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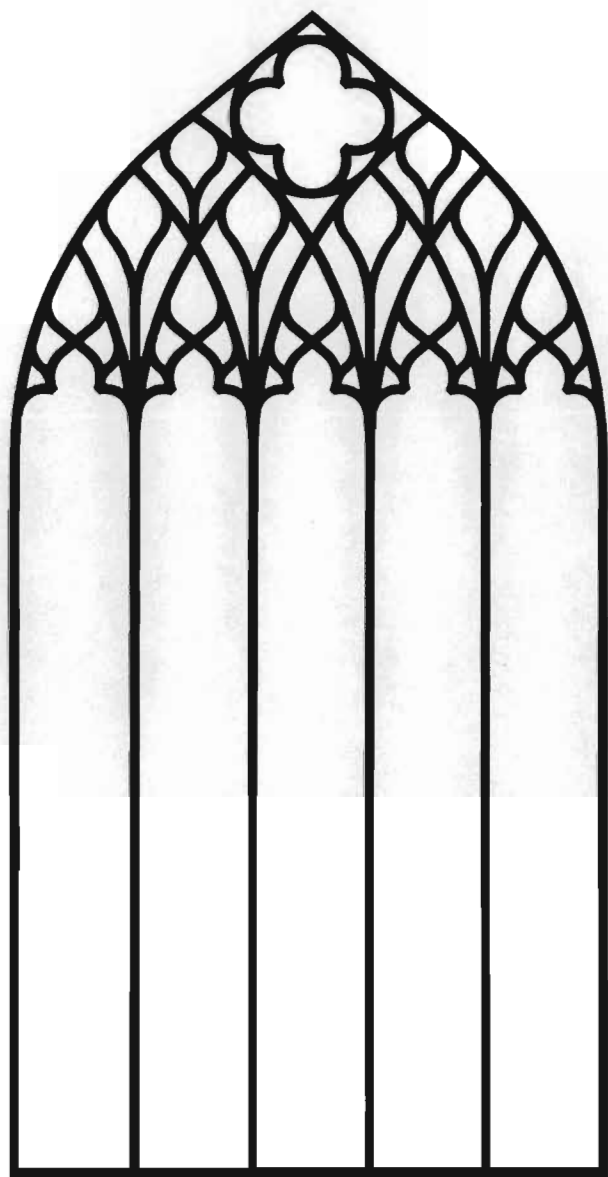
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JOURNAL OF MORMON HISTORY



FALL 1996

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COVER: Abstraction of the window tracery, Salt Lake City Tenth Ward. Design by Warren Archer.

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LETTERS

Request

Will the Janet Ellingson who sent the *Journal* a letter about Todd Compton's article, "Fanny Alger Smith Custer: Mormonism's First Plural Wife?" (Spring 1996), please send her current address to Lavina Fielding Anderson, 1519 Roberta Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84115.

Clarifying Faulring Review

Scott H. Faulring's review of *Inventing Mormonism: Tradition and the Historical Record* (*Journal of Mormon History* 21 [Fall 1995]: 203-8) suggested some possible problems that MHA readers may want to see clarified.

Faulring finds no "new insights" in the book. He then says that there is a "decidedly narrow selection of sources." This may come as a surprise to readers who like Richard L. Bushman in his review of our book found we had added "new material to the record of Joseph Smith." In fact, our research included locating various civil records of the period and also recollections of friends and members of the Joseph Smith, Sr., family, and integrating this material with the work of Latter-day

Saint scholars. In the chapter on the Palmyra revival we show by available records that the revival account written by Oliver Cowdery and the Smith family best fits the years 1824-25. We quote Marvin Hill who has independently written that the revival was going on in 1824.

One of Faulring's criticisms concerns a document dated 16 January 1830, in the handwriting of Oliver Cowdery and signed by Joseph Smith, Sr., father of the Mormon Prophet. The agreement is about selling copies of the Book of Mormon until the printing by Egbert B. Grandin has been paid in full.

Faulring review asserts that a photograph and transcription of the early 1830 document included in the book was "mistakenly identified as including Joseph Smith, Sr.'s signature." A comparison of the Joseph Smith signature on the agreement with the way the capital letters "J" in *Joseph* and "S" in *Smith* are formed shows that the letter in question is much closer to "S" in Smith than to the "J" in Joseph. The designation is "Sr" (for "Senior") and it appears that the signature is that of the elder Joseph Smith. Orsamus Turner learned of this agreement prior to 1851 and, like Faulring, assumed that it was signed by the younger Smith. The Historical Society of Pennsylvania and various LDS publications have

correctly read the signature as "Joseph Smith Sr" on the 16 January 1830 agreement.

The reviewer, in his footnote, then assumes that "Joseph Smith, Sr., did not include either 'Sr.' or 'Sen.' with his signature." This hypothesis does not stand scrutiny. The addition of "Senior" to the elder Smith's name would occur to avoid confusion with his son. In the Nathan Pierce Docket Book, Joseph Smith, Sr., did not add "Sr." (in any form) to his signature. Though this signature does not appear to be an exact match with the 1830 agreement, the variation is not that great. The small sample of Joseph Smith, Sr., holographs prohibits us from making a final conclusion as confidently as Faulring has tried to make it appear.

The reviewer further states that the signature on two ordination licenses dated 9 June 1830 signed by Joseph Smith, Jr., and Oliver Cowdery "both contain nearly identical Joseph Smith, Jr., signatures as on the agreement." This is not correct as the handwritten letter "J" in *Joseph* and *Jr.* is different from the "S" on these two licenses and on the January 1830 agreement in question.

Contrary to Faulring's thinking that "Joseph Smith, Sr., did not include either 'Sr.' or 'Sen.' with his signature," contemporary records contradict this statement. Joseph Smith, Sr., did distinguish his name from that of Joseph, Jr., examples of which can be found in the fol-

lowing sources: the published version of the Articles of Agreement (1825); the Testimony of Eight Witnesses in the Printer's Manuscript of the Book of Mormon (1829); several entries in the Deed Records of Geauga County, Ohio (1837-38); power of attorney (1838); and William Swartzell's deacon license (1838). I doubt that many will agree with Faulring's example of misusing a historical document.

Faulring chided us for not offering analytical interpretations. However, we have avoided dogmatic conclusions in favor of weighing the breadth of the evidence. The spirit and intent of our book was to let readers decide what all this early material means to them. That is why we seriously considered what members of the Smith family said and how the statements best fit into the context of the time. To conclude that the book is only a social history misses the larger historical picture. By using various sources, we have shown that the Smith family lived in a religious, social, and sometimes superstitious world. By considering a broader area rather than a limited one, we have perhaps made some progress toward achieving our goal.

H. Michael Marquardt
Sandy, Utah

Moses Smith Died a Strangite

David L. Clark's article on Moses Smith in the *Journal of Mormon History* (Fall 1995) is flawed. He stated

that Moses Smith broke with James J. Strang, moved to the Eau Clair area of northwestern Wisconsin and remained there until his death on 15 May 1849.

Clark also states: "Despite his sincerity, the level of confusion generated by the claims of his brother-in-law [Strang] and brother [Aaron] made him decide to terminate active participation with any gathering. As far as we know, his affiliation with Strang was his final association with any organized religion" (pp. 169-70).

I do not understand how Clark arrived at the conclusion that Smith ceased being a Strangite. Clark referred to Strang's obituary ten times in his article but ignored the final paragraph which states that "By permission of the prophet [Strang], Moses went into the pine region on the head waters of the Mississippi . . . entrusted with a most responsible mission, the duties of which he has performed in a manner entirely satisfactory. He was last in Voree last July, when it was arranged that he should return from there within the year, and perform the mission formerly given him to the saints in England. . . ." (*Gospel Herald* 4 [14 June 1849]: 53-55.)

It is worth noting that Dale L. Morgan considered the obituary of solid historical worth. He wrote: "This obituary [of Moses Smith] was clearly written by James J. Strang, Moses Smith's brother-in-law, who was intimately associated with him in religious and other af-

fairs. Although Strang would be regarded by the Utah church as a hostile witness, his account accords perfectly with the fragmentary information elsewhere found" (Morgan, ed., "The Reminiscences of James Hohlt: A Narrative of the Emmett Company," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 23 (1955): 5).

A letter from Moses Smith to Strang printed in the 24 February 1848 *Gospel Herald* provides further evidence that Smith did not denounce and leave Strang in 1847 as Clark claims. The letter addresses Strang as "Esteemed Brother James" and thanks him for a package of letters and seven numbers of the *Gospel Herald*. "That was a feast of fat things for me," he wrote. "You have no idea how thankful I was, for you never thirsted after Mormonism as I do now. . . . I must close by subscribing myself your brother in the new and everlasting covenant."

Among the Strang manuscripts in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University are two letters from John Macauley, an 1841 convert who was living twenty-six miles from Nauvoo at the time of Joseph Smith's death. His letters to Strang also indicate that Moses Smith died an active Strangite. He wrote on 21 June 1850: "Since I was led to see through dear Moses Smith that you are Joseph Smiths suckesser he being taken away I am left alone in the midst of enemies and ungodely

Gentels . . . " (Strang Manuscripts, Doc. 424, 21 June 1850).

The second letter (Doc. 422), dated 24 June 1849, reads: "I fell in with Moses Smith . . . [and] had just made up my mind to be Baptized by him when he would come back from Black River (we lived 3 Miles from each other. . . . one day his sone came for me said his father was ill and wished to see me I went and when he seen me he asked me if I had faith. I felt bad I was out of the church I prayed and when I left he asked me to com back but early next morning he died I could only weep I felt the blow . . . "

Moses Smith did not reject Strang as Clark indicates. He remained a loyal Strangite until his death!

*William Shepard
Burlington, Wisconsin*

David L. Clark Replies:

It is not surprising that there are different interpretations of the final years of Moses Smith, given the limited amount of source material that is available. However, differences in interpretation are exacerbated if the source material is not carefully scrutinized, especially in the context of the writer's intent. Careful scrutiny may raise a warning flag; and in the case of the obituary of Moses Smith (which I agree was most likely written by James Strang), certain warning signs are not easily ignored.

Smith's obituary is full of hyper-

bole and misleading statements. I relied on the obituary most often when the events portrayed are at least partially confirmed from other sources. For examples, most of the early history of Smith found in the obituary is also reported in letters and recorded talks (see my notes 1, 3, 5, 7-10, etc.), while some details of his later life can be confirmed from county histories, letters of Bishop George Miller, and a few other sources (my notes 4, 14-19, 22, etc). I cite the Strang obituary most often (Shepard says I cite it ten times; I actually cite it sixteen times) when those events are referred to elsewhere.

In contrast, there are large parts of the obituary that I did not cite because certain accounts seem both exaggerated and, in places, confusing. For example, consider the Emmett affair. In one part of the obituary, Strang states that this missionary venture did not take place (p. 54) but later on the same page gives details of how it occurred! Also, in describing this part of Smith's life, Strang implies that Moses was already an active Strangite but was only doing what Hyrum (in one place, Joseph in others) wanted him to do. Strang ignores the fact that at this time Moses had indicated that he did not believe Strang's claim and that he (Strang) had pled with Moses to leave Brigham Young and join his forces, a plea Smith did not accept at that time (see letter from Strang to Moses, p. 166).

As far as ignoring the final paragraph of the obituary is concerned, I believe that there are compelling reasons to do so, at least in part. Moses Smith was ordained an apostle in Strang's church in April 1846 (p. 169) and this affiliation extended at least until July, or until sometime in 1847. The affairs of Moses and his brother Aaron were closely related, and Steven Shields (*Divergent Paths of the Restoration*, 4th ed. [Los Angeles: Restoration Research, 1990], 48), identifies July 1846 as the time by which Aaron was officially out of the Strang church. The history of the relationship between Moses and his brother supports the idea that it was probably sometime near this date that, according to the final paragraph of Moses' obituary, Strang gave Moses "permission" to leave the work with Strang and to become a temporary lumberman in northwest Wisconsin.

This "permission" raises a warning flag to me, especially when Strang writes in the same para-

graph: "Causes, not fully known here, *detained* him (Moses Smith) longer than was expected" (emphasis mine). It seems highly probable that Moses left Strang at the same time or shortly after Aaron left; it seems quite certain that their dual departures terminated active participation in the Strang church.

The interesting Macauley letters cited by Shepard may or may not refer to a Strang relationship as much as to a pre-Strang "Mormon" relationship of some sort.

In my article, I did not say that Moses Smith "denounced Strang," only that he left the missionary assignment given him by Strang at approximately the same time his brother Aaron left Strang and that he spent the last years of his life as a lumberman in an isolated part of Wisconsin. If he remained a "loyal Strangite until his death," better evidence than is known is needed to prove it.

David L. Clark
Madison, Wisconsin

Joseph Smith's 1891 Millennial Prophecy: The Quest for Apocalyptic Deliverance

Dan Erickson

INTRODUCTION

The Utah Saints of the late nineteenth century accorded a central role to millennialism. Nevertheless, the historiography of Mormon millennialism has focused primarily on the early Church years, thus neglecting the importance of the apocalyptic world view after the move West.¹ This article counters views which have

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¹Works which emphasize the importance of early Mormon millennial thought include Marvin S. Hill, "The Role of Christian Primitivism in the Origin and Development of the Mormon Kingdom, 1830-1844" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1968); Hill, *Quest For Refuge: The Mormon Flight from American Pluralism* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1989); Hill, "Quest for Refuge: An Hypothesis as to the Social Origins and Nature of the Mormon Political Kingdom," *Journal of Mormon History* 2 (1975): 3-20; Hill, "The Shaping of the Mormon

overlooked the importance of millennialism for the Utah Saints.² By examining the common Mormon belief that the millennium would commence in 1891, this study will evaluate how hope in an imminent millennium affected the decision making of Church leaders and sustained the resolve of ordinary Mormons to endure persecution in anticipation of millennial deliverance in 1891. Furthermore, by analyzing both leaders and their flock, this paper will demonstrate that millennial thought was an important theological construct which helped everyday Church members to make sense of distressing circumstances. Chief among those

Mind in New England and New York," *BYU Studies* 9 (Spring 1969): 351-72; Gordon D. Pollock, *In Search of Security: The Mormons and the Kingdom of God on Earth, 1830-1844* (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1989); Grant Underwood, *The Millenarian World of Early Mormonism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993); Dan Vogel, *Religious Seekers and the Advent of Mormonism* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1988), 181-205. Louis G. Reinwand, "An Interpretive Study of Mormon Millennialism" (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1971), concentrated on Mormon millennialism in Utah in the nineteenth century but emphasized that millennialism was just one of many doctrines of importance to the early Saints. Klaus J. Hansen in *Quest for Empire: The Political Kingdom of God and the Council of Fifty in Mormon History* (n.p.: Michigan State University Press, 1970), 1-23, ties Mormon millennialism to the Council of Fifty and sees the decline of millennialism as synonymous with the decline of the idea of the political kingdom of God. See also Hansen, "Mormonism and American Culture: Some Tentative Hypotheses," in *The Restoration Movement: Essays in Mormon History*, edited by Mark McKiernan, Alma R. Blair, and Paul M. Edwards (Lawrence, Kans.: Coronado Press, 1973), 1-25.

²Thomas Alexander takes the position that, until 1890, the imminence of the prophesied apocalypse played a central role in Mormon thought but that, particularly during Wilford Woodruff's administration, the Church's focus shifted to building temples and salvation for the dead as the means of preparing for Christ's return to establish his kingdom on earth. See Thomas G. Alexander, "Wilford Woodruff and the Changing Nature of Mormon Religious Experience," *Church History* 45 (March 1976): 69. See also Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition: A History of the Latter-day Saints, 1890-1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 1-15; Alexander, *Things in Heaven and Earth: The Life and Times of Wilford Woodruff, a Mormon Prophet* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1991), 267-68; Alexander, "'To Maintain Harmony': Adjusting to External and Internal Stress, 1890-1930," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 15 (Winter 1982): 44-58; Alexander, "The Odyssey of a Latter-day Prophet: Wilford Woodruff and the Manifesto of 1890," *Journal of Mormon History* 17 (1991): 169-206.

circumstances was the anti-polygamy campaign's legal and political assault on the Mormon way of life, during which all aspects of their private lives were laid open to public scrutiny and ridicule.

Viewing millennialism and Manifest Destiny synonymously, Americans throughout the nineteenth century defined their republic as both a "redeemer nation" and the new city on a hill.³ Although some Americans like William Miller and his followers predicted a premillennial (and imminent) second coming of Christ, most Americans expected a postmillennial second coming. Christ would return at the end of a thousand-year period of bliss brought about by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the good works of the Church.⁴ Postmillennialism received such widespread acceptance that one nineteenth-century clergyman proclaimed that it had become "the commonly received doctrine" of American Protestantism.⁵

Although early Mormon eschatology professed that the Saints must establish the kingdom of God on earth, Mormon theology maintained the premillennial view that the millennium would come through divine intervention "in the twinkling of an eye."⁶ Thus, some historians have claimed that early Mormonism displayed aspects of both pre- and postmillennialism;⁷ however,

³Ernest Lee Tuveson, *Redeemer Nation: The Idea of America's Millennial Role* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), 122-36; Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 185-89; William A. Clebsch, "America's 'Mythique' as Redeemer Nation," *4 Prospects* (1979): 79-94.

⁴James H. Moorhead, "Between Progress and Apocalypse: A Reassessment of Millennialism in American Religious Thought, 1800-1880," *Journal of American History* 71 (December 1984): 524-25; Moorhead, *American Apocalypse: Yankee Protestants and the Civil War 1860-1869* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978), 9, 42-81; George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelicalism: 1870-1925* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 49; J. F. Maclear, "The Republic and the Millennium," in *The Religion of the Republic*, edited by Elwyn A. Smith (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), 189.

⁵As quoted in Moorhead, "Between Progress and Apocalypse," 525.

⁶*A Book of Commandments for the Government of the Church of Christ* (Zion [Independence, Missouri]: W. W. Phelps & Co., 1833), 3-6; and Marvin S. Hill, *Quest For Refuge*, xx.

they fail to note that premillennialists proselytized as enthusiastically as postmillennialists, although their goals were different. Postmillennialists hoped to defeat evil through the gradual improvement of humanity; premillennialists proselytized to gather the chosen of Israel and prepare them for the millennium.⁸ Apocalypticism was the predominant early Mormon cosmology, illustrating that Mormonism was unquestionably premillennial; they sought to warn, not convert, the masses. Grant Underwood concludes: "Even though the Saints urged human efforts to build the kingdom, or were mission minded, or occasionally waned in the enthusiasm for the imminence of paradisiacal glory, these attitudes do not warrant changing the classification of Mormons as premillennialists."⁹

⁷Although labeling the movement a "uniquely American form of millenarianism," Ernest Tuveson, *Redeemer Nation*, 34 note 11, 175-76, 186, also sees Joseph Smith's idea of eternal progress as the epitome of the idea of natural progress. Ernest Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millennialism, 1800-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 12-14, 23, 48, contends that Mormon millennialism was mixed; believing the destruction of the world was near, Mormons nevertheless labored to gather the elect and to build a New Jerusalem in America. Historians who hold that Mormonism vacillated between pre- and postmillennialism include Hansen, *Quest for Empire*, 20-21; Reinwand, "An Interpretive Study of Mormon Millennialism," 11-12, 47-48; Klaus J. Hansen, *Mormonism and the American Experience* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 118; Keith E. Norman, "How Long, O Lord? The Delay of the Parousia in Mormonism," *Sunstone* 8 (January-April 1983): 49-58; David E. Smith, "Millenarian Scholarship in America," *American Quarterly* 17 (Fall 1965): 542; Richard L. Bushman, *Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984), 170; and J. F. C. Harrison, *The Second Coming: Popular Millenarianism 1780-1850* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1979), 176-92.

⁸Harrison, *The Second Coming*, 176-92, who emphasizes that "Zion was to be built in the American West . . . in the near future," recognizes Mormonism's unique millenarianism (181).

⁹Underwood follows Norman Cohn's millenarian model, defining early Mormonism's world view as clearly premillennialist. Underwood, *The Millenarian World of Early Mormonism*, 24-41; Norman Cohn, "Medieval Millenarianism: Its Bearing on the Comparative Study of Millenarian Movements," in *Millennial Dreams in Action*, edited by Sylvia L. Thrupp (The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1962), 31-43; Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium*, rev. ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), 15-18; Malcolm R. Thorpe, [Review of J. F. C. Harrison,

THE MILLENNIAL PROPHECY

In early 1891, Charles Lowell Walker of St. George wrote, "Some say and have written that great things are to happen . . . in this year 1891. Yea, dire and dreadful things are to transpire. Some even declare that Christ will come and the Millennial Reign inaugurated."¹⁰ Where did this belief come from and why did it have such potency to Saints as the year 1891 approached? Walker's belief, and that of other Mormons like him, stemmed from a prophecy received by Joseph Smith which circulated widely, coupled with intense faith in the literal fulfillment of his prophecies and an urgent hope to be delivered from the crisis of their time.

The prophecy itself dates from an event almost fifty years earlier. At the 6 April 1843 general conference in the Nauvoo Temple then under construction, Smith spoke, among other subjects, on the second coming of Christ.¹¹ He may have been thinking of the local commotion about the Millerites; Miller's predicted ominous day of judgment had failed to occur just three days earlier.¹² While Joseph Smith had been praying, he said, a

The Second Coming: Popular Millenarianism 1780-1850] *BYU Studies* 21 (Fall 1981): 534-36.

¹⁰*Diary of Charles Lowell Walker*, edited by A. Karl Larson and Katharine Miles Larson, 2 vols. (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1980), 3 January 1891, 2:721-722 (hereafter cited as Walker, *Diary*, by volume and page).

¹¹Joseph Smith, Jr., et al., *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, edited by B. H. Roberts (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1902-12; 6 vols., a seventh volume was published in 1932; reprinted by Deseret Book Company, 1976, and reissued in paperback in 1978): 5:336-37.

¹²Scott G. Kenney, ed., *Wilford Woodruff's, Journal 1833-1898*, 9 vols. (Midvale, Utah: Signature Books, 1983-85), 2:365-66 (hereafter cited as Woodruff, by volume and page number); *History of the Church*, 5:326. Based on Jewish calendars, the year 1843 suggested two dates (21 March or 3 April) which the Millerites believed would usher in Christ's return. After the first disappointment, the date for the second advent was recalculated as 22 October 1844. Jonathan Butler, "From Millerism to Seventh-day Adventism: 'Boundlessness to Consolidation,'" *Church History* 55 (March 1986): 55; Michael Barkun, *Crucible of the Millennium: The Burned-Over District of New York in the 1840's* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1986), 31-46; Harrison, *The Second Coming*, 193-95. Mormons and Millerites, as apocalyptic, proselytizing, and millennial

voice had proclaimed: "My son, if thou livest until thou art eighty-five years of age, though shalt see the face of the son of man." Smith then prophesied, "In the name of the Lord God, and let it be written - the son of man will not come in the clouds of heaven till I am eighty-five years old."¹³

Smith would turn eighty-five on 23 December 1890, thus making 1890-91 the appointed time. Future apostle Franklin D. Richards, present in Nauvoo, recorded: "He is therefore now 37 years old last Dec, which leaves 48 years yet to transpire untill the tim[e] of Promise that Joseph should see *Christ*."¹⁴ Newly arrived convert James Burgess was equally impressed: "Revelation given through Joseph Smith, if you [Smith] live untill you are 85 years of age you shall see the face of the Son of Man . . . Joseph Smith was born in the year 1805 + 85 = 1890."¹⁵ And Willard Richards added in his own journal, "48 years hence or about 1890."¹⁶

Wilford Woodruff's understanding of this prophecy is crucial, as he was the president of the Church in 1891. Smith's millennial prophecy confirmed a passage in Woodruff's patriarchal blessing, received 15 April 1837 from Church patriarch Joseph Smith, Sr. It promised that he would "remain on the

groups, had numerous confrontations. Grant Underwood, "Apocalyptic Adversaries: Mormonism Meets Millerism," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 7 (1987): 53-61; John Taylor, "Millerism," *Times and Seasons* 4 (15 February 1843): 103-5, criticized "the false foundation upon which Mr. Miller rests his fabric" and declared it "exposed in all its naked deformity."

¹³*History of the Church*, 5: 336; and Scott H. Faulring, ed., *An American Prophet's Record: The Diaries and Journals of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1989), 343. Smith had made the same prophecy four days earlier at a conference in Ramus, Illinois. Faulring, *An American Prophet's Record*, 340; George D. Smith, ed., *An Intimate Chronicle: The Journals of William Clayton* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1991), 95. Clayton recorded the prophecy to state that Smith would be eighty-four.

¹⁴Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, comps. and eds., *The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet Joseph* (Orem, Utah: Grandin Book Company, 1991), 181, emphasis Richards's.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 334.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 179.

earth to behold thy Savior Come in the Clouds of heaven.”¹⁷

Joseph Smith's 1843 prophecy, canonized in Doctrine and Covenants 130,¹⁸ substantiated an 1835 blessing-prophecy to the newly ordained apostles that they would witness Christ's ushering in of his millennial kingdom “in the flesh” and that “even fifty-six years shall wind up the scene.”¹⁹ Based on the evident failure of these prophecies, Richard Lloyd Anderson have explained that Smith regarded his declarations as opinion, rather than as prophetic revelation.²⁰ But for the purposes of this paper, the point is immaterial; late nineteenth-century Saints did deem these statements revelation, and they acted on that belief. As the predicted time of the millennium approached, both Church leaders and members, particularly those who had known Smith, considered the Saints' persecution in the 1880s a precursor to the apocalypse and the coming of the Lord in 1891.

¹⁷Woodruff, 1:142-43. Woodruff recopied this blessing into his journal 20 December 1850 when his father, Aphek Woodruff, received his own patriarchal blessing. Ibid., 3:585-87. Others who received similar patriarchal blessings include James M. Workes, William Goates, Sr., Amman Rowan, Lyman Johnson, Heber C. Kimball, William Smith, and Orson Hyde. Richard S. Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon: A Portrait of Religious Excess* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1994), 154. For a discussion of patriarchal blessings emphasizing the imminence of the millennium, see Irene M. Bates, “Patriarchal Blessings and the Routinization of Charisma,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 26 (Fall 1993): 1-29.

¹⁸This section was published on 9 July 1856 in the *Deseret News*, was canonized in the LDS 1876 edition, and has been in every LDS edition since then but is not canonized in RLDS scripture. Lyndon W. Cook, *The Revelations of the Prophet Joseph Smith: A Historical and Biographical Commentary on the Doctrine and Covenants* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985), 131; Richard P. Howard, *Restoration Scriptures: A Study of Their Textual Development* (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1969), 229.

¹⁹The selection and blessing of the apostles is in *History of the Church* 2:180-200, but this official account omits the millennial promises, printed in “History of Joseph Smith,” *Millennial Star* 15 (26 March 1853): 206-8; ibid., 15 (2 April 1853): 209-13, and *History of the Church* 2:182. See also Hill, *Quest for Refuge*, 47, Vogel, *Religious Seekers and the Advent of Mormonism*, 203, 212 note 119.

²⁰Richard Lloyd Anderson, “Joseph Smith and the Millenarian Time Table,” *BYU Studies* 3 (Spring 1961): 57.

MILLENNIALISM AS ASSISTANCE IN ENDURING PERSECUTION

During the nineteenth century, crises and apocalyptic expectations recurred cyclically within Mormonism.²¹ The intensity of millennial aspirations increased with "rumors of war," natural disasters, and pressures on the Church.²² Whenever local conditions reached a crisis, leaders and lay members turned toward heaven for relief, believing that calamity and destruction necessarily preceded the millennium. Three such high points came during the Mormon Reformation and Utah War (1856-58), the Civil War (1861-64), and the anti-polygamy campaign (1880s), all of which fed Mormon millennial expectations.²³ Mormons viewed their Utah Zion as a sanctuary in which they would prepare a place and a people for Christ's second coming. General Authorities warned the Saints that the millennium was fast approaching and that the Lord would hasten his work to preserve the elect.²⁴ Because the Saints viewed persecution as a "refiner's fire" to purify them and as a sign of the "last days," oppression figured as a major theme in general conference addresses throughout this period, but especially in connection with the Utah War and the federal "raid" on polygamy.²⁵ The nation's disregard of the Saints'

²¹Therald N. Jensen, "Mormon Theory of Church and State" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1938), 67-68; Reinwand, "An Interpretive Study of Mormon Millennialism," 11; Hansen, *Quest for Empire*, 22.

²²Alexander, "Wilford Woodruff and the Changing Nature of Mormon Religious Experience," 65.

²³John M. Werly, "Premillennialism and the Paranoid Style," *American Studies* 18 (Spring 1977): 40; Richard D. Poll and William P. MacKinnon, "Causes of the Utah War Reconsidered," *Journal of Mormon History* 20 (Fall 1994): 16; Eugene E. Campbell, "Pioneers and Patriotism: Conflicting Loyalties," in *New Views of Mormon History*, edited by Davis Bitton and Maureen Ursenbach Beecher (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987), 311-12.

²⁴Heber C. Kimball, 11 July 1852, *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (London and Liverpool: LDS Booksellers Depot, 1855-86), 1:36; Orson Pratt, 20 May 1855, *ibid.*, 3:17-18; Charles W. Penrose, "The Second Advent," *Millennial Star* 21 (10 September 1859): 581-84.

²⁵Walker, *Diary*, 1:318 and 1:306; Gordon Shepherd and Gary Shepherd, *A Kingdom Transformed: Themes in the Development of Mormonism* (Salt Lake

pleas for either justice or mercy merely confirmed Mormon convictions that the end was near.²⁶

The first such crisis, the Utah War, followed hot on the heels of the 1856-57 "Reformation," a time of internal zealousness and recommitment that drew heavily on the already-established belief that Christ's coming was imminent and that conflict between the Saints and the world would be the precipitating factor.

Jedediah M. Grant, counselor in the First Presidency, instructed elders looking "for some flaming sword unsheathed" in the heavens or other special signs to "dismiss their fears, and dispense with all their anxiety" for the final events were "rushing upon the astonished world with such velocity, as to exceed even our most sanguine expectations." Children would live to raise the dead. In no more than fifty years, everyone in the congregations would have been borne aloft to meet Christ. And Apostle George A. Smith warned the world that "the day of the Lord is near . . . and we should watch for the coming of the Son of Man."²⁷

Mormons defiantly interpreted the Utah War as a step toward the millennium as the U.S. government determined to put down the Mormon "rebellion" and install a Gentile government by force.²⁸ Remembering their past sufferings from government-

City: University of Utah Press, 1984), 76; Ballard S. Dunn, *The Twin Monsters . . .* (New York: James Pott & Co., Publishers, [1884]), 6; "Report of the Utah Commission," 1887, in *Report of the Secretary of the Interior . . .*, 5 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1887), 2:1339.

²⁶Larry M. Logue, *A Sermon in the Desert: Belief and Behavior in Early St. George, Utah* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 33-34; Walker, *Diary*, 2:589 and 2:774-75; Franklin S. Richards, Letter to John Taylor, 9 February 1887, Richards Correspondence, 1886-90, photocopy and typewritten copy, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City.

²⁷Grant, 2 April 1854, *Journal of Discourses*, 2:145; Lorenzo D. Young, 13 December 1857, *ibid.*, 6:212; "Address by President Heber C. Kimball," *Millennial Star* 14 (25 December 1852): 693; George A. Smith, 24 June 1855, *Journal of Discourses*, 2:333-34. See also Orson Hyde, n.d., *Journal of Discourses*, 5:141; Heber C. Kimball, 11 July 1852, *ibid.*, 1:35; Kimball, 20 September 1857, *ibid.*, 5:254; Orson Pratt, 24 January 1858, *ibid.*, 6:202; "Pestilence and Plague," *Deseret News*, 9 February 1854; and Woodruff, 4:269, 4:375.

²⁸For histories of the Utah War, see Leonard J. Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom: An Economic History of the Latter-day Saints 1830-1900* (1958;

sanctioned mob violence, burnings, and expulsions from Nauvoo, the leaders' inflammatory rhetoric unleashed zealous responses from members. "The greater [the army's] numbers," preached Orson Hyde in October 1857, "the greater and more complete its overthrow . . . If the Red Sea be not the trap in which the enemy will be caught, there will be a snow of hail storm, a whirlwind, an earthquake, fire from above or from beneath, or the sword of the Lord and of Brigham." Orson Pratt, believing that signs of the last days were everywhere visible, declared that this war fulfilled the prophecy that "the mother of abominations was to gather together and fight against the Saints." And Brigham Young maintained that persecution would only "hasten the work" of the Lord by beginning the collapse of the United States, leaving the Saints to become an independent nation.²⁹

Fired with millennial fervor, Brigham Young's first response was to stockpile arms and ammunition, recall missionaries, close outlying settlements, proclaim martial law, and initiate a guerrilla

reprinted Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966); Juanita Brooks, *The Mountain Meadows Massacre* (1950; reprinted Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 18; Eugene E. Campbell, *Establishing Zion: The Mormon Church in the American West, 1847-1869* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1988), 233-34; Everett L. Cooley, "Carpetbag Rule—Territorial Government in Utah," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 26 (April 1959): 107-29; Norman F. Furniss, *The Mormon Conflict 1850-1859* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1960); Shirley Greenwood Jones, "Brigham Young's Rhetoric: A Critical and Cultural Analysis of Key Sermons in Five Rhetorical Events" (Ph.D. diss., University of Utah, 1992), 207-8; William P. MacKinnon, "125 Years of Conspiracy Theories: Origins of the Utah Expedition of 1857-58," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 52 (Summer 1984): 212-30; Donald R. Moorman, *Camp Floyd and the Mormons: The Utah War* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1992), 11-16; Richard D. Poll, "The Move South," *BYU Studies* 29 (Fall 1989): 65-88; Richard D. Poll, *Quixotic Mediator: Thomas L. Kane and the Utah War* (Ogden, Utah: Weber State College Press, 1985); Clifford L. Stott, *Search for Sanctuary: Brigham Young and the White Mountain Expedition* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1984), 29, 47-84.

²⁹Orson Hyde, 7 October 1857, quoted in Paul H. Peterson, "The Mormon Reformation of 1856-1857: The Rhetoric and the Reality," *Journal of Mormon History* 15 (1989): 78; Orson Pratt, 24 January 1858, *Journal of Discourses*, 6:202; Brigham Young, 2 August 1857, *ibid.*, 5:98. See also "Government," *Millennial Star* 19 (19 December 1857): 804, and "Record of Andrew Jackson Allen," 14 March 1858, typescript, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City.

campaign against the approaching "invaders."³⁰ John Taylor vowed never again "to bow to the cruelty of Mobs, even when the mob have the name of being legalized by the nation."³¹ All believed that soon the Lord would smite down their enemies, and that deliverance was nigh. Lorenzo D. Young, Brigham's brother, confessed he had "long prayed that the Lord Almighty would destroy the nation that gave me birth." "I have been looking for the time of deliverance," recorded Apostle Charles C. Rich in his diary on 7 October 1857, "but did not expect it so soon." Wilford Woodruff warned a congregation of the Saints that President Buchanan had no idea what he was up against and prophesied that the government was "turning the last key to rend the nation asunder." In 1858 Orson Pratt told the Saints, "The American continent never was designed for such a corrupt Government. . . . After they should become ripened in iniquity, it was not intended they should continue. The Lord has designed another thing, and for this reason we are here in these mountains."³²

³⁰Leonard J. Arrington and Davis Bitton, *The Mormon Experience*, 2d ed. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 169; Poll and MacKinnon, "Causes of the Utah War Reconsidered," 18, 36-38; Poll, *Quixotic Mediator*, 238-39; Reinwand, "An Interpretive Study of Mormon Millennialism," 98-99, 102; and Campbell, "Pioneers and Patriotism," 312-13. For Brigham Young's militarism, see Everett L. Cooley, ed., *Diary of Brigham Young 1857* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Library, Tanner Trust Fund, 1980), entries for 4-8, 11, and 29 August, and 14-15 September, pp. 56-58, 68, 80; Leonard J. Arrington, *Brigham Young: American Moses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), 253-55.

³¹John Taylor, *Deseret News*, 23 September 1857.

³²Lorenzo D. Young, 25 October 1857, *Journal of Discourses*, 6:225; Charles Rich as quoted in Reinwand, "An Interpretive Study of Mormon Millennialism," 95; Woodruff, 6 December 1857, *Journal of Discourses*, 6:121; Orson Pratt, 24 January 1858, *ibid.*, 6:204. For additional *Journal of Discourses* examples of the impending millennium and Utah as a place of refuge from the world's destruction, see Brigham Young, 4:342-44, 4:371, 5:340, 5:171, 5:293, 8:356, 10:38-39, 10:294, 12:119; George Q. Cannon, 14:31, 22:179, 23:105; Jedediah Morgan Grant, 2:148; Orson Hyde, 20:99-100; Heber C. Kimball, 5:218; Orson Pratt, 3:302; Franklin D. Richards, 24:282; George A. Smith, 3:289, 5:168; John Taylor, 20:135-36, 20:266-67, 21:8, 21:255; Moses Thatcher, 26:334. Wilford Woodruff, 6:121; and Lorenzo D. Young, 6:225. See also George Q. Cannon, "Remarks by President George Q. Cannon," *Deseret News*, 26 July 1884, 1; Jules Remy and Julius Brenchley, *A Journey to Great Salt Lake City* . . . , 2 vols. (London:

Although such emotional intensity no doubt contributed to the Mountain Meadows massacre in southern Utah, open conflict was avoided thanks to a number of factors, including the pause imposed on hostilities by the winter of 1857-58, Brigham Young's decision to evacuate the northern settlements, and the peacemaking efforts of Thomas L. Kane. Millennial fervor subsided as the Saints reluctantly discovered that they could accommodate the Gentiles in their midst.

The second wave of heightened millennial intensity accompanied the Civil War. Mormons generally held themselves aloof, believing that the war was God's way of purging the nation in preparation for Christ's second coming.³³ In 1860 Orson Hyde had predicted, "Will the nation be broken? . . . The signs in the heavens and upon the earth . . . were never more portentous over Jerusalem, previous to its destruction, than they are now over the United States of America." Brigham Young declared that "the Government was the most Corrupt & rotten of any Government in the world & they were ready to be destroyed." Wilford Woodruff predicted the war would destroy both sides, leaving the Saints to see "the Kingdom of God Esstablished upon their ruins." Affirming that God's wrath would be upon the nation until the "wicked & Corrupt" are destroyed and the government turned over to the Saints, he warned "the Gentiles upon this land [to] prepare to meet their God."³⁴ Even after the war, in 1868, Wood-

W. Jeffs, 1861), 1:142-43, 2:249-52; and Woodruff, *Journal*, 5:126-31, 230.

³³E. B. Long, *The Saints and the Union: Utah Territory during the Civil War* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981). For millennial hope held by American Protestants in general during the Civil War period, see Moorhead, *American Apocalypse*, 42-81; Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism*, 42-58; Ronald D. Rietveld, "The American Civil War: Millennial Hope, Political Chaos, and a Two-Sided 'Just War,'" in *The Wars of America: Christian Views*, edited by Ronald A. Wells (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1981), 67-90. For non-Mormon awareness of Mormon millennial views during this period, see Richard F. Burton, *The City of The Saints*, edited by Fawn M. Brodie (1861; reprinted New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963), 403; J. H. Beadle, *Life in Utah, or the Mysteries and Crimes of Mormonism*, as quoted in Reinwand, "An Interpretive Study of Mormon Millennialism," 98.

³⁴Orson Hyde, 7 October 1860, *Journal of Discourses*, 8:237; Young quoted in Wilford Woodruff, *Journal*, 5:527; Woodruff, *Journal*, 5:529, 5:617. For similar

ruff prophesied that God would destroy Albany, Boston, and New York, and that the Church president must "take the Presidency of the United States to save the Constitution."³⁵ Many Saints unquestioningly believed that the blood shed on the battlefield was God's punishment on the United States for the murders of Joseph and Hyrum Smith.³⁶

POLYGAMY PROSECUTIONS AND MILLENNIALIST FERVOR

After the Civil War, millennialist fervor subsided somewhat as Mormons once again accommodated the reality that the United States, though grievously wounded, had survived. The third upsurge of millennialist intensity occurred about fifteen years later as renewed and prolonged federal attacks on polygamy increased the Mormons' sense of persecution and heightened their need for deliverance.³⁷ However, all during the 1870s and early 1880s,

statements from the *Journal of Discourses*, see Heber C. Kimball, 9:55, 9:131; Brigham Young, 8:336, 9:321, 9:333. Francis P. Dyer, Utah Territory's federal marshal, reported Apostle John Taylor "could not finish" an address "without running on to the one string . . . that is the *down fall* of the United States and the building up of Mormonism." Quoted in Hansen, *Quest for Empire*, 168-69, emphasis Dyer's. As Church president, Woodruff changed his position and supported the Spanish-American War. Alexander, "Wilford Woodruff and the Changing Nature of Mormon Religious Experience," 69; Alexander, *Things in Heaven and Earth*, 320-21; and D. Michael Quinn, "The Mormon Church and the Spanish-American War: An End to Selective Pacifism," *Pacific Historical Review* 43 (August 1974): 342-46.

³⁵Woodruff, *Journal*, 6:422.

³⁶See, for example, "Retribution Justice—The Enemies of the Church Guilty of the Crimes Charged on the Saints," *Millennial Star* 23 (23 November 1861): 755-58; "The Dark Day of the United States," *ibid.*, 22 (28 January 1860): 49-53; "'Civilized' Warfare in Missouri," *ibid.*, 25 (25 July 1863): 470-71; "A Direful Vengeance and an Unlooked-For Avenger," *ibid.*, 25 (14 November 1863): 728-29; Joseph Romney, "The Fulfillment of the Purposes of God," *ibid.*, 26 (11 June 1864): 366-71; "Modern Prophecy and Fulfillment," *ibid.*, 27 (25 March 1865): 184-90; "Consequences of National Sin," *ibid.*, 30 (15 February 1868): 105-8; Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 12:119; Woodruff, *ibid.*, 10:15; Kimball, *ibid.*, 10:46, 8:245.

³⁷John Henry Smith, Letter to Joseph Smith III, 21 April 1886, Library-Archives of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Independence; Orson Pratt, "Celestial Marriage," *The Seer* 1 (May 1853): 75; John

references to “last things” continued, “Calamities were thickening in the world,” wrote Charles Walker; the earth’s lifespan of six thousand years was nearly over. Many Saints believed that they would never “taste death,” that they would see the dead come forth from their graves, and that the lost tribes would return from the north.³⁸

During the 1870s, specific references to Joseph Smith’s 1891 prophecy reappeared for the first time since Nauvoo. In March 1875, the elders were preaching that the Savior would come to earth “soon not more than sixteen years according to the revelations Joseph Smith had received.”³⁹ In the same year, Oliver Huntington recalled Smith’s prophecy that “God had revealed to him that the coming of Christ would be within 56 years, which being added to 1835 shows that before 1891 and the 14th of February the Savior of the world would make his appearance again upon the earth and the winding up scene take place.”⁴⁰

Thompson, *Mormonism—Increase of the Army* . . . (Washington D.C.: Buell & Blanchard, Printers, 1858), 5. See Shepherd and Shepherd, *A Kingdom Transformed*, 195-96, which shows that general conference addresses with eschatological themes peaked near the end of the two-decade period of 1869-89.

³⁸Walker, *Diary*, 1:388, 1:367, 2:624; Robert Glass Cleland and Juanita Brooks, eds., *A Mormon Chronicle: The Diaries of John D. Lee, 1848-1876*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1983), 2:235, 2:291-92; Woodruff, *Journal*, 7:94; “Record of Andrew Jackson Allen,” 21 September 1873, 97-98; “Prophetic Warnings,” *Deseret News*, 11 August 1884, 2; “An Epoch of Commotion,” *ibid.*, 24 April 1884: 2; Anthony Woodward Ivins, *Diaries*, 1:17-19, Utah State Historical Society; “Excerpts from a Journal or Sketch of the Life of Joel Hills Johnson,” bound printed copy (n.p., n.d.), 28-30, Utah State Historical Society; Thomas William Whitaker, *Journal*, 1849-86, 6 January 1879, photocopy of holograph, Special Collections, Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City; Henry Ballard, *Diary*, 15 January 1876, typescript, 76, Special Collections, Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. See sermons in the *Journal of Discourses*: Brigham Young, 17:37; Franklin D. Richards, 24:283; Orson Pratt, 15:263; Wilford Woodruff, 17:247, 18:37, 23:331, 24:53, and 25:10; George Teasdale, 26:54; Orson F. Whitney, 26:200.

³⁹“Record of Andrew Jackson Allen,” 105, 21 March 1875; C. Jacobson, *Diary*, 1876, as quoted in Reinwand, “An Interpretive Study of Mormon Millennialism,” 145, also refers to fifteen years.

⁴⁰Oliver Huntington, *Diary*, typescript, 2:129, Special Collections, Lee Library, Brigham Young University.

In the next year, 1876, the Church published a new edition of the Doctrine and Covenants, which divided the revelations into numbered verses and added twenty-six sections, including, for the first time, the Joseph Smith millennial prophecy as Section 130.⁴¹ Thus, the Church officially endorsed Joseph Smith's prophetic timetable, renewing hope in the 1891 prophecy.

In 1877, Brigham Young died. His successor, John Taylor, left no doubt of his literal approach to modern prophecy. "All that he [God] has said . . . through ancient prophets and through Joseph Smith are true. . . . I will prophecy that they will take place as sure as God lives, and they are approaching very rapidly upon us." George Q. Cannon, his first counselor, told the Saints that step by step all of Joseph Smith's prophecies were coming to fruition "just as sure as [if] God [had] spoken it." Sixtus E. Johnson, bishop in Kanab, "urged the Saints to prepare for the judgments of the Almighty upon the wicked Nations." And in 1878, Lorenzo Snow predicted that "the time is speedily coming" when the Saints would return "to Jackson County, Missouri. . . . There are many hundreds and hundreds within the sound of my voice that will live to go back to Jackson County and build a holy temple to the Lord our God."⁴²

When the U.S. Supreme Court on 6 January 1879 ruled that polygamy was not covered as an exercise of religion in *Reynolds v. United States*, Mormon millennial fervor increased. Mormon leaders defended plural marriage as both a commandment and a

⁴¹The editor, Orson Pratt, included Section 130 under the direction of Brigham Young. Robert J. Woodford, "The Historical Development of the Doctrine and Covenants" (Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, 1974), 70, 75-76, 1,710. Earlier editions of the Book of Commandments/Doctrine and Covenants had been published in the United States in 1833, 1835, 1844, 1845, and 1846 with a British edition coming in 1845; none of them had included this prophecy.

⁴²John Taylor, *Journal of Discourses*, 21 September 1878, 21:56; Cannon quoted in "Religious Service," *Deseret News*, 26 June 1882, 1, and "Remarks by President George Q. Cannon," *ibid.*, 26 July 1884, 1; Johnson quoted in Leonard John Nuttall, *Diary*, 7 December 1878, typescript, Special Collections, Lee Library, Brigham Young University; Snow quoted in Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon*, 153. See also Woodruff, *Journal*, 7:258; Woodruff, *Journal of Discourses*, 19:135, 360-61

right, denounced the court decision, and prophesied the wrath of heaven upon the government.⁴³ Orson Pratt rhetorically asked, "What about the American nation[?] That [Civil] war . . . was nothing, compared to that which will eventually devastate that country. The time is not very far distant in the future, when the Lord God will lay his hand heavily upon that nation." Apostle Moses Thatcher scornfully claimed that there was more freedom in Great Britain than in the United States. Joseph Young, senior president of the First Council of the Seventy, warned his brethren to "hold themselves in reddeness for coming events," and he confided that Joseph Smith had promised him personally that he "would not sleep" before the millennium. Charles W. Penrose, later an apostle, testified from the tabernacle pulpit that "the times in which we live . . . are just preceding the coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory." And in June 1879, Wilford Woodruff confidently asserted that "there will be no United States in the Year 1890."⁴⁴

⁴³*Reynolds v. United States*, 98 U.S. 145 (1879); Reinwand, "An Interpretive Study of Mormon Millennialism," 151; Edwin Brown Firmage and Richard Collin Mangrum, *Zion in the Courts: A Legal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830-1900* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 151-59; Orma Linford, "The Mormons and the Law: The Polygamy Cases," *Utah Law Review* 9 (Winter 1964): 331-41; George Q. Cannon, *A Review of the Decision of the Supreme Court of the United States in the Case of George Reynolds v. the United States* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Printing and Publishing Establishment, 1879); "The Reynolds Test Polygamy Case—An Unconstitutional and Oppressive Decision," *Millennial Star* 41 (13 January 1879): 24; Walker, *Diary*, 2:513-14; John Taylor, 13 October 1882, in James R. Clark, ed., *Messages of the First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, Inc., 1965-75), 2:348-349; and *Journal of Discourses* sermons by Lorenzo Snow, 20:188; Franklin D. Richards, 23:111; John Taylor, 26:38-39; and George Q. Cannon, 26:145.

