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Cover illustration: No author identified, “Brigham Young, Mormonien glimmainen pappi” (“Brigham Young, The Highest Priest of the Mormons”) Suomen kuvalehti (Helsinki, Finland) 116 (September 15, 1877): 233.

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

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LETTERS

Passing of Two Exemplars

It is with sadness that I report the passing of Dr. John W. McLure, associate professor emeritus of the University of Iowa, on February 8, 2009, at his home in Iowa City, Iowa, from multiple myeloma cancer, and the death of Marlene C. Kettley, author and Illinois historian, on February 15, 2009, at her home in Salt Lake City.

Dr. McLure's name is probably unfamiliar to most, but he was a great example to historians of all ranks and studies. In 1961, while working on his master's thesis at the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana, on the early history of the Illinois Geological Survey, John came to Warsaw, Illinois, to visit with two granddaughters of Amos Worthen, an early Warsaw resident and also Illinois State Geologist. In the course of asking them for biographical information about Worthen, they also shared the story of a friend whose father, a Warsaw attorney, had left a signed statement in his deposit box that he had "stood in the crowd on the afternoon of the assassinations and had shot Joseph Smith." John immediately knew the importance

of the story and pressed the women further, capturing many important details. But fearing that Mormons might seek revenge or desecrate the attorney's grave, the sisters would not disclose his identity.

Dr. McLure carried this story with him for the next thirty-seven years, often thinking about it; and in 1998, he passed it on to the next generation of historians with a letter that was published in the *Journal of Mormon History* in the fall of that year ("A Warsaw Mystery," 24, no. 2 [Fall 1998]: vi-vii). "I believe that truthfulness and completeness in the details of history are important," John wrote to us (vii).

After ten years of hunting, last October I was finally able to call Dr. McLure and tell him that his "Warsaw Mystery" had been solved and that, although the written confession had been lost, the man had been identified, thanks to his persistence in following "this small but significant mystery." But what really makes this bit of John's story most remarkable is that John was not and never has been a member of any church tracing its history to Joseph Smith. Even though Mor-

monism was not his object, his area, his religion, or his history, John was a historian and recognized the duty that all preservers of the past owe to future generations, regardless of their specialty.

Also missing from our circle is Marlene C. Kettley. For many years, Marlene specialized in Mormonism in Illinois outside Hancock County from 1830 to the present and was known as the ablest historian on the subject. Finding a dearth of information while researching family history of Mormons outside Nauvoo, Marlene set about to trace down the forgotten “little people,” who helped to lay the foundation of the churches to which many of us belong. Over decades of work, Marlene found remarkable amounts of information on branches established in the remote settlements of Illinois. Together with Arnold K. Garr and Craig K. Manscill of BYU, she published *Mormon Thororoughfare: A History of the Church in Illinois, 1830–1839* (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 2006). Although the volume is small, her knowledge of Illinois was vast, and she was regularly consulted by historians needing a pearl of wisdom, which she was always willing to share. Because of Marlene’s desire to fill a great hole in the story of Mormonism, many more Mormon settlements are known today, as well as the site dedicated for a temple in Norway, Illinois, the location of the tavern where Joseph Smith was held while under arrest in 1843, and much,

much more.

Marlene and John will both be missed, and Mormon history is better for their having lived.

*Joseph Johnstun
Hamilton, Illinois*

Editor’s Note: Joseph Johnstun has agreed to submit his article on this Warsaw attorney and related matters to the *Journal*.

In Praise of Will Bagley

I never dreamed I would praise Will Bagley in a public setting, but here we go. Let me add that we are good friends, we joke a lot, and about three times a year we argue by phone or electronically over certain aspects of LDS history—frequently about Brigham Young’s soul and his current eternal status—but we always end with a smile.

Bagley’s article “‘One Long Funeral March’: A Revisionist’s View of the Mormon Handcart Disasters” (*Journal of Mormon History* 35, no. 1 [Winter 2009]: 50–116), is the best, perhaps most accurate, detailed, honest, and well-researched telling of this tragic part of our history. The last two companies of 1856 were a disaster. What else can one call them?

Speaking from my perspective as a retired career army officer, if I had commanded those companies and had been responsible for such a loss of life today, I would be court-martialed and gone. The entire scheme was a complex and difficult matter, precipitated and inten-

sified by poor judgment and unrealistic expectations, which Will Bagley very frankly and honestly outlined. Without detracting one iota from the faith and determination of the participants, I am perplexed and disturbed by the unremitting use (and abuse) of these individuals as icons of sacrifice. Nobility and endurance during unavoidable suffering are meritorious traits but not when they obscure individual responsibility to evaluate, critically weigh, and reasonably decide among options. And surely, the relentless task and burden of leadership is to minimize suffering for one's people, not to cause it and then praise it.

We have waited a long time to finally have a solid and non-hagiographical account of these poor people and what they experienced, the decisions that were made and why, and an allocation of responsibility. I am not afraid to use that awful word: "blame." So many people, when it comes to the 1856 handcart disasters, are afraid to affix responsibility and accountability because they want to dwell on the virtues of faith, diligence, obedience, and sacrifice. Yet more than two hundred people perished—many of them unnecessarily. That historical fact merits reflection and analysis, not just glorification of faith and sacrifice.

An unintended consequence of

the iconic use of the handcart disasters is a lack of historic proportion in another direction. I am constantly amazed at how many of our current generation of youth think that every Mormon pioneer traveled by handcart. I am also amazed, as Will mentioned, that these modern "youth conference" programs, in a perhaps laudable effort to encourage devotion in youth have misrepresented not only handcart history but also Mormon Battalion history.

Let me summarize by returning to my praise of this high-quality history that presents the authentic story: a bold attempt of faithful people who executed a bad idea; two companies of which were technically destroyed; and a bungled rescue that tried valiantly but nearly failed due to poor leadership, poorer supervision, and a general lack of proper resources. The real miracle is that any of these people—handcarters, rescuers, and wagon Saints—survived during that fall of 1856. But part of the tragedy is that the handcart saga has become the measure of pioneer devotion although the Mormon pioneer epic has so many other equally outstanding and inspiring models to herald.

*Sherman L. Fleek
Quicksburg, Virginia*

CONVERSION AMID CONFLICT: MORMON PROSELYTIZING IN RUSSIAN FINLAND, 1861–1914

Zachary R. Jones

ON A COLD WINTER'S NIGHT IN RUSSIA in 1894, a small group gathered in a stately Moscow apartment to converse around a warm fireplace. One guest, the elderly, inquisitive Russian author Leo Tolstoy, approached American diplomat and medical doctor Andrew D. White and posed a question: "Dr. White, I wish you would tell me about your American religion." White, somewhat puzzled, responded that the United States, unlike Russia, did not have a state church. Somewhat impatiently, Tolstoy rejoined that he knew this, "but wanted to know about the *American religion*. Catholicism originated in Rome; the Episcopal Church originated in England; the Lutheran in Germany; but the church to which I refer to originated in America, and is commonly known as the Mormon Church."¹ This conversation, like a number of others that took place in Russian homes during the

ZACHARY RAY JONES {zachhistory@hotmail.com} received a B.A. in history from Utah State University, an M.A. in comparative history from the College of William and Mary, Virginia, and is currently pursuing advanced library and archival studies through the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee. He is currently the head archivist at the Sealaska Heritage Institute, Juneau, Alaska, and is researching a history of the LDS Church in Europe. This article is drawn from his thesis; he presented an earlier version of this article at the Mormon History Association Conference, May 2007, in Salt Lake City.

¹Quoted from Thomas J. Yates, "Count Tolstoi and the 'American Re-

latter nineteenth century, typifies the “Mormon question” in Imperial Russia. A number of individuals, like Tolstoy, corresponded with Mormons about their society, encountered missionaries in Europe, or were simply curious about this peculiar religious movement spreading across America and Europe.²

While most Russians expressed little interest in becoming a Mormon, or were “horrified,” as Tolstoy penned in his diary after first reading the Book of Mormon, some were interested in Mormonism as a social movement.³ Russian intellectuals authored columns on the unique nature of Mormon society, economy, polygamy, and numerous aspects of culture—all to theorize about the phenomenon known as Mormonism. Thus, it was no surprise that people throughout Russia and its territories had, as Tolstoy noted in his diary on January 13, 1889, “read about the Mormons.”⁴

The Russian government and Russian Orthodox clergy also paid close attention to Mormon actions, especially after 1875 when LDS missionaries from the Scandinavian Mission’s Stockholm Conference began preaching illegally in Russia’s Finland province, a territory ceded to Russia from Sweden at the close of the Finnish War (1808–09) and subsequently governed by Russia (1809–1917).⁵ Although only Russian Orthodoxy and Lutheranism were legally al-

ligion,” *Improvement Era*, February 1939, 94; emphasis Yates’s.

²Tolstoy corresponded with Brigham Young’s daughter, Susa Young Gates, who sent him a copy of the Book of Mormon, housed today in Tolstoy’s historic library in Russia. See also Leland A. Fetzer, “Tolstoy and Mormonism,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 6 (Spring 1971): 27. Fyodor Dostoevsky also commented about encountering Mormons in his *Winter Notes on Summer Impressions* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1988), 38, where he argued that Mormonism found interested listeners only among the lowest class of society.

³Leo Tolstoy, *Tolstoy’s Diaries. Vol. 1: 1847–1894*, translated and edited by R. F. Christian (New York: Scribner Press, 1985), 236. Tolstoy was “horrified” after reading the Book of Mormon because it and the Joseph Smith story seemed like “all” other organized religions—as a tool to control and manipulate the masses. Tolstoy was strongly against most forms of organized religion and later, ironically, started his own quasi-religious movement known as Tolstoyianism.

⁴*Ibid.*, 237.

⁵Russia obtained Finland from Sweden through the Treaty of Hamnia

lowed to practice in Finland, between 1875 and 1895 LDS missionaries were able to baptize approximately 200 Finns⁶ before combined clerical reconnaissance and police vigilance halted LDS ministry in

at the close of the Finnish War, a war fought because Sweden refused Tsar Alexander I's request to join the "continental system" established by Napoleon Bonaparte. Finland was a Russian territory from 1809 to 1917, then severed itself from Russia after the Russian Revolution of 1917. In conjunction with the Treaty of Hamnia, Tsar Alexander I made Finland a Grand Duchy of Russia and permitted his new Finnish subjects to enjoy liberties guaranteed by their former Swedish constitution, an agreement later interpreted differently by Finns and Russians. Although Alexander granted Finns the right to practice Lutheranism, he, a member of the Orthodox Church, subsequently appointed himself leader of the Lutheran Church in Finland, which Finnish Lutherans strongly resented. As time progressed, succeeding Russian governing officials interpreted Alexander's agreement with Finns as binding only during the reign of Alexander I and thus open to change by subsequent tsars. To the dismay of those in the Grand Duchy, after Alexander's death in 1825, his son, Nicholas I, and ensuing rulers restricted general freedoms, tightened religious liberties, and imposed "Russification." Russification was an empire-building political doctrine implemented by the Russian government with the goal of transforming the culture of subjugated peoples and bringing them into line with mainstream Russian culture and religious belief. It made the Russian language mandatory in schools and legal institutions and granted special privileges to the Orthodox Church. This policy caused great unrest in Finland.

⁶It is difficult to determine the actual number of baptisms performed in Finland; thus, 200 is an estimate. The Finland Branch Record, the only surviving record with convert baptism information, contains an incomplete list of 81 convert baptisms performed in Finland between 1876 and 1889. The list was compiled by a missionary (likely August L. Hedberg) in 1884 and does not contain a complete list of those who emigrated or abandoned Mormonism prior to 1884, nor are any children of the baptized head of household listed. This ledger also falls short of matching the numbers of baptisms mentioned by previous missionaries in their diaries, letters, and those published in the *Nordstjernan*. The record was later updated sporadically between 1886 and 1889. Thus, to document missionary work for the whole of Finland between 1876 and 1889, only a spotty record from one of the five branches that existed has survived. See Finland Branch Record Ledger, Scandinavian Mission, 1876–97, MS LR 14149 21, LDS Church History Library.

Finland. Russian Orthodox clergy—who often teamed up with Finnish Lutheran clergy—informed the tsarist police of Mormon activities so that LDS missionaries would be arrested and deported.

This pattern of surveillance and deportation demonstrates how Russian religious policy functioned in Russia's Grand Duchy of Finland. Although Orthodox clergy did not operate as an official arm of the state,⁷ they perceived LDS missionaries as a threat to the religious power balance⁸ in Finland as Orthodox clergy sought to obtain ecclesiastical dominance and numerical superiority among the laity (although Russian Orthodoxy achieved neither). Russians deduced, from what they read about Mormonism, that it was a threatening contagion that could infect Russian culture, religious life, the economy, and political ideology. During this period, Russian culture espoused an isolationist and introspective approach—rather than continuing to look toward Europe—for societal direction and cultural preservation; consequently, movements such as Mormonism were apt candidates for cultural and political shunning.⁹ Thus, the church and state used numerous assets at its disposal to halt the LDS infiltration into the Russian Empire and its territories.

⁷For information about the role of the Orthodox Church, see Gregory L. Freeze, “Handmaiden of the State? The Church in Imperial Russia Reconsidered,” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 36, no. 1 (January 1985): 78–103.

⁸Religious politics in Finland were complicated because the Russian State gave the Russian Orthodox Church full privilege and authority to operate while simultaneously restricting the Lutheran Church of Finland's freedoms and activities, even though Lutheranism was the dominant faith. Russian Orthodox clergy—and many Russia bureaucrats—grudgingly tolerated Lutheranism only because conditions in the Treaty of Hamnia (the treaty whereby Russia acquired Finland) stipulated and guaranteed the religious right of Finns to practice Lutheranism. In response, Russian tsars declared themselves as heads of the Lutheran Church of Finland—although the tsars were generally devout Orthodox believers—and enacted policies that hindered the Lutheran Church's power, thereby greatly angering Lutherans. These two religions sparred ecclesiastically and legally throughout this period over who had what legal rights.

⁹It should be stressed that during this period Russia was undergoing a cultural revitalization and exploration. Russians were looking to discover the “true Russian culture” by looking inward, often toward peasant culture. Thus, Western influences from Europe (and the United States, in this case)

Russian law allowed only Russian Orthodox Church missionaries to preach in the Empire's provinces (the Lutheran Church of Finland was allowed to hold worship services, but not proselytize), and those who dared to illegally preach in Russian lands could face banishment, imprisonment, or exile to Siberia.¹⁰ Although in the nineteenth century no Mormons experienced Siberian exile because of their religion,¹¹ a number of Latter-day Saints were arrested, served jail terms, were deported, or fled to America. And although 200 converts to the LDS faith in Russia's Finland province may seem like a small number, Mormon missionaries were actually the second most successful Western proselytizers in Finland during this period. LDS missionaries stood behind only the Baptists who had converted approximately 400 followers by 1885 and ahead of the Methodists with 147 proselytes.¹²

As the first study in the English language to address this topic,¹³ this article first discusses Russian/Finnish impressions of Mormonism and reactions to LDS ministry, then examines the role of Mormon missionary efforts in nineteenth-century Russian Finland and investigates why Finns joined the LDS Church during this period. This article also seeks to correct previous historiography surrounding

were culturally and politically shunned with zeal. Orlando Figes, *Natasha's Dance: A Cultural History of Russia* (New York: Picador, 2003).

¹⁰For information on how religious law played out in Russia, see David S. Fogelson, "Redeeming Russia? American Missionaries and Tsarist Russia," *Religion, State, and Society: Keston Journal* 25, no. 4 (1997): 353–68; Peter Waldron, "Religious Toleration in Latter Imperial Russia," in *Civil Rights in Imperial Russia*, edited by Olga Crisp and Linda Edmondson (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1989), 103–20.

¹¹Some LDS Finns were imprisoned and exiled for their wealth in post-1917 Russia. See Kahlile B. Mehr, "Johan and Alma Lindolf: Early Saints in Russia," *Ensign*, July 1981, 23–24.

¹²*Baptist Work in Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden* (Stockholm: Ernst Westerbergs Boktryckeri, 1947), 36; S. T. Kimbrough Jr., *Methodism in Russia and the Baltic States: History and Renewal* (Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon Press, 1995), 27.

¹³For the historiography of non-English language studies on this topic, see Kim B. Östman, "The Scholarly Study of Mormonism in Finland: An Overview of Literature, Research Ideas, and Sources," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 41 (Summer 2008): 32–56.

Mormonism's involvement with pre-Revolutionary Russia, which erroneously overlooked the fact that Finland was a Russian Territory until the 1917 Russian Revolution and that the most extensive Mormon-Russian interaction occurred in Finland.¹⁴ To produce this study, I examined hundreds of letters, numerous diaries, reports, meeting minutes, Church periodicals (especially the *Millennial Star* and *Nordstjernen*), and various Church records kept by LDS missionaries and Church officials that document LDS proselytizing in Finland—most of them written in English and Swedish. I also studied numerous Russian, Finnish, Swedish, English, French, and German language works, reports, and periodicals that document conditions in Finland and Russia during this period. On the one hand, this study brings to the surface the story of LDS missionaries and Finnish converts who worked to further their faith against great opposition, while on the other hand, this article demonstrates the tenacity with which various religious entities and state powers worked against Mormonism to defend their traditional way of life.

FINNISH AND RUSSIAN PERCEPTIONS OF MORMONISM

In the crisp spring Rocky Mountain air in 1870, a small group of Russian adventurers set out to hike the foothills of the Wasatch Mountain Range in the Utah Territory. From the summit of Ensign Peak, the group looked out over the Salt Lake Valley, admiring the picturesque view of the Great Salt Lake and the distant snow-capped mountains. The bustling city and structures of the Mormon settlement below, however, drew disdain. Russian adventurer Edward Romanovich Tsimmerman remarked, "It reminded me of an enormous developed cemetery, in which the dead move, trade, work, nourish themselves,

¹⁴All studies in English by professional historians have overlooked that Finland was a Russian territory and vastly misrepresented nineteenth-century Mormon-Russian relations. Some of these studies are Kahlile B. Mehr, "The 1903 Dedication of Russia for Missionary Work," *Journal of Mormon History* 13 (1986–87): 110–23; Bruce A. Van Orden, *Building Zion: The Latter-day Saints in Europe* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1996); Gary Browning, *Russia and the Restored Gospel* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1997); Donald Q. Cannon and Richard O. Cowan, *Unto Every Nation: Gospel Light Reaches Every Land* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2003); Kahlile B. Mehr, *Mormon Missionaries Enter Eastern Europe* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2002).

and even reproduce. The tabernacle, with its decorative roof, is nothing more than a large sarcophagus.” Tsimmerman lambasted Mormonism as a “societal ulcer” fueled by a “moral utopia of human nature,” but also expressed bewilderment at how the Mormons had “transformed this desert region into [a] flourishing state” and created a city with such an aesthetically “warm atmosphere.”¹⁵

Tsimmerman, like many of his peers, provided an ambiguous interpretation of Mormon society. On one hand, Mormons were economic mavericks and a cultured people, contributing to American literature, architecture, theater, and culture. Voyagers who visited Salt Lake City, such as Tsimmerman, regularly enjoyed performances at the Salt Lake Theatre, read from a variety of literary genres penned by Mormons, and pondered the deeper meanings behind LDS poetry and art. Mormonism’s temples and tabernacles provided (and still remain) a unique and awe-inspiring example of nineteenth-century western American architecture. On the other hand, Mormons were simultaneously portrayed as credulous fools held captive by the hypnotic religious voices of Church leaders. Charged with murdering people during temple rituals and challenging sexual propriety with their practice of polygamy, Mormons were the villains in hundreds of cheap fictional works readily available across Europe in half a dozen languages. Although Tsimmerman, like most Russians who wrote about Mormonism, struggled to bring these polar descriptions of Mormonism into productive dialogue, the overall public image of Mormonism was damning.

The multifaceted image of Mormonism in Russia and Europe formed around the intellectual, political, and ecclesiastical backgrounds of the authors who wrote about Mormonism. Russian politicians viewed Mormonism as a threat to Russian culture, economy, and tsarist policy, arguing that this religious contagion should not be permitted to enter the nation. Orthodox clergy classified the LDS faith as “fanatical,” and thus a very dangerous sect (the meaning of “fanatical”

¹⁵Eduard Romanovich Tsimmerman, *Puteshestvie po Amerike v 1869–1870* (Moscow: K. T. Soldatnekova, 1872), 296–307. For a broad sampling of the response of European travelers to Mormons and Mormon countries, see Michael W. Homer, ed., *On the Way to Somewhere Else: European Sojourners in the Mormon West, 1834–1930*, Vol. 8 of KINGDOM IN THE WEST: THE MORMONS AND THE AMERICAN FRONTIER (Spokane, Wash.: Arthur H. Clark Co., 2006).

was much stronger in the original Russian language), occasionally arguing that Mormons were “worse” than Jews. Russian intellectuals, however, provided the most interesting interpretation of Mormonism. Intellectuals did not necessarily worry about Mormonism entering Russia or the Russian goal to maintain Orthodox homogeneity; rather they were fascinated by Mormonism as a social movement and sought to discover how Mormon society and economy functioned.

Importantly, Russians first learned about Mormonism from Europeans. Excluding two published firsthand travel accounts produced after 1872,¹⁶ all other nineteenth-century printed works on Mormonism produced in the Russian Empire were either translated from European languages or composed by Russian authors who cited European sources. Available sources also show that no Mormons lived in Russia prior to 1874; thus, Mormonism became a topic of discussion in Russia long before Latter-day Saints ever entered Russian lands to live, proselytize, or vacation in any large number. In short, information about Mormonism could be considered a topic of Western knowledge imported into Russia.

Finnish scholar Kim Östman, who has studied the image of Mormonism in pre-1875 Russian Finland, documents that, as early as 1840, articles about Mormonism were regularly appearing in Finnish newspapers.¹⁷ National Finnish periodicals, such as the *Finlands Allmänna Tidning* (an official government publication), *Helsingfors Morgonblad*, *Helsingfors Tidningar*, and numerous other newspapers carried reports on Mormonism. Columns discussed the Mormon economy, the Mormon expulsion from Missouri and Illinois, the murder of Church founder and U.S. presidential candidate Joseph Smith, and the Mormons’ implication in the attempted assassination of Lilburn Boggs, Missouri’s former governor. The *Helsingfors Tidningar*, based in Helsinki and the widest-read newspaper in Finland, issued a number of reports on Mormon “gold-digging” in California—emphasizing the militant nature of Mormonism—and warned of “bloody

¹⁶Ibid.; Alexandra Gripenberg, *Ett halfår i Nya Verlden: Strödda resebilder från Förenta Staterna* (Helsingfors, Finland: G. W. Edlund, 1889).

¹⁷Kim Östman, “Early Mormonism in Finnish Newspapers, 1840–1849,” *BCC Papers* 1, no. 1 (2006), <http://www.bycommonconsent.com/2006/07/bcc-papers-1-1-ostman/> (accessed May 21, 2008).

conflicts” that would soon develop.¹⁸ If government leaders needed reason to worry when LDS missionaries began preaching in Finland, stereotypes generated from these reports could easily have served as fodder.

Lutheran clergy also published newspaper articles about this “shameless fraud” of a religion. The main objective of ecclesiastical articles was to defame Mormonism as a strategy for buttressing the devotion of the Lutheran laity. Quite typically, articles written by Lutheran clergy, such as the following which appeared in the *Borgå Tidning* in 1842, took the approach that Mormon theology transformed ordinary Christians into religious fanatics: “A society of religious dreamers calling itself Mormonites has been formed in the latest years in the United States, which has fallen apart into sects. They have 100,000 members and a 2,000-man army, a power comparable to the US front troops. This state within a state threatens with destruction everything that sets itself against it.”¹⁹ When LDS missionaries began preaching in Finland, clergy truculently denounced the LDS faith. Mormons were charged with blasphemy, sexual immorality, and murder. In Mormon temples “they are initiated into the gloominess of plural marriage and human sacrifices, ‘blood atonement’, and come out thus ‘initiated.’”²⁰ Maligning Mormons for committing human sacrifices in temples (which never occurred) was an easy slander, since it could be borrowed wholesale from the accusations European and Russian clergy had traditionally used to incite a Jewish pogrom.²¹ Such attacks not only discredited Mormonism but also inflamed the public against Mormons.²²

In addition to these portrayals in newspapers and magazines, and moving forward a few decades, numerous books in Swedish were

¹⁸“Kaliforniens guld,” *Helsingfors Tidningar* 4, no. 12 (February 14, 1849): 2; quoted in *ibid.*

¹⁹“Utrikes,” *Borgå Tidning* 66 (September 24, 1842): 3, quoted in Östman “Early Mormonism in Finnish Newspapers.”

²⁰“Mormonismen,” *Helsingfors* 279 (December 2, 1881): 3–4; this source provided courtesy of Kim Östman.

²¹Robert Nemes, “Hungary’s Anti-Semitic Provinces: Violence and Ritual Murder in the 1880s,” *Slavic Review* 66, no. 1 (Spring 2007): 20–44.

²²Russia was a much more dangerous mission field than Europe during this period. Accounts of Russian clergy encouraging religious violence against or non-Orthodox believers is quite common in the historical record.

produced outside of Finland on Mormonism, but it appears that the only work published in Finland to reach a wide audience was *Ett halfår i Nya Verlden* [A Half Year in the New World], by women's activist Alexandra Gripenberg.²³ Available in both Swedish (1889) and Finnish (1892), this work recounted Gripenberg's 1888 travels across the United States with one chapter devoted to her short stay in Salt Lake City.²⁴ Her writing on Mormonism provides a progressive interpretation of LDS society from the "scholarly" perspective of the time but still suffers from numerous flaws, such as an anachronistic account of how Joseph Smith (who was killed in 1844) engaged in numerous orgies in Salt Lake City during the 1850s.²⁵ Overall Gripenberg praised Mormons for building an aesthetic and prosperous society; but as a champion of women's rights, she assailed the unjust conditions inflicted on women living in polygamist households.

Gripenberg examined the social structure of polygamous fami-

People were frequently abused, killed by mobs or the police, or executed or exiled by the government. People often "disappeared" in these types of situations. Two of the better studies on violence and Christianity in Russia are Nicholas B. Breyfogle, *Heretics and Colonizers: Forging Russia's Empire in the South Caucasus* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2005) and Heather J. Coleman, *Russian Baptists and Spiritual Revolution* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005).

²³In addition to Gripenberg's account, see also Johan Sahlman, *Kirkkohistoria koulua ja kotoa varten: Nissenin ja kurtzin mukaan* (Helsinki: Hufvudstadsbladin kirjap, 1877), 155–56; Karl Ervast and D. Klami, *Kirkkohistorian selityksiä* (Hämeenlinna, Finland: Geitlin, 1884), 219–20; Tyko Hagman, *Amerika, sen löytö, valloitus ja kehitys* (Porvoossa, Finland: Werner Söderström, 1892): 146–47.

²⁴Alexandra Gripenberg, *Ett halfår i Nya Verlden: Strödda resebilder från Förenta Staterna* (Helsingfors, Finland: G. W. Edlund, 1889), and Alexandra Gripenberg, *Uudesta maailmasta: Hajanaisia matkakuvia Ameriikasta* (Helsinki: G. W. Edlund, 1891). This account has more recently been translated into English. See Alexandra Gripenberg, *A Half Year in the New World*, translated by Ernest J. Moyne (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1954).

²⁵She also uses defamatory secondary sources to reinforce "her" experience in Salt Lake City and contradicts herself throughout the chapter, perhaps most notably by her initial attack on Mormonism followed by a conclusion that individual Mormons "were the most genial and harmless people in the world." Gripenberg, *A Half Year in the New World*, trans. Moyne, 187.

lies, repeating lurid tales of how LDS men had favorite wives in their “harems,” the existence of conflict and competition between wives, the emotional strain suffered by women in polygamist marriages, and the trade in young women as sex slaves. She asserted that, only through constant family pressure and religious indoctrination about heavenly rewards and the virtue of suffering as Christ did, could these women commit to such a corrupt social system. Gripenberg concluded: “Peace and harmony and happiness in the usual sense of the words do not exist in the Mormon harems” and only those with an “inclination towards mysticism or fanaticism” could be interested in Mormonism.²⁶

Although some information about Mormonism was available in Swedish and Finnish for citizens of the Russian Empire, most discussions of Mormonism took place in the Russian language. Like Finland, Russia’s information about Mormonism often came through newspaper articles, often translated and reprinted from British, French, Swedish, and German periodicals.²⁷ In addition to defaming Mormonism and printing theories about Mormonism as both a religion and as a social phenomenon, these articles informed readers on such “news” topics as convert immigration to the United States from Europe and LDS missionary endeavors across Europe. Russian encyclopedias also carried entries about Mormonism beginning as early as 1864 with Finnish encyclopedias following shortly thereafter.²⁸ Perhaps the most comprehensive encyclopedia entry on Mormonism was a dense four-page essay by Russian philosopher, poet,

²⁶Gripenberg, *A Half Year in the New World*, 181, 183.

²⁷See Östman, “Early Mormonism in Finnish Newspapers, 1840–1849”; and Gene A. Sessions and Stephen W. Stathis, “The Mormon Invasion of Russian America: Dynamics of a Potent Myth,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 45 (Winter 1977): 22–43.

²⁸*Nastolnii slovar*, Vol. 2, edited by F. Tollya (Saint Petersburg: Paulsona and Co., 1864): 923, *s.v.* “Mormoni.” I have been unable to find a Finnish encyclopedia article on Mormonism earlier than 1890 because of limited international library access, but it is highly probable that they exist. See the 1890 Finnish work: *Sanakirja yleiseen sivistykseen kuuluvia tietoja varten*, edited by Agathon Meurman (Helsinki: Edlund, 1890), 572, *s.v.* “Mormonismen.”

and literary critic Vladimir Sergeyeovich Solovyov.²⁹

Drawing on German and British works published by both Mormons and non-Mormons, Solovyov calumniated the “fanatical” LDS faith by focusing on the purported sexual exploits of Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, theorizing about Mormon militancy, and recounting the Spaulding theory—the assertion that Reverend Solomon Spaulding wrote a novel about Roman castaways in the New World that became the basis for Joseph Smith’s Book of Mormon, with Sidney Rigdon acting as go-between. Although Solovyov found ample reason to criticize Mormonism, he still expressed approval of the Mormon education system, the intellectual abilities of Mormon scientist and theologian Orson Pratt, and socialist aspects of the Mormon economy. Overall Solovyov argued that the Utah Territory had become “quite favorable on account of the fervent dedication Mormons had towards their callings, of being strongly united, having disciplined appearances, and because of their diligent and intelligent work ethic, which overall had transformed the desert into a gathering place for higher cultures.”³⁰

A handful of books on Mormonism also became available in Russian during the 1870s. American author J. H. Beadle’s exposé, *Life in Utah; or the Mysteries and Crimes of Mormonism* (Philadelphia: National Publishing Company, 1870) was translated and published in Russian in 1872. However, Russians who wrote about Mormonism most often cited Moritz Busch’s *Die Mormonen: Ihr Prophet, ihr Staat und ihr Glaube* [The Mormons: Their Prophet, Their State, and Their Beliefs] (1855) and Robert von Schlagintweit’s *Die Mormonen: oder, Die Heiligen vom Jüngsten Tage von ihrer Entstehung* [The Mormons: or, the Latter-day Saints and their Origins] (1878), both of which also castigated Mormonism. Other popular works translated into Russian, such as French adventurer Émile Jonveaux’s *L’Amérique actuelle* [America of Our Time], contained a chapter on Jonveaux’s 1869 stay in Salt Lake City.³¹ Yet according to Russian literary critic Serafim Serafimovich Shashkov, for information on Mormonism, Russians in Saint Petersburg relied most heavily on an 1869 translated version of

²⁹Vladimir Sergeyeovich Solovyov, *Entsiklopedicheskii slovar*,” edited by F. A. Brokgauz (Saint Petersburg, Russia: Brokgauza i Efron, 1896), 19:863–866, s.v. “Mormonstvo, Mormoni.”

³⁰*Ibid.*, 865.

³¹See Émile Jonveaux, *Nynieshniaia Amerika*, translated by E.

British author William H. Dixon's two-volume work *New America*.³²

Dixon's book likely received such praise and popularity because of its more objective approach, keen observations, and greater detail, drawn from a short stay among Utah Mormons in 1866. Much of Dixon's writing elaborated on the eclectic nature of Mormon theology and philosophy, namely the Mormon paradigm that individuals can find enlightenment wherever they look and that, if humankind will adopt and practice this learning, it will enrich life. For Dixon, Mormon Christianity seemed largely a product of amalgamated secular wisdom and revelations of God received by Church leaders. Yet Mormons were not philosophers. Rather they "are a praying people. Religion being their life, every action of the day, whether social or commercial, is considered the will of God." In the Utah Territory "work is considered holy" with the result that "no beggar is seen in the streets; scarcely ever a tipsy man; and the drunken fellow, when you see one, is always either a miner or a soldier—of course a Gentile. No one seems poor."³³ Drunken gunfighters, gambling rogues, and sexual libertines were denied access to their lascivious vices in Mormon towns. And although Dixon disliked the idea of polygamy, from his perspective, polygamy seemed to more often aid widows than oppress young women. After viewing how Mormon society functioned on the whole, Dixon remarked, "I confess, I could not see much harm in it."³⁴

In addition to these authors, a small circle of Russian intellectuals between 1857 and 1872—particularly those who leaned toward

Blaramberg (Saint Petersburg, Russia: V. I. Golovina, 1872).

³²Serafim Serafimovich Shashkov, review of *Mormonism: Its Rise, Progress and Present Condition* by N. W. Green, published as "Tsarstvo Mormonov," *Delo* 12 (December 1871): 97–118. See also Nikolai Alexevich Nekrasov, review of *New America*, Vol. 2, by William H. Dixon, published as "Neizvedannia mesta i novye ludi v Amerike," *Otechestvennye zapiski*, May 1867, 83–116. *New America* was first published in London by Hurst & Blackett and in Leipzig by Bernhard Tauchnitz in 1867.

³³*Ibid.*, 207, 163.

³⁴William Hepworth Dixon, *New America*, Vol. 1 (1867; rpt., Boston: Adamant Media Corporation, 2006), 221, 207, 163, 209.

Westernization—began a discussion of Mormonism.³⁵ This intellectual dialogue has been investigated by Russian literature specialist Leland Fetzer, who demonstrated that, in this instance, theological matters did not concern Russian intellectuals; rather they were “stirred by Mormonism because it had emerged as a social movement, a new society struggling to survive within a state often inimical to it with great advantages in population and power.”³⁶ Politically left-wing Russian intellectuals of this group expressed interest in Mormon socialism (the United Order), primarily because America—and especially its Western expanse—could serve as a laboratory for empirical observation of social and economic undertakings autonomous of European influence. The Mormon economy also captured the attention of conservative opinions like those expressed in an 1861 article appearing in *Vremia* [Time], a periodical operated by famous novelist Fyodor Dostoevsky and his brother Mikhail.³⁷ Although they argued that Mormonism was unsuitable for Russian culture, they expressed approbation of the economic accomplishments of Mormon society: “It is indisputable that they have rendered a valuable service to mankind by settling in these inhospitable regions. This barren plain which separates the slopes of the Pacific from the Atlantic appeared to be useless for cultivation. But in the center of this silent desert Mormons laid the foundation of their holy city, which, it appears, must in a short time become a recognized stopover midway between New York and San Francisco, between Western Europe and Eastern Asia.”³⁸

Yet it was the political left, according to Fetzer, that produced the most perceptive and balanced study of Mormonism, a lengthy 1868 four-part article composed by the prominent Russian theorist

³⁵After Russia lost the Crimean War, it began an exploration of European social models, but this venture was short-lived and had, by 1872, died out. When Tsar Alexander III took the throne in 1881, he spearheaded a cultural revitalization that looked inward, rather than toward the West.

³⁶Leland A. Fetzer, “Russian Writers Look at Mormon Manners: 1857–72,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 13 (Spring 1980): 74–75.

³⁷Artur Benni, “Mormonism i Soedinennyye Shtaty,” *Vremia* 10 (1861): 321–55.

³⁸*Ibid.*, 327–28.

and father of Russian populism, Pyotr Lavrovich Lavrov.³⁹ Written while Lavrov was in exile in the Vologda region north of Moscow, this erudite survey of American religions possesses a tremendous breadth of view. It primarily focused on three distinct American faiths: the Shakers, who Lavrov asserts would never attain social significance because of their diminutive numbers; the Spiritualists, who lacked organization and a hierarchy; and the Mormons, whom Lavrov lauds for the creation of their culture and economy.

Lavrov devoted little attention to theological matters, focusing instead on the structure, morals, and character of Mormon society. He particularly examined two aspects of Mormon life: the doctrine of subordinating the individual self to the community, and the industrious nature of Mormon society. He used Mormon Apostle Orson Hyde's statement, "A lazy, inactive man cannot be a Christian and cannot be saved," to encapsulate the prevailing tenet of Mormon culture. For Lavrov the two unifying traits of Mormonism were "theocracy and love of labor." As a utopian movement striving for social and economic tranquility, the behaviors of Mormons "can be explained only by a pathological urge towards the fantastic and the unheard of, which has so long persisted in mankind and has given birth to the strangest phenomena."⁴⁰ Lavrov is stunned and disappointed that the American masses would flock to follow LDS leaders because they promise Mormonism will enhance their quality of life. He predicts that "if the Mormons do not abandon polygamy and adopt equality of the sexes in a timely fashion, one may predict that polygamy will destroy them."⁴¹

This dialogue, however, was restricted to a small group of Russian intellectuals and never reached an audience as broad as that reached by state-backed Orthodox clergy. This difference is important because the Russian Orthodox Church was a major player in the effort to Russify Finns, and the tsarist government interpreted conversion to Orthodoxy as embracing a Russian way of life. In citizenship terms, being Orthodox was a determining factor for advancement socially, economically, and politically in the Russian Empire,

³⁹Pyotr L. Lavrov, "Severo-Amerikanskoe sektatorstvo," *Otechestvennye zapiski* 177, no. 4 (April 1868): 403–70; 178, no. 6 (June 1868): 273–336; 179, no. 7 (July 1868): 269–318; and 179, no. 8 (August 1868): 324–54.

⁴⁰Lavrov, *Otechestvennye zapiski*, July 1868, 297.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, August 1868, 338.

and the state evaluated regime loyalty in terms of Orthodox membership. The Orthodox clergy fulfilled an intrinsically valuable role by serving as unofficial government representatives and as frontline agents in the Russification project.

Approximately two decades before the arrival of LDS missionaries in Russian Finland, the Orthodox clergy had discussed Mormonism across European Russia, but especially in the Samara Diocese *Samarskie eparkhialnie vedomosti* [Samara Diocese Bulletin].⁴² Orthodox clergy classified Mormonism as a “fanatical sect” and Orthodox clergy regularly voiced fears of losing followers to the eternal damnation that espousing Mormonism would surely bring. Coincidentally, as early as the 1860s Mormonism had such a negative reputation that the Orthodox clergy in the Samara Province adopted the process of nicknaming native Russian religious movers and shakers who experimented with sex and polygamy as *Mormoni* [Mormons]. The nickname stuck and the sexual immorality of these *Mormoni* groups became a lasting term and topic of debate across the whole of Orthodoxy, regularly reported on in church bulletins and books, and comprising a discussion panel at the national 1898 Third All-Russian Missionary Conference held at Kazan.⁴³

When LDS missionaries began preaching in Finland in 1875, the Saint Petersburg-based Orthodox Church newspaper *Tserkovnyi vestnik* [Church Messenger], which oversaw the Finland Diocese, zealously disparaged Mormonism and warned Orthodox believers every-

⁴²James W. Scott “Russian Mormonism: Geographic and Historical Foundations,” http://scottcorner.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/2006/06/RM_Foundations2.pdf (accessed May 21, 2008); cited with permission.

⁴³Numerous works are available, but perhaps the best are: S. M. M., *Besedy o tak nazyvaemoi Mormonskoi verii* (Samara, Russia: A. I. Matrosova, 1904); Aleksei Mastushenskii, “Sekta Mormonov v Samarskoi Eparkhi,” in *Deianiia 3: Go Vserossiskogo missionerskago sezda v Kazani po voprosam vnutrennoi missii i raskolosektantstva*, 2d ed., edited by V. M. Skvortsov (Kiev: I. I. Choklova, 1898), 109–13; Timofei Ivanovich Butkevich, “Mormoni,” in *Obzor Russkikh sekt i ikh tolkov* (Kharkov, Russia: Gubernskaia pravleniia, 1910), 597–600. Even Alexander Herzen, the famous Russian revolutionary, condemned the *Mormoni* in his London-based revolutionary periodical: “Mormonism v Chernigovskoi gubernii,” *Kolokol* (May 15, 1861): 831.

where to reject LDS missionaries.⁴⁴ Lutheran priests also followed suit.⁴⁵ Orthodox and Lutheran clergy, though bitter religious rivals, teamed up against Mormon missionaries to ensure their arrest wherever they preached. Mormon missionaries record that, as a result of their combined efforts, a public appeal was submitted to the tsar asking for an official ban on Mormonism; and the government officially complied in April 1878.⁴⁶

The Russian government, and Tsar Alexander II himself, had previously encountered the “Mormon question.” The LDS Church surfaced in the Russian political sphere during 1857–58 as the Utah War was playing out, primarily because an unfounded rumor surfaced in periodicals that Brigham Young was going to lead the Saints to Russian Alaska to avoid the approaching U.S. Army troops. These rumors reputedly led the tsar to remark that Russia should consider selling Alaska.⁴⁷ In subsequent years, a number of Russian diplomats also publicly condemned Mormonism. Perhaps the most telling example occurred when Russian ambassador to the United States Mikhail Kokosoff was criticized by American religious liberals in an

⁴⁴See “Mormoni,” *Tserkovnyi vestnik* 1, no. 46 (November 20, 1876): 11–13; “Smert’ glavi Mormonov,” *Tserkovnyi vestnik* 2, no. 35 (September 3, 1877): 13; and “Religioznya sekty v Amerike,” *Tserkovnyi vestnik* 3, nos. 51–52 (December 22–29, 1879): 7–8.

⁴⁵The National Library of Finland has digitized many of its historic and ecclesiastical newspapers, which can be searched by keywords. There are numerous articles on Mormonism in Finnish papers during this period. See <http://digi.kansalliskirjasto.fi/index.html>.

⁴⁶“Returned Missionary,” *Deseret News*, October 16, 1878, 581. In addition to reporting on LDS missionary Axel Tullgren’s proselytizing in Finland, the article contains the following excerpt about the ban: “The people of that country [Finland] petitioned the Czar of Russia for a guarantee of religious liberty for all sects, excepting the Mormons, on the plea that the latter practiced polygamy.” See also Axel Tullgren, Journal, 1876–79, MS 4968, LDS Church History Library. Although records left behind by missionaries and the Stockholm Conference document this ban, I have been unable to find any Russian or Finnish documents that mention this ban primarily because of limited access to certain rare Russian-Finnish archival materials.

⁴⁷Sessions and Stathis, “The Mormon Invasion of Russian America,” 22–43.

interview about the lack of religious freedom in Imperial Russia. In his rejoinder, he specifically argued that Mormonism and LDS polygamy presented a danger to Russian culture and religious life and that Mormonism itself served as an example of the type of ills caused by allowing religious freedoms.⁴⁸ Albert Heard, tsarist Russia's one-time Ambassador to China, also stated in his religious treatise and memoir that Mormonism should be eschewed because it posed a threat to Russian economic and political stability.⁴⁹

PROSELYTIZING IN THE GRAND DUCHY OF FINLAND, 1861–1914

On a cold Swedish winter's day in 1884, a letter arrived on the desk of Anthon H. Lund, president of the LDS Church's Scandinavian Mission. This letter, from LDS missionary August S. Hedberg who was proselytizing in Finland, reported he had converted numerous individuals, but "police officers were after me. The newspapers throughout the province were filled with stories concerning me."⁵⁰ This letter captures the essence of LDS missionary labors in Russia's Grand Duchy of Finland between 1861 and 1914. During this period, but especially between 1875 and 1888, LDS missionaries illegally traveled into Russian Finland to baptize a few hundred individuals in the face of intense opposition from the authorities.

LDS missionary work in Finland continually struggled against the Finnish Lutheran and Russian Orthodox clergy, tsarist police, and the Russian government as they desperately sought to deter Mormon ministers from preaching in Finland. Backed by a tsarist law which forbade the dissemination of any non-Russian Orthodox message, and with the already negative image associated with Mormonism, Finnish and Russian clergy eagerly reported LDS activities to police in order to protect their congregations from "pernicious" LDS teachings. Although LDS missionaries saw no harm in preaching to Russian citizens, conservative governing officials were worried as

⁴⁸Mikhail Kokosoff, interviewed in "The Russian View," *New York Times*, January 25, 1912, 10.