⁴⁴Orson Pratt, 9 March 1879, *Journal of Discourses*, 20:151; Thatcher quoted in John Morgan, *Journals, 1875-92*, 10 vols., 7 October 1888, 8:158, LDS Church Archives; Young quoted in William G. Hartley, "The Seventies in the 1880s: Revelations and Reorganizing," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 16 (Spring 1983): 82; Penrose, 25 May 1879, *Journal of Discourses*, 20:216; Woodruff, 28 June 1879, quoted in Charles S. Peterson, *Take Up Your Mission: Mormon Colonizing Along the Little Colorado River 1870-1900* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1973), 228 note 18; and Woodruff, *Journal*, 7:537, where

Church members took the same line. Thomas W. Whitaker predicted that, because of the government's oppressive decision, the 1880s would be the "most destructive period of the world's history." A *Millennial Star* editorial reiterated the 1835 prophecy and made the point again that "fifty-six years" would "take us to the year 1891." Although cautiously reminding readers that Smith gave no specific date, the editorial emphasized that "it is evident that one of the most stupendous occurrences, relating to the history of this planet, is approaching" and that is "the coming of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of the world."⁴⁵

An 1879 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants, edited by Orson Pratt, contained footnotes for the first time. Canonized at October 1880 general conference, it provided explicit and official endorsement of the millennial expectation.⁴⁶ Pratt's footnote for Section 130 highlighted Joseph Smith's eighty-five-year millennial prophecy, adding in the commentary section confirmation of the fateful time frame "near the end of the year 1890." Pratt also cross-referenced the revelation: "See prophecy of Joseph, uttered

he recorded telling the Arizona Saints that "the Union would be broken" by 1890. See also Nuttall, *Diary*, 7 January 1879.

⁴⁵"The Coming of the Messiah," *Millennial Star* 41 (7 April 1879): 216-18; Thomas William Whitaker, *Journal*, 1849-86, January 1879, photocopy of holograph, Special Collections, Marriott Library, University of Utah. See also Nuttall, *Diary*, 7 January 1879; Walker, *Diary*, 1:474-75; George Q. Cannon, *Journal of Discourses*, 23:279; Franklin D. Richards, *ibid.*, 20:314-15; Reinwand, "An Interpretive Study of Mormon Millennialism," 140-41. Interestingly enough, in St. George in May 1879, Charles Walker solemnly recorded the testimony of townsman O. M. Allen, who affirmed that Joseph Smith said, "Those who lived until the year 1881 [sic] would see the judgements go forth on the wicked that would make their soul sicken." Walker, *Diary*, 1:486. Allen's 1881 date may stem from Dimick Huntington's recollection that, in surrendering to Illinois officials in 1844, Smith had said, "If they shed my blood it shall shorten this work 10 years." That taken from 1891 would reduce the time to 1881 which is the true time within which the Saviour should come much must be crowded into 6 years." As quoted in Oliver B. Huntington, *Diary*, 2:129. Dean C. Jessee, "Joseph Smith's 19 July 1840 Discourse," *BYU Studies* 19 (Spring 1979): 393, reports that Joseph Smith, on that date, declared the millennium to be at least forty years away.

⁴⁶Woodford, "The Historical Development of the Doctrine and Covenants," 91. This edition was printed and sold in England in October 1879 and printed for the first time in Utah in 1880.

14 March 1835 . . . 'Even 56 years should wind up the scene.'"⁴⁷ Wilford Woodruff in particular believed in the imminence of the cataclysmic end of the world, and his journal records a yearly intensification of his millennial hope that paralleled the increased threat to the Saints.⁴⁸ The high apocalyptic climax for Woodruff came in his "Wilderness Revelation" of 26 January 1880:

The nation is ripened in iniquity . . . and I [Christ] will not stay my hand in judgement upon this nation or the nations of the earth. . . . The blood of my servants Joseph and Hyrum . . . cries from the ground for vengeance upon the nation which has shed their blood. But their blood shall speedily be avenged and shall cease to cry unto me, for the hour of God's judgement is fully come and shall be poured out without measure upon the wicked. . . . Prepare ye for the coming of the Son of man, which is nigh at the door. No man knoweth the day nor the hour; but the signs of both heaven and earth indicate His coming, as promised by the mouths of my disciples. The fig trees are leaving and the hour is nigh.⁴⁹

The Church hierarchy accepted this revelation as "the word of the Lord." Then, with the presiding authorities of the Church gathered in a prayer circle, senior apostle John Taylor, offering the prayer for the group, presented the revelation to the Lord, thus legitimating the Church's condemnation of the United States and the current generation.⁵⁰ For all practical purposes,

⁴⁷Ibid., 1:717-18. A 1921 revisions committee deleted Pratt's footnotes. See also Shepherd and Shepherd, *A Kingdom Transformed*, 195-96.

⁴⁸Woodruff, *Journal*, 8:292-94, 8:310, 8:336-37, 8:343, 8:349-50, 8:351, 8:415, 8:474, 9:74. A recent one-volume condensation of the Woodruff journals reflected the dominance of the theme in its title: Susan Staker, ed., *Waiting for World's End: The Diaries of Wilford Woodruff* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1993). In contrast, Alexander, "Wilford Woodruff and the Changing Nature of Mormon Religious Experience," 66, though conceding that Woodruff felt 1890 was important, did not "actively anticipate" the millennium in 1890. Such an interpretation seems to misrepresent Woodruff's own distinctively apocalyptic sentiments, particularly in his year-end predictions.

⁴⁹Staker, *Waiting for World's End*, 340-46; Fred C. Collier, ed., *Unpublished Revelations of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: Collier's Publishing Co., 1979), 1:123-29; Woodruff, *Journal*, 7:546-47.

⁵⁰Alexander, *Things in Heaven and Earth*, 237-39. See also D. Michael Quinn, "Latter-day Saint Prayer Circles," *BYU Studies* 19 (Fall 1978): 103.

Church leaders had committed themselves to a doctrine of an imminent Second Coming, though no one ventured to assign an exact date to that event.

Not all General Authorities struck an apocalyptic note in their sermons as the government pressure intensified against the Mormons during the 1880s, but Woodruff certainly did. At an 1881 conference in Manti, Woodruff promised: "Thousands of the children of the latter day saints would not die but would live to see the Saviour come." At St. George, he proclaimed: "The coming of the Son of Man was nigh, even at the doors, and that there were thousands living in [the] mountains at [that] time that would see the son of God come and many would not taste death." Returning to St. George in 1885, he asserted that the destruction of the United States was "at the door of this generation," while for the Saints, these tribulations were the final sifting of the wheat and the tares. In 1886 Apostle Moses Thatcher told the Saints, "It is my belief that the time of our deliverance will be within five years, the time indicated being February 14, 1891. . . . In consequence of the wickedness and corruption of the officers of the nation, the government will pass into the hands of the Saints."⁵¹

In 1882 Congress passed the Edmunds Act and, in 1887, the Edmunds-Tucker Act to facilitate the prosecution of polygamists. The first act defined and criminalized both polygamy and "unlawful cohabitation," prohibited polygamists from jury duty or public office, created a board to oversee voter registration and election, and, as inducement, legitimized all children born to polygamous

⁵¹Woodruff, *Journal*, 8:349, 8:336-37, 351, 378; Woodruff as quoted in Walker, *Diary*, 2:563-64, 2:544; Thatcher quoted in Abraham Hoagland Cannon, *Diaries*, 14 October 1886, Special Collections, Lee Library, Brigham Young University. "An extract from the Remarks of Apostle Moses Thatcher at Lewiston, Cache Co. Utah Terr 1886, 6 November 1886," LDS Church Archives, MS 7267; Arthur Pendry Welchman, "Reminiscences and Diary," 133, 10 April 1886, LDS Church Archives; C. A. Merkley, *Diary*, 1886, 13 August 1886, Christopher Amos Merkley Papers, 1886-1935, LDS Church Archives, MS 4851, box 1, folder 2. Walker, *Diary*, 2:656, 2:640 also records Apostle Erastus Snow's prediction that the persecution would continue until the Lord had "gathered the wheat unto the garner." See also John Taylor, 21 March 1880, *Journal of Discourses*, 21:253; Levi Mathers Savage, *Family History Journal*, mimeograph copy, Special Collections, Brigham Young University, 112-13, 14 June 1855.

parents before 1 January 1883 and offered amnesty to polygamists who would accept the president's conditions. The second act, passed when the first proved insufficient, dissolved the Church as a corporation, the Perpetual Emigration Fund, and the Nauvoo Legion; required the Church to forfeit all property in excess of \$50,000; required a wife to testify against her husband; abolished women's suffrage; required a test oath from voters, jurors, and public officials; and placed schools under the control of the federal government.⁵²

Cohabitation did not require proof of marriage, and any contact between a man and a potential plural wife could be used as evidence for conviction. Family, business, and ecclesiastical life was shattered during this period known as "the Raid," as men abandoned their farms and businesses, and plural wives with young children went into hiding or moved continually on "the Underground" to avoid testifying against husbands and fathers.⁵³ Taylor struck a note of defiance: "I defy the United States [and] will obey the will of God."⁵⁴ Accordingly, in 1885 the Saints established refuge colonies in Mexico and, in 1887, in Canada as well.⁵⁵

⁵²Allen and Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints*, 392, 402-3, 412-13; Firmage and Mangrum, *Zion and the Courts*, 161, 171, 197-202.

⁵³Kimberly Jensen James, "'Between Two Fires': Women on the 'Underground' of Mormon Polygamy," *Journal of Mormon History* 8 (1986): 49-61; Martha Sonntag Bradley, "'Hide and Seek': Children on the Underground," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 5 (Spring 1983): 133-53; Jessie L. Embry, *Mormon Polygamous Families: Life in the Principle* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987), 17-22.

⁵⁴Quoted in Samuel W. Taylor, *The Kingdom or Nothing: The Life of John Taylor, Militant Mormon* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co. Inc., 1976), 288. See also "What Shall The Mormon Church Do," *Deseret News*, 6 September 1879, 2; "Honorable George Q. Cannon Interviewed," *ibid.*, 17 December 1881, 4; "Discourse by President George Q. Cannon," *ibid.*, 8 December 1883, 1; "Expressions from the People," *ibid.*, 24 March 1885, 4; "Discourse by President George Q. Cannon," *ibid.*, 11 April 1885, 1; *Juvenile Instructor* (1 May 1885); John Taylor, *Journal of Discourses*, 23:68, 26:152-153; George Reynolds, *ibid.*, 26:159-60; Orson F. Whitney, *ibid.*, 26:201; Lorenzo Snow, *ibid.*, 26:368; Levi Savage, Jr., Diary, 25 January 1885, 78, typescript copy, Special Collections, Brigham Young University; *Walker Diary*, 2:645, 2:649.

The *Deseret News Semi-Weekly* editorialized that Congress aimed to “destroy our rights as citizens, to take away from us our liberties under the Constitution and laws, and to obtain the political control of our country.” Mormon Henry Eyring of St. George fumed that the Edmunds Act placed them “in a state of bondage[,] . . . completely ruled by our enemies.”⁵⁶ The tenacious Mormon faith had a ready-made interpretation for the anti-polygamy crusade: persecution would not only separate the faithful Saints from their wicked persecutors but would also sift out Saints who were not truly valiant. The persecution itself was a “sign of the times” and a prelude to Christ’s second coming to rescue his chosen ones as soon as they were sufficiently tried, exalt them above their enemies, and give them eternal rewards.⁵⁷

Mormon rhetoric kept pace. “The civil war that is past is not the only war that will take place in this land,” declared George Q. Cannon, who described the Edmunds Act and the policies of U.S. President Chester A. Arthur as fulfilling Smith’s prophecies; the drama of the last days was unfolding as God planned. The Saints were Israel and the government was doomed “Pharaoh,” a comparison that evoked not only persecution but deliverance. The *Deseret News* editorialized on the certain downfall of the United States: “Because of her acts she must pay the penalty. Woe is unto her because of the blood of the Prophets and Saints which has

⁵⁵B. Carmon Hardy, *Solemn Covenant: The Mormon Polygamous Passage* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 173-78.; Donald G. Godfrey and Brigham Y. Card, eds., *The Diaries of Charles Ora Card: The Canadian Years 1886-1903* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1993), xxxviii.

⁵⁶Editorial, *Deseret News Semi-Weekly*, 9 April 1886; Henry Eyring, Journal, 1835-1902, typescript, 63, Special Collections, Lee Library, Brigham Young University, 63. See also Charles W. Penrose, Editorial, *Deseret News*, 15 June 1885; George Q. Cannon, *Journal of Discourses*, 26:145; Gibson Condie, “Reminiscence and Diary,” 80, microfilm, LDS Church Archives.

⁵⁷For elements of this scenario, see Woodruff, *Journal*, 8:96; “Discourse by Apostle F. D. Richards,” *Deseret News*, 24 January 1885, 1; “Remarks by President George Q. Cannon,” *ibid.*, 26 July 1884, 1; “Remarks by Apostle F. D. Richards,” *ibid.*, 18 July 1885, 1; “Discourse by President Joseph F. Smith,” *ibid.*, 7 July 1883, 1. *Journal of Jesse Nathaniel Smith* (Salt Lake City: Jesse N. Smith Family Associates, 1953), 288; John Willard Young, Letter to Susie and Mabel Young, 17 February 1886, John Willard Young Correspondence, LDS Church Archives.

been shed. Woe is unto her because of unjust legislation. Woe is unto her because of striving to enforce it." In John Taylor's last discourse before going on the Underground, in February 1885, he chastised the nation: "You will see trouble, trouble, trouble enough in these United States. And as I have said before I say today, I tell you in the name of God, Woe! to them that fight against Zion, for God will fight against them." He then revealed, "Trouble and anxiety and sorrow and judgement will soon overtake this nation." The Lord would "take the matter into His own hands" and "vex" the United States.⁵⁸

It was a scenario that made sense to the troubled Saints. The general membership concurred in the leaders' assessment of the Church's situation. "Alas, the approach of the Son of God is at hand," declared Lorenzo Hill Hatch of Woodruff, Arizona, who described the Edmunds Act as a precursor to the millennium, a sign that Christ's return was imminent. Charles Walker's Seventies Quorum in St. George compared the Saints' afflictions in Missouri and Illinois to the polygamy persecution as part of "the great things that would transpire before the winding up scene in 1891." Church members William Henry Harrison Sharp and Robert Smith published works in Salt Lake City and Payson demonstrating that the end of the world was at hand. Almost every page of Gibson Condie's diary in the 1880s describes either natural disasters or the persecution of the Saints, all as signs of the last days.⁵⁹

⁵⁸"Discourse by President George Q. Cannon," *Deseret News*, 28 October 1882, 1; "Discourse by President George Q. Cannon," *ibid.*, 13 December 1884, 1; "They Refuse to See" (editorial), *ibid.*, 6 June 1885, 2; John Taylor, *Journal of Discourses*, 26:156 and Collier, *Unpublished Revelations*, 1:140, 144. See also Franklin D. Richards, *Journal of Discourses*, 26:102; John Taylor, *ibid.*, 23:266; Walker, *Diary*, 2:645; Nuttall, *Diary*, 7 January 1879.

⁵⁹Ruth Savage Hilton, ed., *Lorenzo Hill Hatch Journal* (Provo, Utah: n.pub., 1958), 125; Walker, *Diary*, 2:586.; William Henry Harrison Sharp, *Prophetic History, and the Fulfillment of Prophecy from 600 Years B.C. to the Year of our Lord A.D. 1891. Containing Historical and Prophetic Charts, Illustrations, and Chronological Tables, Book First* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Home Co., 1883); and Robert Smith, *The Signs of the Times* (Payson, Utah: n.pub., 1887). Walker, *Diary*, 2:731, refers to "books with diagrams showing the great Image that Daniel refers to, and have calculated as they thought to a nicety the Times, time, and half times, etc." Gibson Condie, "Reminiscences and Diary," 85.

After the 1887 passage of the Edmunds-Tucker Act, defiance remained high. In May 1888, Woodruff, then senior apostle, announced during the dedication of the Manti Temple: "We are not going to stop the practice of plural marriage until the coming of the son of man." Apostle Franklin D. Richards proclaimed at October 1888 general conference that many children then alive would yet be alive to see the redemption of Zion and the Second Coming, a repetition of an 1885 promise by Lorenzo Snow. A full year later in November 1889, Woodruff confirmed that "the Lord will never give a revelation to abandon plural marriage," received a new revelation confirming that "the judgements of God, which are to be poured out upon all nations . . . are nigh at your doors," promised the destruction of the Church's opponents, prophesied the Saints' deliverance, and assured Church members that many in his audience would see Christ come in glory while "in the flesh."⁶⁰

But events were whirling out of the Church's control. In February 1890, the Gentiles won the Salt Lake City municipal elections, and the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the Idaho Test Oath, which disfranchised all Mormons, even nonpolygamists. In May 1890, the U.S. Supreme Court declared the Edmunds-Tucker Act constitutional, allowing for the seizure of all Church property in excess of \$50,000. That summer, 1890, the Cullom-Struble bill, which would extend a similar test oath to all U.S. territories, began to move through Congress.⁶¹

⁶⁰Woodruff quoted in Heber J. Grant, *Diary*, 17 May 1888, quoted in Jean Bickmore White, ed., *Church, State, and Politics: The Diaries of John Henry Smith* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1990), 201 note 121; Richards quoted in John Morgan, 6 October 1888, *Journals*, 8:156; Snow quoted in Anson V. Call III, "An Account of the Doings of Anson V. Call II," 1, LDS Church Archives, MS 5384; Woodruff quoted in Heber J. Grant, *Journal*, 20 December 1888, quoted in D. Michael Quinn, "LDS Church Authority and New Plural Marriages, 1890-1904," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 18 (Spring 1985): 35; Woodruff, "Remarks," at Tooele Stake conference, 29 July 1889, in Brian H. Stuy, ed., *Collected Discourses*, 5 vols. (Sandy, Utah: B.H.S. Publishing, 1987-92), 1:325. See also Woodruff, *Journal*, 9:67-69; Nuttall, *Diary*, 24 November 1889; Clark, *Messages of the First Presidency*, 3:171-76; Orson Pratt, *Journal of Discourses*, 20:152.

⁶¹Thomas G. Alexander and James B. Allen, *Mormons & Gentiles: A History*

As the Saints' plight became more desperate, the millennialist rhetoric heightened. On 29 May 1890, Lorenzo Snow, president of the Quorum of the Twelve, prophesied to them, "You brethren will live to behold the savior, you shall not die, death shall have no power over you. You have a great work to perform. . . . Be faithful and you shall never taste death." Apostle Brigham Young, Jr., who recorded the prophecy, added with reverence: "His words penetrated to the marrow surely God is with us." In August Apostle Anthon H. Lund announced at the San Pete Stake Conference, "We need not say—'our Lord delayeth his coming!' . . . We can be sure it is in the near future, because the Lord told Joseph Smith . . . that if he lived to be a certain age, he should see His face, which points to [18]91." That same month, Snow gave Abraham H. Cannon an apostolic blessing which promised that Cannon would "live to see the Savior, [and] the triumph of Zion." As late as September 1890, John Morgan, one of the Seven Presidents of the Seventy, reported a widespread belief that "missions would necessarily be short; that the end is very near and the Elders about to be called home."⁶²

The Saints also drew comfort from an unlikely source. In 1890 came the climax of the Native American Ghost Dance movement, which predicted that the Messiah would return in 1890. Mormons had a strong interest in this movement since the Indians, as "remnants of Joseph," were expected to convert to Mormonism, participate in building a temple preparatory to the

of Salt Lake City (Boulder, Colo.: Pruett Publishing Company, 1984), 100; Grenville H. Gibbs, "Mormonism in Idaho Politics, 1880-1890," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 21 (October 1953): 295-96; Merle W. Wells, *Anti-Mormonism in Idaho, 1872-92* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1978), 57-61; Arrington and Bitton, *The Mormon Experience*, 234; Edward Leo Lyman, *Political Deliverance: The Mormon Quest for Utah Statehood* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 126-33.

⁶²Brigham Young [Jr.] Journals, 1862-1902, LDS Church Archives, 29 May 1890; on 6 August 1890, Snow made a similar prediction. Journal notations and quotations provided courtesy of B. Carmon Hardy; Lund quoted in Lawrence G. Coates, "The Mormons and The Ghost Dance," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 18 (Winter 1985): 107; Abraham H. Cannon, Diaries, 6 August 1890; Morgan quoted in Hartley, "The Seventies in the 1880s," 83.

Second Coming, "scourge" the Gentiles, act as "a shield and a protection," to the Saints, and, within five years (this statement was made in 1886), "go forth as a battle ax, in fulfilment of prophecy." Wilford Woodruff, who had become John Taylor's successor after Taylor died in hiding in July 1887, and Joseph F. Smith, his second counselor, assigned religious significance to the Ghost Dance. Smith announced that the heavenly visitors reported by the Indians were "probably one or more of the Three Nephites" who were designated to remain on earth until Christ's second coming. The tragic massacre at Wounded Knee, South Dakota, on 29 December 1890 signaled an end to these millennial expectations.⁶³

THE MANIFESTO

Then, on 24 September 1890, acting for "the Temporal Salvation of the Church," Woodruff issued the Manifesto, withdrawing public support for new plural marriages.⁶⁴ Despite official claims that the voting "was unanimous," at least some voted against it and perhaps a majority abstained. The members, obvi-

⁶³Henry F. Dobyns and Robert C. Euler, *The Ghost Dance of 1889 Among the Pai Indians of Northwestern Arizona* (Prescott, Ariz.: Prescott College Press, 1967), vii-viii; Dee Alexander Brown, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1971); James Mooney, *The Ghost-Dance Religion and the Sioux Outbreak of 1890* (1896; reprinted Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), 789-91; Garold D. Barney, *Mormons, Indians and the Ghost Dance Religion of 1890* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, Inc., 1986), 104-7, 166-70; Gregory E. Smoak, "Mormons and the Ghost Dance of 1890," *South Dakota History* 16 (Fall 1986): 290-91; "Movements Among the Indians," *Millennial Star* (1 December 1874): 760-61; Henry Eyring, "American Indians," *Millennial Star* (19 July 1875): 449-53; Orson Pratt, 9 March 1879, *Journal of Discourses*, 20:146-47; Arthur Pendry Welchman, 10 April 1886, "Reminiscence and Diary," 133; Abraham H. Cannon, Diaries, 1 October 1890; 3 Nephi 20:15-17, 21:12-13; *History of the Church*, 1: 419; Orson Pratt, *Journal of Discourses*, 15 July 1855, 9:178-79; Joseph Lee Robinson, Journal, mimeograph copy, 13, Utah State Historical Society; Dimick Baker Huntington, Journals, 2 vols., April 1859, LDS Church Archives; Woodruff and Smith quoted in Coates, "The Mormons and The Ghost Dance," 107, 109-10. See also Paul Bailey, *Wovoka, The Indian Messiah* (Los Angeles: Westernlore Press, 1957), 121-22.

⁶⁴Woodruff, *Journal*, 9:112-16.

ously, were unprepared and shocked by this reversal.⁶⁵ Although debate continues about the meaning of the Manifesto, its purpose seems to have been a time-buying effort, deflecting pressure until Utah could gain statehood or until Christ returned. The *Millennial Star* boasted that the Manifesto had been given to “subvert the cunning of the devil” and buy time for the Saints, perhaps fulfilling Brigham Young’s reported declaration that “we shall pull the wool over the eyes of the American people and make them swallow Mormonism, polygamy and all.”⁶⁶

For half a century the “celestial law” of plural marriage had been central to Mormon theology. When the Manifesto was presented for a sustaining vote in the October 1890 general conference, according to Michael Quinn and Kenneth Godfrey, many supported it only reluctantly, some believing that it was a sign that the millennium was nigh.⁶⁷ Moses Thatcher, in the

⁶⁵D&C—Official Declaration 1; Ronald W. Walker, “B. H. Roberts and the Woodruff Manifesto,” *BYU Studies* 22 (Summer 1982): 363-66; Abraham H. Cannon, Diaries, 26 September 1890; Hardy, *Solemn Covenant*, 135; Quinn, “LDS Church Authority and New Plural Marriage, 1890-1904,” 48-49.

⁶⁶“The Manifesto,” *Millennial Star* 52 (24 November 1890): 744; Brigham Young, quoted in *Proceedings Before the Committee on Privileges and Elections of the United States Senate in the Matter of the Protests Against the Right of Hon. Reed Smoot, a Senator from Utah, to Hold His Seat*, 4 vols. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1906), 1:15. See also Ambrose B. Carlton, *The Wonderlands of the West, with Sketches of the Mormons* (n.p., 1891), 321; Jan Shippo, “In the Presence of the Past: Continuity and Change in Twentieth-Century Mormonism,” in *After 150 Years: The Latter-day Saints in Sesquicentennial Perspective*, edited by Thomas G. Alexander and Jessie L. Embry (Provo, Utah: Charles Redd Center for Western Studies, 1983), 10. Alexander, “The Odyssey of a Latter-day Prophet,” 171, calls the Manifesto “a revelation”; James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1976), 413, affirm that it was “not simply a political document” (their 1992 revised and enlarged second edition does not include this description but stresses that “it came by revelation,” 420). However, others consider it to be less revelation than an expedient delaying tactic. See Hardy, *Solemn Covenant*, 55, 129-31; Lyman, *Political Deliverance*, 134; Hansen, *Quest For Empire*, 177. See discussion in Quinn, “LDS Church Authority and New Plural Marriage, 1890-1904,” 9-11.

⁶⁷Allen and Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints*, 413; Alexander, “Wilford Woodruff and the Changing Nature of Mormon Religious Experience,”

meetings preceding general conference, had supported the Manifesto because of his faith that the millennium would occur within months.⁶⁸

In a major effort to reassure the Saints and decrease apocalyptic concern, no fewer than seven Church authorities spoke on the second coming in the same general conference in which the Manifesto was presented. Some advised the Saints not to expect Christ's advent in 1891. Gibson Condie recorded in his journal, "Some of the speakers referred to the year 1891, as a great many of the saints have an Idea that the Lord was to come and reign on earth." George Q. Cannon told members that there was too much "agitation" associated with the 1891 prophecy and that "no man knoweth the day nor the hour."⁶⁹

However, during the same conference, Moses Thatcher warned the Saints to "prepare themselves for 1891" as "the day of calamity is approaching. It is at the doors," and Apostle Francis M. Lyman told the Saints to "pray twice a day" to "be prepared for what is to come in 1891." Perhaps most tellingly, after the Manifesto's presentation at general conference, Woodruff promised the members:

I will say to the Latter-day Saints, as an Elder in Israel and as an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, we are approaching some of the most tremendous judgments God ever poured out upon the world. You watch the signs of the times, the signs of the coming of the Son of Man. They are beginning to be made manifest both in heaven and earth. . . . We are

68; Quinn, "LDS Church Authority and New Plural Marriages, 1890-1904," 47-48; Kenneth W. Godfrey, "The Coming of the Manifesto," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* (Autumn 1970): 20-24.

⁶⁸Thatcher quoted in Heber J. Grant, Journal, 30 September-1 October 1890, cited in Quinn, "LDS Church Authority and New Plural Marriage, 1890-1904," 47.

⁶⁹Gibson Condie, "Reminiscences and Diary," 107; Cannon in Stuy, *Collected Discourses*, 2:110, 121; Marriner Wood Merrill, 5 October 1890, Diaries, 1887-1906, 1:72, LDS Church Archives; citation provided courtesy of B. Carmon Hardy. The Church authorities who referred to the year 1891 in connection with the "coming of the Son of Man reference" include B. H. Roberts, Moses Thatcher, Francis M. Lyman, Franklin D. Richards, Heber J. Grant, George Q. Cannon, and Wilford Woodruff. See "General Conference," *Deseret Evening News*, 6 October 1890, 4; "General Conference," *ibid.*, 6 October 1890, 4; "The Mormon Conference," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 5 October 1890, 4.

approaching these things. All that the Latter-day Saints have to do is to be quiet, careful and wise before the Lord, watch the signs of the times, and be true and faithful; and when you get through you will understand many things that you do not today.⁷⁰

As the anti-Mormon *Salt Lake Tribune* reported, the leaders' references to "1891 as an Epoch in Church History" followed by George A. Cannon's denunciation merely underscored the intensity of the general membership's millennial expectation.⁷¹

Politically, the Manifesto had its desired effect. Eight days after the Manifesto, District Attorney Charles S. Varian told the First Presidency that he favored reversing anti-polygamy legislation. Congress tabled the Cullom-Struble bill. The U.S. Supreme Court reversed a previous ruling disinheriting children born of polygamous marriages. Federal appointees Judge Charles S. Zane and Utah Territorial Governor Arthur L. Thomas endorsed an amnesty petition which went to President Benjamin Harrison late in 1891. With relief, Church leaders began to feel that the government's hand, "extended to crush us," had been averted. As political deliverance manifested itself, the need for divine rescue diminished. In mid-1892, Church leaders issued a proclamation of thanksgiving for deliverance "from the evil which environed [us] and which threatened [our] overthrow."⁷²

⁷⁰"General Conference," *Deseret Evening News*, 6 October 1890, 2; Stuy, *Collected Discourses*, 2:107, 110, 136; Carlton, *The Wonderlands of the Wild West*, 321. Alexander, "Wilford Woodruff and the Changing Nature of Mormon Religious Experience," 66, discounts Thatcher's insistence on the imminent millennium, arguing that in 1887 he had entered into a controversy with George Q. Cannon over mining stock that was not resolved until mid-1890 and that he was not in complete harmony with the brethren. As a result of a later political dispute, Thatcher was dropped from the quorum in 1896. Edward Leo Lyman, "The Alienation of an Apostle from His Quorum: The Moses Thatcher Case," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 18 (Summer 1985): 67-91.

⁷¹"The Mormon Conference," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 5 October 1890, 4; "Second Day's Conference," *ibid.*, 6 October 1890, 4. See also Norman, "How Long O Lord?: The Delay of the Parousia in Mormonism," 53.

⁷²White, *The Diaries of John Henry Smith*, 243, 264-66; Abraham H. Cannon, *Diaries*, 2, 14, and 22 October 1890; Woodruff *Journal*, 9:118; Hardy, *Solemn Covenant*, 152; "Amnesty," *Contributor* 13 (February 1892): 196-97;

Although the hierarchy attempted to present a united front, the discrepancies between the stated and implied understandings of both the Manifesto and the doctrine of the second coming betray behind-the-scenes tension. Church leaders split between those who advocated combining public condemnation of plural marriage with and private practice of the principle and those like Brigham Young, Jr., who insisted, "We will sacrifice no principle to save property or life itself." During the 1890s, the quorum remained divided, not only over polygamy and eschatology, but also over politics.⁷³

THE REINTERPRETATION OF MILLENNIALISM

Over the next fifteen years, the Church reluctantly but quite thoroughly followed a course of accommodation. It slowly abandoned plural marriage, economic separatism, and political unanimity. Historians have described this transitional period as "creative adjustment" and "a new era of cooperation and understanding."⁷⁴ Polygamy prosecution stopped, for the most part.

First Presidency Office Journal, 20 August 1891, quoted in Quinn, "LDS Church Authority and New Plural Marriages, 1890-1904," 50; Lyman, *Political Deliverance*, 120, 185. See also Richard D. Poll, "The Legislative Antipolygamy Campaign," *BYU Studies* 26 (Fall 1986): 119; E. Leo Lyman, "The Political Background of the Woodruff Manifesto," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 24 (Fall 1991): 38.

⁷³Abraham H. Cannon, *Diaries*, 1 October 1890; Walker, "B. H. Roberts and the Woodruff Manifesto," 363-66; Young quoted in Davis Bitton, "The Ordeal of Brigham Young, Jr.," in *The Ritualization of Mormon History and Other Essays* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 132, specifically identifies a generation gap between the older apostles and "the younger men of the Quorum." On the political partisanship of the 1890s, see D. Michael Quinn, "The Mormon Hierarchy, 1832-1932: An American Elite" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1976), 234-38; Lyman, *Political Deliverance*, 166-81.

⁷⁴Arrington and Bitton, *The Mormon Experience*, 234; Allen and Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints*, 416. On post-Manifesto polygamy, see Hardy, *Solemn Covenant*, 167-335; Quinn, "LDS Church Authority and New Plural Marriages, 1890-1904"; Kenneth L. Cannon II, "After the Manifesto: Mormon Polygamy 1890-1906," *Sunstone* 8 (January-April 1983): 27-35; Victor W. Jorgenson and B. Carmon Hardy, "The Taylor-Cowley Affair and the Watershed of Mormon History," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 48 (Winter 1980): 4-36; and Richard Van Wagoner, *Mormon Polygamy: A History* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books,

Between 1894 and 1896 Church property was returned, and statehood was granted in 1896.⁷⁵

Yet Woodruff persisted in his millennial beliefs. On 1 January 1891, he wrote hopefully, "This is New Years day And the year that has been looked upon by many as one of the most important years of the world." In 1892, he counseled St. George members that the dispensation "was to be cut short" with little time for preparation "before the coming of the Son of Man and the ushering in of the great millennium." When he dedicated the Salt Lake Temple in April 1893, he prophesied that the "Millennium is near at hand" and that the temple was to receive Christ at his return after the preparation and perfection of the Saints. In 1894, he wrote his expectation that the day had arrived for angels to descend, "in their hands sharp Sicles . . . sent forth to Visit the Earth . . . to poor [sic] out the Judgements of God upon the wicked and will Continue untill the scene is wound up." In 1897 he was still prophesying that "many in the flesh at the time would see the savior."⁷⁶

Charles Walker of St. George likewise did not relinquish a millennialist perspective: "Some say and have written that great things are to happen this year," he wrote in January 1891. "Some even declare that Christ will come and the Millennial Reign inaugurated." In September 1895, after recording some natural disasters, he added his commentary that they were signs that the Creator was soon to "avenge the blood of the Prophets & Saints & fulfill the Testimony of the Prophets & Apostles upon this Nation." Levi M. Savage saw the fact that "prosecutions on the marriage question are almost . . . a thing of the past" as fulfillment

1989), 143-76.

⁷⁵Arrington and Bitton, *The Mormon Experience*, 242-43; Hardy, *Solemn Covenant*, 152; Linford, "The Mormons and the Law," 584-85. The presidential amnesty proclamations in James D. Richardson, *Messages and Papers of the Presidents* (New York: Bureau of National Literature, Inc., 1917), Harrison, 7:5803-4; Cleveland, 8:5942-43.

⁷⁶Woodruff, *Journal*, 9:133, 307; see also *ibid.*, 9:300; Woodruff quoted in Walker, *Diary*, 2:742; Stuy, *Collected Discourses*, 3:275; "Ninety Years of Age," *Deseret News Semi-Weekly*, 2 March 1897, 6. See also Walker, *Diary*, 2:868; Stuy, *Collected Discourses*, 3:424; "Discourse," *Deseret Evening News*, 7 May 1898, 9.

that the Lord was fighting the Saints' battles.⁷⁷ At stake conferences in March 1902, Bishop W. Derby Johnson, Jr., told the Saints in Mexico the millennium was near, reiterating Colonia Diaz Patriarch James A. Little's belief, expressed one month earlier, that "some present would live to see the Son of Man come in His Glory."⁷⁸

Lorenzo Snow, who became Church president after Woodruff's death in 1898, announced in an October 1900 meeting of the First Presidency and the Twelve Apostles that "Christ will come before long." In January 1901, while blessing a child, Snow petitioned God that he "may live until Thy Son shall come in His glory among the children of men." In November 1900, Snow preached: "There are many here now under the sound of my voice, probably a majority who will have to go back to Jackson county and assist in building the temple." At a reception for missionaries going to Japan in June 1901, Snow testified, "When you return to Jackson County and engage in building the temple there, you will see Jesus and be associated with him." Snow viewed tithing as a step in the arrival of the millennium, as the funds would buy the Jackson County temple site, and instructed Church leaders in 1899 at a solemn assembly on tithing: "If you live 10 or 15 yrs more or less perhaps Less, we are going back to Jackson Co."⁷⁹ Apostles Brigham Young, Jr., and Mathias Cowley also emphasized the nearness of Zion's redemption, Cowley declaring "the day is not far distant when the Lord will clean out

⁷⁷Walker, *Diary*, 2:721, 801; Levi Mathers Savage, Family History Journal, 48, 1 January 1895. See also Carlton, *The Wonderlands of the Wild West*, 321; Walker, *Diary*, 2:821, 835, 842.

⁷⁸Anthony Woodward Ivins, *Diary*, 9 March 1902, 2:8; David Fisk Stout, *Diaries*, 9 February 1902, 13:41, microfilm, LDS Church Archives.

⁷⁹Snow on Jackson County quoted in Stan Larson, ed., *A Ministry of Meetings: The Apostolic Diaries of Rudger Clawson* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1993), 71-72, 150, 213-17, 233-34, 269, 270, 286; Snow on tithing quoted in Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition*, 288-89; Godfrey and Card, *The Diaries of Charles Ora Card*, 449, 504, 568. See also *Deseret News*, 15 June 1901; Anthony Woodward Ivins, *Diaries*, 2 July 1899, 2:68. George C. Naegle, Letter to Anthony W. Ivins, 1 September 1903, Anthony W. Ivins Collection, Box 10, folder 5, Utah State Historical Society, pledged \$100 to buy land in Jackson County, Missouri.

Jackson County," advising fellow leaders to prepare themselves to build up the center stake.⁸⁰

But following Snow's death in 1901, President Joseph F. Smith instituted a policy of assimilation rather than separation. Between 1897 and 1907, the Church replaced eleven apostles, two members of the First Council of the Seventy, and four members of the Presiding Bishopric. Thus, out of the twenty-five General Authorities, all were men who had no personal association with either Joseph Smith or the profoundly millennial worldview of his generation. Only one among this group of new Church leaders, Charles W. Penrose, was born before the Saints' arrival in Utah.⁸¹ In 1903 eighty-five-year-old Benjamin F. Johnson, a close friend of Joseph Smith, recorded the disappointment of his passing generation: "We were over seventy years ago taught by our leaders to believe that the coming of Christ and the millennial reign was much nearer than we believe it to be now."⁸²

The millennial rhetoric of Church leaders became more indefinite. They continued to speak of the imminent redemption of Zion but only after the Saints learned to keep the commandments. George Q. Cannon spoke of Christ's advent as private instruction to Church leaders. While millennialism remained a Church doctrine, it was transformed into calm expectancy about Christ's return as an indeterminate, not immediate, event.⁸³

CONCLUSION

The nineteenth-century Saints had attempted to create a literal kingdom of God, a sacred place for God's chosen people.

⁸⁰Larson, *A Ministry of Meetings*, 78; Winslow Farr Diary, 242-43, typescript copy, Special Collections, Lee Library, Brigham Young University.

⁸¹Allen and Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints*, 436; Gustive O. Larson, *The Americanization of Utah for Statehood* (San Marino, Calif.: Huntington Library, 1971), 272-73.

⁸²Quoted in Hansen, *Quest for Empire*, 19.

⁸³Larson, *A Ministry of Meetings*, 310, 134, 217; Reinwand, "An Interpretive Study of Mormon Millennialism," 159.

Believing intensely in the immediacy of the millennium, they planned to usher in the end of time. Great efforts and sacrifices could be asked and given in such a mood of crisis and expectancy. But in the aftermath of the Manifesto, Mormonism passed through a "psychic watershed" as it adapted to a new order, one which allowed for the survival of the institutional Church. The Mormon apocalyptic vision had created an isolated community with the fortitude to endure trials; but the new synthesis required that the Saints find a way to accommodate the world, even while they waited for its inevitable end.⁸⁴

The changes of the late 1880s and early 1890s were watershed years for Mormonism, the time when a new paradigm was created that allowed it to thrive in the twentieth century. Numerous events, culminating in the 1890 Manifesto, changed the direction of the Church forever. Most historians of this period have slighted the significance of millennial expectations in 1891. Belief that Christ would return in that year stiffened the resistance of many Saints to federal pressure. Wilford Woodruff, profoundly millennialist all of his life, relied on this vision, and it delayed the issuing of the Manifesto until the last possible moment at the end of 1890. Yet ironically, the hope of an 1891 millennial salvation may have permitted Woodruff to take the step of acquiescence that he did, believing that Christ's reign would negate all compromises forced upon the Saints. The results, however, were farther reaching and far different than those he anticipated.

In 1891, apocalyptic hope filled the air, springing from Joseph Smith's prophecy. This oracle, so fixed in the minds of Mormonism's first generation, played a major role in shaping the Mormon psyche, heightening the tensions that alienated the Saints from the larger community. Only when they realized that Christ's return would not deliver them from their enemies did

⁸⁴Glen M. Leonard, "Early Saints and the Millennium," *Ensign* August 1979, 47; Susan Peterson, "The Great and Dreadful Day: Mormon Folklore of the Apocalypse," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 44 (Fall 1976): 366-70; Alexander, "Odyssey of a Latter-day Prophet," 71; Shipps, "In the Presence of the Past," 11, 20-22, 26; Michael Barkun, *Disaster and the Millennium* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1974), 39; Underwood, *The Millenarian World of Early Mormonism*, 139-42.

accommodation gain acceptance; and even then, a generation of Saints had to pass away before the expectation of an immediate apocalyptic solution to their adversity finally subsided.

The Mantle of Joseph: Creation of a Mormon Miracle

Reid L. Harper

Years ago I taught a Gospel Doctrine lesson on Church history that raised questions in my mind about the factual accuracy of the event it was describing.¹ Over half of this particular lesson was devoted to the “mantle of Joseph” episode during which Brigham Young was briefly transfigured into the likeness of Joseph Smith in Nauvoo on 8 August 1844. According to traditional LDS history, this transfiguration event occurred in the presence of thousands of Saints and was pivotal in clarifying for the faithful that Brigham Young was the ordained successor of the Prophet Joseph. Next to the story of the seagulls’ rescue of the famished pioneers in the Salt Lake Valley from hordes of crop-devouring crickets, it remains the most famous miracle in Mormon literature. A 1996 *Ensign* article on presidential succession, for instance, describes the role of “President Young’s pow-

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¹*My Kingdom Shall Roll Forth: Readings in Church History*, 2d ed. (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1980), 10-15.

erful and persuasive teachings regarding the authority and leadership of the Twelve, with himself at their head," as major influences in Brigham Young's ascendancy, but continues: "Another event had a profound impact on the Saints. As President Young spoke to the congregation, the Lord manifested in a most miraculous manner that Brigham Young was indeed chosen to lead the Church at that time." The authors then quote statements by Benjamin F. Johnson and George Q. Cannon describing the transformative miracle.²

When I taught that lesson, I was a believer in a God of miracles and accepted the reality of miracles that answer and confirm faith. Today, I am not so sure. I do, however, strongly feel that religious faith should rest upon a stronger basis than whether a miracle story is fact or fiction. Certainly the transfiguration story is not crucial to, nor the essence of, Mormonism. About the same time that I taught this lesson, I read Truman G. Madsen's *Defender of the Faith: The B. H. Roberts Story*, which reported that Roberts had excluded the questionable "martyrdom miracles" from his multi-volume *Comprehensive History of the Church*. For example, he omitted the "attempted beheading of Joseph Smith at Carthage and a shaft of light preventing it." When a reader protested, Roberts replied:

Suppose your youth receive their impressions of church history from "pictures and stories" and build their faith upon these alleged miracles [and] shall someday come face to face with the fact that their belief rests on falsehoods, what then will be the result? Will they not say that since these things are myth and our Church has permitted them to be perpetuated . . . might not the other fundamentals to the actual story of the Church, the things in which it had its origin, might they not all be lies and nothing but lies?³

²Brent L. Top and Lawrence R. Flake, "The Kingdom of God Will Roll On," *Ensign*, August 1996, 25. On the miracle of the seagulls, see William G. Hartley, "Mormons, Crickets, and Gulls: A New Look at an Old Story," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 38 (Summer 1970): 224-39, reprinted in D. Michael Quinn, ed., *The New Mormon History: Revisionist Essays on the Past* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1992), 137-51.

³Truman G. Madsen, *Defender of the Faith: The B. H. Roberts Story* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1980), 363.

Roberts's statement, a strong caution against the easy acceptance of alleged miracles as the basis for faith, made me curious about how he had treated the "mantle of Joseph" story. When I checked, Roberts had written: "*according to the testimony of many prominent brethren, and very many of the saints . . . Brigham Young was transfigured into the likeness of Joseph Smith—voice, person, and manner.*"⁴ For testimony he cited George Q. Cannon's writings as found in Edward Tullidge's *Life of Brigham Young* (1876), an 1892 statement by Wilford Woodruff published in the *Deseret Evening News*, and William C. Staines's "journal . . . of August 8th." However, this last source seems problematic. Staines's holograph diary begins in 1846 and deals with events in his life until 1860. Staines died in 1881. The exact Staines quotation Roberts uses, however, can be found in *The Contributor* of June 1891. *The Contributor* began publishing extracts from Staines's "papers" in its February 1891 issue. The editorial preface to the first installment states: "Among the journals and papers of Elder Staines, which we have been permitted to examine in the preparation of the Church emigration articles, we found several papers partly prepared for publication. These, with scarcely any editorial modification, will be given to our readers . . ." These papers were used by the editors for the series on Staines.⁵

I found, therefore, that Robert's treatment, though similar to

⁴B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1930 printing), 2:418; emphasis mine.

⁵Edward Tullidge, *Life of Brigham Young* (New York: n.pub., 1876), 115. Tullidge, I believe, uses a direct quote from George Q. Cannon's writings of 1870, without attribution. For the original source see George Q. Cannon, "Biography: Joseph Smith, the Prophet," *Juvenile Instructor*, 5 (October 1870): 174-75. Wilford Woodruff's talk is found in "Priesthood and the Right of Succession," *Deseret Evening News*, 12 March 1892, (page number, if any, is illegible). However, see the same talk in *Deseret Weekly News*, 19 March 1892, 407. "The Reminiscences of William C. Staines," *The Contributor* 12 (February 1891): 121, and (June 1891): 315. Davis Bitton, *Guide to Mormon Diaries and Autobiographies* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1977), 338. D. Michael Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy: Origins of Power* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1994), 393, note 111.

the lesson manual, was quite circumspect. Both used as evidence statements made many years after this event. Yet this occurrence was “a day long to be remembered” as the Gospel Doctrine manual called it and “one of the most important days in the history of the Restoration” as the Institute of Religion manual for Church history termed it.⁶ I was troubled. Nauvoo’s people were literate. More than that, they were eager record-keepers and diarists. At least a few of the thousands who witnessed the transfiguration of Brigham Young into Joseph Smith should have made records of that experience in newspapers, journals, and letters. Richard Van Wagoner in his prize-winning biography of Sidney Rigdon has pointed out that “the happenings of this crucial day constitute Mormonism’s most pivotal hour For the first and only time in Mormon history, church leadership was about to be determined by the will of the people.”⁷ The “mantle of Joseph” miracle, an unmistakable sign to the faithful, assured that the will of God became the will of the people.

I also asked myself about the origin of that metaphor, “mantle of Joseph”? To a biblically literate people, the topic of succession itself would suggest the story of Elijah’s mantle, bestowed in the moment of his departure upon his prophetic successor Elisha (2 Kings 2:11-15). This biblical allusion, in fact, appeared twice within weeks of the August meeting in the *Times and Season*. Neither writer is identified. The first reference, on 2 September 1844, reports that at the “Special Meeting” on the afternoon of 8 August, [Brigham Young] “explained matters so satisfactorily that every saint could see that Elijah’s mantle had truly fallen upon the ‘Twelve.’” The second reference, a letter written on 13 October and published two days later, referring to the October 1844 conference, said, “Who cant see that the mantle of the prophet, (using a figure [of speech]) has fallen on President Young and the Twelve?” A third allusion to the mantle was published in February

⁶Church Educational System, *Church History in the Fulness of Times: The History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1989), 291.