⁴⁹Albert F. Heard, *The Russian Church and Russian Dissent: Comprising Orthodoxy, Dissent, and Erratic Sects* (1887; rpt., New York: AMS Press, 1971).

⁵⁰August S. Hedberg, Letter to Anthon H. Lund, Åbo, November 22, 1884, *Nordstjernan* 8 (December 15, 1884): 376–77. For a condensed translation of this letter in English, see Andrew Jenson, *History of the Scandinavian Mission* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1927), 281–82.

Mormon missionaries exposed Finns to Western culture and encouraged them to leave their homeland and resettle in the American West. And based on some aspects already addressed in this essay, government officials also viewed Mormonism as a threat to basic economic, social, cultural, and religious institutions of the Russian Empire. For these reasons, the government concluded that Mormon missionaries were enemies of the state, officially banning them from the Empire in 1878 and arresting them on the spot thereafter. Ignoring the Russian law, LDS missionaries continued to preach in Finland although they experienced persecution and public ridicule, and were shadowed by the police, arrested, imprisoned, and deported. All in all, the Russian state took strong action to protect its people from this supposedly dangerous Western religious movement in a province where Russification was already struggling to take root.

While many of these factors also accompanied LDS missionary work in some European nations during this period, I would argue that Russia and the Grand Duchy of Finland are unique because Mormonism was debated in Russia long before Mormons ever entered Russian lands and because of the heightened mobilization efforts taken by the Russian government and police against LDS missionaries. This heightened level of activity makes the Russia/Finland example especially distinctive when one considers the context of how few LDS missionaries and converts ever lived in Finland. In contrast to most European nations, the Russian Empire was too hostile for LDS missionary work to progress to any significant number. Missionary work in Finland never got on its feet until after the Second World War and not in Russia until after the fall of Soviet Communism.

Nonetheless, between 1875 and 1888, LDS missionaries established congregations in the towns of Jakobstad (modern Pietarsaari), Larsmo (Luoto), Pojo (Pohja), Sibbo (Sipoo), Åbo (Turku), and Helsingfors (Helsinki). Mormon proselytizing ventures in Finland laid bare Russian governmental religious policy in the provinces, showed how this policy changed with different tsarist regimes, and highlighted aspects of religious life in the Grand Duchy of Finland. The Lutheran clergy, Orthodox clergy, and tsarist police played the most crucial role in ensuring that Finns obeyed Russian religious law. Mormon missionaries and converts in Finland came under greater suspicion after the 1881 assassination of Tsar Alexander II, which inflamed an already smoldering government sentiment against foreign religious sectarians and other suspicious groups across the empire. In

this context, it is crucial to examine the actions of LDS missionaries who preached in Finland and seek to understand why Finns joined this controversial religious movement amid such mounting public and government opposition.

RECONNAISSANCE OF RUSSIA AND PREACHING IN FINLAND: 1861–88

As LDS missionaries continued to harvest tens of thousands of converts across western Europe throughout the mid-nineteenth century, Church leaders at Salt Lake City persistently investigated options for introducing missionaries into eastern Europe and Russia. From the LDS perspective, sending missionaries to Slavic nations was crucial because Mormons believed Russia contained blood descendants of the children of Israel and/or lost ten tribes,⁵¹ and gathering scattered Israel was an essential theme of Mormon theology. While a plan to penetrate Russia took time to solidify, even Church founder Joseph Smith had championed the importance of sending missionaries to Russia. At Nauvoo, Illinois, in 1843 Joseph Smith commissioned two missionaries to travel to Russia and begin preaching, but the plan collapsed with Smith's murder in 1844.⁵²

Fifteen years later, Smith's successor-president, Brigham Young, and members of the Quorum of the Twelve renewed discussion of missionary work in Russia.⁵³ Later that summer Apostle Orson Pratt made the Twelve's desires known in a talk about missionary work when he thundered from the pulpit: "Saints must be established in all those

⁵¹For information about Mormon folk beliefs on Russia as the residence of the lost ten tribes, see Armand L. Mauss, *All Abraham's Children: Changing Mormon Conceptions of Race and Lineage* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003).

⁵²*Times and Seasons* 4 (June 1, 1843): 218, and (October 1, 1843): 347.

⁵³Church Historian's Office, Letter to George A. Smith, April 1, 1859, Church Historian's Papers, LDS Church History Library, 439–40, 455, refers to Young's desire to send missionaries to Siberia by way of Japan. Also see Susan Staker, ed., *Waiting for World's End: The Diaries of Wilford Woodruff* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1993): 193: "I attended the prayer meeting in the evening. President Young said we have got to send men to the Islands to liberate those who are there. . . . I would like to send some Elders to Siberia and also to the Japanees [sic] Islands with Proper papers."

countries. Even in Russia, that place where they would put you to death if you brought a printed work of religious nature into the empire."⁵⁴ Quorum discussions came to fruition in 1861 as the LDS Scandinavian Mission sent Gustaf Wallgren to Russia's Finland province to reconnoiter conditions, but his returning report did not encourage the leaders to commence with a missionary operation in the Grand Duchy.⁵⁵ Six years later, after Tsar Alexander II emancipated Russia's serfs and a more progressive reign appeared to emerge, Scandinavian Mission President Carl Widerborg, European Mission President Brigham Young Jr., and his brother John W. Young, visited Saint Petersburg and Moscow to again investigate the religious environment in Russia. They met with the American ambassador in Saint Petersburg, scrutinized Russian religious laws, conversed with people in the foreigners' corridor of town, and appraised the religious climate in general. At the end of their two weeks, they concluded that laws against non-Orthodox sects were too harsh and that rigid police enforcement made Russia too dangerous for missionary work.⁵⁶ However, during the next few years, a number of Swedish Mormons moved to Finland for employment, prompting the Scandinavian Mission to begin missionary work in the Grand Duchy regardless.⁵⁷ Since Russian Finland bordered Sweden, the Scandinavian Mission—headquartered in Copenhagen—delegated the duties of overseeing the day-to-day missionary operations in Finland to its Swedish operations outpost, the Stockholm Conference.

With Mormons already living in Finland, Scandinavian Mission and Stockholm Conference leaders knew that establishing LDS congregations there would come easier since residents already knew the

⁵⁴Orson Pratt, July 10, 1859, *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (London and Liverpool: LDS Booksellers Depot, 1854–86), 7:185.

⁵⁵Kaija H. Penley, "Leadership of Mormon Missionary Efforts in Finland and Its Influence on Conversion Rates in the Finnish Mission, 1947–1969" (M.A. thesis, Utah State University, 1994), 22. See also Jenson, *History of the Scandinavian Mission*, 160.

⁵⁶Brigham Young Jr., Diary, July 20–27, 1866, Mss 1236, Reel 1, Box 1, fd. 4, Vol. 6, LDS Church History Library; Brigham Young Jr., Letter to George A. Smith, August 8, 1866, *Deseret News*, September 12, 1866, 5.

⁵⁷Erastus W. Snow, Excerpt of letter, May 15, 1873, in Jenson, *History of the Scandinavian Mission*, 214; Erastus Snow, Letter to the editor, Christiania, *Deseret News*, July 9, 1873, 10.

political and cultural conditions of the nation, and since Swedish was still widely spoken in Finland. In theory, as baptisms occurred congregations could be built around seasoned members who could serve in leadership positions and help instruct new converts. Scandinavian Mission leaders viewed Finland as a more feasible place for preaching than in Russia proper. After all, most Finns spoke Swedish and numerous Swedish-speaking missionaries were available to send to Finland, whereas no Russian-speaking Mormons were on hand. Church leaders also hoped missionary work in Finland would yield a high rate of converts, like the thousands of Swedes and Danes who were joining the LDS faith during this period. And perhaps most importantly, testing conditions in Finland could offer logistical insights into opening Russia proper for missionary work in the future.

Overall, missionary work in Finland first really materialized in 1875 as two lone missionaries were sent to Finland. Between 1875 and 1878, Mormon ministry culminated as approximately 100 Finns joined the LDS faith. Between 1878 and 1895, only another 100 individuals or so joined the Church in Finland due to increased ecclesiastic and police pressure, primarily because LDS missionaries had to preach in secret to avoid arrest and likely in response to the influence of negative press coverage about Mormonism. Yet national political events in Russia unconnected to LDS missionary work—the assassination of Tsar Alexander II in 1881 and the politically conservative mobilization that followed—ultimately hindered missionary work so extensively that the Scandinavian Mission was forced to concede that conditions for LDS operations in the Russian Empire were too arduous. Missionary efforts in Finland were terminated in 1888.

This saga specifically began in 1875 when the Scandinavian Mission gave the Stockholm Conference permission to commission two Swedish missionaries, brothers Carl A. and John I. Sundström to cross the border into the Grand Duchy of Finland, link with Mormons in Finland, and begin preaching in the immediate area. The Book of Mormon was not translated into Swedish until 1878, but during this time it was available in Danish and German. It was not translated into Finnish or Russian until the mid and late twentieth century. That fall the Sundströms arrived at Finland's Ostrobothnia region on the western coast and began proselytizing and selling religious tracts and copies of the Book of Mormon at Jakobstad, Larsmo, and Toby (Tuovila), but also at numerous small agricultural villages. They stood in town squares and on main roads to proclaim the LDS message. The

Sundströms ministered to people from any economic background and of any religious affiliation. They soon found a group of interested listeners.

A few months into their ministry, Carl A. Sundström wrote in his diary: “Had a visit from a Lutheran Priest named [Johannes] Back. He forbade us to preach our religion” and “He said the Book of Mormon was a lie and false. We were also false.” A few weeks later, another Lutheran priest, named Wegeljus, “forbade us to explain our belief. The Priest was very angry.”⁵⁸ From this point onward the Sundströms continued to bump heads with local clergy who soon notified police. On August 3, 1876, while preaching in a public town square, the Sundströms were “called by two policemen to go and see the Justice of the Peace.” At the police station officials ordered the Sundströms to discontinue their illegal preaching, while Johannes Back, “wanted to drive the Sundströms from Finland.”⁵⁹ In response, the Sundströms investigated the law further and found that Grand Duchy jurisprudence technically forbade only those who “stood” to preach. Thus, for the next few months, they circumvented the law by delivering sermons while “sitting” on chairs in the public square.⁶⁰ The tactic of sitting to proselytize was short-lived however, and soon—with encouragement from local clergy—police began breaking up all public LDS meetings. As a fierce opponent of Mormonism, Back stated in a newspaper, “Who would have thought that this injurious sect, of which one has said is a distorted and horrid caricature of all that is holy, would find its way even to our sequestered country?”⁶¹

Notwithstanding the negative press attention, by early 1877 the Sundströms had baptized enough people to establish a branch at Jakobstad and shortly thereafter at Larsmo. That spring the Stockholm Conference assigned Axel Tullgren to Jakobstad to serve as the congregation’s branch president and to evangelize in the surrounding area. Over the course of the next year, Tullgren and Olof A. T. Forssell, who was sent in late 1877 to reinforce LDS efforts, continued

⁵⁸Carl A. Sundstrom, *My Diary, 1845–1876*, translated and edited by J. W. Holden (Layton, Utah: J. W. Holden, 1954), 54–55.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 57–58.

⁶⁰John Andersson, Letter to *Deseret News*, Stockholm, March 29, 1876, rpt. in *Millennial Star* 38 (May 22, 1876): 331.

⁶¹Johannes Back, “Mormonism,” *Morgonbladet* 228 (December 11, 1876): 2.

to baptize additional Finns and strengthen congregations at Jakobstad and Larsmo. During Tullgren's sixteen months in Finland, he personally held two hundred meetings, baptized twenty-four, and organized three branches.⁶² Elder Forssell, who was just as energetic, expanded LDS reach to the nearby towns of Vaasa, Pedersöre, and Kristinestad (Kristiinankaupunki), where more Finns embraced LDS membership. The following year Forssell traveled south with newly arrived missionary Truls A. Hallgren, and the duo began preaching in the eastern Uusimaa region. They baptized a number of converts in the cities of Sibbo (Sipoo), Borgå (Porvoo), and Pernå (Pernaja), which eventually led to a small branch being established at Sibbo. Thus, with an estimate of nearly 100 LDS converts and with three branches in operation in nearly three years, evident proliferation convinced Church leaders to continue missionary work in the Grand Duchy notwithstanding mounting opposition.

As reports of Finnish baptisms filtered back to the Stockholm Conference, leaders were pleased and perhaps overeager to press into Russia proper. In 1877 Ola N. Liljenquist, leader of the Stockholm Conference, asked Church leaders in Salt Lake City for permission to send an Estonian convert—then living in Stockholm—to Russia's Baltic provinces to begin proselytizing because of his knowledge of the language.⁶³ This Estonian was never sent because tensions continued to escalate as the Lutheran and, after 1876, Orthodox clergy took special interest in Mormon activities.

During the winter of 1876–77, the situation became more complicated as Russian Orthodox clergy—who had more influence and state recognition than Lutheran clergy—became involved in the move to stop LDS preaching in Jakobstad (the city was known to Russians as Nikolaistad, named after Tsar Nicholas I). Lutheran clergy were not viewed by the state as important in the move to stop sectarian infiltration, partly because the Russian government viewed Lutheranism (and all other faiths) as detrimental to the Russian way of life. The

⁶²See "Returned Missionary," *Deseret News*, October 16, 1878, 581; Axel Tullgren, Diary, 1876–79; August C. Carlson, Letter to H. W. Naisbitt, Copenhagen, January 8, 1878, *Millennial Star* 40 (January 21, 1878): 46–47; Finland Branch Record Ledger; Scandinavian Mission Letterpress Copybooks, 1858–1920, LR 933221, LDS Church History Library.

⁶³Ola N. Liljenquist, Letter to *Millennial Star*, Stockholm, October 17, 1877, rpt., in *Deseret News*, January 3, 1878, 14.

Russian state responded to Orthodox affairs and requests but were uncooperative with Lutheran clergy, and provided police support to quell LDS efforts. While the Orthodox Diocese of Finland boasted a comparatively small membership in western Finland, Orthodox presence in Jakobstad was stronger than in most Finnish cities on account of the ethnic Russian soldiers quartered at the naval barracks located on the outskirts of town.⁶⁴ In December 1876 an Orthodox priest led the police to the homes of Tullgren and the Sundströms and apprehended them for illegally proselytizing. They were hauled before Jakobstad's governor, according to Tullgren, "in a very rough and impolite manner and [the governor] forbade us to preach, telling the police to watch us. He went so far as to threaten to have us arrested and sent to Siberia."⁶⁵ Although the missionaries were released after this interrogation, the homes of Tullgren and the Sundströms were raided and their religious literature confiscated. For the next year, the police shadowed missionaries. Tullgren reported, "It is uncertain how long we shall enjoy liberty, as a policeman may at any moment come and arrest us."⁶⁶ After the police had investigated Mormonism in collaboration with Orthodox and Lutheran clergy over the course of 1877, on April 18, 1878, government authorities officially outlawed Mormonism and banished LDS missionaries from Finland, arresting Axel Tullgren and Olof Forssell and deporting them to Sweden.⁶⁷

The religious and political motif to emerge for enforcing Russian religious law in Finland against Mormons involved clergy acting as police informers. Once local clergy, either Lutheran or Orthodox, became aware of Mormon missionaries, they notified police who in turn sought to capture, arrest, and deport LDS missionaries. This pattern is important because it reveals the power and influence held by clergy in Finland. The fact that Lutheran and Orthodox clergy worked together on occasion to stop Mormon infiltration is significant. Scholar T. A. Kantonen argued that the Lutheran Church of Fin-

⁶⁴O. A. Iarovoi, *Valaamskii monastyr i pravoslavnaia tserkov v Finliandii, 1880–1930* (Petrozavodsk, Russia: KNTS RAN, 1997).

⁶⁵Axel Tullgren, Letter to Ola N. Liljenquist, Jakobstad, December 19, 1876, in Jenson, *History of the Scandinavian Mission*, 227–28.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*

⁶⁷"Returned Missionary," *Deseret News*, October 16, 1878, 581. This letter also reports that the Finns submitted a petition to the tsar requesting religious liberty but asked that Mormonism be prohibited in Finland.

land's official policy was to practice passive resistance toward Orthodox power and, as a general rule, not respond to or take part in Orthodox affairs.⁶⁸ The Mormon challenge changed this pattern for Lutheran and Orthodox clergy, primarily doing so because the introduction of Mormonism threatened the religious turf of both churches, thereby prompting the churches to work together to some extent for mutual benefit.

In addition to serving as police informants, clergy used the press to draw attention to the situation and warn laity of the dangers posed by circulating LDS ministers. Finnish, Swedish, and Russian language newspapers and church periodicals in both Finnish cities and Saint Petersburg disparaged Mormonism and called on citizens to notify the police or local parish magistrate if they encountered LDS missionaries. One warning printed in a Helsingfors (Helsinki) newspaper by an author who claimed firsthand experience with Mormons stated:

Among the 4,000 to 5,000 Scandinavian Mormons that live in Salt Lake City, I met many who admitted they were disappointed in their hopes concerning "Zion," while others, especially women, with tears in their eyes spoke of their home on the other side of the ocean. . . . They are there involved in the worst slavery imaginable—slavery under fanaticism, unskillfulness and under a gang of crooks, thieves, and murderers. . . . [In the temple] they are initiated into the gloominess of plural marriage and human sacrifices ("blood atonement") and come out thus "initiated."⁶⁹

Orthodox periodicals, such as the Saint Petersburg *Tserkovnyi vestnik* [Church Messenger], which oversaw the Finland Diocese, printed a three-page exposé on Mormonism in 1876 which echoed similar arguments. This article emphasized the militant and murderous nature of Mormons in the Utah Territory by discussing the Mountain Meadows Massacre and doctrine of blood atonement. The following year, the Russian *Tserkovnyi vestnik* printed a celebratory obituary announcing the welcome death of Brigham Young and arguing that

⁶⁸See T. A. Kantonen, "The Finnish Church and Russian Imperialism," *Church History* 20, no. 5 (June 1951): 3–13.

⁶⁹"Mormonismen," *Helsingfors* 279 (December 2, 1881): 3–4.

Mormonism would finally sputter and die out.⁷⁰ (See this issue's cover, a Finnish publication announcing Young's death.)

In response to the negative media coverage, past arrests and deportations, the government ban on Mormonism, and mounting actions of clergy and police, LDS leaders became trapped between walking away from a hostile zone and abandoning converts or continuing their efforts and hoping to tough out the vigilance of clergy and police. The LDS Church chose to continue proselytizing but adopted a plan that limited the number of missionaries serving in Finland to one or two per season. This approach became the motif for the next decade. Church leaders felt that "Russia is an iron-bound Empire, opposed to religious toleration" and Russian Finland stood as one of the Church's most dangerous areas for preaching.⁷¹

In 1878 the difficulties of ministering in Finland pushed one missionary to his psychological and physical limits, rendering him so incapacitated that missionaries from Stockholm were sent to pick him up.⁷² Thereafter mission leader Nils Flygare, who oversaw which missionaries ministered in Finland, told Salt Lake City that only "our very best Elders" should serve in Finland because of the psychologically taxing environment.⁷³ And although missionary life was stressful, a letter penned by F. R. Sandberg, one of these "best," contextualizes the demeanor of most LDS missionaries: "I am happy to go as a representative for Jesus Christ's gospel and show people the true way, which leads to eternal life, and my motto is: never surrender, but fight till victory is won."⁷⁴ Most missionaries possessed a spiritual worldview, often attributing and making sense of reality in religious terms.

⁷⁰"Mormoni," *Tserkovnyi vestnik* 1, no. 46 (November 20, 1876): 11-13; "Smert' glavi Mormonov," *Tserkovnyi vestnik* 2, no. 35 (September 3, 1877): 13. See also "Religiozniya sekty v Amerike," *Tserkovnyi vestnik* 3, nos. 51-52 (December 22-29, 1879): 7-8.

⁷¹"Impending Doom of Russia," *Millennial Star* 41 (April 28, 1879): 269.

⁷²See Nils C. Flygare, Letter to President Joseph F. Smith, June 17, 1878, Nils C. Flygare Letterbook, May 1878-August 1879, MS 8428, LDS Church History Library, and Nils C. Flygare, Copenhagen, August 10, 1878, Letter to editor, *Millennial Star* 40 (September 2, 1878): 555-56.

⁷³Nils C. Flygare, Letter to John Larson, July 14, 1879, Nils C. Flygare Letterbook, 1878-79, MS 8428, LDS Church History Library.

⁷⁴F. R. Sandberg, Letter to Nils C. Flygare, Åbo, August 5, 1886,

For example, August Hedberg “wondered how long Lucifer would permit me to have such progress” and at other times marveled at how “the hand of God” protected him from arrest.⁷⁵

Even with a spiritual worldview energizing missionaries, from 1878 to 1881 missionary work crept along at a moderate pace as nine missionaries served in Finland.⁷⁶ While these missionaries continued to baptize a few converts each year, congregations were continually depleted; some neophytes abandoned the Church, many were excommunicated because of sin in 1880, and others immigrated to the Utah Territory.⁷⁷ During the winter of 1878, mission leader A. W. Carlson reported that the missionaries in Finland “were making little progress, having made acquaintance with some families who were pleased to see them and converse about the Gospel.”⁷⁸ In 1880 Elder Peter O. Peterson was arrested, imprisoned, and then deported to Sweden.⁷⁹ By the time of his arrest, it had become very difficult to hold a Sunday worship service since police knew the locations and names of LDS members. By the spring of 1880, “It is not uncommon for one or more of those officials [the police] to enter the house in which an elder holds a meeting. The first thing he does is to break up the meeting, next to forbid him to speak to the people about religion, then to give him, at the longest,

Nordstjernen 10 (September 1, 1886): 252.

⁷⁵August S. Hedberg, Letter to Anthon H. Lund, Åbo, November 22, 1884, *Nordstjernen* 8 (December 15, 1884): 376–77. See a condensed version translated into English in Jenson, *History of the Scandinavian Mission*, 281–82.

⁷⁶For a complete list of missionaries who served in Finland, see Zachary R. Jones, “Conflict amid Conversion: Mormon Proselytizing in Russian Finland, 1860–1914” (M.A. thesis, College of William and Mary, 2008), Appendix A.

⁷⁷See Finland Branch Record Ledger. This lone surviving record contains twelve confirmed migrations to Zion, but the record also notes frequently that people’s membership records had been “moved elsewhere.”

⁷⁸A. W. Carlson, Letter to H. W. Naisbitt, Copenhagen, January 8, 1878, *Millennial Star* 40 (January 21, 1878): 46–47.

⁷⁹N. Wilhelmssen, Letter to William Budge, Copenhagen, March 20, 1880, *Millennial Star* 42 (March 29, 1880): 204.

twenty-four hours to leave [Finland] in.”⁸⁰

Notwithstanding these impediments and Peterson’s arrest, a few months later the Stockholm Conference selected two more missionaries to minister in Finland, Lars Johan Karlsson and David Olof M. Ekenberg. For the next year, they were continually “followed by the Russian authorities, which have confiscated quite a few of our books and pamphlets; but the people themselves seem to be kindly disposed towards the Elders, and some have also been added to the Church in that country.”⁸¹ These missionaries, and others, continually reported that the people of Finland were very interested in their message and that they could have baptized hundreds each year had not the police hampered their efforts.

Yet conditions for proselytizing across the Russian Empire worsened in 1881 with the assassination of Tsar Alexander II on the streets of Saint Petersburg. In response to the tsar’s murder, his successor and son Tsar Alexander III shifted foreign and domestic Russian political policy sharply toward conservatism. Russification efforts in Finland redoubled, Russian Orthodoxy reasserted its cultural and political legitimacy, and police strength became limitless against those considered a threat to the Empire. As part of this process, Alexander III created a special police force known as the Okhrana, a body with near-unlimited power that regulated—with an iron fist—the numbers and activities of undesirables in the Empire. These new developments led to an increased Russian police presence in Finland (as well as in Russia’s other territories undergoing Russification) which exacerbated the already difficult work of LDS missionaries in Finland. In Russia during the post-1881 period, religion blended closely with political policy and society “functioned under strict censorship and constant police surveillance.”⁸²

For LDS missionaries, preaching in the post-1881 period became incredibly difficult due to the Okhrana’s heightened surveillance and efforts. The Okhrana secretly shadowed missionaries, en-

⁸⁰D. M. Olson, Letter to William Budge, Stockholm, April 3, 1880, *Millennial Star* 42 (April 12, 1880): 238–39.

⁸¹N. Wilhelmsen, Letter to A. Carrington, Copenhagen, December 24, 1880, *Millennial Star* 43 (January 3, 1881): 12.

⁸²Catherine Evtuhov and Richard Stites, *A History of Russia: Peoples, Legends, Events, Forces since 1800* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004), 151.

gaged in sting arrests, deported captured missionaries, and kept tabs on local LDS congregations.⁸³ This was also the common plight of other faiths, such as the Baptists and Methodists, who were also trying to illegally proselytize in Finland during this period.⁸⁴ LDS missionaries worked cautiously, attempting to avoid the Okhrana. They held religious meetings at secret locations after sunset, baptisms were performed after dark or in remote areas, and missionaries changed locations frequently to avoid arrest. Through these methods, Mormon missionaries sometimes eluded detection and carried out their ministry until 1888 when LDS proselytizing in Finland was terminated by the Scandinavian Mission.

With increasing police surveillance of LDS activities in the Ostrobothnia and Eastern Uusimaa region, post-1881 missionaries were forced to expand their ministry to other cities where the police and clergy were not already watching for them. In 1882 Anders P. Norell, Matts Andersson, and Joseph R. Lindvall began proselytizing in the region of Finland proper where they baptized converts at Åbo and Kimito (Kemiö), and later established a small branch at Åbo. However, the vigilance of the Okhrana soon chased missionaries from these cities also. It appears that Åbo was a difficult place for missionaries of any faith because Baptist evangelist Erik Åmossa was arrested in 1881 for proselytizing and sentenced to twenty-four days imprisonment on only bread and water. Throughout the 1880s Baptist ministers in Åbo were arrested. Government officials encouraged mobs to attack Baptist missionaries, and the mobs “even tried to murder them on a few occasions.”⁸⁵

In the midst of these increasing difficulties in Finland, in 1884 the Stockholm Conference decided to send its best missionary, August S. Hedberg, to Finland. Known as the “champion tract-seller” Hedberg was quite possibly the boldest and most zealous missionary

⁸³Alma Söderhjelm, *Jakobstads historia; 3 tredje perioden: utvecklingens tid 1808–1913* (Jakobstad, Finland: Jakobstads stad, 1974), 248.

⁸⁴S. T. Kimbrough Jr., *Methodism in Russia and the Baltic States: History and Renewal* (Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon Press, 1995); *Baptist Work in Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden* (Stockholm: Ernst Westerbergs Boktryckeri, 1947).

⁸⁵*Ibid.*, 36–37. See also Teuvo Aaltio, “A History of the National Baptists in Finland” (Ph.D. diss., Southern Baptist Theology Seminary, Kentucky, 1958).

with regard to baptisms performed and distances traveled by any who ministered in Finland, but he was also perhaps the least careful. He regularly preached openly, converting a number of individuals, but his boldness soon attracted the attention of police.

Upon his arrival in Finland in October 1884, he began preaching in the Uusimaa region where he soon baptized numerous converts and laid the groundwork for congregations at Pojo and Finland's capital, Helsingfors (Helsinki). In November he traveled to Sibbo where he "held many good meetings and the people expressed a desire that I should continue to preach to them. I therefore held meetings every second day, occasionally every day, and on one day I held three meetings." Because of his effrontery, at 7:00 A.M. on a biting cold winter's morning, local clergy and local police arrived at his home with an official document ordering him to leave the city. Hedberg reported, "I paid no attention to this order, but continued to hold meetings and baptize." A few weeks later, local individuals contacted the Okhrana. At that point, Hedberg fled into the country and hid in an abandoned barn. Hedberg reported to mission leaders that "police officers were after me. The newspapers throughout the province were filled with stories concerning me." He later learned that the Okhrana had raided his residence, confiscated his belongings and Church literature, and "had visited a number of people, asking them what I had taught them."⁸⁶ In late December, Hedberg returned to Sweden because "the police have been on his track the whole time."⁸⁷

Facing these difficulties and because it had become more difficult for missionaries to cross the border, Stockholm Conference leaders tried a new strategy; namely sending Finns instead of Swedes to Finland. This staple tactic had proved its effectiveness in past Mormon missionary ventures in Denmark and Sweden, and leaders hoped it would pay off. Stockholm Conference leaders asked Church headquarters in Salt Lake to send any Finns living in Utah to Stockholm so they could be sent to Finland. From 1881 to 1888 fifteen different missionaries preached in Finland, eight of them Finns baptized in Finland or Sweden, most of whom had previously immigrated to

⁸⁶August S. Hedberg, Letter to Anthon H. Lund, Åbo, November 22, 1884, *Nordstjernen* 8 (December 15, 1884): 376–77.

⁸⁷Anthon H. Lund, Letter to *Millennial Star*, Copenhagen, December 12, 1884, *Millennial Star* 46 (December 22, 1884): 814–15.

Utah. Local branch members in Finland began accompanying full-time missionaries as they traveled about the country to preach. At the April 1885 general conference in Salt Lake City, Apostle John Henry Smith announced, “We have gained a foothold in Finland” because of these native elders and added that the Church was considering expanding the ministry into Russia proper.⁸⁸ However, Smith’s assessment was premature and conditions did not improve, notwithstanding the efforts of LDS Finnish missionaries.

The Okhrana knew where LDS converts lived and made missionary work nearly impossible after 1885. By 1886 missionaries were unable to visit the scattered LDS congregations, baptism rates were low, and police maintained a tight control. Elder F. R. Sandberg, writing from Åbo in 1886, lamented that “there are some brethren and sisters [LDS converts] which haven’t been visited in over two years.” Sandberg expressed his fear of being arrested at any moment—he had nearly been captured by the police a few weeks earlier, but the “Lord” had allowed him to escape and later baptize five people. Sandberg concluded his letter by expressing pity for Church members in the Grand Duchy who could not worship God freely because of Russian “despotism.”⁸⁹

In the fall of 1888 Stockholm Conference leaders could not locate any Finnish-speaking missionaries. Because the ministry had become so enervated, leaders decided temporarily to postpone operations in Finland. Work in Sweden soon took precedence for Stockholm Conference officials, and Finland was overlooked amid the everyday bustle. After only a few years, no missionaries and leaders remained in Sweden who had personal experience with Finnish members. After 1888 no full-time missionary was sent to preach in Finland until after the First World War. Missionary work in Russia’s

⁸⁸John H. Smith, April 6, 1885, *Journal of Discourses*, 27:176.

⁸⁹F. R. Sandberg, Letter to Nils C. Flygare, Åbo, August 5, 1886, *Nordstjernen* 10 (September 1, 1886): 252. See also F. R. Sandberg, Letter to “Dear Brethren,” September 25, 1886, in Finland Branch Record Ledger. For additional information about missionary work in Finland between 1885 and 1888, see Nils C. Flygare, abstract of correspondence, n.p., September 9, 1886, *Millennial Star* 48 (September 20, 1886): 603; Nils C. Flygare, Letter to D. H. Wells, Copenhagen, December 1, 1886, *Millennial Star* 48 (December 13, 1886): 796–97; Leonard D. Nyberg, Letter to N. C. Flygare, Helsingfors, July 22, 1887, *Nordstjernen* 11 (August 15, 1887): 254.

Grand Duchy of Finland began in 1875 with energy, excitement, and ample coverage in Mormon periodicals but ended unintentionally in 1888 with hardly a whimper or even a printed notice in LDS publications. Although full-time missionary work in Finland ended and branches were, for the most part, forgotten, a few attempts were made between 1888 and 1914 to reconnect with Finland's wilting branches.

LDS FINNISH CONVERTS

The Finns who embraced Mormonism between 1875 and 1888 embarked on a different—and more difficult—way of life. Mormonism was illegal, and the police were vigilant in cracking down on members and missionaries alike. Stockholm Conference contact with Finnish members via mail was also difficult since Russian customs officials at the Finnish border “open the Star [*Nordstjernen*] packages and sends empty wrappers to the Saints. . . . They say their orders are to let no Mormon papers enter Finland.”⁹⁰ These factors made it difficult to practice the LDS way of life. Converts were regularly subjected to criticism and shunned for abandoning their traditional faith. Mormon converts were often treated as “lost souls.”

Mormon neophytes reacted to these difficulties in a number of ways. Some became disenchanted and abandoned the LDS Church. Others immigrated to the Utah Territory to be among fellow Latter-day Saints. A resolute handful stayed in Finland and practiced their belief to whatever extent they could. Because of such difficulties it is important to ask: Who were the people who joined the LDS Church in Finland during this period and why did they do so? Many of these questions are currently unanswerable since there are nearly no surviving sources documenting why these converts embraced Mormonism. However, although sources are very limited, enough material has survived to help us understand at least some aspects of who these Finnish converts were and why they joined such a controversial religious movement.

The single Jakobstad Branch Record, the only surviving record from the branches in Finland, offers the best glimpse into the lives of

⁹⁰Anthon H. Lund, Letter to *Millennial Star*, January 1, 1885, *Millennial Star* 47 (January 12, 1885): 27.

Finnish converts.⁹¹ It contains individual names, birth places, birth dates, baptismal dates, place of baptism, tithing contributions, the spiritual status of converts, congregation meeting minutes, and information about marital status on slightly less than half of the people who embraced Mormonism in Finland. These data disclose information about the background and religious devotion of Finnish converts. First, this record tells us that nearly all of those baptized in Finland were ethnic Finns or Swedes. It shows that of the eighty-two individuals recorded in this ledger, slightly more than half were women whose average age was thirty-nine years, the oldest being sixty-five and the youngest eighteen. The average age of male converts was also thirty-nine. While women have regularly comprised the majority of those converted by Christian missionaries, it is interesting that this pattern also applies to the LDS faith in light of the negative image of polygamy. This may have occurred in conjunction with the loosely connected Lutheran women's movement in Finland that encouraged women to become religiously involved in their communities.⁹² Growing numbers of women in Finland during this time were engaging in religiously motivated projects that sought to better Finnish society and improve conditions for women. And while records are somewhat inconclusive on this subject, Mormonism's Relief Society organization could easily have been seen as providing a niche for a manifestation of Finland's female culture, thereby making Mormonism attractive to some.⁹³

Of these middle-aged Finnish women proselytes, nearly 70 percent were unmarried or joined without their husbands. Some were widowed, abandoned, or divorced; others were never-married individuals. Sixty-one percent of men who joined the LDS Church in Finland were also unmarried or joined without their spouse. Thus, only about 30 percent of LDS converts in Finland consisted of a husband

⁹¹See Finland Branch Record Ledger.

⁹²See Pirjo Markkola, *Gender and Vocation: Women, Religion, and Social Change in the Nordic Countries, 1830–1940*, *Studia Historica* 64 (Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, 2000).

⁹³Although records are somewhat inconclusive about Relief Society operations in Finland, Ann Caroline Boberg Roat, who was baptized in Finland and had immigrated to Utah, returned to Finland in 1891 to provide spiritual training to LDS Finnish women. Calvin S. Kunz, "A History of Female Missionary Activity in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1976), 44.

and wife joining together. Based on these statistics, the LDS Church was more attractive to singles than to couples in Finland during this period.

Sources also indicate that most Finnish converts had professions like farmers, gardeners, and lower-class tradesmen. Johannes Lindelöf, one of the few affluent Saints, was a goldsmith. Scholars have repeatedly argued that Mormonism was attractive to the masses because gathering to Zion offered economic advantages not available in Finland, since agricultural lands were more readily available. The LDS Church funded (or helped fund) the immigration of a number of Finnish converts to the Utah Territory where they began new lives and embraced economic opportunities, and where singles married.⁹⁴

The story of the Johannes Blom family, converts in Finland during this period, provides an example of what some proselytes endured in Finland. Originally born in Sweden, Johannes and his wife, Anna, joined the LDS Church and moved to a small community on the outskirts of Helsingfors where Blom was a gardener and groundskeeper for a wealthy aristocrat. The Bloms, a zealous member-missionary family, proved influential in bringing numerous Finns into the LDS Church. During the summer of 1884, Johannes traveled to a secluded area where he had arranged to baptize two people. Unbeknownst to him, the Okhrana trailed him to the site and, after the baptism was performed, rushed from their hiding places and arrested Johannes. He was sentenced to thirty days in Helsingfors prison on bread and water and was fined 600 marks. Combined with court costs, his debt amounted to 1,510 marks. Blom had to sell his furniture and belongings to pay the fine before serving his sentence during the Christmas season.⁹⁵ Shortly after his release from prison, the Blom family relocated to the Utah Territory. The fact that the Blom family chose emigration is telling about sectarian religious life in the

⁹⁴Philip R. Kunz, *Johannes Emanuelsson Sidbäck Stoor, Johanna Majasdotter Gästgivars, Marie Vinberg Isaksson Family: Ancestors and Descendants* (Provo, Utah: P. R. Kunz, 2000), and Stig A. Stromberg, *Power in a Positive Attitude: The Saga of a Finnish Latter-day Saint* (Orem, Utah: Sharpshooter Press, 2004).

⁹⁵See Johannes Blom, abstract of correspondence, Aminefors, July 18, 1884, in *History of the Scandinavian Mission*: 281; Anthon H. Lund, Copenhagen, Letter, December 12, 1884, *Millennial Star* 46 (December 22,

Grand Duchy. In the Jakobstad Branch Record, the Bloms were one family of twelve above whose names appeared the penciled Swedish words “Emigrerat till Zion” [Emigrated to Zion].⁹⁶

While the example of the Blom family gives context to how Finnish Saints reacted, Polly Aird’s pioneering study offers a new theory on why European LDS converts accepted Mormonism and often immigrated to Utah.⁹⁷ Many have examined push theories (forces that make remaining in one’s homeland unattractive), pull incentives (that made the new homeland attractive), and financial incentives, such as the PEF, that ease migration. She argues, however, that these three aspects do not comprehensively explain conversion and also proposed religious vision theory. According to this theory, LDS missionaries succeeded (1) because they possessed a new vision of world history and believed that they had a place in that new history as part of a restored church, which ultimately framed their behavior; and (2) because converts embraced new values, transformed themselves to reflect LDS doctrine and culture, and adopted a new identity—that of “Latter-day Saints” who were abandoning a spiritually decadent way of life to embrace a new worldview.⁹⁸

The few surviving documents left behind by Finnish converts hint at this conclusion. When Alma Lindelöf emerged from the baptism waters she felt spiritually reborn and exclaimed, “Oh, how happy I am. . . . I know God has forgiven my sins.”⁹⁹ The correspondence documents how intimately bonded LDS members were with each other and with the missionaries who served them. Letters from numerous missionaries and converts describe how proselytes sorrowed deeply and “wept like children” when missionaries were arrested, persecuted, or had to leave their area. The 1887 letter from Leonard D. Nyberg, a Finnish convert who immigrated to Utah but returned to Finland as a missionary, briefly explains how he viewed his role in the LDS Church and as a missionary in his native land: “When I received my call [to be a missionary] through God’s priesthood, it gave me

1884): 814–15.

⁹⁶Finland Branch Record Ledger.

⁹⁷Polly Aird, “Why Did the Scots Convert?” *Journal of Mormon History* 26 (Spring 2000): 91–122.

⁹⁸*Ibid.*, 93.

⁹⁹August J. Höglund, Letter to Anthon H. Lund, June 18, 1895, Saint Petersburg, *Millennial Star* 57 (June 27, 1895): 414.

comfort and everything has went [sic] well. . . . I am happy that the gospel is spreading here [in Finland], and it is my sincere prayer to God that he will grant me the strength, power, and wisdom to carry out my calling and lead me to the pure in heart.”¹⁰⁰ Supporting Aird’s findings, Lindelöf and Nyberg adopted a new world vision in which they embraced Mormonism as a restored church.

MORMONISM IN POST-1888 FINLAND

No missionaries served in Finland between 1888 and the 1930s. However, with no contact from LDS Church officials, a number of Finns secretly practiced Mormonism. During the 1930s when Church leaders in Salt Lake City began taking steps to renew preaching in Finland, it came as a welcome surprise to find a group of committed Mormons still there.

Finnish Mormons after 1888 received about a half-dozen missionary visits between 1895 and 1914, and had no contact between 1915 and 1929. These few missionary visits occurred because, in 1895, the Lindelöf family, who had encountered missionaries in Finland, wrote from Saint Petersburg to the Stockholm Conference requesting baptism. The former Stockholm Conference president, August Joel Höglund, journeyed to Saint Petersburg and baptized the Lindelöfs in the Neva River.¹⁰¹ The missionaries who traveled to Saint Petersburg after 1895 occasionally stopped in Finland to visit its Mormons. Surviving sources from these missionary ventures yield information about post-1888 LDS Finns.

The first account comes from the 1895 voyage of Höglund, who rendezvoused with the Lindelöf family in Saint Petersburg, and on his return stopped in Finland. He located a small congregation of “faithful” members at Jakobstad, and instructed, fellowshiped, and or-

¹⁰⁰Leonard D. Nyberg, Letter to N. C. Flygare, Helsingfors, July 22, 1887, *Nordstjerman* 11 (August 15, 1887): 254.

¹⁰¹Johannes Blom baptized members of the extended Lindelöf family in Finland in 1884. For the story of the Lindelöfs, see Kahlile B. Mehr, “Johan and Alma Lindelöf: Early Saints in Russia,” *Ensign*, July 1981, 23–24; Mehr, “The 1903 Dedication of Russia for Missionary Work”; Mehr, *Mormon Missionaries Enter Eastern Europe*; Browning, *Russia and the Restored Gospel*; and E. A. Eliason and Gary Browning, “Crypto-Mormons or Pseudo-Mormons? Latter-day Saints and Russia’s Indigenous New Religious Movements,” *Western Folklore* 61, no. 2 (2002): 173–207.

dained a few Finnish males to the priesthood. Höglund believed “many good people could be found in Finland if missionaries were sent” and challenged Stockholm leaders to renew efforts in Finland. Höglund expressed concern about Jakobstad Mormons who had adopted various strange doctrinal practices (not specified) and argued that missionaries were urgently needed to provide proper spiritual instruction.¹⁰²

Although efforts in Finland were not renewed, the following year two missionaries traveled to Saint Petersburg to work with the Lindelöfs and then tour Finland. In Finland Elders Alonzo Irvine and Erick Gillen discovered many more Finnish Saints than Höglund had encountered, and the duo instructed Saints at Larsmo and Jakobstad for a few weeks before departing.¹⁰³ The following year, Elders S. Norman Lee and Carl Ahlquist, after visiting Saint Petersburg, stopped for a month to more comprehensively “hunt up” lost sheep in Finland. They first arrived at Åbo where they learned that its members had “not been visited for at least seven years. They were all spiritually dead except for one old lady named Sjöblorn who has remained faithful.”¹⁰⁴ Next, they found a small group of devout Latter-day Saints in the Pojo area. The missionaries were very impressed by their faithfulness and subsequently ordained various male Pojo Mormons as elders so they could practice Mormonism autonomously. After visiting areas where Mormonism had previously blossomed, Lee concluded that the religious zeal in “some had pretty well dried up, but a number were very much alive spiritually. . . . We found 38 in all, most of whom were firm in the faith.”¹⁰⁵

Although missionaries also visited Finnish Saints in 1900, 1905, 1912, and 1914, no actual proselytizing occurred. Apostle Francis M.

¹⁰²August J. Höglund, Letter to *Nordstjernen*, Jacobstad, July 9, 1895, *Nordstjernen* 19 (August 1, 1895): 234–36.

¹⁰³A. L. Irvine, Letter to *Nordstjernen*, Malmo, September 1896, *Nordstjernen* 20 (October 1, 1896): 297–99.

¹⁰⁴S. Norman Lee, Diary, May 27, 1896, published in *From Brigham City to St. Petersburg: A History of Severin Norman Lee*, edited by William L. Knecht (Sandy, Utah: Knecht Family Association, 1991), 20.

¹⁰⁵“Autobiographical sketch of S. Norman Lee,” 4, Box 1, fd. 1, Severin Norman Lee Papers, Mss 315; L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. See also S. Norman Lee and C. A. Ahlquist to *Deseret News*, “Trip to St. Petersburg,”

Lyman attempted to open Russia and its provinces for full-time missionary work in 1903, but his aims were swiftly vetoed by the First Presidency.¹⁰⁶ Lyman stopped at Åbo and offered a dedicatory prayer but apparently knew little about the state of work in Finland because he failed to rendezvous with Finnish Saints.¹⁰⁷ For the most part, the few practicing LDS Finns were counseled to remain “steadfast” if unable to emigrate. Yet emigration for some European converts became financially difficult when the Edmunds-Tucker Act (1887) disincorporated the Church’s Perpetual Emigration Fund as part of its efforts to suppress polygamy.

Ironically, during the late 1880s, unrelenting Finnish resistance to Russification and a desire for independence intensified until the tsarist government made various political reforms to avoid a Finnish revolt. Included was the 1889 Dissenter’s Bill which granted religious liberties to citizens of the Grand Duchy, recognized Protestant sects, granted the right to hold meetings and proselytize, and allowed Finns to join registered denominations. That year, the first two Christian sects to register with the government and legally proselytize in the Grand Duchy were Baptists and Methodists, both of whom enjoyed moderate success in obtaining converts after legal acknowledgment.¹⁰⁸ It is baffling why the LDS Church failed to act on this watershed event, but no statement or acknowledgment of this bill even surfaces in records left by LDS leaders. Apparently the Church was too overburdened with debt, the quest for statehood, and the ensuing battle over polygamy to allocate time and means toward improving low-yield missionary endeavors.¹⁰⁹

Throughout the post-1888 period, LDS leaders at Salt Lake City practiced their “wait and see” policy. Apostle Anthon H. Lund com-

Deseret News, September 4, 1897, 12, and S. Norman Lee, speech, *Report of the Semi-Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, April 1917 (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, semi-annual), 105–6 (hereafter cited as *Conference Report*).

¹⁰⁶Mehr, “The 1903 Dedication of Russia for Missionary Work,” 110–23.

¹⁰⁷Joseph J. Cannon, “Prayer of Dedication Offered at Åbo, Finland,” *Millennial Star* 65 (August 13, 1903): 517–19.

¹⁰⁸Harri Heino, “The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland,” in *Church in Finland* (Helsinki: Church Council for Foreign Affairs, 1989), 21.

¹⁰⁹See Thomas G. Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition: A History of*

mented at October 1909 semiannual conference: "We have tried to send missionaries to Finland, but on account of the strict rule of Russia, our elders have not been able to stay there long."¹¹⁰ After 1914 LDS missionaries did not visit Finland for nearly two decades, and it appears that Church leaders totally forgot about the Finnish Saints. In the late 1920s a lone Finnish Mormon, Anders Johansson, showed up in Stockholm looking for the Swedish Mission headquarters on behalf of the Larsmo Branch to determine if the Church still knew that there were Saints in Finland. He was warmly received and later returned to his branch in Finland with renewed hope of reconnecting to the larger church.¹¹¹

In response to Johansson's visit, in 1929 Gideon N. Hulterstrom, former Swedish Mission president, traveled to Finland where he held meetings, blessed Finnish Saints, and baptized six individuals.¹¹² Hulterstrom's visit finally put independent Finland on the road toward becoming its own mission and receiving continual Church contact. Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, missionaries visited Finland and branches were reestablished. In 1947 the Finnish Mission was established and Church membership there has grown slowly. As of 2006 LDS membership in Finland was a little over 4,000, and in the fall of 2000 the LDS Church announced that a temple would be built in Finland. Completed in 2006, the Finland Helsinki Temple currently serves the geographically largest temple district of the LDS Church: Finland, the Baltic States, and all of the Russian Federation.

CONCLUSION

Mormonism's relationship with pre-Revolutionary Russia and

the Latter-day Saints, 1890–1930 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986).

¹¹⁰Conference Report, October 1909, 12.

¹¹¹Stromberg, *Power in a Positive Attitude*.

¹¹²Importantly, Hulterstrom encountered three children from the Lindelöf family (formerly of Saint Petersburg), who had been arrested shortly after the Russian Revolution because of the wealth of their goldsmith father. The Lindelöf children, who were in their twenties and teens, were sent to labor camps where two died. Hugo M. Erickson, "President Halterstrom visits Finland," *Millennial Star* 91 (August 22, 1929): 538–40. See also Wallace G. Bennett, "Behind a Program in Larsmo, Finland," *The Instructor*, April 1949, 165–68.

its territories was plagued by numerous problems, some of which included the negative reputation and stereotype of the LDS faith, conflicts occurring as result of cross-cultural interactions between American and Russian peoples, tsarist Russia's strict religious laws, and the united religious and political front that mobilized against Mormonism in Russian Finland. On the whole, LDS ventures in pre-Revolutionary Russian lands could be classified with the handful of other failed nineteenth-century LDS missionary experiments which spanned the globe. Mormon efforts in Finland failed to improve the Church's negative image, missionaries were able to baptize only about two hundred, legal actions were designed to hamper Mormons and Mormonism, and Finnish converts endured a more complicated life due to persecution and being "forgotten." Thus, the labors of LDS missionaries in Russian lands could be called unsuccessful.

Yet from another perspective, Mormon ministry in Russian lands could be considered effective and even impressive given the difficult conditions. As an isolated and not overly large religious movement to preach in Finland, Mormonism became the second most successful non-Orthodox proselytizing venture in Russia during this period—no small feat. LDS missionaries and converts in Russia braved a substandard image, along with cultural, political, and religious persecution, for something they strongly believed in. Because of pre-1888 LDS missionary labors in Finland, Mormonism remained alive in Finland for half a century with little to no outside Church contact. These accomplishments should not be dismissed.

All in all, the LDS drive into pre-Revolutionary Russian lands demonstrates the difficulties and complexities of missionary work in nineteenth-century eastern Europe. These events show the extensive efforts of Russians and Finns to protect their "traditional" values, while LDS missionaries bravely sought to bring their religious beliefs into a dangerous and complex nation. While many aspects of Mormonism in Europe remain unstudied—especially those that require non-English language skills—studies of Mormonism in nineteenth-century Europe promise to tell us a great deal about both the finer details and broader complexities of Mormon history.

THE FORMS AND THE POWER: THE DEVELOPMENT OF MORMON RITUAL HEALING TO 1847

Jonathan A. Stapley and Kristine Wright

Brother Joseph, while in the Spirit, rebuked the Elders who would continue to lay hands on the sick from day to day without the power to heal them. Said he: "It is time that such things ended. Let the Elders either obtain the power of God to heal the sick, or let them cease to minister the forms without the power."¹—Parley P. Pratt

JONATHAN A. STAPLEY {jonathan@splendidsun.com} has a doctorate from Purdue University and is an executive with a firm that is industrializing his graduate research and KRISTINE WRIGHT {kristine.l.wright@gmail.com} has a M.A. in history from the University of Western Ontario and currently works as an independent researcher. Acknowledgments: We thank Matthew Bowman, Samuel Brown, Jill Mulvay Derr, John Turner, and the anonymous reviewers for their criticism of draft manuscripts. We have silently added terminal punctuation and initial capitals to direct quotations lacking them.

¹Parley P. Pratt, *Autobiography of Parley Parker Pratt, One of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Embracing His Life, Ministry and Travels, with Extracts, in Prose and Verse, from His Miscellaneous Writings*, edited by his son, Parley P. Pratt (New York: Russell Brothers, 1874), 325; emphasis his. It is not known when Pratt wrote this account, though it must have been before his lynching in 1857. Wilford Woodruff briefly noted the healings in his contemporaneous diary, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal, 1833–1898*, typescript, edited by Scott G. Kenney, 9 vols. (Midvale, Utah: Signature Books, 1983–85), 1:347; see also 6:377. Woodruff later

ALTHOUGH THE MIRACULOUS HEALINGS that Joseph Smith performed in 1839 on the banks of the Mississippi are well-known among modern Mormons, Parley P. Pratt did not write the first extended account of these events until years after they occurred. Despite the passage of time, his perceptive description of Joseph Smith's commentary focuses on a theme that is present throughout Smith's lifetime and which is similarly confirmed through hundreds of contemporary sources. As Mormonism grew, Joseph Smith persistently sought to incorporate two elements into the alloy of his people: the power of God and rituals for its implementation. Reformed religion insisted that the days of miracles were past, yet Joseph Smith was unreserved in combining charisma and ritual into a healing liturgy that challenged these norms. Smith drew on the salvific rituals of his church and used them to focus the power of God in his people, to overcome death both spiritually and physically, both af-

published an extended version. Wilford Woodruff, *Leaves from My Journal*, Book 3 of THE FAITH-PROMOTING SERIES (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor Office, 1881), 75–79. During the winter of 1857–58, Church historians, including Woodruff, wrote short descriptions of the events for inclusion in the “History of Brigham Young” and the “History of Wilford Woodruff.” Young’s 1839 diary does not include a description of the events. “History of Brigham Young,” *Deseret News*, February 24, 1858, 401; “History of Wilford Woodruff,” *Deseret News*, July 28, 1858, 93. Orson F. Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball, an Apostle: The Father and Founder of the British Mission* (Salt Lake City: Kimball Family, 1888), 262–63, includes an extended narrative, ostensibly quoted from Heber C. Kimball. The source of Whitney’s quotation attributed to Kimball is not clear; however, if it is genuinely Kimball’s, then he must have made the statement before his death in 1868. J[oseph]. B. Noble, “Early Scenes in Church History,” *Juvenile Instructor* 15 (May 15, 1880): 112, includes a short version of the events, including the expression of disapproval about the elders as found in Pratt’s account. See also Jedediah M. Grant, December 17, 1854, and Heber C. Kimball, December 17, 1854, *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (London and Liverpool: LDS Booksellers Depot, 1854–86), 2:232–34; Woodruff, *Journal*, 5:23; George A. Smith, Loose diary pages, July 22 and 24, 1839, MS 1322, Box 1, fd. 5, LDS Church History Library, in *Selected Collections from the Archives of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 2 vols., DVD (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, [December 2002], 1:32; Lavina Fielding Anderson, ed., *Lucy’s Book: A Critical Edition of Lucy Mack Smith’s Family Memoir* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2001), 765–76.

ter this life and during it. This study delineates this developmental process in Mormonism's healing liturgy up to the Latter-day Saint settlement of the Great Basin.

THE CONTEXT OF CHRISTIAN HEALING

Joseph Smith was born into a world of religious dynamism. In the expanding religious space created by the Revolution, evangelicalism tempered the strict Calvinism of American religion. Yet this American context was anticipated by the overall history of Christianity, back through the Puritan settlement of New England, to the Reformation, the history of the Roman Catholic Church, and to the accounts of Christ's contemporaries. As Mormon ritual development was informed by many aspects of religious history, to understand Mormon healing practices, one must comprehend healing in this broader context.

Jesus Christ was known as a healer and great miracle worker, but the King James Bible² also records that Jesus "ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils" (Mark 3:14–15; see also Luke 9:1–2, Matt. 10:1). The New Testament includes several general statements that many were healed through the ministry of the apostles, but the precise formula for these healings is not given. Mark 6:13 records that the apostles anointed the sick with oil, but none of the apostolic healing accounts in the New Testament mentions anointing. For example, Peter healed a beggar by commanding him in the name of Jesus to arise and lifting him up by the hand (Acts 3:6–7). Paul healed "a cripple" by simply commanding him to arise in one instance, and in another he healed a man by first praying and then laying his hands upon him (Acts 14:8–9, 28:7–8). In more mystical healings, people sought to pass under the shadow of Peter for a miraculous cure and Paul sent handkerchiefs and aprons, which he had touched, to the sick and they were healed (Acts 5:15, 19:12). Jesus gave his apostles "power" to heal, which they exercised in variety of ritualistic fashions.

²Mormons were assiduously biblical, mustering commonsensical if not idiosyncratic interpretations of the King James Version to support their beliefs and practices. See Philip L. Barlow, *Mormons and the Bible: The Place of Latter-day Saints in American Religion* (London: Oxford University Press, 1991), 43–46, 62–73.

After Jesus's death and resurrection, the Bible records that he instructed the apostles to go into the world and preach his gospel. He stated that those who believed would be baptized and that the ability to lay hands on the sick to heal was among the "signs that follow" these believers (Mark 16:15–18). Jesus opened the wider Church to participation in healing rituals. Later, Paul classified healing as one of the many "spiritual gifts" that, like the gift of tongues and prophecy, were available to the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12). In James 5:14–15 the sick are exhorted to call for the elders to pray for and anoint them in order to be healed and thereby also have their sins forgiven. This practice was consistent with a world that valued oil for its therapeutic properties and viewed physical and spiritual health as being intricately entwined.³

Early Christians inhabited a mystical world in which the sacraments of the Church secured and restored life,⁴ and the earliest records indicate that both lay men and women participated in anointing the sick.⁵ As Christianity expanded, the Church found itself in competition with indigenous magic for the healing of their people; and in

³Jeffrey John, "Anointing in the New Testament," in Martin Dudley and Geoffrey Rowell, eds., *The Oil of Gladness: Anointing in the Christian Tradition* (Collegetown, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1993), esp. 50–51.

⁴Amanda Porterfield, *Healing in the History of Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), esp. 60–62; John Halliburton, "Anointing in the Early Church" in Dudley and Rowell, *The Oil of Gladness*, esp. 82–83.

⁵The landmark study of early Christian unction is Antoine Chavasse, *Étude sur l'onction des infirmes dans l'Église latine du IIIe au XIe siècle*, vol. 1, *Du IIIe siècle à la réforme carolingienne* (Lyons, France: Librairie du Sacré-Cœur, 1942). Volume 2 of Chavasse's study was never published; however, his findings are summarized in his "Prières pour les malades et onction sacramentelle," in *L'église en prières: Introduction à la liturgie*, edited by A. G. Martimort (Paris: Desclée & Cie, Éditeurs, 1961), 580–94, and in Placid Murray, "The Liturgical History of Extreme Unction," *Studies in Pastoral Liturgy*, Vol. 2, edited by Vincent Ryan (Dublin: Gill & Son for The Furrow Trust, 1963): 18–38. The most sophisticated and accessible overview of early Christian anointing is Frederick S. Paxton, *Christianizing Death: The Creation of a Ritual Process in Early Medieval Europe* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1990), esp. 27–32. For an introduction to early Christian women participating in the anointing of the sick, see also Lizette Larson-Miller, "Women and Anointing the Sick," *Coptic Church Review* 12

the sixth-century. Bishop Caesarius of Arles in what is now France, relying on James, championed the clerical distribution of oil.⁶ He also encouraged Church members to seek healing through the Christian sacraments instead of from folk magics, which persisted in spite of clerical antipathy into the milieu of Joseph Smith.⁷ By the end of the Carolingian Renaissance, the rites of anointing the sick for health had merged with rites of penance and death into a unified sacrament for the dying.⁸ Anointing the sick was practiced as well as this preparation for death, or “extreme unction”; and both frequently involved, among other activities, anointing various parts of the body, including the five sense organs. After the eleventh century, anointing the sick fell out of use and the extreme unction became the only anointing besides those of baptism, confirmation, and ordination generally performed in the Roman Church.

Reformation churches rejected extreme unction as a serious departure from biblical Christianity and viewed the anointing of the sick with disapprobation.⁹ John Calvin was perhaps the most ardent critic of these rituals, claiming that they are “merely playacting” and that “unction has no divine authorization or promise.” He claimed

(Summer 1991): 37–48.

⁶Paxton, *Christianizing Death*, 48–51, 55–59, 78–79.

⁷In one excellent example, Caesarius encouraged mothers to come to the church to receive oil with which to anoint their families and, through the Eucharist, not only be healed physically, but also receive a remission of sins. Germain Morin, *Sancti Caesarii Arelatensis Sermones: Nunc primum in unum collecti et ad leges artis criticae ex innumeris mss. recogniti*, 2 vols., *Corpus Christianorum: Series Latina*, Vols. 103–104 (Turnholti [Turnhout], Belgium: Brepols, 1953), 2:751. Eligius (590–660) provides an informative list of magic practices over which the Church hoped to hold primacy, including the use of amulets, visiting magicians and use of folk-magical practices like being passed through forked trees. *Spicilegium, sive Collectio veterum aliquot scriptorum qui in Galliae bibliothecis, maxime Benedictinorum, latuerunt*, edited by Lucas d’Achéry, vol. 2 (1723; rpt., Farnborough, England: Gregg Press, 1967–68), 97.

⁸We recommend Paxton’s entire volume, *Christianizing Death*, to the interested reader.

⁹Geoffry Rowell, “The Sacramental Use of Oil in Anglicanism and the Churches of the Reformation,” in Dudley and Rowell, *The Oil of Gladness*, esp. 137–41. Note that Rowell describes several European churches of the Reformation that experimented with anointing the sick; however, such

that healing, like the rest of the New Testament miracles, was a witness of the gospel's validity but that, after the biblical era, no such powers were available from God.¹⁰ By the end of the sixteenth century, the extreme Protestant view that "divine grace could not be conjured or coerced by any human formula" was normative among Reformation churches.¹¹ And while the seventeenth and early eighteenth-century "lived religion" of Protestant England did not completely exclude miraculous healing,¹² the Puritan establishment which settled New England held to a worldview that maintained the strict cessationist tradition.

Reformed theology rejected as both absurd and blasphemous the idea that people could wield the power of God. The Puritan interaction with God was obsessed with this Calvinist separation between people and His power. In the ritual vacuum created by selective Puritan anti-sacramentalism, folk magic flourished. Magic persisted throughout the history of Europe and, as the Reformers observed, mingled with Christianity. Early Americans engaged in divination, treasure seeking, and healing, although their clergy decried such

ritual application was anomalous. For example, some seventeenth-century British Baptists controversially anointed the sick. Jane Shaw, *Miracles in Enlightenment England* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2006), 33–50.

¹⁰Ford Lewis Battles, trans., and John T. McNeil, ed., *Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), 2:1466–68. For a general treatment of miracles in Protestant thought to the 1830s, see Robert Bruce Mullin, *Miracles and the Modern Religious Imagination* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1996), 12–25.

¹¹Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic: Studies in Popular Beliefs in Sixteenth and Seventeenth-Century England* (Hammondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1971), 65. Richard Godbeer, *The Devil's Dominion: Magic and Religion in Early New England* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 16, critiques Thomas's sweeping generalization and asserts a more nuanced relationship between magic and religion among Protestants. Still, Godbeer affirms the general antipathy of established clergy to magic.

¹²Shaw, *Miracles in Enlightenment England*, esp. 21–33. Shaw's entire volume is insightful. Note particularly, the treatment of miraculous healings associated with the Baptists, Quakers, Charles II, and others. *Ibid.*, 33–97.

practices.¹³ This historical persistence highlights the deep human yearning to access power to change one's immediate situation as well as a willingness to circumvent authoritarian customs in the process. Furthermore, many early Mormons, including Joseph Smith himself, descended from a culture that particularly bucked clerical constraints on supernatural folk religion.¹⁴

By the time of the First Great Awakening, self-declared Calvinist evangelists like George Whitefield frequently preached a gospel that allowed for concepts that had traditionally lain outside the bounds of their formal association. After the Revolution, popular evangelicalism further expanded Arminian beliefs and pushed strict Calvinism to the sidelines of American religion.¹⁵ Participants in the revivals of the Second Great Awakening often experienced enthusiastic visions,

¹³The complexity of New England religion and its interaction with magic are treated and contextualized by Godbeer, *The Devil's Dominion*; David Hall, *Worlds of Wonder, Days of Judgment: Popular Religious Beliefs in Early New England* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989); and Jon Butler, *Awash in a Sea of Faith: Christianizing the American People* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990). For a short introduction to folk healing, see Wayland D. Hand, "The Folk Healer: Calling and Endowment," *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 26 (July 1971): 263–75. Mark Ashurst-McGee, "A Pathway to Prophethood: Joseph Smith Junior as Rodsman, Village Seer, and Judeo-Christian Prophet" (M.A. thesis, Utah State University, 2000), a study of Joseph Smith's development as a prophet, is an excellent treatment of folk magic and its influence on early Mormonism. D. Michael Quinn, *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View*, 2d ed. rev. (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1998), and John L. Brooke, *The Refiner's Fire: The Making of Mormon Cosmology, 1644–1844* (Cambridge, Mass.: Cambridge University Press, 1994) also trace magical elements which influenced or affected early Mormonism.

¹⁴Steven Fleming, "The Religious Heritage of the British Northwest and the Rise of Mormonism," *Church History* 77 (March 2008): 73–104.

¹⁵Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1989), esp. 59–62, 170–79; Roger Finke and Rodney Stark, "How the Upstart Sects Won America: 1776–1850," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 28 (March 1989): 27–44. Arminianism, a system of thought instigated by Dutch Reformed theologian Jacobus Arminius (1560–1609), generally includes the tenets of resistible grace, conditional election, and general atonement; it rejects Calvinist

jerking, fainting, and other ecstatic manifestations.¹⁶ Some religious groups sought to find a rejuvenation of scriptural charisma exhibited by glossolalia and even healing. However, this healing was generally limited to the prayer of faith. Methodists frequently prayed over their sick, seeking miraculous cures.¹⁷ It is important to note that such healings were viewed as manifestations of God's grace and not miracles elicited by the power of faith, a ritual invocation of God's power, or charisma *per se*.¹⁸ Nonetheless, groups outside American orthodoxy, like the Shakers, were founded on the great miracles of their early participants, and healings were recorded as resulting from laying hands

determinism.

¹⁶Leigh Eric Schmidt, *Holy Fairs: Scotland and the Making of American Revivalism*, 2d ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2001), xiv-xxviii.

¹⁷John H. Wigger, *Taking Heaven by Storm: Methodism and the Rise of Popular Christianity in America* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 104–24. On the controversy of early Methodist healing, see Henry D. Rack, "Doctors, Demons and Early Methodist Healing," in W. J. Shiels, ed., *The Church and Healing: Papers Read at the Twentieth Summer Meeting and the Twenty-first Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society* (Cambridge, England: Crampton & Sons Ltd, on behalf of Basil Blackell, Oxford, 1982), 137–52.

¹⁸E. Brooks Holifield, *Health and Medicine in the Methodist Tradition* (New York: Crossroad, 1986), 36, states: "In explaining once how he had been healed of a painful sickness, Wesley emphasized that he had not expected the cure and did not look for such cures, because he believed that God did not intervene in accord with 'the will' of men and women." However, Wesley encouraged his followers to pray for the sick and noted miraculous outcomes. *Ibid.*, 36–38. Note, however, that a small minority dissented from this view. E.g., the Reformed Methodists, a relatively small charismatic group that split from the Methodist Church and from which Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball converted, "believed that the church has apostatized; that as all blessings given in answer to prayer are suspended upon the condition of faith, that therefore faith is the restoring principle. They dare not limit faith, except by a 'thus saith the Lord.' They have not been enabled to see from the records of truth any limitations interposed since apostolical times, and hence they conclude that we may now, in this age, pray for the removal of temporal as well as spiritual diseases; and that 'according to their faith it will be done unto them.'" Wesley Bailey, "History of the Reformed Methodist Church," in Israel Daniel Rupp and John Wine-

on the afflicted.¹⁹

A few isolated religious communities anointed the sick in antebellum America. In the early eighteenth century, the Welsh Baptists of the Delaware Valley administered to the sick by anointing with oil;²⁰ however, such rituals appear to have been quite rare.²¹ Later that century, a community within the Separate Baptist movement also engaged in anointing the sick. This influential but short-lived group, was a collaborative union of Arminian and Calvinist Baptists in the South. Sources indicate that they anointed the entire body of the afflicted, but Baptist historians note that the Separates eventually abandoned the practice of anointing and joined with the General Baptists in 1787.²² By the early nineteenth century, the “Dunkers” apparently developed a healing ritual from a deathbed practice similar to extreme unction. They anointed the sick three times on the head

brenner, eds., *History of All the Religious Denominations in the United States: Containing Authentic Accounts of the Rise and Progress, Faith and Practice, Localities and Statistics, of the Different Persuasions*, 2d ed. (Harrisburg, Pa.: John Winebrenner, V.D.M., 1849), 384.

¹⁹See, e.g., Benjamin Seth Young, *The Testimony of Christ's Second Appearing: Containing a General Statement of All Things Pertaining to the Faith and Practice of the Church of God in This Latter-Day*, 2d ed. rev. (Albany, N.Y.: E. and E. Hosford, 1810), 479, 487. Susan Juster, *Doomsayers: Anglo-American Prophecy in the Age of Revolution* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 72–73, notes a few other eighteenth-century examples of healing by touch.

²⁰Hywel M. Davies, *Transatlantic Brethren: Rev. Samuel Jones (1735–1814) and His Friends: Baptists in Wales, Pennsylvania, and Beyond* (Bethlehem, Pa.: Lehigh University Press, 1995), 65, 70.

²¹For example, Owen Thomas (1692–1760), who was reverend of the Welsh Tract Church in the 1740s, indicated that he had administered the rite only three times. David Benedict, *A General History of the Baptist Denomination in America and Other Parts of the World* (New York: Lewis Colby and Company, 1850), 628. No extant records give a ritual prescription; however Shaw includes some examples of earlier British Baptist anointing rituals in *Miracles in Enlightenment England*, 35, 46–47.

²²C. Dirck Keyser, “The Virginia Separate Baptists and Arminianism, 1760–1787,” *Virginia Baptist Register* 23 (1984): 1110–38; Morgan Edwards, *Customs of Primitive Churches; or a Set of Propositions Relative to the Name, Materials [sic], Constitution, Power, Officers, Ordinances, Rites, Business, Worship, Discipline, Government &c. of a Church; to Which Are Added Their Proofs*

and apparently also sometimes on the afflicted area of the body.²³ Despite these rare manifestations of anointing, healing rituals were otherwise absent in American Christianity. The conservative Briton Charles Buck succinctly summed up the normative evangelical view of such activities in his popular *Theological Dictionary*: “The passage . . . from St. James respecting the anointing with oil, has been a source of difficulty to some pious minds; but in order to understand it, it is necessary to observe that anointing with oil was an ordinance for the miraculous cure of sick persons (Mark iv. 13.) But since those extraordinary gifts are ceased, as being no longer necessary for the confirmation of the Gospel, of course there is no warrant now for using the ceremony.”²⁴ Not only were rituals for healing invalid, but the gift of healing had become anachronistic.

JOSEPH SMITH AND EARLY MORMONISM

Sickness and early mortality were omnipresent in the world of

from Scripture; and Historical Narratives of the Manner in Which Most of Them Have Been Reduced to Practice (Philadelphia: n.p., 1768), 94–95; A. H. Newman, *A History of the Baptist Churches in the United States* (New York: Christian Literature Co., 1894), 302.

²³Donald F. Durnbaugh, *Fruit of the Vine: A History of the Brethren, 1708–1995* (Elgin, Ill.: Brethren Press, 1997), 120; *Minutes of the Annual Meetings of the Church of the Brethren: Containing All Available Minutes from 1778 to 1909* (Elgin, Ill.: Brethren Publishing House, 1909), 19, 30, 50. The Dunkers were also called the “Tunkers” and are now typically known as the Old German Baptist Brethren. That they also anointed the area of affliction is attested by Edwards, *Customs of Primitive Churches*, 94–95.

²⁴Charles Buck, “Unction,” in *A Theological Dictionary, Containing Definitions of All Religious Terms; A Comprehensive View of Every Article in the System of Divinity, an Impartial Account of All the Principal Denominations which Have Subsisted in the Religious World, from the Birth of Christ to the Present Day: Together with an Accurate Statement of the Most Remarkable Transactions and Events Recorded in Ecclesiastical History*, 4th American ed., from the 3rd London ed. (Philadelphia: A. Griggs & Dickinson, Printers, 1815), 512. Matthew Bowman and Samuel Brown, “The Reverend Buck’s Theological Dictionary and the Struggle to Define American Evangelicalism, 1802–1851,” forthcoming in *Journal of the Early Republic* (Fall 2009) highlights the central role that Buck’s dictionary played in defining Evangelical consensus in antebellum America.

Joseph Smith. Coinciding with Joseph's annual visits to the Hill Cumorah was the death of his oldest brother Alvin; while the death of his and Emma's first child occurred in the first stages of his translation of the Book of Mormon. These losses poignantly illustrate Smith's familiarity with mortal suffering. The Smith family believed in medical science, employing physicians as needed—successfully in the case of Joseph's leg; but in the case of his brother, their mother ultimately blamed practitioner incompetence and the misuse of calomel for the death.²⁵ Lucy herself was known in the community as something of a folk healer²⁶ and much of the Smith family's life revolved around folkways, notably demonstrated by their involvement in the folk divination characteristic of the period.²⁷ However, the Smiths were also heavily invested in the Christian death culture that permeated American society.²⁸ As one Palmyra neighbor later recalled, they “were the best family in the neighborhood in case of sick-

²⁵Anderson, *Lucy's Book*, 493. On Joseph's leg surgery, see LeRoy S. Wirthlin, “Nathan Smith (1762–1828) Surgical Consultant to Joseph Smith,” *BYU Studies* 17, no. 3 (1977): 319–37.

²⁶Orrin Porter Rockwell's sister recalled that Lucy “doctored many persons in Palmyra[.]” Mrs. M. C[aroline]. R[ockwell]. Smith, Statement, March 25, 1885 in Arthur B. Deming, ed., *Naked Truths about Mormonism* 1 (April 1888): 1, column 3. A later Palmyra resident who conducted research on Mormonism stated that Lucy “knew the virtues of remedial roots and herbs, and was ever ready to administer and assist when her lowly neighbors were sick or dying.” Mrs. Dr. Horace [Anne R. Webster] Eaton, *The Origin of Mormonism* (New York: Woman's Executive Committee of Home Missions, 1881), 3.

²⁷See Ashurst-McGee, “Pathway to Prophethood.” Incidentally, the attributes that Ashurst-McGee applied to the development of Joseph's seeric gift are also strongly correlated to the folk healers of the era. *Ibid.*, 99–117; Hand, “The Folk Healer.”

²⁸Samuel Brown, “The ‘Beautiful Death’ in the Smith Family,” *BYU Studies* 45, no. 4 (2006): 121–50. Often referred to as the “righteous,” “beautiful,” or “good” death, Christians of the early American republic practiced a stylized deathbed scene, which was informed by the societal reactions to mortality. This death culture underscored the role of family, community, and salvation in the face of mortality. It also emphasized a ritualized death, focusing upon the calm acceptance of death by the dying and attendance of the death by family and friends who found assurance of and a window into

ness. One was at my house nearly all the time when my father died.”²⁹

The Smith family was deeply religious, even if some members were unchurched.³⁰ Palmyra had its cohort of Christian groups—Presbyterians, Methodists, Calvinist Baptists, Episcopalians, and Quakers. Lucy and three of the children formally affiliated.³¹ The family’s grief at Alvin’s death, however, was intensified when one minister intimated that he was destined for hell because he was not baptized.³² Years earlier, Joseph Smith witnessed firsthand the enthusiasm of frontier revivalism and subsequently sought the comfort of God’s grace.³³ The resulting theophany, now known as the First Vision, likely steeled him against the criticism of credal Christians; but one detail of this communication, as recorded in his 1838 account, seems to have strongly informed Smith’s later religion-making: God’s condemnation of those churches which profess “a form of Godliness but . . . deny the power thereof.”³⁴ Having already defied standard religious practice by engaging in folk magic, once the power of God was within the reach of Joseph Smith, he vigorously employed

immortality.

²⁹Orlando Saunders, interviewed by William H. Kelley and Edmund L. Kelley, Palmyra, New York, March 6, 1881, in Dan Vogel, ed., *Early Mormon Documents*, 5 vols. (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1996–2003), 2:85.

³⁰Richard Lyman Bushman, *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling* (New York City: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005), 30–56; hereafter cited as Bushman, *Rough Stone Rolling*.

³¹Milton V. Backman, *Joseph Smith’s First Vision: Confirming Evidences and Contemporary Accounts*, 2d ed. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1980), 61–75. For the Smith family’s congregational participation, see Bushman, *Rough Stone Rolling*, 36–38.

³²William Smith, interviewed by E. C. Briggs, 1893, in Vogel, *Early Mormon Documents*, 1:512–13.

³³D. Michael Quinn, “Joseph Smith’s *Experience* of a Methodist ‘Camp-Meeting’ in 1820,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought, Dialogue Paperless*, E-Paper #3, Expanded Version, <http://www.dialoguejournal.com/excerpts/e3.pdf> (accessed January 22, 2008).

³⁴Dean C. Jessee, ed., *The Papers of Joseph Smith*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1989–92), 1:273. This excerpt is from Joseph Smith’s history which was completed in 1839, later incorporated into the *History of the Church*, and canonized in the Pearl of Great Price, JS–H 1:19 in the current (1981) edition.

it to assuage the mortal suffering he knew so well.

A critical step in that developing theology was Smith's translation and publication of the Book of Mormon. This new scripture was an iconoclasm against the ritual proscriptions that still governed American religion, powerfully informing his restoration theology which aimed at re-living the biblical world. The book claimed that "the work of miracles and of healing did cease" not because God's power was withdrawn, but "because of the iniquity of the people" and that if the faith sufficient for miracles is not present then the people have insufficient faith for salvation (Mormon 1:13, 9:7-9; Moro. 7:37-38). The Book of Mormon prescribes no form for healing, but the specific accounts of Abish and Zeezrom emphasize charismatic power and touch (Alma 19:28-30, 15:4-10).

In the first year after the Church of Christ was organized, Smith engaged in its rapidly expanding revelation and organization, the culmination of which was the proto-endowment of June 1831.³⁵ While traveling west from New York in the fall of 1830, Mormon missionaries met Sidney Rigdon in Ohio. Rigdon, a minister who split from Alexander Campbell over the necessity of spiritual gifts, almost immediately traveled to New York to meet the Prophet. During Rigdon's stay, Smith received a revelation directed toward him and fellow convert Edward Partridge. As part of these instructions, the voice of the Lord declared that "whoso shall ask it in my name in faith, they shall cast out devils; they shall heal the sick; they shall cause the blind to receive their sight, and the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak, and the

³⁵The meaning of "endowment," as used by Mormons has evolved over time. Modern Mormons employ it as the appellation for a dramatic ritual performed in their temples. As can be seen, the earliest usage of the term was to describe the divine bestowal of charismatic power upon individuals in association with an ordination. In the post-Nauvoo era, the term grew to refer to specific rituals, and historians have retrospectively described the Kirtland Temple rituals as the "Kirtland Endowment" (discussed below). For purposes of clarity, we designate the events of the June 1831 conference as the "proto-endowment." Gregory A. Prince, *Power from On High: The Development of Mormon Priesthood* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1994), 15-21 discusses the general chronology and contains a number of relevant sources leading up to this event.

lame to walk.”³⁶ These words reinforced the resurrected Jesus’s teachings to the Twelve, which opened up charismatic gifts to the entire Church.

On January 2, 1831, the faithful gathered for the third conference of the Church. At this meeting Smith dictated a revelation that required Church members to move to “the Ohio,” and indicated that they would there be “endowed with power from on high.”³⁷ In February, Smith again revealed that the elders of the church were to be “endowed with power.”³⁸ During this time, Smith’s continued amplification of the Bible narrative revealed details about Melchizedek, who was a high priest, an office lacking in the nascent Mormon Church. The revelation stated “that every one being ordained after this order and calling should have power by faith” to work great miracles.³⁹

The Mormons gathered at their conference in Kirtland, as “there was a revelation received, requiring the Prophet to call the elders together, that they might receive an endowment . . . The Melchizedek priesthood was introduced for the first time and conferred on several of the elders. In this chiefly consisted the endowment.”⁴⁰ The proceedings of the conference were somewhat contro-

³⁶Revelation, December 7, 1830, 1835 Doctrine and Covenants 11:3; 1981 D&C 35:9.

³⁷Revelation, January 2, 1831, 1835 Doctrine and Covenants 12:7–8; 1981 D&C 38:32, 38; Donald Q. Cannon and Lyndon W. Cook, eds., *Far West Record: Minutes of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830–1844* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1983), 5.

³⁸Revelation, February, 1831, 1835 Doctrine and Covenants 14:4; 1981 D&C 43:16.

³⁹“Old Testament Manuscript 1” in Scott H. Faulring, Kent P. Jackson, and Robert J. Mathews, *Joseph Smith’s New Translation of the Bible: Original Manuscripts* (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 2004), 127; JST Gen. 14:30–31. Sidney Rigdon was the scribe for this portion of the manuscript.

⁴⁰John Corrill, *A Brief History of the Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints, (Commonly Called Mormons;) Including an Account of Their Doctrine and Discipline; with the Reasons of the Author for Leaving the Church* (St. Louis: Printed for the Author, 1839), 18. Corrill was an active participant in early Mormonism, being an official historian; but he later left the Church and published this volume.

versial.⁴¹ Still, that Church members understood this endowment to include great healing powers is illustrated by Jared Carter's account of his wife's healing. She had fallen from a wagon and was gravely injured: "I conversed with her and told her that she need not have any more pain I also spoke of my Brother simeon & told her that he was one that was endowed with power from on high and that she might be healed if she had faith. After this Brother Simeon conversed with her & after he had conversed with her a while he took her by the hand and said I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to rise up & to walk and she arose & walked from room to room." Near the same time and in the same account, Carter described the healing of his child by Joseph Smith. He wrote that Smith "came to my house and I told him that I had faith that the babe might be healed. He then spoke in the name of the Lord that it should be according to my faith. The child was healed immediately."⁴² These healing accounts are a recapitulation of the apostolic healing forms explicitly exemplified in the New Testament.

While the proto-endowment was limited to a select few men who were ordained at the June conference, the effect on the community was a documented increase in healing ritual performance.⁴³ During these early years of the Church, Mormon healing typically involved an individual praying to God for the afflicted

⁴¹Compare Bruce N. Westergen, ed., *From Historian to Dissident: The Book of John Whitmer* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1995), 69–71, and Ezra Booth, "Mormonism—IV," Letter, October 31, 1831, written at Nelson, Portage Co., *Ohio Star* 2, no. 96 (November 3, 1831), <http://www.sidneyrigdon.com/dbroadhu/OH/miscohio.htm#110331> (accessed July 8, 2008).

⁴²Jared Carter, Journal, unpaginated narrative, near June 6, 1831, microfilm of holograph, LDS Church History Library. Ezra Booth, who published an antagonistic commentary on the events of the conference, described the first ordination of the meeting: "[Lyman Wight] was ordained to the gift of tongues, healing the sick, casting out Devils, and discerning spirits; and in like manner he ordained several others[.]" Booth, "Mormonism—IV."

⁴³In the months leading up to the conference, Joseph Smith acted to purge the Church of what he viewed as false manifestations of the Holy Spirit (fainting, jerking, and barking), but simultaneously encouraged what he viewed to be genuine charismatic power like healing. On Smith's percep-

person and then laying hands on him or her, which was according to the pattern that Jesus declared would follow true believers. For example, before the proto-endowment, Newel Knight traveled to Ohio with the other New York Church members. His aunt broke her shoulder. Newel “went to see my aunt, and immediately on my entering the room she said, ‘. . . if you will lay your hands upon me, I shall be well and able to go on the journey with you.’ I stepped up to the bed, and, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, rebuked the pain with which she was suffering, and commanded her to be made whole; and it was done.”⁴⁴

These early Mormons did not use consecrated oil, nor did they invoke priesthood authority in healing.⁴⁵ Frequently, those administering to the sick laid their hands on the afflicted area; for example, on October 26, 1831, Joseph Smith healed William

tions of false manifestations, see Robert J. Woodford, “The Historical Development of the Doctrine and Covenants,” 3 vols. (Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, 1974), 2:643–47. On Smith’s support for true gifts, see Revelation, March 8, 1831, 1835 Doctrine and Covenants 41; 1981 D&C 46.

⁴⁴Newel Knight, *Autobiography*, in Vogel, *Early Mormon Documents*, 4:65.

⁴⁵In our survey of healings among early Mormons, we found only three instances of the ritual use of oil, none of which is reliable: (1) One is handed down through the Erastus Snow family. Andrew Karl Larson, *Erastus Snow: The Life of a Missionary and Pioneer for the Early Mormon Church* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1971), 16. It is repudiated by the Milando Pratt account reproduced in Elden Jay Watson, ed., *The Orson Pratt Journals* (Salt Lake City: Elden Jay Watson, 1975), 502. (2) A retrospective account that purports to be Anonymous, “Anointing Bowl Found,” *Watertown Daily Times*, December 10, 1898, rpt., *Jefferson County Genealogy* 12 (April 11, 2002): 8–10. These two accounts state that the early Mormon missionaries had a piece of pottery that was either unearthed from the same hill as the Nephite plates or from a Kirtland burial mound. The accounts involve oil administered from this vessel: a healing, a raising from the dead, and an account of baptismal chrism. However, the cited edition of the *Watertown Daily Times* contains no such article. Regardless, due to the details of the story being so fantastical and from a recollection that purports to be close to sixty years after the fact, without further corroboration, we consider them inaccurate.

McLellin's sprained ankle by placing his hands on it.⁴⁶ This method of healing was endorsed by the only two instances in modern Mormon scripture that describe a form for administering to the sick, both of which were delivered in 1831. Smith received a revelation declaring that the elders of the Church "shall pray for and lay their hands upon them [the sick]" in the name of the Lord.⁴⁷ Smith also delivered a revelation to William McLellin that exhorted him to "lay your hands upon the sick and they shall recover."⁴⁸ McLellin followed this instruction; and his journal, a valuable resource for understanding early Mormon healing praxis, recounts many such healings.⁴⁹

Orson Pratt also recorded similar healings in his missionary diary. On June 15, 1833, Pratt visited the Harvey home and found their daughter terribly ill: "She had been sick about 12 weeks and vomited much blood; and it was supposed by many that she could not live many days. She was desirous that I should pray for her that she might be healed, at the same time covenanting before God to obey the Gospel. Therefore I prayed for and laid my hands upon her in the name of Jesus Christ and she was immediately healed."⁵⁰ This account is illustrative of the tendency for missionaries to administer ritual healings contingent upon commitment to the Church or baptism.⁵¹ The rituals of the Church were seen as a conduit to God's power, and converts

⁴⁶Jan Shipps and John W. Welch, eds., *The Journals of William E. McLellin, 1831–1836* (Provo, Utah: BYU Studies/Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 45.

⁴⁷Revelation, February 9, 1831, 1835 Doctrine and Covenants 13:12; 1981 D&C 42:44.

⁴⁸Revelation, October 29, 1831, in Shipps and Welch, *The Journals of William E. McLellin*, 46; 1981 D&C 66:9. Note that the headnote to D&C 66 claims that the revelation was delivered on October 25, 1831, at a Church conference. However, McLellin's diary is clear that he transcribed the revelation from Joseph Smith's dictation on October 29, 1831.

⁴⁹Ibid., 40, 43, 66, 67, 71, 72, 96, 136, 138.

⁵⁰Watson, *The Orson Pratt Journals*, 17. See also pp. 18, 22.

⁵¹See, e.g., Stanley B. Kimball, *Heber C. Kimball: Mormon Patriarch and Pioneer* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 48; Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball*, 178–79; Lycurgus A. Wilson, *Life of David W. Patten, the First Apostolic Martyr* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1900), 8–9.

were frequently healed upon their baptism or confirmation.⁵²

Extensive ritual application is the embodiment of Mormonism's early commitment to the signs that Jesus, the Book of Mormon and Joseph Smith all revealed would "follow them that believe."⁵³ The idea that all believers could have access to healing power is illustrated by an area of practice often misunderstood by modern observers—ritual healing by women.⁵⁴ Though female healing was not formalized until the later Kirtland period, forms of the practice were exhibited earlier. Despite Smith's early revelation that the elders be called to lay hands on the sick, when Joseph Smith Sr. first gave patriarchal blessings publicly in 1835, he sometimes bestowed the "gift of healing" or the "power to heal" on women.⁵⁵ One of the most extraordinary accounts of healing during this period in Kirtland was later recorded by Sarah Studevant Leavitt, decades after the fact. While her daughter lay critically ill, Sarah prayed fervently. In response, an angel appeared and instructed her "to call Louisa up and lay my hands upon her in the name of Jesus Christ and administer to her and she should recover."⁵⁶ This ritual formulation is precisely that contemporarily described by William McLellin and Orson Pratt.

⁵²Jonathan A. Stapley and Kristine Wright, "They Shall Be Made Whole": A History of Baptism for Health," *Journal of Mormon History* 34, no. 4 (Fall 2008): 69–112.

⁵³Mark 16:17; Mormon 9:24; Revelation, September 22–23, 1832, 1835 Doctrine and Covenants 4:11; 1981 D&C 84:65–72.

⁵⁴The history of female ritual healing in Mormonism is the focus of our forthcoming study. Among earlier studies are Linda King Newell, "Gifts of the Spirit: Women's Share," in *Sisters in Spirit: Mormon Women in Historical and Cultural Perspective*, edited by Maureen Ursenbach Beecher and Lavina Fielding Anderson (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 111–40, and Claudia Lauper Bushman, "Mystics and Healers," in *Mormon Sisters: Women in Early Utah*, edited by Claudia Lauper Bushman, 2d ed. (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1997), 1–23.