⁷Richard S. Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon: A Portrait of Religious Excess* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1994), 339.

1845. "Miss Eliza R. Snow" in the third verse of a poem entitled "To President Brigham Young" writes "Thou hast gain'd, like Elisha, a rich behest, / For the mantle of Joseph seems to rest / Upon thee, while the spirit and pow'r divine, / That inspir'd his heart, is inspiring thine."⁸ These references are, in my judgement, seeds for the harvest of mystical recollections in pioneer Utah. Over time the figurative became literal, the allusion an illusion.

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

At the time these questions first interested me, I was living in New Jersey and research in the primary documents held in the LDS Church's Historical Department Archives was not a possibility. Was it possible, I wondered, to piece together a coherent account from published sources or at least to eliminate some possibilities? With those restrictions, I began an effort to recreate, in as much detail as I could, exactly what had happened on 8 August 1844.

Two public meetings were held on 8 August. The morning meeting is sometimes called a prayer meeting, and the afternoon meeting is sometimes called a special conference. Both meetings were in the grove near the temple site. B. H. Roberts, in both the *History of the Church* and *Comprehensive History*, says that the transfiguration occurred in the afternoon session. The 1980 Gospel Doctrine manual and the Institute's text on Church history locate the event during the morning session. Thomas G. Alexander and Leonard Arrington also place the transformation in the morning. Several retrospective accounts mention that listeners had to turn from facing Rigdon to face the speaker's stand to see if Joseph had risen from the dead because the voice, or voice and appearance, of the next speaker was that of the transfigured Young. Various accounts that historians have cited with little or no disagreement indicate that Rigdon spoke for one and one half hours at the morning meeting from a wagon, rather than from the

⁸"Special Meeting," *Times and Seasons* 5 (2 September 1844): 637; "Correspondence," *Times and Seasons* 5 (15 October 1844): 675; a simple "C." at the end of the letter is the only identification of the author. Eliza R. Snow, "To President Brigham Young," *Times and Seasons* 6 (15 February 1845): 815.

speaker's stand, because a wind was blowing against the stand; by Rigdon's speaking from the wagon, the wind helped carry his words. But there is far from unanimous agreement on the wagon's location, various witnesses describing it as at the rear, center, or side of the congregation, and also in front of the speaker's stand.⁹ At the afternoon meeting, "President Rigdon called upon W[.] W. Phelps to speak in his behalf as he could not speak."¹⁰

I began with the sources cited by these two church manuals. The Gospel Doctrine manual referred to "three eyewitness accounts" to corroborate Wilford Woodruff's testimony: George Q. Cannon (the same words that B. H. Roberts quoted), Orson Hyde, and Benjamin F. Johnson. The Institute text, in addition to naming Woodruff, Cannon, and Johnson as witnesses, adds Zina D. H. Young.

WILFORD WOODRUFF'S SIX ACCOUNTS

Woodruff's treatment of the "mantle of Joseph" episode is cited frequently by historians who have written about these events because of addresses he gave in 1872 and 1892. He left at least four written documents and gave two speeches which refer to the events of that day. The first source is his thirty-one volume holograph diary, spanning from shortly after his conversion in 1833 until his death in 1898. He said in 1857 that the keeping of

⁹Joseph Smith et al., *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, edited by B. H. Roberts, 7 vols., 2d ed. rev. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1980 printing), 7:227, 236; *Comprehensive History of the Church*, 2:418-19; *My Kingdom Shall Roll Forth*, 11; *Church History in the Fulness of Times*, 291; Thomas G. Alexander, *Things In Heaven and Earth: The Life and Times of Wilford Woodruff* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1991), 371 note 106; Leonard J. Arrington, *Brigham Young: American Moses* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 114 note 7. Arrington says that his "reading of Brigham Young's own diary entry made on August 8, and the recollections of others who were there have persuaded me that it must have occurred when Brigham made his brief talk after Rigdon's speech in the morning." Quinn, *Origins of Power*, 393 note 111, says "the available evidence also allows the setting to have been the afternoon meeting."

¹⁰*Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, 1833-1898, typescript, edited by Scott G. Kenney, 9 vols. (Midvale, Utah: Signature Books, 1983-85), 2:438 (hereafter cited as Woodruff by volume and page).

his journal had “occupied nearly every leisure moment of my time for 24 years” and “a great portion of the Church History has been Compiled from my Journals.”¹¹

Woodruff’s lengthy entry (about 2,200 words) for 8 August 1844 provides the basis for the version found in the *History of the Church*. His journal mentions the prayer meeting in the morning but adds (and this phrase is not included in the *History of the Church* version) that the Twelve “spent their time in the fore part of the day at the office and in the afternoon met at the grove.”¹² Woodruff therefore recounts only the afternoon meeting. He says nothing about a miracle, a transfiguration, a mantle, or any resemblance between Brigham Young and Joseph Smith. If such an event had occurred, it seems unlikely that he would have omitted it, since Woodruff was quick to see the miraculous and to note God’s hand in his life and in the progress of the church.¹³

Woodruff, by his own account, did not attend the morning meeting. However, Brigham Young arrived while Sidney Rigdon was giving his speech from a wagon, made a few remarks afterwards, and announced another meeting for the afternoon. Young,

¹¹Susan Staker, ed., *Waiting for World’s End: The Diaries of Wilford Woodruff* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books 1993), viii.

¹²Woodruff 2:435.

¹³Wallace Stegner, *The Gathering of Zion: The Story of the Mormon Trail* (Salt Lake City: Westwater Press 1981), 69, characterizes him: “Woodruff, pious, methodical, superstitious, accident prone, had a faculty for seeing the hand of God in the slightest incident, the lucky accident, the sickness that was healed, the bone that knitted, the fall that did not kill.” Staker, who spent hundreds of hours producing a one-volume version of the Woodruff journals, comments in *Waiting for World’s End*, xiii, “Not surprisingly a man who imagined the world in such violent and hostile terms would see God’s hand painting the skies red with blood as a sign of the coming end. Soon after arriving in Kirtland, Ohio, for example, Wilford wrote, ‘At early Candlelight the heavens began to show forth the signs in fulfillment of the Prophecy of JOEL. . . . The clouds of fire & blood began to arise. . . . the heavens were covered with pure red’ (25 Jan. 1837).” Thomas G. Alexander, “Wilford Woodruff and the Changing Nature of Mormon Religious Experience,” *Church History* 45 (March 1976): 62, says that Woodruff “reported various experiences including being led to safety by a shining light and seeing visions of fiery clouds” and interpreted his numerous youthful accidents “as a result of Satan’s desire to thwart his service to God” but that “his deliverance was a sign that the Lord had a greater work for him.”

remembering the event in 1860, stated: "To use a comparison, the horses were all harnessed and the people were in a big carriage, and where were they going? They did not know. Who would gather up the lines and guide the team? No man would step forward, until I did. There was not one of the Twelve with me when I went to meet Sidney Rigdon on the meeting-ground. I went alone, and was ready alone to face and drive the dogs from the flock."¹⁴

The second document is a letter "To the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," dated 11 October 1844 when Woodruff was in Salem, Massachusetts, on his way to the British Mission. This letter, first published in the *Prophet*, the Church's New York City paper, and then in the *Times and Seasons*, sustained Rigdon's excommunication. He argued that Rigdon had been a burden to Joseph Smith for years and then contrasted Rigdon with Brigham Young. He extolled Young's service, praised Young's "spirit of wisdom and counsel," his possession of such crucial elements as keys, endowments, and responsibility "to bear off this kingdom" which Young had received "in connection with the twelve," and summarized: "As far as my faith, prayers, influence and labor, will effect any thing, they will go to sustain President Young, and in connection with him, the quorum of the Twelve, in holding the keys of the kingdom of God, as they have been delivered unto them by the revelation of Jesus Christ . . . through the voice of the Prophet, Seer, and Revelator, who has . . . sealed his testimony with his blood." Woodruff urged the Saints to likewise sustain Young and the Twelve. Nowhere in the letter was there any mention of a transfiguration or other manifestation of divine approbation; Young and the Twelve were to be sustained in office because of their record.¹⁵

¹⁴*Journal of Discourses*, 6 October 1860, 26 vols. (London and Liverpool: LDS Booksellers Depot, 1855-86), 8:317. In James A. Little, *Jacob Hamblin* (1881; reprinted Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1969), 13, Hamblin recalls that Parley P. Pratt and Heber C. Kimball accompanied Young to the stand. Hamblin died in 1886. The annotation in Bitton's *Guide to Mormon Diaries*, 136 for Little's biography says Hamblin "told" Little the events of his life, while Pearson H. Corbett, *Jacob Hamblin: The Peacemaker* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1968), 433, says Little wrote his book "from interviews, as Jacob had remembered or recalled to mind."

Woodruff's third account of the events of 8 August cited by the Gospel Doctrine manual appears in his address "To the [Church] Officers and Members" in the British Islands which was published in the *Millennial Star* in February 1845:

On the second day after our arrival, August 8th, 1844, we met in a special conference, all the quorums, authorities, and members of the Church, that could assemble in Nauvoo. They were addressed by elder Brigham Young, the president of the quorum of the twelve. It was evident to the Saints that the mantle of Joseph had fallen upon him, the road that he pointed out could be seen so plainly, that none need err therein; the spirit of wisdom and counsel attended all his teachings, he struck upon a chord, with which all hearts beat in unison.

He was followed by a number of the twelve and others, who spoke to the point in an edifying manner, and at the close of the conference, a number of resolutions were formed, and votes taken, among which was the following: Do the Saints want the twelve to stand as the head, as the First Presidency of the Church, and at the head of this kingdom in all the world. . . . All that are in favor of this . . . make it manifest. . . . At once there was a sea of hands, a universal vote; a contrary vote was called and not a hand was raised in a congregation of about fifteen thousand Saints. Sidney Rigdon himself, who was present, did not vote against it, but I think in favor of it.¹⁵

This account, though it uses the popular phrase, "mantle of Joseph," does not refer to a transfiguration but rather to Young's qualities of clear and motivational leadership.

A fourth account, found at the end of the "History of Joseph Smith," was completed in 1856 by George A. Smith and Wilford Woodruff as "Historians" and "carefully revised under the strict inspection of President Brigham Young and approved by him." This portion of the history, which ends with the events of 8 August 1844, was serialized in the *Deseret News* in 1858 and in the *Millennial Star* in 1863. There is no mention of a mantle, a transfiguration, or a physical similarity between Young and Smith. Woodruff, as a historian, was working from his journals of 1844 and not from memory. The finished product was apparently

¹⁵Wilford Woodruff, "From the N.Y. Prophet," *Times and Seasons* 5 (2 November 1844): 698-700.

¹⁶Wilford Woodruff, "To the Officers and Members," *Millennial Star* 5 (February 1845): 138.

satisfactory, in 1856, for George A. Smith and for Brigham Young, both of whom participated in the Nauvoo events of 8 August.¹⁷

Woodruff's fifth statement is his testimony concluding an address in the "New Tabernacle" on 8 April 1872 and published in the *Journal of Discourses*:

I have heard two or three of the brethren testify about brother Young in Nauvoo. Every man and every woman in that assembly, which perhaps might number thousands, could bear the same testimony. I was there, the Twelve were there, and a good many others, and all can bear the same testimony.

The question might be asked, why was the appearance of Joseph Smith given to Brigham Young? Because here was Sidney Rigdon and other men rising up and claiming to be the leaders of the Church, and men stood, as it were on a pivot, not knowing which way to turn. But just as quick as Brigham rose in that assembly, his face was that of Joseph Smith—the mantle of Joseph had fallen upon him, the power of God that was upon Joseph Smith was upon him, he had the voice of Joseph, and it was the voice of the shepherd. There was not a person in that assembly, Rigdon, himself, not excepted, but was satisfied in his own mind that Brigham was the proper leader of the people, for he [Rigdon] would not have his name presented, by his own consent, after that sermon was delivered. There was a reason for this in the mind of God; it convinced the people. They saw and heard for themselves, and it was by the power of God.¹⁸

The sixth reference, frequently cited, is a comment Woodruff gave in the Assembly Hall in February 1892. B. H. Roberts, lecturing on succession in the presidency to Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association, turned to President Woodruff, who was seated on the stand, and asked him to bear testimony of the 8 August 1844 events. President Woodruff did so at the end of Roberts's lecture:

I do not know if there is any one present here tonight but myself who was there at that conference [8 August 1844]. There are but few living who were present on that occasion. . . . And when Brigham arose and commenced speaking, as has been said, if my eyes had not been

¹⁷*Deseret News* 7 (20 January 1858): 362-63; *Millennial Star*, 25 (4 April 1863): 216-17, (11 April 1863): 231-32, (18 April 1863): 248-49, (25 April 1863): 263-64, (2 May 1863): 278-80.

¹⁸*Journal of Discourses*, 15:81.

so I could see, if I had not seen him with my own eyes, there is no one that could have convinced me that it was not Joseph Smith speaking. It was with the voice and face of Joseph Smith; and any can testify to this who was acquainted with the two men.¹⁹

As I contemplated these six Woodruff documents in order, they seemed to show the growth of a Mormon myth. The two earliest accounts, both in 1844, say nothing about a miracle. The third document, an 1845 letter, uses the “mantle” image as a simple metaphor, without elaboration. The fourth account, prepared for publication, was based upon the 1844 journal account. Only much later, speaking extempore in 1872 and 1892, does Woodruff term the events miraculous.

If the transfiguration occurred in the morning meeting, Woodruff, who was not present, could not have been an eyewitness as he later claims.²⁰ If the transformation took place in the afternoon meeting, Woodruff’s silence about the event until 1872 and 1892 seems very curious.

ORSON HYDE’S ACCOUNT

The Gospel Doctrine manual identified Apostle Orson Hyde as one of “three eyewitness accounts [to] corroborate Wilford Woodruff’s testimony” and quotes his October 1869 general conference address, his first recorded account.²¹ According to Hyde, after the martyrdom of the Prophet and the return of the Twelve to Nauvoo, Brigham Young gathered the Twelve around him and told them to “disperse among the congregation and feel the pulse of the people” while Young spoke.

His words went through me like electricity. “Am I mistaken?” said I, “or is it really the voice of Joseph,” but there were the features, the gestures and even the *stature* of Joseph before us in the person of Brigham. And though it may be said that President Young is a complete *mimic*, and can mimic anybody, I would like to see the man who can

¹⁹Wilford Woodruff, “Priesthood and the Right of Succession,” *Deseret Weekly News*, 19 March 1892, 407.

²⁰It is disconcerting that no professional Mormon historian pointed this discrepancy out before Alexander, *Things in Heaven and Earth*, 371 note 106.

²¹*My Kingdom Shall Roll Forth*, 11.

mimic another *in stature* who was about *four or five inches higher than himself*.²²

Hyde's recollection is troublesome because, on 8 August, he was in Kirtland or thereabouts, en route to Nauvoo from a mission in the East, accompanied part of the way by Woodruff and four other apostles. Woodruff's journal reports on 26 June 1844: "O Hyde left at fairport to visit his family in Kirtland" and, on 13 August, "Elder O. Hyde returned home to Nauvoo to day."²³ Hyde's, remarks and writings after the martyrdom consistently support the succession of the Twelve, but none of them ever mentions the mantle incident.²⁴ D. Michael Quinn, who appears to accept the reality of the transfiguration, calls both of Hyde's reminiscent statements "obvious fabrications."²⁵

²²Orson Hyde, 6 October 1869, *Journal of Discourses* 13:181; emphasis Hyde's. Hyde told virtually the same story again on 5 April 1877, *Journal of Discourses* 19:59: "As soon as [Young] opened his mouth, I heard the voice of Joseph through him, and it was as familiar to me as the voice of my wife, the voice of my child, or the voice of my father. And not only the voice of Joseph did I distinctly and unmistakably hear, but I saw the very gestures of his person, the very features of his countenance, and if I mistake not, the very size of his person appeared on the stand. And it went through me with the thrill of conviction that Brigham was the man to lead this people."

²³*History of the Church* 7:228 and note on 231 lists the apostles in Nauvoo on 8 August 1844. Hyde is not among the number. *Woodruff* 2:431, 441.

²⁴Orson Hyde, *Speech of Elder Orson Hyde, Delivered Before the High Priest's Quorum, in Nauvoo, April 27th, 1845, Upon the Course and Conduct of Mr. Sidney Rigdon, and Upon the Merits of His Claims to the Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Liverpool: James and Woodburn, 1845), "Trial of Elder Rigdon," *Times and Seasons* 5 (15 September 1844): 647-55; (1 October 1844): 660-67; (15 October 1844): 685-87; Orson Hyde to El[benezer] Robinson, 19 September 1844, in *The Return* 2 (April 1890); Orson Hyde, Letter to the Editor, *Times and Seasons* 5 (15 December 1844): 739; see also Quinn, *Origins of Power*, 249.

²⁵Quinn has written about the 8 August 1844 meeting in two articles and one book. In none of these publications has he raised any objection to the traditional story. His sole negative comment is with regard to Hyde's statements, about which he observes: "Hyde's fabricated memory has no bearing on the legitimacy of the reminiscent accounts by others who were actually in attendance at the August 1844 meeting." *Origins of Power*, 394 note 117; see also his "The Mormon Succession Crisis of 1844," *BYU Studies* 16 (Winter 1976): 187-233, and

GEORGE Q. CANNON'S ACCOUNTS

Cannon wrote a biography, "Joseph Smith, the Prophet," which was published serially in the *Juvenile Instructor*. Cannon wrote the biography as a historian and not as a participant, so it is puzzling that he would be quoted so frequently as a transfiguration witness. Speaking with the editorial "we," he describes the 8 August meeting:

After speaking for a short time he [Rigdon] sat down, and as soon as he did so, President Brigham Young who was in the stand, having come there after Sidney Rigdon had left it to occupy the wagon, arose and addressed the people. The congregation wheeled around and faced him, turning their backs upon Sidney Rigdon. It was the first sound of his voice which the people had heard since he had gone east on his mission, and the effect upon them was most wonderful. [Then follows these words, which are cited by the Gospel Doctrine manual:] Who that was present on that occasion can ever forget the impression that was made upon them! If Joseph had risen from the dead and again spoken in their hearing, the effect could not have been more startling than it was to many present at that meeting. It was the voice of Joseph himself; and not only was it the voice of Joseph which was heard; but it seemed in the eyes of the people as though it was the very person of Joseph which stood before them. A more wonderful and miraculous event than was wrought that day in the presence of that congregation we never heard of. The Lord gave his people a testimony that left no room for doubt as to who was the man He had chosen to lead them.²⁶

I have not been able to determine whether Cannon, who was then seventeen, was definitely present or absent. However, because it seems likely that he would have said so if he had been an eyewitness, I suspect that he was not.²⁷ In at least three talks, Cannon mentions Brigham Young's transformation. In none of these does Cannon indicate that he was present. In fact, in 1882,

"Joseph Smith III's 1844 Blessing and the Mormons of Utah," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 15 (Summer 1982): 69-90.

²⁶George Q. Cannon, "Joseph Smith, the Prophet," *Juvenile Instructor* 5 (October 1870): 174-75; *My Kingdom Shall Roll Forth*, 12.

²⁷Top and Flake, "The Kingdom of God Will Roll On," 25, say, "Several others [besides Benjamin F. Johnson] who were present bore similar testimonies, including a 17-year-old British convert, George Q. Cannon," suggesting that they interpret his statement as that of an eyewitness.

he said, "It is probable that there are some here to-day who were present on that occasion, and they, I doubt not, could, if necessary bear witness that the power of God was manifested at that time, to the joy and satisfaction of the Saints."²⁸ I know of no Cannon documents, contemporary with Nauvoo events, to aid in further analysis.

BENJAMIN F. JOHNSON'S ACCOUNTS

Johnson's testimony, cited by the Gospel Doctrine manual as having "no date," actually appears in his 1903 letter to George F. Gibbs, then secretary to the First Presidency.²⁹ Johnson, then eighty-five, says: "So deeply was I impressed with what I saw and heard in this transfiguration, that for years I dared not publicly tell what was given me of the Lord to see. But when in later years I did publicly bear this testimony, I found that others could testify to having seen and heard the same." Johnson also wrote an autobiography (date not known, published in 1947), which states that: Rigdon "put forth his claim" then "President Brigham Young arose and spoke. I saw him arise, but as soon as he spoke I jumped upon my feet, for in every possible degree it was Joseph's voice, and his person, in look, attitude, dress and appearance was Joseph himself, personified; and I knew in a moment the spirit and mantle of Joseph was upon him."³⁰ I know of no earlier accounts Johnson left about these 1844 events.

²⁸George Q. Cannon, 29 October 1882, *Journal of Discourses*, 23:363-64; *ibid.*, 14 December 1884, 26:60-61. In Brian H. Stuy, comp. and ed., 15 February 1891, *Collected Discourses: Delivered by President Wilford Woodruff, His Two Counselors, the Twelve Apostles, and Others* (Sandy, Utah: BHS Publishing, 1988), 2:177, Cannon says, "Those who were present on a certain occasion bear witness to the veritable transformation of Brigham Young before their eyes, when he spoke with the voice and bore the countenance of the Prophet Joseph."

²⁹Benjamin F. Johnson, Letter to George F. Gibbs, 1903, published in Dean R. Zimmerman, *I Knew the Prophets: An Analysis of the Letter of Benjamin F. Johnson to George F. Gibbs, Reporting Doctrinal Views of Joseph Smith and Brigham Young* (Bountiful, Utah: Horizon, 1976), 36.

³⁰Benjamin Johnson, *My Life's Review* (Independence, Mo.: Zion's Printing and Publishing, 1947), 103-4. Top and Flake, "'The Kingdom of God Shall Roll On,'" 25, quote this statement.

ZINA D. H. YOUNG'S RECORDS

Zina D. H. Jacobs Smith Young, married plurally to both Joseph Smith and Brigham Young while she was still married to her first husband, left an account thirty-three years later of the "mantle" transformation. This account, quoted in the Institute manual, reads:

When the twelve returned, the mantle fell upon Brigham.

When I approached the stand (on the occasion when Sidney Rigdon was striving for the guardianship of the Church), President Young was speaking. It was the voice of Joseph Smith—not that of Brigham Young. His very person was changed. The mantle was truly given to another. There was no doubting this in the minds of that vast assembly. All witnessed the transfiguration, and even to-day thousands bear testimony thereof. I closed my eyes. I could have exclaimed, I know that is Josephs Smith's voice! Yet I knew he had gone. But the same spirit was with the people; the comforter remained.³¹

However, Zina D. H. Young also kept a daily journal during the Nauvoo period and, like Woodruff, "she acknowledges on nearly every page of her diary the hand of providence."³² This Nauvoo journal, discovered among family papers by a descendant, was published in 1979. Its 8 August entry reads: "I went to meeting in the afternoon. Thanks be to Him who reigns on high, the majority of the Twelve are her[e]. Brigham Youngs [sic] spoke and the Church voted that the 12 should act in the office of there calling next to Joseph or the three first presidents."³³ Like Woodruff, she did not attend the morning meeting; her diary makes no mention of the miraculous transfiguration of Brigham Young—an event that in 1877 she said "thousands bear testimony thereof."

³¹Edward W. Tullidge, "The Story of the Huntington Sisters Continued," *The Women of Mormondom* (New York: Tullidge and Crandall, 1877), 326-27, as quoted in *Church History in the Fulness of Times*, 292.

³²Martha Sonntag Bradley and Mary Brown Firmage Woodward, "Plurality, Patriarchy, and the Priestess: Zina D. H. Young's Nauvoo Marriages," *Journal of Mormon History* 20 (Spring 1994): 101.

³³Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, "'All Things Move in Order in the City': The Nauvoo Diary of Zina Diantha Huntington Jacobs," *BYU Studies* 19 (Spring 1979): 294.

JOHN D. LEE

Although not cited by either the Gospel Doctrine or Institute manual, John D. Lee also left a reminiscent account of this transfiguration. In his 1880 *Confessions* he wrote:

Time passed on until the whole twelve got in from their missions, and a conference was held, and the several claimants came forward with their claims. Sidney Rigdon was the first who appeared upon the stand. He had been considered rather in the back-ground for sometime previous to the death of the Prophet. He made but a weak claim. Strong [Strang] did not file any. Just then Brigham Young arose and roared like a young lion, imitating the style and voice of Joseph, the Prophet. Many of the brethren declared that they saw the mantle of Joseph fall upon him. I myself, at the time, imagined that I saw and heard a strong resemblance to the Prophet in him, and felt that he was the man to lead us until Joseph's legal successor should grow up to manhood, when he should surrender the Presidency to the man who held the birthright.³⁴

However, Lee, although he claims to be present "at the time," had been absent on a mission and did not reach Nauvoo until 20 August, twelve days after the conference.³⁵

PRIMARY DOCUMENTS CITED BY OTHER HISTORIANS

It is true that a historian can never prove that an event did not occur simply because no one wrote about it: negative proof cannot be changed into positive proof unless someone specifically addresses that question. Nevertheless historians can arrive at a fairly good grasp of what is probable. We know that Mormons were careful record-makers, encouraged to keep diaries of relig-

³⁴John D. Lee, *Confessions of John D. Lee* (photomechanical reprint of *Mormonism Unveiled: or the Life and Confessions of the Late Mormon Bishop, John D. Lee*, 1880 ed.) (Salt Lake City: Modern Microfilm Co., n.d.), 155. Quinn, in *Origins of Power*, 394 note 117, accepts Lee's statement as support for the reality of a "mystical experience."

³⁵Juanita Brooks, *John Doyle Lee: Zealot, Pioneer Builder, Scapegoat* (Logan: Utah State University Press 1992), 62; Harold Schindler, *Orrin Porter Rockwell: Man of God, Son of Thunder* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1966), 132 note 5.

ious experiences.³⁶ A part of their Puritan heritage was “to record the remarkable providences that would show the hand of God in their lives.”³⁷

Although I have not had access to primary documents from Nauvoo, Glen M. Leonard, a historian specializing in Nauvoo history, has examined more than one hundred diaries and reminiscences of Utahns who lived in Nauvoo.³⁸ Kenneth W. Godfrey in 1984 said he was aware of “3,000 Nauvoo letters” in an “unclassified letter file, the contents of which no one seemed to know.”³⁹ Ronald K. Esplin, a specialist in Brigham Young materials, cites diary entries of 8 August for Brigham Young, Wilford Woodruff, Willard Richards, Heber C. Kimball, and Norton Jacobs and then, in a footnote, says of the transfiguration story: “Though there are no contemporary records, the number of later retellings, many in remarkable detail, argues for the reality of some such experience.”⁴⁰

“No explicit accounts of this manifestation were written at

³⁶See, for example, “Do You Keep a Journal?” *Millennial Star* 1 (October 1840): 159-60.

³⁷William A. Wilson, “The Study of Mormon Folklore: An Uncertain Mirror For Truth,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 22 (Winter 1989): 100.

³⁸Glen M. Leonard, “Remembering Nauvoo: Historiographical Considerations,” *Journal of Mormon History* 16 (1990): 35 note 4. He coauthored with James B. Allen *The Story of the Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Church Historical Department and Deseret Book, 1976). Dennis L. Lythgoe, “Artful Analysis of Mormonism,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 10 (Autumn 1977): 134-37, reviewing that book, wondered if its “under-treatment” of “the transfiguration, which they do not even acknowledge by that name” was because their “research convinced them otherwise.” In the expanded and revised second edition of their book, Allen’s and Leonard’s treatment of the transformative miracle is unchanged, both editions citing Woodruff’s statement only.

³⁹Kenneth W. Godfrey, “The Nauvoo Neighborhood: A Little Philadelphia or a Unique City Set Upon a Hill?” *Journal of Mormon History* 11 (1984): 80. He had also compiled information from over a hundred Nauvoo diaries (*ibid.*, 82 note 10), but he does not mention whether any of these documents discuss the transformation.

⁴⁰Ronald K. Esplin, “Joseph, Brigham, and the Twelve: A Succession of Continuity,” *BYU Studies* 21 (Summer 1981): 325 notes 84 and 86, and 328 note 97.

the time of its occurrence," Quinn agrees, "even though many journals recorded reminiscent descriptions of it."⁴¹ He adds:

For many the rightness of the apostolic claim for continuity was demonstrated miraculously by a transfiguration that occurred as Brigham Young stepped to the podium. Among the accounts written at the time in Nauvoo, the description of George Laub's diary was the most detailed. . . . Obviously, not everyone present saw this manifestation, because about twenty people voted against the apostles. And most of the rest of that multitude were persuaded by the calm logic of the apostles rather than by seeing a miraculous transfiguration of Brigham Young.⁴²

Quinn cites the "1845-1846 Journal of George Laub." When it was published in 1978, its editor Eugene England stressed that Laub's diary comment is "the earliest yet found that specifically mentions the change in voice and appearance in the 'transfiguration.'"⁴³ Since 1978, however, Richard S. Van Wagoner has demonstrated that this document is actually a revision of the original diary, rewritten by Laub in Utah, no earlier than 1852 and probably in or after 1857.⁴⁴ The original diary's account of that meeting, probably written in March 1846, makes no reference to any likeness, miraculous or otherwise, of Young to Smith:

Now after the Death of Jos & Hyrum[,] Rigdon came from Pittsburgh. (Because Jos. had sent him there to get him out of his way as Rigdon Desired to goe) to clame the presidency of the church to lead the church[.] But as the lord would have his servant Brigham Young the President of the Twelve to come just in time to tell the people who was the fals sheperd or who was the good shepard and Rigdon soon quaked and trembled and these things which he declared the day before to be revelations was then think [so's] and gess [so's] and hoap so and his words fell to the ground because they was Lies from the beginning to the End.⁴⁵

⁴¹Quinn, "The Mormon Succession Crisis of 1844," 212.

⁴²Quinn, "Joseph Smith III's 1844 Blessing and the Mormons of Utah," 78-79.

⁴³Eugene England, ed., "George Laub's Nauvoo Journal," *BYU Studies* 18 (Winter 1978): 166.

⁴⁴Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon*, 351 note 99, and Richard S. Van Wagoner, "The Making of a Mormon Myth: The 1844 Transfiguration of Brigham Young," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 25 (Winter 1995): 20 note 76.

⁴⁵As quoted in Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon*, 351 note 99.

Laub's revised version reads:

Just about the time that the Vote was to be taken for him [Rigdon] to be president & gardien, But as the Lord would have the Twelve to come home & I felt to praise God to See Bro Brigham Young walk upon the stand then. Thes[e] positive Revelations of Rigdon's ware only guess So, & he thinks So & hoap so, while the lord had told him how to proseed before according to his one [own] mouth & after wards only Suposed them so.

Now when President Young arose to address the congregation his Voice was the Voice of Bro. Joseph and his face appeared as Joseph's face, & Should I not have seen his face but herd his Voice I Should have declared that it was Joseph.⁴⁶

The original diary, recently donated to the LDS Church Archives, was apparently unavailable to Quinn or England. Quite clearly, however, the strongest contender as the earliest contemporary account of the "mantle" miracle is, like many other sources, actually late in origin. It raises a disturbing question: Why did George Laub, a faithful Latter-day Saint, feel a need to revise his diary as he copied it to accommodate an event that had not been important enough to include earlier?

Two letters, written from Nauvoo within days of the conference, likewise fail to mention a miraculous event. On 11 August 1844, Brigham Young wrote to his daughter Vilate: "Through the great anxiety of the Church there was a Conference held last Thursday [8 August 1844]. The power of the Priesthood was explained and the order thereof on which the whole Church lifted up their voices and hands for the Twelve to move forward and organize the Church and lead it as Joseph lead it. Which (it) is our indispensable duty to do. We shall organize the Church as soon as possible."⁴⁷ Surely, he would have confirmed this rational explanation with the seal of a miracle had one occurred.

Sarah Scott, writing to her mother in Massachusetts the day after the conference, summarizes briskly: "The twelve were appointed to take charge of all the concerns of the Church both spiritual and temporal. Brigham Young said if he had been here,

⁴⁶England, "George Laub's Nauvoo Journal," 166.

⁴⁷Elden Jay Watson, Manuscript History of Brigham Young 1801-1844, 176, LDS Church Archives.

he wouldn't have consented to give Joseph up and he would be damned if he would give himself up to the law of the land. He would see them all in hell first."⁴⁸ There is, again, no mention of any resemblance between Young and Smith.

Quinn quotes a letter from Henry and Catharine Brooke written in Nauvoo on 15 November 1844 to Leonard and Mary Pickel. They comment that Brigham Young "favours Br Joseph, both in person, & manner of speaking more than any person ever you saw, looks like another." Although without any hint that a miracle is involved in this resemblance, this statement suggests, contrary to the picture painted by Orson Hyde, that there was a physical resemblance. However, since Brooke joined one of the splinter groups, the resemblance was not influential in determining his religious allegiance.⁴⁹

William Burton's diary, also quoted by Quinn, comments in May 1845: "But their [Joseph and Hyrum Smith's] places were filled by others much better than I once supposed they could have been, the spirit of Joseph appeared to rest upon Brigham."⁵⁰ This statement could be read either as meaning that Brigham was animated by the same spirit as Joseph or as support for a literal transformation, but it is not indicative of a miracle by itself. An entry in Arza Hinckley's diary after 20 November 1844 observes approvingly: "and Brigham Young on hom the mantle of the prophet Joseph has falen is a men of god and he ceeps all things in good order."⁵¹ Not one of these early sources refers unambiguously to a mystical event or a miraculous transfiguration.

MISSED OPPORTUNITIES BY THE TWELVE

The succession of the Twelve to their leadership over the Church was not, despite the ease with which Rigdon's claims were put down, a foregone conclusion from the outset. However,

⁴⁸Quoted in William Mulder and A. Russell Mortensen, eds., *Among the Mormons: Historic Accounts by Contemporary Observers* (New York: Knopf, 1958), 153.

⁴⁹Quinn, "The Mormon Succession Crisis," 212.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*

⁵¹*Ibid.*, 212 note 69.

from my perspective, the crisis of leadership did not come on 8 August. On that date the contest was between the Twelve and an unreliable, unstable, sickly Sidney Rigdon. This was no real contest. On that day Rigdon probably felt it. W. W. Phelps, whom Rigdon asked to speak in his behalf at the afternoon meeting knew it,⁵² and the Saints knew it. The crisis of leadership came later when other claimants became known; as the Nauvoo secret teachings, such as polygamy, an earthly king and kingdom, and endowments, became more publicly known; as the move west commenced; as hard times continued; and as second thoughts arose about a prophetic leader. As Michael Quinn observes: "A church which loses 50 percent of its previous members within eight years is in a severe crisis."⁵³

Thus, silence about a miracle in contemporary documents that argue for the leadership of the Twelve on other grounds is significant. Such support, it can be argued, became increasingly important in sustaining the position taken by the Twelve.⁵⁴ A general epistle from the Twelve, over the signature of Brigham Young as President of the Twelve, was written one week after the conference. This epistle addressed to the Saints in "Nauvoo and all the world" said nothing about a transfiguration or a mantle. What it said to the Saints was that they were "now without a prophet present with you in the flesh to guide you; but you are not without apostles."⁵⁵ Given the importance assigned to the miracle by the various witnesses, this wording is strangely reti-

⁵²Phelps, during the course of his talk, said: "I believe enough has been said to prepare the minds of the people to act. . . . You cannot put in a guardian of the church [the title Rigdon was claiming]. . . . You want to do right, uphold the Twelve. . . . I will sustain the Twelve as long as I have breath." *History of the Church*, 7:237-38; see also Woodruff 2:438.

⁵³Quinn, *Origins of Power*, 242.

⁵⁴"Undated Certificate of the Twelve, ca. fall 1844 or winter 1845, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Church Archives; Samuel W. Richards, letter to Franklin D. Richards, began on 23 August 1844, Franklin D. Richards Papers, LDS Church Archives, cited by Esplin in, "Joseph, Brigham, and the Twelve," 320 note 66.

⁵⁵Brigham Young, "An Epistle of the Twelve," *Times and Seasons* 5 (15 August 1844): 618.

cent, confirming only what Young said to the assembled Saints a week earlier in the afternoon meeting on 8 August:

For the first time in my life, for the first time in your lives, for the first time in the kingdom of God in the 19th century, without a Prophet at our head, do I step forth to act in my calling in connection with the Quorum of the Twelve, as Apostles of Jesus Christ unto this generation—Apostles whom God has called by revelation through the Prophet Joseph. . . .

This people have hitherto walked by sight and not by faith. You have had the Prophet in your midst. Do you all understand? You have walked by sight and without much pleading to the Lord to know whether things were right or not.

Heretofore you have had a Prophet as the mouth of the Lord to speak to you, but he has sealed his testimony with his blood, and now for the first time, are you called to walk by faith, not by sight.⁵⁶

Young speaks and writes of himself as an apostle, as something different from a prophet. The Twelve were sustained as apostles, and only as apostles. Although the Twelve were publicly “acknowledged” as “Prophets and Seers” at the dedication of the Kirtland temple in 1836, the Church understood them to be apostles in August of 1844.⁵⁷ The Twelve were not “sustained” as prophets during the Nauvoo era nor during Young’s lifetime. In the very early days of the Church, say from 1829 to 1835, there had been charismatic apostles and prophets. But in Nauvoo the Saints knew only one prophet and he was now a martyr.

Another reason why the mantle miracle would have been widely reported if thousands had truly witnessed it would have been to refute the claims of dissident leaders. James J. Strang acted like the prophet the Nauvoo Saints were used to seeing: he had revelations and translated from buried plates. Among his converts were Apostles John E. Page and William Smith, other members of the Smith family, including the Prophet’s mother, Lucy Mack Smith, and other leaders. During the spring of 1846, the Strangites successfully proselyted among the Mormons in Nauvoo until they “converted some three to four thousand people.”⁵⁸ The Twelve

⁵⁶*History of the Church* 7:232. See also Woodruff 2:435.

⁵⁷Quinn, *Origins of Power*, 610-11; see also 60-61.

⁵⁸William D. Russell, “King James Strang: Joseph Smith’s Successor?,” *The*

felt sufficiently threatened by his success that he was the subject of a letter by Brigham Young in January 1846 and a broadside by Orson Hyde in March 1846.⁵⁹ The "mantle of Joseph" would have effectively cancelled Strang's claims; however, it was never used in that context. RLDS historian William D. Russell has written:

In Smith's day a favorite hymn sung in the church was, "A church without a Prophet, Is not the Church for me; It has no head to guide it; In it I would not be." This left Brigham Young in a difficult situation, because he was not given to the announcement of visions and revelations, . . . He [Young] did ban the singing of the embarrassing hymn, however.

How could Brigham Young claim to be the prophet, seer and revelator for the church when he was apparently not gifted along this line? This was the kind of question that Strang and his followers threw in the teeth of Young's followers, and it was an embarrassing one for the "Brighamites." It seemed apparent to some Mormons that Brigham Young was not able to guide the church in the matter in which it was accustomed.⁶⁰

Levi Graybill, who withdrew support for the Twelve, recalled: "I think it was in the spring of 1847, that Bishop [George] Miller came . . . and stated to us that we had no church, for the church could not exist without a head, and that we were without a prophet in the flesh."⁶¹ According to Marvin S. Hill, "George Miller argued this point repeatedly to Brigham Young in Nauvoo in 1846, insisting 'no prophet, no church.'"⁶² According to Hill,

Restoration Movement: Essays in Mormon History, edited by Mark McKiernan, Alma R. Blair and Paul M. Edwards, rev. ed. (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1992), 233; see also Richard E. Bennett, *Mormons at the Missouri, 1844-1852: "And Should We Die"* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), 20.

⁵⁹Quinn, "The Mormon Succession Crisis," 193-96; Linda King Newell and Valeen Tippetts Avery, *Mormon Enigma: Emma Hale Smith, Prophet's Wife, "Elect Lady," Polygamy's Foe* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1984), 232.

⁶⁰Russell, "King James Strang," 228; see also, Alma R. Blair, "Reorganized Church of Latter Day Saints: Moderate Mormons," *The Restoration Movement*, 206.

⁶¹Quoted in Bennett, *Mormons at the Missouri*, 306 note 33.

⁶²Marvin S. Hill, *Quest For Refuge: The Mormon Flight from American Pluralism* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1989), 166.

the Saints in Nauvoo wanted "a prophet who would spell out the Lord's will day by day. . . . The multiplication of aspiring prophets following Smith's death in 1844 suggests how important the function of prophet was to his followers." Tellingly he adds: "Almost all of the successors to Smith claimed to be prophets, including James J. Strang, James C. Brewster, William Smith, Charles B. Thompson, and Sidney Rigdon, as well as others. Perhaps David Whitmer is an exception for he was reluctant to seize the mantle, and so also was Brigham Young in the earliest years, maintaining that he was to fulfill the prophet's purposes, not to replace him."⁶³

Other events in the fall of 1844 provided logical openings for reference to a miracle confirming the succession. A formal debate about Church leadership was held in Nauvoo on 26 October 1844, the day after sermons and remarks on the same subject. No one mentions a miracle.⁶⁴ Three successive issues of the *Times and Seasons* report the excommunication trial of Sidney Rigdon, including testimony by several members of the Twelve and others about revelations and visions, who is having them and who is not, but there is no talk of a miraculous manifestation witnessed by all or any of those in attendance only weeks earlier. Apostle Amasa Lyman, a former counselor to Smith, referred slightlyly to Rigdon:

There is a curiosity connected with the revelation of this individual [Rigdon], who is so favored of heaven Here are men present who have travelled through the length and breadth of these United States, and to Europe, and some who have travelled as far as Palestine to carry out and establish the principles which have been laid down by our deceased prophet, and yet the great God has not made known to any of these men the wonderful things made known in this revelation. Neither has elder Marks or the Twelve received any such wonderful

⁶³Marvin S. Hill, "Mormon Religion in Nauvoo: Some Reflections," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 44 (Spring 1976): 177-78. Quinn, *Origins of Power*, 241, substantially agrees.

⁶⁴Hosea Stout, *On the Mormon Frontier: The Diary of Hosea Stout 1844-1848*, edited by Juanita Brooks (1964; reprinted Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1982), 7. Stout's diary, begun on 4 October 1844, also does not mention a transfiguration.

revelation. But this man who has been asleep all the while, when he was not sick, to sleep and smoke his pipe, and take his drink; correspond with John C. Bennet, and other mean, corrupt men. This is the character of the man on whom shines the light of revelation; this is the man who says the Twelve have gone astray and this church is not led by the Lord.⁶⁵

Parley P. Pratt's testimony says, in part: "Now the quorum of the Twelve have not offered a new revelation from the time of the massacre of our beloved brethren, Joseph and Hyrum, but we have spent all our time, early and late, to do the things the God of heaven commanded us to do through brother Joseph."⁶⁶

Lucy Mack Smith, in Nauvoo at the martyrdom, dictated her memoirs in 1845. Although she later changed her mind more than once about the leadership issue, this account in all versions is simple and straightforward:

The church at this time was in a state of gloomy suspense. Not knowing who was to take the place of Joseph, the people were greatly wrought upon with anxiety, lest an impostor should arise and deceive many. Suddenly, Sidney Rigdon made his appearance from Pittsburgh, and rather insinuated that the church ought to make choice of him, not as president, but as guardian. . . . But before he could carry his measures into effect, the Twelve, who had also been absent, arrived, and assuming their proper places, all was set to rights.⁶⁷

T. Edgar Lyon, during his lifetime the acknowledged expert on Nauvoo, affirmed that the Twelve constituted the only immediately viable leadership choice; thus, whatever the private meaning of a transformative miracle to each "witness," it did not become part of the public discourse. "The vote to sustain the Quorum to direct the church," he said, "was a quite logical choice to fill the void. Who else had so much experience under the

⁶⁵"Trial of Elder Rigdon," *Times and Seasons* 5 (15 September 1844): 654. The minutes cover 647-55, 660-67, 685-86.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, 653.

⁶⁷Lucy Mack Smith, *Joseph Smith and His Progenitors* (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1969 printing), 356-57, a reprint of the original 1853 edition that Orson Pratt published in Liverpool; the same wording appears in the edited LDS version, Preston Nibley, ed., *History of Joseph Smith by His Mother Lucy Mack Smith* (Salt Lake City: Publishers Press, 1979), 326-27.

prophet, were so widely known, so respected and loved, now that Joseph and Hyrum were dead?"⁶⁸ This position closely resembles that taken by Nauvoo resident John Fullmer in a letter written in September 1844: "[Joseph Smith had succeeded] in completely organizing the Church, conferring keys, authority and endowments upon the Apostles and others, so that the work can go on as well as when he alone was propelling it; and better, because there are more now to push it, each holding all the power which he held in the priestly office."⁶⁹ The selection of the Twelve to lead the Church was, therefore, logical and necessary, a position probably taken by many other Saints. Joseph Fielding's diary entry in Nauvoo, probably written before 4 January 1846, says Sidney Rigdon came to Nauvoo after the death of the Prophet and claimed "an important Vision," but his address at the 8 August meeting had "no Liberty or Power" while Brigham Young manifested "much Liberty and the Power of the Spirit." Fielding continues: "The saints soon began to see how things were and that the 12 must now hold the Keys of Power and Authority according to the Revelation which says the 12 are equal with the first Presidency[.] before this he [Young] asked the Church if they wished to choose themselves a Guardian, but they did not raise their Hands, and it was now no hard thing determining who should lead the Church."⁷⁰

A consensus of major Mormon historians agree: the Twelve had no need for a miracle in August of 1844. In addition to Lyon, Quinn comments that the Saints in Nauvoo were "not voting for a successor to Joseph Smith. The Mormons were simply acknowledging the fact that the Quorum of the Twelve presided over the

⁶⁸T. Edgar Lyon, "Nauvoo and the Council of the Twelve," *The Restoration Movement*, 188. According to Lyon, Robert Bruce Flanders, *Nauvoo: Kingdom on the Mississippi* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1965), 123, 135-38, came to the same conclusion about the succession of the Twelve. Lyon's article which deals with "The Meeting of August 8, 1844," in a section of its own, does not even mention the transfiguration event.

⁶⁹John Fullmer, Letter to Uncle John, 27 September 1844, as quoted in Esplin, "Joseph, Brigham, and the Twelve," 301.

⁷⁰Andrew F. Ehat, trans. and ed., "They Might Have Known That He Was Not a Fallen Prophet"—The Nauvoo Journal of Joseph Fielding, *BYU Studies* 19 (Winter 1979): 155.

Church by virtue of known revelations and by the recognized ascendance given to them by the founding Prophet." Esplin says the Saints "understood the Twelve's relationship to Joseph Smith. . . . Many were aware of the private training as well as the public responsibilities. Finally, the Church administrative structure was already firmly in the hands of the Twelve. Under the circumstances there was little reason to look beyond the Twelve, and certainly no realistic expectation that anyone else could lead the body of the Church without their cooperation." Historian James B. Allen says, "No new president of the church was chosen at the August 8 meeting, but the powers of the presidency were vested in the Twelve, and Brigham Young had been president of the Quorum since 1840." Leonard Arrington and Davis Bitton state: "In pragmatic terms there was no viable alternative to direction by the tried and proven Twelve under the leadership of Brigham Young."⁷¹

THE 1847 LEADERSHIP REORGANIZATION

If thousands of excited Saints had witnessed a miracle on 8 August 1844, it is doubtful that the editor of the *Times and Seasons* would have printed on September 2, 1844:

Great excitement prevails throughout the world to know "who shall be the successor of Joseph Smith?"

In reply, we say, be patient, *be patient* a little, till the proper time comes, and we will tell you all. "Great wheels move slow." At present, we can say that a special conference of the church was held in Nauvoo on the 8th ult., and it was carried *without a dissenting voice*, that the "Twelve" should preside over the whole church, and when any alteration in the presidency shall be required, seasonable notice will be given.⁷²

⁷¹Quinn, "The Mormon Succession Crisis of 1844," 216; Esplin, "Joseph, Brigham, and the Twelve," 323; James B. Allen, *Trials of Discipleship: The Story of William Clayton, a Mormon* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 163 (Allen makes no reference to a mantle miracle); Leonard J. Arrington and Davis Bitton, *The Mormon Experience: A History of the Latter-day Saints* (Boston: George Allen & Unwin, 1979), 84.

⁷²"City of Nauvoo, September 2, 1844," *Times and Seasons* 5 (2 September 1844): 632; emphasis in original.

When the “alteration in the presidency”—the reconstitution of a First Presidency—occurred in December of 1847, no “seasonable notice” was given. It appears that this alteration was not easy for Brigham Young to accomplish. Bennett and Quinn argue persuasively that, had the full Quorum of the Twelve been in attendance, this reorganization may not have happened. According to Quinn, John Taylor and Parley P. Pratt, both in the Salt Lake Valley, were opposed to the idea of a First Presidency. So was Lyman Wight, who had betaken himself and his followers to Texas. Even so, Orson Pratt, Wilford Woodruff, and George A. Smith, all present in Winter Quarters, registered opposition, both Woodruff and Orson Pratt desiring a revelation.⁷³ In 1860, Young gave his version of the reorganization: he first discussed it with Woodruff when they were returning to Winter Quarters in late 1847. Woodruff, according to Young, agreed: “It is right; I believe it, and think a great deal of it, for it is from the Lord; the Church must be organized.” However, Woodruff recorded in his diary: “I had a question put to me by President Young what my opinion was concerning one of the Twelve Apostles being appointed as the President of the Church with his two Councillors. I Answered that A quorum like the Twelve who had been appointed by revelation & confirmed by revelation from time to time I thought it would require A revelation to change the order of that quorum.” An asterisk by this entry directs attention to a later insert. The insert adds: “Whatever the Lord inspires you to do in this matter I am with you.” According to Quinn, this insert “is in a different penmanship than the previous quote. Woodruff obviously added

⁷³Quinn, *Origins of Power*, 247; Wilford Woodruff complained, “If three are taken out to become a first presidency, it seemed like severing a body in two. . . . I desire that it should continue as it was.” George A. Smith said, “I want to stick together as we have done. . . . We are good fellows and better in harmony. If three are picked out there may be jealousies.” Orson Pratt declared on 17 November 1847, “There is no authority higher in decision than 7 of the 12,” and on 30 November 1844, “Have the other nine the right to do that, to give such power to the three? Have we a right to make the decision of three of the Twelve higher than the Quorum of the Twelve or seven when the Book of Covenants say we have the Twelve? If they have that power there is something in the dark yet.” As quoted in Bennett, *Mormons at the Missouri*, 202-3.

this at a later date, probably after Brigham Young actually organized a First Presidency two months later."⁷⁴

Bennett summarizes: "It is entirely possible that the single, most important development at the Missouri was the emergence of the principle of apostolic supremacy and its logical consequence, apostolic succession. What happened in relative obscurity at the Kanesville Log Tabernacle in 1847 established a precedent that continues to dictate Latter-day Saint ecclesiastical government to this day."⁷⁵ In short, at least two apostles wanted a revelation. Had Young been able to refer to a transfiguration miracle three years earlier, surely he would have done so.⁷⁶

CREATION OF A GROUP MEMORY

The anomalies in the documentary record are vexing. As someone who reveres the faith and sacrifice of Mormonism's first generation, I came to the conclusion that a number of committed Latter-day Saints had testified to information about which they could not have had direct knowledge and that Woodruff's, Hyde's and Zina D. H. Young's later accounts include material omitted from and not even suggested by their earlier accounts. There are many diaries, letters, minutes of meetings, proclamations, and two Church newspapers (the *Nauvoo Neighbor* and the *Times and Seasons*) that write about the August events. I agree with Van Wagoner's conclusion: "Several sets of minutes of the afternoon meeting [of 8 August], each in the hand of a different scribe, make it clear that they saw no mystical occurrence during that gathering."⁷⁷ If a transfiguration occurred, it is incredible that it is not

⁷⁴Brigham Young, 7 October 1860, *Journal of Discourses*, 8:197; Woodruff 3:283; Quinn, *Origins of Power*, 451 note 7.

⁷⁵Bennett, *Mormons at the Missouri*, 214; see all of chap. 11; see also Quinn, *Origins of Power*, 245-52.

⁷⁶Quinn, *Origins of Power*, 249, comments: "Years later [1860] Hyde and Young said the vote [to restore the First Presidency] occurred because of a divine manifestation. . . . By contrast, Woodruff later said he did 'not remember any particular manifestations at the time of the organization of the Presidency.' His diary mentions nothing unusual about the 5 December meeting, and the minutes mention nothing extraordinary." See also Van Wagoner, "The Making of a Mormon Myth," 18 note 71.

mentioned in an age "awash in a sea of faith."⁷⁸ What could explain these departures from apparent fact?

First, I must leave open the possibility that the limited number of sources available to me have created a discrepancy that can be resolved with the analysis of more sources. Historian Lynne Watkins Jorgensen says she is aware of "over one hundred and ten witnesses who wrote or dictated mantle testimonies."⁷⁹ Even though her research is still in progress, she offers such potential resolutions as the hypothesis that the transforming miracle occurred both in the morning and in the afternoon meeting and at later dates as well. This hypothesis does not resolve all contradictions in the sources and introduces conflicts as well. Richard S. Van Wagoner, in contrast, who has compiled a partial list of first-person accounts firmly concludes that "this tussle for church leadership metamorphosed into a mythical marvel" and concludes that "the most damning evidence to claims of a transfiguration is the fact that on 8 August 1844 the congregation sustained a committee rather than an individual to run the church."⁸⁰

Second, what were the possible motives of those who told the reminiscent accounts? Although we can never advance beyond speculation and certainly no one profited financially from these accounts, I suggest, with the utmost tentativeness, that there was a "religious marketplace" in which those of the Nauvoo generation "needed" to bear witness of this miracle. Dean C. Jessee cites American historian David Thelen on the role of memory in history: "A recent study indicates that a person's

⁷⁷Van Wagoner, "The Making of a Mormon Myth," 9.

⁷⁸John Butler, *Awash in a Sea of Faith: Christianizing the American People* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990). Butler also describes this period of time as an "antebellum spiritual hothouse." He discusses Mormonism on pp. 242-47.

⁷⁹Lynne Watkins Jorgensen, "The Mantle of the Prophet Joseph Passes to Brother Brigham and the Twelve Apostles: A Collective Spiritual Witness," typescript, 7 August 1995, 5, photocopy in my possession. Jorgensen is working on an exhaustive annotated list of the witnesses which will be forthcoming in monograph form from *BYU Studies*.

⁸⁰Van Wagoner, "The Making of a Mormon Myth," 2, 22; see his list of late witnesses on p. 16 note 62.

motives, biases, mood, etc., at the time of reconstructing past events, rather than proximity to the events, have a crucial impact upon the way events are remembered.”⁸¹ Steve Rose, author of *The Making of Memory*, points out that, when a memory has been induced or distorted, the new memory supplants the old one; what is recalled is no longer the original event. “The new memory has become biologically real for its possessor independently of how it was acquired.” In a number of “now famous experiments,” Elizabeth Loftus, a psychologist whose research focuses on the accuracy of memory, “has shown how easy it is to ‘implant’ memories or distort a person’s recollection of even the recent past.”⁸² When this happens—and it may or may not be apparent—independent verification or corroboration is required.

Jessee explains that the authors of the martyrdom portion of the *History of the Church*, written “a dozen years after the events described,” found that “the memory of Carthage witnesses in certain instances had faded beyond recall.” Jessee also quotes B. H. Roberts’s comments about the alleged miracles at Carthage: “It is inevitable, perhaps, that something miraculous should be alleged as connected with the death of Joseph Smith that both

⁸¹David Thelen as cited in Dean C. Jessee, “Priceless Words and Fallible Memories: Joseph Smith As Seen in the Effort to Preserve His Discourses,” *BYU Studies* 31 (Spring 1991): 33. James B. Allen notes in his “Emergence of a Fundamental: The Expanding Role of Joseph Smith’s First Vision in Mormon Religious Thought,” *Journal of Mormon History* 7 (1980): 44 note 2, that his “paper is based on a study of contemporary sources rather than reminiscences which could have been affected by the tendency of the writers to read their current understanding into past experiences.” He uses as an example the reminiscences of Edward Stevenson, which “suggest that Joseph Smith was publicly telling the story of his first vision in great detail in the early 1830s. The reminiscence was written, however, some fifty years later, and on this issue it runs directly counter to all the available contemporary evidence. No one questions the personal integrity of Stevenson, but it is likely that after fifty years his memory played tricks on him by combining things he heard in one period with things he heard at other times.”

⁸²Stephen Rose, “Two Types of Truth: When Is a Memory Real, When Is It Not, and How Can Anyone Tell?” *New York Times Book Review*, 26 February 1995, 20.

myth and legend, those parasites of truth, should attach themselves to the Prophet's career."⁸³

We may also plausibly look for motives in the context of decades of the 1850s through the 1880s. The "mantle of Joseph" miracle stories grew in Utah as splinter groups grew elsewhere. As the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints sent missionaries to Utah—especially Joseph Smith's three sons in the 1860s—the "mantle" stories confirmed that the Twelve were true successors of the true prophet. Linda King Newell and Valeen Tippetts Avery suggest a parallel in the treatment of Emma Smith's reputation in Utah following the missionary efforts of her sons. "Denunciations of her became a popular topic throughout the Utah Territory," even though "the climate and the inflamed rhetoric of the times cast serious questions" about people's later recollections of her Nauvoo behavior.⁸⁴

A related question was whether Brigham Young became the leader only through the voice of the people. Members wanted evidence that he was a prophet, called of God. Brigham Young speaking in August of 1847 said, "Some have had fears that we had not power to get revelations since the death of Joseph. But I want this subject from this time forth to be forever set at rest[.] And I want this Church to understand from this day henceforth & forever that an apostle is the Highest office & Authority that there is in the Church & kingdom of God on the earth."⁸⁵ This forceful pronouncement, however, did not lay the subject to rest. Orson Hyde, speaking in October 1860 conference said, "It has been said by some that Brigham was appointed by the people, and not by the voice of God."⁸⁶ George Q. Cannon echoed this thought in October 1882: "There were many who, after the Prophet's death, were not disposed to accord President Young the same rights, the same authority, the same gifts, that they were willing to accord to

⁸³As quoted in Dean C. Jessee, "Return to Carthage: Writing the History of Joseph Smith's Martyrdom," *Journal of Mormon History* 8 (1981): 13-14, 17.

⁸⁴Newell and Avery, *Mormon Enigma*, 197, and 346 note 53.

⁸⁵As quoted in Staker, *Waiting for World's End*, 131.

⁸⁶Orson Hyde, 7 October 1860, *Journal of Discourses* 8:234.

the Prophet Joseph Smith.”⁸⁷ We may never be able to determine the facts beyond all question, but I hypothesize that the many reminiscent accounts of a mantle miracle arose in response to the people’s need for evidence of a prophetic call.

UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

Jorgensen’s projected critical analysis of all known accounts will be a valuable case study in the fields of folklore and historiography, enabling scholars to deal with interesting discrepancies in the accounts. For example, Jorgensen hypothesizes that more than one manifestation occurred, thus solving the problem of “eyewitnesses” who were not in Nauvoo or not present at the morning meeting. However, none of the participants seems aware of more than one manifestation. Dozens of recollections, including those of Woodruff, Cannon, Hyde, Zina D. H. Young, speak of “that occasion” or from “that conference on” or “thousands witnessed that occasion”—always as a single event.

Another question is the contemporary silence about the miracle. Jorgensen suggests that there was no time to write, that writing material was not available, or that the Saints were uncomfortable in writing about spiritual events. These explanations are not completely satisfactory in light of the enormous amount of primary documentation, much of it on inspirational topics, that has survived from the Nauvoo period.

A third problem is the reaction of those present. Some of the late accounts record that many witnesses say they “jumped up” or “arose” when they heard the voice of the Prophet coming from Brigham Young and that they “exclaimed” or cried out. Ivan J. Barrett writes, “A blind man leaped to his feet exclaiming, ‘Joseph is not dead, He’s speaking to us!’”⁸⁸ Benjamin F. Johnson, William Adams, Drusilla Dorris Hendricks, and Jacob Hamblin also say that they arose to their feet.⁸⁹ “Eliza Ann Perry Benson reminisced that

⁸⁷George Q. Cannon, 29 October 1882, *Journal of Discourses* 23:357-58.

⁸⁸As quoted in Ivan J. Barrett, *Joseph Smith and the Restoration: A History of the LDS Church to 1846* (Provo, Utah: BYU Press, 1973), 627. Barrett does not cite a source for this story.

⁸⁹Benjamin F. Johnson, *My Life’s Review*; William Adams, “Pioneer Jour-

the Saints arose 'from their seats enmass' exclaiming 'Joseph has come! He is here.'"⁹⁰ Another late recollection by Emmeline B. Wells says:

I was standing in a wagon box on wheels, so I did not have to rise, but those who were seated arose and made the exclamation. I could see very well, and every one of them thought it was really the Prophet Joseph risen from the dead. But after Brigham Young had spoken a few words the tumult subsided, and the people really knew that it was not the Prophet Joseph, but the President of the quorum of the Twelve Apostles. It was the most wonderful manifestation, I think, that I have known or seen, and I have seen a very great number.⁹¹

It is difficult to believe that all these arisings and exclamations would be totally unnoticed in all contemporary sources. But no contemporary source, to my knowledge, describes such reactions from the group. On the contrary, the pattern is quite clear: Whenever the same individual has left both a contemporary account and reminiscent account of the August meeting, the contemporary account does not mention a miraculous or mystical event nor does it describe a public outburst of the type later recollections include.

It is unfortunate that the valuable diaries of Willard Richards and William Clayton for this time period are unavailable, as are the minutes of the morning meeting. More than 5,000 Saints may have attended, but Thomas Bullock's shorthand minutes "have never been transcribed."⁹² Other potentially useful records, not currently available, are the 1844 minutes ("nearly 200 closely written pages") of the Council of Fifty.⁹³ This source is particularly important since Lyman Wight, a member of the Twelve, among others, believed that the Council of Fifty was the highest govern-

nals," typescript, 6-7, LDS Church Archives; Drusilla Dorris Hendricks as quoted in Carol Cornwall Madsen, *In Their Own Words: Women and the Story of Nauvoo* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1994), 168; Little, *Jacob Hamblin*, 13.

⁹⁰As quoted in Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon*, 343.

⁹¹Emmeline B. Wells, "My Testimony," in Preston Nibley, comp., *Faith Promoting Stories* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1943), 138.

⁹²Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon*, 348 note 55, and 339.

⁹³Quinn, *Origins of Power*, 196.

ing body of the Church and should have determined Joseph Smith's successor.⁹⁴

The LDS Church has legitimate concerns about being misrepresented by writers, whether it is done deliberately or otherwise. However, as Dale Morgan pointed out years ago in a letter to the First Presidency's secretary, the only way to clear up misrepresentations is by "appeal to the record. In the long run the record will correct itself. . . . So long as the Church permits access to its archives only when it can control the fruits of the scholarship, so long must it be content to be misrepresented and misunderstood."⁹⁵ The Institute of Religion authors of *Church History in the Fulness of Times* explain that they disregard statements by David Whitmer, Martin Harris, and Emma Smith about the Book of Mormon translation process because they were "sketchy accounts," "often contradictory," and "recorded much later."⁹⁶ By these criteria all the retrospective accounts of the transfiguration should also have been ignored.

CONCLUSION

The late stories about the transfiguration do not mean that someone willfully lied or manipulated records. A recent analysis about the problems of knowing the historical Jesus may be a helpful analogy:

Thus the Jesus tradition contains three major layers of strata: an *original* stratum retaining at least the essential core of words and deeds, events and happenings from the life of the historical Jesus; a *developed* stratum, changing the data for new situations, novel prob-

⁹⁴Ibid., 192-98.

⁹⁵Dale Morgan, Letter to Joseph Anderson, 20 April 1948, in John Phillip Walker, ed., *Dale Morgan on Early Mormonism: Correspondence and a New History* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1986), 157.

⁹⁶Church Educational System, *Church History in the Fulness of Times*, 58. For more on the translation process see James E. Lancaster, "The Method of Translation of the Book of Mormon," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 3 (1983): 51-61; and Richard Van Wagoner and Steve Walker, "Joseph Smith: 'The Gift of Seeing,'" *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 15 (Summer 1982): 49-68.

lems, and unforeseen circumstances; and a *created* stratum, not only composing new sayings and new stories but above all composing larger complexes, textual juxtapositions, and narrative sequences which changed their contents by those very framings. My interest here is in that *original* layer, in the immediate situation of the historical Jesus, but I reject absolutely any pejorative language for those other two strata.⁹⁷

A full, historical account of the events of 8 August 1844, in Nauvoo, Illinois, will never be recalled exactly; but it should be possible to tell the story better. We seem to have another case where "churchmen embellished the events to teach specific lessons, and professional historians failed to seriously question the documents and their interpretation."⁹⁸ The story, as told, is another demonstration that "our historians were perhaps unduly respectful of certain authorities, placing credence in accounts that should have been subjected to critical analysis."⁹⁹

The banner of the *Times and Seasons* carried the words "Truth will prevail," a slogan famous to the LDS people since the landing of Mormon missionaries in England in 1837. An article copied from the New York *Prophet* by the *Times and Seasons* in September 1844 started with a pertinent quotation from Milton: "Though all the winds of doctrine were let loose upon the earth, so truth be in the field, we do injuriously by licensing and

⁹⁷John Dominic Crossan, "Jesus the Peasant," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 26 (Spring 1993): 158; italics his.

⁹⁸Mark R. Grandstaff, "Having More Learning than Sense: William E. McLellin and the Book of Commandments Revisited," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 26 (Winter 1993): 37. Grandstaff is talking of the mistreatment of William E. McLellin in LDS history, but "those who desired to make McLellin into an example of criticism, irreverence, and apostasy may have done their history a great disservice."

⁹⁹Leonard J. Arrington, "The Search for Truth and Meaning in Mormon History" in *Personal Voices: A Celebration of Dialogue*, edited by Mary L. Bradford (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1987), 66. Arrington is discussing Mormon historiography up to the 1940s. He observes, "Most of our Latter-day Saint histories and the monographs which have been written from them represent what might be called 'documentary histories.' They attempt to give an account of the important events of the past without critical analysis or interpretation."

prohibiting to mis-doubt her strength. Let her and falsehood grapple."¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰As quoted by John A. Eaton, "Magna Est Veritas Et Prevalebit" [Truth is Mighty and Will Prevail], *Times and Seasons* 5 (September 1844): 642.

From Tolerance to “House Cleaning”: LDS Leadership Response to Maori Marriage Customs, 1890-1990

Marjorie Newton

While Mormon missionary work began among the Pakeha (Europeans) in New Zealand as early as 1854, only sporadic attempts were made to preach to the Maori before 1883. From that time, Mormon missionaries systematically tried to learn the Maori language and convert Maori, with considerable success. By the end of 1886, there were 2,292 Latter-day Saints in the Australasian Mission, 2,055 (89.7 percent) of them Maori, and approximately fourteen pairs of American Mormon missionaries were giving pastoral care to the Maori converts who were organised into districts and branches.¹ As the number of Maori converts

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¹John Ephraim Magleby Papers, 1885-1937, New Zealand mission journal, introduction to volume 4 (1888), microfilm of holograph, Historical Department Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter cited as LDS Church Archives). These figures also include a small number of

increased, the question of how compatibly some aspects of Maori culture fitted with gospel teachings began to exercise the minds of successive mission presidents. During the next hundred years, three aspects of Maori culture in particular offended some Mormon leaders at different times and for differing reasons. These were the *haka* (ceremonial dance), the *tangihanga* (funeral rites), and Maori marriage customs. While the cultural clash over the *tangi* has been the most prominent, the focus of this paper is Maori marriage customs, which have probably provided the deepest and most persistent problems for American Church leaders in New Zealand.²

Tribal and regional variations are important and must be kept in mind, but some generalisations about Maori social and marriage customs in the pre- and early post-European period can be drawn. While Maori placed a high value on marriage, children, and family life, the first Christian, and later the Mormon, missionaries were often shocked at what they perceived as moral laxity in Maori society. In reality, pre-European Maori tribal society had strict standards of modesty and morality and effective sanctions for their violation. Much of this carried over into the European era.

Premarital sex was regarded as normal, and most anthropologists agree that considerable sexual freedom was allowed young people of both sexes.³ Only daughters of high *rangatira* (chiefs),

European Saints in Australia. Many more than 237 Europeans had been baptized in both Australia and New Zealand, but most had emigrated to Utah by this date.

²Cultural dissonance between LDS leaders and Maori Saints over the *tangihanga* has been discussed by anthropologist Eric G. Schwimmer, "The Cognitive Aspect of Culture Change," *Journal of Polynesian Society* 72, no.2 (June 1965), 149-81. More general and historical aspects are dealt with in my doctoral dissertation, currently being prepared under supervision of the School of Studies in Religion at the University of Sydney.

³While Margaret Mead's account of adolescent sexual freedom in Samoa has been challenged by Derek Freeman, *Margaret Mead and Samoa: The Making and Unmaking of an Anthropological Myth* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1983), Freeman makes it clear that his objections are to Mead's methodology and to her attribution of customs of Eastern Polynesia (specifically, Tahiti and the Cook Islands) to Western Polynesia (see pp. 227, 234, 284). New Zealand Maori culture is acknowledged to be Eastern rather than Western Polynesian; indeed, most modern anthropologists agree that New Zealand was

who were often *puhi* (ceremonially dedicated) or *taumau* (betrothed, often in childhood), were expected to be virgins at marriage. "Sexual intercourse was not a sin, though it was a social offence when it occurred between the wrong persons," writes anthropologist Bruce Biggs. "The freedom allowed to women however ceased abruptly on marriage, and adultery involving a married woman was a serious crime."⁴

Marriage customs were less formal and ritualistic than those of the Christian churches. Matches were arranged through formal discussions between extended families, though prompting from the interested parties was common. However, there does not appear to have been any kind of formal marriage service before European contact. "The endeavour to demonstrate an elaborate marriage ritual for the Maori, even when the couple were of the highest rank, seems to have failed for lack of corroboration," Biggs asserts.⁵

According to Biggs, the essential parts of the marriage contract were ensuring that the whole community knew that a young couple were entering a permanent relationship and that there was general consensus and agreement to the match, achieved by formal discussion. Once both families agreed to the marriage, the bride was either escorted to her husband's home and formally given into his care, or the young couple simply set up house

first settled from a "homeland" region in central East Polynesia. See, for example, Geoffrey Irwin, *The Prehistoric Exploration and Colonization of the Pacific* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). Statements by modern anthropologists about Maori adolescent sexual freedom (see, for example, Bruce Biggs, *Maori Marriage: An Essay in Reconstruction* [Wellington: Polynesian Society, 1960] and Joan Metge, *The Maoris of New Zealand: Rautahi* [London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1976] are corroborated by numerous journal entries written by Mormon missionaries in the 1880s and 1890s. Unlike Mead in Samoa, the Mormon missionaries lived with the Maori people and many of them learned to speak Maori fluently.

⁴Biggs, *Maori Marriage*, 15.

⁵Biggs traces all references to Maori marriage rites to a paper on Maori marriage customs given to the Auckland Institute in 1903 by noted anthropologist Elsdon Best. He points out that Best never suggested that formal rites characterised any but marriages of high-born couples, and suggests that Best's informants were telling him of post-Christian contact customs. *Ibid.*, 41.

together. In the former case, the families exchanged gifts and then celebrated together with an elaborate feast. These social customs were important. As Biggs points out, "The fact that such observance did not consist of a sacrament or other ritual ceremony need not have lessened its effectiveness as a symbol of the marriage contract."⁶

Dissolution of a marriage was correspondingly simple and cheap. As there were no legal documents or ritual to be cancelled out and no dowry to be returned, marriages could end by mutual agreement. The most common grounds seem to have been childlessness (because children were so highly valued and desired), adultery, or desertion. In the two latter cases, the family of the injured party would extract compensation (*utu*, satisfaction or payment) from the other family by a forceful act of *murū* (plunder). Such a raid "effectively dissolved the union, leaving both free to make other matches," writes anthropologist Joan Metge.⁷ Many Maori chiefs also practised polygyny, often taking up to four wives.

Church of England (1814), Wesleyan (1823), and Roman Catholic (1838) missions had converted large numbers of Maori during the half-century before the Mormon missionaries in New Zealand turned their attention to the native race. Many tribes initially accepted Christianity enthusiastically; but after the Maori Wars of the 1860s, which left the native population deprived of much of their land, disenchantment with the Christian missionaries (most of whom aided the British regiments during the conflict) was widespread. Several Maori churches, usually millennial and centred on a Maori prophet, developed in succeeding decades. As is common in such situations, syncretism resulted and elements of Christian doctrine and Maori tradition were blended to the satisfaction of the Maori.⁸ The Latter-day Saint doctrine of celestial marriage simply added another element to the amalgam.

⁶Ibid., 42.

⁷Metge, *The Maoris of New Zealand*, 21.

⁸Bronwyn Elmsore, *Like Them That Dream: The Maori and the Old Testament* (Tauranga, N.Z.: Moana Press, 1985) and *Mana From Heaven: A Century of Maori Prophets in New Zealand* (Tauranga, N.Z.: Moana Press, 1989).

Because the original Christian missionaries encouraged Christian marriage services, many Maori couples were married by either European or Maori Christian ministers. The government allowed but did not require Maori couples to be married by Christian ceremonies, and Maori marriages were not even registered until the second decade of the twentieth century.⁹ Thus Maori were free to marry either by tribal law and custom or by Christian marriage rites, and were equally free to “mix and match” elements of both Christian and Maori culture.

In the 1880s—and, indeed, for some years after—the Mormon missionaries expressed no concerns about Maori polygyny. “[Brother X] was baptised at Taonoke [in April 1884], also his two wives and other persons,” reads one account of early missionary work; because plural marriage was both a recognised doctrine and current practice of Mormons, this reference to the plural wives of the convert is almost casual in its tone of acceptance.¹⁰ However, many missionaries were concerned about the lack of a formal, Christian marriage ceremony, and some began to excommunicate those Maori members who married “Maori fashion.”

On Sunday, 8 July 1888, two young women from Tamaki requested rebaptism. Both had been baptised earlier but were now living in Maori marriages—“most of the Maories [sic] are,” wrote Elder Nelson S. Bishop ruefully. The women had not been excommunicated, but the missionaries taught them that they were committing the sin of adultery. Bishop visited their nonmember husbands and explained to the men that

in order to be rebaptized [their wives] would have to be married, But

⁹Maori marriages were registered from 1911, but were registered separately from Pakeha marriages until 1952. From 1911, Maori could be married legally under either the Maori Land Act or under the Marriage Act. Civil registration of Maori births and deaths was not compulsory until 1913. Registration of births and deaths of European settlers began in 1848, marriages from 1854. Some church records exist for the period before civil registration began.

¹⁰R. H. Manihera, “Account of Missionary Work in N.Z. in 1880s,” microfilm of typed copy of holograph given to Louis G. Hoagland in August 1918, in Elwin W. Jensen, Papers, [n.d.], LDS Church Archives. In all instances, names of individual members have been withheld to preserve the privacy of living descendants.

the men refused, saying they preferred to live as they were. I told them that when Maories had no law from God, they were justified by doing as they did, but now they had the law of God, and would be judged by that law and by that law they were living in sin, but they still refused to be married by our Church, I then told them they could be married by their minister, or the law of the land, but still they refused.

The women were placed in a difficult situation. Bishop asked one of them what she would do if the mission president, William Paxman, ruled that she should be "cut off" from the Church. "She said she was not able to leave her husband," he recorded sadly.¹¹

The situation was further complicated because the Mormon missionaries were not registered marriage celebrants in New Zealand before 1903. "Elder E. F. Richards received a letter from the [mission] president, concerning the law of marriage in this country," wrote John Ephraim Magleby in his journal in August 1886. "We the Elders are allowed to marry Maories only; as there is a strict law regarding half casts and Europeans."¹² "Half-castes" were numerous, given that intermarriage, or at least miscegenation, had been common in New Zealand since the 1830s.¹³ And many Maori converts to Mormonism had Pakeha ancestry.¹⁴ "The Maories wanted me to baptise and marry a couple. but I didn't," wrote Elder Bishop in December 1886. "In the first place he was

¹¹Nelson Spicer Bishop, *Journals, 1886-1889*, 8 July 1888, microfilm of holograph, LDS Church Archives.

¹²Magleby, *Journal*, 12 August 1886, 55.

¹³As the European settlers assumed that the Maori race would eventually be "amalgamated" or absorbed by intermarriage, little social stigma attached to children of mixed race. M. P. K. Sorrenson, "Maori and Pakeha," in Geoffrey W. Rice, ed., *The Oxford History of New Zealand: Second Edition* (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1992), 142; Sorrenson, "How to Civilize Savages: Some 'Answers' from Nineteenth-Century New Zealand," *New Zealand Journal of History* 9, no. 2 (1975): 97-103; Keith Sinclair suggests other perspectives in "Why Are Race Relations in New Zealand Better Than in South Africa, South Australia or South Dakota?", *New Zealand Journal of History* 5, no. 2 (1971): 121-27. No statistics on the number of half-castes were kept until 1886.

¹⁴Elsdon Gardner and Alice Gardner, eds., "Day Journal of John W. Gardner in New Zealand LDS Mission, 17 July 1901 to 23 January 1904," 14 August 1901, (n.p., n.d.), LDS Church Archives.

a half cast and the law of the land wont allow us to marry anyone but Maories. And in the second place he had been cut of from the Church for Adultery And I wouldnt do it without the consent of the president of the district.”¹⁵

Eighteen months later, at a mission conference in April 1888, the missionaries met in council “to consider the marriage question,” wrote Bishop. “And we thought it best to allow the [native] pres[idents] of Branches to do all of the marrying on account of our not being able to marry half casts &c (the law of the land would not allow us to marry any white blood).”¹⁶ As the Maori branch presidents were not legal marriage celebrants either, this decision did nothing more than shield American elders from the perceived threat of prosecution for inadvertently performing marriages for individuals of mixed Maori and Pakeha ancestry.

Thus, by the turn of the century, the situation was proving confusing for missionary and convert alike. The conflict of Maori tradition with the Mormon missionaries’ firm belief in the necessity for a western marriage ceremony and their ineligibility to perform such a ceremony for most of their converts, together with the Church’s official retreat from polygamy, proved a considerable headache for the puzzled mission presidents.

Ezra Foss Richards from Farmington, Utah, served his first mission among the Maori from November 1884 to April 1888; during this mission, he helped translate the Book of Mormon into the Maori language. A son of Apostle Franklin D. Richards, he returned to New Zealand ten years later (September 1896-January 1898) as the last president of the original Australasian Mission.¹⁷ Disturbed by the marriage problem, President Richards finally wrote to the First Presidency (Wilford Woodruff, George Q. Cannon, and Joseph F. Smith) requesting a ruling. Their reply was dated 19 March 1897:

Where couples living together as man and wife have observed the requirement of their people, tribe or nation, their union should be

¹⁵Bishop, Journal, 11 December 1886.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 8 April 1888.

¹⁷In October 1897 (effective 1 January 1898), the Australasian Mission was divided into the Australian and New Zealand Missions.

respected by our brethren. Where the Maori Saints observe the national custom so far as marriage is concerned but have not been united in any Christian church, they should not be excommunicated because they have not done so. The elders should be instructed to counsel them in kindness to have an elder perform the ceremony so that there may be no cloud on their union. The advantages of doing this should be explained to them but if they cannot understand the necessity for such a course and are keeping the covenants they have already made, no farther [sic] action should be taken.¹⁸

These instructions were clear as far as they went and seem remarkably free from prejudice or a paternalistic determination to impose "higher" laws on the Maori. But even Maori who had taken part in western marriage ceremonies had no qualms about dissolving them at will according to tribal custom. The First Presidency's counsel was far too simple to cope with the realities of Maori "divorce" and the subsequent apparently casual entrance into new unions. Were those following this native custom also to be tolerated, or were they to be seen as not "keeping the covenants they [had] already made" and subjected to Church discipline?

A few months after receiving the First Presidency's reply, Richards wrote again, describing the "peculiar case" of [Brother Y] and asking for counsel.¹⁹ A very active member and highly respected *rangatira*, Brother Y had taken a second wife at the suggestion of his first wife, whose health apparently precluded her from bearing further children.²⁰ Previous mission authorities

¹⁸George F. Reynolds for First Presidency, Letter to Ezra F. Richard, 19 March 1897, Manuscript History of the New Zealand Mission; received in New Zealand Mission office, Auckland, 1 May 1897, but added to mission history under date of 8 April 1897.

¹⁹Ezra Foss Richards, Letter to Wilford Woodruff, datelined Poverty Bay, 13 September 1897, in Richards, Papers, 1885-1927, Box 2, fd. 5, microfilm, LDS Church Archives.

²⁰In Maori culture, "barrenness was considered grounds for divorce or taking a second wife." The family of a woman who died or who proved to be barren felt obligated to offer the husband a younger kinswoman as a second wife. Metge, *The Maoris of New Zealand*, 10-11, and "The Maori Family," in Stewart Houston, ed., *Marriage and the Family in New Zealand* (Wellington: Sweet & Maxwell, 1970), 113. Biggs states that a barren woman was often the one to suggest a

regarded this arrangement not as Maori polygamy but as adultery, and excommunicated the man. The first wife took their two children to Utah in 1894 with the first—and only—company of Maori to gather. “In as much as he has two women and has a family by each—one being in Zion and the other here—and the maoris not counseled to gather at present and he and his legal wife not having been legally seperated [sic], what disposition would you suggest my making of the case?” pleaded Richards. He omitted the additional complication that Brother Y had not been “legally” married to his first wife either.

The First Presidency’s reply was cautious. “Regarding Bro. [Y’s] case, the brethern [sic] feel that great care will have to be used lest the susceptibilities of the natives be hurt. Inasmuch as his wife is here, could he not obtain a divorce from her on the ground of desertion; And if so would that be the best and wisest course to pursue.”²¹ Richards approved. “I have felt since first hearing of the [Y] case that the manner [you] suggested would be the most likely way out, and that the best results would be reached,” he wrote, “and I think perhaps it can be brought about if outside relatives don’t intercept it but there are many feeders to these Maori matches it will have to be worked with great care.”²²

Richards’s diary does not give a conclusion to this complex story. We get a later glimpse of the no doubt confused but still loyal Brother Y in a few years when Ephraim Magleby, serving as New Zealand mission president from February 1900 to August 1902, recorded in his journal: “Thursday. Aug 29/01 Last night I took up a labor with [Brother Y] as to his being baptized. . . . For some time he has been wanting to come [back] into the church but [was] refused on the ground that he was not married but from the fact that his former wife has left and again that he has never been married to his first wife neither to this one with whom he is now living.” Magleby indicated that he also had written to the First

second marriage. Biggs, *Maori Marriage*, 58, 73.

²¹First Presidency, Letter to Ezra F. Richards, 6 November 1897; as copied into Richards, Journal, 6 December 1897.

²²Richards, Letter to Woodruff, copy in Richards, Journal, 17 December 1897.

Presidency about this case. "No answer coming," he continued his journal entry, "we have worked on our own jud[g]ment, thus he and his wife were both baptized."²³

Magleby had a genuine love for the Maori and great understanding of and sympathy with their culture. Two faithful women, daughters of an outstanding Maori leader, had been excommunicated under a previous regime for leaving their husbands. Magleby rebaptised both. "We have determined not to ask them to consent to return [to their former husbands] . . . having no love for them," he wrote.²⁴ Nevertheless, Magleby preached strong sermons on virtue, cleanliness, and chastity.²⁵

However, such case-by-case decisions did not resolve the larger marriage problem. Magleby tried to explain the complexities of Maori marriage customs to the First Presidency:

First a couple are married properly with general consent. . . . In a year or such . . . they divorce themselves, in Maori style, are given in marriage to another, remember without a divorce; which by the way is hard to get legally. Now in cases like this, where the law neither speaks for or against, could we in the eyes of the Church sustain the mode of living and retain them as members or would it be considered a case of adultery? We would not dare to remarry them as a Church nor can they be remarried by any Church or law without a divorce save the Maori tradition and . . . a [European] divorce is almost out of reach of most Maoris.

Again, we as a Church make a union. Time proves it to be no union at all, only a mere form of ceremony as parties often separate. In other cases, parents interfere, being dissatisfied, thus causing a separation. Here is the question. Can we either by Church or Maori law dissolve the union and give them to another in marriage? Heretofore, such cases have been disfellowshipped and most cases cut off while their hearts are with the work. . .

These questions may seem simple but we have them to deal with frequently and I am not clear upon them hence the reason for making inquiries.²⁶

²³Magleby, Journal, 29 August 1901.

²⁴*Ibid.*, 13 October 1900.

²⁵"Day Journal of John W. Gardner," 16 August 1901.

²⁶John E. Magleby, Letter to George F. Reynolds, New Zealand Mission Minutes, 16 April 1900, microfilm, LDS Church Archives.

By the end of 1903 there were 4,548 Maori members,²⁷ and there were still no clear-cut guidelines for dealing with the large numbers who were not legally married according to LDS doctrine. Magleby's successor was Charles B. Bartlett (1902-05) from Vernal, Utah, who, like Magleby, had served a prior mission in New Zealand during the 1880s. During his tenure, the Church's representatives were officially authorized as marriage celebrants in 1903, but this fact had little effect nor, apparently, did governmental attempts to regulate Maori marriages in order to simplify the work of the land courts.²⁸

Most mission presidents in New Zealand developed a resigned and reluctant acceptance of the realities of Maori marriages. President James N. Lambert (1916-20) recorded having a long talk with an active member who had left his first wife and was living with another woman. "The truth of the matter is," Lambert recorded in his diary in 1917, "when he was married first, his marriage was a Maori one which was consent of all parties concerned. While this is binding to the extent that all children born are his heirs, he can marry according to the law of the land another woman and she will be his legal wife. [Brother C] knows this. He don't want to repudiate his first wife and the one whom the Church recognises for after all the marriage ceremony of the

²⁷Charles B. Bartlett, "The New Zealand Mission," *Millennial Star* 66 (11 August 1904): 499.

²⁸Formal marriages made it easier for the Native Land Court (established 1865) to determine inheritance rights and legal ownership of land, an extremely complicated problem in New Zealand where most tribal land was jointly owned. The Native Land Court converted Maori communal and customary ownership to title derived from the Crown. Paper title deeds were, of course, easily negotiable; the objective was to make it easier for British settlers to obtain, by purchase or lease, such land as the Maori retained after widespread land confiscation following their defeat in the Maori Wars of the 1860s. Seduced by the easy money obtainable by selling land to Pakeha, many Maori sought to have their claims to land validated; unless their claim had been cleared by the Land Court, they could neither sell nor lease. The peripatetic land court hearings became occasions for large tribal gatherings often accompanied by feasting and drunkenness. The Mormon missionaries (like ministers of other denominations) not infrequently took advantage of land court sittings to preach to large assemblies of potential converts.

Maoris is just as binding in the sight of the Almighty as that of the white man's."²⁹ Eighteen months later, Lambert was visited by a branch president who had, in Lambert's words, "been getting on a spree" for some years. "He wanted to be forgiven and continue to hold his position," Lambert wrote. "Promised to keep himself straight. . . . Most of the menfolks around here are in the same condition as he is in so there is not much choice. Decided to leave him as he is for the present."³⁰ President George S. Taylor (1920-23) also took the situation somewhat for granted. "Brother [Z] and his wife . . . have been living together for 5 months, Maori fashion and were desirous of being married legally, Saturday they secured a liscence [sic] and this afternoon I performed the Marriage Ceremony."³¹

Although not all couples cooperated so willingly with Church regulations, many did. Julian R. Stephens and his companion were instructed by the Mission Office in 1925 to survey all families in their district, ascertain their marital status "and marry, baptize, bless as necessary." "It was quite an interesting thing," Stephens recorded. "We had a number of marriages where grandchildren were present at the ceremony."³²

The opening of the Hawaiian Temple in 1919 caused further problems for the Mormon mission presidents. Quite a few Maori couples desired to visit the temple and had the means to go. Magleby, during his third mission to New Zealand and his second term as mission president (1928-32), worked tirelessly on the organisational details and government red tape involved in sending groups of Maori to Hawaii. But some problems were even harder to resolve. "Wrote a letter to [Hawaii Mission] Prest Wm M. Waddoups—with refference to Temple marriages, for our young people—whether they should carry a licence or can they

²⁹James N. Lambert, Journals, 1916-19, 15 January 1917, 155, microfilm of holograph, LDS Church Archives.

³⁰*Ibid.*, 27 June 1918, 553-54.

³¹George S. Taylor, Journal, Book 2, 16 May 1921, 149, Manuscripts and Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo.

³²Julian Rackham Stephens, Autobiography, 1981, 22, microfilm of Book of Remembrance, LDS Church Archives.

get one in [Hawaii] . . ." he recorded in his journal at Christmas 1928. Concerned about established couples whose marriage had been arranged "Maori fashion" many years before, he asked if such couples could have their marriages sealed in the temple despite the lack of a formal marriage certificate. "The Marriage question in N.Z. is complicated," he told Waddoups.³³

Waddoups's reply was predictable. Young people could get their licence in Honolulu and be married in the temple. People living with each other but not married by a civil or religious ceremony would not be allowed in the temple. Magleby accepted this verdict reluctantly. "This [policy] rather works a hard ship on this mission—as there are so many who have been married and left each other and have chosen another pardner [sic] outside the marriage vow," he wrote regretfully.³⁴

The previous November, Magleby had written to President Heber J. Grant asking "whether or not we may baptize one man who has been and one who now is living in plural marriage."³⁵ Grant's reply was unequivocal. "No man living with more than one wife can be baptized into the Church. But those who have heretofore lived so and will now discontinue doing so and will live with none but their legal wives [legal, presumably, according to European law] would be fit subjects for baptism." However, Grant added, "if the man [living in plural marriage] has proven himself worthy during his life he can have his work done in the Temple after he has passed away, and his wives can also be sealed to him & his children."³⁶

By World War II, little had changed. Although both churches and government now expected Maori couples to formalise their marriages, either by religious or civil rites, a significant number of unions remained informal. Few Maori, LDS or not, bothered with formal divorce, which was both difficult to obtain and extremely costly,³⁷ before entering a new union. Census statistics show that

³³Magleby, Journal, 6 December 1928.

³⁴Ibid., 26 February 1929.

³⁵Ibid., 2 November 1928.

³⁶Heber J. Grant, Letter to Magleby, copied in Magleby, Journal, 26 December 1928, 125.

legal divorce rates among Maori were considerably lower than among Pakeha couples in New Zealand; however, sociologists feel that these statistics were probably influenced as much by economic factors and by the fact that many Maori marriages were *de facto* in the first place (and therefore not subject to legal dissolution) as by casual Maori attitudes.³⁷ President Matthew Cowley, later an apostle, administering the New Zealand mission virtually single-handed during the war years, had neither time, manpower, nor inclination to force Maori members to abandon their traditional ways, and made no attempt to impose Church discipline on his native flock. His successor, A. Reed Halversen (1945-48) was equally disinclined to deal with the question since he found his time fully occupied reorganising the branches and reclaiming scattered members after six long years of war.

President Gordon Claridge Young (1948-51), like most of his predecessors a former New Zealand missionary, arrived in Auckland in 1948 with his wife and two youngest children. After becoming acquainted with current conditions in the mission, Young embarked on a program of what he referred to as "cleaning house." Writing in May 1950 to David O. McKay, then a counselor in the First Presidency, he confessed himself "disappointed" at the condition of the mission. "To find adultery rampant among our people to the extent of about 70% of our members made me feel the necessity of drastic action being taken," he wrote.³⁹ Young, like most New Zealand mission presidents, had previously served among the Maori and was almost as well

³⁷Alan Holden, *Family Law and You* (Dunedin, N.Z.: John McIndoe, 1987), 7. Legal divorces were financially beyond the reach of many Pakeha as well as Maori. Only 33 divorces were finalised in New Zealand in 1897; amendments to the Divorce Act in 1920 made divorces more easily obtainable but no less expensive; there were still only 614 divorces in New Zealand in 1926 among a population of nearly 1.5 million. See Eric Olssen, "Towards a New Society," in Rice, *The Oxford History of New Zealand*, 280.

³⁸Roderick Phillips, *Divorce in New Zealand* (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1981), 96.

³⁹Gordon C. Young, Letter to David O. McKay, 12 May 1950, carbon copy of typescript in Gordon Claridge Young, Papers, 1948-72, microfilm, LDS Church Archives.

acquainted as Magleby and Cowley with their habits, beliefs, and customs. Unlike Magleby and Cowley, however, he did not recognise Maori cultural practices as legitimate and embarked on a series of warnings, threats, and ultimately Church court actions. "I could not feel that these people after some of them being the fifth Generation in the Church should be allowed the leeway of at any time leaving their wives and husbands and living with other men and women," he explained to McKay, in justifying what he himself referred to as his "crusade."⁴⁰

In later years, Young claimed to have "straightened out" some 168 couples, though, he said, only a small number were actually excommunicated. "I only had to do about three before they stopped," he stated.⁴¹

He saw himself as something of a martyr because of his high standards: "I wasn't liked," he recalled twenty years later. "It would be very foolish to say that I was loved because I wasn't, I was disliked and in many cases hated because I cracked down on immorality."⁴²

"It was necessary at times to be rather, apparently, sharp, and I suppose, to them, a little hard," he wrote to McKay in 1951. "But . . . it is really gratifying to see the way so many members are getting their houses in order . . . Invariably . . . their feelings toward their Church have been improved."⁴³

⁴⁰Young's reference to "five generations" is hyperbolic. He appears to have calculated the number of generations on the common misconception among later American mission presidents that the gospel had been preached to the Maori for over one hundred years. It seems highly unlikely that any adult Maori Church member could be fifth-generation Latter-day Saint in 1950. Fourth generation might be possible where two generations of adults were baptised in the 1880s, but third generation seems more likely. Since it is not clear that Young would have been more tolerant for first-generation members or even for new converts, the question of how long these Maori had been members of the Church (and presumably how thoroughly acculturated they were) is somewhat moot.

⁴¹Gordon Claridge Young, Oral History, interviewed by Lauritz G. Petersen, 28 August 1972, 21, Moyle Oral History Program, LDS Church Archives.

⁴²*Ibid.*, 20.

⁴³Gordon C. Young, Letter to David O. McKay, 24 April 1951, carbon copy in Gordon Claridge Young Papers.

With hindsight, Young claimed that his actions were a necessary preparation for the New Zealand Temple and ultimate stakehood. "To . . . have stakes and a temple there meant that these practices had to stop. . . I just didn't let this adultery situation go on."⁴⁴ Young treasured a few letters in which some leading Maori members acknowledged the necessity for his actions, one even asserting that Young had done more for the New Zealand Mission than any other president, including, presumably, the legendary Matthew Cowley.⁴⁵

The New Zealand Temple was dedicated in 1958 during the presidency of Ariel S. Ballif (1955-58), brother-in-law of Marion G. Romney and a former principal of the Maori Agricultural College. Despite Young's claims to have "cleaned house," Ballif found many members still living in "Maori marriages." "I performed many marriages for Maori families who had been married Maori style for twenty-five years," he said in an interview recorded in 1981. "The Government said they couldn't have their claims to their property validated unless they were legally married. So many of them had the marriage ceremonies performed. . . ." Apparently land court requirements finally accomplished what threats of excommunication had failed to do. However, those who were recalcitrant were excommunicated. "We had to excommunicate quite a number of people . . . We held elders courts and gave the accused a chance, . . . and then had to cut them off from the Church, because they couldn't justifiably be permitted to remain on the Church records with the things that they were doing," he explained.⁴⁶

⁴⁴Young, Oral History, 52.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, 21.