⁵⁵H. Michael Marquardt, *Early Patriarchal Blessings of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Smith-Pettit Foundation, 2007), 36, 47, 56. In all these early blessings, the power to heal was associated with their children.

⁵⁶Juanita Leavitt Pulsipher, ed., "History of Sarah Studevant Leavitt (1875)," 9, Ms 62, Special Collections, Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City (hereafter Marriott Library).

ANOINTED AND SEALED

After the first Kirtland conference, the concept of the “endowment of power” expanded with Joseph Smith’s revelations that the Lord required a temple for people to receive it. Smith’s concern that his people be filled with God’s power, however, did not change. Several months before the rituals now frequently called the “Kirtland Endowment” were delivered, Smith stood before the Twelve Apostles and preached: “You need an endowment brethren in order that you may be prepared and able to overcome all things, and those that reject your testimony will be damned the sick will be healed the lame made to walk the deaf to hear and the blind to see through your instrumentality.”⁵⁷ The Church at large shared Smith’s perspective, which was reported in local media.⁵⁸

The Kirtland Temple rituals included an anointing. In January 1836, Joseph Smith Sr. was the first to receive this rite. The administrators anointed his head with consecrated oil and then sealed blessings upon him.⁵⁹ Several were healed by the laying on of hands at

⁵⁷Dean C. Jessee, Mark Ashurst-McGee, and Richard L. Jensen, eds., *Journals, Vol. 1: 1832–1839*, in THE JOSEPH SMITH PAPERS series, general editors Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman (Salt Lake City: Church Historian’s Press, 2008), 98, also 68. Compare also to the February 14 and 15, 1835 ordinations of the Twelve. Fred C. Collier and William S. Harwell, eds., *Kirtland Council Minute Book* (Hannah, Utah: Collier’s Publishing, Co., 2002), 72–76. Butler, *Awash in a Sea of Faith*, 245, mistakenly states that Joseph Smith adopted a growing cessationism during this period, especially with regard to healing; however, he has simply misread Smith’s November 17, 1835, diary entry.

⁵⁸Consider the quotation of and response to an anonymous March 18, 1836, letter describing a visit to Kirtland and published in the *Ohio Atlas*. Anonymous, “Mormonism,” *Painesville Telegraph* 2 (May 20, 1836): 768, in [Oliver Cowdery?], “The ‘Atlas’ Article,” *Messenger and Advocate* 2 (April 1836): 303.

⁵⁹Jessee, Ashurst-McGee, and Jensen, *Journals*, 1:167. Joseph F. Darowski, “An Endowment from on High: 1831–1842,” paper presented at the Mormon History Association annual meeting, May 2007, Salt Lake City, audio recording in our possession, discusses the various locales and dates at which the Kirtland Temple rituals were performed.

the later dedication of the temple;⁶⁰ and after the pentecostal endowment during the subsequent Solemn Assembly,⁶¹ the elders went from door to door, administering the sacrament of the Lord's supper, healing the sick, and casting out devils.⁶² Eliza R. Snow remembered that, from that point forward, "the sick and the lame came [to the temple] to be healed, and would throw away their crutches and go home whole."⁶³ Starting with its dedication, the Mormon temple became a sacred space, not only to receive the power of God but also to exercise it.⁶⁴

Before Joseph Sr.'s anointing, there are few extant accounts of anointing the sick, all of which involve Joseph Smith. All but one of these anointings was executed in the months immediately preceding

⁶⁰Benjamin Brown, Letter, March 27, 1835, in John W. Welch with Erick B. Carlson, eds., *Opening the Heavens: Accounts of Divine Manifestations 1820–1844* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press/Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2005), 336.

⁶¹Scholars frequently refer to the combined Kirtland Temple rituals as the "Kirtland endowment." However this term is somewhat anachronistic. In the dedicatory prayer for the temple, the Saints prayed, "Let the anointing of thy ministers be sealed upon them with power from on high[.]" Joseph echoed this view of the endowment of power being a confirmatory gift beyond the formalized rituals three days later when the priesthood gathered to administer rituals in the temple. Smith wrote of the meetings: "The brethren continued exhorting, prophesying and speaking in tongues until 5 o'clock in the morning—the Saviour made his appearance to some, while angels ministered unto others, and it was a pentecost and endowment indeed, long to be remembered[.]" Jesse, Ashurst-McGee, and Jensen, *Journals*, 1:207, 215–16.

⁶²Erastus Snow, Autobiography, 29–30, in *Selected Collections*, 1:31. See also Edward Leo Lyman, Susan Ward Payne, and S. George Ellsworth, eds., *No Place to Call Home: The 1807–1857 Life Writings of Caroline Barnes Crosby, Chronicler of Outlying Mormon Communities* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 2005), 43–44.

⁶³Anonymous, "Quarterly Conference of the Primary Associations of Weber Stake of Zion, opened at 10 a.m., June 11," *Ogden Daily Herald*, June 11, 1881, 2.

⁶⁴The Kirtland Temple was frequently the location for patriarchal blessing meetings, Church meetings, and other activities where visions, prophecy, and glossolalia were common.

this ceremony.⁶⁵ By 1834 Smith was familiar with Buck's *Theological Dictionary*, whose injunction against the ritual use of oil, declaring that the "extraordinary gifts are ceased," practically defied Smith to engage in the practice.⁶⁶ Though the dictionary was used for the *Lectures on Faith* and Smith later used it in explicating the doctrine of baptism for the dead, he does not quote from the anointing entry so it is not certain whether Smith was aware of the specific entry on anointing.⁶⁷ Still, the ritual use of oil is consistent with Smith's Restorationist innovation. There is also no doubt that the Saints were aware of Smith's pre-temple ritual anointing of the sick as, in one case, the anointing was performed at an elders' conference and in another, Smith was asked to perform the ritual by community members.⁶⁸

Immediately after the temple anointing was revealed, it was adapted to healing. While Joseph Smith had anointed the sick previous to the Kirtland temple rituals, only after these ceremonies did Church members administer the new healing unction. Furthermore, the pattern set out in the temple anointing—use of consecrated oil and subsequent sealing of blessings—was not previously employed for the sick and became the standard form for anointing in the Church. Several priesthood leaders later recalled that Smith, through the Kirtland rituals, "had taught them the . . . anointing of their head and sealing their blessings on each other with the laying on of hands."⁶⁹ The Kirtland Temple rituals were patterned after the biblical consecration of priests and symbolized

⁶⁵Collier and Harwell, *Kirtland Council Minute Book*, 58–59 [September 8, 1834]; Jessee, Ashurst-McGee, and Jensen, *Journals*, 1:112, 122 [November 28 and December 14, 1835].

⁶⁶Buck, "Unction," in *A Theological Dictionary*, 512. Early Mormons regularly used the contemporary concept that the heavens were sealed or that the age of miracles had ceased as a foil to their supernatural and institutional claims.

⁶⁷Samuel Brown and Matthew Bowman, "Joseph Smith and Charles Buck: Enthusiasm, Common Sense, and the Living Witness of History," Paper presented at the Mormon History Association annual meeting, May 24, 2008, Sacramento, California, photocopy in our possession.

⁶⁸Collier and Harwell, *Kirtland Council Minute Book*, 58–59; Jessee, Ashurst-McGee, and Jensen, *Journals*, 1:122.

⁶⁹Franklin D. Richards, February 12, 1893, *Collected Discourses*, edited by Brian H. Stuy, 5 vols. (Sandy, Utah: B.H.S. Publishing, 1987), 3:227–28.

a conferral of power as well as the purification and sacralization of the participants (Ex. 29:1–9; Lev. 8:1–13). The precise reasons for adapting the temple anointing form to healing are not extant; however with the biblical exhortation that the sick should seek ritual anointings to be healed, the adaptation was likely a natural evolution for early Mormons. As with the earlier ritual of laying hands on the sick, the area of affliction was frequently anointed. One month after the general participation in the Kirtland Temple dedication, William McLellin again recorded in his journal an example at a sacrament meeting: “being called upon we anointed, prayed for and laid our hands upon A. Culbertson’s sore leg.”⁷⁰ Wilford Woodruff participated in the temple rituals the following year on April 3, 1837, and kept the surplus oil from his anointing. Later, when his wife was gravely ill, even being described as dead in reminiscence, he used the oil to heal her.⁷¹

As with the proto-endowment of June 1831, the administration of the temple “endowment of power” of 1836 appears to have elevated Mormon energy and focus on ritual healing. After the temple dedication in March, women participated in “blessing meetings,” where Church members gathered for communal outpourings of the Spirit and blessed each other in the name of the Lord.⁷² Joseph Smith Sr. continued to publicly bestow on women “power” to heal their family members, with the blessings becoming more and more

See also Merle H. Graffon, ed., *Salt Lake School of the Prophets: Minute Book 1883* (Palm Desert, Calif.: ULC Press, 1981), 20–21; George A. Smith, March 18, 1855, *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (London and Liverpool: LDS Booksellers Depot, 1854–86), 2:215. Note, however, that the sealing by the laying on of hands was not employed for the bulk of the anointing recipients. At meetings organized for the purpose, when individuals were anointed, the rituals were frequently sealed *en masse* by a presiding authority’s prayer with uplifted hands and shouts of hosanna. E.g., Lyndon W. Cook and Milton V. Backman Jr., eds., *Kirtland Elders’ Quorum Record, 1836–1841* (Provo, Utah: Grandin Book, 1985), 9, 11, 12, 27, 29.

⁷⁰Shipps and Welch, *The Journals of William E. McLellin*, 217.

⁷¹Woodruff, *Journal*, 1:128, 306; Woodruff, *Leaves from My Journal*, 66–67. This is the first mention of anointing the sick in Woodruff’s voluminous diaries.

⁷²Lyman, Payne, and Ellsworth, *No Place to Call Home*, 43–44.

explicit.⁷³ In 1837 he specifically authorized one sister to “lay thy hands on thy children” when the elders were unavailable.⁷⁴ In these early years, there is no question that Church leaders viewed with primacy the ritual administration of the elders of the Church, but female participation in ritual healing also became normative during this time.⁷⁵

After the Smith family fled from Kirtland in 1838 for its brief stay in Far West, Missouri, the Relief Society women in Utah later remembered that Lucy Mack Smith participated in the healing of one Mormon girl: “[She] was taken very ill, and her life despaired of, in fact it seemed impossible for her to get better. The mother of the Prophet, Mrs. Lucy Smith, came and blessed the child, and said she should live. This was something new in that age, for a woman to administer to the sick.”⁷⁶ That same year while on a mission in Maine, Phoebe Woodruff administered to her apostle husband, Wilford,

⁷³Marquardt, *Early Patriarchal Blessings*, 73, 104, 147.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, 166.

⁷⁵In her otherwise important essay, Linda Newell, “Gifts of the Spirit: Women’s Share,” 112, makes the unsubstantiated claim that during this early period “women were as likely to heal or be healed as were men.” There is no question, however, that female ritual healing was normalized in the late Kirtland period. Perhaps indicative of this shift is Joseph Smith’s later July 30, 1840, preaching as recorded by John Smith: “Furthermore if the Saints are sick or have sickness in their families, and the Elders do not prevail every family should get power by fasting & prayer & anointing with oil & continue so to do their sick shall be healed this also is the voice of the Spirit.” Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon Cook, eds., *Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet Joseph* (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1980), 37. On the elders’ institutional mandate to administer healing rituals, see the instruction of Joseph Smith Sr. to the Elders’ Quorum on January 4, 1837. Cook and Backman, *Kirtland Elders’ Quorum Record*, 22–23.

⁷⁶Anonymous, “A Representative Woman: Mary Isabella Horne,” *Woman’s Exponent* 11 (June 15, 1882): 9. The author of this biographical essay was likely Emmeline B. Wells, who was not in Missouri and hence would have been passing on this memory from another woman or women. Augusta Joyce Crocheron published a similar essay but it did not include this specific healing in her compilation. *Representative Women of Deseret: A Book of Biographical Sketches to Accompany the Picture Bearing the Same Title*

when he fell ill.⁷⁷ The apostolic missions appear to have spread the practice of female ritual healing as British women were also anointing the sick by 1838.⁷⁸

While anointing became more and more common after the Kirtland Temple rituals, there still remained a diversity among Mormon healing rituals. Individuals continued to lay their hands on the sick without anointing.⁷⁹ Baptism and confirmation remained a frequent source of physical healing for converts and instances of simply commanding the sick to rise still occurred. There was also additional innovation in healing praxis. Perhaps, in a mixture of folk medical healing and Church ritual, the sick drank consecrated oil.⁸⁰ Following the biblical precedent of the Apostle Paul (Acts 19:12), members of the Quorum of the Twelve sometimes touched or sent handkerchiefs to people in order to heal them.⁸¹ Joseph Smith Sr. issued the first extant instruction on such healing as part of Lorenzo Snow's December 1836 patriarchal blessing, where he declared that Lorenzo would have faith "like that of Peter thy shadow shall restore the sick—the diseased shall send to thee their handkerchiefs and aprons

(Salt Lake City: J. C. Graham & Co., 1884).

⁷⁷Woodruff, *Journal*, 1:235.

⁷⁸Joseph Fielding, *Diary*, December 16, 1838, microfilm of holograph, LDS Church History Library. This theme appears common in the early missions. Addison Pratt also instructed native women to anoint the sick during his first mission to the Society Islands in 1846. S. George Ellsworth, ed., *The Journals of Addison Pratt* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1990), 292–93.

⁷⁹For example, the missionary diary of Orson Pratt, which ends in late 1837, and the Kirtland Elders' Quorum Record include several healings by the laying on of hands only after the institution of the Kirtland Temple rituals. Watson, *Journals of Orson Pratt*, 79, 80, 84, 85, 87; Cook and Backman, *Kirtland Elders' Quorum Record*, 20, 22, 41, 43.

⁸⁰George D. Smith, ed., *An Intimate Chronicle: The Journals of William Clayton* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1995), 6. This practice endured into the twentieth century.

⁸¹Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball*, 165; George D. Smith, *An Intimate Chronicle*, 31; Woodruff, *Journal*, 1:409. Heber C. Kimball also appears to have healed by passing along other articles of clothing. Mary Ellen Kimball, *Diary*, undated entry preceding July 5, 1857, microfilm of holograph, LDS Church History Library.

and by thy touch their owners shall be healed.”⁸² Such activities were quite rare compared to other means of healing; however they illustrate the degree to which the early Mormons sought to embody the power of the biblical apostles and modeled their healing practices on New Testament precedents.

In the development of their various healing practices, the most important concept to these Mormons was the idea that people had access to the power of God and the implicit authority to wield it. They do not appear to have been concerned with the theological constructions of grace, magic, and sacrament in relation to their healing activities. This desire for charisma is most simply viewed in the vocal rebukes of disease and the laying on of hands. Further, Joseph Smith envisioned the endowment as the conferral of this power upon the Saints. Just as individuals received power through rituals, oil for anointing was consecrated by ritual. It appears that Mormons viewed consecrated oil as having power, manifested by the consumption of oil as well as its application to the afflicted area of the body. While the use of handkerchiefs could be viewed as a form of magic descending from the use of Catholic relics, gifts associated with the “king’s touch,” and royal cramp rings,⁸³ Mormons at the time appear to have viewed their use as a logical extension of biblical precedent and as a conduit to the healing power given by God to the individual. Joseph Smith’s early involvement

⁸²Joseph Smith Sr., Patriarchal Blessing to Lorenzo Snow, December 15, 1836, MS 1330 1, vol. 1, in *Selected Collections*, 1:31. That Lorenzo engaged in the practice of healing via handkerchief is attested to in Eliza R. Snow Smith, *Biography and Family Record of Lorenzo Snow* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Company, 1884), 264–65.

⁸³Shaw, *Miracles in Enlightenment England*, 64–75; Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, 227–35. The use of healing by coffin canes and the cherished handkerchiefs kept by Mormons from the Nauvoo era do appear by the Utah era to have taken on a character very similar to Catholic relics. Heber C. Kimball, March 15, 1857, *Journal of Discourses*, 4:294. For an introduction to the healing canes fashioned from Joseph and Hyrum Smith’s coffins, see Steven G. Barnett, “Canes of the Restoration,” in James B. Allen, ed., “The Historian’s Corner,” *BYU Studies* 21, no. 2 (1981): 205–11. Such cases are rare; we have found only one individual who healed by using a cane besides those practitioners described in Barnett’s article, namely, John Albiston, Letter, April 30, 1848, Ashton-under-Lyne, England, *Millennial Star* 10 (May 15, 1848): 158.

with folk divination did, however, leave him open to ritual possibilities that the Protestant establishment viewed as anathema.⁸⁴

Not surprisingly, Mormonism's hallmark practice of healing was criticized by antagonists of the Church. The Mormon claims of working "miracles and super-natural cures" were among the litany of accusations presented by the citizens of Missouri against the Saints.⁸⁵ Anti-Mormons were never hesitant to castigate healings, especially those that failed,⁸⁶ and there is no question that such attacks struck a sensitive area. Caroline Crosby remembered a crippled brother, Joel Dury, at whose home in Kirtland meetings were frequently held. She wrote, "He had been afflicted for years, and although he always seemed strong in the faith, yet he was not healed, which proved a great stumbling block to many unbelievers."⁸⁷

In early Mormonism, ineffectual healing rituals produced great tension. The remarkable healings of infants and even animals formed a puzzling contrast with individuals of great faith who remained afflicted. Wilford Woodruff remembered laboring as a missionary with David Patten, who when their mule fell incapacitated, laid his hands on and blessed it. The mule arose. At first Woodruff felt that such a

⁸⁴Ashurst-McGee, "Pathway to Prophethood," similarly argues that Smith's involvement in folk magic prepared him for his role as prophet.

⁸⁵[No headline], Minutes and Resolutions of Meeting, July 20, 1833, *Missouri Intelligencer and Boon's Lick Advertiser*, August 10, 1833, quoted in William Mulder and A. Russell Mortensen, eds., *Among the Mormons: Historic Accounts by Contemporary Observers* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1958), 79. In the Utah period, several Church leaders projected their use of oil for anointing the sick onto the Missourians' critique: George A. Smith, June 20, 1869, *Journal of Discourses*, 13:79; George A. Smith, August 13, 1871, *Journal of Discourses*, 14:212; John Henry Smith, Discourse, Salt Lake Assembly Hall, January 16, 1881, *Deseret News*, April 20, 1881, 178. Highlighting the generally controversial nature of administering healing rituals, one missionary wrote in his 1833 missionary diary, "We, at the close of the meeting laid hands on his little children, which appeared to excite some opposition." John Sims Carter, Diary, April 13, 1833, microfilm of holograph, LDS Church History Library.

⁸⁶J. Spencer Fluhman, "Anti-Mormonism and the Making of Religion in Antebellum America" (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2006), esp. 97-101.

⁸⁷Lyman, Payne, and Ellsworth, *No Place to Call Home*, 33-34.

blessing was sacrilegious but grew to see it as a gift from God.⁸⁸ Ritual healings of animals were not regular events, sporadically occurring on the trek west and into the Utah period;⁸⁹ however, they highlighted the power of the administrant over nature and the devil. Conversely, when Joseph Smith preached to the Twelve preparatory to the 1836 Kirtland endowment and informed them that they would be endowed with power to heal all manner of disease, he also cautioned them, “Let me tell you that you will not have power after the endowment to heal those who have not faith, nor to benefit them.”⁹⁰ Smith placed the burden of faith on all parties participating in ritual healings.⁹¹

Even while linking successful healing to the faith of participants, Joseph Smith still grappled with the failed outcomes of some ritual ad-

⁸⁸Abraham H. Cannon, Diary, November 9, 1893, photocopy of holograph, L. Tom Perry Special Collections and Manuscripts, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah (hereafter Perry Special Collections). Cannon summarizes Woodruff’s account as part of a conversation with the First Presidency and Twelve.

⁸⁹Ibid.; John Doyle Lee, Journal, February 1846 to August 1846, March 14, 1846, microfilm of holograph, LDS Church History Library; Horace K. Whitney, Journal, April 24, 1846, microfilm of holograph, LDS Church History Library, cf., Helen Mar Whitney, “Our Travels beyond the Mississippi,” *Woman’s Exponent* 12 (February 1, 1884): 135; Lavina Fielding Anderson, “Mary Fielding Smith: Her Ox Goes Marching On,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 14 (Winter 1981): 99–100; Luisa Steele Jensen, “The Story of My Grandmother Nancy Bailey Steele,” microfilm of typescript, LDS Church History Library. Walter Murray Gibson wrote to Brigham Young in 1862 about the native Hawaiians’ propensity for charismata. In doing so, he noted, “It has been common for native elders to lay hands upon a tired and worn out horse to give him fresh vigor[.]” Letter, January 16, 1862, Palawai, Lanai, Brigham Young Office Files, Box 28, fd. 21, LDS Church History Library; we thank Ardis E. Parshall for providing this reference.

⁹⁰Jessee, Ashurst-McGee, and Jensen, *Journals*, 1:98.

⁹¹This perspective is illustrated by a later sermon by Orson Pratt, November 2, 1873, *Journal of Discourses*, 16:290. On several occasions, Joseph Smith described failed healings as resulting from lack of faith. Jessee, Ashurst-McGee, and Jensen, *Journals*, 1:122, 348. See also Corrill, *A Brief History of the Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints*, 46; Ehat and Cook, *The Words of Joseph Smith*, 191–92; Editor, “Physician Heal Thyself,” *Times and*

ministrations. Soon after moving to Kirtland in 1831, Smith dictated a revelation that, among other things, declared: "He that hath faith in me to be healed, and is not appointed unto death, shall be healed." This caveat leaves open the possibility that God, in his wisdom, might have good reason to not allow an individual to be healed. The subsequent sentences further affirmed that healing was to be sought and that "the lame who hath faith to leap shall leap"; still, those who lack faith "have power to become my sons," an allusion to conversion and salvation.⁹² The idea that the Lord would allow death for His own reasons likely informed Smith's theodicy regarding infant mortality⁹³ and is not far from Protestant beliefs of providence.⁹⁴ However, this Mormon providence began and ended at the deathbed. Instead of submitting to the "afflictive providence" of their Protestant peers,⁹⁵ Mormons approached healing by God's power with an ethic similar to that of early

Seasons 4 (September 15, 1843): 325–26.

⁹²Revelation, February 9, 1831, 1835 Doctrine and Covenants 13:13; 1981 D&C 42:48–52. Joseph Smith speaking on September 29, 1839 echoed this sentiment. During a period of immense sickness, Smith spoke about the "false idea that the saints will escape all the judgements whilst the wicked suffer" and that "the just shall live by faith—yet many of the righteous shall fall a prey to disease to pestilence &e and yet &c by reason of the weakness of the flesh and yet be saved in the kingdom of God So that it is an unhallowed principle to say that such and such have transgressed because they have been preyed upon by disease or death[.]" Jessee, Ashurst-McGee, and Jensen, *Journals*, 1:352–53.

⁹³Woodruff, *Journal*, 2:153. In 1835 Mormon evangelist Amasa Lyman wrote of a child's funeral invoking providence. Amasa Lyman, Diary, September 9, 1835, in *Selected Collections*, 1:37.

⁹⁴For an overview of antebellum views of divine providence, see Lewis O. Saum, *The Popular Mood of Pre-Civil War America* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1980), 3–26. See Jonathan R. Baer, "Perfectly Empowered Bodies: Divine Healing in Modernizing America" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 2002), 49–50, for a treatment of later Evangelical theodicean interactions with healing. In relation to infant mortality, see Paula Bernat Bennett, "God's Will, Not Mine: Child Death as a Theodicean Problem in Poetry by Nineteenth-Century American Women," in *Representations of Death in Nineteenth-Century U.S. Writing and Culture*, edited by Lucy E. Frank (Ashgate, England: Ashgate Publishing, 2007), 125–40.

⁹⁵Heather D. Curtis, *Faith in the Great Physician: Suffering and Divine*

nineteenth-century physicians, where “the Lord might give and the Lord take away—but until he did, the physician dared not remain passive in the face of those dismaying signs of sickness which caused his patient anxiety and pain.”⁹⁶

As they sought to use God’s power to heal with an ethic similar to that of physicians, as a matter of faith, early Mormons also wrestled with the degree to which they should engage medical science. Much later and in language reminiscent of the Protestant divine healing movement of the era, Helen Mar Kimball Whitney lamented, “What a pity we cannot always have faith like a little child, and instead of calling upon doctors who have no faith in the ordinances, call on the Great Physician, who giveth freely to all and upbraideth not. When we can do this, there will be less suffering and fewer graves to weep over.”⁹⁷ Some early Mormons controversially espoused beliefs that all medicine was satanic, but Joseph Smith clarified that, while Mormons were free to believe as they wished, all sickness was not from the devil and that God had “ordained for the use of man” many herbs and plants for medicine.⁹⁸ The 1833 revelation known as the “Word of Wisdom” had outlined the benefit of Thomsonian or “botanic” medicine, which Mormons embraced over the more traditional heroic allopathic remedies.⁹⁹ As a consequence, Mormons frequently employed a mixture of

Healing in American Culture, 1860–1900 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), 27–34, 40. Even Arminians viewed resignation to suffering as a mark of piety by the 1830s. Holifield, *Health and Medicine in the Methodist Tradition*, 72.

⁹⁶Charles E. Rosenberg, “The Therapeutic Revolution: Medicine, Meaning, and Social Change in Nineteenth-Century America,” in Morris J. Vogel and Charles E. Rosenberg, eds., *The Therapeutic Revolution: Essays in the Social History of American Medicine* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1979), 11.

⁹⁷Helen Mar Kimball Whitney, “Life Incidents,” *Woman’s Exponent* 9 (July 1, 1880): 18. Note that Whitney herself suffered from serious and chronic illness, which forms a constant theme in her journal. Charles M. Hatch and Todd M. Compton, eds., *A Widow’s Tale: The 1884–1896 Diary of Helen Mar Kimball Whitney* (Logan: Utah State University, 2003).

⁹⁸Cannon and Cook, *Far West Record*, 96–97.

⁹⁹Thomson’s botanic medicine was viewed as “sectarian medicine” and championed by many great figures of the Second Awakening. This shift

ritual and botanic healing¹⁰⁰ as outlined in the even earlier revelation that “whosoever among you are sick, and have not faith to be healed, but believe, shall be nourished with all tenderness, with herbs and mild food, and that not by the hand of an enemy.”¹⁰¹

NAUVOO: RITUAL EXPANSION

The Mormons were expelled from Missouri and Joseph Smith

was part of a wider revolt against institutional elites. See Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity*, 28–30, 129. Rosenberg, “The Therapeutic Revolution,” 3–25, introduces and contextualizes the practices of American physicians during the nineteenth century. Robert T. Divett, “Medicine and the Mormons: A Historical Perspective,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 12 (Fall 1979): 16–25, briefly outlines Mormonism’s interaction with these medical trends. Though not up to modern historiographical standards, Divett’s later volume, *Medicine and the Mormons: An Introduction to the History of Latter-day Saint Health Care* (Bountiful, Utah: Horizon Publishers & Distributors, 1981) is a broader introduction to the American medical milieu and study of Mormon medical history.

¹⁰⁰See, e.g., Oliver Cowdery, letter to Dr. S. Avord [Samson Avard], Kirtland, December 15, 1835, Oliver Cowdery Letter Book, Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, Calif.: “I made inquiry on the subject of your coming to this place to establish yourself as a Botanic Physician. We are a people who design living near the Lord, that our bodies may be healed when we are sick, for a general rule, though our faith is yet weak, being young, weak and surrounded by a wicked enticing world—When, however, we have need of an earthly physician, and in many instances we have, we call upon our highly esteemed friend and brother Dr. F. G. Williams, universally known through this country as an eminent and skilful man. I may say in short, he is also a Botanic Physician—which course of practice is generally approved by us.”

¹⁰¹Revelation, February 9, 1831, 1835 Doctrine and Covenants 13:12; 1981 D&C 42:48–52. An excellent example is Joseph Smith’s unsuccessful administration and subsequent explanation that the sick individual’s “faith was not sufficient to effect, a cure.” Emma then administered a botanic cure. Jessee, Ashurst-McGee, and Jensen, *Journals*, 1:122. For a more in-depth treatment of Mormonism and botanic medicine, see Lester E. Bush Jr., *Health and Medicine among the Latter-day Saints: Science, Sense and Scripture* (New York: Crossroad, 1993), 89–93; N. Lee Smith, “Herbal Remedies: God’s Medicine?” *Dialogue: Journal of Mormon Thought* 12 (Fall 1979): 37–60.

rebuilt his city in Illinois. It is in this city of Nauvoo that Smith expanded the endowment of power, first offered to a small group of high priests and then to the body of the priesthood in Kirtland, to the entire Church—both men and women. Furthermore, through progressive levels of ritualization, Smith equipped Church members with the ritual forms to channel this power to heal.

Building upon the Kirtland experience, Smith envisioned the Nauvoo temple as a distinctive site for healing.¹⁰² He expanded the traditional salvific ordinance of baptism to include the dead and also modified it to benefit the health of the living.¹⁰³ Both of these rituals were performed by male priesthood holders, and Smith considered them to be uniquely temple ordinances.¹⁰⁴ In 1841, the Twelve published an epistle to the Saints in the *Times and Seasons* that the temple was to be a place for the Lord's servants to be "endued from on high"

¹⁰²For example, Thomas Gregg, *History of Hancock County, Illinois, Together with an Outline History of the State, and a Digest of State Laws* (Chicago: Chas. C. Chapman & Co., 1880), 374–75, printed an account of "I. R. Tull, Esq., of Pontoosuc," who related: "In the fall of 1843 I went to Nauvoo to buy calves, and called on a blind man who had one to sell. I bought his calf, and being curious to learn his history, went in and saw his wife, with two little twin infants in a cradle, and great destitution. He told me that he had a nice home in Massachusetts, which gave them a good support. But one of the Mormon elders preaching in that country called on him and told him if he would sell out and go to Nauvoo, the prophet would open his eyes and restore his sight. And he sold out, and had come to the city, and had spent all his means, and was now in great need. I asked why the prophet did not open his eyes. He replied that Joseph had informed him that he could not open his eyes until the temple was finished, and then when the temple was finished he would open them, and he should see better than before! And he believed, and was waiting patiently for the last stroke to be made on the temple." Joseph Smith took his wife, Emma, to the temple for her health; and after the temple was finished, people were known to seek healing there. Jessee, *The Papers of Joseph Smith*, November 1, 3, 1842, 2:490; Gregory R. Knight, ed., "Journal of Thomas Bullock (1816–1885) 31 August 1845 to 5 July 1846," *BYU Studies* 31 (Winter 1991): 70.

¹⁰³For a complete history of baptism for health, see Stapley and Wright, "They Shall Be Made Whole."

¹⁰⁴Joseph Smith, Conference Minutes, *Times and Seasons* 3 (April 15, 1842): 763. Note that soon after this sermon, Joseph started baptizing for health outside the temple, a practice, which soon became normative.

and that the font would be “a place, over which the heavenly messengers may watch and trouble the waters as in days of old, so that when the sick are put therein they shall be made whole.”¹⁰⁵ Church leaders led out in employing the ritual,¹⁰⁶ and “baptism for health” was practiced commonly from that period forward as an explicit rite of the Church. Still, Smith envisioned focusing God’s power in the Saints through the ritual endowment. For Smith, receiving this power was of paramount importance.

The founding of the Relief Society, coupled with anticipation of the Nauvoo endowment, ushered in a further amplification of ritual healing. Women sometimes administered to the sick in more formal settings in conjunction with their regular meetings. Minutes of the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo reveal how women felt empowered by greater access to healing rituals. On April 19, 1842, “Mrs. Durfee bore testimony to the great blessing she received when administered to after the close of the last meeting by Prest. E[mma]. Smith & Councilors Cleveland and Whitney. She said she never realized more benefit thro’ any administration, that she was healed, and thought the sisters had more faith than the brethren.”¹⁰⁷

Female ritual healing apparently caused some controversy; however, Joseph Smith rebuked the detractors on April 28, 1842, “according to revelation,” which he newly preached that day. In the context of Paul’s teachings to the Corinthians on spiritual gifts, he reiterated Christ’s teaching that the signs¹⁰⁸ that follow true believers, “whether male or female,” included the healing of the sick. He stated that it was proper for women to administer to the sick by the laying on of

Stapley and Wright, “They Shall Be Made Whole,” esp. 77–83.

¹⁰⁵“An Epistle of the Twelve, Nauvoo, October 12, 1841,” *Times and Seasons* 2 (October 15, 1841): 569. For the allusion to troubling the waters, see John 5:4, and the pool of Bethesda.

¹⁰⁶For example, see Woodruff, *Journal*, 2:138, 175, 177; Willard Richards, *Journal*, April 15, 16, 27, 28, 1843, in *Selected Collections*, 1:31.

¹⁰⁷Nauvoo Relief Society, Minutes, April 19, 1842, in *Selected Collections*, 1:19. After that same meeting, “Mrs. [Abigail] Leonard was administered to for the restoration of health by Councillors Cleveland & Whitney.”

¹⁰⁸Beyond Jesus’s explicit teaching that the signs following true believers included their laying hands on the sick to heal, Joseph Smith also gave a lengthy sermon on “signs,” code for necessary rites, just a month earlier. He noted that the “sign of the healing of the sick” was the laying on of

hands and further asserted that, when the temple was complete, the “keys of the kingdom” would be given to them “as well as to the Elders.”¹⁰⁹

Anticipating this communal increase in knowledge and power, Smith preached about these “keys of the kingdom” a few days later.¹¹⁰ One onlooker quoted Smith as saying: “The Prophets spoke of being endowed With power from on High They spoke of power that was of God They spoke of power works by it performed To heal the sick by the prayer of faith To cast out Devils raise the Dead And will declare the Council of God This in connection with all the gifts Composed the Endowment of those sent to preach.”¹¹¹ Three days later on May 4, Smith revealed the expanded endowment rituals to several close associates. When one of the men who had received these

hands. Woodruff, *Journal*, 2:161–62. A splendid example of this phenomenon is the 1843 healing of a child by Jane Manning James, an African American convert, and her traveling company. Jane Manning James, *Autobiography*, 2–3, microfilm of typescript, LDS Church History Library.

¹⁰⁹Nauvoo Relief Society, Minutes, April 28, 1842; Ehat and Cook, *The Words of Joseph Smith*, 114–19. See also Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 2:378–79, which entry is from the “Book of the Law of the Lord.” As modern Mormons base their healing liturgy on concepts of “priesthood authority,” questions relating to the impact of Smith’s teachings on the relations of women to the priesthood are natural. However, such modern concepts are anachronistic in Joseph Smith’s milieu where the power to heal and the forms for its administration were available to all Church members. Woodruff, *Journal*, 2:162 and 267. As is evident in Joseph Smith’s discourse, however, some in the community questioned the propriety of female ritual healing, but this protest can be seen as unfamiliarity with the history leading up to Smith’s revelation as well as a broader question of women’s role in society. Some also questioned whether the Relief Society was infringing on the role of the bishop in ministering to the needs of the poor. Jill Mulvay Derr, Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, and Janath Russell Cannon, *Women of Covenant: The Story of Relief Society* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992), 32.

¹¹⁰Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, May 1, 1842, 2:379. This entry is also from the “Book of the Law of the Lord” and summarizes Smith’s sermon that the reception of the “keys of the kingdom” or “certain signs,” was necessary “to be endued with power.”

¹¹¹Oliver Olney, Record, Joseph Smith Discourse, May 1, 1842, in Ehat and Cook, *The Words of Joseph Smith*, 2d ed. rev., 1st computer ed., 1996.

rituals died, Smith stated that “he had anointed him . . . to receive knowledge, and power.”¹¹² Similarly, just one week after receiving temple rituals with his wife, Mary Fielding, in 1843, Patriarch Hyrum Smith blessed one woman that she would “be endowed with power.”¹¹³ Joseph Smith intended all the Saints, both men and women, to be endowed with power, including the power to heal.

As with the Kirtland temple anointing, the rituals of the Nauvoo temple were adapted to healing and other purposes from the earliest moments. These rituals, unlike those of the Kirtland Temple, are generally regarded by Latter-day Saints as too sacred to publicly detail; however, much has been published with the consent of the Church. The Nauvoo Temple rituals are the foundation for modern Mormon temple liturgy, which includes a washing and anointing, where, as the initiates “are washed, they will be spiritually cleansed. As they are anointed, they will be renewed and regenerated in soul and spirit.”¹¹⁴ In the dramatic presentation now commonly referred to as the endowment, the Saints in Nauvoo were instructed in the “true order of prayer”¹¹⁵ often called the “prayer circle.”¹¹⁶ The advent of the Nauvoo endowment ceremonies introduced a greater complexity to healing, for as with Kirtland temple anointing and baptism, these salvific rituals were adapted to healing.

The prayer circle was viewed as an especially effective means

¹¹²“Minutes of a Special Conference,” *Times and Seasons* 4 (September 15, 1843): 331–32.

¹¹³Marquardt, *Early Patriarchal Blessings*, 222.

¹¹⁴James E. Faust, *To Reach Even unto You* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1980), 82. Note that, in modern Mormon parlance, “soul” refers to one’s physical existence. For scholarly treatments of the Mormon temple liturgy, see Andrew F. Ehat, “Joseph Smith’s Introduction of Temple Ordinances and the 1844 Mormon Succession Question” (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1982); David John Buerger, *The Mysteries of Godliness: A History of Mormon Temple Worship* (San Francisco: Smith Research Associates, 1994).

¹¹⁵Boyd K. Packer, *The Holy Temple* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1980), 4.

¹¹⁶D. Michael Quinn, “Latter-day Saint Prayer Circles,” *BYU Studies* 19 (Fall 1978): 79–105.

of supplicating for the sick.¹¹⁷ It was also used to consecrate oil¹¹⁸ and, in conjunction with the laying on of hands, to heal the sick.¹¹⁹ Children were washed and anointed before being sealed to their parents¹²⁰ and the sick were washed and anointed for their health.¹²¹ Washing and anointing the sick became a regular healing practice, being administered by both men and women.¹²² While the first extant account of washing and anointing the sick occurred after

¹¹⁷As an antecedent, when the elders of the Church in Kirtland received their temple anointings, leaders “organized” them for supplication and on February 1, 1836 “petitions were presented for prayers in behalf of those who were sick.” Cook and Backman, *Kirtland Elders’ Quorum Record*, 5, 6, 8.

¹¹⁸Stanley B. Kimball, ed., *On the Potter’s Wheel: The Diaries of Heber C. Kimball* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1987), 125, 218; George D. Smith, *An Intimate Chronicle*, 218. Consecrating oil at prayer circles continued well into the Utah period. See, e.g., Woodruff, *Journal*, 5:229; John Pulsipher, *A Short Sketch of John Pulsipher* (n.p., 1970), 34; 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), 426. William B. Smart, *Mormonism’s Last Colonizer: The Journals of William H. Smart, April 11, 1898–October 24, 1937*, January 27 and February 23, 1901, CD-ROM included with William B. Smart, *Mormonism’s Last Colonizer: The Life and Times of William H. Smart* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 2008).

¹¹⁹Kimball, *On the Potter’s Wheel*, 123, 125, 129. Adaptations of this practice are seen in the Utah period. For example, see Lucy Meserve Smith, Letter to George A. Smith, April 19, 1851, in *Selected Collections*, 1:33; Oliver B. Huntington, Diary, January 27, 1887, 159–61, holograph, Perry Special Collections.

¹²⁰Heber C. Kimball, December 27, 1857, *Journal of Discourses*, 6:191; Andrew Ehat, ed., “‘They Might Have Known That He Was Not a Fallen Prophet’: The Nauvoo Journal of Joseph Fielding,” *BYU Studies* 19 (Winter 1979): 160.

¹²¹Lyman, Payne, and Ellsworth, *No Place to Call Home*, 64–65.

¹²²The precise formulations for these healing rituals are not extant. However, texts for a similar ritual written over sixty years later have an overall pattern that is similar to the temple ritual, and later Relief Society members claimed that Joseph Smith taught women to wash and anoint the sick. See our forthcoming study on female ritual healing. It is currently impossible to determine if this ritual homology or similarity based on a common developmental origin, was extant in Nauvoo; though it is likely as the bap-

the death of Joseph Smith, the practice reflects his ritual dynamism in adapting salvific rituals to healing and was executed by his successors: "President Young and H. C. Kimball, assisted by their wives and Sister Whitney, washed and anointed for their health their three little children."¹²³ Empowered by their rituals, early Mormons continued their quest to experience the biblical precedent of curative miracles.

The Nauvoo Temple was the locus for Joseph Smith's ultimate theology aimed at bridging mortality and immortality. In a revolutionary move he opened the temple doors to the sick and the dying. In ancient Israel, such people experienced severe restrictions in relation to the temple as they were considered unclean, yet Smith administered rituals for their healing and sanctification. In the temple, he bound the living and the dead in eternal relationships and prepared men and women to reign in eternity as royal heirs of God. Healing has not been considered to be a significant part of Smith's sacral development; however, the adaptation of salvific rituals to heal the sick, the formalization of the temple as a sacred space for healing, and his consistent teaching that the endowment entails a bestowal of healing power illustrates how Smith used the same tools to bind his people into a celestial society that was not only spiritually but physically whole. Several scholars have noted Joseph Smith's revelatory and li-

tism for health ritual was drawn from salvific baptism. Men and women frequently went to the Utah temples to be washed and anointed for their health, as well as performing these rituals outside of the temples. Stapley and Wright, "They Shall Be Made Whole," 88-95.

¹²³Helen Mar Kimball, "Scenes from Nauvoo, and Incidents from H. C. Kimball's Journal," *Woman's Exponent* 12 (August 15, 1883): 42. Note that this serialized episode is an excerpt from the Heber C. Kimball diary (December 28, 1845) kept by William Clayton and not included in George D. Smith, *An Intimate Chronicle*. See also William Clayton, Diary, kept for Heber C. Kimball, in Devery S. Anderson and Gary James Bergera, eds., *The Nauvoo Endowment Companies, 1845-1846: A Documentary History* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2005), 210. Two days later, one of the children, Brigham Willard C. Kimball, was included in the temple prayer for his sickness. *Ibid.*, 233. However, we may have failed to find earlier accounts of washing and anointing for health.

turgical passion to conquer death.¹²⁴ With the development of the Mormon healing liturgy, this war on death was not only spiritual but tactile, ever-present, and continually waged for mortal life.

Joseph Smith's administrations to the sick highlight the complexity of Mormon ritual healing during this time. While he occasionally commanded the sick to rise¹²⁵ and healed others by passing along his handkerchief,¹²⁶ he more frequently used the rituals widely administered by Latter-day Saints. On one occasion he anointed a woman's broken finger¹²⁷ and on another a little girl's throat.¹²⁸ When those close to him were critically ill, such as his wife or a young girl in his charge, Smith baptized them for their health.¹²⁹

With Smith's revelation on female ritual healing, Mormon women engaged in Nauvoo's healing activities. Church leaders specifically set apart women to administer to the sick¹³⁰ and spoke favorably

¹²⁴See, for example, Douglass James Davies, *The Mormon Culture of Salvation: Force, Grace and Glory* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate Publishing, 2000), 84–112; M. Guy Bishop, "To Overcome the 'Last Enemy': Early Mormon Perceptions of Death," *BYU Studies* 26, no. 3 (1986): 63–79; Samuel Brown, "Joseph Smith's Death Conquest: Sacerdotal Genealogy and the Great Chain of Being," Paper presented at the American Academy of Religion meeting, November 18, 2006, Washington, D.C.

¹²⁵E.g., see Pratt, *Autobiography of Parley Parker Pratt*, 325.

¹²⁶Newel Knight, *Autobiography and Journal* (1846), unnumbered pages, 96–97, microfilm of holograph, LDS Church History Library; "History of Wilford Woodruff," *Deseret News*, July 28, 1858, 93; Wilford Woodruff, *Leaves from My Journal*, 78–79; Woodruff, *Journal*, 5:53; Levi James Taylor, *Pleasant Green Taylor Family Record* (1917), 5–6, microfilm of typescript, LDS Church History Library; Quinn, *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View*, 314.

¹²⁷Scott H. Faulring, ed., *An American Prophet's Record: The Diaries and Journals of Joseph Smith*, 2d ed. (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1989), July 27, 1843, 400.

¹²⁸Margaret McIntire Burgess, "Mothers in Israel," *Relief Society Magazine* 5 (January 1918): 14.

¹²⁹Jessee, *The Papers of Joseph Smith*, October 5, 1842, 2:486; Lucy Walker Kimball, *Autobiography*, n.d., 7, microfilm of typescript, LDS Church History Library.