⁴⁶Ariel S. Ballif, Oral History, interviewed by R. Lanier Britsch, 1973, typescript, 47, 38, Moyle Oral History Program, LDS Church Archives. As membership records and church court minutes are confidential, there is no way of checking the actual number of New Zealand Saints disciplined by either Young or Ballif; but from their own descriptions, Ballif apparently excommunicated more members than Young. Ballif did not completely resolve the problem either. Five years after his term as mission president, a Pakeha couple was assigned to work with unmarried Maori couples; where necessary, they even helped them raise money for divorce proceedings in order to make legal marriage possible. Quarterly

To this day, Young, and to a much lesser extent Ballif, are regarded ambivalently by some Maori Saints. Fostered somewhat by his own statements, Young's reputation for having prepared the mission for stakehood and a temple lives on simultaneously with deep pain at his disciplinary actions. Those Maori Latter-day Saints who have chosen to forsake or give less emphasis to their "Maoriness" fully accept the necessity of Young's and Ballif's actions. Others, particularly since the nation-wide resurgence of Maori culture which burgeoned in the 1970s, struggle with mixed feelings as they attempt to reconcile *taha Maori* (the Maori worldview) and gospel culture, still decidedly American-flavoured despite its aspirations to universality. These Saints look back on the Young era with mixed feelings. While acknowledging, accepting, and living the gospel principles involved,⁴⁷ and even crediting Young with preparing New Zealand for stakehood and a temple, they nevertheless deplore his harsh treatment of what they still perceive as Maori polygamy rather than adultery. Implicit in their feelings seems to be a consciousness that the *principle* of plural marriage, unlike the practice, has never been repudiated by the Church.⁴⁸

Today, according to Metge, the Maori of New Zealand "accept legal registration, by authorized persons in the presence of witnesses, as the normal and proper way to establish a marriage. At the same time, they neither condemn nor ostracize couples who are not legally married. . . . Maoris argue that if Pakehas had not introduced registration, *de facto* unions would be valid by Maori standards." Metge also notes that the term "Maori marriage" has been reserved in New Zealand law, since 1952, for *de facto* unions "established by mutual consent between persons not already married. Today these are valid only for purposes of suc-

Historical Report of the New Zealand Mission, 31 March 1963.

⁴⁷For example, William Roberts, former president of the Auckland Stake, reported that in ten years as stake president (1960-70) he was never called on to complete the dissolution of a temple marriage for either Maori or non-Maori Latter-day Saints. William Roberts, Oral History, interviewed by Charles Ursenbach, 1976-77, typescript, 43, Moyle Oral History Program, LDS Church Archives.

⁴⁸Name withheld (Maori high priest), interviewed by Marjorie Newton, 13 October 1993; notes in my possession.

cession and if contracted before 1952."⁴⁹ She points out that in everyday usage, Maori also apply the term "Maori marriage" to unions involving at least one partner who is legally married to someone else. The latter variety are the most numerous; the former are, of course, decreasing every year.

While the great majority of New Zealand Maori Latter-day Saints today conform to Church and government requirements, LDS indigenous members in the Cook Islands district of the New Zealand Mission were subjected to a similar "house-cleaning" as recently as 1989. "There are many members of the Church who have been living in a de facto relationship which is nothing more than cohabitation," wrote Mission President Herschel N. Pedersen (1987-90). "They have been living this way for many years. The Cook Islands Government does not recognise it as a marriage. In my own mind I consider it as immorality, therefore we have proceeded to hold courts." Feeling that it was his responsibility to "cleanse the inner vessel first," Pedersen proceeded to hold 113 disciplinary courts during 1988-89, some couples proceeding through the stages of probation and disfellowshipment to excommunication. "Most came back to the Church," reported Pedersen.⁵⁰ At least some Cook Island Latter-day Saints, however, have a different impression. "We were shocked," reports a Rarotongan member who served a mission in Australia and later returned to Australia to live. "Some of my friends were excommunicated for adultery when President Pedersen was there. But they were married our way. Our Government does recognise our marriages. We were shocked," she repeats. "My friends don't come to Church any more."⁵¹

For one hundred years, then, the marriage question among the Maori of New Zealand has perturbed, puzzled, and worried successive LDS mission presidents. Since World War II, Church leaders have felt that it was necessary to take an increasingly hard

⁴⁹Metge, *The Maoris of New Zealand*, 139.

⁵⁰Annual Reports of the New Zealand Mission, 1988 and 1989, LDS Church Archives.

⁵¹Name withheld (Cook Islands Maori member) interviewed by Marjorie Newton, 5 December 1993; notes in my possession.

line with traditional Maori marriage forms, and that strict obedience to Church standards should be required of Maori after several generations have been taught that Maori marriage customs are unacceptable in the post-polygamy LDS Church.

The reconciliation of deeply ingrained cultural *mores* with gospel principles is never easy for Church leaders to achieve; neither is it a simple matter for converts of any background to relinquish their traditional ways where these conflict with universal gospel laws. The marriage question is a difficult one. Few would argue that there should be special exemptions or different laws for particular ethnic groups, but perhaps the transition among the Maori could have been made more sympathetically; for example, long-standing Maori marriages might have been accepted for live temple endowments and sealings after the Hawaiian Temple opened in 1919, at least until 1952, from which date the Maori Land Court ceased recognising new Maori customary marriages.⁵²

The problem has not entirely disappeared in New Zealand and the Cook Islands, and the question of non-western marriage customs is still relevant—and still unsolved—in other parts of the international Church as well. Legal polygyny in Papua New Guinea and some African countries, for example, is limiting missionary work in those areas. While some concessions have apparently been made in Africa, LDS missionaries in Papua New Guinea are simply instructed not to teach polygamous contacts.⁵³ This policy does not necessarily imply discrimination against or rejection of Papua New Guinea Nationals who are in polygamous marriages. The population is large and the missionary force small, and perhaps it is not yet necessary to confront the issue, either in Papua New Guinea or in Africa, Asia, and Asia Minor where polygamy is also legal. But that time will inevitably come. Perhaps,

⁵²Alan Ward, "Law and Law-Enforcement on the New Zealand Frontier, 1840-1893," *New Zealand Journal of History* 5, no. 2 (1971): 133 note 20.

⁵³According to my informal discussion with two General Authorities, the Church does not seek, but has in limited instances accepted, polygamous converts in African nations, while not permitting them to contract additional plural marriages. In this, the LDS Church is following the well-established policy of the RLDS Church.

at that point, the counsel of Wilford Woodruff will be seen as prophetic: "Where couples living together as man and wife have observed the requirements of their people, tribe or nation, their union should be respected by our brethren."

Before Stakehood: The Mission Years in Brisbane, Australia

Ross Geddes

“Send forth the elders of my church unto the nations which are afar off,” Joseph Smith recorded the Lord’s commandment in 1831. “Let them, therefore, who are among the Gentiles flee unto Zion. . . . Go ye out from among the nations, even from Babylon” (D&C 133:8, 12, 14).

Nineteenth-century members of the Church understood such language literally; indeed they could say with Joseph Smith, “We believe in the *literal* gathering of Israel . . .” (10th Article of Faith). The children of Thomas C. Stayner, Latter-day Saint captain of the ship *Tamar* based in Sydney, Australia, wrote to their father from Salt Lake City in 1853: “When do you think of leaving Babylon and com[ing] to Zion[?]”¹ Such was also the counsel of

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¹“Original Correspondence,” *Zion’s Watchman* 1 (5 August 1854): 125. Published monthly from August 1853 to May 1856 in Sydney, *Zion’s Watchman* was the official organ of the Australian/Australasian Mission (the name varied). A

Church leaders. "Let all the Saints in the colonies," wrote the presidency of the Australian Mission the following year, "excepting the American Elders, and such as shall receive private counsel to act otherwise, prepare to flee to Zion."² A few months later the Australian Saints who yet remained were assured that their fellow Saints were "gathering to Zion with songs of joy and triumph, singing, O Babylon! O Babylon! we bid thee farewell, / We're going to the Mountains of Ephraim to dwell."³

In contrast to such literalism is the current understanding of the "gathering" expressed by more recent Church leaders:

Elder Bruce R. McConkie, 26 August 1972: The gathering of Israel consists of joining the true Church, . . . and of worshipping [Christ] in the congregations of the Saints in all nations and among all peoples. . . Every nation is the gathering place for its own people.⁴

President Spencer W. Kimball, 13 April 1974: The First Presidency and the Twelve see great wisdom in the [concept of] multiple Zions, many gathering places where the Saints within their own culture and nation can act as a leaven in the building of the kingdom.⁵

President Spencer W. Kimball, 17 August 1975: And so the gathering is taking place. Korea is the gathering place for Koreans, Australia for Australians, Brazil for Brazilians, England for the English.⁶

This reinterpretation of the doctrine of the gathering, "Mormonism's oldest and most influential doctrine" according to one observer,⁷ is an obvious and well-known difference between the

complete run is available on microfilm in the Historical Department Library, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter LDS Church Library), and in the Mitchell Library, Sydney.

²"An Epistle of the Presidency of the Australian Mission," *ibid.* (14 October 1854): 154.

³[Augustus Farnham], "Editorial and General Intelligence," *ibid.*, 2 (15 May 1855): 14.

⁴Bruce R. McConkie, *Official Report of the First Mexico and Central America Area Conference . . . , 1972* (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1972), 45.

⁵In Edward L. Kimball, ed., *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982), 440.

⁶*Ibid.*

⁷William Mulder, "The Mormon Gathering," in *Mormonism and American*

Church today and that of the founding generation. What is perhaps not so well known is that the shift did not happen overnight. Between the literal gathering of the nineteenth century and the present spiritualised gathering was a sixty-year interim phase, distinct enough that its beginning and end can be dated quite precisely but containing developments that culminated in a reversal of the earlier policy. It involved mainly members living in the mission areas, particularly those outside the United States. The rest of this article will examine this interim phase of the gathering, and will then focus on one branch in one mission to illustrate how the phase affected members of the Church.

THE INTERIM PHASE OF THE GATHERING

The interim phase of the gathering began in the 1890s. In 1894, the First Presidency (then comprised of Wilford Woodruff, George Q. Cannon, and Joseph F. Smith) and Council of the Twelve decided that converts in distant missions “should not be encouraged to emigrate until they are firmly grounded in the religion by labor and experience” and that even mature members (especially if in good circumstances) “not be encouraged to emigrate to this place, where labor is so scarce.”⁸ In the October general conference in 1898, George Q. Cannon of the First Presidency announced: “There is one course that has been taken which I think will be attended with good effects, that is, counseling the Saints in the various lands where they embrace the Gospel to remain quiet for a while; to not be anxious to break up their homes to gather to Zion. This counsel is being given by the Elders now in various lands.” That this “counsel” was intended only as temporary is obvious from Cannon’s explanation that one benefit of the new policy would be that converts would have time to “gain experience and strength,” so that “they will be better able to

Culture, edited by Marvin S. Hill and James B. Allen (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), 89.

⁸Abraham H. Cannon, Diary, 21 June 1894, as quoted in V. Ben Bloxham, James R. Moss, and Larry C. Porter, *Truth Will Prevail: The Rise of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the British Isles 1837-1987* (Solihull, England: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1987), 189.

withstand the trials and difficulties they will have to contend with *when* they do emigrate to Zion.”⁹

Most scholars argue that this change in emigration policy emerged from economic factors. The Perpetual Emigrating Company had been terminated by the Edmunds-Tucker Act in 1887; little suitable land was left for further colonisation; the Church was in debt more than \$1,250,000 by 1898; and the depression of the 1890s caused production shortages, business failures, cash scarcity, and soaring unemployment to an extent unprecedented in Utah’s history.¹⁰ No doubt such economic conditions influenced the decision of Church leaders to curb immigration, but finances may not have been the only reasons for the change. Cannon’s explanation—that fewer immigrants would apostatise and return home and that larger and more mature branches in the missions would benefit missionary work—should not be discounted.¹¹

Backsliders and apostates had always figured in the emigration picture: the gospel net, after all, gathered all kinds. The number who returned to their homelands or drifted to other parts of the United States, while impossible to ascertain, was probably a significant percentage. Brigham Young might be able to say to such people, “Go in peace, sir, go and prosper if you can,”¹² but the derogatory letters, anti-Mormon publications, and verbal criti-

⁹*Report of the Semi-Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, October 1898 (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, semi-annual), 4; italics mine. Hereafter cited as *Conference Report*.

¹⁰Leonard J. Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom: An Economic History of the Latter-day Saints 1830-1900* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966), 380-83; Richard D. Poll, Thomas G. Alexander, Eugene E. Campbell, and David E. Miller, eds., *Utah’s History* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1978), 237-38.

¹¹*Conference Report*, October 1898, 4.

¹²Brigham Young, 27 March 1853, *Journal of Discourses*, 27 vols. (London and Liverpool: LDS Booksellers Depot, 1855-86), 1:82. His message to apostates who refused to leave was not as conciliatory: “Go to hell across lots” and “Now, you nasty apostates, clear out, or judgment will be put to the line, and righteousness to the plummet.” *Ibid.*, 1:83.

cism they produced must have acted as a drag on the progress of the Church.¹³ The other problem that concerned Church leaders was the decline in converts as the nineteenth century progressed. In the British Mission, traditionally the Church's mission show-piece, every decade after 1860 saw a steady and dramatic decline in the number of convert baptisms, until during the 1890s it was a mere 10 percent of what it had been in the 1840s.¹⁴ Perhaps the curb in emigration would ameliorate both problems.

For the next half-century, members in overseas missions lived almost in a state of limbo. The physical gathering to Zion was still the official doctrine of the Church, and Zion was still synonymous with Salt Lake City or Utah, but members received mixed messages. Occasional pronouncements from Church leaders discouraging emigration to Zion were interspersed with the private expressions of missionaries who, even unintentionally, painted glowing pictures of life in the promised land. In addition, members continued to sing hymns, study scriptures, receive lessons, and read literature that promoted the physical gathering or, at the very least, taught the necessity of temple ordinances which were not available outside Zion. No wonder many Saints were unable to abandon the urge to emigrate.¹⁵

One step designed to give the missions a feeling of permanency was the meetinghouses built in some of the larger branches. Buildings were dedicated in Copenhagen, Denmark, and Christiania (Oslo), Norway, in 1903; chapels began to be built or purchased in Great Britain shortly afterwards; and the first chapel in Australia was built by members and missionaries in Brisbane in 1904. According to President Joseph F. Smith, these buildings would create a "permanent foothold" and would help dispel the impression that the Church was "constantly on the wing in these distant lands, . . . that our work there was only temporary."¹⁶ A

¹³William Mulder, *Homeward to Zion: The Mormon Migration from Scandinavia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1957), 96-98, 182-85.

¹⁴Bloxham, Moss, and Porter, *Truth Will Prevail*, 214.

¹⁵Ben E. Rich, *Conference Report*, April 1903, 34-35; Joseph E. Robinson, *ibid.*, 44.

¹⁶*Conference Report*, October 1903, 3-4; Manuscript History of the Austra-

1911 letter from the First Presidency to the people of the British Isles explained that "it is desirable that our people shall remain in their native lands and form congregations of a permanent character to aid in the work of proselyting."¹⁷

An important development during the interim phase was the decision to build a temple in Hawaii. A temple site had been dedicated earlier in Alberta, Canada, the first outside the borders of the United States, and Church leaders had contemplated building a temple in the Mormon colonies of northern Mexico before the expulsion of the Saints in the 1912 revolution.¹⁸ However, both of these locations could be viewed as outposts or colonies of the Mormon heartland, and both were included in Joseph Smith's definition of Zion as "the whole of North and South America."¹⁹ In the October 1915 general conference, President Joseph F. Smith announced:

We have come to the conclusion that it would be a good thing to build a temple . . . down upon one of the Sandwich Islands, so that the good people of those islands may reach the blessing of the House of God within their own borders, and that the people from New Zealand, if they do not become strong enough to require a house to be built there also, by and by, can come to Laie, get their blessings and return home and live in peace, having fulfilled all the requirements of the Gospel the same as we have the privilege of doing here.²⁰

Even this decision was perhaps not as big a leap as it seems, for Hawaii was a U.S. Territory and could perhaps be accommo-

lian Mission (hereafter cited as Manuscript History), 4 December 1904, Historical Department Archives of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter LDS Church Archives).

¹⁷Joseph F. Smith, Anthon H. Lund, John Henry Smith, "Important to the People of the British Isles," in James R. Clark, comp., *Messages of the First Presidency of the Church*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965-75), 4:222.

¹⁸Joseph F. Smith, *Conference Report*, October 1915, 7-8.

¹⁹Wilford Woodruff, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal, 1833-1898*, typescript, edited by Scott G. Kenney, 9 vols. (Midvale, Utah: Signature Books, 1983-85), 2:388 (8 April 1844). See also Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, eds., *The Words of Joseph Smith* (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1980), 362-65.

²⁰*Conference Report*, October 1915, 8-9.

dated under the umbrella of Joseph Smith's definition. In addition, the Hawaiians (and also the Maoris, who in 1915 still accounted for the bulk of the New Zealand membership) were widely regarded by LDS leaders as not only of the house of Israel but descendants of Lehi for whom the Latter-day Saints had a special responsibility.²¹

During the 1920s Church leaders emphasised unemployment and sluggish economic conditions in the western states of America in an effort to stem the continuing flow of emigrants from overseas missions.²² The United States government helped by passing restrictive immigration legislation in 1921 and 1924, but the new quotas operated more successfully against immigrants from Australia and New Zealand than from the British Isles. Church leaders still viewed the restraint as a temporary expedient, for Saints intending to emigrate were advised only to "defer their departure until times improve."²³ A hint that the policy might become permanent appeared in a 1929 letter from the First Presidency which quoted 1 Nephi 14:12, 14 to show "that the Saints are not all to gather to Zion."²⁴ By the 1930s the message was even plainer. British members were told: "Zion is where live the pure in heart. The Church is to be built up in these missions." "Zion in the West has been built up. The ringing challenge on these Isles today has become: 'Build Zion in Britain.'" "Every Latter-day Saint in the British Isles must strive toward the day when the Church of God shall be mighty in Britain, and when the

²¹George Q. Cannon, 25 May 1884, *Journal of Discourses* 25:172.

²²Heber J. Grant, Charles W. Penrose, Anthony W. Ivins, letter to George Albert Smith, President of the European Mission, 28 April 1921, in Clark, *Messages of the First Presidency*, 5:199-200; Anthony W. Ivins, letter to Orson F. Whitney, President of the European Mission, 2 August 1921, *ibid.*, 5:200-1; Heber J. Grant, Anthony W. Ivins, Charles W. Nibley, letter to Fred Tadge, President of the Swiss-German Mission, 18 October 1929, *ibid.*, 5:268-69; O.F.W. [Orson F. Whitney], "Stay Where You Are!" *Millennial Star* 83 (15 September 1921): 584-86.

²³Ivins to Whitney, 2 August 1921, in Clark, *Messages of the First Presidency*, 5:201.

²⁴Grant, Ivins, and Nibley, Letter to Tadge, 18 October 1929, *ibid.*, 5:269.

spires of a Temple of the Lord shall pierce British skies, for 'Zion is the pure in heart.'"²⁵

The outbreak of war in Europe in September 1939 curtailed emigration more effectively than Church leaders could do; but with peace restored in August 1945 came another surge in emigration as war brides returned home with their American husbands; and others, reminded by the war of the destruction that yet awaited the wicked, decided to flee to the haven of Zion. The First Presidency and mission leaders again tried to stem the rising tide by counselling caution, but there was still no clear change in policy:

We have no desire to unnecessarily delay the gathering of Israel [the First Presidency wrote in 1945], or in the least to discourage the Saints from using every means in their power to economize with a view to saving means with which to emigrate. On the contrary we constantly pray for the gathering of Israel, and rejoice to see the Saints come to Zion; and we emphasize the instructions of the missionary Elders to the Saints, to practice self-denial with a view to saving the necessary means to emigrate themselves and families.²⁶

But a distinct shift in policy is evident from April 1952. In a powerful and moving conference address, Elder Matthew Cowley of the Council of the Twelve directly addressed the members of the Church living in its overseas missions:

You are needed where you are. . . . You in your far-flung areas, away from this hub of Zion, are the leaven of righteousness. . . . We encourage you to stay where you are because you are needed there, . . . You in Great Britain have contributed to the leadership of this Church as has no other nation. . . . To you in the isles of the sea, I say unto you, were it not for you, I would not be standing here this day. . . . To you in Tahiti, . . . you have contributed of your tithes and your

²⁵M. [presumably editor Joseph F. Merrill], "Britain's Contribution to Church Leadership," *Millennial Star* 95 (28 December 1933): 841; W.J.A. [presumably editor Wendell J. Ashton], "Answering the Challenge: The Call for Building Zion Comes to Great Britain," *ibid.*, 98 (23 January 1936): 55; Richard L. Evans, *A Century of 'Mormonism' in Great Britain* (1937; reprinted, Salt Lake City: Publishers Press, 1984), 241.

²⁶George Albert Smith, J. Reuben Clark, Jr., and David O. McKay, Letter to Hugh B. Brown, President of the British Mission, 28 August 1945, *Millennial Star* 107 (October 1945): 304-5.

offerings, your widow's mite, and not one of you has yet come to a temple of God. . . . Australia, the great continent down under, there where our people are scattered over such a vast area, how great has been your contribution! During the war years, when you were without missionaries from Zion, your leadership rose up and magnificently carried on. . . . God bless you people out in these areas of the earth. And I testify to you that much strength comes from you to us, and if you remain strong where you are, we will not become weak here at the hub.

He continued, directly addressing the Saints in various countries throughout the world. But perhaps the sentence that meant most to those who heard it: "And to you whose lives are committed to righteousness, I say unto you, You are Zion."²⁷

Eleven days later, on 17 April 1952, the First Presidency (then consisting of David O. McKay, Stephen L Richards, and J. Reuben Clark) and Council of the Twelve authorised the search for temple sites in Europe. By July property had been purchased near Bern, Switzerland, and a site south of London was under consideration. With the announcement that a temple site had been acquired in Switzerland, Saints around the world realised that a new era was about to dawn.²⁸

The January 1954 issue of the *Austral Star*, the official monthly publication of the Australian Mission, contained an article by mission president Charles V. Liljenquist quoting extensively from Cowley's conference address. The admonition to "stay where they are," Liljenquist told the Australian Saints, was "more than a duty . . . It [was] now a call and a request by the Prophet of God." He promised, "If the Saints in Australia will do as the Lord now asks of them, it will not be long until there will be a temple in this part of the world."²⁹

²⁷Conference Report, April 1952, 102-3.

²⁸Three related articles in the *Millennial Star* 114 (September 1952): 197-201: "The European Temple," 197; Willis H. Brimhall, "Saints to Prepare for Temple," 198-99; "A Letter from President McKay," 200-1; also Bloxham, Moss, and Porter, *Truth Will Prevail*, 395-96; William E. Berrett and Alma P. Burton, comps., *Readings in L.D.S. Church History, from Original Manuscripts*, 3 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1953-58), 3:411-12.

²⁹President C. V. Liljenquist, "You are needed where you are!" *Austral Star* 26 (January 1954): 5, 12. The *Austral Star* was published monthly by the

Liljenquist's words were prophetic. One year later President David O. McKay toured the missions of the South Pacific, including New Zealand and Australia. While dedicating a chapel in Queensland, he prayed: "Give [the members] courage to remain in this land, realising that this is a world-wide Church." In his address afterwards, he commented: "I hope that in the near future a Temple will be placed here in the South Seas somewhere, easily accessible for you, so that you may tend to every ordinance and every blessing which the restored Gospel offers and remain in your own branches, in your own districts."³⁰ Shortly after President McKay's return to Salt Lake City, the Church announced on February 17 that a temple would be built in New Zealand.³¹

President McKay's 1955 tour had at least three other direct consequences besides the announcement of the New Zealand temple. First, on 17 March the First Presidency and the Twelve decided that members of the Twelve would visit the distant missions annually, just as they did missions in the United States. McKay's fifty-thousand-mile tour in six weeks had apparently convinced him that, because of the revolution in air travel, Church members on the other side of the world were now effectively as close to Church headquarters as members in St. George had been in Brigham Young's day.³² Second, the First Presidency assigned Elder Marion G. Romney of the Council of the Twelve to divide

Australian Mission (mostly in Sydney, but in Melbourne for a time) between 1929 and 1958. In the United States a complete run is available at the LDS Church Library. In Australia there is no complete run publicly available, although the John Oxley Library, Brisbane, has a partial run, and many copies are in private possession.

³⁰As quoted in "President McKay's Ipswich Address," *ibid.*, 27 (March 1955): 10, 12.

³¹Brian W. Hunt, *Zion in New Zealand: A History of the Church . . . in New Zealand 1854-1977* (Temple View, New Zealand: Church College of New Zealand, 1977), 81; David W. Cummings, *Mighty Missionary of the Pacific: The Building Program of the Church . . . Its History, Scope and Significance* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1961), 50-56; Allie Howe, "A Temple in the South Pacific," *Improvement Era* 58 (November 1955): 811-13.

³²David O. McKay, *Conference Report*, April 1955, 25; Elder H. Earl McBride, "President McKay in Brisbane," *Austral Star* 27 (February 1955): 5.

the Australian Mission.³³ And third and probably most important, a definite decision was made to work towards stakehood in the outlying missions, especially those areas that seemed closest to achieving it, such as Australia, New Zealand, and Great Britain. No dramatic announcement accompanied this decision, but that it had been made is apparent from what soon followed.

"The long cherished hope of emigrating to Zion has become the soon-to-be-realized plan to go to the Temple in New Zealand," stated an *Austral Star* editorial of June 1955. "Instead of us leaving home to go to the Church, the Church has grown and, if we will receive it, has come to us." Then came a deceptively matter-of-fact statement which was in fact a momentous announcement:

All this is to the end that we who now have the Gospel will be able to form a solid foundation upon which the coming rapid expansion of the Church in Australia can be built. With twice as many missions there must soon be twice as many fully staffed branches. All of us must be ready to carry twice the responsibility that we now do and twice as dependably. Stakes are always staffed by members living within them. Hence, how soon we can have stakes depends greatly on how soon we can establish within ourselves that FOLLOWSHIP which is 90 per cent. of the necessary leadership.³⁴

While Elder Marion G. Romney was in Australia dividing the mission, his fellow apostle Spencer W. Kimball was touring Great Britain, promising the British Saints that, if they stayed where they were, "fan-shaped growth would result from the division of branches into stakes and wards of Zion."³⁵

Ideologically the Church had reached the end of its interim gathering phase. The third phase—the spiritualised gathering—began in reality once the Auckland Stake was created in New Zealand on 18 May 1958. While in New Zealand a month earlier for the dedication of the temple, David O. McKay had surprised and

³³"First Presidency Announces Plans to Divide the Australian Mission," *Church News*, 23 April 1955, 4; "Elder Romney Assigned to Divide Mission," *Austral Star* 27 (May 1955): 12-13.

³⁴Unsigned editorial [Hayward S. Robertson was then editor], "A New Era," *Austral Star* 27 (June 1955): 3.

³⁵G. Edwards Baddley, "A Prophetic Vision of the Future," *Millennial Star* 117 (August 1955): 249; Kimball, *Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, 439.

delighted a select group of local leaders and General Authorities with the announcement that a stake would soon be organised there.³⁶ Although the decision to organise this particular stake was seemingly made on the spur of the moment, the underlying decision to organise stakes throughout the world as strength and numbers justified them had been made three years earlier, as we have seen. Observers have recognised that the Auckland Stake was a milestone but have perhaps not appreciated just how significant it was. Quite simply, it was the first “stake of Zion” outside American territory.³⁷ As such it broadened the meaning of Zion, not just in the abstract, but in fact. Other stakes followed in distant missions. The first Australian stake was organised in Sydney on 27 March 1960, and the first stake in Great Britain the same day in Manchester. The Toronto Stake was organised in August, two more stakes in Australia—in Brisbane and Melbourne—in October, and another two in New Zealand before the end of the year.³⁸

With the organisation of these stakes, geographically distant from the headquarters of the Church in Salt Lake City, Church leaders abandoned any lingering thoughts of ever resuming the physical gathering. Elder George Q. Morris of the Council of the Twelve wrote to the British Saints at the creation of the Manchester Stake: “The time has now definitely come . . . when the great strengthening of the Church will not be accomplished through

³⁶Marion G. Romney's Account of His Travels in 1958, microfilm of type-script, Ms d 5347 fd 1, 7-9, LDS Church Archives; Hunt, *Zion in New Zealand*, 93-94.

³⁷I use “American territory” broadly, to include stakes in Canada, Mexico, and Hawaii. During the nineteenth century stakes were organised in areas settled during Mormon colonisation of the American West. The first stakes in Canada (Alberta, 1895) and Mexico (Juarez, 1895) were not only a continuation of this process but also were deliberately located outside the United States to provide havens from judicial prosecution for members practising plural marriage. In the first half of this century, beginning with Los Angeles in 1923, stakes were formed in areas outside the traditional Mormon heartland but still within the definition of Zion as “the whole of North and South America.” Hawaii, where a stake was organised in 1935, as a U.S. Territory probably falls within this same pattern.

³⁸*Deseret News 1991-1992 Church Almanac* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1990), 189.

emigration, as was the case many years ago, but in the permanent building up of the Kingdom of God where it has been planted by the marvellous missionary work of the Church."³⁹

THE CHURCH IN BRISBANE BEFORE STAKEHOOD

After a couple of early missionary forays, the real beginnings of the Church in Brisbane, subtropical capital of the colony (later state) of Queensland in Australia, date from 1890. A branch of the Church was organised six years later and a chapel built in 1904. By this time the Brisbane Branch was "the largest and most stable branch in the Australian Mission,"⁴⁰ with a membership (including children of record) approaching 200. Growth thereafter was steady but unspectacular until the 1950s when convert baptisms soared to new heights and stayed there. When the Brisbane Stake was organised in October 1960, it had a membership of 1,466, almost a thousand of whom lived in the area covered by the original Brisbane Branch. The prestakehood period of the Church in Brisbane thus corresponds almost exactly with the interim phase of the gathering for the Church as a whole.⁴¹

I propose to examine six characteristics of the Church in Brisbane during the period before stakehood: expectancy, dependence, sociality, limited Church program, absence of the temple, and mixed marriages. To do this I rely heavily on the recollections of several people who were members of the Brisbane Branch prior to 1960.⁴²

³⁹"Best Wishes from General Authorities," *Millennial Star* 122 (May 1960): 217.

⁴⁰Marjorie Newton, *Southern Cross Saints: The Mormons in Australia* (Laie, Hawaii: The Institute for Polynesian Studies, 1991), 37.

⁴¹No general published history of the Church in Brisbane exists, but for partial treatments see Ross Geddes, "'A Storm in the Camp of Brighamism': LDS-RLDS Relations in Brisbane, Australia, 1901-1918," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 11 (1991): 47-59, and Newton, *Southern Cross Saints*, passim. An early though not entirely accurate account is "The Brisbane Branch," *Austral Star* 2 (20 November 1930): 6-7.

⁴²From this point, all statements and quotations not otherwise attributed are based on my interviews with the following individuals: Eric Orth (15 January and 5 March 1995), Shirley Orth (22 January 1995), George Orth (29 January 1995),

Expectancy

Because the second phase of the gathering was never viewed as a permanent condition, there was always an air of expectancy among the members of the Brisbane Branch. In the very early days, they expected that, when economic conditions improved, the temporary restraint on emigration would be lifted and they would be allowed to gather to Zion. Some of them firmly intended to emigrate despite official discouragement and were simply waiting to save sufficient funds to make the journey. In the meantime, they too had great expectations.

Later, the idea developed among the members that one day the prophet would issue a general call for all the scattered Saints throughout the world to come to Zion. This belief was not confined to members of the Church in Australia but was widespread until fairly recent years. No doubt it developed from the generally held nineteenth-century teaching that the Saints would return to Jackson County, Missouri, and was based on the statements of General Authorities combined with a literal interpretation of certain scriptures.⁴³ Missionaries, who naturally reflected the doctrinal views common to the Mormon heartland, would have helped to disseminate this one as well.

Undoubtedly most members believed this “was the accepted doctrine of the Church.” Older members recall its widespread acceptance: “That was the general understanding—not that it was taught from the pulpit, but it was an inner feeling that had developed.” “We used to talk about being called to go to Zion. . . . We always called it Zion, never America or Salt Lake City.” “The

Eva Smith (4 February and 5 March 1995), Kendall Davie (7 February 1995), Arthur Maurer (7 February and 5 March 1995), Jan Maurer (7 February 1995), and Val Croucher (18 February and 5 March 1995). I thank these people most sincerely for their kind and ready cooperation.

⁴³For only three of numerous examples of statements by General Authorities, see Brigham Young, 23 March 1856, *Journal of Discourses* 3: 278-79; Orson Pratt, 7 September 1879, *ibid.*, 21: 136; Joseph F. Smith, 3 December 1882, *ibid.*, 24: 156-57. Scriptures that can be used to support the concept include D&C 101:17-20. As far as I am aware no one has studied the development of this particular folk doctrine, but a semi-official refutation is Graham W. Doxey, “Missouri Myths,” *Ensign* 9 (April 1979): 64-65.

common thought was that one day we would all be called to Zion. . . . It was talked about among the members, and occasionally mentioned in talks." One woman remembers Sunday School teachers asking questions such as, "If you were called to go to Zion tomorrow, would you be ready?"

This was about as specific as the idea got. It wasn't clear whether Zion meant Utah or Missouri. "I assumed it was Jackson County," one man recalls. In addition, the timing was vague. The range of thought was probably similar to ideas on the timing of the Millennium among members today: for some it is more imminent than for others. A woman from Sydney remembers, as a young girl in the early 1940s, mystifying her school teacher by announcing that she was going to America one day "when the call comes."⁴⁴ A teenage boy in Brisbane was interested in learning navigation and map-reading because he felt such knowledge might be useful when the Saints had to find their way to Zion. This man still feels "it may be possible that in the last days we'll be called to go there, even though it's not talked about any more."

Dependence

The Brisbane Branch, like other mission branches of the time, was dependent on both the mission president and the missionaries. Mission presidents serving in areas where stakes did not exist, thousands of miles and weeks or even months away from Church headquarters, possessed a power and influence that may be difficult for members who have spent all their lives in a stake to imagine. To the Saints a mission president represented Church headquarters—Zion. Furthermore, he was the only such representative most of them would see for years at a time. Prior to 1955 only four General Authorities had ever visited Brisbane: David O. McKay in 1921, George Albert Smith and Rufus K. Hardy in 1938, and Matthew Cowley three times in the late 1940s. The mission president thus had the *mana*, or aura, normally associated with a General Authority. "The mission president was all-powerful," one member recalled, adding hastily, "but he was always sustained by the members."

⁴⁴I thank Marjorie Newton for sharing this experience with me.

The relationship between the members and the mission president was one of dependence because the latter was an outsider, in almost all cases an American who lived in the mission for only a few years at most. And yet all direction from Church headquarters came through this man. "Instructions came by word of mouth," or in the pages of the monthly organ of the Australian Mission, the *Austral Star*. Members had no choice but to accept what the mission president told them, for even branch and district leaders saw no letters from Church headquarters. About the only written materials they saw were Church magazines and an occasional book. Local leaders not only did not see priesthood handbooks, apart from John A. Widtsoe's compilation *Priesthood and Church Government* (first published in 1939), but most of them did not even know such publications existed. The pronouncements of the mission president were therefore accepted by the Saints almost as scripture.

Such dependence could be detrimental. When Elder Romney reported to the First Presidency on his 1955 tour of Australia, he lamented, "The members and missionaries are 'rule' ridden. They are more concerned about the 'rule' of the incumbent mission president than a revealed principle of the gospel. . . . When a new mission president comes into office the local Church officers practically stand still. They fear to move until they find out whether his rules of procedure will be the same as those of the retiring mission president."⁴⁵

Members were also dependent on the missionaries. The Brisbane Branch was first organised with a presidency of three local men, holding the Aaronic Priesthood, who were supposed to act under the direction of the missionaries. But misunderstandings quickly led to a power struggle. The branch president complained that he was "a figurehead" or "fifth wheel" and that "the Elders did not place due confidence" in him.⁴⁶ By the turn of the century, this conflict, together with other factors, led to a serious

⁴⁵Manuscript History, 18 August 1955, 5.

⁴⁶Minute Book of Priesthood Meetings of East Brisbane Branch of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, November 29, 1897, in the possession of Geoffrey Waters, Cleveland, Australia.

schism in the branch. Thereafter, missionaries served as branch president, generally without counsellors. From about 1906 to 1929, the same missionary served concurrently as branch president and conference (after 1927, district) president.

Even after local men resumed the presidency of the branch in 1929, the missionaries remained extremely influential. A granddaughter of Archibald Campbell, branch president from 1929 to 1943, remembers missionaries advising him on branch matters although he had spent more than thirty years in the Church, including ten years as branch president and two as a full-time missionary. But the missionaries, although fifty years his junior, were from Zion, and that made all the difference. "The missionaries had a lot to say because they were from Zion. They were very much respected by the members," another informant recalled. The attitude of the members (and often the missionaries as well) was, "Whatever the missionaries said must be right because they were from Salt Lake City."

Apart from those involved in the problems near the turn of the century, most members did not resent their dependence. In general, those who represented the Church as missionaries were likeable young men, personally popular with the members, most of whom were therefore happy to accept the status quo. As late as the 1950s missionaries were still involved in activities that members were quite capable of performing: for example, they often baptised and confirmed children of record, even when the father was an active and worthy member of the Church.⁴⁷

At the same time, however, some mission presidents viewed this member dependence as negative and made deliberate attempts to reduce it. As early as 1929, Clarence H. Tingey called Archibald Campbell as Brisbane Branch president; and when this experiment proved successful, he extended the idea to other branches in the mission. When the missionaries were withdrawn in late 1940, James Judd also called Campbell as president of the Queensland District, and this innovation continued after the return of the missionaries in 1946. Campbell's successor as district president, William E. Waters, was acting mission president for five

⁴⁷Records of Members, Queensland District, LDS Church Archives.

months in 1952-53, and the following year he was called as first counsellor to Charles V. Liljenquist.

The *Austral Star* in 1955 spelled out the responsibilities of missionaries, branch presidencies, and members:

A missionary is called . . . to teach the gospel of Jesus Christ to those who have not had the opportunity to hear it. . . . In the past, here in this land, missionaries have been doubly obligated with the job of both proselyting the gospel and of being in charge of Sunday Schools, branches, and things in general. . . . The missionaries are no longer needed for these positions of responsibility except in places where the Church is not yet sufficiently strong. . . . In every organised branch of the Church, we have a branch president and his two counsellors. . . . It is to him that we should bring our problems and not the missionary. . . . As good members, we ask you to remember the duties and callings of both your branch presidency and the missionary.⁴⁸

Nevertheless, missionaries continued to be a major influence in branch affairs.

Sociality

For most of its existence the Brisbane Branch was a unit of about two hundred people, with an average attendance somewhat over one hundred. In a group this size, everyone knew everyone else. It was close knit, functioning probably more like an extended family than anything else. "One big happy family," in fact, is how one of the oldest surviving members of the branch described it. One woman remembers that as a child she called many of the adults in the branch, although she was not related to them, "aunty" and "uncle." One disadvantage of this closeness was that a member sometimes felt awkward about bringing along a nonmember friend. It was like introducing a new boy- or girl-friend to your family. But the advantage was that, because investigators in those days attended Church for a protracted period, sometimes a year or more, before baptism, they were well integrated into the branch family by the time they joined.

As well as the Sunday meetings—Sunday School, sacrament meeting, an evening meeting and, eventually, priesthood meeting—the branch members met on many other occasions. During

⁴⁸"A Note to the Members," *Austral Star* 27 (September 1955): 7.

the week the women went to Relief Society, the children were taught in Primary, and at least until 1930 the men attended priesthood meeting (sometime afterwards this meeting was moved to Sunday). One night a week was Mutual Improvement Association (MIA), an evening of cultural and recreational activity nominally for the youth but in fact attended by most of the branch; one night a month the Mutual held an open night to which everyone was invited. At semi-annual district conferences, members of the Brisbane Branch were able to catch up with members in neighbouring branches.⁴⁹ District conference "was a very big occasion, and was considered to be a highlight of the year."

In addition to the regular meetings were frequent activities sponsored by an auxiliary or the branch as a whole, not to mention weddings and other informal get-togethers involving various members. For example, during a twelve-month period in 1929-30, seventeen activities were recorded in the Brisbane Branch (not counting the monthly Mutual open night). They included concerts, parties, and picnics. Some activities were quite elaborate: the MIA Festival, for example, which became an annual event, was held over three days and included competitive singing, recitations, drama and debate, as well as exhibition dances, speeches, and the grand finale, a picnic at a popular park.⁵⁰ One of the Brisbane Branch's specialties was drama. In addition to short skits, the Saints, under the direction of William E. Waters, often performed full-length plays, the most memorable of which was probably a three-act comedy called *The Mummy and the Mumps*. People liked to be in these plays because they were of a high standard. Sometimes outside halls were hired in which to stage them, and the Saints invited friends and neighbours.⁵¹

People have fond memories of those days. "There was a lovely atmosphere of togetherness and friendliness." "The old

⁴⁹The pages of the *Austral Star* contain numerous references to these meetings and auxiliaries in the Brisbane Branch, as well as elsewhere in Australia. For Monday night priesthood meetings in Brisbane as late as 1930, see "The Brisbane Branch," *ibid.*, 2 (20 November 1930): 7.

⁵⁰"The M.I.A. Festival, Brisbane," *ibid.*, 1 (20 February 1930): 7-8.

⁵¹"Brisbane Jubilee," *ibid.*, 12 (September 1940): 7.

days were good times. We had a lot of fun." "Tuesday Mutual was a real fun time. Everyone went. There wasn't a lot else to do in those days, only the pictures on Friday night. Everybody supported the activities."

So much did the branch members enjoy each other's company that they looked for every opportunity to be together. "When Nambour and Toowoomba [branches about seventy miles from Brisbane] had their branch conferences, we all went up on the train. All the families of the district leaders went up for support. After the conference we had lunch and then returned home by train. There was big excitement." The camaraderie extended to the members of these other branches as well. One year five families from three of the Queensland branches went camping together during their annual holidays. "Regular Sunday meetings, including Sunday School, Sacrament and evening Services were held, and the average attendance was thirty-one. Concerts were presented, ward teaching was engaged in, and a wonderful spirit prevailed throughout the camp."⁵²

The sociality among the members of the branch also included the missionaries. "The missionaries were part of branch life." For one thing, "they stayed for a year or two in the one branch," so obviously everyone knew them personally. They lived in an attic room at the chapel and thus were on the spot for activities. "The missionaries were very involved in social activities." They attended outings on public holidays, picnics, and the other socials held by the branch. They were invited to weddings. They were frequently in the members' homes, and most nights had dinner with one family or another. When a missionary was transferred to another area, the branch held a farewell party for him; often a party was held to celebrate a missionary's birthday.

When the announcement was made in 1952 that the Brisbane Branch was being divided into three smaller branches, members of the branch wept. They were told by their leaders that it was necessary "to divide in order to multiply," but that was small consolation for what felt like the break-up of a family. The move,

⁵²"Novel Holiday Camp for Queensland Saints," *ibid.*, 17 (23 February 1946): 10.

however, enabled many people to gain leadership experience that later stood them in good stead when the first stake was organised. This was a pattern that, with the mushrooming growth of the Church in Brisbane, was to be repeated over and over during the coming decades.

To a lesser extent the brother- and sisterhood of the branch and district was carried throughout the entire mission by the pages of its monthly organ, the *Austral Star*. The Saints in Brisbane read of the doings of their counterparts in Sydney, Melbourne, Hobart, and other parts of the country, so that members all over Australia knew each other by name if not by sight. When a woman from Brisbane found herself in Perth on a mission in the early 1950s, she met people whom she felt she already knew, and they in turn knew her and her family. With the discontinuance of the *Austral Star* in December 1958, this Australia-wide family feeling gradually faded.

Limited Church Program

When the Brisbane Branch was first organised, the only local man holding the Melchizedek Priesthood was octogenarian William Duffin, who had joined the Church nearly half a century earlier in England. Soon the practice of not ordaining men to the Melchizedek Priesthood, presumably because they had no access to a temple, became an entrenched policy throughout the mission. The policy was relaxed about 1905, and thereafter some men were ordained elders; but it was not until Clarence H. Tingey became president of the Australian Mission (1928-35) that this became a regular practice. With one exception, no Australian men were ordained to the offices of seventy or high priest during the pre-stakehood years.⁵³

By 1898 all the auxiliary programs had been organised in Brisbane. The Relief Society lapsed some time in the early 1900s and was not reorganised until 1931, although some sort of informal group does seem to have existed in the interim.

⁵³Newton, *Southern Cross Saints*, 180-84; Records of Members, Queensland District. The exception was William E. Waters, counsellor in the mission presidency, who was ordained a high priest on 17 January 1957 by Elder Hugh B. Brown, then an assistant to the Twelve.

In many respects members did not realise how limited the Church program was in the branch until after the stake was created. Then the difference became apparent. Before stakehood, there was no ordained patriarch; thus the only members who had received patriarchal blessings were the few who had visited the United States or, after 1958, New Zealand. There were far fewer positions available for members to fill than there would be later in the stake—no high councils or auxiliary boards, and no quorum presidencies before 1955. There were no seminary or institute classes, no welfare program, and very few full-time missionaries called from the branch until the mid-1950s. As we have seen, there was also a dearth of written material, such as handbooks and lesson manuals.

Absence of the Temple

One of the main motivations for nineteenth-century converts to emigrate was to be near a temple. The desire to attend the temple was the major factor in the continuing emigration of members to Utah even after the practice was discouraged. During the interim phase, members were aware of the importance of the temple, but getting there was virtually impossible for most of them. They were generally working-class people, and the cost of a return trip to Utah or even Hawaii (especially for a family with children) would have been the equivalent of a year's salary or more. Only one couple in the Brisbane Branch, who had emigrated to Utah three times between 1905 and 1919 and returned each time because of ill health, had been sealed in the temple. The rest knew little about the temple, and the topic was not often discussed. Like the call to Zion, the temple was an expectation the members consigned to an indeterminate future.

Mission presidents refrained from urging members to attend the temple because they realised it was out of the question for most; instead they encouraged attendance at meetings and building up the Church locally. But some members—often single, or financially better off than most, or perhaps with a relative already living in Zion who sent money—went anyway. These probably shared the feelings expressed by an unidentified member of the Church in England who wrote poignantly to Elder John A. Widtsoe, then an apostle and President of the European Mission:

Without a temple we who are here must wait. You tell us it does not matter, that we will lose nothing by waiting, but to me it does seem to matter. To me it does seem as though I had been on a very long journey; then when I come home, to my own home, I can see through the doorway but I cannot enter. My loved ones can come outside to me, but I cannot go to them until I have gone through the different ordinances of the temple or until someone has done the work for me.⁵⁴

Only about 18 percent of the members in Queensland emigrated between 1890 and 1954; thus, most of them lived—and many died—with the temple only a future hope. As Elder Widtsoe commented, “There are thousands of faithful Latter-day Saints who have died in the mission field. They have lived well and faithfully, and have gone to a splendid reward, I am sure, but the work for many of these people has not been done in the temples.”⁵⁵ It wasn’t until the announcement of the New Zealand Temple in 1955 that people realised the opportunity for temple service would now be within reach.

Mixed Marriages

Between 1896 and 1959 at least 121 marriages were performed involving members of the Queensland District. Of these only 50 (or 41 percent) were marriages where both partners were members of the Church.⁵⁶ Lest this figure be thought atypical, the number of mixed marriages in Queensland was, if anything, lower than in other parts of Australia. Out of 204 marriages involving members of the Church in the other five districts between 1932 and 1951, only 65 (or 31 percent) occurred between two Mormons.⁵⁷ These statistics highlight the difficulty members experienced finding suitable marriage partners within the Church.

Older members recall that although “it was understood that

⁵⁴Quoted in John A. Widtsoe, “Genealogical Activities in Europe,” *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine* 22 (July 1931): 98.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, 99.

⁵⁶Marriage records held by the Brisbane Stake, Annual Reports of the Australian Mission, LDS Church Archives, plus a few miscellaneous sources. I compared these records with the Record of Members, Queensland District, to determine who were members.