¹³⁰Elizabeth [Ann Smith] Whitney, "A Leaf from an Autobiography,"

of women healing in general conference.¹³¹ Emmeline Wells remembered Relief Society women meeting sick immigrants and ministering to them with healing rituals.¹³² Church authorities facilitated healing rituals performed by women;¹³³ and after the martyrdom, Patriarch John Smith continued the practice of blessing women to heal the sick.¹³⁴ Highlighting this focused ritual energy, Bathsheba Smith wrote to her missionary husband in 1842 about their sick infant: "I took him to the fount and had him baptised and sinse then he has not had any feavor. He is about well now. Looks a little pail. I anointed him with oil a good many times."¹³⁵

Joseph Smith's claims of the latter-day restoration of God's power to heal and extensive ritualization exposed the Church to traditional arguments that such practices were inherently magical.¹³⁶ Mormons deflected this argument by insisting on a biblical witness of history that

Woman's Exponent 7 (November 15, 1878): 91; Anonymous, "In Memoriam," *Woman's Exponent* 7 (June 1, 1879): 251.

¹³¹Thomas Bullock account of Brigham Young sermon, Special Elders Meeting, April 9, 1844, in Church Historian's Office General Church Minutes, *Selected Collections*, 1:18. The text of the speech was edited for inclusion in Joseph 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, 1948), 6:322.

¹³²Emmeline B. Wells, "Relief Society Memories," *Relief Society Bulletin* 1 (May 1914): 4-5.

¹³³Kimball, *On the Potter's Wheel*, 122.

¹³⁴See, e.g., John Smith, Patriarchal Blessing of Lydia Snow, in William Snow, Autobiography, 35, digital copy of holograph, Perry Special Collections; John Smith, Patriarchal Blessing of Loenza A. Kingsbury in Joseph C. Kingsbury, Diaries, February 19, 1847, 34-36, digital copy of holograph, Perry Special Collections; John Smith, Patriarchal Blessing to Cathrine Campbell Steele, in Irene M. Bates and E. Gary Smith, *Lost Legacy: The Mormon Office of Presiding Patriarch* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996), 117.

¹³⁵Bathsheba B. Smith, Letter to George A. Smith, October 12, 1842, quoted in Kenneth W. Godfrey, Audrey M. Godfrey, and Jill Mulvay Derr, eds., *Women's Voices: An Untold History of the Latter-day Saints, 1830-1900* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1982), 122.

¹³⁶E.g., J. B. Turner, *Mormonism in All Ages: or the Rise, Progress, and Causes of Mormonism; with the Biography of Its Author and Founder, Joseph Smith*

affirmed their rituals.¹³⁷ Even baptism for health was believed to be practiced “in Solomon’s temple, and all temples that God commands to be built.”¹³⁸ This position had rhetorical potency, and even non-Mormon critics of American orthodoxy pointed to Mormon healing as an “external evidence” of its biblical veracity.¹³⁹ Additionally, Latter-day Saints sought to purge what they considered actual dark magic from among them. Brigham Young remembered that some were practicing evil “necromancy” in Nauvoo¹⁴⁰ and that the Nauvoo High Council acted against a practitioner of explicitly magical healing.¹⁴¹

THE TRAIL WEST: A UNION OF FAITH

After the death of Joseph Smith, the Saints fled from Nauvoo, carrying their healing rituals with them. These sacred rites provided for a meaningful expression of faith as well as the deepening of com-

Junior (New York: Platt and Peters, 1842), 290–97.

¹³⁷On the Mormon use of the “witness of history,” see Brown and Bowman, “Joseph Smith and Charles Buck.” For an example of Mormon deflection of criticism regarding miraculous healings in 1846 Wales, see Ronald D. Dennis, ed. and trans., *Prophet of the Jubilee* (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1997), 24–28, 70–78, 107–19, 128–31, 156–60.

¹³⁸W. W. Phelps, “The Answer,” Letter to William Smith, Nauvoo, December 25, 1844, *Times and Seasons* 5 (1 January 1844): 759. While some might point to the holy wells in Europe as an antecedent to baptism for health, Latter-day Saints clearly drew the ritual from salvific baptism and contextualized it biblically. Smith may have, however, blessed one well for healing the sick. Harriet A. Preston, “A Moment of Peace,” *Relief Society Magazine* 7 (January 1920): 19. On holy wells, see Alexandra Walsham, “Reforming the Waters: Holy Wells and Healing Springs in Protestant England,” in *Life and Thought in the Northern Church, c. 1100-c. 1700*, edited by Diana Wood (Woodbridge, England: Ecclesiastical History Society/Boydell Press, 1999), 237–55; Judith F. Champ, “Bishop Millner, Hollywell, and the Cure Tradition,” in *The Church and Healing*, 135–64.

¹³⁹Ann Taves, *Fits, Trances, and Visions: Experiencing Religion and Explaining Experience from Wesley to James* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999), 183, highlights the rhetoric of spiritualist A. J. Davis to this effect.

¹⁴⁰Fred C. Collier, ed., *The Office Journal of President Brigham Young, 1858–1863, Book D* (Hannah, Utah: Collier’s Publishing, 2006), 83.

¹⁴¹Fred C. Collier, ed., *The Nauvoo High Council Minute Book* (Hannah, Utah: Collier’s Publishing, 2005), March 11, 1843, 103.

munal ties. Furthermore, the healing practice on the western trail functioned to train Mormons in the use of the new and expanded healing liturgy, thus serving as a pattern for the rest of the nineteenth century. Curative anointings, washing and anointings, and baptisms were all performed along the western trail, in Winter Quarters then beyond the borders of the United States, wherever the Saints were located. The vanguard pioneer company of 1847 exemplifies pioneer healing practice. When company member Norton Jacobs suffered joint pain and fever, Charles Harper anointed his head and back, then baptized him for his health.¹⁴² When Brigham Young became critically ill a few days later, the leaders held a prayer circle in the mountains, then subsequently “washed and anointed [him] all over.”¹⁴³ He recovered and the company arrived in the Salt Lake Valley later that month. Upon their arrival, they dammed City Creek and conducted rebaptisms and baptisms for health in the resulting pond.¹⁴⁴ Pioneer healings were frequently communal in nature and employed a variety of rituals.¹⁴⁵

Female participation in healing and blessing during this time

¹⁴²Ronald O. Barney, ed., *The Mormon Vanguard Brigade of 1847: Norton Jacob's Record* (Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 2005), 193–94.

¹⁴³George A. Smith, “Memoirs of George A. Smith,” 348, July 18, 1846, MS 1322, Box 1, fd. 2, in *Selected Collections*, 1:32; Barney, *The Mormon Vanguard Brigade of 1847*, 211–12.

¹⁴⁴Journal History, August 7, 1847, 1, in *Selected Collections*, 2:1; George A. Smith, “Memoirs of George A. Smith,” 361, August 6–7, 1846; Barney, *The Mormon Vanguard Brigade of 1847*, 238.

¹⁴⁵For other examples of men administering washing and anointings for the sick on the trail, see Charles Kelly, ed., *Journals of John D. Lee, 1846–47 and 1859* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1984), 95; Job Smith, *Diary and Autobiography, 1849–77*, 25 [67], digital copy of holograph, Perry Special Collections. For examples of baptism for health on the trail see Stapley and Wright, “They Shall Be Made Whole,” 83–86. For an examples of healing prayer circles, see Juanita Brooks, ed., *On the Mormon Frontier: The Diaries of Hosea Stout*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1964), 1:170; Samuel W. Richards, *Diary*, September 12, 1846, microfilm of holograph, Perry Special Collections. Richards was in New York, having gone East on a mission while the body of the Church moved West.

was normative.¹⁴⁶ With the accessibility of the endowment of power, women administered to each other with greater frequency. Over 10 percent of the inhabitants at Winter Quarters were sick in December 1846.¹⁴⁷ Louisa Barnes Pratt wrote of her experience during this time, “The shaking ague fastened deathless fangs upon me, from which there was no escape. . . . The sisters were moved with sympathy. They assembled at my tent, prayed, annointed [sic] me with oil, and laid their hands upon me.”¹⁴⁸ The following spring, several sisters administered to a child in a manner that highlights continued Mormon willingness to combine healing rituals with frontier medicine. In Utah, a writer for the *Woman’s Exponent*, probably editor Emmeline B. Wells, remembered the healing of a sick child: “The little one had not seen or spoken for two days, its eyeballs were dried over, the sisters were called in to administer, Sister Elizabeth Ann Whitney, Sister Vilate, Sister Laura Pitkin and Presendia Kimball and one or two others. They administered, anointing the child with oil, and bathing its eyes with milk and water, and it was restored to life and health miraculously, but the sisters gave God the glory.”¹⁴⁹

The post-Nauvoo period was characterized by a heightened fluidity in ritual healing. Participation in temple ceremonies increased

¹⁴⁶Besides the examples of female ritual administrations contained in this section, see also Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, ed., *The Personal Writings of Eliza Roxcy Snow* (1995; rpt., Logan: Utah State University Press, 2000), 151, 176, 181, 190, 208, 209; Donna Toland Smart, ed., *Mormon Midwife: The 1846–1888 Diaries of Patty Bartlett Sessions* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1997), 81, 83, 84, 93, 100, 102, 103; Sarah De Armon Pea Rich, *Journal* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1960), 53–54; Helen Mar Whitney, “Scenes and Incidents at Winter Quarters,” *Woman’s Exponent* 14 (December 1, 1885): 98; 14 (December 15, 1885): 106.

¹⁴⁷The bishop’s census indicated that, of the 3,483 inhabitants at Winter Quarters, 386 were sick. Brooks, *On the Mormon Frontier*, 1:219. Richard Bennett, *Mormons at the Missouri: Winter Quarters, 1846–1852* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), esp. 131–47, contextualizes the degree of sickness, mortality, and suffering in Winter Quarters.

¹⁴⁸S. George Ellsworth, *The History of Louisa Barnes Pratt: Mormon Missionary Widow and Pioneer* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1998), 87.

¹⁴⁹Anonymous, “A Venerable Woman: Presendia Lathrop Kimball,” *Woman’s Exponent* 12 (June 1, 1883): 2.

communal feelings between men and women by prescribing their mutual ritual participation. An ethos of unity,¹⁵⁰ which informed these activities, served to subvert the prevalent notion of “separate spheres” within the realm of healing administrations and contributed to a social order of non-hierarchical blessings and healings.¹⁵¹ George A. Smith reflected on the power of this union, when preaching at the temple: “We are now different from what we were before we entered into this quorum. . . . When a man and his wife are united in feeling, and act in union, I believe they can hold their children by prayer and faith and will not be obliged to give them up to death until they are fourscore years old.”¹⁵² Illustrative of this faith union, men and women administered

¹⁵⁰See Lucy Meserve Smith’s observations and remembrance of Zina D. H. Young describing a union of faith through healing rituals, Lucy Meserve Smith, Letter to George A Smith, April 19, 1851, quoted in Jill Mulvay Derr, “‘Strength in Our Union’: The Making of Mormon Sisterhood,” in *Sisters in Spirit: Mormon Women in Historical and Cultural Perspective*, edited by Maureen Ursenbach Beecher and Lavina Fielding Anderson (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 167. Also see Helen Whitney’s description of a “union of faith” in 1855 as she and men healed together. Hatch and Compton, *A Widow’s Tale*, 71.

¹⁵¹The diversity of spiritual administrations was not even limited to adults. Children, who perhaps became part of the charismatic community through the washing and anointing they received previous to being sealed to their own parents, participated in collective rituals. In Winter Quarters, Sarah G. Richards experienced such an event: “There were about a dozen or 15 [children] sitting there, and two or three grown persons . . . Soon however I saw one of the little boys (there were none over 14 years old . . .) rise from his seat and went to another . . . put his hands on his head and began to say something to him . . . then he turned off and spoke in tongues a few minutes then went to his seat . . . One of the little boys went over and put his hands on the head of Brother Joseph Young, Senr and he was so much moved with the action even before the interpretation was given that tears coursed each other down his cheeks bedewing his venerable beard.” Sarah G. Richards, Letter to Zina D. H. Young, July-December, 1889, quoted in Martha Sonntag Bradley and Mary Brown Firmage Woodward, *4 Zinas: A Story of Mothers and Daughters on the Mormon Frontier* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2000), 162–63.

¹⁵²George D. Smith, *An Intimate Chronicle*, 221. Note that Smith’s ref-

to the sick together.¹⁵³ For example, on March 17, 1847, Patty Sessions noted, “[Mary Pierce] was buried. I went to the funeral. Brigham preached. I then visited the sick. Mr. Sessions and I went and laid hands on the widow Holmons ^step^ daughter. she was healed.”¹⁵⁴

Healing ritual performance during the migration to the Great Basin guided Latter-day Saint practice for the remainder of the century. While anointing the sick was the most common form of ritual healing, men continued to wash and anoint the sick during the Utah period.¹⁵⁵ Similarly, baptism for health was the most commonly performed temple ritual for the living for many years.¹⁵⁶ Men and women also continued to administer to the sick collaboratively. For example, Andrew and Elizabeth Ferguson in Scotland sought to unitedly heal their three-year-old son. Ferguson recorded: “Satterday lit-

erence to the “quorum” refers to the “Quorum of the Anointed.” This is the organization that Joseph Smith set up to administer temple rituals to men and women. While the quorum was not maintained after the Nauvoo period, this is an example of the term applied to those who had received temple rituals.

¹⁵³For instance, midwife Patty Sessions anointed and laid hands on the sick and suffering with her husband David. Smart, *Mormon Midwife*, 75, 78, 180, 208. Sessions also wrote that “we” laid hands on or anointed the sick. These instances could describe all female administrations as well as rituals involving both men and women. *Ibid.*, 79, 81, 93. See also Beecher, *The Personal Writings of Eliza Roxcy Snow*, 180.

¹⁵⁴Smart, *Mormon Midwife*, 75.

¹⁵⁵E.g., John Lyman Smith, Diary, June 10, 1855, digital copy of holograph, Perry Special Collections; Robert Glass Cleland and Juanita Brooks, eds., *A Mormon Chronicle: The Diaries of John D. Lee, 1848–1876*, 2 vols. (San Marino, Calif.: Huntington Library, 2003), 1:221; Donald G. Godfrey and Kenneth W. Godfrey, eds., *The Diaries of Charles Ora Card: The Utah Years, 1871–1886* (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 2006), 135; 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), 194, 196; L. W. Macfarlane, *Yours Sincerely, John M. Macfarlane* (Salt Lake City: L. W. Macfarlane, M.D., 1980): 277; Kym Ney, ed., *Allen Russell Autobiography and Journal*, July 1, 1894; June 10, 15, 17, 27, 1896, April 2, 1905, and March 22, 1907, typescript (Russell Family, n.d.), holograph in possession of Brandon Gull; [Joseph F. Smith], Sermon at the Funeral of Joseph H. Grant, “Editors’ Table,” *Improvement Era*, 21 (February 1918): 354.

¹⁵⁶Stapley and Wright, “They Shall Be Made Whole,” Figure 2, 96.

tle William is very ill. had to wait upon him all night . . . I anointed him with consecrated oil, & his mother & I laid hands upon him & Praid over him.”¹⁵⁷

Women also remained potent healers. Louisa Barnes Pratt, who was anointed by women at Winter Quarters during her illness, later served as a missionary wife in the Pacific Islands and contributed to the spread of female administration throughout the world. Her husband, Addison, recorded many ritual healings and baptized the native sick for their health,¹⁵⁸ while Louisa carried out a similar ministry among the women and children:

The natives . . . have great faith in the ordinances of the Gospel such as baptism and the laying of hands of recovering the sick to health. I brought with me a bottle of consecrated [sic] oil which was blessed by brother Brigham Young and other of the authorities, previous to my leaving Salt Lake. The females had great faith in the oil, when I told them from whence I had brought it, and by whom it had been blessed. They would frequently bring their young children to me when they were sick to have me annoint [sic] them, give them oil inwardly, and lay my hands upon them in the name of the Lord.¹⁵⁹

Like the healing handkerchiefs earlier, consecrated oil was sometimes the conduit to the power of those who had blessed it. However, it also illustrates the faith of the participants and how the community of Saints expanded with the application of healing rituals.

Although the post-Nauvoo period can be seen as a period of adapting healing rituals to a variety of circumstances, it can also be described as one of institutionalization, in which ritual performance acted as the pattern for future Mormon practices. The typical LDS response to illness was to seek out the forms of healing that Joseph Smith had introduced to the Saints in Kirtland and then Nauvoo. Continuing Smith’s vision of spiritual power and healing played a significant role in the settlement of Utah. The later establishment of temples as curative edifices through anointings, washings and anointings, baptisms, and the consecration of oil held a central posi-

¹⁵⁷Andrew Ferguson, Diaries, November 11, 1854, digital copy of holograph, Perry Special Collections.

¹⁵⁸See, for example, Ellsworth, *The Journals of Addison Pratt*, 215–16, 278–79, 292–93, 478.

¹⁵⁹Ellsworth, *The History of Louisa Barnes Pratt*, 128.

tion in the lives of Mormon pioneers.¹⁶⁰

CONCLUSION

In antebellum America, Mormonism stands out in its vigorous development of ritual healing. However, the most striking aspect of the Mormon healing liturgy is the adaptation of salvific rites to healing. The first Mormon ritual employed for healing was laying hands on the afflicted area of the sick. Over time this practice evolved to follow the pattern set when the heavenly messengers laid hands on Joseph Smith's head for the conferral of priestly authority. Smith took oil from the temple, which for millennia had been used to consecrate priests and kings to make them holy, and poured it on the sick. The imagery of priests being anointed in preparation for entering the presence of God, and the Mormon parallel of having such anointings "sealed" in its temples, a term connoting the binding of heaven and earth, heightens the potency of the symbolism when applied to the afflicted. Later and more explicitly in Nauvoo, Church leaders adapted baptism and the new temple rites as healing rituals.

Smith's passion to conquer death is strikingly manifest in the development of Mormon healing rituals, where this battle was aimed not only at the post-mortal sphere, but also at the omnipresent mortality of this life. This impetus to circumvent death appeared in the language of many early patriarchal blessings, such as John Smith's blessing bestowed on Lydia Leavitt Snow in 1845: "Tis thy privilege to heal the sick in thine house to preserve thy children from the grasp of the destroyer [sic] in the absence of thy companion and if thy Faith does not fail thee thou shalt never be called to mourn the loss of a child for thy children shall grow up around thee like healthful plants."¹⁶¹

While Joseph Smith is most often remembered as a religious innovator, a compelling leader of a religious community and a prophet

¹⁶⁰While physical healing is no longer performed in modern Mormon temples, it was an important role of temples throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Stapley and Wright, "They Shall Be Made Whole."

¹⁶¹John Smith, Patriarchal blessing to Lydia Snow, in William Snow, *Autobiography*, 35. Cf., John Smith, Patriarchal blessing given to Jennetta Richards, January 22, 1845, Knecht family records in Irene M. Bates, "Patriarchal Blessings and the Routinization of Charisma," *Dialogue: A Journal of*

of God by those who believe his message, he is rarely portrayed as a healer. However, a central feature of Smith's ministry was his legacy of healing rites, emphasizing the connection between these ritual forms and the endowment of spiritual power, which early Mormons received through their temple ceremonies. Many authors have noted the flurry of temple activity that occurred in Nauvoo immediately preceding the Mormon exodus and have attributed it to a desire to be sealed as families. However, under the tutelage of Joseph Smith, early Saints also understood the temple rituals as a bridge between the forms and the power—the rites that would bequeath the gifts of the Spirit, heal those who were ill, and bind a community of believers together, both in sickness and in health, in life and death.



Elizabeth Ann Whitney, left, first counselor to Emma Hale Smith in the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo, with Emmeline B. Wells, standing, and Eliza R. Snow. Wells and Snow each served as general secretary and then as president of the Relief Society and worked to preserve the minutes and memory of the Nauvoo society. Photograph by Charles R. Savage, ca. 1876. Courtesy of LDS Church History Library (PH 892).

PRESERVING THE RECORD AND MEMORY OF THE FEMALE RELIEF SOCIETY OF NAUVOO, 1842–92

Jill Mulvay Derr and Carol Cornwall Madsen

“A BOOK OF RECORDS CONTAINING THE PROCEEDINGS of the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo” appears unremarkable at first glance. But this volume, in its protective cover of well-worn black book cloth is, as Eliza R. Snow once described it, a “Treasure beyond Price.”¹ She was the primary keeper of this foundational record. Thirty-eight years old when she was appointed secretary of the Fe-

JILL MULVAY DERR {derrjm@ldschurch.org} is senior research historian at the Church History Department of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City. She is completing a biography of Eliza R. Snow and co-editing with Carol Cornwall Madsen an 1842–92 documentary history of Relief Society that includes the record of the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo and other documents referenced in this article. CAROL CORNWALL MADSEN {ccmadsen@comcast.net} is professor emeritus in history at Brigham Young University and was a research historian with the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for LDS History before her retirement. Her research focus has been on the history of early Mormon women. She received the Mormon History Association’s Best Book Award for *An Advocate for Women: The Public Life of Emmeline B. Wells, 1870–1920* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press/Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2006), and is currently preparing a full biography of Emmeline B. Wells. She recently completed longtime service as a member of the executive committee of the *Journal of Mormon History*. Both women are past presidents of the Mormon

male Relief Society of Nauvoo in 1842, she kept the minutes of nineteen of its thirty-three recorded meetings. Following the last society meeting in March 1844, she maintained possession of the record until her death in 1887. Snow largely created the record; she preserved it; and she used it. She carried it and cited it when she addressed Relief Society women in Utah and shaped for thousands of women in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints the memory of Relief Society origins.²

Emmeline B. Wells was the last of the five general Relief Society presidents who had known the Prophet Joseph Smith. She capitalized on this experience and became thoroughly acquainted with his messages to the Relief Society and, with Eliza R. Snow, used the minutes in her own efforts to convey a sense of what they both felt was the transcendent significance of Joseph's teachings to the society. Like Snow, she served first as the society's general secretary and later as its president and preserved the record by making her own handwritten copy. As editor of the *Woman's Exponent*, she utilized the record to transmit the memory and meaning of Relief Society beginnings to a second generation of Mormon women.

Eliza R. Snow and Emmeline B. Wells both claimed the present by reclaiming the past. They drew upon the authority of the Relief Society

History Association. They delivered an earlier version of this paper at the Mormon History Association annual meeting, May 25, 2007, in Salt Lake City.

¹“Minutes of a meeting held at Ephraim, Sanpete Co., Friday, June 25th, 1875,” *Woman's Exponent* 4, no. 5 (August 15, 1875), 42–43. “A Book of Records containing the Proceedings of the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo” (hereinafter Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes) is housed in the LDS Church History Library, Salt Lake City. Digital images of the minute book are available in *Selected Collections from the Archives of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 2 vols, DVD (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, [December 2002], Vol. 1, disc 19.

²For example, in Lehi, Utah, “the Bishop [David Evans] then Requested Sister [Eliza R.] Snow to read the Records of the organization of the first female Relief Society at Nauvoo after Mrs E R Snow read the Record the Bishop Said we will now proceed to organize this Female Relief Society it had been A temporary one we will now proceed to organize it legally and properly.” Lehi Ward, Utah Stake, Relief Society Minutes, 1868–79, October 27, 1868. All ward and stake records cited herein are housed in the LDS Church History Library.

Book of Records, or Nauvoo minutes, to legitimize and extend women's participation in the Church and in the broader society. In recent years historians have debated the underlying purpose for the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo and examined its minutes to identify its connections with priesthood, temple ordinances, plural marriage, and Masonry.³ This article focuses on how Snow and Wells, acting as historians, preserved a foundational document, consistently and persuasively interpreting it for their cohorts to create meaning and ensure memory.

RELIEF SOCIETY "BOOK OF RECORDS"

The volume Eliza Snow safeguarded for more than four decades measures 12½ x 8¼ inches, and is slightly over one inch thick. It is an account book or ledger with alphabetic tabs on the initial twelve leaves, which might have been used for a full listing of members or donors, but were left blank.⁴ The care Snow exercised in creating the title page, which immediately follows the alphabetic tabs, is indicative of the exactness with which she kept 96 pages of this 127-page record.

³Examples include Margaret and Paul Toscano, *Strangers in Paradox: Explorations in Mormon Theology* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1990), chap. 16, "A Kingdom of Priestesses"; D. Michael Quinn, "Mormon Women Have Had the Priesthood Since 1843," in *Women and Authority: Re-emerging Mormon Feminism*, edited by Maxine Hanks (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1992), 365–409; Dallin H. Oaks, "The Relief Society and the Church," *Ensign*, May 1992, 34–37; Jill Mulvay Derr and Carol Cornwall Madsen, "'Something Better' for the Sisters: Joseph Smith and the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo," in *Joseph Smith and the Doctrinal Restoration: The 34th Annual Sidney B. Sperry Symposium*, [edited by W. Jeffrey Marsh] (Salt Lake City: BYU Religious Studies Center and Deseret Book, 2005), 123–43; Don Bradley, "'The Grand Fundamental Principles of Mormonism': Joseph Smith's Unfinished Restoration," *Sunstone*, Issue 141 (April 2006): 32–41.

⁴Two exceptions on the otherwise empty initial twelve leaves are the tiny note "Jane Easton commenc'd work August 9th 1852" noted under the "A-B" tab, and the note "Mc Intire Geo. 2" under the L-M tab. Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes. Joseph Smith's clerk, Willard Richards, who presented the volume to Eliza Snow, may deliberately have selected an account book, or simply appropriated the blank book most readily available to him at the time. A ledger was a fortunate choice because it opens flat for repeated entry-making, and this sturdy construction has kept the oft-read book largely intact.

Well-known as a poet in Nauvoo, Snow also had experience as transcriber and recorder, previously having served as secretary for her father, Oliver Snow, a justice of the peace and county commissioner in Ohio. She titled the volume: "A Book of Records Containing the proceedings of the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo." She noted the date of beginning, March 17, 1842, and acknowledged "Elder W. Richards" (Joseph Smith's clerk Willard Richards) as having provided the ledger. She also located Relief Society's founding in the meeting room for the Masonic Lodge, the room above Joseph Smith's red brick store, by copying onto her frontispiece a Masonic prayer found on a scrap of paper in the room.⁵

The minutes of individual meetings in this "Book of Records," are largely pro forma: location and date, songs sung, prayers offered, members admitted, needs identified, donations rendered, and discussions and counsel. Notably, however, in her fine and legible penmanship, Snow distinguished each meeting with a prominent heading. "A Record of the Organization and Proceedings of the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo," introduces the founding meeting and headings for subsequent meetings read: "Minutes of the proceedings of the Second [Third, Fourth, etc.] Meeting of the Society." She fastidiously recorded the names of members and donors. Some names have been erased, probably by light scraping with a pen-knife, and then rewritten correctly or more neatly. She made almost no strikeouts or additions, though some words were later inserted.

Snow's precision indicates her belief that she was constructing a significant, enduring record. The well-known minutes of the first meeting, for example, convey the purposes Joseph Smith outlined for the society, the enthusiasm of President Emma Hale Smith for the society's potential and the lengthy discussion about the most appropriate name. This part of the meeting, which unfolded before Snow was elected as secretary, was initially recorded by Joseph Smith's scribe, Willard Richards, and later copied by Snow into her record with a clear indication of where his record ended. Her minutes for the last part of the meeting capture Emma's recapitulation of society pur-

⁵Minutes of the first meeting note the location as "Nauvoo Lodge Room." The prayer reads: "O, Lord! help our widows, and fatherless children! So mote it be. Amen. With the sword, and the word of truth, defend thou them. So mote it be. Amen." Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, frontispiece and March 17, 1842.

A Record of the
Organization, and Proceedings of
The Female Relief Society of Nauvoo

Nauvoo Lodge Room
March 17th 1842.

Present President Joseph Smith, John Taylor,
William Richards, Emma Smith and others.
Elder John Taylor was called to the chair by Pres
Smith, and elder W. Richards appointed secretary.
Meeting commenced by singing "The Spirit of God
be like fire in burning" &c. — Prayer by elder Taylor.
When it was moved by Pres Smith and seconded
by Mrs. Blacklock, that a vote be taken to have of all
an satisfaction with each female present, and acknowledging to
acknowledge them in full fellowship, and admit them
to the privileges of the Institution about to be formed.

The names of those present were then taken as follows:

Mrs. Emma Smith	Prudence W. Smith
Mrs. Sarah M. Blacklock	Mrs. M. Wheeler
Mrs. Ann Harker	Eliza C. Cole
Elizabeth Jones	Margaret A. Cook
Sophia Richards	Elizabeth Smith
Rebecca M. Murrin	Sarah M. Kimball
Martin Knight	Miss P. Stone
Rebecca L. Talbot	Sophia Thompson
Elizabeth Ann Whitney	Ann Chapman
Leanna Taylor	Sophia P. Mack

Pres Smith + Elders Taylor and Richards

First page of minutes of the organization meeting of the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo, March 17, 1842, as copied by Eliza R. Snow into "A Book of Records containing the Proceedings of the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo." Courtesy of LDS Church History Library (MS 3424).

poses and John Taylor's closing remark that the sisters were now "organiz'd according to the law of Heaven."⁶ Though she left no record of her transcription procedure, it is likely that Snow took shorthand or verbatim notes at meetings and later recopied them into the volume. The extent to which her own literary talent enhanced the spoken words she recorded also remains an open question. She was probably as accurate as the clerks who left records of other Church meetings and Joseph Smith discourses. Her record of the six sermons Joseph Smith delivered to the Relief Society between March and August 1842 is the only account of his teachings directed specifically to women.⁷ His "wise counsel and precious instruction and encouragement"⁸ form the heart of Snow's record, the core elements she and others referenced repeatedly over the years.

Snow kept minutes for the meetings held during 1842 and the first two meetings held in 1843 (June 16 and July 7), at which point she moved from Nauvoo to Morley's Settlement, about twenty-five miles to the south.⁹ The following minutes were recorded by assistant secretary Phebe M. Wheeler, at least one unidentified scribe, and Hannah Ells, whose brief minutes of the last four meetings, held morning and afternoon on 9 and 16 March 1844, conclude the record. In the wake of escalating controversy over plural marriage, society meetings were

⁶Ibid.

⁷Edited versions of Joseph Smith's addresses to the Relief Society are published in Joseph Smith Jr. et al., *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, edited by B. H. Roberts, 2d ed. rev., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1971 printing), vols. 4 and 6 (consult index under "Relief Society, Female"). On the development of the *History of the Church*, see Dean C. Jessee, "The Reliability of Joseph Smith's History," *Journal of Mormon History* 3 (1976): 23–46. The addresses as recorded in Snow's original minutes for March 17 and 30, April 28, May 26, June 9, and August 31, 1842, are published in Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, eds., *The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1980), 104–5, 110, 114–19, 120–21, 122–24, 129–31.

⁸Eliza R. Snow, "Relief Society," *Deseret Evening News*, April 18, 1868, 2.

⁹Eliza R. Snow, Journal, 1842–82, July 21, 1843, LDS Church History Library, in *The Personal Writings of Eliza R. Snow*, edited by Maureen Ursenbach Beecher (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1995), 80.

suspended, not to resume for a decade. Eliza Snow at some point reclaimed the record she had initiated and took it with her when she left Nauvoo in 1846 with Saints who trekked westward.¹⁰

ELIZA R. SNOW AND THE RELIEF SOCIETY RECORD

In 1868, more than twenty years after her arrival in the Salt Lake Valley, Snow took out the Relief Society Book of Records, studied it, and began to interpret portions of the text for Latter-day Saint women who had little or no knowledge of Relief Society. How often she consulted the volume between 1844 and 1868 is not known.¹¹ Snow played no part in the 1854–58 reorganization of ward Relief Societies

¹⁰Hannah Ells, (1813–45), like Eliza Snow, was a plural wife of Joseph Smith. The two women were close friends, and Eliza was present when Hannah died in 1845. Todd Compton, *In Sacred Loneliness: The Plural Wives of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1997), 535–42. Thomas Bullock's list of Church records packed up in the "small box" and the "large box" in Nauvoo in February 1846 contains no indication that Relief Society records were among the items packed, although they may have been included in "miscellaneous papers" and "miscellaneous books." Historian's Office inventories from the 1850s do not reference any distinct Relief Society records. Historian's Office, *Catalogues and Inventories, 1846–1904*, LDS Church History Library.

¹¹The Relief Society "Book of Records" left Snow's possession briefly in 1855 when, at Brigham Young's request, she loaned it to those compiling the official history of the Church for publication in the *Deseret News*. "G.A.S. [George A. Smith] & T.B. [Thomas Bullock] visited the Governor to read to him Joseph's sermons to the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo when he referred them to Sister Eliza Snow, who delivered them the original Sermon in the Female RS Record." Historian's Office Journal, March 29, 1855, LDS Church History Library. It was possibly at this time that clerks in the Historian's Office transcribed Joseph Smith's May 26, June 9, and August 31 addresses to the Relief Society "as reported by Miss E. R. Snow." Joseph Smith Collection, 1827–44, LDS Church History Library. Substantially edited excerpts from Snow's minutes, particularly Joseph Smith's addresses to the Relief Society, appeared in the *Deseret News* August 22, September 5, October 3, and December 19, 1855. These edited excerpts became the basis for the treatment of Relief Society in *History of the Church*, 4:602–7. See also Jill Mulvay Derr, Janath Russell Cannon, and Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, *Women of Covenant: The Story of Relief Society* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book,

in the Utah Territory.¹² Almost all of those promising organizations waned following the Utah War and the Civil War; but Brigham Young initiated their revival on a Churchwide basis during the winter and spring of 1867–68.¹³ On December 8, 1867, he publicly called upon bishops to reorganize Relief Societies in every ward to help care for the poor. Over the next four months, a dozen or so bishops inaugurated new or reconfigured old ward Relief Society organizations.¹⁴ Then, pressing for more widespread action, Young called Eliza Snow to facilitate the new movement. She later recalled: “As I

1992), 74–75.

¹²In 1854, some LDS women in Utah Territory organized independent Relief Societies or “Indian Relief Societies” to sew clothing for impoverished Indian women and children. At Brigham Young’s direction, they were reconfigured as ward organizations and placed under bishops’ supervision. There is no evidence that Eliza Snow was involved, although other wives of Brigham Young were. Richard L. Jensen, “Forgotten Relief Societies,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 16 (Spring 1983): 105–25; Derr, Cannon, and Beecher, *Women of Covenant*, 75–82.

¹³At the close of 1866, Apostle Wilford Woodruff recorded that Brigham Young, meeting with the Twelve, “Said if we Could get up Female relief Societies & they would use their influence to get the Sisters to make their own bonnetts & make & wear their own Home made Clothing it would do much good.” Scott G. Kenney, ed., *Wilford Woodruff’s Journal, 1833–1898*, typescript, 9 vols. (Midvale, Utah: Signature Books, 1983–85), December 26, 1866, 6:309.

¹⁴“Remarks by President Brigham Young, made in the Old Tabernacle, G. S. L. City, Sunday, December 8th, 1867,” *Deseret Evening News*, December 14, 1867, 1–3; see also *Journal of Discourses* 12:115. On December 2, 1867, Young organized, in connection with the University of Deseret, the School of the Prophets, a forum where selected priesthood leaders discussed spiritual and temporal concerns. “School of the Prophets,” *Deseret News Weekly*, December 4, 1867, 1; Leonard J. Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom: An Economic History of the Latter-day Saints, 1830–1900* (1958; rpt., Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966), 245–51. On December 5, 1867, he proposed in a meeting of local bishops that the poor then receiving weekly allowances from the general Tithing Office in Salt Lake City be moved to the care of the bishops of their respective wards, a move that would free up sparse tithing funds for the construction of the Salt Lake Temple. Presiding Bishopric, Bishops’ Meeting Minutes, 1851–84, December 5, 1867, LDS Church History Library. Thus, local bishops would be

had been intimately associated with, and had officiated as Secretary for the first organization, Pres. Young commissioned me to assist the Bishops in organizing Branches of the Society in their respective Wards; for, at that time, the Bishops had not acquainted themselves with the movement, and did not know how to proceed.”¹⁵ She gave no date for this assignment, but it must have been near April 1868 general conference when Young repeated his call for the organization of ward Relief Societies.¹⁶

On April 18, 1868, Eliza R. Snow published an article in the *Deseret News* providing women and bishops with basic information about the organization’s history, structure, and purposes.¹⁷ In it, she laid out the essential ideas she would elaborate over the next two decades as she unceasingly traveled the Utah Territory to instruct women. First, she taught that an organization for women was a timeless part of “the true order of the church of Jesus Christ” and inseparably connected to priesthood pattern, order, and authority. Second, she communicated Joseph Smith’s charge to women not only to help the poor but also to save souls, and emphasized his teachings on repentance, faithfulness, and charity. And finally, she conveyed his confidence in the glorious potential of Relief Society and its members.

The first two paragraphs of Snow’s article define an organization of substance, significance, and authority. Under the simple headline “Relief Society,” she wrote: “This is the name of a Society which

shouldering a larger responsibility for the poor than previously had been the case, a particular concern since 1868 was projected, correctly, as it turned out, to be a year of unusually high immigration. Under the auspices of their ward Female Relief Societies, women would both meet together regularly to discuss spiritual and temporal concerns (paralleling in some ways the School of the Prophets), and work collectively in conjunction with their bishops to relieve the poor.

¹⁵Eliza R. Snow Smith, “Sketch of My Life,” holograph, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, California, in Beecher, *Personal Writings*, 35–36.

¹⁶“Remarks by President Brigham Young, in the New Tabernacle, afternoon, April 8, 1868,” *Deseret News Weekly*, May 13, 1868, 2–3; see also *Journal of Discourses* 12:202–5.

¹⁷Eliza R. Snow, “Relief Society,” *Deseret Evening News*, April 18, 1868, 2. The second part of the article appeared in *Deseret Evening News*, April 20, 1868, 2.

was organized in Nauvoo, on the 17th of March, 1842, by President Joseph Smith, assisted by Elders Willard Richards and John Taylor. Although the name may be of modern date, the institution is of ancient origin. We were told by our martyred prophet, that the same organization existed in the church anciently, allusions to which are made in some of the epistles recorded in the New Testament, making use of the title, “elect lady” [2 John 1].”¹⁸ By tying a women’s organization, or what she terms a “quorum,” to the ancient church, Snow took it out of time, providing continuity and avoiding the difficult and complex history of starts and stops in Nauvoo and Utah. Although she does not quote the Sixth Article of Faith, she essentially taught that Relief Society was part of “the same organization that existed in the primitive church.” It was a familiar theme that resonated with nineteenth-century Latter-day Saints.

In the second paragraph, she emphasized Relief Society’s connection to priesthood: “This is an organization that cannot exist without the Priesthood, from the fact that it derives all its authority and influence from that source. When the Priesthood was taken from the earth, this institution as well as every other appendage to the true order of the church of Jesus Christ on the earth, became extinct, and had never been restored until the time above.”¹⁹ Snow thereby established the authority and legitimacy of women’s work. The Female Relief Society of Nauvoo, she explained “was organized after the pattern of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, with a Presidentess, who chose two Counselors.” As she visited local societies, often carrying with her the volume of Nauvoo minutes, Snow defined these officers’ role. “It is the duty of the President and her councilors to preside over the society in the same manner, as the First Presidency preside over the Church,” she told Provo women and their bishop in 1869, in words taken nearly verbatim from the minutes.²⁰

The interrelatedness of Relief Society and priesthood committed women to work within the prescribed hierarchical order. “The so-

¹⁸Snow, “Relief Society,” *Deseret Evening News*, April 18, 1868, 2.

¹⁹*Ibid.*

²⁰Provo Second Ward, Utah Stake, Relief Society Minutes, 1869–82, September 1869, LDS Church History Library. Joseph Smith “propos’d that the Sisters elect a presiding officer to preside over them, and let that presiding officer choose two Counsellors to assist in the duties of her Office—that he would ordain them to preside over the Society—and let them

ciety stands in the same relation to the Bishop, as the Society in Nauvoo did to Joseph Smith, and must act always in accordance with his instructions," she told the Provo women.²¹ "No Society can overstep the counsel of its Bishop," Snow advised in her 1868 article.²² Nor were the women to burden the bishops, but rather to assist them in caring for the poor. Snow expected women to take initiative and assert autonomy within Relief Society's proper sphere: "We need not be afraid of doing too much nor getting ahead of our Bretheren and iff we did why let them hurry up," she told women in Santaquin.²³ She taught Gunnison women the same principle, drawing precedent from the Nauvoo minutes: "The Prophet Joseph Smith said to the Sisters: 'provoke the Brethren to good works.'"²⁴ Snow described the Relief Society as "self-governing" and sought to cultivate in women a sense of initiative, responsibility, and partnership. "Woman was not only created as a help meet for man but to be one with him in the priesthood," she declared.²⁵ Echoing Joseph's counsel that "all must act in concert or nothing can be done," she affirmed that men's and women's interests "are both in the Kingdom of God and cannot be divided. The Gospel of Christ is designed to unite our labors."²⁶

Just as Eliza Snow urged women to understand their connection to the timeless priesthood and church of Jesus Christ, she reminded them of their engagement in the essential and enduring work of salvation. In ward after ward, town after town, she repeated words Joseph had spoken to Nauvoo women gathered in the grove on June 9, 1842:

preside just as the Presidency preside over the church." Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, March 17, 1842.

²¹Provo Second Ward, September 1869.

²²Snow, "Relief Society," 2; see also *Deseret Evening News*, April 20, 1868, 2.

²³Santaquin/Summit Creek, Utah Stake, Relief Society Minutes, 1878–89, June 30, 1878, LDS Church History Library.

²⁴Gunnison Ward Relief Society Minutes, 1879–87, August 13, 1880.

²⁵"R. S. Y. L. M. I. A. and Primary Reports," ["Special meeting of the Kanosh Relief Society (Willard County) Nov. 12th, 1880"] *Woman's Exponent* 9 (December 1, 1880): 103; Lehi Ward, Utah Stake, Relief Society Minutes, 1878–82, October 27, 1880.

²⁶Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, March 30, 1842; "Special meeting of the Kanosh Relief Society," 103.

“The Society is not only to relieve the poor but to save souls.”²⁷ For example, in Santaquin in 1878,

Sister Snow arose and said she was around teaching and instructing the Relief Societys. She said the Relief Society was not organized soley for the relief of the poor. but to save souls and to help our Bishops, in their work of salvation. she said there could not be A true Church without A relief Society she had heard, Brother Joseph Smith say the same. husbands could not save us. but our salvation Depended upon our own exertions. therefore we should honnour our calling living the life of A true Saint, placing our affections on heavenly things aspiring to an higher sphere.²⁸

Every woman must repent and work out her own salvation, Snow taught, and then seek to become a “true Saint,” and a “savior on Mount Zion.”

Joseph Smith told women in the April 28, 1842, meeting of the Relief Society: “After this instruction, you will be responsible for your own sins. It is an honor to save yourselves—all are responsible to save themselves.”²⁹ Contextualizing this statement for Relief Society sisters in Spring City, Snow explained: “In 1842 Joseph organized a female relief society according to the conmmagment [sic] of God his wife Emma was pres and she was secretary some thought that the bretheren would save us and we had nothing to do but this was not the case we had just as much to do as they had and had as great labor to do and would receive just as much blessings anon.”³⁰ In Provo Snow pointedly asked if the sisters were “merely machines to be saved by the brethren,” and answered: “In these last days woman has to do her part to perform, which is so significant upon us.”³¹

Snow taught that Relief Society would strengthen women individually and provide opportunities for significant collective labor. “Joseph Smith said that the Relief Society was designed to perfect

²⁷Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, June 9, 1842.

²⁸Santaquin/Summit Creek, Utah Stake, Relief Society Minutes, 1878–89, June 30, 1878.

²⁹Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, April 28, 1842.

³⁰Spring City, Sanpete North Stake, Relief Society Minutes, 1878–1901, June 23, 1878.

³¹Provo Second Ward, September 1869.

woman,” she affirmed in Fountain Green.³² In Box Elder, she instructed: “The Prophet Joseph, in his lifetime, had said whenever the Church was fully organized there would always be a Relief Society, and every virtuous woman should be a member.”³³ Snow elaborated these ideas in a letter to Angeline Holden, Relief Society president in the Provo Second Ward: “The sacred organization of the Female Relief Society is instituted not only for the relief of the poor, but for our mutual improvement and perfection. When properly acted upon, it has a tendency to make the good better and assist the bad in overcoming evil propensities, that they by the kind and godlike assistance of the good, they may also become good.”³⁴

In almost all of Joseph Smith’s addresses to the Relief Society, he had exhorted women to cultivate charity and mercy: “It is the object of this Society to reform persons, not to take those that are corrupt, but if they repent we are bound to take them and by kindness sanctify and cleanse from all unrighteousness, by our influence in watching over them.”³⁵ Though Snow did not quote Joseph Smith on charity and mercy, she conveyed the essence of his message: “We are all frail and subject to weakness, and should be very merciful and forbearing towards one another, and as members of the Society should hold each others characters sacred,” she continued to Holden.³⁶ “If the Society should see any mistake in their President the Sister[s] should not blaze

³²“Fountain Green, July 8th, 1878,” *Woman’s Exponent* 7 (August 1, 1878): 39.

³³Box Elder Stake, Relief Society Minutes 1875–84, October 10, 1876, LDS Church History Library. Joseph Smith said “that the Society should grow up by degrees—should commence with a few individuals—thus have a select Society of the virtuous and those who will walk circumspectly” and that “there should be a select Society separate from all the evils of the world, choice, virtuous, and holy.” See also Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, March 30, 1842.

³⁴Eliza R. Snow, Letter to “Sister [Angeline] Holden Presidentess of the 4th Ward,” November 1869, copied into Provo 2nd Ward, Utah Stake, Relief Society Minutes, 1869–82, LDS Church History Library.

³⁵Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, June 9, 1842.

³⁶Snow, Letter to Holden. Joseph Smith instructed the sisters to “hold all characters sacred.” Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, March 17, 1842.

it abroad but Pray for them,” she counseled women in Payson.³⁷ “Sister Eliza R. Snow said that the saints ought to love each other this is one object of the organization of the sisters,” noted the minutes of a meeting in Davis Stake. “We want to get acquainted with each other exchange our views and ideas talk about common affairs of life and have our spirits refreshed. The Prophet Joseph said this organization would be the most glorious if the instructions were carried out. It already attracts attention.”³⁸

Snow frequently offered instructions about assessing the needs of the poor and the sick, collecting donations, and administering aid with wisdom and sensitivity. “As its name indicates,” she wrote in 1868, “the first grand objective of the Society is to seek out, and relieve the wants of the poor.”³⁹ But she inevitably pointed to the need for spiritual as well as temporal aid. “Care of the poor was but a small part of our duties. The saving of souls was of far greater importance.”⁴⁰ The Relief Society was more than a benevolent or relief organization. Its essential work was more comprehensive: the work of salvation. Speaking to women Snow affirmed: “We are here in this dispensation to cooperate with God and our brethren in saving the human family.”⁴¹

The connectedness of Relief Society to the Church’s essential structure and purposes portended a bright future for the organization and the women who embraced it.

At an 1870 meeting in Draper Ward, Snow, apparently holding the precious volume, “read the minutes of the meeting for the organization of the First Relief Society in Nauvoo. She said ‘you see by these minutes, that Joseph Smith said if the sisters would carry out his counsel, they would become the most glorious organization that had ever been.’”⁴² The Prophet’s regard for the organization’s potential importance legitimized women’s efforts. Speaking in Gunnison, Snow defended the society against implications that it was suspect or trivial

³⁷Payson Ward, Utah Stake, Relief Society Minutes, 1868–77, September 9, 1871.

³⁸Davis Stake Relief Society Minutes, 1878–87, July 27, 1883. Terminal punctuation added.

³⁹Snow, “Relief Society,” 2.

⁴⁰Morgan Stake, Relief Society Minutes, 1878–1912, Third Quarterly Conference, October 24, 1879.

⁴¹Provo Second Ward, September 1869.

⁴²Draper Ward, East Jordan Stake, Relief Society Minutes, 1873–

when she said: "It has been looked upon as got up by women, and only a begging institution. I heard him [the Prophet] say if only carried out after his instructions, it would become the most glorious institution on earth: That Queens would come and learn of them."⁴³ By referencing Joseph Smith's assurances regarding the future of the organization, Snow offered women a sense of pride in the present, hope in the future, and reasons for participation.

Beginning in 1868 and ending with her death in 1887, Eliza R. Snow effectively reestablished ward Relief Societies in the Mountain West. She praised Brigham Young for opening up the opportunity and even spoke of his call for revitalization as "turning the key."⁴⁴ But the Nauvoo teachings of Joseph Smith were her authoritative precedents. She did not quote from the edited version of the minutes, published in the serialized "History of the Church" in the *Deseret News* in 1855. Rather, she read directly from the Relief Society Book of Records, featuring Joseph's words as she had transcribed them, and perhaps with a full recognition of the book's power as a relic—an object that could connect her sisters to real events.⁴⁵ She made virtually no reference to Emma Smith, Emma's objections to plural marriage, or to conflicts over Emma's assertion of authority in the Relief Society and Brigham Young's proscription on women's gathering without his approval.⁴⁶ She set aside an inevitably controversial history to focus on the essential role of the

1872, May 26, 1870.

⁴³Gunnison Ward, Sevier and Sanpete Stakes, Relief Society Minutes 1872–79, June 28, 1875. Joseph Smith told the Relief Society: "You are now plac'd in a situation where you can act according to those sympathies which God has planted in your bosoms. If you live up to these principles how great and glorious!—if you live up to your privileges, the angels cannot be restrain'd from being your associates—females, if they are pure and innocent can come into the presence of God. . . . This Society shall have power to command Queens in their midst." Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, April 28, 1842.

⁴⁴Snow wrote: "President Young has turned the key to a wide and extensive sphere of action and usefulness. Eliza R. Snow, "Relief Society [concluded]," *Deseret Evening News*, April 20, 1868, 2.

⁴⁵Jennifer Reeder, "Eliza R. Snow and the Prophet's Gold Watch: Time Keeper as Relic," *Journal of Mormon History* 31, no. 1 (Spring 2005), 120–21, 128.

⁴⁶At the last meeting of the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo, Hannah

women in the dispensation “for the last times; and for the fullness of times” (D&C 27:13). Her narrative was sacred history, *mythos* rather than *logos*, that established the importance of women to the work of the kingdom, and enabled them to step forward and reclaim the vitality and spirit of the Relief Society. Then under its aegis they organized associations for young women and children, permanently establishing women’s place within the Church organization,

EMMELINE B. WELLS AND THE RELIEF SOCIETY RECORD

Although Emmeline B. Wells never attended the Nauvoo Relief Society, having arrived in the city as a teenager a month after its final meetings in 1844, she became as well versed as any original member in its procedure, objectives, and personal and social value. As a resident of Nauvoo for two years and sister-wife to Elizabeth Ann Whitney,⁴⁷ Emma Smith’s counselor, she developed a singular attachment to the original Society, perceiving the significance of preserving Joseph Smith’s words to the Nauvoo Relief So-

Ells recorded Emma Smith as saying, “if their ever was any authourity on the Earth she had it—and had yet.” Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, March 16, 1844. In organizing the presidency of the Relief Society on March 17, 1842, Joseph Smith had “propos’d that the Sisters elect a presiding officer to preside over them, and let that presiding officer choose two Counsellors to assist in the duties of her Office—that he would ordain them to preside over the Society—and let them preside just as the Presidency preside over the church; and if they need his instruction—ask him, he will give it from time to time.” Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, March 17, 1842. Whether or not Emma’s March 16 statement was something other than an affirmation of the authority Joseph had given her is unclear. That the subject of this March 16 meeting was a discussion of plural marriage, which Emma opposed, heightened the tension surrounding the question. This was the first time the potential and perhaps inevitable tension or conflict between women’s interests and the interests of the Church was confronted, and the lack of a satisfactory resolution apparently resulted in the disbandment of the Relief Society. Derr, Cannon, and Beecher, *Women of Covenant*, 61–63. In 1845 Brigham Young opposed the reinstatement of women’s meetings and told Church leaders who might see “females huddling together” to “veto the concern.” Jill Mulvey Derr, “The Lion and the Lioness: Brigham Young and Eliza R. Snow,” *BYU Studies* 40, no. 2 (2001): 77.

⁴⁷Carol Cornwall Madsen, *An Advocate for Women: The Public Life of Emmeline B. Wells* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press/Salt Lake

ciety and disseminating them to all women in the Church. She met Joseph, heard him preach to the Church, and felt the resonance of those encounters throughout her life. His charismatic nature, his magnetic personality, and the power of his words were integral elements in her testimony of his prophetic leadership. His sermons underlay her understanding of Relief Society's essential role in the organization of the church. Moreover, to Wells the Relief Society was an instrument to expand women's opportunities for personal growth and public contribution.

In 1868, after the Relief Society was reestablished in Utah, Emmeline joined the Thirteenth Ward Society.⁴⁸ By then she was the mother of five daughters, two from her marriage to Newel K. Whitney, and three from her marriage to Daniel H. Wells, whom she married as a plural wife after Newel K. Whitney's death. Under Rachel Ridgeway Ivins Grant, first president of the Thirteenth Ward Relief Society, Emmeline served as assistant secretary and later as president of the quorum of visiting teachers.⁴⁹

If Eliza R. Snow used the minutes to invest Mormon women with a sense of the spiritual power that Joseph opened to them through the restoration of the "ancient order," Emmeline Wells viewed them as an investiture of personal and temporal power that enabled women to move beyond the social restraints that limited their agency. The *Woman's Exponent*, which she began editing in 1872, was her primary forum, although she also verbalized her message of empowerment at Relief Society conferences and throughout her long career as a representative of Latter-day Saint women in national women's organizations.

At some point after 1872, Wells made "a verbatim copy" of the

City: Deseret Book, 2006), 19–20.

⁴⁸Emmeline had been a member of the first Thirteenth Ward Relief Society organized in 1854 but disbanded during the Utah War in 1857. Jensen, "Forgotten Relief Societies, 1844–67," 112–13.

⁴⁹In the early Utah years, many ward Relief Societies called members for a specified time to be visiting teachers. They were organized into quorums with their own presidencies who served under the ward Relief Society presidency, and often held their own meetings. Their assignment was to ascertain and relieve the needs of the poor, as in Nauvoo. Derr, Cannon, and Beecher, *Women of Covenant*, 91–92.

Nauvoo minutes.⁵⁰ The numerous brief marginal summaries of Joseph's words, paragraph by paragraph, and notations of the other talks and activities recorded in the minutes suggest that she made a thorough study of the record. As a result, the *Woman's Exponent* carried at least fifty articles specifically relating to the Nauvoo Relief Society, either extracts from the minutes, a review of its history, or reports of the various celebrations of its founding day, March 17. More than those of any other meeting, however, Wells printed the minutes of the April 28 meeting, sometimes as they had been recorded in *The History of the Church* but also as rendered in Eliza R. Snow's original minutes.⁵¹ Joseph Smith's long sermon to the women based on 1 Corinthians 12–13 discussed woman's exercise of spiritual gifts, the importance of each member to the building up of the Church, and temple-related instructions along with promises of knowledge and intelligence that would alter their lives. Wilford Woodruff felt that the importance of this particular sermon of Joseph's warranted inserting it into his own diary and assigned John McEwan to copy it into an addendum to his 1842 diary, which McEwan did on August 27, 1844, from Eliza R. Snow's holograph minutes.⁵² The last full reference to the Nauvoo minutes in the *Exponent* appeared in 1911, an article that summarized each of Joseph's six sermons to the Relief Society.⁵³

References to these sermons, to the minutes, and to Relief Society origins also found their way into ward and stake Relief Society reports, Relief Society conference talks, and annual greetings from Relief Society general presidents, all reported in the *Exponent*. Bathsheba W. Smith, who served as Relief Society general president from 1901 to 1910 (following Zina D. H. Young and preceding Emmeline), was a founding member of the Nauvoo Relief Society and occasionally referred to Joseph's counsel to women from the minutes, which

⁵⁰Holograph copy in Emmeline Wells Papers, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah (hereinafter cited as Perry Special Collections).

⁵¹See for example, "Sermons and Writings of the Prophet Joseph, His Teachings to the Relief Society," *Woman's Exponent* 17 (August 15, 1884): 44, 52, and "The Relief Society: Extracts from the Records," *Woman's Exponent* 34 (November 1905): 36–38.

⁵²Woodruff, *Journal*, 2:197–202.

⁵³"The Relief Society (Copied from the Original Record), Eliza R. Snow, Secretary," *Woman's Exponent* 39 (February 1911): 49.

for a time were in her possession. Her reflections were likewise preserved in the *Exponent*.⁵⁴ When President John Taylor set apart the first general Relief Society presidency in 1880, he invited his secretary to read from the Book of the Law of the Lord regarding the society's founding meeting when Taylor himself had been present; that record was in his possession while the Nauvoo minutes remained with Eliza Snow.⁵⁵ Apostle Franklin D. Richards quoted at length from Joseph's April 28, 1842, address, probably as recorded in the Manuscript History of the Church, when he delivered a sermon on the

⁵⁴In 1905, for example, Bathsheba Smith cited Joseph Smith's addresses on March 30 and April 28, 1842, to the Female Relief Society: "He said that he had given the sisters instructions that they could administer to the sick and he wanted to make us, as the women were in Paul's day, 'A kingdom of priestesses.' We have that ceremony in our endowments as Joseph taught." "Relief Society Reports: Pioneer Stake," *Woman's Exponent* 34, nos. 2-3 (July-August 1905): 14. Bathsheba also drew upon the minutes to correct a statement made by Sarah M. Kimball during the 1892 Jubilee celebration. According to Kimball, Joseph Smith had said that, in organizing the Relief Society, he was "making more complete the organization of the Church by organizing the women in the order of the Priesthood." We find by comparing it with the original record no such statement was made," wrote Bathsheba Smith in collaboration with Emmeline B. Wells. "Correction," *Woman's Exponent* 34 (January 1906): 44. Derr, Cannon, and Beecher, *Women of Covenant*, 447.

⁵⁵"Salt Lake Stake Relief Society Conference," *Woman's Exponent* 9 (July 1, 1880), 21-22. Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 133, erroneously conclude that minutes of the March 17, 1842, meeting were recorded in the Book of the Law of the Lord. The entry in the Book of the Law of the Lord, which served at this time as Joseph Smith's journal, reads essentially as it does in the March 17, 1842, entry in *History of the Church*, 4:552-53. As reproduced by Dean C. Jessee, ed., *The Papers of Joseph Smith. Volume 2: Journal, 1832-1842* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992), 371, the original document reads: "[Thursday 17] Assisted in organizing 'The Female Relief Society of Nauvoo' in the 'Lodge Room' Sister Emma Smith President, & Sisters <Elizabeth Ann> Whitney & <Sarah M.> Cleveland councillors, Gave much instruction, read in the New Testament, Book of Doctrine & Covenants, concer[n]ing the Elect Lady. & shewed that *Elect* meant to be *Elected* to a *certain work* &c, & that the revelation was then fulfilled by Sister Emma's Election to the Presidency of the Soc[i]ety, she having previously been ordained to expound the Scriptures. her councillors were ordaind by Elder J<ohn>

priesthood to Relief Society members during a commemorative meeting in Ogden in 1888.⁵⁶ Wells published both men's addresses in the *Exponent*. These uses of the Nauvoo minutes reenforced the close link between the Utah and Nauvoo societies, a goal both Snow and Wells wished to achieve.

Wells's journalistic policy made the minutes easily accessible to Mormon women, acquainting them with Joseph Smith's vision of Mormon women's privileges and potential, and some women not only read but copied into their personal journals the minutes Wells published.⁵⁷ Joseph Smith's teachings also motivated Wells's life-long efforts to correct the false image of Mormon women held by a censorious public. Of particular importance to Wells, though seldom referenced by Eliza Snow, was Joseph's symbolic statement, given in the April 28 meeting: "I now turn the key to you in the name of God and this society shall rejoice and knowledge and intelligence shall flow down from this time—this is the beginning of better days to this society."⁵⁸ For Emmeline, and for many others, this rhetorical gesture opened the way to secular as well as spiritual knowledge and opportunity. She associated women's political and legal advancement and the

Taylor. & Emma <was> Blessed by the same."

⁵⁶Franklin D. Richards, quoted in "Report of the Relief Society Meeting held in the Ogden Tabernacle, July 19th 1888," *Woman's Exponent* 17 (September 1, 1888): 53–54. At the time Richards was serving as assistant Church historian and would have had access to the Manuscript History of the Church, which had been published serially in the *Deseret News* and would later become *History of the Church* edited by B. H. Roberts. See footnotes 6 and 10. The wording Richards used was not taken from Snow's minutes.

⁵⁷Some examples include: Pamela Elizabeth Barlow Thompson, Papers, 1875–91, LDS Church History Library; "A Brief History of the Relief Society in Nauvoo Hancock Co Ill," in Emma Lorena Barrows Brown, Writings [ca. 1880], LDS Church History Library, brought to the authors' attention by Christy Best; and Hannah Adeline Hatch Savage, Journal 1894–1915, LDS Church History Library, 114–20, brought to our attention by Jonathan Stapley. Savage apparently took her account from the *Deseret News*.

⁵⁸Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, April 28, 1842. The *History of the Church*, 4:607, makes several changes from the Snow minutes, including altering "turn the key to you" to "in your behalf," "in the name of God" to "in the name of the Lord," and "the beginning of better days to this society" to

commencement of broader economic and educational opportunities directly with the organization of the Relief Society. As Emmeline explained, the organization of the Relief Society opened “one of the most important eras in the history of woman. It presented the great woman-question to the Latter-day Saints, previous to the woman’s rights organizations.”⁵⁹ When “the key of knowledge was turned” to women, she was convinced, “men no longer had the same absolute sway.” Women could now claim a place in those aspects of public life and personal development once closed to them, she optimistically asserted.⁶⁰ The Relief Society “has given to women in its rise and progress influence on all subjects that pertain to her welfare and happiness, and opportunities for developing her own thoughts, views and opinions, all of which has had a tendency to render her intelligent in regard to matters which before were considered incompatible with ‘a woman’s sphere,’ and unintelligible to her ‘weaker’ mind.”⁶¹

In 1892, a jubilee celebration of the founding of the Relief Society in Nauvoo was held in the Salt Lake Tabernacle and in various wards throughout the Church. Dominant among the Tabernacle’s decorations for that occasion was a floral depiction of the “key.”⁶² It is unlikely that anyone in the audience would have failed to understand the sym-

“better days to the poor and needy.” While the essential meaning is not significantly changed by the words “in your behalf,” the change seems to discount Joseph’s other uses of this symbolic verbal gesture which he used to express the idea that he was giving them a key of light and knowledge that would open doors of spiritual blessings and truth.

⁵⁹The first woman’s rights convention was held in 1848, six years after the Relief Society’s founding. Homespun [Susa Young Gates], “What Hath the Century Wrought,” *Woman’s Exponent* 29 (January 1, 1901): 71, noted: “From the hour the key was given, great and restless activity has marked every phase of womanly life.” Her article follows a collection of short essays by women, “Symposium, The Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries,” which Gates may have assembled and concluded with her own piece. “Symposium” includes essays from Emma Woodruff and Louisa Greene Richards that allude to the advancement of women through the restoration and the turning of the key.

⁶⁰“A Wonderful Age,” *Woman’s Exponent* 27 (February 1, 1899): 100.

⁶¹“Women’s Organizations,” *Woman’s Exponent* 8 (January 15, 1880): 122.

⁶²Large portraits of the three general Relief Society presidents, along

bol's significance. It was an artistic reminder of Joseph Smith's rhetorical gesture in turning the key to the sisters at the April 28 meeting which still carried such strong reverberations. The minutes provided a focal point for the celebration as excerpts from Joseph Smith's sermons to the Relief Society found their way into the speakers' remarks on that occasion. As the last speaker of the day, Emmeline Wells summarized the significance of the early minutes and the unique features of the Relief Society. The *Exponent* reported her speech: "What does this woman's jubilee signify," she asked. Then answered, "Not only that fifty years ago the organization was founded by a Prophet of God but that woman is becoming emancipated from error and superstition and darkness. . . . That light has come into the world and the Gospel has made her free—That the key of knowledge has been turned and she has drunk inspiration from the divine fountain."⁶³

As they elaborated the meaning of Joseph Smith's April 28 sermon, and particularly his statement regarding the key, Emmeline Wells and other Relief Society women bore witness of its prophetic significance and shaped a sacred narrative that explained expanding roles for women in the Church and society at large, a narrative also invoked by male Church leaders. In 1906 Apostle Orson F. Whitney noted that when Joseph Smith "turned the key" and "From what has since taken place we are justified in believing that the words were big with fate. . . . [T]he spirit of woman's work has spread, until other nations are interested in the growing movement. . . . But who ever heard of such things until after the establishment of 'Mormonism' until the turning of the key by the Prophet of God, and the setting up in this Church, of women's organizations, as one of the signs of a new era, one of those sunbursts of light that proclaim the dawning of a new dispensation."⁶⁴ At a 1912 Relief Society conference, Joseph F. Smith, whose wife Julina served as second counselor to Emmeline Wells, also referred to the organization of the Relief Soci-

with a portrait of Joseph Smith, were also displayed. Some controversy arose over the inclusion of Emma Smith's portrait, but it ended when Church President Wilford Woodruff declared that those who opposed its hanging "must be very narrow minded indeed." Emmeline B. Wells, *Diary*, March 15, 1892, Perry Special Collections.

⁶³"Relief Society Jubilee Exercises at the Tabernacle," *Woman's Exponent* 20 (April 1, 1892): 140-44.

⁶⁴Orson F. Whitney, "Woman's Work and Mormonism," *Young Wo-*

ety in Nauvoo which, he claimed, “inaugurated a movement in favor of women that had never been known before. Its objects and purposes are among the greatest that affect the well-being, happiness and prosperity of the human family.”⁶⁵ As late as 1945, Church President George Albert Smith affirmed that “when the Prophet Joseph Smith turned the key for the emancipation of womankind, it was turned for all the world.”⁶⁶

To the women of the nineteenth century, particularly, the key was an enduring representation of the Nauvoo Relief Society. Its power as symbol derived from the promises and expectations of Joseph Smith relating to the women of the Church as expressed in his resonant statement. Turning the key to women unlocked their potential and resulted in an “awakening” of women not only to the spiritual blessings that awaited them through the ordinances of the temple but also to their own capabilities in assuming an essential part in “the work of the world,” Wells believed. The Relief Society would be a major conduit leading toward achievement of women’s highest potential, both temporal and spiritual. This conviction provided the philosophical basis of Wells’s work in behalf of women, culminating in her own ascendancy to the general presidency of the Relief Society in October 1910, the last link between the Nauvoo and the Utah general presidencies.

MEMORY AND HISTORY

Eliza R. Snow, Zina D. H. Young, and Bathsheba W. Smith were all members of the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo and Utah successors to its president Emma Hale Smith. Emmeline B. Wells, with her Nauvoo connections and experience, was one with them in person-

man’s Journal 17 (July 1906): 295–96.

⁶⁵“General Relief Society Conference,” *Woman’s Exponent* 40 (April 1912): 58. Joseph F. Smith’s Letterpress Copybook, February 2, 1902–April 4, 1905, between March 14 and 17, 1902, 33–36, contains a summary of the March 17, 1842, organizational meeting of the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo with some quotations from Snow’s minutes. *Selected Collections from the Archives of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 2 vols. (Provo, Utah: BYU Press [December 2002], vol. 1:30. We thank Jonathan Stapley for bringing this source to our attention.

⁶⁶George Albert Smith, “Address to the Members of the Relief Society [October 4, 1945],” *Relief Society Magazine* 32 (December 1945): 717.

through the medium of those who are
 appointed to lead - and I now turn
 the key to you in the name of
God and this society shall receive
 and knowledge and intelligence
 shall flow down from this time
 This is the beginning of better
 days to this society. When you
 go I charge you to guide & command
 but let kindness, charity and
 love govern your works hereafter
 Don't annoy sinners - have mercy on
 them. God will destroy them!
 Let your labors be bestowed
 mostly to those around you
 in your own circle, as far as
 knowledge is concerned it may
 extend to all the world but
 your administrations should be
 confined to the circle of your
 immediate acquaintance and more
 especially to the members of the
 society.
 Those ordained to lead the society
 are authorized to appoint in different
 offices as the circumstances shall
 require.
 If any time a matter to reveal
 it is to be in your own tongue. Do
 not indulge too much in the gift of
 tongues, as the devil will take advantage
 of the innocent. You may speak in
 tongues for your own comfort but

Joseph the Prophet
 Turn the key to women
 Speaking in Tongue
 Appointing
 Appointing Labors

A section from Joseph Smith's April 28, 1842 address to the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo, with his statement about turning the key, as penned and highlighted by Emmeline B. Wells in her own manuscript copy of the Nauvoo minute book. Courtesy of L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University.

ally remembering Nauvoo and Joseph Smith and his teachings.⁶⁷ Wells's death in 1921, in effect, broke the connecting chain of memory. As board member Susa Young Gates noted at Wells's passing, Nauvoo faded quietly into history, "dear but very distant."⁶⁸

The minutes, the key, and the past were employed to generate secondary memories for a generation who had not been in Nauvoo, with the daughters drawing upon the memories and records of their foremothers. Susa Young Gates, first editor of the *Relief Society Magazine*, successor to the *Exponent*, took her cue from Wells and made her own typescript copy of the Nauvoo minutes. In 1915, she began what became a long tradition of celebrating Relief Society beginnings in the *Magazine's* March issue. "Instructions of the Prophet Joseph Smith" featured five of the Prophet's six addresses to women, not from *The History of the Church*, but from her own typescript, apparently made from a copy in the possession of Zina D. H. Young, Eliza R. Snow's close associate and successor as Relief Society general president. Whether Zina had the original record for a time or made her own handwritten copy is unclear.⁶⁹ Susa used the typescript minutes for her "Story of the Organization of the Relief Society," published in the *Magazine* in March 1919. Her articles on Relief Society quickly became wide ranging, treating the society's early history, its increasingly complex programs in Utah, and its spread into the Church's foreign missions, not unlike the *Woman's Exponent* had reported decades earlier.⁷⁰

Amy Brown Lyman was called to the Relief Society general board in 1909 and became assistant secretary in 1910, for a time as-

⁶⁷Emmeline Wells was the last Relief Society general president who had lived in Nauvoo and was personally acquainted with the Prophet Joseph Smith. As a plural wife during the Nauvoo period to Presiding Bishop Newel K. Whitney, she had much social interaction with the leading sisters of the Church and particularly those Relief Society sisters who became the first female officiators in the Temple.

⁶⁸"Emmeline B. Wells," *Relief Society Magazine* 8 (July 1921): 416–17.

⁶⁹"Instructions of the Prophet Joseph Smith," *Relief Society Magazine* 2 (March 1919): 91–99; Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, typescript in Susa Young Gates Collection, LDS Church History Library. An obscure phrase typed at the conclusion of Gates's typescript reads: "Original copy (record) handed by Zina D. H. Young."

⁷⁰Susa Young Gates: "Story of the Organization of the Relief Society,"

sisting Susa Gates with the *Relief Society Magazine*. In August 1928, Amy was called as first counselor in the general presidency. Fourteen months later in December 1929, she added to the general board minutes a brief sketch of the provenance of the Nauvoo minute book:

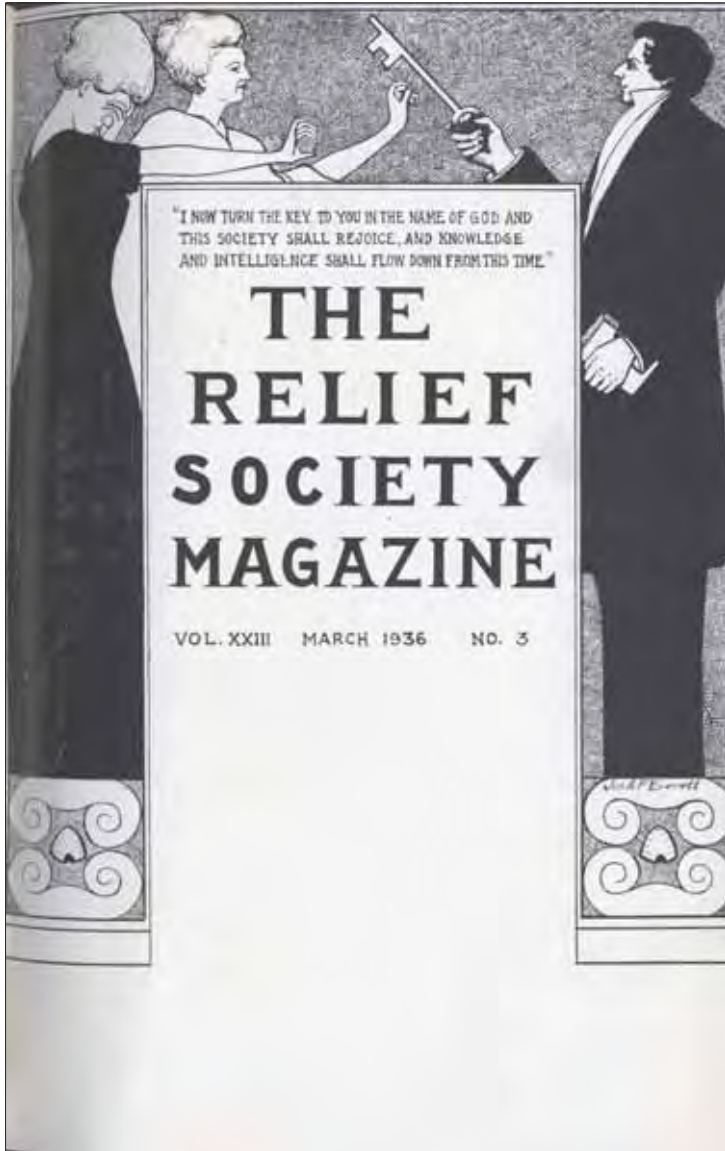
Nauvoo Minutes. The original minutes of the Nauvoo RS are filed in the Church Historian's Office. During the life time of Eliza R. Snow, they were in her possession. Some time after her death this book came into the hands of Dr. Romania B. Penrose [Relief Society assistant secretary], who carefully guarded it for a number of years. Dr. Penrose gave the book to Bathsheba W. Smith when she was appointed General President, in 1901. Upon the death of President Smith, I was permitted to make a copy of the original minutes. They were then carefully proof read. An alphabetically arranged list of the names of all the women who were members of the Relief Society in Nauvoo, was arranged and added to the Minutes.⁷¹

As Relief Society general president from 1940 to 1945, Amy Brown Lyman presided over the organization's 1942 Churchwide centennial celebration, marked by the publication of *A Centenary of Relief Society, 1842-1942*. It contains only a brief overview of Relief Society beginnings and includes a few sentences from Joseph Smith's six sermons to the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo.⁷² The contrast with the full quotations and numerous allusions was marked, but probably not because the beginnings had become irrelevant. Rather, for a second and third generation of Mormon women, the story of the founding of Relief Society and the turning of the key had become iconic. For example, the March 1936 issue of the *Relief Society Magazine* featured on its

Relief Society Magazine 6, no. 3 (March 1919): 127-42; "Relief Society Work in the Missions," *Relief Society Magazine* (July 1918): 365-88; "Relief Society Beginnings in Foreign Lands," *Relief Society Magazine* 9 no. 3 (March 1922): 121-25; "Relief Society Beginnings in Utah," *Relief Society Magazine* 9 no. 4 (April 1922): 184-96. Gates served as editor of the *Relief Society Magazine* until August 1922. At the time of her death in 1933, she was working on a comprehensive history of Mormon women. See Louise Plummer, "Susa Young Gates," *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 4 vols. (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1992), 2:536.

⁷¹Relief Society General Board, Minutes, December 11, 1929, LDS Church History Library.

⁷²*A Centenary of Relief Society, 1842-1942* (Salt Lake City: General Board of Relief Society, 1942), 13-17.



Cover of the March 1936 Relief Society Magazine featuring Joseph A. F. Everett's illustration of Joseph Smith's statement to the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo: "I now turn the key to you in the name of God and this society shall rejoice and knowledge and intelligence shall flow

cover a painting by Utah artist Joseph A. F. Everett, depicting Joseph Smith handing a large key to a woman dressed in white, eagerly accepting it, while a woman dressed in black lowers her head, covers her eyes, and only tentatively reaches toward the key.⁷³

Eliza R. Snow and Emmeline B. Wells used the Relief Society Book of Records or Nauvoo minutes not only as a source of organizational history, but as a constitution for Latter-day Saint women and as a manifesto for their ecclesiastical engagement and political and social activism. At the society's founding meeting Joseph Smith said: "The minutes of your meetings will be precedents for you to act upon—your Constitution and law."⁷⁴ Reliance on the minutes as an organizational and doctrinal framework may have been what the Prophet intended when he rejected what he considered to be a well-crafted constitution and by-laws written by Eliza R. Snow prior to the first meeting.⁷⁵

In contrasting ways but with the same goal of empowering women, Snow and Wells each interpreted the minutes for her own purpose and generation. For Eliza Snow, the minutes recorded the restoration of the ancient and essential role of women in the true Church and the gospel of Jesus Christ. She addressed women during a period of disconnection, when the Relief Society had been largely inoperative and when Mormon women faced constant ridicule for their involvement in plural marriage. Snow used the minutes to affirm continuity, authority, responsibility, and dignity. The original document with its connection to Joseph, his instructions directly to the women, and to the symbol that Nauvoo had become was of the utmost importance to her. She spoke of the true church and priesthood but made almost no reference to the turning of "the key." In contrast, for Emmeline Wells, this rhetorical gesture encapsulated the meaning and potential of Relief Society. It was the basis for the spiritual and secular empowerment that she observed developing throughout the nineteenth century. Rather than connecting Relief Society to the ancient past as an element of restoration, she interpreted it as a key to

⁷³[Mary Connelly Kimball], "The Key Turned for Women" (editorial), *Relief Society Magazine* 23 (March 1936): 200–202, and cover.

⁷⁴Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, March 17, 1842.

⁷⁵[Sarah M. Kimball], "Relief Society Record, 1880–1892," 29, 30, LDS Church History Library. See also "[Sarah M. Kimball], Auto-Biography," *Woman's Exponent* 12 (September 1, 1883): 51.

the future, the tangible vehicle that would take women to the lofty heights Joseph prophesied. As Eliza R. Snow and Emmeline B. Wells worked to grasp the meaning of Joseph Smith's teachings to a group of women in Nauvoo, they provided precedents for new identity and new collective opportunities for thousands of Latter-day Saint women, and they caught hold of their own lives in new and poignant ways.

THE REED SMOOT HEARINGS AND THE THEOLOGY OF POLITICS: PERCEIVING AN “AMERICAN” IDENTITY

Konden R. Smith

And here let me add, the feelings of pure and unalloyed loyalty to our government which were deep-seated in the hearts of the Mormon people then, are still a part and parcel of our very being now, and indeed could not be otherwise, for the simple reason that as a community, we are an integral part of the nation itself, and the God whom we worship is the God of this nation.

—Joseph F. Smith, 1907¹

THE REED SMOOT HEARINGS OF 1903–07 reveal important insights into shifts within American religious and secular history. Upon winning a seat in the U.S. Senate, Reed Smoot (1862–1941), an apostle in the Mormon Church, generated a public furor, leading to a significant accusation by the Senate and the American public: that his election demonstrated an unforgivable breach

KONDEN R. SMITH {konden.smith@asu.edu} is a Ph.D. candidate at Arizona State University in the Religious Studies Department. He presented an earlier version of this article at the biennial conference of the Claremont Mormon Studies Student Association, April 2008.

¹Joseph F. Smith, Letter to Reed Smoot, February 23, 1907, in James R. Clark, ed., *Messages of the First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965–75), 4:141.

between the “separation” of church and state, thereby threatening the stability of the republic itself. It is ironic, however, that Protestant ministers, numerous denominations, and various Christian organizations felt the most intense threat from Smoot’s election and led the protests to preserve the integrity of the Senate against Mormonism.² The fact that Smoot ultimately retained his seat after an intensive four-year investigation and the negative vote of the investigating committee suggests an im-

²The denominational unity posed against Smoot by Christian churches throughout the nation was so strong that Mormons, like Catholics earlier, often failed to make any distinction among them. Congregationalists, Episcopalians, Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians, as well as numerous Protestant associations, missions, and assemblies all took a prominent public role during the Smoot hearings. Even the Reorganized Latter Day Saints joined these anti-Smoot efforts. Notable exceptions were the Roman Catholic Church, and to a lesser degree, the Lutheran. In two odd articles, the *Washington Post* offered insight to these exceptions in early 1904. While noting the “debasing” and “brutalizing” influence of polygamy—reason enough for most Christians to resist it—the *Post* claimed (accurately) that the great Protestant reformer Martin Luther not only declared that “it [polygamy] does not contradict the Scriptures” and gave permission to Landgrave Philip of Hesse to marry a second wife (whose first marriage was for purely political reasons), but admitted to his co-laborer and friend Philip Melancthon in 1521, while engaged in the translation of the Bible, “I have already had three wives at the same time whom I loved intensely.” The Pope himself made an exception for the crusader Count Giefchen of the once sovereign house of Hohenhole to marry the Sultan’s daughter while his first wife was in Germany. Finding this union sanctioned by the Pope himself, the Count’s first wife accepted the new tripartite union, and they all lived, according to the *Post*, “happily ever after.” Although Luther had, in fact, made the “three wives” statement, it was taken out of context. Luther tolerated polygamy, but was never a polygamist himself. These “three wives” were former nuns (he had helped twelve escape from a convent) for whom he had not yet found husbands. It was rather a jocular statement to his friend whom he called a “timid lover” for not daring “to marry even one.” Anthony J. Gavigan, “Luther and Smoot,” *Washington Post*, February 1, 1904, 9; “Rulers with Many Wives,” *Washington Post*, March 27, 1904, E7. For more on Luther and polygamy, see Roland H. Bainton, *Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther* (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1950), 223–24, 293.

portant shift in the power dynamics of American politics between the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This shift was the changing role of religion in American public life, particularly in the waning of denominational influence in that life. In short, the Smoot case demonstrates not only a “coming of age” for the Mormon Church, but simultaneously, one for the American republic. Observing these national transformations reveals significant connections between a newly emerging Mormon and an “American” identity.

These transformations had critical effects on how Americans perceived themselves and their Mormon neighbors. Moreover, Mormonism itself experienced significant shifts in how Mormons perceived themselves as Americans. This article explores what it meant to be truly American at the turn of the twentieth century and how so-called religious “outsiders” like the Mormons came to identify themselves as Americans *within* these changing concepts of national identity against the rich and turbulent background of what historians call the “Progressive Era.” During this time of growing religious pluralism and the secularization of politics, the recession of the Protestant evangelical hegemony can be clearly seen in the senatorial hearings focused on whether Mormon apostle Reed Smoot could retain his seat. His ultimate victory was in attaining the identity of an “American,” despite his religious affiliation.

BACKGROUND OF THE SMOOT HEARINGS, 1903–07

Reed Smoot was not the first Mormon to aspire to high public office. Mormonism’s founder, Joseph Smith, set the precedent in his bid for the White House in early 1844 just prior to being assassinated by a mob. Brigham Young was appointed Utah’s territorial governor in 1850 until he was deposed (in a manner of speaking) by U.S. troops of the Utah Expedition in 1858; George Q. Cannon of the First Presidency served as Utah’s territorial delegate in Congress for ten years before his seat was declared vacant by the Edmunds Act (1882) and before his face appeared on “Wanted” posters offering a \$500 reward for his arrest (President John Taylor’s reward was only \$300); and Brigham H. Roberts of the First Council of the Seventy, elected in 1898, was denied his seat after a brief fight in the House of Representatives because of

his polygamous status and national fears of Mormon political influence. Given this seemingly unsuccessful track record of Mormons in politics, a harsh national spotlight again glared on Mormonism to determine if Reed Smoot could serve as both a Mormon apostle and as a representative of Utah in Congress.

The Republican majority of the Utah State Legislature elected Smoot to the senate on January 20, 1903.³ Only six days later, with the editorial assistance of Republican Edward B. Critchlow, a former U.S. district attorney in Utah, Dr. William M. Paden, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Salt Lake City, represented Salt Lake City's Ministerial Association, in filing the first petition against Smoot on January 26. Prominent clergymen, business leaders, and public officials in Utah, including Salt Lake City's mayor, signed the petition, giving it significant weight.⁴ Petitions came before President Theodore Roosevelt and Congress from throughout the nation containing millions of signatures. Historically conscious Mormons, deeply fearful of more national crusades, had also sparked opposition at home.⁵ In the forefront of this crusade against Smoot were numerous national women's organizations including the National Congress of Mothers, the Inter-Denominational Congress of Women of Washington, and Salt Lake's Ministerial Association, all pan-denominational movements that made anti-Smoot/anti-Mormonism their primary activity throughout the Smoot hearings.⁶

The month following the Paden and Critchlow petition, Jul-

³Brigham H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. (1930; rpt., Provo, Utah: BYU Press, 1965 printing), 6:390; Milton R. Merrill, *Reed Smoot: Apostle in Politics* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1990), 8.

⁴Roberts, *A Comprehensive History*, 6:390–91; Kathleen Flake, *The Politics of American Religious Identity: The Seating of Senator Reed Smoot, Mormon Apostle* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 13; Merrill, *Reed Smoot*, 30–31.

⁵Michael Harold Paulos, "Under the Gun at the Smoot Hearings: Joseph F. Smith's Testimony," *Journal of Mormon History* 34, no. 4 (Fall 2007): 189.

⁶National newspapers throughout the Smoot hearings featured such provocative titles as "Mothers Denounce Smoot," "Women Unite against

ius C. Burrows, Republican senator from Michigan, introduced a "Citizens Protest" to the Senate on February 23, 1903, that turned the case over to the Committee on Privileges and Elections, which Burrows also chaired. John L. Leilich, superintendent of Missions of the Utah District for the Methodist Episcopal Church, joined his petition to Paden and Critchlow's three days later on February 26.⁷ However, his sensationalism in declaring Smoot a practicing polygamist backfired. It discredited Smoot's opposition, attracted the threat of Smoot's libel suit against him, and brought severe criticism from the Ministerial Association. On March 21, twenty out of twenty-five pastors of the Methodist churches in Leilich's jurisdiction, in protest, asked his superior in Denver to move him to another field.⁸ Nevertheless, Leilich's false claims helped foster the prejudiced sentiments for popular anti-Smoot assemblies and religious rallies. The intensity of the hearings waxed and waned as petitions and letters came before Congressmen; but finally the charges against Smoot were dropped and his seat was confirmed on February 20, 1907.⁹

On a broader canvas, the Reed Smoot hearings, though understood as a political matter, reveal the conflict and interplay among the numerous ideologies then vying for national attention and position. Indeed, as I will argue, the hearings were so theologically and politically fused that it is easy to see how Congress perceived Smoot and his unorthodox brand of Christianity as a dangerous threat. The evangelical-crusade tone of the hearings expressed not merely an attempt to preserve the "honor and dignity of the United States and their Senators in Congress," as Paden's original protest stated, but indeed an effort to preserve the Protestant ethos enjoyed throughout the nineteenth century.¹⁰ In other words, the Senate's "honor and dignity" was code for the government's traditional Protestant hegemony, which Smoot's

Smoot," "W.C.T.U. Denounces Smoot," and "Signed by 1,000,000 Women."

⁷Merrill, *Reed Smoot*, 34.

⁸"Attack on Smoot's Accuser," *New York Times*, March 22, 1903, 3; "Ministers Act on Smoot," *New York Times*, March 1, 1903, 2.

⁹Roberts, *A Comprehensive History*, 6:398-99.

¹⁰U.S. Senate, Committee on Privileges and Elections, *Proceedings before the Committee on Privileges and Elections of the United States Senate in the*

presence seemed to undermine.

This significant shift in the power dynamics of American culture was reflected in important shifts within Mormonism. It, too, was encountering important national challenges during the Progressive Era due to rapid urbanization, industrialization, an increasingly troubled economy, and a continually redefined popular conception of secularization. In this turbulent context, Mormons redefined how they understood themselves as Americans, while other Americans were doing the same. These dynamics impacted how most Americans saw not only the Mormon religion, but also how they saw themselves in relation to these peculiar neighbors. Mormon identity versus an American identity has always been highly complex, involving charged rhetoric, misunderstandings, and at times even violence. Mormonism's ambivalent attitude toward a national identity has led some historians to perceive it as little more than "mysterious." Commonly, scholars either celebrate Mormonism as "quintessentially American" or dismiss it as deviant, un-American, and violent.¹¹

Ironically, these two opposing identities are intimately related. The Smoot hearings do not represent only the entrance of a

Matter of the Protests against the Right of Hon. Reed Smoot, a Senator from the State of Utah, to Hold His Seat, 59th Congress, 1st Session, Senate Report No. 486, 4 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1904–07), 1:1 (hereafter Smoot Hearings).