⁵⁷Annual Reports of the Australian Mission.

it was wise to marry in the Church,” leaders “accepted that because of the small numbers of members many would not be able to find partners in the Church.” Members who married out of the Church were not looked down on by other members. Accepting the practicalities of the situation, local leaders did not place much emphasis on marrying within the faith. Probably another factor contributing to official tolerance was the reality that all marriages, whether both partners were members or only one, were civil marriages. Prior to 1924, even marriages where both parties were Latter-day Saints had to be performed by clergymen of other faiths or else in a registry office, for there was no legal recognition in Queensland of Mormon marriage celebrants until that year.⁵⁸ Temple marriage was not an option, and it could be years, if ever, before it would be possible. There was thus plenty of time, members undoubtedly reasoned, to convert the nonmember partner. A surprisingly large number of nonmember spouses (at least a quarter) did eventually join the Church, including the wives of two future stake presidents. But it was equally true that many members fell into inactivity because of hostile or disinterested spouses.

After the second World War, leaders stressed more the wisdom of marrying within the Church, but it was still not the article of faith it would later become. In the mid-1950s, as Church membership grew rapidly throughout Australia and the prospect of temple marriage came closer with the announcement of the New Zealand Temple, the *Austral Star* addressed the youth with a series of articles counselling against marriage outside the Church.⁵⁹ While warning that there might be cases where “far more happiness can be gained and some times more good done by remaining single in this life,” the writer did acknowledge that members might sometimes be justified in “looking outside the

⁵⁸*Queensland Government Gazette* 122, no. 104 (3 May 1924), 1270; Newton, *Southern Cross Saints*, 80.

⁵⁹“Marriage Outside the Church,” [a three-series article] *Austral Star* 27 (January 1955): 8-9, 14; (March 1955): 7; (May 1955): 8, 17; “On Conversion after Marriage,” (July 1955): 11, 14; “On Mixed Marriages,” (August 1955): 9-10; “The Right Marriage,” (September 1955): 9-10.

Church for a prospective mate . . . if there just isn't anyone within the Church." In such cases an excellent—though often ill-starred—solution was "to select from the world one whom they desire as a companion, bring them into the Church and then marry them."⁶⁰ It seems unlikely that today's youth would find such counsel in the pages of the *New Era*.

THE COMING OF STAKEHOOD TO BRISBANE

The Brisbane Stake was organised by Elder Spencer W. Kimball, then an apostle, on 23 October 1960. The stake president was William E. Waters, former district president and counsellor in the mission presidency, and the man whom Marion G. Romney had described as "one of the ablest, if not the most able, local member in Australia."⁶¹ Waters seems to have been the first non-American stake president called in any of the distant stakes. Expatriate Americans were the first presidents in the Auckland, Sydney, and Manchester Stakes.

The Brisbane Saints had had no thought of stakehood before mid-1955, a mere five years earlier. To members growing up in the Church between the wars, or even during and after World War II, "the way it was *was* the Church as far as we were concerned, and we never anticipated it being any different," at least not until the call to Zion came. "We didn't know anything else." Even though stakehood was officially the goal from mid-1955 on, it was not till the creation of the Auckland Stake in 1958 that most people took it seriously. Visiting members from New Zealand would tell them, "You're only coasting in the district. You'll know you're alive when you're a stake." From then on people often talked about the prospect of stakehood, but they found it hard to imagine how it would really change anything.

When it finally came, though, "everyone was very excited about becoming a stake." "There was a lot of enthusiasm and excitement." Stakehood represented maturity: "It was like growing up, like going from a teenager to an adult or from a child to

⁶⁰"Marriage Outside the Church," *ibid.*, (January 1955): 14, 9; "On Conversion after Marriage," (July 1955): 11.

⁶¹Manuscript History, 18 August 1955, 5.

an adult. . . . It was a real progressive step, and we were now entitled to all the benefits of the Church. We were now fully fledged members. It was like when you become twenty-one and get the key to the door." And with maturity came feelings of responsibility: "Before we had tra-la-la'd along. Now there was a different atmosphere, like we had come of age and were expected to perform . . . The status of being a stake made it seem more awe-inspiring. The program in some respects was much the same but you felt that more was expected of you."

Those members who had wondered how a stake would change anything soon found out: "There was a lot more work to do." One man found himself holding ten callings simultaneously. In a stake there were many more positions to fill than there had been in the district. One immediate result was that, whereas in the past leaders had tended to be older men, now there were bishops and auxiliary presidents in their twenties and thirties. Having more positions to fill had another effect. For example, "people were excited about the calling of high councillors. Until then our leaders had been a presidency of three men. Now we suddenly had twelve other men beside the stake presidency who were looked up to as sages or wise men."

Along with more positions came more priesthood offices. For the first time in Brisbane, men were ordained seventies, high priests, and bishops, and one man was ordained a patriarch. This gave most members their first opportunity to receive a patriarchal blessing.

Training also increased. General Authorities and members of general auxiliary presidencies and boards visited regularly, assessing strengths and weaknesses, providing training, and exposing the Saints to a more regular stream of teaching. No longer did local leaders receive information second-hand from the mission. These visitors also encouraged them to be more self-reliant. The stake Young Women president was told by a visiting board member: "You've got the handbook. We don't know your circumstances. You make your own decisions; you don't need to keep asking us."

But stakehood was a new experience for everyone, including the stake president, and it would be many years before the old mission ideas and ways of doing things would die out.

CONCLUSION

Out of the characteristics I have identified for the prestakehood period in Brisbane, which of them can be attributed to the ambivalent attitude of Church leaders to the physical gathering, and which ones were natural concomitants of the small numbers of members? If Church leaders at the turn of the century had announced categorically that the physical gathering was over and that stakes would now be created throughout the world, would things have been any different? Certainly expectations of a future emigration to Zion would have been quashed, but the small numbers of members would still have ensured dependence on others, a limited Church program, lack of access to the temple, and many mixed marriages. The one positive characteristic—the high level of sociality—would also have been unaffected. With the exception of expectancy of future emigration, the characteristics of the Brisbane Branch during the interim phase of the gathering are typical of small units anywhere in the Church, even to the present day.

The experience of progressing to stakehood in Brisbane seems to have been similar to that of other areas of the Church. At a symposium on “The Expanding Church” held at Brigham Young University in 1976, the question was asked, “What happens to the members in the transition from missions to stakes?” All four respondents spoke of the shift from dependence to maturity and responsibility. Arthur Henry King, a member of BYU’s English Department and a convert from Great Britain, put it as well as anyone:

I am convinced you cannot lead a full life in the Church until you have stakehood. You do not even know that you are not living a full life because you do not know what a full life is. But the difference is tremendous, and it can be pointed to with one simple word: *responsibility*. The sense of dependence in a mission branch district is very great. You do not realize how dependent you are until you prepare the way for a stake.⁶²

⁶²“Questions and Answers” in “The Church in Europe: Challenges of the Second Century,” in *Mormonism: A Faith for All Cultures*, edited by F. LaMond Tullis (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1978), 68-70.

For those Brisbane Saints who remember the prestakehood days, the Church has come a long way. From a district comprised of only three or four branches, the Church in south-east Queensland has grown to include five stakes. Where the nearest temple was once several weeks away in Hawaii, it is now only hours away in Sydney. Where once was dependence, there now is maturity and third-, fourth-, even fifth- and sixth-generation Latter-day Saints. Where once there was a second-string program, now there are second-generation seminary and institute students. And where youth once struggled to marry within the faith, now they attend conferences surrounded by hundreds of like-minded peers.

While proud of their Church's progress, long-time members recognise that it now has a different feel. The one inevitable drawback of the dramatic growth is the loss of that feeling of close sociality—the “one big happy family” feeling—that was part of the smaller Church. Indeed, those who look back with fondness on the days before stakehood in Brisbane sometimes ask one another, “Do we still belong to the same Church?” They answer, of course, in various shades of yes and no. It is a question, though, that would perhaps not even be asked by members who have never known a Church before stakehood.



Betsy Jane Tenney Loose Simons

Colonizing the Muddy River Valley: A New Perspective

Audrey M. Godfrey

On Monday, 12 February 1866, Betsy Jane Loose Simons made her first journal entry about life in the southeastern Nevada Muddy River Valley.¹ Jane's four-month journal is the only known woman's record of the Muddy Mission experience, although several letters of other women survive along with personal journals by male colonists. Through Jane's writings, which are rich in day-to-day detail, we see the emergence of the third settlement on the Muddy—Simonsville—named after Jane's husband, Orrawell Simons. Her journal also serves as a springboard to a

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¹Betsy Jane Tenney Loose Simons, Diary, February-June 1866, Loose Collection, Special Collections, Merrill Library, Utah State University, Logan, Utah; hereafter cited as Loose, Journal. I call her "Jane" in this article because that is how Orrawell addressed her. I have added terminal punctuation and initial capitals to sentences, where necessary. The Muddy River Valley is now known as the Moapa Valley.



MUDDY RIVER SETTLEMENTS, 1866

discussion of the sacrifices and challenges of women who participated in colonizing efforts which heretofore have not been discussed in studies of the Mormon frontier.²

Jane wrote that February day, "Orrawell started home this eve . . . My feelings nearly overcame me after all the resolves I made to be calm and cheerful and say goodbye with a smile." Two months earlier, they had arrived: forty-five-year-old Orrawell Simons, of Payson, their year-old son, Grant, and Jane's two sons by her first marriage to Robert Loose: sixteen-year-old Willy and twelve-year-old Eddy. Jane's oldest son, seventeen-year-old Warren Loose, had remained in Payson with Orrawell's first wife, Martha Dixon Loose, and her three children. Jane and Orrawell had married in 1861; their first child, a daughter named Ema, had died at age two in November 1864 in Payson, the same year that Orrawell had married his third wife, seventeen-year-old Kate Baldwin. Now Orrawell, who had supervised the building of a gristmill, was returning to the family home in Payson. However, he left Jane and her sons on the Muddy to fulfill his call as a settlement missionary.

Over a year earlier in November 1864, Brigham Young had called missionaries to settle the thirty-mile-long Muddy River Valley and appointed Thomas Sassen Smith of Farmington, Utah,

²Excellent sources about the Muddy Mission include Leonard J. Arrington, *The Mormons in Nevada* (Las Vegas: Las Vegas Sun, 1979); Pearson S. Corbett, "History of the Muddy Mission," M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1968; Corbett, "Settling the Muddy River Valley," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* 18 (Fall 1975): 141-51; (no author), "The Muddy Mission—1865," *Our Pioneer Heritage*, edited by Kate B. Carter (Salt Lake City: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1966), 9:26-31; S. George Ellsworth, *Samuel Claridge: Pioneering the Outposts of Zion* (Logan, Utah: S. George Ellsworth, 1987); L. A. Fleming, "The Settlements on the Muddy: 1865 to 1871," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 35, no. 2 (Spring 1967): 147-72; Arabell Lee Hafner, comp., *One Hundred Years on the Muddy* (Springville, Utah: Art City Publishing, 1967); Andrew Jenson, "Manuscript History of the Muddy River Mission," Historical Department Archives, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah (hereafter LDS Church Archives); Andrew Karl Larson, *"I Was Called to Dixie": The Virgin River Basin: Unique Experiences in Mormon Pioneering* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1971), chap. 9; and William Wood, Sr., and Elizabeth Wood, "Mission to the Muddy, 1867-1872, by James Harland Wood" (n.p., n.d.).

as leader of the colonizing efforts. Smith's party, consisting of eleven men and three women, had arrived in January 1865. Smith, born 3 April 1818 in New York, brought his second wife, Amanda Hollingshead Smith, and left his first wife, Polly Clark Smith, in Farmington. Following Young's instructions, Smith named his settlement St. Thomas after himself.³

A few months later, a second group under the direction of Joseph Warren Foote established St. Joseph, eight miles north of St. Thomas. Foote was the settlement's first presiding elder under Smith's leadership as president of the Muddy Mission.⁴ By the time Simons arrived to supervise construction of a grist mill three and a half miles south of St. Joseph, crops had been planted; his mill, Brigham Young envisioned, would grind the valley's grain and also process salt from deposits near St. Thomas.

The importance of this region to Brigham Young was three-fold. First, it was part of his plan to build a corridor to bring Saints up the Colorado River to Call's Landing, through the Muddy Valley settlements, and on to Salt Lake City. Second, cotton grown in the Muddy would supply the church factory at Washington near St. George as part of his master plan for self-sufficiency. In an April 1863 sermon, the Mormon leader said, "We are satisfied that we need not depend upon our neighbors abroad for any single necessity of life, for in the elements around us exists every ingredient of food and raiment."⁵ Third, Young foresaw the threat if Gentiles controlled the area. Mines at nearby Pioche were already beginning production. Erastus Snow, an apostle and president of the Southern Utah Mission, headquartered at St. George, stated in 1864 his concern that U.S. military leaders and other Gentiles intended to farm the valley and appropriate the water rights of the Muddy River.⁶

³Arrington, *The Mormons in Nevada*, 39.

⁴Corbett, "A History of the Muddy Mission," 73, says St. Joseph was named for Joseph Smith; Larson, *"I Was Called to Dixie,"* 142, says it was named for Foote.

⁵Quoted in Leonard J. Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958), 216.

⁶Quoted in James G. Bleak, "Annals of the Southern Utah Mission," type-

The valley presented excellent prospects for success. Its rich soil in time produced good gardens where radishes, sweet potatoes, pumpkins, and melons thrived. Wheat and corn also grew well. However, this early settlement attempt eventually failed in all three aspects of Brigham Young's vision. Heat, malaria, flies, and isolation discouraged those who came with high hopes of success. Some left early; others hearing of the difficulties of the mission enlisted substitutes to take their places. Others, though faithfully accepting the call as colonizing missionaries, found that the realities of the experience tested their faith, not only in God, but in themselves. Still, their efforts show remarkable endurance and fortitude in a losing venture.

Jane confided her discouragement to her journal: "O Heavenly Father give me health and strength that I may perform my duty faithfully. . . . Give me Patience & strength to bear my burdens. . . . Give me wisdom to do what is right to bear patiently to uphold my Husband and continually seek his interests."

At one point she grumbled, "If I was not here by council, I would not stay any longer."⁷

Her psalm-like sentiments reveal the religious commitment of Mormon colonizers who answered their leaders' calls as sacred obligations but without ignoring the realities of the sacrifices involved. First, just getting to the Muddy challenged the fortitude of those called to settle the area. It was located 450 miles from Salt Lake City and 90 miles from the nearest large settlement, St. George. The rocky trails crossed innumerable ravines and stream beds. The road from St. George followed the Virgin River, but heavy wagons mired frequently in quicksand; and a narrow, steep hogback called Virgin Hill required tripling teams and blocking the wheels periodically to rest the horses during the climb. At one point the teams were unhitched, taken to the top of the perpendicular rock, and hitched to a log chain. This chain then pulled the wagons up the remaining narrow road to the top of the mesa. No water was available on other routes, making each crossing a

script, 148, Utah State Historical Library, Salt Lake City.

⁷Loose, Journal, 12 February, 5, 18, and 3 March, 1866.

race between the carried supply of water, the growing exhaustion of the teams, and the risk of the wagons breaking down.

Second, the new settlement had virtually no amenities and little way of getting any. One new arrival described St. Thomas as "a little group of adobe huts with willow and mud roofs mused [sic] together into a fort, pitiful attempts at wheat and corn fields; not a tree to impede the direct rays of the sun."⁸

Third, the climate of the Muddy was one of extremes. Summer temperatures rose to 120 degrees with little shade available. Creosote bushes, cactus, mesquite, and other desert plants added little beauty to the greenery-hungry eyes of the settlers. Saleratus deposits coated the grass and ground in places. Willows grew along the Muddy, but no timber shaded the missionaries from the sun. Out of the swamps swarms of mosquitoes brought malarial fevers and discomfort. Lizards abounded. The water in the Muddy was milky in color and warm. Its taste sickened settlers, and it caused cankers in the mouth.

In winter, nights turned cold. Most entries in Jane's journal begin with a weather report. One morning in February she stayed in bed to write because the temperature was so uncomfortable. On March 12 she found ice in a tub of water. Frequent winds blew sand into recently dug canals and the pioneers' poorly built shelters. Eighteen-year-old Mary Amelia Richards Streeper, William Henry Streeper's bride of three months, told of housecleaning her willow-walled cabin in St. Joseph in February 1868, the second month she was in the Muddy: In an arduous day, she swept nearly a bushel of sand from each "room."⁹

Jane's observations of the weather also included smoky air under a cloudy sky, a bright circle around the moon, and two "moon dogs." Rain came in March with heavy thunder and "very sharp lightning." On 6 May, Sunday meeting was rained out. Mary Streeper reported similar weather in August 1868 when a thun-

⁸Hannah Sharp, as quoted in Fleming, "The Settlements on the Muddy," 157.

⁹Mary Amelia [Richards Streeper], Letter to My Dear Pa [Samuel Whitney Richards], 7 February 1868, Mary Amelia Richards Streeper Collection, 1849-1920, LDS Church Archives. Mary was accustomed to hard work; she had been born in Missouri, one of nineteen children.

derstorm with hurricane-like winds and "torrents" of rain hit St. Joseph. She worried that her tent would be torn to pieces. It was not, but everything was "perfectly soaked with the rain, there was not a dry spot large enough to sit down on, I slept in a wet bed all night and wore wet clothes all the next day."¹⁰

Fourth, the barrenness and isolation were psychologically draining as well as physically demanding—probably beyond the point of anything that could be called reasonable expectations. Many women, like Jane, were left in rough, new settlements to make it on their own while husbands went on missions, settled additional areas, or visited other wives and polygamous families. Inevitably, these women suffered from loneliness and discouragement. Jane's experience poignantly illustrates their fortitude and contributions while being denied the physical and emotional support of their husbands and close family members.¹¹ Jane's teenage sons finished digging the basement of the mill and helped to clear land for crops, then returned to Payson in April, leaving Jane alone with toddler Grant and one hired man.¹² Wrenched by loneliness, she wrote on 15 June: "I can hardly refrain from weeping. My husband, my boys. Oh, is this sepperation necessary."

How did women experience the demands of settlement in such a locale with such challenges? Most studies of the Muddy Mission to this point have focused on the male perspective. Karl Larson gives a good overview of the possibilities for agriculture and the labor required to plant, irrigate, and harvest crops. He adds, "The hard and difficult life which the Muddy imposed on its would-be homemakers continued to drive the settlers away."¹³ One would expect, after "homemakers," a discussion of domestic

¹⁰Mary Amelia [Richards Streeper], Letter to My Dear Brother [Samuel Richards], 9 August 1868, Streeper Collection.

¹¹Juanita Brooks, ed., *Not By Bread Alone: The Journal of Martha Spence Heywood, 1850-56* (Salt Lake City: Utah State Historical Society, 1978), recounts the experiences of another woman in circumstances like Jane's a decade earlier during the settlement of what is now Nephi, Utah.

¹²While Edwin remained in Payson, both William and Warren left to work in California, largely because of bad feelings between them and Orrawell.

¹³Larson, "I Was Called to Dixie," 144.

life, but instead he talks of crops, not gardens. He makes no reference to meal preparation, the availability of culinary water, or the construction of homes. He does not mention how many women or children lived in the three Muddy settlements or describe their social or religious life. L. A. Fleming also discusses crops, the Indian problem, and the movement of settlers from place to place; but his only reference to the domestic side of settlement life is a quotation about a fire in St. Joseph that burned nine dwellings in August 1868, causing the loss of dishes, clothes, and food. Leonard Arrington mentions schools, dances, and the pregnancy of Ann Foote, wife of Joseph Warren Foote. George Ellsworth quotes sixteen-year-old Elizabeth Claridge's description of building the family's adobe home and also how her parents, Samuel and Rebecca Claridge, tried to do the family laundry when they were so ill they had to lie by the wash tub to do so. He also lists the names of both women and men who came in Claridge's company and how many children were included. Although he documents the shortage of water for crops, he says nothing about culinary water. Pearson Corbett's "Settling the Muddy River Valley" describes how the homes were laid out in St. Joseph and, probably, in the other settlements as well. As a narrative history, it is excellent; but it contains only hints of what domestic life was like, the best being a quotation from Abraham A. Kimball's journal about how the heat affected the members of his family.¹⁴

Using Jane's journal, with other extant writings by Muddy missionaries to reconstruct their experience, enriches existing histories by adding the dimension of women settlers' efforts to establish routines and maintain homes in a harsh environment

¹⁴Arrington, *The Mormons in Nevada*, 40; Ellsworth, *Samuel Claridge*, 91, 99; S. George Ellsworth, *Pioneering the Outposts of Zion* (Logan, Utah: S. George Ellsworth, 1987), 11; Hafner, *One Hundred Years on the Muddy*, 155, 159, 164; Corbett, "Settling the Muddy River Valley," 144-45, 148. LDS Family History records identify Foote's wives as Artemesia Myers and Eliza Ivie. It was probably Eliza, not Ann, who was the pregnant wife referred to by Arrington, as on 5 December 1865, she gave birth to John Ammon Foote at St. Joseph. Arabell Lee Hafner's *One Hundred Years on the Muddy* is an exception to this masculine-perspective rule, perhaps because of her own gender; her history includes many anecdotes of both male and female settlers and later residents.

where anxiety about physical security and loneliness added an extra burden to the crushing physical labor. Jane was used to the company and support of female relatives; now she was thrust into a solitary life filled with hours of unending drudgery in a hostile climate.

Simonsville and the other towns of the mission resembled the pattern of Mormon city planning which gathered people into villages based loosely on the Plat of Zion instituted by church founder, Joseph Smith, in Kirtland, Ohio. In this plan the land was divided into three sections: village lots, farm land, and pasturage fields. The people employed cooperative labor and individual stewardship as stressed in the system, and the expertise of certain participants aided the project.

A mission census taken in the fall of 1866 at St. Joseph (formerly Simonsville), lists 167 settlers, thirty-five of whom are men. The rest are presumably women and children. The town was probably laid out like St. Joseph, where homes were built ten rods apart. Jane records that on 19 February the men laid off the ground for the fort at Simonsville and, on 11 March, after a Sunday meeting, the men accompanied President Thomas Smith "up on the hill to look for a town site." Three days later, Jane writes that lots were being surveyed and, on the 15th, were given out.

From these clues, we can deduce that Jane settled in temporary lodgings as soon as she arrived and stayed there the entire time, since she does not mention a move. There is no indication in her journal where her "camp" was nor how near her neighbors were. Jane's sons and hired man, identified only as "Clark," plant grapes, fruit trees, and a garden for her between working on the mill basement and doing their share of community work. Her brother, Warren Tenney, also a millwright, ran the mill in Simons's absence and possibly lived with or near Jane. On 24 February when Bishop Gustin ate with her, she says he "slept with Warren." Even though Jane had a good relationship with her brother, he must not have provided the comfort and support she required, possibly because he was so busy running the mill and helping lay out the town. He also searched for lost livestock, went three times to St. Thomas with Warren Foote to meet with President Thomas Smith, helped distribute lots, and met with President Erastus Snow (27 February, 2 and 7 March, 2 and 15 April, 3 June). These entries

chart an active involvement in establishing and directing the community.

Men and women had separate spheres of labor in this endeavor. At Simonsville, men worked in the fields and orchards together. Lumber for corrals and the ridgepoles of the adobe and sod houses came from two sources. Warren Foote identifies "an immense body of the best timber that we ever saw" some sixty miles to the northwest which they reached by building a road. This location was probably on Sheep Peak, which James Leitner, Thomas Smith's successor as bishop, called Sheep Mountain.¹⁵ Jane's journal reports a three-day journey to get ash poles that some of the men took February 13, 14, and 16. Later settlers made the even longer journey 130 miles to the northeast to Pine Valley in southwestern Utah.¹⁶

After mines opened in the Pahrnagat Valley to the north, the Mormons hauled salt from deposits near St. Thomas, ground it, and sold it to the miners. Other men grubbed away the native plants to clear fields for planting. They endlessly toiled to dig canals that quickly blew full of sand during the frequent storms. Jane's diary records a list of men's jobs that included surveying, building, laboring, herding, geology, town planning, and apportioning lots. In May the men harvested the first wheat grown there, and on June 4 they ground that wheat in Simons's mill. "Public works" was always men's work.

Women's work, or domestic work, is rarely recognized in historical studies as vital to community building, yet without the daily labor of cooking, washing, sewing, mending, child care, and gardening, men could not have easily performed their work. The collective endeavors of women, especially in times of sickness, wove a fabric of community through the support they rendered to their neighbors. Time spent together mending clothes, quilting, taking walks, attending meetings, and sharing meals also gave women the psychological respite they needed to endure.

Jane washed and baked for other women who were ill.

¹⁵Quoted in Arrington, *The Mormons in Nevada*, 40; Hafner, *One Hundred Years on the Muddy*, 50.

¹⁶John Young, letter, *Deseret News*, 19 June 1868.

Although her dwelling seems to have been merely a tent with a willow lean-to and had no stove, it served as an unofficial "boarding house" to accommodate important Church leaders and travelers who stopped at Simonsville. During these four months, she mentions feeding and housing ecclesiastical visitors for the night nine times.¹⁷ Although she does not comment on the extra work of cooking and serving meals, the drain on her scanty supplies, and the labor of bedmaking that such visits required, she wrote on 15 March after one group's departure, "I am glad." She used the last of her flour brought from Payson to feed Erastus Snow and recorded her embarrassment at serving poor dinners due to her lack of provisions.¹⁸ On Sunday, March 4, she fed Sister Thomas light bread, cracked wheat mush, and a very little molasses, "an odd supper for company," she said. The following day she recorded enviously that another woman had "had some bake pudding for dinner. . . . Wonder if I shall ever see potatoes and bread pudding again" (5 March).

Only two days later, Tuesday, March 6, she inventoried the family's few provisions from which she was to feed herself and her three sons: four sacks of flour, a gallon of molasses, a handful of dried meat, two bushels of unground wheat, and two quarts of corn meal. She worried that this was "a very small amount for our family. Unless we strike some unforeseen streak of good luck we shall have to go on short rations."

Jane and women like her sought to recreate the routine of their past lives, hampered by their want of facilities, equipment, and tools. For example, she had no stove and cooked over an open fire. On February 24 she wrote, "Rather unlucky for us, upset meat and mush in the fire. Had to cook second breakfast."

As another example, she records doing her laundry only

¹⁷James Pierce stayed there after his arrival with supplies from California (14 March). Men she identifies as Brother Patten, Bishop Gustin, President Seth Cook, Henry Miller, a man named Chaffin, James Cragun, Marius Ensign, and James G. Bleak came at various times (24 February, 11 March, 12 March, 26 April). On 2 June Erastus Snow and his party not only ate at her house but slept in her bed while she stayed with Sister Box for the night. On 9 June she provided food and beds for President Thomas Smith and James Leithhead.

¹⁸Dear Mother and Sister, 14 June 1868, Loose Papers.

twice in the four-month period. Most likely she washed up small batches between these times, but doing a real washing involved an all-day effort of carrying water from some distance, building a fire, possibly from brush her boys had grubbed, and boiling the clothes in a heavy iron pot, agitating them with a stick, and then hanging them to dry. Jane had no tap or well from which to draw water, and no trees, fences, or clotheslines on which to hang her clothes. She says nothing of how she managed these problems, but the labor needed to undertake such an effort with insufficient equipment is reason enough to limit her industry.

Jane evidently had brought a supply of cloth with her, for she records making items of clothing for her and the boys four times. She mentions three times mending their clothes.

Like her neighbors, she bartered for necessary goods, lending and swapping needed items and provisions. This lively sharing of goods and services was not merely neighborliness, but a necessity when little specie circulated. Jane records: "Perkins gave us some seeds mamoth pie plant red pepper Tomatoe" (February 18). "Took a walk on the hills Moth[er] Box, and C r[ho]des and I. We called on Inglestead for garden seeds. He gave us some Beer, - got a hat for Grant 2 Doll[ars]" (February 21). "Sis Box came after Garden seeds" (February 26)." "Let Sister Box have half bushel Potatoes to plant" (March 7). She also sent Sister Wilson some willows for a chair and loaned a frying pan to Andrew Gibbons.¹⁹ On March 13, long-awaited supplies came from California which were "in good condition [but] poor selection."

Such informal commercial encounters, plus the occasional house party for visiting, sharing a meal, and singing (four times), constituted nearly all of Jane's social life during the four months she was in Simonsville. She mentions only one community party,

¹⁹Rasmus M. Englestead and Anna Margaret Englestead, both born in Norway, stayed in the Muddy Mission until they were released and then relocated to Kane County where they were among the original members of the United Order in Orderville, Utah. Sister Box may be the wife of Andrew Box from Payson. Sister Wilson is possibly Harriet Wilson, wife of Thomas H. Wilson, who later lived in Payson. Andrew Smith Gibbons of St. Thomas was an Indian missionary and interpreter. His wife Rizpah gave birth to a son, Charles R. Gibbons, on 15 June 1866.

which celebrated the grinding of the first wheat in June. There was no meetinghouse, but Sunday meetings were usually held in someone's home and, once, in the shop of the grist mill. An unexpected element of such meetings for modern readers was the reading of letters from ecclesiastical authorities, such as Erastus Snow and George A. Smith, who sent instructions relative to building the Muddy settlement (11 March). On 15 April, Jane records that an unspecified number of babies were named and blessed, and oil was consecrated for its healing purpose. Two weeks later the first Sunday School was organized; Bro. John C. Perkins, a forty-five-year-old convert from Illinois who had earlier settled in Davis County, was named superintendent.

Providing shelter in a place such as the Muddy forced a creativity not known in settled areas. Because wood was so scarce, the settlers used clay, sod, and willows to make shelters. Jane does not describe her house, but her diary hints that it may have been nothing more than a tent, perhaps with a willow lean-to. She also speaks of her "camp," suggesting its roughness and lack of amenities.

Mary Richards Streeper, who arrived in St. Joseph six months after Jane left the area, wrote, "Our tent is pitched, and now I've commenced housekeeping with the tent for a parlor and bedroom and my kitchen is the bare ground and no roof." Later she reported living in a willow shanty lined inside with wagon covers. These structures were made by weaving willows in and out of upright poles placed in the ground. There was one door and a hole with a cloth stretched over it which served as a window.²⁰

Jane also mentions a third type of dwelling: the Box family lived in a sod house (17 February). More durable than Jane's or Mary's, this shelter was made of slabs of sod, probably dug from grassy meadowland near the river. These slabs were piled to make

²⁰Mary [Amelia Richards Streeper], Letter to Dear Mary Ann [Parker] Richards, 12 December 1867, Streeper Collection; Mary [Amelia Richards Streeper], Letter to My Dear Pa [Samuel Whitney Richards], 30 January 1868; Eliza J. Thorn, "Biography of Lorenzo Johnson," 2, microfilm of typescript, n.d., Special Collections, Merrill Library.

the walls and roofed with bundles of cattails from nearby swamps laid over stringers, or horizontal poles, connecting the upright posts that made a frame for the roof. John Franklin Brown, who was eleven when his family pioneered on the Muddy, described the roofing process in his autobiography: "We would go down in the swamps of the Muddy and gather these cat tails, tie them in bunches six inches in diameter. They grew ten and twelve feet tall. These were piled and tied on the roof and when laid in bundles evenly on the stringers and then on the cracks and tied and weighted, they shed the snow and rain and made a dry shelter."²¹

These conditions seem so harsh and difficult for Jane to deal with alone that one wonders how Orrawell Simons could leave her there. Almost certainly the more advanced Payson farm would repay his efforts more richly. Possibly he also felt that the mission could not survive but that, by leaving Jane there, he was fulfilling the letter of his missionary commitment. And possibly his pride was injured when he lost a minor political contest of wills. Warren Foote, presiding officer of the St. Joseph settlement, reported that Simons tried to influence the men there to relocate at his mill site, but they refused, "much to the chagrin of Simonds [sic] and company."²²

Orrawell seemed to have great confidence in Jane's managerial abilities, nor was it misplaced. She had been a widow for seven years prior to her marriage to Orrawell, and with her brother, Warren Tenney, had brought her three sons and their parents across the plains. She had taught school both before her first marriage in Illinois and again after she arrived in Payson. But the marriage seems to have meant different things to Orrawell and Jane. He may have married her, a widow, as some men were encouraged to do, to give her a home and his protection; but they

²¹As quoted in Larson, *I Was Called To Dixie*, 142. After the Muddy missionaries were released, John moved with his parents, Gurnsey and Lovina Brown, to Kanab where he married Elizabeth Fuller in 1878 and was at various times a blacksmith, lawyer, mayor of Kanab and Kane County prosecuting attorney.

²²Warren Foote, *Journal*, 3 vols (1837-1903), 1:95, typescript, 195, LDS Church Archives.

rarely lived together after 1866, a fact she comments on in letters to relatives. In 1874 while living in an inconvenient half-built dwelling in Payson, she wrote to her mother in Salt Lake City that, after two years, Orrawell still had not finished building the house. Jane's descendants think that Orrawell's departure from the Muddy was hastened by his desire to return to Kate Baldwin, his young bride.²³

Other men in Orrawell's situation made similar decisions. Orson Hyde brought his wife Mary Ann Price Hyde to winter with him in Carson Valley, then later proposed to leave her "here with her sister, having taken up a good ranch that will do for both." Joseph Heywood, one of the founders of Nephi, left his newly married third wife, Martha Spence Heywood, living in a wagon box through the winter while he returned to his other two wives in Salt Lake City. Though assigned as president of the new settlement, he spent very little time there, leaving Martha to fend for herself most of the time.²⁴

Still, Jane's diary entries reveal her emotional dependance on Orrawell. "I am well enough but hardly know how to set myself to work ever since Orrawell went away . . . thers something lacking" (February 12). "God is evry where, my Hus[band] is not here. If he was, it seems I should have someone to lean upon" (February 28). "If I could have my Husbands company what would [I] not give? I often ask the question—Shall we ever meet again. I hardly dare think of Him or my lonly situation" (March 18). "Cold-well-in body - but lonly in spirit," she wrote on 19 February. She reported nervousness, gloomy feelings, sleeplessness. On 18 March she asked, "Do our folks ever think of me. It all most seem like we were banished."

Likewise, when Mary Streeper's husband left on a trip, her usual cheerful coping lapsed into loneliness. "It seems more than

²³B. J. Simons, Letter to Dear Mother [Eliza Webb Tenney], 11 February 1874, Loose Papers; telephone conversation with Jane's great-grandson, Edwin L. Peterson of Logan, Utah, 24 March 1994.

²⁴Quoted in Eugene F. Campbell, "Brigham Young's Outer Cordon—A Reappraisal," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 41, no. 3 (Summer 1973): 237; Brooks, *Not By Bread Alone*, 68, 75, 78.

I can bear to stay in this desolate place without seeing you all; when he is away I feel perfectly deserted.”²⁵

The demanding labor, poor housing, loneliness, and harsh environment taxed the health and increased the emotional distress of these women. After a day caring for a boarder, Jane wrote, “feel very much fatigued and confused so many coming and going” (14 March). Three days later, she confessed, “This is a very hard situation, a heavy days work before me and dont feel very well” (17 March). On another occasion, she complained of a cold and headache (16 February). On 7 June, after walking three and a half miles in the heat each way to a meeting in St. Joseph, she was so tired she had to lie down most of the next day.

She was fortunate not to succumb to the malaria borne by the mosquitoes in the nearby swamps. Lucy Allen, who had reached St. Joseph on the Muddy in 1865, joked about her every-other-day spells of fever and ague: “I had to bake the days I didn’t shake.”²⁶ Jane records helping Sarah Cahoon Angell, wife of John Osborn Angell, who was ill in February (20 and 23 February). Three years later, a letter from Mary Streeper mentioned that Sister Angell’s baby daughter had died, two of her sons had chills and fever, and Sarah herself was confined to bed “worn out with watching and care.” Mary had spent most of a day, she wrote, “helping her [Mrs. Angell] all I could.”²⁷

Considering Mormonism’s emphasis on a gospel of joy (2 Ne. 2:25), the satisfactions of doing one’s duty, and the uplifting effects of feeling that one was contributing to a great cause, the sense of discouragement that faithful members such as Jane and Mary suffered is even more poignant.

²⁵Mary Amelia [Richards Streeper], Letter to Dear Pa [Samuel Whitney Richards], 8 April 1868, Streeper Collection.

²⁶Quoted in Arrington, *The Mormons In Nevada*, 40. Lucy, a native of Ohio, is listed as a citizen of Orderville, Utah, in the 1880 census with her husband, Joseph Allen, and a son, Simson Allen.

²⁷Mary Amelia [Richards Streeper], Letter to My Dear Father [Samuel Whitney Richards], 26 April 1868, Streeper Collection. The mother was Sarah Prudence Ermina Cahoon Angell. LDS Family Search identifies the baby as Lerona Marliisa or Martissa, with a death date of 1865 and 1866. Mary’s letter indicates that the proper date would be 1868.

The Mormons had generally sought for good relations with the Native Americans because of their religious belief that these people were descendants of Israelites; nonetheless, their attitudes included superiority to, fear of, and repugnance towards these people. Jane records quite neutrally that Orrawell hired Indians to clear the land and help construct the mill. She also employed a native woman to help her with the laundry on 26 March, as did Mary Streeper, who wrote to her father's second wife, with a perhaps inadvertent disclosure of racial bias: "I have engaged one to wash for me. What do you think of our hired help? Is it not a fine prospect, to think of spending one's day with such associates?"²⁸ Working together on these homely tasks did not apparently foster understanding or friendship between the women. Although the Mormons saw the Indians as brothers and sisters from the past, their views reflected the current Euro-American feelings of superiority or of being saviors to the "uncivilized" race. A rather typical expression was Mormon Apostle Ezra T. Benson's address at a church conference in Provo in 1855, during which he stated his repugnance for the "dirty practices" and "Indian traits" of his two Indian foster children and looked to the day when these would be erased from their memories.²⁹ It was inevitable that a clash would occur in this type of environment; then underlying fears became immediately apparent.

In 1866, while Jane resided on the Muddy, Indian agitation reached into the settlements which were situated in the middle of the Southern Paiute homeland. Triggered by unrest among the Utes led by Black Hawk who were being moved to the Uintah reservation, the Paiutes, too, felt the pressure of the encroachment of Anglo settlers. At first they pulled up the Muddy settlers' crops, hoping to drive them out. Then they killed and drove off horses, mules, and cattle. Jane's teenage sons were part of the unsuccessful search party. Jane recorded the "precarious situ-

²⁸Mary Amelia, Letter to Dear Mary Ann, 12 December 1867, Streeper Collection.

²⁹E. T. Benson, "The Gospel to the Indians," as quoted in "Indian Tribes and Their Dealings with the Mormons," compiled by Kate B. Carter, March 1955 DUP Lesson, 357, copy in my possession.

ation" of the women with "all our best men drawn from camp and but 2 or three guns" (28 February). The party returned empty-handed and quickly constructed a corral for their remaining stock. Jane wrote that "boys the size of Eddy" were required to stand guard in turn with the men. "How I Tremble for fear of the treacherous Indians putting their threat into execution—to take our stock and pick off our men one by one" (2 March). She does not say who made this threat nor how she heard about it.

Thomas Smith recommended another search posse and the women worked feverishly to equip their men the best they could. Jane cut out and sewed a pair of pants for Clark, her hired man, in one day. Women baked into the evening hours. Men hurried to get ready to leave as darkness fell. After ten unsuccessful days, the men again returned.

Because of the growing unease regarding the Indians, the first Sunday in June, the Simonsville congregation walked to St. Joseph to hear President Erastus Snow urge the settlers to gather into two towns for greater safety. The people of St. Joseph could pick between Simonsville, which would be renamed Mill Point, and St. Thomas. Negotiations between the ecclesiastical leaders and local chiefs smoothed over the difficulties, but the consolidation effort went forward.

Perhaps the Indian unrest as the year progressed caused Orrawell to bring Jane and Grant back to Payson. Simonsville was no longer Simonsville and the gristmill was finished and functioning without his direction. The earlier departure of Jane's older sons had left her without male protection. In a letter to Jane's sister, Eliza, her mother wrote that she expected Jane to return to Payson with her brother Warren "next month."³⁰

The settlements rose and fell in population, and the people moved about the valley, trying to better their marginal situations. After a federal survey in 1870 placed the Muddy Mission in Nevada, the state government demanded back taxes in gold, to be collected by force, if necessary. The impoverished Saints looked to their ecclesiastical leaders for counsel. In December 1870, Brigham Young released the Saints from their missions. Many of

³⁰Eliza Tenney, Letter to My Dear Child, 28 June 1866.

them moved en masse to Long Valley in the Kanab area. Some Payson settlers returned to that town. It had not been a financially successful venture for anyone. William Wood remembered he went to the Muddy rich and returned poor to Salt Lake City in 1872. Warren Foote left the Muddy with two old horses, one old wagon, and two cows after six years of work.³¹

Jane's and Orrawell's relationship before the Muddy experience is unknown, but from Jane's first entry in her journal it is clear that she was struggling bravely to cope with a situation she did not want. During the next four months on the Muddy, she expressed feelings of abandonment. Her subsequent writings suggest that the marriage was not close and that Orrawell was often absent. While some challenges draw couples together, the Muddy experience seemed to divide Jane and Orrawell. A letter from Orrawell to Jane in March 1866, the month after his return to Payson, shows little insight into her situation and very little affection. He chastised her for not writing more often and closed the letter with, "Good by. Keep in good cheer."³² It was hardly the kind of encouragement she needed.

From her growing-up years in New York, then a convert and member in Missouri and Nauvoo, to her widowhood, crossing the plains, and her remarriage in Utah, Jane was physically and emotionally close to her own family—her mother, her brother, Warren, and her sister, Eliza Tenney Cannon. She felt psychologically secure and cared for, even after the death of her first husband. In contrast, on the Muddy she was cut off, not only from her husband but from most of her male and female relatives. The strongly gendered spheres of the Victorian world probably made the deprivation of female companionship the more acutely felt. Women often shared their inner feelings more easily and more often with their own sex than with their spouses.³³ Perhaps in

³¹William Wood, Journal, photocopy of typescript in my possession, 33; quoted in Ellsworth, *Samuel Claridge*, 111.

³²Orrawell Simons, Letter to Dear Jane, 7 March 1866, Loose Papers.

³³See Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual," in her *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 53-76.

time Jane would have developed sustaining friendships with the other women of Simonsville, but four months was not long enough. Mary Streeper also felt this void. Three months after she moved to St. Joseph, she received a visit from old friends now living in neighboring St. Thomas. "It seems good to be with the girls and talk of the friends at home," she wrote. She contrasted these feelings, perhaps unconsciously, with the feelings of reserve that she still felt toward a woman of short acquaintance with whom she had yet to develop shared memories and experiences.³⁴

Jane's life after her four months on the Muddy was a mixture of frustrations and personal satisfaction. She again taught school, sold publications of interest to women on commission, and served for twenty-four years as president of the Payson Ward Relief Society until the ward was divided in 1891. She rejoiced in the friendships she made and the service she rendered in that capacity. In contrast, she regretted that she could not educate her sons. Though well-to-do when she arrived in Utah, at marriage her resources went to Simons who seemed unwilling to use them for her sons. In fact, Jane's Loose descendants perceived him as miserly and tell how Eddy and Willy Loose, while on herd duty in the Muddy Mission, collected a large amount of wool that had been caught on bushes only to have Simons appropriate it; it was one reason for Willy's departure from the Muddy and Payson once he had completed Simons's work there.³⁵

The boys eventually did well in mining. Edwin became a prominent Provo businessman and state chairman of the Republican party. Jane's descendants are proud that William's grandson, Daniel De Luce, won a Pulitzer Prize as a World War II Associated Press correspondent in 1944.³⁶ Edwin's grandson and namesake, Dr. Edwin L. Peterson, taught geography for many years at Southern Utah State and Utah State University and donated Jane's papers

³⁴Mary Amelia Richards Streeper, Letter to My Dear Pa [Samuel Whitney Richards], 4 March 1868.

³⁵Peterson, telephone conversation, 24 March 1994.

³⁶De Luce's mother changed the spelling of the family name from Loose to its original French spelling. Conversation with Edwin L. Peterson, 3 July 1996.

to the latter's Special Collections in the Merrill Library. Grant managed a mill that Orrawell built on Peeteeneet Creek in Payson and was also the community's postmaster for a time.

Jane's testimony of the truthfulness of her religion continued strong throughout her life. One of her great sadnesses was that her older boys were not active Church members. In fact, her papers contain a number of letters from them denouncing the Church and her marriage to Simons. She petitioned for and received a cancellation of her temple sealing from Simons on 24 May 1899, afterwards going by the name of Loose.

Jane spent most of her later years in Provo with Edwin. At her death in 1904, he erected a huge marble statue to her memory at her gravesite in Payson. It featured handcarved figures of a mother and a child and cost two thousand dollars.

Historian Susan Armitage wrote: "It has always seemed to me that it is not the drama and the heroism, but the very dailiness and ordinariness of the frontier story that we find so compelling. We want to know how people travelled to the West, what difficulties they encountered, how they coped, and how the story turned out in the end. And we want that history of real people to make sense in our lives as westerners today."³⁷

Jane and other Muddy missionaries left their impressions of what George Ellsworth has called "the most difficult of all Mormon colonizing efforts."³⁸ Of course Jane, like all diarists, was selective in what she recorded. But the sheer quantity of entries that expressed feelings of weariness and loneliness reveal her need to come to grips emotionally with the challenge of facing a difficult task alone. She also narrates an irreplaceable story of the Muddy Mission as she knew it, a reminder of the legacy of endurance these early missionaries left to the citizens of Nevada and to Mormons today.

As we read Jane's attempt to make sense of her ordeal, the strength of her commitment shines through even the most painful

³⁷Susan Armitage, "Through Women's Eyes: A New View of the West," in *The Women's West*, edited by Susan Armitage and Elizabeth Jameson (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), 16.

³⁸Ellsworth, *Samuel Claridge*, 83.

entries. "I thank thee Father for evrything I have. O enlighten my mind, that I may more fully apreiciate thy goodness and mercy," she prayed on 16 February. Her reminiscences not only tell of her own and other women's challenges but also reveal the dynamics of building a community from little more than dirt and labor sprinkled with the scanty salt of shared experiences and the sustenance of spiritual commitment.

Sidney Rigdon and Me

Richard S. Van Wagoner

Death preserved Joseph Smith in amber, taking him before time could erode his youthful brilliance. As a result, he shares the inevitable glory of all celebrities who die tragically and young: we make of them what we want, molding our hopes and disappointments around them.

In contrast, Sidney Rigdon lived to be a well-worn eighty-three and, unlike Smith, had to soldier on in an abrasive world while Nauvoo floated away into golden and scarlet memory. Few Mormon leaders have been more extravagantly admired or more savagely reviled than Rigdon. Few embodied more genuine contradictions in their lives. I went one-on-one with the man for the better part of five years. It was not easy. It was not fun. I look back on it with intense and mixed memories. If this essay seems contradictory, it is because my feelings about Rigdon are deeply conflicted.

I suppose that every biographer, while searching for tracks of the subject, at some point discovers something wholly surprising and revealing about himself or herself. For me that moment came when I journeyed to Friendship, New York, the small hamlet where Sidney Rigdon spent the last twenty years of his eventful life. There it was easy to envision the quaint old gentleman ambling about the dusty streets in the obscurity of what he termed

“self-exile.” In my mind I placed his bearded face in a crowd surrounding the local telegraph office as Civil War news came across the wire. I recalled with some disdain how the poverty-stricken zealot, secluded in a bedroom in the home of his son-in-law Ed Wingate, directed the lives of a handful of distant followers through hundreds of sanctimonious letters and revelations. His personal poverty, curmudgeonly qualities, and malevolent temperament prevented him from governing in person.

Except for a discarded bathtub on the lawn, the still-standing home on Main Street where Sidney’s much beloved Phebe died, looked much as it probably did in 1886 when her funeral was held there. Sidney had died a decade earlier on Depot Street in the Wingate home which was destroyed by fire in 1881. “Tears of sorrow were shed over his grave by his family and . . . friends,” wrote Rigdon’s son Wickliffe in an unpublished biography of his father. Ultimately “he and his wife who had shared his joys and sorrows sleep side by side in the little cemetery in Maple Grove where loving hands . . . laid them to rest beneath the sod.”¹

I went to that little cemetery in 1993. Although Rigdon’s personality, achievements, and roles had long occupied much of my thought, Maple Grove Cemetery was where our paths converged for the first time. As I stood over his grave, an electrifying surge in the depths of my soul fused me to him. For the first time I felt a surprising sense of empathy for a man I didn’t think I even liked. Although I still retain ambivalent feelings toward him, I have considerable compassion for a man so consumed by the fires of religious passion that he ignored many of the realities of mortal existence.