¹¹R. Laurence Moore, *Religious Outsiders and the Making of Americans* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1986), 25–26, 43–45, demonstrates the struggle that scholars have in dealing with Mormonism, and it is from him that I borrow "mysterious." Ethnohistorian Martha C. Knack, *Boundaries Between: The Southern Paiutes, 1775–1995* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001), 51–52, 75, is typical of those who easily dismiss nineteenth-century Mormon agency in light of LDS "separatist tendencies," unauthorized political aspirations, isolationist aims from a secular government, and other un-American tendencies including interlocking clerical/political offices. On the other hand, historian Ernest Tuveson, *Redeemer Nation: The Idea of America's Millennial Role* ([1968]; rpt., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 185, argued that nineteenth-century Mormonism embodied "the most characteristically 'American' religious doctrine ever set forth." Western historian Patricia Nelson Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: W. W.

minority faith into the American mainstream, but rather a simultaneous transformation of that mainstream. Through Reed Smoot, Mormonism entered a modern world that had changed radically since Utah's territorial period. By Smoot's election, even though such markers as the Woodruff Manifesto, the disbanding of the Mormon People's Party, and statehood were barely a decade old, the political and social climate of the nation had shifted away from its once exclusive, theocratic, and vigilante culture that Mormonism had resisted. Thus, the Smoot case represents not just an interesting story of Mormon transition, but also a national transition that created new ground for minority groups like the Mormons. Religious scholar Kathleen Flake likewise argues: "Mormonism's transition during the Smoot hearings from un-American to American, from dangerous infidel to peculiar church, is not its story alone, but the story of the changing relation of churches to the state in the early twentieth century."¹² Flake presents a brilliant and enlightening observation, but it is also important to recognize the changing relation of the "state" regarding "churches," so as to avoid taking for granted a one-sided hermeneutic of Mormonism from "dangerous infidel" to "peculiar church." Though this dichotomy is normative in Mormon and American religious historiography, this article focuses instead on the boundary creation and maintenance that gave Mormonism these descriptions, while recognizing that the Protestant elites who defined Mormonism as "dangerous infidel[s]" had moved aside for a very different set of elites who then defined them as a "peculiar church."

As stated previously, Smoot's Mormonism became the ground for appraising his fitness for the Senate. The major arguments against Smoot and the Mormon Church were "fourfold and woven together," explained the chief counsel of the House Special Committee, Robert M. Tayler, a former Ohio Senator who had

Norton & Company, 1987), 286, also wrote concerning Mormon nineteenth-century Americanness: "The center of the irony lay in the many ways that Mormonism was quintessentially American. Faith in progress, commitment to hard work, devotion to the family, careful attention to material prosperity—in all these qualities, Mormons could not have been more American."

¹²Flake, *The Politics of American Religious Identity*, 11.

chaired the Special House Committee that had successfully thwarted B. H. Roberts's seating only five years earlier. These arguments were "one fabric and not . . . continued separate threads." First, he declared, the Mormon leaders dictated "in all matters whatsoever, civil and religious, temporal and spiritual," positioning themselves as authorities in both church and state affairs; second, they use these powers to "inculcate and encourage a belief in polygamy and polygamous cohabitation"; third, they also "countenance and connive at violations of the laws of the State," regardless of their promises made to the American people and pledges they made in order to become a state; and fourth, they "by all the means in their power protect and honor those who with themselves violate the laws of the land and are guilty of practices destructive of the family and the home."¹³

Smoot understandably declared himself innocent of such charges and, moreover, he had never practiced polygamy. Nonetheless, as an apostle and senator, Smoot had a "double relationship" with the two major institutions in his life, as his First Presidency put it. Smoot could not escape "the interest of the church," despite his personal interest. "It will not be necessary for us to remind you," Joseph F. Smith, John R. Winder, and Anthon H. Lund quite purposefully reminded him on December 9, 1904, "that the stronger and more complete evidence for the Church is made, the stronger must be your prospects for retaining your seat."¹⁴ To retain his seat, Smoot had to demonstrate that all the rumors and speculations regarding Mormonism were false, or at least overblown, and that Latter-day Saints could be as patriotic and honorable as any citizen.

However, Smoot was facing a contentious time that was emerging from a contested history. No matter how sincerely he may have honored monogamous marriage and the traditional family, the Church's sincerity was markedly suspect. President Joseph F. Smith and Francis M. Lyman, president of the Quorum of the Twelve, told the Senate committee in March 1904 that, although they had not

¹³Smoot Hearings, 1:239, 1.

¹⁴Joseph F. Smith, John R. Winder, and Anthon H. Lund, Letter to Reed Smoot, December 9, 1904, in Clark, *Messages of the First Presidency*, 4:91.

condoned or participated in any post-1890 polygamous marriages, they did continue to cohabit with their plural wives and have children with them. Smith candidly preferred “to face the penalties of law to abandoning my family.”¹⁵ Despite this unwillingness to compromise on existing families (for which he paid the maximum fine allowed by law), Smith presented the Second Manifesto on April 6, 1904, prescribing excommunication as the penalty for newly formed plural unions. Apostles Matthias Cowley and John W. Taylor, however, both of whom had married new wives themselves and performed and authorized other post-1890 sealings, dismissed this new move by Smith, at least partly on the basis of Smith’s earlier, personal authorizations of their activities.¹⁶

As rumors of new marriages continued to circulate and as these two “renegade” apostles retained their positions in the quorum, national suspicion and outrage, rather than patience attended the new policy. By mid-1905, national opposition toward Smoot and the Mormon Church had increased significantly. Smoot’s attorneys reminded President Smith that, if the Church could not prove its sincerity by strong action, not only was Smoot’s seat in jeopardy, but “a constitutional amendment and perhaps confiscation” of Church property were real threats.¹⁷ As president of the Twelve, Lyman vigorously scolded his colleagues in the quorum: they “must sustain the stand taken by President Smith and must not talk nor act at cross purposes with the Prophet. What has already been done is shaking the confidence of the Latter-day Saints. We are considered as two-faced and insincere. We must not stand in that light before the Saints or to the world.”¹⁸ Embarrassed and frustrated that his own quorum was providing

¹⁵Smoot Hearings, 1:129–31. Reports like “Law of 1890 Violated,” *Hartford Courant*, March 5, 1904, 2, were common, repetitively declaring that Mormons were still engaging in plural marriages, that Smoot knew all about them, and that President Smith would raise revelation above the nation’s law. See also Paulos, “Under the Gun at the Smoot Hearings,” 181–225.

¹⁶B. Carmon Hardy, *Solemn Covenant: The Mormon Polygamous Passage* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 141–47, 317–19.

¹⁷Flake, *The Politics of American Religious History*, 93.

¹⁸Francis M. Lyman, quoted in Flake, *The Politics of American Religious*

his political enemies with ammunition, Smoot complained to his friend Jesse M. Smith: "We have not as a people, at all times lived strictly to our agreements with the government and this lack of sincerity on our part goes farther to condemn us in the eyes of public men of the nation than the mere fact of a few polygamous cases of a polygamist before the Manifesto living in a state of unlawful cohabitation."¹⁹

Both Lyman and Smoot represent a new and growing concern within Mormonism to take public relations more seriously. Obviously, much was at stake for both the Mormon Church and those who wanted Smoot ousted. Senator Henry C. Hansborough (R–North Dakota), who voted against Smoot when the full Senate made its decision, defended himself: "Were I to fail to do otherwise, I should feel that I had condoned every offense ever committed against good morals and the written laws of the country by the Mormon Church."²⁰ Smoot followed this logic, writing as early as December 16, 1902, to John Q. McQuarrie, president of the Eastern States Mission headquartered in New York and a personal friend, "If they can expel me from the Senate of the United States, they can expel any man who claims to be a Mormon."²¹ In other words, the Smoot hearings were as much about re-identifying the Mormon Church as both Christian and American as it was about saving Smoot's national political career.

PROTEST

Reed Smoot also had to face popular opinion, much of it enunciated in resolutions, votes, and media articles and cartoon. Popular comic weeklies frequently depicted Smoot as a clown, buffoon, or puppet, while Mormonism was a kind of monster or serpent threatening the vitality and health of the country.²² These images had been common during the days of Brigham Young and John Taylor, but the weeklies revived these images during the na-

History, 104.

¹⁹Smoot, quoted in Merrill, *Reed Smoot*, 52.

²⁰"Senate Refuses to Oust Smoot," *New York Times*, February 21, 1907, 5.

²¹Reed Smoot, Letter to John G. McQuarrie, December 16, 1902, quoted in Merrill, *Reed Smoot*, 31.

²²Harvard S. Heath, "The Reed Smoot Hearings: A Quest for Legiti-

tional crusades against Smoot. A particularly effective image used from the beginning of this period was depicting Mormonism as an octopus, many-armed and hard to kill. Of course, polygamy was one of the much-feared tentacles, insinuating itself into the nation's institutions despite the 1890 Manifesto. Dr. Charles L. Thompson of New York, secretary of the Presbyterian Assembly, in a widely publicized 1903 speech, summarized the popular fear: "There is a moment . . . to seize it [Mormonism] It is when it thrusts forth its head. It has done it. Its high priest claims a senator's chair in Washington." Thompson concluded to great applause from the assembly: "It [Mormonism] is not to be educated, not to be civilized, not to be reformed—it must be crushed."²³ Thompson's militaristic imagery communicates not just an exclusionary but a hostile attitude toward Mormon participation in American politics.²⁴ Such rhetoric also reflects highly charged religious sentiments that continued to inspire and inflame endless public protests, whose aims were not just to eradicate polygamy or unseat Smoot, but to destroy Mormonism.

Protestant churches in Utah, evangelical ministers, and women's organizations were among the many voices raised to decry Smoot. Local Methodists were well known in Utah for their anti-Mormon conferences in the new century's open years. The Ministerial Alliance of Salt Lake City, led by William Paden, became the major player in this local attempt to expel Smoot from of-

macy," *Journal of Mormon History* 33, no. 2 (Summer 2007): 17–18.

²³Quoted in Brigham H. Roberts, *Defense of the Faith and the Saints*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1907, 1912), 1:74–5. I use the pagination of the reprinted edition by Maasai Publishing, 2002.

²⁴This hostile attitude toward Mormonism can be further seen in the heavy use of "wartime" metaphors to describe the events surrounding Smoot and the LDS Church, such as Joseph F. Smith taking "fire" from the committee, as well as newspaper titles like "War on the Mormon Church." See *New York Times*, November 9, 1903, 2. As linguistics professor George Lakoff recognizes, metaphors are not random, but rather illuminate the mental structure of how we conceive of them, thus framing our actions; as he put it, "we act according to the way we conceive them." George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (1980; rpt., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 5.

face and embarrass the Mormon Church.²⁵ This alliance helped organize and unite the state's once-divided evangelical churches to focus on opposition to Mormonism. Paden's anti-Mormon efforts to stir popular sentiment benefited from an accident of timing. In May 1903, at the beginning of his local crusade, a large number of Presbyterian ministers from eastern states were passing through Salt Lake City by train en route to a general assembly in Los Angeles. Salt Lake's Ministerial Alliance solicited their cooperation and distributed several pamphlets focused on the more sensational and threatening aspects of the "Mormon Question." According to B. H. Roberts, the Ministerial Alliance gave these ministers more than a thousand pamphlets, which they distributed at the General Assembly. It was also reported that these same pamphlets would be presented to the Baptist Conference in Buffalo, New York; the Congregational Conference in Portland, Oregon; the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, the YWCA and YMCA conventions, and the Inter-Denominational Association of Women.²⁶ So successful was this nationwide appeal that the *New York Times* found it noteworthy when the thirty-second annual conventions of the New York and the New Jersey Evangelical Lutheran Synod adjourned without passing a resolution protesting Smoot's election.²⁷

The most disconcerting protest against Smoot came from the Interdenominational Council of Women for Christian and Patriotic Service. They warned in February 1903 that Mormons took secret oaths to "avenge upon the Government of the United States the death of Joseph and [Hyrum] Smith," thus associating Smoot with treason.²⁸ In fact, so widely established and uncritically accepted were notions of Mormon anti-Americanness and treachery that Burrows, the chairman of the Committee on Privileges, remarked that it was "impossible for the committee to hear all the protes-

²⁵Roberts, *Defense of the Faith*, 1:73-74.

²⁶*Ibid.*, 1:73.

²⁷"Lutherans Fail to Act in Smoot Case," *New York Times*, September 12, 1903, 5.

²⁸"Ministers Act on Smoot," *New York Times*, March 1, 1903, 2.

tants.”²⁹ Indeed, these protests were said to have come from every state and territory in the nation, in “hundreds of thousands of documents.”³⁰

In the halls of Congress itself, Robert Tayler assumed his political appointment as counsel for the complaints against Smoot as both a patriotic and religious obligation. To him, Mormonism threatened the “sacred pledges of the past.” Assuring the committee that his motivations were not “anti-church” bigotry, Tayler declared himself to be the voice of liberty. This fight, as he phrased it, lay “at the foundation of democracy of Thomas Jefferson and the republicanism of Abraham Lincoln. It is the sunlight and air of every true patriot.” The protest against Smoot was not merely a narrow political concern within American governance but represented a struggle “as deep as the human soul, as broad as life.” In addition to attacking Smoot’s Americanness, Tayler questioned his right, as a leading official in the Mormon Church, to hold public office. Indeed, he questioned any Mormon’s right. Though this attack against religious liberty appears extreme today, especially since Tayler was justifying his actions with the names of Jefferson and Lincoln, he argued that his fight was not “hysteria” but an attempt to preserve the propriety and integrity of government itself.³¹

In the context of the time, Tayler was appealing to national concerns. The history of polygamy, rumors of continuing polygamy, and the supposed Church “dictatorship” set Mormonism at odds with nationally cherished ideals of monogamy and democracy and therefore was an opponent to basic social ideals. The idea of a Mormon, not to mention one of its highest leaders, in charge of making laws for all Americans, justified the intense concern manifested in the heated rhetoric of Tayler and others. Despite the significant level of protest and alarm and the fact that evangelical ministers were largely the instigators of such high emotions against him and his religion, Smoot remained confident. He adamantly insisted that he had broken no law, local or national, nor was he guilty of any practices destructive to home or family. He de-

²⁹Smoot Hearings, 1:70.

³⁰Merrill, *Reed Smoot*, 38.

³¹Smoot Hearings, 1:984, 42.

clared his election proper and himself endowed with “the patriotism and loyalty expected and demanded from every United States Senator.”³² As he told McQuarrie, he clearly saw that, as a politician, he represented the Church: “The ministers will have to show their hand to get anywhere and then the people of the United States will know and realize that this is not a fight against Reed Smoot, but that it is a fight against the authority of God on earth and against the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.”³³ He confidently expected that the religious motivations behind his opponents’ attacks would fall flat. Their “hand” was not only based on falsehood but was an illegitimate manifestation of religious influence in state affairs. Significantly, as this fight against Smoot wore on (not unlike Utah’s four decade-long bid for statehood), the opposition began to look more and more like the sole fight of prejudiced non-Mormon ministers in Utah.³⁴

THE PROGRESSIVE ERA, 1890s–1910s

U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt in January 1903 had dismissed Mormonism’s religious claims, particularly its temple ordinances, as “foolishness.” But like many other citizens, Roosevelt’s tolerance for emotionally driven paranoia waned steadily as the hearings dragged on.³⁵ Noted historian Harvard Heath, “Pro-Smoot speeches . . . appealed to reason and common sense while the heated fulminations of the anti-Smoot senators seemed too mean-spirited to have much credibility.”³⁶ This changing sentiment from emotional polemics to rational investigation was part of the changing era itself. “Myths” are stories (true or false) that take account of who we are, how we got here, and finally where we are going. As such, myths (both secular and religious) have proved important throughout American history in establishing basic ideolo-

³²Ibid., 1:32.

³³Reed Smoot, Letter to John G. McQuarrie, December 16, 1902, in Merrill, *Reed Smoot*, 31.

³⁴In a similar vein, non-Mormon ministers in Salt Lake City were accused in 1893 of being the main opponents of Utah’s quest for statehood. “Is Utah Fit for Statehood,” *New York Times*, February 16, 1893, 4.

³⁵Flake, *The Politics of American Religious History*, 100.

³⁶Heath, “The Reed Smoot Hearings,” 73.

gies that create particular and powerful meaning and that order experience. Through myths, Americans effectively make sense of themselves, their environment, and those they come in contact with. The “Progressive Era” helped to broaden and redefine perspectives on a particular “national myth,” namely, the role of religion in society and how humankind could make more progress by secular means.

The unprecedented transformations that took place on a nationwide scale during the Progressive Era cannot be underestimated. Between 1870 and 1900, the United States went from being an agricultural nation of farmers, artisans, and merchants, to the “world’s foremost industrial power.”³⁷ The rural isolationism of the past had ended, notes Congregational minister and social activist Josiah Strong in 1893, for “steam and electricity are making the whole world a neighborhood and every man a neighbor.”³⁸ Indeed, the technology boom revolutionized how Americans lived, refashioning the literal landscape where they took up residence. Moreover, growing divisions in American popular thought deepened with the social realities of urbanization and industrialization. A strong upwelling of social and economic discontent was the inevitable result.³⁹ Technology brought forth industrialization, which called for the organization of new monopolies like corporate industries, the unemployment of skilled artisans, and the exploitation of poorly paid female, child, and unskilled laborers. “The progress of invention, by causing a continual ‘dropping’ of men,” complained Strong, “produces among operatives a feeling

³⁷David Goldfield, Carl Abbott, Virginia DeJohn Anderson, et al., *The American Journey: A History of the United States*, 2 vols. (Upper Saddle River: Prentice-Hall, 1998), 2:594.

³⁸Josiah Strong, *The New Era or the Coming Kingdom* (New York: Baker and Taylor, 1893), 344–45.

³⁹The new sense of optimism was astounding. Henry Adams wrote in 1900: “It is a new century, and what we used to call electricity is its God. . . . The period from 1870–1900 is closed. . . . The period from 1900–1930 is in full swing, and, gee-whacky! How it is going! It will break its damned neck long before it gets through, if it tries to keep up the speed.” Quoted in Paul F. Boller, *American Thought in Transition: The Impact of Evolutionary Naturalism, 1865–1900* (Boston: University of Massachusetts, 1969), 227.

of insecurity which ministers to discontent." Thus, technology brought joblessness, which creates social and economic instability, and finally "much discontent and not a little distress."⁴⁰

The national myth, as it had always been, continued to be one of "progress." However, Strong was arguing that evangelical methods to control and shape these massive progressive transformations were "sadly deficient." In a moment of prophetic utterance, Strong cautioned that if the churches did not "awake to their duty and their opportunity," then the "present tendencies will continue until our cities are literally heathenized."⁴¹ Preachers who espoused the popular ideas of social Darwinism, together with a form of the "prosperity gospel," taught the ruthless concepts that God simply designed some to get ahead while others were destined to be impoverished.⁴² Rather than benefiting the nation, Strong warned, such elitism produced violent discontents. Thus, the great transformations of the Progressive Era not only illuminated grave social and economic problems but also exposed the inability of traditional religion to solve them.

The national myth of progress that mainstream Americans

⁴⁰Strong, *The New Era*, 143.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, 253, 255, 201.

⁴²Celebrated Reverend De Witt Talmage of the Central Presbyterian Church in Brooklyn demonstrated this condescending sentiment of churches toward the working class in light of industrialization and urbanization: "The fact is, if you had all the churches free, by mixing up the common people with the uncommon, you would keep one-half of Christians sick at their stomach. If you are going to kill the church thus with bad smells, I will have nothing to do with this work of evangelization." This attitude paralleled that of Brooklyn's Plymouth Church minister Henry Ward Beecher: "God has intended the great to be great and the little to be little." Both quoted in Boller, *American Thought in Transition*, 118–19. Josiah Strong, *The New Era*, 209–11, expressed grave concern with this form of exclusion, then widespread in churches: "But I fear that a very large proportion are indifferent or worse than indifferent in regard to reaching the masses with Christian influence, under the impression that the church is a kind of religious coterie or 'steeped club,' existing expressly for 'our sort of folks.' They are under the impression that 'our sort of folks' would pretty nearly exhaust the list of the elect; they are willing that the masses should be saved, but not in their church or by their instrumentality."

were relying upon was undergoing intense transition during this era, from an evangelical post-millenarianism to that of secularized scientific investigation.⁴³ At the beginning of the Progressive Era, few Americans saw these two myths (religious versus secular progress) as separate. Indeed, many nineteenth-century Americans understood Protestant Christianity as the leading driver of scientific and social progress.⁴⁴ According to a strong group of Protestant intellectuals—among them the influential pastor of Plymouth Congregational Church in Brooklyn Henry Ward Beecher—natural science would play an important part in bringing forth Christ’s kingdom in America.⁴⁵ Strong, who not incidentally was an avid supporter of anti-Mormon movements and women’s organizations,

⁴³Historian of religion and American culture George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 2d ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 50–55, argues the failure of postmillenarianism when challenged by modernity. As such, the more “socially responsible” postmillenarianism was abandoned for a more isolationistic premillenarianistic worldview of politics. Ferenc M. Szasz, *The Divided Mind of Protestant America, 1880–1930* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1982), 72–75, also offers an important overview of the Bible Conferences that continued to grow since 1876, popularizing a form of premillennialism that would continue to define itself against the growing tides of both modernity and liberal Christianity. Adherents of this reactionary movement against modernity and liberalism soon self-titled themselves the “Fundamentalists.”

⁴⁴Ethnographer and theorist of religion Stanley Tambiah, *Magic, Science, Religion, and the Scope of Rationality* (1900; rpt., Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 17, notes that, prior to late nineteenth-century debates surrounding Darwinism, Protestant theology and modern science were strongly allied. Historian J. Edward Larson, *Summer for the Gods: The Scopes Trial and America’s Continuing Debate over Science and Religion* (New York: Basic Books, 2006), 23, further noted that, by the end of the nineteenth century, evolutionary theory was not anti-religious but had been incorporated into leading textbooks with a theistic twist that reflected prevailing scientific opinion.

⁴⁵Nineteenth-century Protestants in America allied themselves with the American philosophy of Francis Bacon, who had established that careful observation and classification of the facts presented the avenue toward scientific truth. This approach was connected to the popular notion of “common sense realism,” which asserted that things were just as they ap-

had argued as early as 1893 that science not only represented an extension of this evangelical kingdom, but was also a new revelation from God. Scientists could therefore be seen as akin to ancient prophets declaring “the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”⁴⁶ Although elites had been arguing (both for and against) the connection of science and religion for decades, by the early stages of the twentieth century, these worldviews revealed themselves in the minds of a growing number of Americans as bitter enemies, culminating in the diminishing public role of postmillennialists in society.⁴⁷

At the time Strong wrote about his view of scientists as prophets, American scientists were beginning to adopt methodologies

peared to be. As Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 7, 14–15, notes, far from excluding religion, as the next century would do, scientists could focus on theology as well as geology, needing only to classify the certainties of that subject and avoid speculative hypotheses. “The Bible, of course, revealed the moral law; but the faculty of common sense, which agreed with Scripture, was a universal standard. According to Common Sense philosophy, one can intuitively know the first principles of morality as certainly as one can apprehend other essential aspects of reality.” See also pp. 24, 50, for more on Beecher and the larger theological connection between science and the kingdom of God, which was to be a literal historical event, taking place “in this world,” not otherworldly, but “here and now.” Tuveson, *Redeemer Nation*, 29–30, had earlier argued that redemption of society had its appointed progression, and natural laws could not be ignored. See also a copy of Beecher’s sermon “Evolution and the Church” as reprinted in Edwin S. Gaustad, ed., *A Documentary History of Religion in American Since 1865*, 2d ed. (1983; rpt., Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2002), 342–45.

⁴⁶Strong, *The New Era*, 11, 12, 22, 30.

⁴⁷Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 48–51, shows that, as the popularity of premillennialism rose near the end of the century, postmillenarianism did not disappear, but rather transferred hope for the kingdom from this world to the heavens. Although the Social Gospel demonstrates a continued interest in a type of here-and-now amelioration, postmillennialism became secularized in the sense that it dropped many earlier supernatural expectations, becoming more figurative and less literal. For early controversies surrounding Darwinism and religion, see Bert J. Loewenberg, “The Controversy over Evolution in New England 1859–1873,” *New England Quarterly* 8, no. 2 (June 1935): 232–57.

and questions that would threaten the very fabric of Christianity itself, especially as a growing number of millennialists rethought it. In particular, Darwinian theories of evolution brought into question the biblical account of creation of the earth and the divine creation of humankind. In response, Charles Hodge, professor of systematic theology at Princeton, agreed that Darwinism, as a symbol of atheistic empiricism, threatened to “dethrone God” in the quest for ultimate truth.⁴⁸ Together with these controversies and challenges from evolutionary theory, German Higher Criticism challenged the authenticity of Christ’s life, death, and resurrection, and the infallibility of the Bible, finally, German moral relativism questioned the very concept of civilization itself.⁴⁹ Therefore, by the time of the Smoot hearings, the divisions and hostilities (both real and imagined) between religion and secularism were well underway.

Throughout the nineteenth century, evangelicals provided an important millennial worldview that supported notions of America’s manifest destiny, constantly in tension with the all-too-real sectarian anxieties and social failings. Many, however, both evangelical and nonevangelical, began to lose faith in a religious approach to these deep societal concerns. Becoming increasingly pessimistic about their ability to ameliorate an increasingly complicated and troubled society, more and more Christian millennialists began to believe that Christ’s second advent would follow the destruction of the wicked world (premillennialism) rather than believing that faithful and righteous Christian would prepare the world for Christ’s return (postmillennialism).⁵⁰ The major distinction between these two oversimplifications of Amer-

⁴⁸Boller, *American Thought in Transition*, 22.

⁴⁹German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, following his intellectual forerunners Karl Marx and Ludwig Feuerbach, tore apart traditional notions of good and evil in 1887. He questioned the very value of values, noting that morals are all manufactured to oppress lower classes, priests being the worst offenders, and classifying “all religions” as being, “at bottom systems of cruelty.” Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy and The Genealogy of Morals*, translated by Francis Golffing (1872, 1887; rpt., New York: Doubleday, 1956) 167, 192.

⁵⁰Marsden, *Fundamentalism in American Culture*, 49.

ican millenarianism is to be found in the basic attitude of optimism or pessimism, which informed science, defined “progress,” and thus set the social agenda.⁵¹

Given this division within Protestantism, secularists and liberal Protestants allied to rely on “natural principles” (as opposed to theological), a philosophical coalition that directly informed the national setting that the movement against Smoot had to answer to. At the same time, the simultaneous frontal attack on Christian power by secularists took full advantage of this division and strife among Protestant denominations at the beginning of the twentieth century. Traditional Protestant notions of the kingdom were being replaced by more secularized ones.⁵² Although evangelicals, ability to resist this ideological change did not totally disappear, they found their ability to influence American public life largely exhausted and their efforts increasingly marginalized.

Despite the philosophical contest that left conservative evangelicals increasingly sidelined and irrelevant after the Scopes trial

⁵¹BYU scholar of religion Grant Underwood, *The Millenarian World of Early Mormonism* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1993), 3–5, 8, 41, 74, recognized that the “simplistic differentiations about whether Christ will come before (pre-) or after (post-) the millennium are hardly sufficient to distinguish these two schools of thought.” The eschatology of Mormonism, for example, “is thoroughly premillennial,” despite its postmillennial evangelical drive, its social sense of responsibility, and its heavy political aspirations. As a general rule, premillennialists are literalists, while postmillennialists were more allegorists. Mormonism, however, represented a mix of figurative, literal, and allusive tendencies in their biblical interpretations. Therefore, the major differences between the two camps can be seen as differences of scriptural interpretation on such key points as what the kingdom will look like, humanity’s role (or non-role) in bringing forth this kingdom, the need for evangelism, and importantly the relation of the state in this coming messianic millennial kingdom.

⁵²According to sociologist Christian Smith, ed., *The Secular Revolution: Power, Interests, and Conflict in the Secularization of American Public Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 1, this drastic societal shift can be attributed to the “Secular Revolution,” which occurred between 1870 and 1930. The secularization of American public life represented more of a “contested revolutionary struggle than a natural evolutionary progression.”

(aka “Monkey trial”) of 1925–27, their influence in the nation did not disappear and would roar back to the center of political life in the last quarter of the twentieth century. Still a force to be reckoned with during the Smoot hearings, evangelicals had already lost enough ground to secularism that the national mood was disposed to let Mormonism speak for and defend itself against the barrage of insults being thrown against it. Mormons were likely inclined to present themselves in a more empirically inspired “progressive” fashion.⁵³ Indeed, Smoot represented a church that was facing and incorporating significant and radical changes. Of course, in 1890, the Manifesto radically transformed how marriage would be theologically understood and temporally practiced. In the October 1901 general conference, on the eve of the Smoot hearings and just days prior to his death, President Lorenzo Snow explained in an “epistle to the world” that progress as seen in technology was not purely a human accomplishment, but was indeed “prompted by His Spirit which before long will be poured out upon all flesh that will receive it,”⁵⁴ which amounted to an enthusiastic embrace of progress per se. Emmeline B. Wells, noted suffragist and Mormon leader, also echoed this late nineteenth-century view of progress: “The spirit of progress of this age is the work of God.”⁵⁵ Though technically premillennial, such Mormon leanings were a practical adaptation to the Progressive Era. Mormonism heralded scientific progress as its own, and unlike other premillennialists, did not seek retrenchment from public society.

Joseph F. Smith, John R. Winder, and Anthon H. Lund, in a First Presidency letter to President Francis M. Lyman, referred with pride to the year 1904 as a “building era,” and then in a “Christmas Greeting” to the whole Church in 1906, commented that “a healthy, progressive spirit has been manifested in almost every part of Zion.” In their growing “intermountain metropolis,” Latter-day Saints found themselves better organized internally, pushing forward with larger social improvements, including com-

⁵³Thomas G. Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition: A History of the Latter-day Saints, 1890–1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996), 126.

⁵⁴Lorenzo Snow, “Greeting to the World,” January 1, 1901, in Clark, *Messages of the First Presidency*, 3:335.

⁵⁵Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition*, 96.

munication, architectural structures, agriculture, transportation, and medical care.⁵⁶ There were also improvements in education, ecclesiastics, business, politics, medicine, and proselytizing. Religiously, the Church was refining itself socially, educationally, theologically, and ecclesiastically. For example, in 1894, illiterate missionaries were no longer being sent out; non-tithe-payers were kept from the temple in 1898; the importance of serious and accurate recordkeeping was reemphasized in 1902; stake presidents were advised in 1903 to be more selective when calling stake patriarchs; congregational “floating” was condemned in 1902, and by 1905 widespread non-attendance was strongly rebuked; and members who would not abstain from alcohol and did not keep the Word of Wisdom in 1908 had their memberships threatened.⁵⁷ “The Church is now seventy-two years of age,” President Lorenzo Snow reminded the Saints in his last conference address in 1901. “We are not expected to do the work of the days of our youth, but to do greater, larger, and more extensive work.”⁵⁸ Smoot, in his election to the Senate, and subsequent defense of his seat, brought the Church before the world during this era of progress, supporting the Mormon Church’s revived sense of purpose and destiny. His success symbolized a feeling of profound change for both the Church and the Mormons’ place in the nation. Although many prominent Mormons initially questioned the wisdom of Smoot’s run, LDS president Joseph F. Smith assured himself and other believers that God was behind such events.⁵⁹

With Snow’s passing in 1901, his last address, considered a

⁵⁶First Presidency, Letter to Francis M. Lyman, August 21, 1903, in Clark, *Messages of the First Presidency*, 4:64–65; The First Presidency Christmas Greeting, December 15, 1906, in *ibid.*, 4:128–32.

⁵⁷These developments are identified in various First Presidency statements during the period. *Ibid.*, 3:265, 266, 288, 315; 4:12, 35, 58, 64, 100, 130, 185.

⁵⁸Lorenzo Snow’s “last address” from *Conference Reports*, October 1901, *ibid.*, 4:11.

⁵⁹“If I have ever had the inspiration of the spirit of the Lord given to me forcefully and clearly it has been on this one point concerning Reed Smoot, and that is, instead of his being retired, he should be continued in the United States Senate.” Joseph F. Smith, quoted in Alexander, *Mormon-*

revelation by his successor Joseph F. Smith, became a standard of progress that would take the Church into the new century. The Church may not have become “more” American in its approach toward progress, but it brought a feeling of inclusion into the national life that Mormons had not until then enjoyed. The 1890s had seen much of the same feeling, especially in the 1893 World’s Fair in Chicago where the Mormon Tabernacle Choir won a prize and was cheered by thousands. The *New York Times* quoted non-Mormon Colonel Isaac Trumbo in 1894, an organizer and leader of the struggle to achieve statehood for Utah, as remarking that Utah had much to offer the nation, and that Mormons during this era were “intense Americans.”⁶⁰ Statehood, so long deferred, represented a new level of acceptance. Of course, ridicule and suspicion against the Mormon Church continued during the new century, but in some ways, it was becoming less hostile. This new century had become more conciliatory and open, noted Mormon historian Thomas Alexander, providing better opportunities for the Church to launch “concerted efforts to explain the Latter-day Saints to the outside world.”⁶¹

VOICES AGAINST, VOICES FOR

The “outside world” was changing its mood and temperament as well. Many Americans at the turn of the century still doubted whether Mormons were sufficiently loyal Americans to be entrusted with high public service, and the ground in which this contest played out was Smoot’s seating. Throughout the hearings, Smoot and his supporters had gone from optimistic to pessimistic, to once again optimistic, yet the year 1905 proved particularly difficult, especially in light of Apostles Matthias F. Cowley and John W. Taylor’s status as defenders of polygamy and their refusal to be

ism in Transition, 30. Milton Merrill, *Reed Smoot*, 29, notes that President Smith was the only one who could have persuaded Smoot to retire, but never did, despite the opposition by many LDS who felt that now was no time for the Church to engage the nation in another struggle with public opinion.

⁶⁰“Sees a Bright Outlook for Utah,” *New York Times*, July 23, 1894, 5.

⁶¹Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition*, 257.

questioned by the committee in Washington.⁶² Despite internal concerns, there were no public efforts to discipline these apostles, with the result that the Church's credibility was being seriously eroded. To the nation, Joseph F. Smith's passivity where these apostles were concerned supported suspicions of Mormon insincerity and gave revived legitimacy to any and all anti-Mormon attacks. Mrs. Frederic (Hannah) Schoff, president of the National Congress of Mothers and leader of the National League of Women's Organizations, declared Mormonism in March 1905 "a menace to every home in America." Mary E. James in her speech at the same anti-Smoot assembly declared the Church's origin "one of fraud and duplicity."⁶³ One month later the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution passed a resolution embodying its view that the Mormon "hierarchy" sought "the overthrow of the government."⁶⁴ Marian Bonsall of Minneapolis, following a two-month-long visit to Utah, declared in July 1905 that Mormon Utah was "practically a bit of foreign territory in the midst of our country" and a greater menace than previously thought.⁶⁵

Reaching a height at the time of the Smoot hearings, anti-Catholic rhetoric long paralleled what was also being thrown at Smoot and the Mormon Church. As historian William Shea explains, "Anti-Catholicism was never purely a religious matter for American Protestants; it was from the outset a political fear as well, for the Catholic Church was never a purely or merely objectionable *religious* system."⁶⁶ Mimicking the sentiments of many early Americans, Samuel Finley Breese Morse (1791–1872), devel-

⁶²Heath, "The Reed Smoot Hearings," 30–33, demonstrates growing resentment against Taylor and Cowley by Smoot and the rest of the nation, particularly for the apparent stigma of insincerity and untruthfulness it placed on Smoot and Mormonism in light of the 1890 and 1904 Manifestos and the Amnesty of 1901.

⁶³Joan Smyth Iversen, *The Antipolygamy Controversy in U.S. Women's Movements, 1880–1925: A Debate on the American Home* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1997), 217; "Mormonism Scored," *Washington Post*, March 15, 1905, 2.

⁶⁴"Congress at an End," *Washington Post*, April 23, 1905, 2.

⁶⁵"Mormons a Menace," *Washington Post*, July 11, 1905, 7.

⁶⁶William M. Shea, *The Lion and the Lamb: Evangelicals and Catholics in*

oper of the electric telegraph and Morse Code, made the comparison that “Popery, from its very nature,” favored “despotism,” whereas Protestantism, “from its very nature,” favored “liberty.”⁶⁷ Nathan O. Hatch, historian of American religions, demonstrates that the Second Great Awakening (1800s–1830s) brought forth an important democratization of American culture, including religious and political aspects. Following Jacksonian philosophy that any citizen (as long as you were white, male, and Protestant) could become U.S. president, the Great Awakening inspired the idea that any individual could perform God’s work in America. God resided in the individual soul, not a church structure.⁶⁸ However, rather than inspiring religious pluralism as often assumed, this new philosophy of individualism redefined the role of religion in politics in highly exclusionary terms. Rather than setting up a “secular” political arena that honored religious freedom and equality, “separation of Church and State” now said that only individuals (Protestants), not churches or hierarchies (Catholics), could participate in state affairs.⁶⁹

Prior to the emergence of Mormonism, Catholicism represented the quintessential American “other,” allowing Americans to draw boundaries around what they considered to be the limits of religious liberty and tolerance. Catholic immigrants were, of course, welcomed to the United States, explained the eminent New England pastor Lyman Beecher in 1836, but only as they became “American,” which to him, according to Shea, meant Protestant.⁷⁰ Mormonism, with its similarly structured hierarchical “church,” provoked similar (if not identical) fears among mainstream Americans. Apostles Taylor and Cowley quickly became the symbols of the LDS “hierarchy,” which all eagerly watched.

America (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 56; emphasis his.

⁶⁷Quoted in *ibid.*, 60.

⁶⁸Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 3–16.

⁶⁹Since Thomas Jefferson, “separation of Church and State” may have moved religion out of politics, yet made politics intensely religious. See Philip Hamburger, *Separation of Church and State* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002), 142–43, 228.

⁷⁰Quoted in *ibid.*, 60, 64.

The escalation of suspicions and denunciations of the Church's failure to enforce either the first (1890) or second (1904) Manifesto finally reached a climax when it seemed that Smoot's political life was on the line. Smoot avoided attending April 1905 general conference so that he would not have to vote for or against Taylor or Cowley's status in the quorum and, although he attended October's conference, did not vote to sustain them individually, although he did sustain them in the general designation of "prophets, seers, and revelators."⁷¹ In late October, Francis M. Lyman, president of the Twelve, asked Taylor and Cowley to resign. They promptly obeyed, and new, monogamous apostles were sustained the following April conference.⁷² Considering the extent to which this battle was one of public image, the fact that Joseph F. Smith gave Smoot permission to make the resignations known only if absolutely necessary to retain his seat is significant. Still, this action had its desired effect. Although the committee vote on June 6, 1906, recommended Smoot's expulsion, the whole-Senate vote on February 20, 1907, was positive, allowing Smoot and his religion to be engaged in the nation's political life on less emotionally hostile terms. Signs of religious pluralism were beginning to appear, but the entrance fee was that religious groups must behave themselves and make appropriate accommodations to the dominant national myth of progress. Part of that myth was the growing national belief that church and state should remain separate, a mood that contributed to the public view that Smoot's religion was not a qualifying or disqualifying factor.

This overview should not be read as meaning that anti-Smoot/anti-Mormon efforts were negligible. The opposition to

⁷¹Merrill, *Reed Smoot*, 57. In reporting on the April 1905 Mormon conference, the *Washington Post* noted that, in the sustaining of the First Presidency and the Twelve, two negative votes came from the bishops' section of the Tabernacle, most likely against Apostles Taylor, Cowley, and Teasdale. "Revolt of Mormons," April 7, 1905, 1.

⁷²Flake, *The Politics of American Religious Identity*, 91-94; Heath, "The Reed Smoot Hearings," 57-59. With the death of Marriner W. Merrill that following February, the three apostolic vacancies were filled by George F. Richards, Orson F. Whitney, and David O. McKay. "Two Apostles Are Let Go," *Los Angeles Times*, April 9, 1906, 11.

Smoot was still very much an exceedingly strong “religious crusade” against Smoot that the Mormons and non-Mormons recognized. However, given the emerging sense of religious pluralism, some within even the most hostile Protestant churches were questioning the appropriateness of such politically focused religious crusades. For example, John I. Platt of the Presbyterian General Assembly in May 1904 strongly opposed the reports against Smoot and his religion, thereby creating pandemonium in the assembly. “Hold on gentlemen,” he insisted. “I have a right to my opinion. I hold this as a political question with which this Assembly has nothing to do.”⁷³ Though achieving some support in the assembly, his objection was voted down. In attacking Smoot, Platt had argued, the Presbyterian Assembly was not attacking Mormonism but the American principle of “separation” of church and state as he understood it. Truly, Platt spoke as a minority in the assembly, which had opened with a prayer that God would help to expel Smoot from office, but his view certainly represented a growing concern over the role of religion in American public life. He also represented a larger national interpretation of “separation” and the appropriateness of religious bodies to set or influence the political standards of the day.

Women’s organizations that opposed Smoot had gained by the end of 1905, according to the *Washington Post*, the support of more than two million women.⁷⁴ Yet some women took the unpopular public stand of attacking such crusades as inappropriate. Nationally known and respected suffragist leader Susan B. Anthony denounced the female voice against Smoot in 1903 as mere religious prejudice and a waste of time: “The idea of crushing polygamy by action against an individual who does not practice it, instead of a general enforcement of the law, seems to be a small way for our country to be acting.”⁷⁵

The case of Theodore Roosevelt vividly reveals the change in thinking from religious to more secular concerns, or at least a

⁷³“Presbyterian Union in Sight,” *New York Times*, May 29, 1904, 7.

⁷⁴“Want Smoot Unseated,” *Washington Post*, October 28, 1905, 4; “Signed by 1,000,000 Women,” *Washington Post*, November 26, 1905, 8; “Smoot Keeps His Seat,” *Washington Post*, February 24, 1907, 4.

⁷⁵“Miss Anthony for Smoot,” *New York Times*, January 27, 1903, 1; see

new relationship between the two. Although Roosevelt accepted the implications of social Darwinism, he adamantly rejected the earlier stances toward the poor that pastors Henry Ward Beecher and De Witt Talmage, had long espoused. The “social gospel” movement (together with the “gospel of wealth”⁷⁶) became the new religious beacon that men like Roosevelt engaged to solve the ills of an increasingly secularized society.⁷⁷ Quoting James 2:18, Roosevelt once defined his sole religious creed as: “I will show my faith by my works.”⁷⁸ Merit, not metaphysics, became the central tool of judgment for Roosevelt and many co-progressives in national politics. Originally, Roosevelt had advised Smoot “kindly but firmly” against his 1903 candidacy for the U.S. Senate; and although he later came to actively support Smoot, he was never comfortable with the idea of a senator who was also an

also Iversen, *The Antipolygamy Controversy*, 219.

⁷⁶Taken from the idea of organic evolution as popularized by Charles Darwin, “social Darwinism” applied these principles to society. Not only did this philosophy inform the idea of racial hierarchy, but it also bled into justifying one’s class position within society, where the strong, by natural law, get ahead. The poor were to be left to themselves, so as not to disrupt the social world plan. The “gospel of wealth” played off these principles of social Darwinism but deemed it the obligation of the wealthy to increase the wealth of the community. According to this philosophy, the rich had a trusteeship for the poor. The “social gospel” represented a more aggressive social awareness of this obligation to the poor. In this mentality, righteous action, not dogmatic belief, lay at the heart of “true religion.” Consequently, as historian William Hutchison explained, “Social gospel activity meant exposure to minorities and their problems. Quite often, it involved exposure to their religious forms and religious experience.” Interestingly, this emphasis of the social gospel on the part of Roosevelt helps explain his softer stance toward Smoot. For more on these social movements of the early twentieth century, see William R. Hutchison, *Religious Pluralism in America: The Contentious History of a Founding Ideal* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2003), 85–88, 101–6, 175, 177.

⁷⁷Clifford Putney, *Muscular Christianity: Manhood and Sports in Protestant America, 1800–1920* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001), 40.

⁷⁸George E. Mowry, *The Era of Theodore Roosevelt, 1900–1912* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958), 48.

apostle.⁷⁹ In early 1903, Roosevelt, conversing with C. E. Loose, a mutual friend who was also Smoot's political ally, had two questions: "Is Smoot a polygamist?" and "Are Mormons good Americans?"⁸⁰ Loose's firm defense of Smoot satisfied the president; but when Apostles Taylor and Cowley continued to evade testifying before the Senate committee, Smoot's support significantly eroded during the first months of 1905. Even Roosevelt's relations with Smoot became, in Smoot's word, "cool,"⁸¹ especially since Joseph F. Smith still required him to keep the Taylor and Cowley resignations a secret.⁸² Following the Church's reluctant sacrifice of Taylor and Cowley, Roosevelt threw solid support behind Smoot. Roosevelt's close friend and journalist Jacob Reis, whom he had sent later that year with an investigation committee to Utah, assured him there was nothing to fear from Mormons and much to respect. Roosevelt became wholly convinced that the continued national outcry against Smoot and his religion was simple religious persecution.