In the beginning I hadn’t wanted to do a Rigdon biography. Writing history virtually nonstop since 1978 had pushed me into emotional depletion. I felt completely exhausted after *Lehi: Portraits of a Utah Town* (Lehi, Utah: Lehi City Corporation, 1990) was published. Furthermore, I did not initially find Sidney Rigdon particularly alluring. He reminded me too much of an eccentric

¹J. Wickliffe Rigdon, “Life Story of Sidney Rigdon,” holograph, Historical Department Archives of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter cited as LDS Church Archives).

old man who haunted my teenage memories of the Lehi Fifth Ward. J. Freeman, a blustery orator like Rigdon, loved the lime-light, also like Rigdon, and, finding formal invitations too few, looked forward with relish to testimony meeting. With a resolute voice that seemed to come from the bottom of an empty barrel, he evoked images of God thundering commandments from Mount Sinai. Although I feared his big-voiced pronouncements when I was young and knew no better, I neither liked him nor identified with his brand of religious swagger. I particularly disliked the interminable length of his sacrament meeting pontifications, brought to an amen only by a tug on his coattails by the long-suffering bishop. His garrulously annoying prayers often left us deacons writhing for fifteen minutes or more—we timed them.

Despite my misgivings about religious eccentrics, I ultimately became personally committed to the Rigdon project after spending a dozen or so hours rummaging through the Stephen Post Collection in the Historical Department Archives of the LDS Church. Post, a tormented religionist himself, was Rigdon's appointed spokesman. He became the channel through which the old prophet's spiritual energy was initially funneled to a small group of believers in Attica, Iowa, and later in the Red River Valley of Manitoba, Canada.

In the hundreds of documents I read in the Post papers, I saw convincing evidence that Rigdon's life was passionately preoccupied with religion. This preoccupation seemed psychologically unhealthy, obsessive-compulsive, taking a form that seemed to endanger his mental stability. Visionaries sometimes seem to be possessed creatures. Such individuals can enmesh themselves in the thrall of belief so powerful that they ignore all else—even reason—to ensure that reality catches up with their dreams.

The contradictions of religious fanaticism had interested me since my early years when a trio of men in my hometown made phenomenal spiritual claims. They insisted that God had spoken wondrous things to them from a great ball of fire in the nearby mountains of Cedar Valley. One of the men stood up in my ward on Fast Sunday and described the shared epiphany. While the brother was bearing awe-inspiring testimony of his visions, the chapel was as quiet as the Tabernacle on Temple Square when they demonstrated dropping the pin. All three men were prompt-

ly excommunicated. But I have never forgotten how their boldly delivered message electrified the local populace. Despite intense adversity from townspeople, those recreants never denied what they claimed to have seen and heard. Despite my youth, I didn't think of them as evil, although many did. I saw them as reflected through the eyes of my mother who viewed them as good men who were victims of religious excess. I wondered how these deluded souls had galloped away from reality on the misguided horse of fanaticism.

There is something powerful and compelling about the manner in which intense, and often misplaced, ardor can imprison the human soul. One of the striking facts in the lives of many of the world's religious leaders is how their eccentric grandiosity can erupt into apparent psychosis. Ultimately, to Sidney Rigdon, religion was not just a matter of life and death. It was more important than that. A man of vast eccentricity, wholly obsessed with a manic-depressive's religious fervency, he became *my* obsession, despite my initial reluctance.

I think biographers are fortunate if they can partially see the world through the eyes of their subject. Notwithstanding his religious excess, I generally identified with Sidney Rigdon's life-long quest for truth and knowledge. Although born a century and a half apart, there were similarities in our youthful years. Born in the rolling hill country near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Sidney possessed a restless mind that revealed itself early. A book-consuming farm boy, seemingly propelled from an early age to avoid the sweat, dirt, and menial labor of the farmstead, he began borrowing books from whoever would lend them and spent much time alone, pondering and reading. He later recalled that in his youth he had "an insatiable thirst for reading."²

I also was an avid reader from my earliest years. When I was eight, I determined to read every book in the Lehi Carnegie Library. Although I did not accomplish my goal, I nevertheless read hundreds of those still-remembered and much-loved books.

²As quoted in "The Mormons," by A. W. Cowles, *Moore's Rural New Yorker*, 1869, 61, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

Even today, despite the rigors of a demanding life, I can seldom sleep at night without reading for an hour or two before retiring.

I, like Rigdon, was also a religiously focused and pious youth, although I was neither as introspective nor as encumbered with melancholy as he. While he was fed by the wellsprings of the Regular Baptist movement, I grew up thoroughly immersed in Mormonism. Through a process I now liken to osmosis, I found my full source of moral authority and eternal security based on the shared light and testimony of others. Like thousands of Latter-day Saint youth, I learned early to conform, to adjust myself to the common mold, to lead a honorable yet unexamined life. I received eight 100 percent Individual Awards for perfect attendance at all of my church meetings from age twelve to nineteen. I received my Duty to God Award, my Eagle Scout Award, and every merit badge that the Boy Scout organization offered. For two years I served the Church dutifully and honorably in the Central States Mission. When I returned I married promptly, began a family, graduated from Brigham Young University, and moved forward into the life I seemed destined to live.

Retrospectively, the most startling aspect of my early years was that I never stopped to deeply scrutinize my beliefs. I had merely lived my life without questioning my interpretations, without reading between the lines. Literally the first moment of metaphysical wonder came traumatically as my mission began. A message from a larger reality suddenly grasped me in its talons as the Union Pacific streamliner, carrying me and twenty-nine other missionaries, left Salt Lake City eastbound. The despair of vague uncertainty crashed down on me before we had even reached Ogden. Although I knew the train would end up in Kansas City two days later, I had absolutely no idea where *I* was going. I recall sobbing quietly to myself, a truly dismayed young man, until I fell asleep somewhere on down the line.

I have never regretted my mission. I can now see that those two years spent in the Midwest evoked in me a spiritual quest for truth, a thirst for wholeness and union with God that I have increasingly found at odds with many of the theological certitudes I had about Mormonism.

From my earliest memory, I was taught that the Church had all the answers, all the truth one needed to ascend the golden

ladder to heaven. Just take one rung at a time and you could not possibly go wrong, was the message. I began to seriously doubt the verity of that reasoning at some point in my early twenties. For reasons largely unknown to me then or now, I had come to the conclusion that it was frequently a mistake to listen to the chorale of the collective mind. I'd learned that influential people and large institutions could be, and often were, wrong. This seemed particularly true in religious matters where the democratic application of skepticism was seldom evident.

It is apparent to me that Sidney Rigdon also came to that conclusion early in life. It was a realization that caused considerable personal tragedy for him. First a Baptist, afterwards a Reformed Baptist, then forever afterward a Book of Mormon-believing Latter-day Saint, Rigdon did not ease through mortality on silver wings. Theological swordplay punctured his relationship with Alexander Campbell. Had he kowtowed to Brigham Young and embraced polygamy, or "spiritual wifery" as it was then called, he would no doubt have been revered alongside such other Mormon eccentrics as Orson Pratt and W. W. Phelps. But Rigdon was not compliant. He seldom stayed in anyone's amen corner. I respect him for that although I disdain his efforts, in his declining years, to extort money from his followers. His abiding yet egocentric efforts to bring about the Second Advent through insipid hollow pronouncements issued in God's name were also hard for me to stomach.

Rigdon felt that because of his lifelong religious efforts he deserved a personal gratuity like the financial security Brigham Young was enjoying in Utah Territory. Long before Young entered the stage through a side door after the drama had already started, Rigdon had emerged as Joseph Smith's foremost adviser, strategist, and divinely appointed spokesman, a role, noted Joseph Smith, that the Book of Mormon had predicted thousands of years earlier. Furthermore, Rigdon had a prodigious memory. No doubt he felt that his contributions also merited a kind of old-age pension.

The Joseph Smith/Sidney Rigdon relationship is a fascinating one. Rigdon, Smith's designated spokesman played the role with sturdy discretion for nearly a decade. Together the two, along

with a small supporting cast, led a nineteenth-century religious revolution that is still ongoing in many respects.

In the beginning, Mormonism in its simplest form was merely a gathering of believers awaiting the soon-to-occur Millennium promised by their prophet. Rigdon's belief in a literal gathering of Israel and an imminent millennium predated his meeting Joseph Smith. The young New York seer, however, convinced Rigdon that God's blueprint for forming and governing the millennial church was now on the table.

Most studies incorrectly assume that Rigdon's disenchantment with Joseph Smith began later in Nauvoo when the Prophet made what the Rigdon family thought were indecent proposals to nineteen-year-old Nancy. On the contrary, his loss of faith occurred gradually as a discontent that initially erupted when Smith's millennial revelations seemed to fizzle. The record appears abundantly clear that the Mormon vision of the gathering to western Missouri was an abject failure. No Native Americans were converted to the Church as promised. Indian agents would not even allow missionaries access to the "remnants of Israel" who were supposed to assist with the building of the "New Jerusalem." Moreover, the area, as subsequent events proved, was most certainly not a "land of peace, a city of refuge, a place of safety for the saints of the Most High God" (D&C 45:66).

In the name of the Lord, Joseph Smith had also pronounced earlier that "the city of New Jerusalem shall be built by the gathering of the saints, beginning at this place [Independence, Missouri], even the place of the temple, which temple shall be reared in this generation. For verily this generation shall not all pass away until an house shall be built unto the Lord" (D&C 84:4-5).

That did not happen either. All Saints living in that generation were long dead when the first Mormon temple in Jackson County was recently completed by the RLDS Church. Mormonism, claiming to be in the eleventh hour of the latter days has now been hovering on the brink of the advent for more than 165 years.

The Latter-day Saint capacity for denial even in the face of manifest evidence may strike non-Mormons as absurd. But it is deeply rooted in the Mormon psyche's mixture of bravado, rhetoric, and religious conviction. Undoubtedly every age has its pecu-

liar folly. Psychologists have long recognized that, when prophecies fail, followers often unexpectedly bounce back with greater faith than before, believing that the failed prophecy was merely God's test of their conviction.

Rigdon, because he was designated as the Church's official spokesman, no doubt took the failures of Joseph Smith's Missouri visions personally. The indignity of incarceration in Richmond and Liberty jails, to a man so steeped in establishing his self-worth, seemed sure evidence to Rigdon of the failure of God's promise to bless and nurture His children. He, like Joseph Smith, wondered where God was hiding while the Mormons were getting collectively kicked out of the state. Rigdon continued to wonder anxiously about Joseph Smith's prophetic integrity when his predictions of successful Missouri redress also failed. Sidney, like many others, became profoundly dismayed over the introduction of polygamy into the church. He viewed it as clearly reprehensible and as having less to do with God's work than the lustful affairs of men.

I also have serious personal reservations about the Church's demeanor in Missouri. The official Mormon position is that the "Missouri War" was one-sided, that our people were driven from the state and persecuted practically without provocation. One of the saddest conclusions I reached during my research of this period was that the Saints were not always innocent victims nor were their enemies always villainous. Both Mormons and non-Mormons alike were guilty of deplorable crimes during the fall of 1838. That evidence was particularly distressing to me because my direct ancestor, Austin Hammer, was one of the group of unarmed men murdered at Haun's Mill in October 1838. His tangled bones still lie in the well where all of the corpses were hurriedly dumped.

Sidney Rigdon and Joseph Smith were both undeniably responsible for much of the Missouri debacle just as they both had been responsible for the equally imprudent Kirtland Safety Society. Their combustible rhetoric, the clandestine Danite band's illicit operations, and the candid anti-Mormon testimony by prominent dissidents—all of which clearly contributed to the conflict—stood as evidence that the Saints posed a bona fide threat to the perceived peace and well-being of non-Mormon society.

That particular episode of Mormon history leaves me still wondering how things would have turned out had the Saints turned a Christian cheek to Gentile atrocities rather than retaliating with vengeful military might.

Perhaps the most profound personal effect on me during my research on the Rigdon book was the increased awareness of how frequently Mormon leaders of the past have altered our official history. Changes in our annals have become so routine, so banal, that Mormons have insulated themselves from what it really means.

I love the Church in terms of its essential gospel message. As a group, Latter-day Saints have historically been good-hearted and uncommonly well-meaning people. But in my opinion, modern Mormons, despite being pro-education, are decidedly anti-intellectual. Instead of recognizing freedom of thought and truthful self-expression, we as a people have chosen instead to let others do much of our thinking for us. This intellectual dependence has resulted in a body of believers inordinately susceptible to legend, exaggeration, and prophetic posturing. Some Church leaders, unfortunately, have capitalized on this group gullibility. There are numerous instances where respected leaders have resorted to duplicity, obfuscation, and unethical manipulation of our history because it was "best for the Church." So now we use a Book of Mormon edition containing slightly more than 3,900 changes, many of them substantial, completely altering original meanings. We have a Doctrine and Covenants so riddled with alterations of the original revelations that a word-by-word tally of omissions and additions would likely run into the tens of thousands.³

³See Jerald and Sandra Tanner, *3,913 Changes in the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Modern Microfilm, 1965); Lamoni Call, *2000 Changes in the Book of Mormon* (Bountiful, Utah: n.pub., 1898); Jeffrey R. Holland, "An Analysis of Selected Changes in Major Editions of the Book of Mormon—1830-1920," M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1966; Lloyd Lamar Peterson, *Problems in Mormon Text: A Brief Study of Certain Changes in Important Latter-day Saint Publications including the Book of Mormon, Book of Commandments, Doctrine and Covenants, and History of the Church* (Concord, Calif.: Pacific Publishing, Co., 1969); Melvin J. Peterson, "A Study of the Nature and Significance of the Changes in the Revelations as Found in a Comparison of the Book of

I still remember my shock in the early 1970s when I learned that the Egyptian papyri from which Joseph Smith claimed to translate the Book of Abraham had absolutely nothing to do with Abraham. When some of the original papyri were discovered and ultimately translated by Egyptologists, they turned out to be to be common funerary documents, very ordinary elements of the Egyptian "Book of the Dead."

Perhaps the saddest of these silent revisions, at least for me, occurred to our official *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, first issued in the *Deseret News* in the 1850s under Brigham Young's supervision, then eventually published in book form under the direction of the First Presidency in 1902. The introductory assurance that "no historical or doctrinal statement has been changed" is more than demonstrably wrong; it is dishonest. Overshadowed by editorial censorship and hundreds of deletions, additions, and alterations, these seven volumes are essentially not reliable. This official history is a partisan chronology, a flawed legacy for rank-and-file believers. Not only does this history place polygamy and Brigham Young's ecclesiastical significance in the rosy glow of political acceptability, it smooths out Joseph Smith's roughhewn edges, tidies up his more disreputable adventures, and deletes unfulfilled prophecies. Even conceding the different standards of what constituted historical accuracy between the nineteenth century and our own, I find it lamentable that this manipulative history has been perpetuated right up to the present. I feel especially strongly about this double dealing because, in my opinion, the history of Mormonism requires no such anxious sanitation. It is even more powerful, compelling, and, yes, inspirational in its workaday shirt sleeves than it is in its Sunday broadcloth and cuff-links.

In the process of remaking Mormon history, a monumental disservice was done to Sydney Rigdon and others who challenged

Commandments, and Subsequent Editions of the Doctrine and Covenants," M.S. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1955; Robert J. Woodford, "The Historical Development of the Doctrine and Covenants, Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, 1974; John W. Fitzgerald, "A Study of the Doctrine and Covenants," M.S. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1940.

the Quorum of the Twelve's 1844 ascent to power. The Twelve, under Brigham Young's leadership, began altering the historical record shortly after Joseph Smith's death. Contrary to the introduction's claim, Smith did not author the *History of the Church*. At the time of his death, the narrative had been written up to 5 August 1838. By 4 February 1846, when the books were packed for the trek west, Willard Richards had completed the history to 1 March 1843. After Richards's death in 1854, the account from 1 March 1843 to 8 August 1844 was finished under the direction of George A. Smith, the Prophet's cousin. The full history was eventually concluded by Smith, Wilford Woodruff, and others in August 1856, seventeen years after it was undertaken.

Although I have been troubled by Mormon revisionism for years, newly discovered incidents in my Rigdon research fueled a profound dismay. How it was done in a significant case which alters our modern view of the former member of the First Presidency serves as an example. After the dust had settled over Joseph Smith's overtures to young Nancy Rigdon, Smith was guiltily conciliatory and uncomfortable around the Rigdon family. He seemed to view them with a suddenly keen sense of paranoia. On 13 June 1843, the Smith family left Nauvoo to visit Emma's sister, Elizabeth Hale Wasson, at Inlet Grove, 200 miles northeast of Nauvoo. While there the Prophet was arrested by Missouri officers, then released.

One month later, based on a false report from Orson Hyde, the suspicious Prophet publicly accused Rigdon, then his counselor, of treason, claiming that he had informed the Missouri agents of the Smith family's travel plans. Without allowing Rigdon a chance to defend himself, Smith then tried to disfellowship him and pressured him to give up his ministerial license.

My careful study of the record shows that Rigdon was innocent of the charges. Smith's accusations were based on hearsay; and after Rigdon received a letter from Governor Thomas Carlin on 20 August denying Rigdon's involvement, Smith was forced to acknowledge that he was probably wrong. On 27 August, while addressing the gathered Saints, the Prophet discussed his earlier action and read Carlin's letter to the group, saying that the letter was evasive and designed to hide the truth.

Rigdon then took the stand in his own defense, turned to

Smith, and said that he had met Carlin on only three occasions and had not discussed Smith's travel arrangements with anyone. The matter was put before the Saints who voted to table the issue until October. The original version of Sidney's 7-8 October hearing, as recited in the *Times and Seasons*, was recast when reported in the *Deseret News* in 1858, and later published in the *History of the Church*. This falsification conveyed an erroneous image of Rigdon that prevails in Mormon tradition to this day. The Quorum of the Twelve closed ranks around a version of post-martyrdom Mormonism, reserving the right to realign past realities. This labor to sanctify the Mormon experience resulted in distorted history heavily oriented toward justifying leaders. When "evil speaking of the Lord's anointed" was considered worse than lying, the truth inevitably suffered.

It is true, of course, that the incomplete documentary record is susceptible of other interpretations besides those I have come to; but I think it undeniable that Sidney Rigdon's experience during that important three-day October 1843 general conference when his character and position as Smith's counselor came under ferocious attack differs considerably from the official version. The first item of business on Friday, the opening day of conference, according to the official record, was "the case and standing of Elder Sidney Rigdon, Counselor to the First President."⁴ Rigdon, taking the stand in his own defense, briefly summarized the situation. Smith then stated his grievances against Rigdon as a counselor. Failing to mention the serious limitations imposed by Sidney's chronically poor health, Smith complained of his "not having received any material benefit from [Rigdon's] labors or counsels since their escape from Missouri."⁵ He then invited members of the audience to voice any charges or complaints they wished to make. Several petty criticisms respecting Rigdon's management in the post office, having little relevance to his calling in the First Presidency, were expressed. Rigdon's sup-

⁴Journal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Chronology of typed entries and newspaper clippings, 1830-present), 7 October 1843, LDS Church Archives.

⁵Ibid., 8 October 1843.

posed treachery in league with John C. Bennett was also brought up, along with the new charge of machination with Governor Thomas Carlin.

After discussing a few other items, the Prophet then declared that “in consequence of those, and other circumstances, and [Rigdon’s] unprofitableness to him as a counselor, he did not wish to retain him in that station, unless those difficulties could be removed; but desired his salvation, and expressed his willingness that he should retain a place among the Saints.”⁶

Rigdon stood again to defend himself, rebutting Smith’s points one by one. On Sunday he resumed his appeal, concluding with a moving plea to Smith. He expressed his willingness to resign from the First Presidency but tearfully said that doing so would cause him considerable sorrow.

The altered portion of the official record states that at this point the Prophet arose and discussed Rigdon’s “supposed treacherous correspondence with ex-Governor Carlin” and expressed an “entire lack of confidence in his integrity and steadfastness, judging from their past intercourse.”⁷ Hyrum Smith pled “with great earnestness and sympathy, to try Brother Sidney another year.” Hyrum alluded to the “many trying scenes” their “aged companion and fellow-servant” had passed through, imploring, “I know that Brother Sidney has not done as he should, but let us forgive him once more, and try him again.”⁸ After Almon Babbitt and William Law also spoke in Rigdon’s behalf, the conference voted that Rigdon should be allowed to retain his station in the First Presidency.

According to the official account, which seems to be an example of putting words into Smith’s mouth, the Prophet then allegedly arose, shook himself, and said: “*I have thrown him off*

⁶Joseph Smith, Jr., et al., *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, edited by B. H. Roberts (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1902-12; 6 vols., vol. 7 published 1932; reprinted by Deseret Book Company, 1976, and reissued in paperback in 1978): 6:47-48.

⁷*Ibid.*, 6:48-49.

⁸As quoted in Jedediah M. Grant, *A Collection of Facts Relative to the Course Taken by Elder Sidney Rigdon in the States of Ohio, Missouri, Illinois and Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: Brown, Bicking & Guilbert, 1844), 15.

*my shoulders, and you have again put him on me. You may carry him, but I will not.*⁹ Of course it is possible that the compilers remembered details not originally recorded and also that their memories were colored by later events, but the consistency of the alterations toward a clearly defined goal makes the assumption of volition unavoidable.

The contemporary transcript from the 15 October 1843 *Times and Seasons* presents a more moderate outcome, one more sympathetic to Rigdon, one lacking the purported final dramatic flourish on Smith's part:

President Joseph Smith arose and satisfactorily explained to the congregation the supposed treacherous correspondence with Ex-Governor Carlin, which wholly removed suspicion from elder Sidney Rigdon, and from every other person. He expressed entire willingness to have elder Sidney Rigdon retain his station, provided he would magnify his office, and walk and conduct himself in all honesty, righteousness, and integrity; but signified his lack of confidence in his integrity and steadfastness, judging from their past intercourse.

Hyrum Smith then reminded his brother and fellow Saints of God's mercy, and the importance of their showing compassion to Rigdon.

Wickliffe Rigdon added that a few days later a regretful Smith came to the Rigdon home in tears and asked Sidney's forgiveness for all he had said and done against him and his family. Smith claimed he wanted to settle all differences between them and wanted thereafter to "live as Brothers of the church should live and be to each other the same old friends they had been in the past[.]" Sidney grasped Joseph by the hand, "and with tears in his eyes" avowed that "all matters of difference w[ere] settled. The Prophet shook hands with family members and he and Sidney "were good friends from that time."¹⁰

Members of the Quorum of the Twelve later united in a post-martyrdom effort to protect the practice of polygamy and exclude Rigdon's succession claims. Thus the 8 October 1843 scenario was rewritten to portray Rigdon and Smith as irrevocably

⁹*History of the Church*, 6:49; emphasis in original.

¹⁰W. Rigdon, "Life Story of Sidney Rigdon," 178-79.

estranged. Orson Hyde, the quorum's *de facto* agent of disinformation, seemed to take particular pleasure in attacking Rigdon's reputation. Hyde later wrote that, after the Saints voted to retain Rigdon in the First Presidency, the Prophet chastised the Twelve saying, "Why will you suffer the Church to put that old hypocrite upon my shoulders again, after I have thrown him down? But as you have neglected to help me put him down, you will have it to do yourselves when it will cost you more to do it than it would now."¹¹

Ebenezer Robinson, long-time Church printer, presented a much more benevolent view of the Prophet's 1844 assessment of his sporadic esteem for Rigdon. Called to accompany Rigdon to Pittsburgh in June 1844, Robinson was admonished by Smith to "stand by [Elder Rigdon] under all circumstances, and uphold his hands on all occasions, and never forsake him . . . for he is a good man and I love him better than I ever loved him in all my life, for my heart is entwined around his with chords [sic] that can never be broken."¹²

Within days of Rigdon's mission to Pittsburgh, Smith was murdered, an act that forever after bestowed the halo of martyrdom. Ironically that tragedy and the shift in power it engendered buried Sidney Rigdon's body of accomplishment under the rubble and left an obscured history of the Quorum of the Twelve's rise to prominence.

Rigdon was not in Illinois at the time of the martyrdom. On 18 June he and his family had left Nauvoo for Pittsburgh. But he had not "apostatized and left Bro[ther] Joseph," as Brigham Young falsely declared on 24 June 1868.¹³ Rather, he was sent there by the Prophet for three reasons—first, for his safety. Joseph Smith's

¹¹Orson Hyde, *Speech of Elder Orson Hyde, Delivered Before the High Priest's Quorum, at Nauvoo, April 27th, 1845, Upon the Course and conduct of Mr. Sidney Rigdon, and upon the Merits of His Claims to the Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Liverpool: James and Woodburn, 1845), 51.

¹²Ebenezer Robinson, "To the Saints Throughout the World, Greeting:," *Latter-day Saints' Messenger and Advocate* (Pittsburgh) 1, no. 4 (16 December 1844), 60.

¹³Journal History 24 June 1868.

personal diary entry for 22 June 1844 notes: "I have sent Br. R[igdon] away [and] I want to send Hiram away to save him [too], to avenge my Blood."¹⁴ Second, Rigdon's going to Pittsburgh fulfilled an earlier prophecy Smith had made that "my servant Sydney must go sooner or later to Pittsburg."¹⁵ Rigdon's third reason was to establish residency there, making him eligible to run as Joseph Smith's vice-presidential candidate in the 1844 U.S. presidential race.

Perhaps Rigdon erred most seriously in outliving Joseph Smith, in having functioned as the Prophet's right arm too effectively, in wanting too much to carry Smith's prophetic legacy forward. After Nauvoo, most of Rigdon's contemporaries peered down their collective noses at him, considered him a has-been, a fraud, and a lunatic. Dauntless, he nevertheless bore most of his dreams, unrealized visions, and prophecies throughout the rest of his long life and took them to the grave. Rigdon was not unique in such prophetic unfulfillment. Failed prophecies appear in the pronouncements of virtually all nineteenth-century millennialists. In presenting their colorful history to the world, twentieth-century Mormons overlook or are unaware of the fact that many of the divine predictions of Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, Parley P. Pratt, Wilford Woodruff, and other Church leaders also did not materialize.

Dim as the past may seem, its ambiguity is deepened by our inability to confront it. In nineteenth-century Mormon understanding, a prophet was defined by his ability to see beyond the finite. He uttered holy scripture, thundered oracular, unpopular words of warning. Oracles were measured by how fully their predictive statements came to be. If an oracle were truly inspired of God, he was precisely accurate. There could be no margin of error or God would have ceased to be omnipotent. Viewed from a twentieth-century perspective, this rigid literalism seems quaint. Failed prophecy, in Sidney Rigdon's case as well as in others, is

¹⁴Joseph Smith, Diary, loose sheet dated 22 June 1844, microfilm copy in Special Collections, Lee Library.

¹⁵David Whitmer, Letter to Joseph Smith III, 9 December 1886, *Saints' Herald*, 34 (5 February 1887): 90.

proof that visionaries err. In proclaiming to reveal God's truths, they often expressed unfulfilled longings of their own psyche.

Recently I received a letter from a self-described "active Mormon" who had just finished reading my Rigdon book. He accused me of writing for "worldly fame or fortune" and asked "what Christ-like virtue" I was pursuing. In answering him, I pointed out, tactfully, I hope, that it was ludicrous to think that fame or fortune could somehow fuel my ambitions, given how little of either is possible from writing about Mormon history. In all my research and writings, I have essentially been seeking to understand truth. And I would add that I do not believe the truth of any matter can ever be harmed by investigation. Searching for Truth (with a capital T) itself can serve as a way of bringing awareness of the greater glory of God.

After a life of research, prayer, and soul-searching, however, I have reached the conclusion that whatever absolute or relative truths exist are best found in the lessons of science and history, and reflected in personal prayer. Ultimately, the prayerful, individual conscience seems the most reliable moral authority, not organized religion. My journey has been tortuous. En route, I found that I have no longer been able to carry my earlier, more comfortable, illusions. Instead, I have had to replace them by beliefs less inviting but more real. For me it has proven far better to grasp the world as it really seems to be than to persist in delusion, however satisfying and reassuring it may have been in my youth.

While this philosophy has been upsetting to many about me, I like to think that, even though our naive self-confidence may be somewhat undermined in the process of truth seeking, the journey is ultimately a maturing and character-building experience. During my LDS seminary experience, for example, we were taught that the world was only six thousand years old. That erroneous idea has perhaps died a death of its own by now. At least, I hope it is not still being taught to our youth. Yet science presents us with considerably more advanced evidence that the earth is eight to fifteen billion years old.

Pulitzer Prize winner Carl Sagan in his *The Demon-Haunted World* writes:

Science thrives on errors, cutting them away one by one. False conclusions are drawn all the time, but they are drawn tentatively. Hypotheses are framed so they are capable of being disproved. A succession of alternative hypothesis is confronted by experiment and observation. Science gropes and staggers toward improved understanding. Proprietary feelings are of course offended when a scientific hypothesis is disproved, but such disproofs are recognized as central to the scientific enterprise.¹⁶

I surely wish that organized religion could follow this admirable approach to truth seeking. But unfortunately charismatic denominations like Mormonism long ago circled the wagons and entrenched themselves behind dogmatic positions. "Be careful when you study Mormon history," my boyhood bishop told me several years ago. "So many seem to fall away from the Church when they study our history." I wondered why then and I still wonder why now. Do most Americans lose enthusiasm for democracy after they study the history of our country? In painting ourselves into an "only true Church" corner, we refuse to acknowledge truths that don't fit into narrow dogma.

While Sidney Rigdon's efforts to seek truth are admirable, he, like many other religious extremists, sacrificed what could have been a normal existence had he made personal prayer the focus of his religious life and then devoted himself to his loving and loyal family, the bounteous farm he inherited from his father, and good works among his neighbors. Instead he unwisely lived his entire adult life in the pursuit of Zion, longing for the blessed hope of the Second Advent. In the process, he lost the natural, slow rhythm of life. His constant rushing towards the idea left him haunted to his death by the specter of greatness unachieved. It would have been tragic enough had he lived the life of a recluse. But his visionary pursuits were interpreted by hundreds of others as the word of God. They, in turn, erred seriously in putting their faith in what turned out to be his arm of flesh.

Three years before his death, after his brain had been assaulted by a series of strokes, Rigdon issued one of his most profound prophecies to his remaining followers:

¹⁶Carl Sagan, *The Demon-Haunted World* (New York: Random House, 1995), 20-21.

I the Lord will give to [Sidney Rigdon] . . . length of days and power, and glory until the whole work of God is completed; and then shall he be crowned with glory such as neither men nor angels ever saw before. The names of Noah, Daniel and Job, of Moses, Elias and Samuel, of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob & Joseph shall [pale] into insignificance before me. On earth his power shall be supreme nothing but what shall move at the sound of his voice. The mountains shall shake, the hills shall tremble, the vallies shall rise and sink at his command. All things that God has made things animate or inanimate, men or beast shall hear and obey. The heavens shall shake by the blast of his nostrils and the stars of heaven shall obey his command. His voice shall be my voice on the earth says the everlasting God. . . . All nations under heaven shall hear the voice of this priesthood and tremble.¹⁷

That sample revelation, as well as the underlying message Sidney Rigdon's life as a whole conveys, seems profoundly important today. Various forms of religious fanaticism seem to have grasped certain areas of the world by the throat. Rigdon sought recognition and always wanted to serve as an exemplar to others. More than a century after his death that is, ironically, what he has become. His piously erratic and sometimes even bizarre thinking exemplifies the perils of religious excess. It warns us that it is ultimately wiser to think for ourselves than to surrender decision making to others. Such a course is especially true regarding those who assume God's voice and dictate to us what He would have us do, rather than allowing Him to tell us directly. After all, a skeptical, prayerfully inquiring mind is a true gift from God, a candle in the dark.

¹⁷Sidney Rigdon, Letter to Stephen and Jane Post, 5 December 1873, Stephen Post Collection, Box 2, fd. 12, LDS Church Archives.

REVIEWS

D. Michael Quinn. *The Mormon Hierarchy: Origins of Power*. Salt Lake City: Signature Books in association with Smith Research Associates, 1994; 685 pp; photographs, notes, appendices, index. \$29.95. ISBN 1-56085-056-6

Reviewed by Dean C. Jessee

Few historians have been in a better position to study the Mormon past than D. Michael Quinn. With degrees in English and history, including a doctorate at Yale, employment in the LDS Church Historical Department and wide-ranging access to its holdings, a dozen years of teaching history at BYU, and painstaking research in seventy-five repositories (he lists them), Quinn has spent a substantial part of his life studying Mormon history. This book and a second volume to follow are the outgrowth of research that led to a master's thesis, continued through a doctoral program, and is the crowning accomplishment of thirty years work.

Quinn's attention to source material goes beyond the usual historical treatise. More than half of the volume (422 pages out of 685) consists of notes and appendices. The first 263 pages are divided into seven chapters. Chapter 1, "The Evolution of Authority," focuses on the development of the concepts of authority, Church, and priesthood. Chapter 2, "The First Five Presiding Priesthood Quorums," reviews the origin and evolution of the First Presidency, presiding patriarch, Quorum of the Twelve, the seventy, and the presiding bishopric. Chapter 3, "Theocratic Beginnings," traces the development of theocratic power beyond strict ecclesiastical functions. Chapter 4, "The Kingdom of God in Nauvoo, Illinois," chronicles the "advancement of Mormon theocracy within a public, civil framework" at Nauvoo, Illinois. Chapter 5, "The 1844 Succession Crisis and the Twelve," addresses the emergence of the Twelve as the presiding quorum of the Church after the death of Joseph Smith. Chapter 6, "Other Succession Options," continues the discussion of the previous chapter. Chapter 7, "The Nature of Apostolic Succession," conveys the concept of apostolic succession from the time of Brigham Young to the present day.

Seven appendices follow, giving extensive biographical information about general officers of the Church, 1830-47; Mormon "security forces," 1833-47; a partial list of Danites, 1838; meetings and initiations of the "Anointed Quorum," 1842-45; members of the Council of Fifty, 1844-45; and a "selected chronology" of LDS Church history from 1830-47.

Quinn's study is forceful, his prose articulate. Voluminous notes give the impression of thorough research. The main contributions, as I see

them, lie primarily in his treatment of the development of the Church's presiding quorums, succession issues that followed the death of Joseph Smith, and biographical data on Church leaders—topics dealt with in Quinn's earlier works. He dates the beginnings of the First Presidency in 1832, a year earlier than was previously thought, and restores Jesse Gause to his place as the initial first counselor in the presidency (pp. 40-42). He also dates the inception of the office of presiding patriarch in 1834, a year later than early lists (pp. 46-47), and points out that John Young was ordained a patriarch to his family three months before Joseph Smith, Sr., was ordained patriarch of the Church, and for almost three years Young was the only other patriarch in the Church (pp. 48-51). Quinn also clarifies the nature of the office of bishop in the beginning years of the Church, concluding that while Edward Partridge was the Church's first bishop, there was no presiding bishop until Newel K. Whitney was sustained to that position in April 1847 (pp. 69-76).

Though the reader will not always agree with Quinn's interpretations and treatment of events, his abundant source references indicate the research path one must tread in order to offer credible alternatives in a major study of early LDS Church history.

Claiming that "essential features of the church's evolution and leadership have been misunderstood or ignored" (p. x), Quinn has undertaken to fill this void. In doing so he warns that "many readers may be surprised to learn the details of early Mormonism's theological evolution, retroactive redefinition in sacred texts, internal conflicts among revered leaders, theocratic activities, militancy, alienation of formerly friendly non-Mormons, succession ambiguities, and violence against perceived enemies." But these issues, he argues, are "as central to the early Mormon experience as its visions, revelations, conversions, sacrifices, heroes, heroines, and martyrdoms" (p. xi). He acknowledges that a detailed study of 165 years of Mormon leadership risks "obscuring the larger experience of Mormonism." To compensate for this imbalance therefore, he has provided a "Selected Chronology" appendix, which he regards as perhaps "the most important single component" of the book and urges readers to begin their reading with the chronology.

It is probable that some of the "surprises" readers will encounter in this volume will come from his treatment of theocratic beginnings in Chapter 3. Here Quinn traces the beginnings of the Mormon theocratic power structure, reasoning that since, for Latter-day Saints, "all things unto God are spiritual" (D&C 29), and an early Church revelation "established the primacy of religious law over secular law" (D&C 98), the ecclesiastical domain of the Church hierarchy is unlimited (pp. 79, 81). This reasoning leads to what Quinn calls a doctrine of "theocratic ethics" which justified Latter-day Saints and their leaders "in actions which were contrary to conventional ethics and sometimes in violation of criminal law," extending the ecclesiastical domain throughout the social, political, economic, and cultural realms of society (p. 79).

This doctrine, according to Quinn, led to a variety of questionable actions, such as the violation of state marriage laws, the marriage of undivorced spouses, polygyny, polyandry, sexual relationships with juvenile polygamous wives, official denials of real events, tolerance for counterfeiting, stealing from non-Mormons, violence against dissenters, the killing and castration of sex offenders, the killing of anti-Mormons, bribery of government officials, unethical business dealings, and so forth (pp. 88, 89). Quinn sees the Danites, with Joseph Smith at their head, as an important vehicle for carrying out some of these questionable activities. Under this theocratic power structure Joseph Smith and then Brigham Young were able to forge an aggressive counter culture to contemporary society that "altered—and usually disrupted—the social landscape wherever it established its headquarters" (p. 80).

This rather breathtaking list raises the question: How central is "theocratic ethics" to an understanding of the LDS Church hierarchy? Indeed, in a major study of the hierarchy one might well expect to find a treatment of the ethical structure—the moral principles and values—that governed the leadership, shaped the development of the organization, and attracted people to the cause. But to focus primarily upon the messy world defined here seems to me a major distortion of historical achievement—an instance where the sweepings of the outhouse are used to define the palace. Certainly, in a comprehensive study, aberrations should be dealt with if they exist, but they need to be placed in their proper relationship to the whole.

There is no doubt that in the beginning years of the Church as the doctrines of the restoration developed "line upon line," mistakes were made, understanding lagged, and some decisions appear out of place in comparison with the well-ordered structure that emerged. In the case of plural marriage, for example, the practice in its initial phases was not what it later became. Amasa Lyman recalled that in the beginning of the Church, "We were not aware that any such a thing as plural marriage had to be introduced into the world; but the Lord said it after a while, and we obeyed the best we knew how, and, no doubt, made many crooked paths in our ignorance. We were only children, and the Lord was preparing us for an introduction to the principles of salvation" (*Journal of Discourses*, 11:207). Unless the modern historian of Mormonism is sensitive to the people he writes about, an obsession with the "crooked paths" and "ignorance" of the early years can make the movement look like an exercise in absurdity. Too often in Quinn's study, one wonders what the hierarchy did that ever attracted anyone to the faith. Nor does the selected chronology solve the problem.

In his writings Quinn seems anxious to set the Mormon record straight, to correct "official history" where it has been sweetened and homogenized, and to travel a road shunned by more timid LDS historians. There is no doubt he has corrected, clarified, and informed in significant ways. But the story he tells is not as free from speculation and faulty

interpretation as his bold writing style and abundant source notes would imply. For example: In Chapter 1, Quinn states, "There is no evidence that a restoration of what was later called the Melchizedek priesthood happened in June 1829" (p. 22). Instead, he arrives at a restoration date of 6 July 1830, three months after the organization of the Church. In arguing his case he dismisses the June 1829 revelation (D&C 18:9), which states that Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, and David Whitmer were called with the same calling as the apostle Paul, implying that the Melchizedek Priesthood restoration had already occurred. Quinn reasons that because the New Testament "mentions no literal ordination for Paul," he must have been an apostle only in the sense of being a witness (p. 10).

In further support of a July 1830 restoration date, Quinn cites the 1842 Joseph Smith letter (D&C 128:20) in which the Prophet writes of having heard the voice of Peter, James, and John "in the wilderness between Harmony, Susquehanna county, and Colesville, Broome county [New York], on the Susquehanna river, declaring themselves as possessing the keys of the kingdom" (p. 22). He also quotes an 1881 Addison Everett reminiscence reporting an 1844 Joseph Smith conversation overheard by Everett, in which the Prophet related the circumstances of his ordination by Peter, James, and John as having occurred after Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery had traveled all night in mud and water to escape from a mob. Placing these events in the context of the Prophet's late June/early July 1830 Colesville court case and hurried return to Colesville from Harmony, Pennsylvania, a few days later, as described in the *History of the Church* 1:88-97, Quinn deduces a July 6 ordination date (pp. 22-26).

Quinn charges that Mormon historians have tended "to avoid the evidence" and have been unwilling to "challenge official history" dealing with the restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood or "admit that Smith organized the LDS Church in April 1830 without the Melchizedek priesthood" (p. 26). But the issue is not as simple as this. Larry Porter has pointed out that the question of the Apostle Paul's apostolic calling is still open to discussion. Porter also draws attention to discrepancies in the Everett account that would place the restoration event in June or August 1829. Furthermore, while Quinn quotes Brigham Young as saying Joseph Smith received the Melchizedek Priesthood "after the church organization" (p. 26), Porter draws attention to statements by Orson Pratt and Hiram Page that this priesthood was conferred *before* the Church was organized. (See Larry C. Porter, "The Restoration of the Priesthood," *Religious Studies Center Newsletter*, Brigham Young University, 9 [3 May 1995].)

It seems to me that the dating issue is not so much a fear to challenge official history as it is a commitment to carefully weigh the evidence. While Quinn's argument for a July 1830 Melchizedek Priesthood restoration date is plausible, it is not indisputable. After weighing much of the

same evidence for dating the restoration in his 1984 work on Joseph Smith, Richard Bushman concluded, "We will not know for certain until more information is uncovered." (Richard L. Bushman, *Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism* [Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1984], 241.) Based on the same incomplete and sometimes contradictory evidence, Quinn is unequivocal, dismissing those who see it differently.

Quinn also chides Mormon historians for overstating the role of Brigham Young and the Twelve during the Mormon exodus from Missouri in 1839 (pp. 63-64). He maintains that John Smith, assistant counselor in the First Presidency, called the first meeting to supervise the exodus on 26 January 1839, and "continued as chair of the evacuation committee." Hence the whole migration "occurred under the direction of the First Presidency," not the Twelve. He adds that "neither Young nor the Twelve had the authority in 1837-39 to preside in the manner John Smith did."

But the matter may not be as clear-cut as Quinn states it. While John Smith chaired meetings on 26 and 29 January at Far West to plan for the exodus, it was William Huntington who was appointed chairman of the evacuation committee when that committee was formed on 29 January (*History of the Church* 3:249-50). If being called to chair the January meetings was equivalent to overseeing the entire Mormon migration, then a case for leading the exodus could also be made for William Marks and Brigham Young, who chaired meetings in February and March (*History of the Church* 3:260, 283).

Furthermore, if Brigham Young and the Twelve had no authority to preside in local affairs at this time, it seems unlikely that the First Presidency, writing from the Liberty Jail on 16 January 1839, would inform Heber C. Kimball and Brigham Young that "in as much as we are in prison and for a little season if need be the management of the affairs of the church devolves on you that is the twelve" and urge them to "proceed to regulate the Elders as the Lord may give you wisdom," and to appoint the oldest of the Twelve to be the president of the Quorum. (Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, Hyrum Smith, Letter to Heber C. Kimball and Brigham Young, 16 January 1839, MS., Joseph Smith Papers, LDS Church Archives).

Since Brigham Young was the oldest, the leadership of the Twelve fell upon him. And since he was in Far West in January 1839 when the Twelve received the call to manage Church affairs, he could well have been the moving force behind the meetings of 26 and 29 January, chaired by John Smith, and held the presiding position in planning the exodus. Nor would it seem out of place for Brigham Young, about the middle of January, to give orders to Bishop Edward Partridge to help move the poor out of the state (*History of the Church* 3:247).

As an example of "theocratic ethics," Quinn claims that Joseph Smith violated Ohio marriage laws by "performing a marriage for Newel Knight

and the undivorced Lydia Goldthwaite without legal authority to do so" (p. 88). However, in his forthcoming revision of *"They Are My Friends": History of the Joseph Knight Family, 1825-1850*, Bill Hartley cites Ohio legal sources to show that Lydia Goldthwaite, having been deserted by her husband Calvin Bailey for three years, was legally entitled to remarry. Moreover, Ohio law of the time empowered "any ordained minister of any religious society" to solemnize marriages in the state. Consequently, if local officers sought to deny the Prophet his right to perform marriages, it was not on legal grounds but due to prejudice.

In his treatment of Joseph Smith's death, Quinn refers to the statement by Allen Stout that Joseph, in Carthage Jail, had ordered Jonathan Dunham, commander of the Nauvoo Legion, to bring the legion and rescue him; and that Dunham did not respond (p. 141). Quinn quotes Seymour Young's 1903 conversation with Oliver Huntington, reporting that Dunham "seemed to grieve over the matter" of failing to rescue Joseph; depressed, Dunham persuaded a friendly Indian to kill and bury him (pp. 179-80). But Quinn has altered the Young conversation with Huntington to support Stout's story that Joseph had sent for the Nauvoo Legion. According to Young, Huntington informed him that, in the spring of 1844, Joseph told Dunham to fortify Nauvoo so the Saints could make a stand against their enemies. Dunham's depression after the martyrdom was over his failure to complete the fortification; he felt that had he done so, the Prophet might not have had to go to Carthage in the first place.

These are but a few examples of a type of interpretive "rush to judgment" that flaws other sections of the book as well. These include the assertions that "in the last days of his life, Smith seemed ready to turn his back on all the secret developments of Nauvoo and abandon what he had taught as sacred for years" (p. 145); that the Prophet "never made a statement which altered the division of church jurisdiction between the Quorum of the Twelve 'abroad' and the high council in the home stakes" (p. 156); the Allen Stout/T.B.H. Stenhouse statements that Joseph Smith ordered Jonathan Dunham to lead the Nauvoo Legion in an attack on Carthage to free the prisoners (p. 141); and the reference to Porter Rockwell killing four mobocrats at the Highland Branch is another distortion of an original source (pp. 404-5).

A work containing the encyclopedic detail found in this volume is bound to have flaws due to misreading, oversight, and occasional breakdowns in copy editing. "Opportune" on page 85, for example, should read "importune." The Book of Commandments citation on page 10 should be "15" instead of "35." A missing source note number in the text on page 127 shifts all of the endnote citations beyond that point in chapter 4 one number off. The reference to Joseph Smith's diary on the top line of page 372 should read "13 May" instead of "13 Mar."

A final observation: In a work where source notes are taken as seriously as they are in this book, it is unfortunate that they were not included in appendices 6 (Biographical Sketches) and 7 (Selected Chro-

nology). The careful student needs to be able to weigh the evidence for the extensive and sometimes sensational information that is given here.

The Mormon Hierarchy is a valuable contribution in terms of identifying sources and understanding the groundwork of the organizational structure. But major questions of what is important to know about the hierarchy seem to have been swallowed up by considerations of lesser importance. While *Hierarchy* has laid important groundwork, the definitive study remains to be written.

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John L. Brooke, *The Refiner's Fire: The Making of Mormon Cosmology, 1644-1844*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1994; xix, 421 pp.; illustrations, maps, appendix, index; ISBN 0-521-34545-6

Reviewed by Stephen J. Stein

The study of new religious movements (NRM) has become a growth industry in the United States. Various named—sects, alternative religious groups, marginal religions, outsider groups—NRMs, including Mormonism, can no longer be viewed in isolation from the rest of the history of Western or American religion and culture. On the contrary, as R. Laurence Moore argued so persuasively, outsiderhood has been and is a strategy that sects have repeatedly employed for their own advantage. In the United States outsider groups use this strategy to stake their claim to being authentically American.

In *The Refiner's Fire: The Making of Mormon Cosmology, 1644-1844*, John L. Brooke, an award-winning professor of history at Tufts University, guides the reader into the esoteric world of Western alchemy and hermeticism as it evolved from ancient times down to the nineteenth century in order to offer a new interpretation of the origins of Mormonism. He puts Mormon beginnings squarely within the “outsiderness” of the Western hermetic tradition. This complex tradition, defined by Brooke as involving “the philosophy of metallic transmutation and human perfection” (p. 4), becomes the lens through which he views both the intellectual framework of early Mormonism and the general cultural context in the United States during the first half of the nineteenth century.

Brooke has written a highly instructive historical study based on wide-ranging research. His sources include publications dealing with alchemy in the ancient world, magic in early modern Europe, millenarianism in seventeenth-century England, and German sectarian traditions

in eighteenth-century America, to name but select examples. In addition, he has studied closely local historical and geneological records from early New England, the Middle Colonies, and the Midwest as well as family correspondence involving the earliest converts to Mormonism. He has immersed himself in the historiography of early American religion and the vast and varied scholarship dealing with early Mormonism. He has also taken seriously the central religious documents of the Latter-day Saints, namely, the Book of Mormon and Joseph Smith's visions and revelations.

But still more has gone into this impressive study. Brooke combines the extensive research in primary and secondary sources with insights derived from his remarkable skill as a historical sleuth and from the creative juxtaposition of materials only rarely, if ever, placed side by side. The result is a powerful, provocative, alternative account of the construction of the Mormon worldview as it emerged in the period up to 1844.

Brooke divides his volume into three parts, but he acknowledges that it consists essentially of two—one dealing with the history of hermeticism, especially in the early modern North Atlantic community, and the other with the intellectual life of Joseph Smith and the early leaders of Mormonism. In brief, Brooke finds striking parallels between the early Mormon cosmology and the hermetic tradition as it evolved in western Christian culture. On the basis of these similarities he argues against the scholarship that has explained the rise of Mormonism as a response to social stress generated in the Northeast during the period following the American Revolution.

Brooke draws on the rich literature dealing with hermeticism in Western culture and underscores the restorationist objective of that tradition which seeks to restore to humans the powers lost in the Fall. The tension with Christian orthodoxy in the West was real, for hermeticism celebrated "the potential divinity and power of humanity" (p. 12) by contrast with the ecclesiastical establishment's accent on divine sovereignty and human limitations. Brooke also describes links between the restorationist impulse and other elements associated with hermeticism, including sectarianism, perfectionism, prophecy, divination, the occult, and political radicalism. He traces these relationships through several centuries, including especially the period extending from the Radical Reformation in sixteenth-century Europe to Joseph Smith's world in antebellum America. He sees sectarians associated with the Radical Reformation as the crucial link tying the hermetic tradition to nineteenth-century America. Pietists, Quakers, Baptists, and perfectionists who came to the Middle Colonies between the 1650s and 1730s and established such groups as the Ephrata Cloister, the German Philadelphians, the Society of the Woman in the Wilderness, the Newborns, and the New Mooners, provided channels through which hermeticism passed.

In what may be the most speculative section of the book, Brooke (who

acknowledges the tentative nature of his judgments at this point) attempts to link the families of the first converts to Mormonism with various expressions of the hermetic tradition. For instance, he notes that the Whitmer family, some of whom later served as witnesses to the miraculous character of the Book of Mormon, were German in background and for a time lived near the Ephrata Cloister before moving to New York. Brooke ties the family of Martin Harris, who played a critical role in the days when Smith was translating the golden plates, to sectarian dissent and Quakerism in Rhode Island. And most importantly, Brooke notes that Vermont, from which the Smith family eventually migrated to western New York, was a hotbed of perfectionist and sectarian activity, including such notable examples as the bearded prophet Isaac Bullard as well as the Dorrellite and Shaker communities. The rise of Freemasonry and expanding interest in Swedenborgianism also contributed to the spread of the culture of hermeticism in America.

Brooke aims his argument at earlier historians who asserted that the primitivist predisposition of early Mormon converts came from the Puritan tradition in New England. Rather, he maintains, it was a product of the tradition of sectarian dissent that included both the fear of witchcraft and fascination with folk metallurgy. In other words, Brooke is seeking to discover why the earliest converts found Mormonism attractive. What predisposed them to accept Joseph Smith and his "Golden Bible"? Brooke's answer is their shared belief in the power of spirit in both the visible and invisible worlds as well as their interest in metallurgy as reflected through folk traditions of alchemy and the occult.

One primary theme Brooke develops is the dual character of the hermetic tradition. In what I regard as the most original chapter in the volume, Chapter 5, "Alchymical Experiments," he contrasts hermetic purity and danger by discussing perfectionism and counterfeiting. To that end he examines the connection between alchemy and both divining cults and counterfeiting circles in early America. Turning the base into the precious was the objective of both. In the eyes of the populace, both also involved magic, witchcraft, and money-making. Brooke finds geographical and historical evidence in local records tying both divining and counterfeiting to sectarian religious activity. He discovered that the two activities often occurred in the same localities, but "among *different* groups of people" (pp. 122-23). These localities correlated positively with early Mormon conversions, including also the areas in Vermont where the Smith family lived for a number of years.

This is the cultural landscape in which Brooke locates his account of the origins of Mormonism. In the second half of the volume he examines the ways in which the complex story of early Mormonism, and especially Joseph Smith, Jr.'s, intellectual biography, reflect the cultural world of nineteenth-century hermeticism. In his analysis Brooke addresses a number of well-known and oft-debated topics in Smith's biography including, for instance, the money-digging ventures of his family, his fascination

with Masonic ritual, and his use of seer stones. In the second half Brooke also charts two critical changes that transform Smith, first from the village conjuror into the prophet of the new dispensation and new revelation, and then later at Nauvoo into the priest, *magus*, and spokesman for a distinctive Mormon hermetic tradition.

Among the evidence Brooke provides for his reading of Smith's biography is a thoughtful and perceptive interpretation of select passages from the Book of Mormon which he calls "disguised autobiography" (p. 178). For instance, Brooke regards the "Gadianton bands" from that text as allusions to the connection between counterfeiting and Freemasonry that surfaced in New York in 1829. His choice of the title for this volume derives from a perceived link between the prophet Moroni and the "refiner's fire," the traditional tool of the alchemist. Brooke, likewise, joins other commentators, including Fawn Brodie, in linking the conflicts central to the Book of Mormon with the struggles among the Smith brothers. For those of us who read this scripture from outside the community of faith, this is a suggestive way of understanding elements in this important text. Brooke supports his autobiographical reading of the Book of Mormon by using Carl Jung's theory of archetypes as a way of explaining Smith's unconscious attraction to the hermetic culture.

Smith's hermeticism reaches its fullest expression, according to Brooke, in Nauvoo where he constructed a "New Mormonism," a new ritual order combining restorationism and hermetic perfectionism. The years in Illinois witnessed theological and religious innovation. Even before the completion of the temple, Smith established complex ceremonies and endowments accessible only to those properly initiated. He revealed the Mormon doctrine of celestial marriage and inaugurated among a select few the practice of plural marriage, a move Brooke associates with the antinomian strain in hermeticism and sectarianism. In addition, Smith's revelations concerning the coequality of matter and spirit, multiple heavens, and the prospect of progress toward godhood or divinization—all these placed early Mormonism openly at odds with the traditions of orthodox Christianity. Secrecy and deception also surrounded many of these innovations.

In the closing chapter Brooke adds an analysis of the changes that occurred within Mormonism following the move to the Salt Lake basin. He acknowledges that his judgments concerning the hermetic aspects of early Mormonism are not applicable to the later period under Brigham Young and his successors when the Mormons turned away from mysteries and toward an emphasis on living in obedience. Brooke equates this development with the classic routinization process marking the evolution from sect to church. In the twentieth century, temple endowments are one residual from the earlier hermetic tradition, but even they have changed with the acculturation of the church. Another remnant of a different sort was the excitement generated by the forgeries masterminded by Mark Hofmann.

The Refiner's Fire is arguably a brilliant piece of detective work. It is well researched, clearly written, and persuasively argued. It is refreshing to see a historian work in a classic manner, mining deeply the available sources and eschewing theoretical fads or current jargon. At the same time it must be noted that Brooke's interpretation of early Mormonism has been aided immensely by the contemporary interest in popular religion among both European and American historians as well as by the new scholarly attention and respect directed to the occult.

Brooke states his motivation clearly and, in my opinion, persuasively: historical curiosity drives his research. Yet I expect that this volume will elicit strikingly different reactions from LDS insiders and from those outside the Mormon church. Insiders suspiciously may regard Brooke's attempt to link early Mormonism with hermeticism as an effort to discredit the Church's distinctive claims and his reading of the Book of Mormon as an attempt to undermine its authority as revealed scripture. Furthermore, the fact that Brooke links con men, counterfeits, the Smith family, and early converts to Mormonism may be viewed as further proof of hostile intentions. Brooke's frequent references to the works of Fawn Brodie and Michael Quinn will do nothing to lessen these insider impressions. Even the dustjacket will raise similar suspicions, for Cambridge University Press was apparently unable to find any Mormon scholar willing to endorse this manuscript prior to publication. But, suspicions aside, it will be unfortunate if this volume is not engaged seriously by *all* students of Mormon history. Anyone who has the slightest interest in new religious movements in America or special interest in Mormonism has a genuine treat in store when reading this fine book.

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Grant Underwood. *The Millenarian World of Early Mormonism*. Urbana: University of Illinois, 1993; 213 pp.; index. ISBN 0-252-02037-5

Reviewed by Mario S. De Pillis

"Gramm, on Stump, Invokes the Second Coming of Christ" read a *New York Times* headline for 23 September 1995.

Senator Phil Gramm of Texas, the leading candidate for the Republican Presidential nomination, was working hard to gain the votes of millions of American religious conservatives—an unheard-of political pitch in twentieth-century American history but an understandable one. For these voters, the return of Jesus Christ is imminent.

Few beliefs have affected the American psyche more continuously

and more deeply than millennial fears and expectations, and few American religious movements have expressed the belief more explicitly than the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Mormon belief that we are now living in the "latter days," that is, near the millennium, has thrived since before the 1831 attempt to establish the pre-millennial City of Zion, to which Christ would return, in Independence, Missouri. Persecution forced the postponement of that enterprise, but millennial fervor erupted at least two or three times in the Utah period, and the doctrine remains part of the Mormon faith to this day.

Clearly millennialism is one of the largest topics in Mormon history and in American history, and Mormonism's City of Zion experiment is familiar to most readers of this journal. Amazingly, until the appearance of this fine study by Grant Underwood we have had no complete scholarly history of early Mormon millennialism.

Underwood tells us that his work "is an attempt to link two fascinating realms in the world of knowledge: the study of Mormonism and the study of millennialism." His main premise is that Mormon "eschatology is thoroughly pre-millennial" (p. 41), (meaning that Christ returns at the beginning of the thousand years of peace; in post-millennialism, Christ's return climaxes the thousand years of peace). Some historians of Mormonism describe early Mormon millennialism as post-millennial or mixed. One such line of argument is that the pre-millennialists have been more intensely apocalyptic than post-millennialists; that they are more concerned with warning people than converting them; and that their feeling that the end was near made them less interested in reforming society than the post-millennialists.

The terms *pre-* and *post-* are imprecise, for no matter which millennial group one studies—the Shakers, the Oneida Perfectionists, or modern survivalist sects, one can usually find elements of both supposedly disparate views of the end-time. Underwood very sensibly downplays the simplistic pre-/post- distinction in Mormon preaching and practice by admitting that while there are post-millennial elements in early Mormonism (like the moments when the Mormons were less mission minded or less enthusiastic about imminent paradisiacal glory), "these attitudes do not warrant changing the classification of Mormons as pre-millennialists" (p. 8). Most scholars would agree with that evaluation, especially for the years before 1839.

After a useful and down-to-earth introduction defining terms, Underwood gives us seven short chapters covering the "distinctiveness" of Mormon millenarianism. He sees it, rightly, I think, as a special form of pre-millennialism emphasizing the gathering of the Saints to Zion. This doctrine, combined with the teaching that the City of Zion would be built on the American continent, made the Mormon version of millenarian doctrine distinctive (chap. 2). Aside from their emphasis on the gathering, early Mormons were orthodox Protestant millenarians. Early Mormonism taught the usual "apocalyptic dualism" that stressed "exclu-

siveness." Exclusiveness meant that there was no salvation outside the church—an ancient doctrine that Underwood terms "a satisfying soteriological (salvation-related) dualism which ultimately damns the opposition and consigns them to perdition, while the elect live on triumphantly in a transformed world" (p. 9). He thinks that early Mormonism provides an excellent example of such "apocalyptic dualism."

With some historical subtlety and theological expertise, Underwood spells out the Mormon form of this dualism in chapter 3. There he resolves the apparent contradiction between Parley P. Pratt's clear enunciation of soteriological dualism on the one hand and, on the other hand, the more liberal Mormon doctrine of the "three degrees of glory" in the afterlife: celestial, telestial, and terrestrial. Many sinners and non-Mormons could now escape eternal damnation by gaining entry to the lowest degree of glory (terrestrial). Why then were the Saints so slow in accepting the more liberal degrees? Underwood explains that the three degrees revelation came late (1840s) in the millennial timetable; moreover, the continued power of the theology of the Westminster Confession over the Protestant minds of Mormon converts slowed the process of replacing Westminster's teaching of a stark separation of heaven (for the "righteous") and hell (for the "wicked"). Underwood goes so far as to call this gradual acceptance a "paradigm shift," and, he remarks, "Paradigm shifts take time."

Underwood is equally successful in the task of connecting Mormon millenarianism with the Bible and the Book of Mormon (chaps. 4 and 5). The biblical origins of Mormon millenarianism are obvious enough, but Underwood has pulled together the strands that were particularly relevant to the early Mormons, most notably those from the Old Testament. Any analysis of the role of the Book of Mormon in early Mormon millennialism is difficult, because its millennial notions are not so clear and present as those found in the Prophet Joseph's revelations or in the writings and private diaries of Mormon leaders.

Underwood asserts that millenarian doctrine in the Book of Mormon is often overlooked in today's LDS Church: "Though the Book of Mormon has since been used in the LDS community as a source for a uniquely Mormon anthropology, soteriology, and even Christology, its earliest uses were primarily eschatological and reflected as well as reinforced a millenarian worldview" (p. 96). The key word here is "uses."

In one of the strongest pieces of historical analysis in his work, Underwood overcomes the historical problem I have noted above—that is, I have never thought there was enough millenarian content in the Book of Mormon to make it an important pre-millennial document. Instead of taking the Book of Mormon text at face value or asking how later Mormons used it, he scrutinizes the special way in which early Mormons used it. For example, how did they interpret particular passages? Which verses did they quote most frequently? He finds answers to these questions by analyzing the comments and labels of the early

indexers of the Book of Mormon, men who made it quite clear in their headnotes and other indexing devices what they thought a passage meant. Interestingly, they often gave certain passages a stronger millennial slant. Thus, both explicators like Charles B. Thompson and the indexers clearly labeled 2 Nephi 28:11-16 as a description of the corrupt "state of the gentiles" in the last days who denied the Holy Ghost and robbed the poor, but would soon face destruction.

Underwood also analyzed frequency of citation and discovered that 3 Nephi 21—an apocalyptic chapter on the establishment of the New Jerusalem—was most often cited. Although Underwood does not explain how he compiled his statistics or for which years, his analysis has altered my understanding of the Book of Mormon, which I had never before interpreted as important evidence for early Mormon millenarianism. A further argument he makes is that the very fact of the Book of Mormon's publication served as "a millenarian milestone which helped the Saints locate themselves in the eschatological timetable" (p. 91).

Underwood's treatment of the millenarian appeal of Mormonism in England (chap. 8) is also instructive, though I wish he had examined the larger question of why the English-speaking world was so heavily millenarian in the late 1820s. Mormons preaching the last days in England found ready ears among the Southcottians, Aitkenites, Christian Israelites, Irvingites (Catholic Apostolic Church), and other primitivist, charismatic, and millenarian groups—sectarians who supplied many converts and showed how "English millenarianism helped serve as midwife to Mormonism" (p. 131).

But in my opinion, Underwood overreaches himself in depicting the early Saints as "moderate millenarians" (chap. 6). The most common academic explanation of millenarianism is "deprivation theory," which posits that sectarians and millenarians are psychologically or economically deprived and which has traditionally classified new millenarian sects as "religions of the oppressed." Underwood dismisses this theory—and is at least partially correct. Statistical evidence corroborates that early missionaries did not find their converts in the anguished underclasses of England and America. But there is also more than enough evidence that Mormon converts were no happier with their lot than the Smith family; and many were profoundly discontented with the society and religion of their time. They were in tension with the dominant society, and not, as Underwood asserts, "very much a part of the dominant culture" (p. 97). I believe that he has oversimplified the evidence here.

Underwood also takes issue with Mark Leone and Klaus Hansen, who viewed the early Mormons as radical, countercultural communitarians. Surprisingly, he follows Fawn McKay Brodie in explaining the law of consecration as an abortive attempt toward economic community that was easily relinquished because Joseph Smith never really liked it. According to Underwood, the Prophet and his followers were "too

American at heart," too "typically Jacksonian [in their] acquisitiveness" to accept true communalism (103).

In my opinion, however, casting early Mormons as mainline Americans consumed by economic individualism overstates the case. The picture was mixed and varies with time and place. The Latter-day Saints were both capitalist individualists and communally minded cooperators through much of the nineteenth century. Even in the twentieth century, outsiders immediately note tithing and the Church Welfare Plan as unmistakable remnants of a different economic order than today's vast and very non-millenarian Church corporations in agriculture, television, and insurance. And socially the Latter-day Saints of today are still a very tight-knit group, another inheritance from the New Jerusalem of the 1830s.

Underwood's thesis that Mormon millenarianism was "moderate" is not so much wrong as somewhat lacking in theoretical balance and historical perspective. If he had chosen to continue his story past 1844, the early Saints might seem, in the longer perspective, less moderate. They might even seem less pre-millennial and more reformist. After all, in 1831 Joseph Smith was surveying the New Jerusalem on the banks of the Little Blue in Jackson County, Missouri; in 1844 he was running for President of the United States, hoping to reform a corrupt society.

Smith was no political radical. But to argue, as Underwood does in Chapter 6 that the early Mormons did not wish to overturn American society in a fundamental, "revolutionary," "structural," Marxist sense (p. 108), this upheaval to be carried out by the subversive Council of Fifty in a "Mormon jihad or coup d'etat," is to set up a straw man to prove his moderation thesis. This chapter mars a fine book.

In his short conclusion, Underwood states that Mormonism's "persistent supernaturalism keeps it intellectually insulated from the acids of modernity. It has gone far towards modernizing without becoming secularized" (p. 142). If the Church is indeed immune to secularization and modernization, it may well be that other, less supernatural protective devices have formed the shield. Examples are such institutional controls as stringent preservation of doctrinal orthodoxy, the sanction of excommunication, the unifying effect of normatively universal male missionary service, the thorough-going organization that makes each ward a separate enclave in the world while being linked to counterpart wards horizontally and to the hierarchical structure vertically, and so on.

In addition to the mistaken assertion of moderate millenarianism, I also regret Underwood's sermonizing on the beneficence of Mormon Indian policy and on the complete lack of commentary on millennialism after the Nauvoo period. Still, few topics on the history of American religion rival millenarianism in importance and no pillar of the Mormon faith has more strongly directed the development of Mormon intellect or more deeply shaped the everyday practice of Mormon life. It is a wonder that we have had to wait so long for the first decent history of

Mormon millenarianism. Historians of Mormonism will find Underwood's work an indispensable introduction to the study of early Mormonism.

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Ruth Kauffman and Reginald Wright Kauffman. *The Latter Day Saints: A Study of the Mormons in the Light of Economic Conditions*. Introduction by John S. McCormick and John R. Sillito. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994; xxviii, 363 pp.; index. ISBN 0-252-06423-2 (paper).

Reviewed by Bill Martin

Thanks to the efforts of scholars John S. McCormick and John R. Sillito, the first study of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints written from a socialist and "Marxian" perspective is once again available after an absence of many decades. To this date, the only other published study of the Mormons written from such a perspective remains Mark P. Leone's *Roots of Modern Mormonism* (1979). The Leone book is far more creative in its application of Marxist ideas and, perhaps significantly, it also approaches its subject with a good deal more sympathy. The Kauffmans' effort, by contrast, is neither sympathetic nor particularly insightful as Marxist analysis. Indeed, besides two rather broad "Marxist" theses worth considering (discussed below), the book tells us more about the limitations of a certain kind of "Marxism" or socialism than it does about the movement of the Latter-day Saints.

The first four of *The Latter Day Saints's* fifteen chapters (approximately one-fifth of the book), deal with the pre-Utah, "communitarian" period of Mormonism; the last eleven analyze the machinations of the Mormon "empire." The organizing principle is that Mormonism began as a somewhat communalistic alternative to emergent industrial capitalism but later transformed itself into a mere appendage of the existing order. The "assimilation" argument is known well enough in our day but is interesting to see in an earlier formulation.

As McCormick and Sillito explain, the book was written for an English audience and published in England in 1912, "during a period of intense anti-Mormon agitation," although the authors are Americans (p. vii). Apart from a condescending and "clever" tone, *The Latter Day Saints* reads little differently from the standard anti-Mormon tract of the period.

The Kauffmans refer to Joseph Smith as an "absolute dictator" (42), a "slave-holder" (46), and "obnoxious" (pp. 42, 46, 47), the last adjective appearing in an account of his assassination. As for Brigham Young, "there was not in all the slavish East a despot more absolute" (p. 50). The authors quote at length and without critical comment sources that are clearly hostile to the Mormons, e.g., works with titles such as *The Death of a False Prophet* and *The Tyranny of Mormonism*. "Even the dissatisfied had to remain and be exploited for the greater glory of the Mormon god" (p. 66). This statement appears as part of the conclusion to Chapter 4; even in the transition from community to empire, Mormonism is unrelievedly tyrannical. No proof for this claim is offered. But even more interestingly, "exploitation" is a technical term in Marxism; it refers to the appropriation by an alien class of a surplus generated by the labor of working people. In contemporary Western societies, this alien class is, of course, the bourgeoisie—the capitalist class. But the Kauffmans, despite their supposed Marxist orientation, do not argue that the leaders of pre-Manifesto Mormonism were capitalists, only that they were tyrants and despots.

Perhaps the book's lack of generosity and insight is best captured by the fact that the authors nowhere mention Mormonism's materialist ontology, not even in a pair of chapters on "The Old Mormon Religion" and "The New Mormon Religion" (122-69), when Marxist commentators should have been struck by it. The authors also seem schizophrenic about Mormon communitarianism. On the one hand, they argue Mormons were persecuted primarily because of their communitarian economics; simultaneously, they give only the most cursory reading of the tenth Article of Faith (pp. 153-54), and little or no attention to any other documents of Mormon communitarianism.

McCormick and Sillito cite Reginald Kauffman's novel, *The House of Bondage*, published between 1910 and 1913, to illustrate the perceived need in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to "reorganize the whole of the industrial system" (p. xxx). What neither the editors nor the authors discuss at all is the Mormon critique of the industrial system. Brigham Young's views, for one, are readily available in the recently published collection of Hugh Nibley addresses, *Brother Brigham Challenges the Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1994).

This summary gives—and accurately, I believe—a view of *The Latter Day Saints* as a distorted historical treatment of early Mormonism in general, with a fairly typical economic determinism tacked on. The book's review of Mormonism's history, peppered with the standard rumors and accusations, leads toward the conclusion that all of it is somehow connected to economic conditions. Well, of course. But the same or similar economic conditions led to the formation of many different groups and movements in Jacksonian America. "Economic conditions" cannot account for either the distinctiveness of the Latter-day Saints nor of any other group. The connections between economic

conditions and the specific features of early Mormonism should be set out in more detail and more systematically; however, there are Marxist ways of doing this that are not mere economic determinism. The fact that the Kauffmans do not do anything very specific on the first score shows that their version of Marxism is indeed little more than economic determinism. And determinisms, of whatever sort, being always already "right," cannot be falsified—hence the Kauffmans' smug and clever tone.

What, then, does the book achieve that merited this new edition? More constructively, the Kauffmans did begin to frame a thesis about Mormonism's accommodation to the mainstream of U.S. economic life. In their analyses of Church involvement in sugar production and trade and in national politics, the authors also raise some important questions about what happened to earlier Mormon communitarian experiments. However, I believe they do not prove their thesis of complete accommodation because they do not show how the leadership of the Mormon Church transformed itself into an exploiting class or into the mere instrument of the larger U.S. ruling class. Indeed, to read the Kauffmans' account, the Mormons were a communitarian thorn in the side of capitalist America and, simultaneously, nothing more than a brutal dictatorship all the same. That's possible, I suppose. One might give a similar account of the Stalin period in the Soviet Union—but I'd want to see the evidence in both cases.

Nor do I believe that such evidence will be found so easily. After the Manifesto, in this period of supposed complete accommodation, has it been possible for the Mormon community (including its leadership) to make major decisions that are not fully guided by the profit imperative? (Or, as Marxists sometimes put it, "Is the red flag still flying?") If the answer to this question is "yes," then it seems to me that Mormon communitarianism is still alive, even if not entirely well. I happen to think that the answer is indeed, "Yes."

Despite my misgivings, I still must acknowledge that the Kauffmans begin to frame what was later called the thesis of "capitalist restoration," giving us a clearer sense of what the stakes are for a community besieged by rampant commodification. Whatever Mormon resources there are for resistance to this logic must be marshalled; this gathering to Zion includes an analysis of a certain cold reality, namely the incursions that commodification has made into the communitarian alternative. From a Marxist perspective, the greatest failing of *The Latter Day Saints* is that it doesn't even make an effort to gather seeds of resistance, seeds of Zion. It blithely forecloses on the very possibility.

But, of course, this other, nonorthodox and nondeterministic Marxism is not the Marxism of the Kauffmans and not even entirely that of Marx. This nonorthodox Marxism would gather seeds of Zion from wherever they might be found, including among the Latter-day Saints. While Marx was never so tied to determinism as some of his second-generation followers, he was quite attached to the industrial system and to

the idea that progressive historical changes would, from the mid-nineteenth century on, emanate primarily from Europe. Given the well-known shortcomings of industrial economy and the impossibility, especially after the Holocaust, of a confident Eurocentrism, the time is overdue for historical materialism to learn from *all* communitarian movements that offer resistance to capitalism.

Despite my misgivings about this work, from my perspective as a sympathetic observer of Mormon culture and as a serious scholar of Marxism, this new edition of *The Latter Day Saints* will, I hope, be taken as an opportunity to reinitiate a much more profound investigation into the possibilities of what might be called a "redemptive" Marxism, the practical possibilities of Mormon communitarianism, and the possibility for a fruitful cross-fertilization of these two radical projects.

BILL MARTIN teaches in the philosophy department at DePaul University of Chicago. He is the author of *Politics in the Impasse: Explorations in Postsecular Social Theory* (Albany, N.Y.: SUNY Press, 1995) and is completing *Mormon Possibilities: Elements of Community*.

Book Notices

The Journal of Mormon History invites candidates for this column—particularly biographies, family histories, community histories, and regional histories of interest to researchers in LDS and RLDS history that are published privately and of limited circulation. Please send one review copy to Richard L. Jensen, Book Review Editor, 125 Knight Mangum Hall, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT 84602.

Francis M. Gibbons. *Harold B. Lee: Man of Vision, Prophet of God*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1993; 525 pp., preface, photographs, bibliography, index. \$21.95. ISBN 0-87579-716-4

Francis M. Gibbons. *Spencer W. Kimball: Resolute Disciple, Prophet of God*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1995; 320 pp., preface, photographs, bibliography, index. \$24.95. ISBN 0-87579-994-9

iar with the major biographies of both Church leaders written by family members: L. Brent Goates's comprehensive *Harold B. Lee: Prophet and Seer* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1985) and Edward L. Kimball and Andrew E. Kimball's warmly human portrait, *Spencer W. Kimball* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1977). Despite the many merits of these works, however, Francis M. Gibbons has been a meticulous record keeper for forty years and has associated with both men as a staff member and later as a General Authority. His perspec-

Many readers are no doubt famil-

tives and personal vignettes are valuable.

For example, Gibbons includes a detailed description of the council chamber in which the Quorum of the Twelve and the First Presidency meet in the Salt Lake Temple (p. 154), provides a thorough history and development of the Correlation movement with which President Lee was associated throughout his apostolic career (pp. 250, 389-90, 412-16), and explains the origin of Church Security during President Lee's tenure. This Church department was created in the wake of tensions caused by the civil rights movement and then dealt with death threats from a fundamentalist sect in Mexico and poison introduced into President Lee's office pitcher (pp. 424, 463, 482). It was interesting to learn that President Lee's mentor, J. Reuben Clark, affectionately called him "kid" and that one of President Lee's favorite forms of recreation was attending a baseball game with one of his sons-in-law.

Particularly marked is the story of President Lee's spiritual maturation. As a thirty-one-year-old stake president he took the reins of Pioneer Stake with "a series of . . . Church courts . . . which disciplined members for a variety of transgressions including adultery, fornication, polygamy, apostasy, and dishonesty," actions which presumably "had a bracing effect on the members of the stake" (p. 95). In tender contrast, in his later years as an apostle and also as president of the Church he received a transforming endowment of love

for all humankind, surrounding him in an aura of spirituality and love so powerful that Gibbons records more than one conference at which the members refused to leave their seats when the meeting ended. His last public statement was at the 1973 Christmas party of Beneficial Life Insurance Company, at which he prayed so movingly for peace in the Middle East that the guests, according to one, "were extremely hesitant to open our eyes, because we knew he was talking with the Lord" (p. 495).

When President Lee died unexpectedly just a few days later, Spencer W. Kimball, who had been his supportive and deferential associate, succeeded him. Shocked and dismayed, President Kimball was greatly comforted when he awoke "with a sense that President . . . Lee was in the room" (*Kimball*, p. 274).

Particularly valuable in Gibbons's biography of President Kimball's life and presidency is the climactic 1978 revelation which granted priesthood to all worthy males, an event which the 1977 Kimball and Kimball biography preceded. Francis Gibbons's account supplies background about the issue: the criticism that the Church absorbed during the civil rights movement and the discussions during President McKay's era involving Nigerian would-be members. He identifies President Kimball's intensifying concerns about restrictions on those otherwise worthy, the "conflict" between praying for missionary doors to be opened and restricted priesthood, and the "administrative complica-

tions" posed when the temple in Brazil opened (pp. 292-97). He then outlines a year of strenuous pondering and frequent prayer that President Kimball embarked on, his personal concern for Helvécio Martins, a faithful black member in Brazil who later became a General Authority, discussions with the General Authorities (he first told his counselors on 23 March 1978, that he felt the priesthood restrictions should be lifted), the visitation of Wilford Woodruff to a council meeting in May reported by LeGrand Richards, and the creation of several drafts of the statement which was finally issued to the press announcing President Kimball's revelation. Gibbons summarizes his discussion of the reaction to and impact of this revelation: "It seemed to relieve [members] of a subtle sense of guilt they had felt over the years. . . . The enormous outpouring of happiness among the members . . . which followed the announcement of the revelation seemed to reflect members' genuine joy that the gospel could now be freely shared with all inhabitants of the earth" (pp. 296-97).

No president of the Church has failed at diligence, but this biography makes it plain that President Kimball felt driven, partly by his own early-established habits of work and partly because of persistent feelings that he was not doing enough. Thus, amusingly, but also poignantly, President Kimball scrutinized travel schedules and, if time between meetings had been reserved for rest, he insisted it be

filled with interviews or more meetings. He spoke out against Sunday naps, looked forward to the time when the temples would be open around the clock, and in the last stages of his final illness, "fretted" with an unrelenting "restlessness and unease" (pp. 280-81, 304).

Gibbons does not shun difficult or controversial episodes, even though his reporting of them may be less detailed than some history-minded readers may wish, nor does he avoid a biographer's responsibility to analyze such events, even though he seldom provides more than one interpretation and that usually positive. The index could be more helpful. Many administrative items, instead of having separate headings, are included as sub-headings under the excessively lengthy main headings of each president. Gibbons also frequently fails to mention women by name, noting their presence only as "and wife."

With the exception of Presidents Howard W. Hunter, the recent biography of whom by Eleanor Knowles is still in print, and President Gordon B. Hinckley, the current president, these two volumes complete Gibbons's series on the presidents of the Church. Yet as these biographies themselves show, the work of these men as apostles and as counselors in the First Presidency sometimes overshadowed their presidential achievements, highlighting the need for solid, analytical biographies of such men who made their contributions exclusively in those callings. These two volumes alone

hint at the significant and Church-changing contributions of Henry D. Moyle, J. Reuben Clark, Stephen L. Richards and a host of earlier figures, receding rapidly into the shadows of the early twentieth century. It is to be hoped that Francis Gibbons's taste for writing biography will turn itself to these waiting projects.

Don R. Mabey. *The Canyon: The Story of Judson A. Mabey and the Ranch He Built*. N.p., Don R. Mabey, 1995; 281 pp., photographs, maps, genealogical chart. For pricing and copies, write the author, P.O. Box 2217, Park City, UT 84060.

Judson A. Mabey was born in 1873 and died in 1946, a time of shattering transformation in the Mormon Church, of which he was a lifelong member, and the American West. The author, his youngest son, commemorates his achievement in assembling, working, and preserving as a ranch the area in and around Monroe Canyon in southeastern Idaho which gives this book its title.

Don Mabey had to be creative in his use of sources. Judson kept a diary only while he was a Mormon missionary in the 1890s and during 1935 when he was fully engaged in ranching. Don's mother, Ruby Pearl Pickett Mabey, wrote her own life story, and Judson's brother Charles wrote a history of their father's family. Don drew on both family histories but warily notes a tendency in both to suppress unpleasant or difficult infor-

mation. He also conducted his own research, interviewed many family members, and pored over ledgers and financial records from the ranch house attic.

The biography is clearly and gracefully written, each chapter beginning with an introspective meditation that confesses the complexities of a son/biographer's voice. Judson was descended from two many-branched and strongly rooted Mormon families in Davis County: Thomas Mabey and Esther Chalker Mabey and Judson Tolman and Sarah Holbrook Tolman. Although Judson A. served a mission, his diaries do not describe it from a religious perspective; and Judson, though also committed to Mormonism, was inactive much of his adult life. Before his mission, Judson agreed to be sealed by proxy to Ann Lutheria Briggs, a local girl who had died at age nineteen. Her aunt (and her father's second wife) stood proxy in the ceremony, but Judson never talked about this sealing, possibly because it distressed Ruby; and it remains a family mystery.

Judson's professional and career achievement, however, was as a farmer and rancher, early in partnership with his brother William, then alone. He built the ranch out of determination, ingenuity, and unrelenting toil against adverse weather, financing difficulties, a risky market, the psychological barriers of loneliness and isolation, and the strains on the marriage and family of maintaining two homes—one in Bountiful, largely so the five

surviving children could go to school—and one in Idaho.

From cancelled checks and bills, Don Mabey has painstakingly and illuminatingly reconstructed the size of the herds from year to year, the routes they followed to summer and winter pasture, the wool and meat prices in Omaha and St. Joseph that determined financial prosperity, the patient assembling of sufficient land to make flock size profitable, and the dogged hanging on during the Depression that preserved the ranch for another generation. It is not an extraordinary story, although Judson Mabey was comparatively more successful than most; but the patient and honest reconstruction of a life, focused in humility on the effort to understand, makes this biography extraordinary.

This family history should be both an inspiration and a model for the offspring of many equally worthy and equally “obscure” ancestors to commemorate and also interpret, honestly and sympathetically, their achievements in the context of their time.

Janet Peterson and LaRene Gaunt, *The Children's Friends: Primary Presidents and Their Lives of Service*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1996; 210 pp., photograph of each president, timeline, notes, index. \$14.95. ISBN 1-57345-020-0

The authors, after writing biographical essays of the Relief Society presidents (*Elect Ladies*) and the Young Women's presidents (*Keepers of the Flame*), have

turned their attention to the general presidents of the Primary in this volume: Louie Bouton Felt (1880-1925), May Anderson (1925-39), May Green Hinckley (1940-43), Adele Cannon Howells (1943-51), LaVern Watts Parmley (1951-74), Naomi Maxfield Shumway (1974-90), Dwan Jacobsen Young (1980-88), Michaelene Packer Grassli (1988-94), and Patricia Peterson Pinegar (1994-present).

Each essay provides information on the ancestral background of the president, biographical data, involvement with the Primary, calling, pre-presidential service, presidential years and achievements, and activities after release. One of the most interesting facts is that the first four presidents had no biological children. Louie Bouton Felt was childless; May Anderson never married; May Green Hinckley (President Gordon B. Hinckley's step-mother) was older when she married Bryant S. Hinckley; and Adele Cannon Howells was an adoptive mother.

The Primary's growth from modest beginnings through its days of most ambitious projects (the creation and maintenance of the Primary Children's Hospital in Salt Lake City, the organization's affiliation with Scouting, and its publication of its own magazine) through the adaptations required by Correlation and internationalization are told as part of each administrative section.

Although each essay is necessarily brief, the book contains numerous character-illuminating anecdotes. For example, when Louie

Bouton Felt strenuously objected to a particular date planned by the daughter of her sister-wife, she "pushed the piano in front of the door so that Judith could not get out" (p. 9). Patricia Peterson Pinegar, as a teenager, developed the habit of praying constantly by taking the advice of a fireside speaker to utter a silent prayer every time the bell rang to change classes at school (pp. 171-72). Dwan Jacobsen Young, whose mother had earlier served on the Primary general board, learned to be sensitive to the international Church through extensive travels in which she sometimes found herself as the only person in a Primary meeting who could play the piano and where she observed that pencil-and-paper activities in the Philippines were not appropriate because the teachers had no access to paper for the children (p. 132).

Paul M. Edwards, *F. Henry Edwards: Articulator for the Church*. Makers of Church Thought Series, Vol. 1. Independence, Missouri: Herald Publishing House, 1995; 142 pp., photographs as chapter frontispieces, notes, index. ISBN 0-8309-0704-1.

This book begins with a biographical overview of Francis Henry Edwards II, the author's father. A convert from England, his views on pacifism were so firm that he was, "according to English law, sentenced to death" which was later commuted to life imprisonment, then imprisonment for the duration of the war. He served

nearly thirty-six months in Dartmouth prison (p. 17). In 1920, he served as secretary to Frederick Madison Smith, president of the RLDS Church, came to Graceland College in 1921, and was called as a member of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles in 1922 when he was not quite thirty-five. Almost two years later, he married Smith's daughter, Alice, for whom "he nurtured a thorough and overarching affection and respect . . . though by his own admission, she sometimes overwhelmed him" (p. 20). He served for forty-eight years as an apostle and in the First Presidency until he was superannuated in 1970; he died in 1991.

Paul Edwards devotes the body of the book to a fifty-two-page overview of F. Henry Edwards's doctrinal ideas (section titles are: "Epistemology and the Nature of Revelation," "History and the Nature of Duration," "Restoration and the Nature of Tradition," and "Peace: The Promise of the Kingdom), and theological ideas: ("God the Father," "Jesus Christ, the Incarnation," "The Holy Spirit, the Comforter," "The Nature of Humankind," "Spiritual Gifts: The Nature of Receiving," "Eschatology and Immortality," "The Kingdom of God," "Priesthood, Authority, and Responsibility," "The Sacraments," "Prayer: The Nature of Disclosure," "Church: The Body of Christ," "Authority: The Nature of Right," "Scripture: The Word as Revelation," "Agency: The Test of Freedom," "The Obligations of Stewardship," "Evangelism: God at Work," and Repentance").

A thirty-five page bibliography lists Edwards's numerous books and articles, while a concluding chapter summarizes his contributions: "He was greatly responsible for the articulation, as well as the formation, of theological considerations during a significant period of the movement's history. His writings and addresses cover the intellectual history of the movement for half a century" (p. 125).

It is no small challenge to organize, fairly summarize, and illuminatingly comment on such an enormous body of work. The section headings give some idea of that range. For example, Paul Edwards notes that F. Henry Edwards believed God to be "almighty" but ignored the theological debate over whether God "is almighty or all powerful, the difference being that God does everything he can to help us, but that some things even God cannot do. God cannot void his own commandments. God cannot force us to be good and still allow us to be free. His great power lies in the causes through which he sets our divine accomplishments in motion" (p. 49).

As another example, F. Henry Edwards's views on priesthood were that it "was not only sacramental" but "educational—a call to teach people about God." Paul Edwards comments that F. Henry Edwards used English royalty "as a significant model for priesthood. For royalty was not privilege; it was responsibility. Royalty consists of people born and bred to the responsibilities of governing who, in the best of all worlds, accepted the

great commission, education, training, and preparation for the awesome responsibility of being the presence of 'the Crown' in their particular place. . . . The people have every right to expect servant ministry of the highest order from those to whom it has been given to represent the King of Kings in this particular place. Within the same model Edwards focused on the standards that, for him in his time, were the marks of royalty: loyalty, obedience, selflessness. It also included the right to lead" (p. 64).

Retired before the time that RLDS women were granted ordination to the priesthood, Edwards was neither surprised nor dismayed by this change and summarized what he felt was the irrational nature of many objections to ordination by quoting one "irate brother" who had challenged his views by saying, "You want to know what priesthood is? I'll tell you. It's what you have and your sister doesn't have, even though she can do everything better than you!" (p. 29).

Alan D. Tyree, *Evan Fry: Proclaimers of Good News*. Makers of Church Thought Series, Vol. 2. Independence: Herald House, 1995; 138 pp., notes. ISBN 0-8309-0705-X.

Evan Fry, whose distinctive tenor voice was known to thousands in the Kansas City area, was Radio Director for the RLDS Church from 1940 when he was thirty-eight until his untimely death in 1959. (His age at death is given as both fifty-six and fifty-nine, an

unfortunate editing glitch.) He was a prodigious reader, writer, and producer, during at least one decade producing ten religious programs a week, including music and eight-minute sermons—one every weekday and four on Sundays. His estimated radio sermons number more than three thousand, only a fraction of which found their way to print in RLDS periodicals.

Standing six foot four and with a "robust" frame, Evan Fry also had a warmly genial personality, a quick sense of humor, and a gift for making each person he was with feel important. He officiated at an enormous number of weddings and funerals—Tyree does not attempt to estimate them—because people felt he was their "pastor on the air." He did not stint his ministry to black individuals and willingly preached for black congregations, manifesting Christian ecumenism that was not universally observed in the South during the 1940s and 1950s. He scheduled black choral groups on his radio programs, "always maintained excellent relationships with the black community," and "worked quietly and openly to encourage Christian attitudes of understanding and respect" (p. 74).

The book begins with a biographical chapter, then an overview of his radio ministry. Chapters 3-17 are devoted to a sample sermon each, with Tyree's commentary, that represents a typical interest of Fry's or is important for another reason. His themes deal with setting priorities, distinguishing what's important in religion, faith,

humility, teamwork, and preparation; he linked the RLDS faith to mainstream Christianity as well as asserting the importance of distinctive RLDS doctrines. He used homely examples: his own experience, snowflakes on a hot stove, a newspaper blowing down a street, or Kansas City's phenomenal winter chuckholes. His contribution, says Tyree, "was more in making the gospel accessible to others by his style of interpreting it in the common vernacular of everyday experience than in breaking any new theological ground" (p. 10).

One of the examples Tyree includes was a 1948 sermon on peace when atomic war was a lively fear. Fry made a distinction between "pacifism and passivism," then urged:

Jesus did not say, "Avoid your enemies so that they can't get to you," nor did he say, "Ignore them," nor did he say, "Kill them first before they can kill you." He said, "Love your enemies," actively, aggressively, sacrificially if need be. Don't wait to see what is going to happen; don't wait for the enemy to make the first move. *You* make the first move by *doing* something good for him. If you have already been offended, or smitten on one cheek, don't just get out of the way, but take the lead away from the aggressor; beat him to the next step by *turning* the other cheek. That is vastly different from just standing around and letting him have his way with you. When men hate you or curse you or revile you or persecute you, don't answer them in kind; don't just ignore them or sit there with your mouth shut; but *bless*

them. That is active, aggressive pacifism (pp. 92-93).

Jo Ann F. Hatch. *Willing Hands: A Biography of Lorenzo Hill Hatch, 1826-1910*. Pinedale, Ariz.: Kymera Publishing Company, 1996; 335 pp., notes, appendices, bibliography, index. For purchase information, contact the publisher at P.O. Box 1123, Pinedale, AZ 85934.

Lorenzo Hill Hatch, one of Mormonism's grand old patriarchs, grew up on Mormonism's frontiers, went with his widowed father and four siblings to Nauvoo, crossed the plains and spent the rest of his life faithfully pioneering two of Mormonism's harshest outposts: Franklin, Idaho, and Woodruff, Arizona. He married four times: to Hannah Elizabeth Fuller (she died childless at age twenty in 1847), to Sylvia Savonia Eastman (five children), to Cathrine Karren (eleven children), and to Alice Hanson (nine children).

The book begins with Hatch's six generations of New England ancestors; his father, Hezekiah, a Universalist, promptly joined the Church and converted his own parents when he heard the preaching of Peletiah Brown. Lorenzo, then fourteen, was baptized through a hole sawed through the ice in Vermont's Lincoln River. Though orphaned in Nauvoo, he was part of a large extended family of converts, served a mission, married, buried his first wife, and crossed the plains at age twenty-four with his siblings, uncles, and grandfather. The three

brothers, Jeremiah, Lorenzo, and Abram, settled first in Lehi where Lorenzo remarried, became a counselor in the bishopric, and served a mission to England which was cut short by Brigham Young's recall in 1857 of all of the missionaries in preparation for the Utah War.

Hill was hard-working, competent, devoted to the gospel, and a leader in each community he lived in (he became mayor of Lehi, Franklin, and Woodruff consecutively), and frequently put Church and civic interests above those of his family. "Lean and spare," he frequently worked past his strength and suffered much with ill health. At thirty-six, he accepted a call from Brigham Young to become bishop of Franklin Ward in Idaho, where he stayed until, at age fifty, Brigham Young ordered him south to avoid prosecution for polygamy.

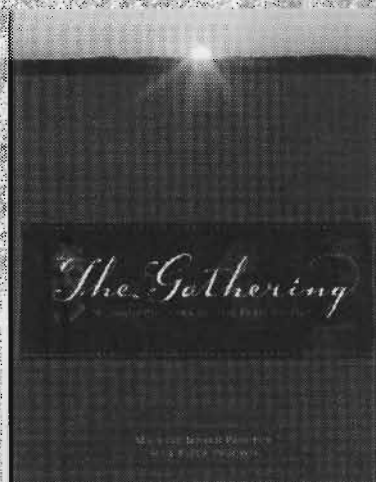
He spent the next twenty-four years of his life on the Little Colorado, a relocation and dislocation from which his family never recovered financially. At age fifty-eight, he again fled into hiding in the dead of winter from federal marshals. Finally, four of his sons secretly petitioned Church leaders to release him from his mission and he immediately returned to Cache Valley where, at age eighty-four, he died.

Lorenzo, who had kept a journal nearly all of his life and was a voluminous letter-writer despite his lack of education, left a well-documented life. This biography supplements the published transcription of his journals by granddaughter Ruth Savage Hilton. One appendix gives biographical

sketches of the three wives who bore children, a second appendix gives some examples of Hatch's holograph letters, and a final appendix contains maps (unfortunately none showing his Idaho activities) and photographs, including a haunting portrait by an unknown artist that now hangs in a museum in Franklin, Idaho.

One particularly poignant example of a family letter to his son Hezekiah from Woodruff, Arizona, in 1881, laments: "I have in

the main kept down all family jealousies and the boys often talk of coming back [to Utah] and going to school, but the lack of means does not permit. I also talk of making a visit, but the cost is so much and would burden you, I have almost forgotten the thought and at times my spirit is bowed in sorrow, fearing that my life will pass away and leave a helpless, lovely family to be laughed at because of poverty . . . " (p. 157)



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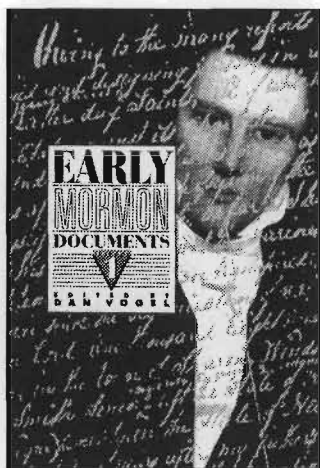
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