Roosevelt's decision to actively support Smoot generated wide controversy and criticism. For example, women's groups, particularly the Council of Mothers, for which Roosevelt had once served as its advisory committee chairman, decried his thinking.⁸³ Some national newspapers editorialized against his decision. A special in the *New York Times* noted that Roosevelt's own friends found his role "extremely unfortunate." Consequently, notes the *Times*, "He is believed to have alienated powerful friendships for the party."⁸⁴ Frederick T. Dubois, Idaho's Democratic Senator and former (1880s) active anti-Mormon federal marshal, and his equally vociferous wife, Edna, were as out-

⁷⁹Flake, *The Politics of American Religious Identity*, 12–13.

⁸⁰Merrill, *Reed Smoot*, 28.

⁸¹Milton R. Merrill, "Theodore Roosevelt and Reed Smoot," *Western Political Quarterly* 4, no. 3 (September 1951): 440–53; the quotation is from p. 441.

⁸²Flake, *The Politics of American Religious Identity*, 144.

⁸³*Ibid.*, 12–13, 146, 162. See also Merrill, *Reed Smoot*, 92; "Riis Misled President, Says a Senator's Wife," *New York Times*, December 19, 1906, 10.

⁸⁴"Smoot Is Assured of Victory To-day," *New York Times*, February 20, 1907, 5.

spoken as any could have been against the president. Smoot's biographer Milton R. Merrill called Dubois "the most vindictive enemy Smoot and the Church ever had." Dubois charged Roosevelt at the closing of the hearings in December 1906 with using his influence to help Smoot, declaring him a friend of a pernicious "law-defying and un-American organization." He continued, "Mormonism is more insidious, more dangerous, and a greater menace to our Government and civilization to-day than it was at any particular period when these messages were addressed to Congress. Yet President Roosevelt does not deem the subject worthy of mention in a message filled with suggestions."⁸⁵ In Roosevelt's own words, he sought to emulate the "unflinching resolution" and "unyielding courage" of his hero Abraham Lincoln, who stuck up for the "plain people," rather than the "demagogue."⁸⁶ As "chief" of this "democratic republic," Lincoln was to Roosevelt the embodiment of the "masculine Christianity" that he had learned at Boston's Trinity Church when he was a student at Harvard. Young Roosevelt must have been influenced by statements by Trinity's pastor, Philip Brooks, that it was concern for "one's self" that represented the "root of every cowardice."⁸⁷ It was the more liberal social gospel, infused with "muscular Christianity," rather than the conservative self-serving prosperity gospel that undergirded Roosevelt's hardheaded support of Smoot.

To Dubois, however, Roosevelt's warm relations with and active defense of Smoot were appalling. As such, he accused Roosevelt in the final phases of the hearings, of breaking the long chain of American presidents who have acted against, rather than in support of, national threats. To Dubois, Roosevelt was selfishly courting the Mormon vote at great national cost. He blasted Roosevelt for doing what "no president heretofore" had done, namely, to make national security "a matter of partisan poli-

⁸⁵Merrill, *Reed Smoot*, 37; "Dubois Attacks President," *New York Times*, December 14, 1906, 7.

⁸⁶H. W. Brands, *The Selected Letters of Theodore Roosevelt* (New York: Cooper Square Press, 2001), 375.

⁸⁷Kathleen Dalton, *Theodore Roosevelt: A Strenuous Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002), 62-63.

tics.”⁸⁸ Indeed, Roosevelt welcomed the Mormon vote, but Dubois’s accusations represented little more than overheated polemics. Hoping to diminish Roosevelt’s role, Dubois argued two months later, before the Senate took its final vote on February 20, 1907, that not ten senators, if they actually read the testimony, would vote for Reed Smoot. “But I know that strong influences are at work here,” Dubois continued. “The president of the United States is the open friend of the Senator from Utah. He wants him seated. You have got the Mormon vote. You have every one of them, my friends on the Republican side. But it has cost you the moral support of the Christian women and men of the United States.”⁸⁹

Roosevelt would have none of such complaints. He was convinced, based on investigation and his personal acquaintance with Smoot, that the accusations outlined in the original protests against the LDS Church were “without so much as the smallest basis in fact” and dismissed the women crusading against Smoot as manifestations of “hysterical persecution.”⁹⁰ A few years later in a letter to *Collier’s* magazine, he even praised the Mormon people for their “unusually high” standards of sexual morality.⁹¹ When Edna Dubois declared Mormonism a “treasonable organization” and “an even greater blot than was slavery” and accused Mormon children of being taught to “spit upon the American flag,” Roosevelt declared bluntly, “You don’t know what you are talking about.”⁹² He apparently was equally dismissive of any and all organizations that accused Mormonism of being un-American. Public misrepresentation was a political reality for which Roosevelt had little tolerance. In November 1904, Roosevelt announced an embargo on news from all federal departments in Washington to the Boston *Herald* for publishing “deliberate falsification” and “malicious inventions” about his own

⁸⁸“Dubois Attacks President,” 7.

⁸⁹“Senate Refuses to Oust Smoot,” *New York Times*, February 21, 1907, 5.

⁹⁰Iversen, *The Antipolygamy Controversy*, 224–27.

⁹¹Theodore Roosevelt, “Mr. Roosevelt to the Mormons,” *Collier’s*, April 15, 1911, 28.

⁹²“Smoot Is Assured of Victory To-day,” 5; see also “Riis Misled President,” 10.

family.⁹³ Linked with Roosevelt's valuing of the "strenuous life," historian Joan Smyth Iversen makes the interesting observation that Roosevelt's support of Smoot coincided with an understanding of sexuality compatible with the new secularism of the Progressive Era.⁹⁴ Roosevelt represented an important national shift in perceptions of male sexuality, from genteel Victorian "manliness," to a sturdier yet composed "masculinity." Therefore, Roosevelt's initial opposition to Mormonism had more to do with its support of a perverse view of masculine sexuality rather than with its breach with the Christian gospel. Consequently, unlike Dubois, when the Mormon Church had provided evidence of sincere opposition to polygamy in punishing Taylor and Cowley, Roosevelt's concerns were swept aside.⁹⁵

CRUSADE IN THE HALLS OF CONGRESS

What about the hearings themselves? The fact that evangelical ministers had spearheaded the stormy emotions against Smoot and his religion—the Presbyterian Convention sought to influence Congress to enact laws that would serve to "stamp it [polygamy] out forever"—were not lost on the senator.⁹⁶ However, his hopes that the Senate debates would be ruled by reason and investigation rather than bigotry and paranoia were, for the most part, disappointed. Dubois's ferocity was only chords in a loud chorus. Dubois accused Senator Albert J. Hopkins (D-Illinois), who voted in support of Smoot, of placing the Mormon Church above all other Christian organizations. Burrows claimed in April 1905 that to allow Smoot to retain his seat would drag "the churches of this land, Jew and Gentile, down to the level of abomination." Women

⁹³H. W. Brands, *T. R.: The Last Romantic* (New York: Basic Books, 1997), 519.

⁹⁴Iversen, *The Antipolygamy Controversy*, 224–27.

⁹⁵Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880–1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 190.

⁹⁶"The Mote and the Beam," *Los Angeles Times*, May 27, 1903, 6.

in the gallery applauded his statement.⁹⁷ Clearly, a substantial fraction of these American politicians and their supporters saw placing Mormonism on the same level as the “churches of this land” as a grave insult. The very extremity of these statements cast into high relief what was at stake in the Smoot case. The issue was not control of the Senate, but the country’s very salvation, its national integrity, and its notions of religious honor. The contest was rhetorically framed in terms of protecting the national prominence of the “true” Christian faith and the concept of morality and civilization it upheld.

Obviously, Mormon theology and its relation to traditional Christianity was of great interest, and questions over these matters arose early in the hearings. Late in the afternoon of March 3, 1904, attorney Robert Tayler questioned Joseph F. Smith about the nature of God in Mormon thought. Smith explained that, although the leaders of the Church declare that they have divine authority to speak for God,

“there is not, and can not be, any possible restraint held over the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints except the restraint which people themselves voluntarily give.”

Mr. Tayler. “In your conception of God then, He is not omnipotent or omniscient?”

Mr. Smith. “Oh yes; I think He is.”

Mr. Tayler: “But do you mean to say you, at your pleasure, obey or disobey the commands of Almighty God?”

Mr. Smith: “Yes sir.”

Mr. Tayler. “Communicated to you?”

Mr. Smith. “I obey or disobey at my will.”

Mr. Tayler. “Just as you please?”

Mr. Smith. “Just as I please.”

Mr. Tayler. “And that is the kind of a God you believe in?”

Mr. Smith. “That is exactly the kind of a God I believe in.”

Tayler obviously felt a sense of victory in establishing the impotence of Smith’s God compared to man’s will; however, Senator Joseph B. Foraker (R-Ohio) reminded Tayler that this doctrine of “free moral religion” was the same that “every good Methodist be-

⁹⁷“Congress at an End,” *Washington Post*, April 23, 1905, 2.

lieves in.”⁹⁸ Moral agency had become a core philosophical issue among early twentieth-century progressives. By tapping into it, Smith placed Mormonism directly in line with notable politicians like William Jennings Bryan, Theodore Roosevelt, and Woodrow Wilson.⁹⁹ Tayler’s zealotry to embarrass Mormonism demonstrated his inability to engage its theology rationally or seriously, also revealing the political dangers of doing so. Religion and politics thus shared an important relationship, for the theology of the former informed the assumptions and policies of the latter. To Tayler, Mormonism had to be either totally despotic (denying free will) or completely chaotic (God is unable to control his people) before he dared recognize it as viably Christian and by implication “American.” In a land that idealized religious liberty and national unity (however illusory), Mormonism always stood as the quintessential “other,” its direct opposite. Clearly, Tayler was making more of an attempt at exposition than investigation.

The next morning, March 4, Senator George F. Hoar (R-Massachusetts) continued this challenge against Smith and the Mormon religious worldview by referring to “our scripture—what we call the New Testament.” He was surprised when Smith replied that this was his scripture also.¹⁰⁰ As this simple fact had been known throughout the hearing and even acknowledged the day before by Hoar himself, his accusations were a fairly clumsy attempt to discredit Mormonism as a Christian or biblically based religion.¹⁰¹ Interestingly, although one of the central concerns over Smoot’s election had been whether Mormonism could separate church from state, here, clearly, was a member of the senate (Smoot) being “sized up” for political office according to an explicit scriptural model.

Predictably, polygamy promptly became the center of this theological wrangling between Smith and the committee. Hoar quoted 1 Timothy 3:2, which states that a bishop must be the husband of one wife, a familiar verse often used by Protestant minis-

⁹⁸Smoot Hearings, 1:161.

⁹⁹For a detailed social and political analysis of moral agency, see Mowry, *The Era of Theodore Roosevelt*, 50.

¹⁰⁰*Ibid.*, 1:209.

¹⁰¹*Ibid.*, 1:179.

ters to discredit Mormon polygamy.

Senator Hoar. "I understood—and I am not sure I understood you aright—that it [the injunction to practice polygamy] was permissive, but did you mean to say that or do you mean to say that it is obligatory, so far as a general principle of conduct is concerned, but not mandatory under the circumstances?"

"Now I will illustrate what I mean by the injunction of our scripture—what we call the New Testament."

Mr. Smith. "Which is our scripture also?"

Senator Hoar. "Which is your scripture also?"

Mr. Smith. "Yes, sir."

Senator Hoar. "The apostle says that a bishop must be sober and must be the husband of one wife."

Mr. Smith. "At least."

Senator Hoar. "We do not say that. [Laughter] The bishop must be sober and must be the husband of one wife. I suppose that is generally construed to enjoin upon bishops the marriage relation. But I have known several bishops, two in my own State, of great distinction, who were bachelors . . ."

To support the idea that polygamy is a legitimate biblical practice, Smith commented that this particular scriptural injunction was given "in the midst of polygamous people, and that all the people believed in the practice of polygamy at that time."¹⁰² However inaccurate Smith's commentary might have been, neither Hoar nor any other member of the committee disputed it.

Scriptural interpretation and theological commentary proved an important aspect of both attacking and defending Mormonism as a legitimate American religion. Both sides used this tactic to determine whether Mormonism had a place in civic life. As theological disputes continued, not just against Smith, but throughout the hearings, it grew apparent that Mormons had answers to back up their claims about revelation, temple worship, and most important, polygamy. To the chagrin of the committee members, discrediting Mormonism's claims proved more difficult than expected. Recognizing this, Tayler pushed a new approach that he hoped would decisively expose the incompatibility of Mormonism with American political and social culture.

On April 26, 1904, he attacked Mormonism on the grounds of

¹⁰²Ibid., 1:209–10.

lack of patriotism and “manhood,” and the restriction of individual choice in the LDS Church. As a witness, he called former Mormon apostle Moses Thatcher. Tayler attempted to present Thatcher as the heroic embodiment of individuality and agency who had been deposed as an apostle for standing up against the powerful Church hierarchy. This depiction enabled Tayler to remind the committee again of Mormonism’s breach of church/ state separation, an influence perceived as fundamentally different from the influences of Protestantism upon the free moral agency of the individual. Thatcher had been dropped from the quorum in April 1896 for his “un-Christian-like conduct” and not being “in harmony” with his quorum, and was subsequently replaced by Matthias F. Cowley. As evidence that he was not “in harmony” with his brethren, Thatcher was accused of hurling heavy public “insults and hard language” against President George Q. Cannon’s ecclesiastic, business, and political endeavors, of being lethargic in his (Thatcher’s) duties as an apostle, and of refusing to put forth any real effort to promote good-will with his colleagues of the Twelve.¹⁰³ But he had also refused to sign the Political Manifesto of 1895, which required high officials to seek permission for a “leave of absence” prior to running for public office. Thatcher, who had been an unsuccessful candidate for the U.S. Senate in 1895 had accused Church authorities of influencing his defeat and also viewed the Political Manifesto as another attempt by the Church to control local politics.¹⁰⁴ After the election, Thatcher wrote to Lorenzo Snow, then president of the Twelve, demanding an opportunity for a public hearing to counteract what had already been printed about him in the *Deseret News*, and thus defend his reasons for defiance. He accused the Twelve of taking his case as a light matter while he was really “in the position of a victim.”¹⁰⁵ Lorenzo Snow denied him this permission for a public hearing on the grounds that his standing in the Church was not at stake, otherwise “specific charges would be made, and he would have to answer to them in the usual way, which is not and has not

¹⁰³Davis Bitton, *George Q. Cannon: A Biography* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1999), 353–55, 412–13; *Smoot Hearings*, 2:1023–24.

¹⁰⁴Merrill, *Reed Smoot*, 14.

¹⁰⁵Moses Thatcher, Letter to Lorenzo Snow, December 12, 1896, Letter printed in *Smoot Hearings*, 2:1025.

been by public demonstration." Snow was convinced that Thatcher had been given an unusual allotment of "consideration and mercy" by the quorum, and that it was entirely in Thatcher's power to make amends "without great exertion or much time."¹⁰⁶ Predictably, Thatcher's refusal to do this, together with his repeated insistence on a public hearing put him further out of touch with the sympathies of his quorum.

Taylor praised Thatcher for refusing "to be made a subservient tool in the hands" of his ecclesiastical superiors, who required a "full renunciation of his rights and manhood as an American citizen." In dropping Thatcher from the quorum, Taylor quoted President Lorenzo Snow as attributing the action to Thatcher's "rebellious spirit," but Taylor was clear that Thatcher had been punished for his progressive American spirit and patriotism. Taylor thus cast Thatcher's individualistic heroism and patriotic manhood as the antithesis of Mormonism's "unmistakable indications of narrowness, prejudice, and injustice," which made it incompatible with true Americanness. "Of all the Mormon high priesthood," continued Taylor, "Moses Thatcher is the one that stands for the principles of Jefferson and Lincoln as the American people understand those principles." Thatcher had surrendered his position in the Church on the basis of an "emasculated manhood and civil agency," making him, as Taylor declared, "a humble instrument in His Omnipotent hand." Furthermore, Mormonism (as viewed through the example of Thatcher) was "inimical to liberty, and the genius of American citizenship." Also, the Church was "opposed to the true spirit of progress," which "the Mormon Church has already solemnly pledged itself against." He gloomily forecast the "end of Jeffersonian Democracy in Utah" if Mormonism continued in its political dictation, while, if Smoot retained his seat, "in the end there will be violence and loss of life; the whole State will be storm-swept." Mormonism's "priestly junta" was like the "serfdom" imposed by Jesuits.¹⁰⁷ These bold religious declarations demonstrated the religious sensibilities and fears that Taylor was trying to evoke to discredit Smoot and Mormonism.

¹⁰⁶Lorenzo Snow, Letter to Moses Thatcher, November 11, 1896, printed in Smoot Hearings, 2:1024.

¹⁰⁷Smoot Hearings, 1:968-71.

However, Thatcher testified on April 26, 1904, to Smoot's attorney Waldemar Van Cott, that the Political Manifesto "left all the officers of the church absolutely free as an American citizen to exercise my rights as such." He repeated: "It [the Political Manifesto] left all the officers of the church absolutely free, and the members, as I understood it, and as I now understand it. It simply applied to the higher authorities of the church, to which I had no objection." His initial opposition was due to simple misunderstanding of the manifesto's implications, and he would have signed it had he properly understood its implications:

Mr. Van Cott. "Mr. Thatcher, as that rule [regarding the political manifesto] was interpreted by the high council of the Salt Lake stake of Zion, and your acceptance of it, did that meet with your free and voluntary judgment, or not?"

Mr. Thatcher. "Entirely so, for the reason that that was the contention. You will notice in the correspondence which is now filed for record that my objection to the political manifesto was in reference to the fact that it was not definite, that it might be applied to all officers in the church, and seriously I objected to that. I would object to it to-day just as seriously, because I apprehend that under such a condition it would absolutely put the state in the power of the church. That was my objection; but when an authoritative tribunal, holding coordinate jurisdiction with that of the twelve apostles, decided that that was not the meaning—that there was no conflict between the former announcements and the political manifesto itself—I accepted that decision on those grounds, and held that that would be the finding, and it would be the understanding throughout Utah. Whether it was or not, it was my understanding, and I am left perfectly free to stand where I have stood in all that discussion, barring any unkind references while under that misapprehension to my friends in and out of the church."

Thatcher continued to testify that nothing "has come to my knowledge" which shows that "the church had ever undertaken to dominate the political affairs of Utah," thus making Tayler's argument appear more and more specious.¹⁰⁸

The objective of Tayler's attack on the Church was to convince others that Church leaders (including Smoot) controlled both state politics and individual agency in a "crafty conspiracy." By using Thatcher as an example of a victim of this conspiracy, he

¹⁰⁸Smoot Hearings, 1:1038-50.

tried to show Mormonism as antipatriotic and anti-American; moreover, this argument raised the stakes of patriotism, since “true” patriots would have to be out of favor with their church, even disciplined, like Thatcher. “Thatcher’s war with the Church was not a religious or personal one,” announced Tayler, but was rather “a war with the individuality and independent manhood required by the Declaration of Independence.” According to Tayler, “Everyone [in Utah] relinquishes his individuality. He no longer acts from the dictates of his own will, but from the will of the Church.”¹⁰⁹ Tayler had declared Mormonism inimical to true American “manhood” at a time when white manliness and masculinity were markers of civilization’s evolutionary triumphs and millennial expectations.¹¹⁰ Clearly, as a Mormon and an apostle, Smoot could not be a true American, a good citizen, or his own man.

Interestingly, following the excommunication of prominent politician Frank J. Cannon (a well-known son of President George Q. Cannon) on March 15, 1905, after a series of bombastic denunciations of Joseph F. Smith’s testimony during the Smoot hearings in the *Salt Lake Tribune*, Cannon took on the persona of a hero of American liberty. As Tayler had argued a year earlier regarding Thatcher, Cannon’s excommunication was celebrated as a true demonstration of American patriotism. “Though expelled by the Mormon hierarchy,” said a resolution adopted against Smoot and Mormonism by the Mothers’ Congress in a March 18, 1905, conference, Cannon was “welcomed into the ranks of loyal, law abiding citizens as a brave defender of home and purity.”¹¹¹ For such efforts, Frank Cannon, and by extension Moses Thatcher, acted

¹⁰⁹Ibid., 1:987, 1:1007–8

¹¹⁰Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization*, 44. Literary historian Ann Douglass, *The Feminization of American Culture* (New York: Doubleday, 1977), 327, powerfully demonstrates the new masculinization of American culture in reaction to growing concerns of an explicitly feminine one. Revivalist Billy Sunday embodies this cultural shift in his depiction of Jesus as “the greatest scrapper that ever lived.”

¹¹¹Frank J. Cannon’s indiscretions with prostitutes and alcohol while a young married man (monogamous) in 1885, were an “open secret” in Salt Lake City. During the Smoot hearings, Cannon threw his support behind

the part of a true American patriot, rendering “valuable service . . . to the Nation.”¹¹² It seems clear that, by the examples of Cannon and Thatcher, the former excommunicated and the latter dropped from his quorum, the argument was that one could not be a member of the Church and also a law-abiding manly American citizen. At least, that was the argument being presented.

Finally, in Tayler’s campaign to deny Smoot (or any Mormon) his rights as an American citizen, he labored most strenuously to clarify what he understood to be the separation of church and state. Notably, while doing so, he held his fingers in the Bible: “Under the American system there are two distinct spheres for church and state, and they must be kept separate from inception to culmination. In the one sphere, according to the words of Christ, we must ‘render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s.’” Delving deeper into theology, he declared that “individual souls of men and women created by God in His image and after His likeness,” were “endowed in the nature of things with inalienable rights of life, liberty, and happiness.” These God-endowed rights, he explained, were independent of government, which exists as “an expansion and administration of these primal rights.”¹¹³ In this larger Protestant metanarrative, government was in the service of God, and those who defied God had no business in such service. Though a contradiction of what “separation” seems to imply today, the concept has a history all its own. Far from being a static principle of American individuality, freedom, and liberty, it was a powerful political and religious tool used by nineteenth-century

the American Party that oversaw the controversial construction of Salt Lake’s Stockade, making prostitution legal and medically supervised. Therefore, being honored as one of America’s brave defenders of home and family by one of the nation’s women groups, demonstrates the deep polemics that were involved regarding national perceptions of polygamy. Due to the energized antipolygamy wing of the American Party, it was normal for women of the nation to sympathize and for non-Mormon women in Utah to support it, despite its official and unofficial disapproval of prostitution. Jeffrey Nichols, *Prostitution, Polygamy, and Power: Salt Lake City, 1847–1918* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002), 65, 138.

¹¹²“Mothers Denounce Smoot,” *New York Times*, March 18, 1905, 1.

¹¹³Smoot Hearings, 1:1017.

Protestants and other nativists to marginalize (if not crush) the public presence of Catholicism and later Mormonism. This dynamic explains Taylor's seemingly hypocritical use of religious theology to define the separation of church and state. Ironically, secularists later used the concept effectively to attack the place of religion itself (including Protestantism) in state affairs. As it was, both groups found the myth malleable enough to serve their various social and political purposes. It had been used as a weapon of power against political opponents since the U.S. revolution (at times even as an accusation), and the fight against Smoot represented no exception to this American religio-political use of the term "separation."¹¹⁴

Nevertheless, it is easy to dismiss such theologically laden rhetoric as less like "Christian" theology and more like generic theo-political talk. The very fact, however, that Smoot's seat was hotly debated for four years, attacked primarily by ministers, women's Christian organizations, and attorneys quoting both the Declaration of Independence and the Bible, demonstrates that this hearing, beyond confirming Smoot's fitness to sit in Congress, confronted the definition of what it meant to be an American, an American male, and an American Christian. Importantly, as Smoot won the right to retain his seat in February 1907 despite such religious clamor, it was certain that the potency of such definitions was in drastic transition—in fact, in public decline.

The case against Smoot and the Mormon Church echoed what Senator William H. Seward (R–New York) had argued in Congress more than fifty years earlier on March 12, 1850. When it comes to government, explained Seward, there is a "Higher Law" above the American Constitution, and that is God's law as understood in the Bible.¹¹⁵ The Reed Smoot hearings presented a dying echo of this "Higher Law," serving to keep the "Mormon" debate alive but, simultaneously, exhausting public patience with the de-

¹¹⁴Philip Hamburger, *Separation*, 1–17, demonstrates the ambiguity of the meaning throughout U.S. history, and thus the possibility that it could be used in various ways to accomplish various agendas.

¹¹⁵Senator William Seward told Congress: "The Constitution regulates our stewardship; the Constitution devotes the domain to union, to justice, to defense, to welfare, and to liberty. But there is a higher law than the

bate. Although this debate threatened Smoot's standing in the Senate, as well as the rights of all Mormons and non-Protestants throughout the nation, in the end, the Senate decreed that the Constitution trumped this "Higher Law." Religious liberty, which was a value of secularization, prevailed over evangelical ideals of religious conformity and civic exclusion of nonconformists.

CONCLUSION

During the debate of Smoot's retention of his seat, Mormon Americanness had been intensely debated and finally accepted, at least officially. Naturally, the unofficial and religious debates between churches over Mormon Christianness were far from over. In celebration of Smoot's and the Church's victory, Joseph F. Smith and his counselors issued "An Address to the World," which was then read in general conference and unanimously adopted by the Church on April 5, 1907. This letter emphatically declared Mormonism to be a pure "Christian church"—indeed, "the most distinctively American church." In response, the Ministerial Association of Salt Lake City, among them Reverend Paden,¹¹⁶ issued its own "Review" strongly discrediting such claims and declaring that, until the LDS Church authorities themselves radically changed, "there can be no peace between them and pure Christianity." Furthermore, until the Church's doctrines are radically altered, Mormonism can "never establish a claim to be even a part of the Church of Jesus Christ."¹¹⁷ Likewise, the *Salt Lake Tribune* critiqued the LDS letter "to the world" for its "evasions" and "dishonesty," accusing its au-

Constitution, which regulates our authority over the domain, and devotes it to the same noble purposes." Quoted in Frederick W. Seward, *William H. Seward: An Autobiography from 1801 to 1834. With a Memoir of his Life, and Selections from his Letters, 1831-1846* (1877; rpt., New York: Derby and Miller, 1891), 126.

¹¹⁶The Ministerial Association's "Review" includes the combined labors of Presbyterian, Congregational, Methodist Episcopal, Baptist, Lutheran, Christian, and Episcopal denominations. Roberts, *Defense*, 2: 526.

¹¹⁷"An Address: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints to the World, April 5, 1907," in Clark, *Messages of the First Presidency*, 4:143-55, particularly pp. 144, 146. The Ministerial Association's letter was reprinted in full in Roberts, *Defense*, 2: 525-51. Interestingly, in response to the Minis-

thors of “but half-hearted efforts . . . to make the world believe in their patriotism, their piety, their selflessness.” Mormon leaders could not have believed their own letter, charged the *Tribune*, for they know “their own corruption, treason, blasphemy and corroding selfishness, avarice, lusts of power, and of the flesh.” The *Tribune* characterized the Ministerial Association’s response as “calm, deliberate, and temperate in tone,” announced that it was “warmly welcomed and approved by the loyal citizenship of Utah,” and characterized it as looking “a good deal in the nature of a revelation.”¹¹⁸ Though clearly and promptly rejected by some, the First Presidency letter revealed a deep intention on the Church’s part to be seen as both Christian and American.

The First Presidency’s announcement staking out this territory was directly connected to Smoot’s victory and marked a new phase in the Church’s long battle to be seen as a legitimate Christian faith. The Reed Smoot hearings brought focus to this new aspect of the “Mormon Question”: to the growing belief (and still-strong disbelief) in religious diversity. Pluralism in faith was becoming increasingly evident in the Progressive Era, and the Smoot hearings provide an insight into this aspect of the changing national scene. The *New York Times*, while cavalierly ignoring seventy-five years of suffragist lobbying, asserted that “Smoot would furnish almost the first instance when Congress had ignored a crusade organized and conducted by the women of this country.”¹¹⁹ Though these women’s organizations were numerous, extremely popular, and nationally respected, the crusades had failed. Despite the fact

terial Association’s “Review,” Roberts offered his own defense of the Church’s “letter to the world.” Before an audience of between four and five thousand listeners at the Mormon Tabernacle, Roberts forcefully argued that the LDS “world letter” was “truthful” and was meant to be “conciliatory in spirit.” Roberts opposed the Ministerial Association’s accusations as “unjust; conceived in spite and vengeance; brought forth of malice; and nurtured by hate.” Roberts also dismissed its representative ministers for being, “as a class, narrow, bigoted, intolerant, petty; and I say that in the very best of feeling.” *Defense*, 2:587, 605. For his entire lecture, see 2:552–605.

¹¹⁸Roberts, *A Comprehensive History*, 6:438.

¹¹⁹“Smoot Is Assured of Victory To-day,” 5. Significantly, as Americans moved toward a “masculine Christianity,” it is no coincidence that they simultaneously sounded the alarm of the “Woman peril,” that is, the fear

that religion formed the basis and logic of the Smoot hearings and required four exhausting years to reach their conclusion, they were conducted with more fairness than Mormons had yet experienced and provided Mormons with an opportunity for Mormons to rationally engage their accusers. Moreover, it was a *national* hearing—occurring in the very halls of Congress—and was thus a contest at the highest level. Inasmuch as Smoot retained his seat, the hearings further demonstrated a decline in the influence of the evangelical political base and a declining interest by the general public in the moral aspects of plural marriage.¹²⁰

Both the nation and Mormonism had been transformed. Consequently, the relations between them had changed, revealing a new role for minority religions in the “state” and a new definition of the separation of church and state that no longer supported theology as the basis for political exclusion. Mormons were no longer considered “dangerous infidels,” but that miraculous transformation had as much to do with Mormonism as it did with government officials who no longer found such descriptions persuasive.

Mormons had long declared their patriotism and their religious legitimacy, but Smoot’s victory marked a new national awareness of their claims. Through this long-drawn-out investigation (together with Roberts’s earlier national struggle for the House of Representatives), Mormonism had been “discovered.” Like the American continent, the discovery did not bring it into existence, but rather into a popular perception of existence and a degree of fresh understanding.¹²¹ Mormonism, at least as revealed on a national level, turned out to be not so bad after all. Smoot retained his

that women’s influence on religion, society, and politics was corrupting. This concern would have further weakened the female voice during Smoot’s hearings. So alarming had this female influence become that numerous educational articles called for the replacement of “old maids” with men as schoolteachers to properly train the “masculine nature” of the rising generation. Putney, *Muscular Christianity*, 31.

¹²⁰Iversen, *The Antipolygamy Controversy*, 255.

¹²¹This framework comes from Richard E. Wentz, *The Culture of Religious Pluralism* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1998), 21: “‘Discovery’ also incorporates the expectations and memories of those who meet, those who discover each other. It would have been impossible for Columbus to have

seat, and the Republic was not dashed upon the rocks of disaster. When Reed Smoot walked into the Senate chamber and sat in his accustomed seat the day after the vote, he symbolically placed Mormonism in a context of true Americanness. At last, it was established that Mormons could be viable participants in the American public political system and that American Protestant sentimentalities were no longer in a position to forbid it.

discovered *anything except* what he was enabled to perceive on the basis of the imagined order and meaning of the world of which he was a part. . . . One can never discover raw empirical reality; one discovers *perceptions* of reality.” In the fight over public opinion regarding Smoot, together with the state’s role regarding religion, the nation was in discovery of itself, as much as it was of Reed Smoot’s religion.

LETTERS AND MAIL BETWEEN KIRTLAND AND INDEPENDENCE: A MORMON POSTAL HISTORY, 1831–33

William G. Hartley

TODAY, BECAUSE OF EMAIL, TEXT MESSAGING, and cell phones, our younger generation is the first in American history unfamiliar with the importance of the U.S. Postal Service in sending and receiving personal correspondence. During Joseph Smith's lifetime, other than personal visits, messengers, and the more general communication form of newspapers, handwritten correspondence was the primary way by which people not in personal contact could communicate with each other. Church correspondence was frequent and vital, but our vast array of studies of early Mormonism fail to explain how the postal system then worked and its impact on Church developments. We can gain a new perspective on some of the challenges that early Church leaders faced by understanding the cultural context: how letters were written and posted, how U.S. mail was sent and received, what routes it took, how postage was

WILLIAM G. HARTLEY {billhartley1@juno.com} is an associate professor of history at Brigham Young University, a past president of the Mormon History Association, a co-editor of two volumes of the *Joseph Smith Papers* that include letters from the early 1830s, and, since boyhood, a letter writer and stamp collector. He presented a version of this paper at the 2005 Mormon History Association conference at Killington, Vermont.

paid and how much it cost, how long the postal system took to deliver letters both directions, and what problems that caused.

In the early 1830s, Mormon leadership in Kirtland, Ohio, was 900 travel miles away from Saints in Independence, Missouri. For the Kirtland-based Mormon First Presidency, this meant that advising and interacting in a timely manner with fellow leaders in Missouri was not possible. Turnaround time required weeks. As the number of members in Missouri rose, leaders there increasingly needed to consult with the presidency on a range of economic, doctrinal, ecclesiastical, and personal issues. Kirtland leaders regularly sent specific instructions for Missouri Saints on how to found their Zion society; but when questions arose, answers took three weeks or more each way.

In July 1833, slow communications became particularly frustrating and critical when Jackson County citizenry gave the Saints an ultimatum to leave the county. The crisis became intense when mobs forced the Saints out in early November. The Saints in Missouri made every effort to keep Joseph Smith informed about the damaging vigilante anti-Mormon actions and to seek his counsel. His instructions sometimes crossed in-transit letters from Missouri that made those instructions obsolete. Leaders in both centers craved reliable information from the other, but neither group could obtain this crucial instruction when it was most needed.

Excellent histories of the U.S. postal system describe mail operations in general terms,¹ but period-precise regional and local studies are rare. What follows is, first, a detailed look at Church mail prac-

¹Marshall Cushing, *The Story of Our Post Office: The Greatest Department in All Its Phases* (Boston: A. M. Thayer & Co., 1893); Wesley Everett Rich, *The History of the United States Post Office to the Year 1829* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1924); Ross Allan McReynolds, *History of the United States Post Office, 1607-1931* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1935); Gerald Cullinan, *The Post Office Department* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1968); Richard B. Kielbowicz, *News in the Mail: The Press, Post Office, and Public Information, 1700-1860s* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1989); Wayne Fuller, *The American Mail: Enlarger of the Common Life* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980); Arthur Summerfield, *The U.S. Mail: The Story of the United States Postal Service* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1960); Richard R. John, *Spreading the News: The American Postal System from Franklin to Morse* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995); *The United States Postal*

tices in general from 1831 to 1833. Next is an explanation of U.S. Postal Service ways and means during that period, and the mechanics of letter writing and posting letters. Finally, I'll closely assess correspondence exchanged by Church leaders in Kirtland, Ohio, and Jackson County, Missouri, during the critical final seven months of 1833 when Saints were expelled from Jackson County.

MAIL TO AND FROM CHURCH HEADQUARTERS

Postal studies show that, prior to 1845, “few Americans ever sent or received a letter through the mail.” Postage for individual letters was costly because politicians and policy makers assumed that sending letters through the U.S. postal system was confined to merchants who treated postage as a business expense, to the wealthy who could afford it, and to federal officials with franking—free postage—privileges.² Most pieces of mail were not letters, but newspapers, which had special postal privileges. However, Joseph Smith’s newly organized church generated a significant exchange of personal mail. Illustrative is a July 2, 1833, letter to “the brethren in Zion” (by which he meant Jackson County, Missouri), penned by Sidney Rigdon. This letter identifies a big mail day—seven letters in a single delivery. Rigdon noted that, on that day, the First Presidency, “having received your [three] letters in the mail of today, we hasten to answer, in order that our reply may go with tomorrow’s mail.” He added that the First Presidency had also received two letters that same day from the branch in Eugene, Indiana, to which they were likewise replying. He alerted the Missouri brethren that they should soon receive a letter from the Presidency mailed a week earlier.³

That letter, dated June 25, shows how much could depend on a

Service: An American History 1775–2002, Publication 100, dated September 2003 and posted May 2005, <http://www.usps.com/cpim/ftp/pubs/pub100/pub100.htm> (accessed in October 2008), not paginated.

²John, *Spreading the News*, 156–57. John found that in 1830, U.S. mail totaled 13.8 million letters, or 1.3 per capita, compared to 16 million newspapers, or 1.5 per capita (4).

³Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and F. G. Williams to Brethren in Zion, July 2, 1833, in Joseph Smith Letterbook 1:51–54, Joseph Smith Collection, LDS Church History Library, Salt Lake City. Unless otherwise noted, all holograph letters cited are in this library.

single letter.⁴“We have received your last containing a number of questions which you desire us to answer,” the letter begins, and then addresses questions from four Missouri elders: William W. Phelps, Bishop Edward Partridge, store operator Sidney Gilbert, and Oliver Cowdery. Answers related to a range of matters—binding the Book of Commandments, handling copies of the Book of Mormon, lost books of the Bible and the apocrypha, recent revelations not yet sent, reprinting the Book of Mormon, printing the “New Translation” of the Bible, approving a teacher for the high priests, and naming new bishops and United Firm personnel to be appointed. In addition to answering his correspondents’ questions, Rigdon also passed on First Presidency instructions about consecration forms and procedures, stocking Gilbert’s store, *Evening and the Morning Star* subscriber updates, corrections for the wording in some revelations, and an explanation of the doctrine regarding devils. Also included was news about Kirtland and missionary success. The letter advised that it was being sent with a “package” of plans, drawings, and explanations for the City of Zion and the temple that Missouri Saints must build. Obviously, much depended administratively on that one letter. Its timeliness in reaching Missouri with the plans was obvious. “We hasten to a close because the mail is just going,” Rigdon concluded hurriedly, but added a postscript reminding recipients that the letter, filled with so much counsel, should be shared widely among priesthood leaders in Missouri.

Church correspondence for 1830–33 is not in just one repository. Central to this study are thirty-four items of correspondence to and from Joseph Smith: four letters in 1831, five in 1832, and twenty-five in 1833, the year of crisis and expulsion in Jackson County. Most of these letters survive only as copies, not originals. Only four are in Joseph Smith’s own handwriting. In November 1832, Church clerks in Kirtland began copying letters into what became the first Joseph Smith Letterbook, and their efforts explain why so many 1833 letters survive compared with those written in previous years. Three of the four 1831 letters are in the Joseph Smith Collection at the LDS Church History Library, and one is in the letterbook. Of the five 1832 letters, one is at the Chicago Historical Society, another is at

⁴Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, Frederick G. Williams, and Martin Harris, Kirtland, Ohio, Letter to “Brethren in Zion,” Independence, Missouri, June 25, 1833, Joseph Smith Collection, Box 6, fd. 2.

the Community of Christ Archives in Independence, Missouri, and the remaining three are in the LDS Church History Library. For 1833, fifteen of the twenty-five are in the letterbook, one is in Lucy Smith's history, one is in the George A. Smith papers at the University of Utah, and two survive only as published in the *Evening and the Morning Star*.

Among other surviving letters from this time block are a Lucy Mack Smith letter to her brother Solomon (1831), a William Phelps letter to E. D. Howe (1831), a William McLellin letter to "beloved relatives" (1832), several 1833 letters involving Missouri elders and the law firm hired to represent the Church there, and a few non-Mormon letters, including Ezra Booth's hostile missives.⁵

A November 1831 revelation (LDS D&C 69) caused a number of letters to be written. "My servants who are abroad in the earth," this revelation instructed, "shall send forth the accounts of their stewardships to the land of Zion." Quoting that instruction, the *Evening and the Morning Star's* editor, William Wine Phelps, appealed that summer for "elders at a distance, to send forth, to the Editor of the Star post paid, all matters connected with their mission."⁶ The missionaries responded, and he published excerpts of their reports starting with the *Star's* November 1832 issue and continuing sporadically until September 1834. In one installment the *Star* listed letters Phelps had received the previous month from Columbus, Kirtland Mills, Cincinnati, and Piqua in Ohio; Florida, Lexington, St. Louis, Middle Grove, and Richmond in Missouri; Bath, New Hampshire; Waterloo, Oxford, and Homer in New York; Canton, Troy, and Centre Moreland

⁵Many of these other letters are reprinted in Dan Vogel, *Early Mormon Documents*, 5 vols. (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1996–2003). Booth wrote nine letters to Ira Eddy, a presiding elder of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Ravenna, Ohio, which were published in the *Ohio Star* in October–December 1831. See Vogel, *Early Mormon Documents*, 3:280–81.

⁶Untitled notice, *The Evening and Morning Star* 1 (August 1832): 23. Many elders kept accounts of their labors. In the LDS Church History Library are no fewer than twenty-eight missionary reports and journals for 1831–34. See listing in Jan Shippis and John W. Welch, eds., *The Journals of William E. McLellin, 1831–1836* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press/Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 408–12.

in Pennsylvania; and Washington, D.C.⁷ A score of other letters mentioned in the correspondence that forms the focus of this article have not been located.

Many of the letters studied were private; others were for public sharing. Among public letters is one sent to Missouri brethren on January 14, 1833, which, prior to mailing, was read to a conference of high priests for their approval.⁸ In an April 21, 1833, letter to the brethren in Zion, Joseph Smith explained that “every letter that comes from Zion must go the rounds of the brethren for inspection.”⁹ In the June 25, 1833, letter quoted above that Sidney Rigdon wrote for the First Presidency, these Church leaders told Missouri brethren: “We are not a little surprised to hear that some of our letters of a public nature, which we sent for the good of Zion, have been kept back from the Bishops.” They instructed that “when we direct letters to Zion to any of the High Priests, which pertain to the regulation of affairs, we always design that they should be laid before the Bishop, so as to enable him to perform his duty.”¹⁰

THE U.S. POSTAL SYSTEM

Although some Church letters were hand delivered, most were mailed, entrusted to the established federal mail system for delivery. Alexis de Tocqueville, traveling in the hinterlands of Kentucky and Tennessee in late 1831, reported: “There is an astonishing circulation of letters and newspapers among these savage woods. . . . I do not think that in the most enlightened rural districts of France there is intellectual movement either so rapid or on such a scale as in this wilderness.”¹¹ For its time, the U.S. Postal Service operated rather well, having regular postal roads and schedules along the East Coast, into the South, and inland to Missouri.

⁷“Letters,” *Evening and Morning Star* 1 (March 1833): 80.

⁸Joseph Smith Jr. et al., *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, edited by B. H. Roberts, 2d ed. rev. (6 vols., 1902–12, Vol. 7, 1932; rpt., Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1978 printing): 1:321.

⁹Joseph Smith, Letter to Brethren in Zion, April 21, 1833, Joseph Smith Letterbook 1:32–36.

¹⁰Smith, Rigdon, Williams, and Harris to “Brethren in Zion,” June 25, 1833.

¹¹Alexis de Tocqueville, *Journey to America*, trans. by George Lawrence (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1960), 268.

In 1785 the Continental Congress authorized the postmaster general to award mail transportation contracts to stagecoach operators, in effect subsidizing public travel and commerce with postal funds. Stagecoaches, despite their higher costs and sometimes lesser efficiency, became preferred over horseback delivery.¹² After riverboats became powered by steam engines, the federal government contracts integrated them into the mail system starting in 1815. At first, steamboats were poorly suited to convey mail because few operated on a regular schedule, and river conditions were ever changing.¹³ However, in 1823, Congress declared waterways to be post roads; and during the 1820s, more than 200 steamboats, under contract, regularly transported mail to and from river communities.¹⁴ Primarily, however, the mail service depended on stagecoaches.¹⁵

By 1828, when U.S. Postmaster General John McLean finished his tenure, through his labors “the central government had established a post office in virtually every locality of any consequence in the United States,” and postal routes, designated by Congress, were functional.¹⁶ By requiring that stagecoach companies carrying mail set regular schedules, this federal regulation doubtless greatly furthered the development of America’s transportation network. The postal department boasted 7,530 post offices and 29,956 postal employees, mail contractors, and carriers, making it the largest employer in the federal government. By 1831, postal employees accounted for 76 percent of the civilian federal workforce, and postmasters were the most widespread representatives of the federal government.¹⁷ Of the nation’s twenty largest post offices, Ohio had but one, in Cincinnati.¹⁸ In 1831, both Kirtland and Independence had post offices, which Church leaders and members regularly utilized.¹⁹

From early days, the privacy of the mail received a high priority. The 1792 Post Office Act prohibited postal officers from opening letters that postal patrons had sent, and it required officers to make cer-

¹²*The United States Postal Service.*

¹³John, *Spreading the News*, 92.

¹⁴*The United States Postal Service.*

¹⁵John, *Spreading the News*, 5.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 110–13.

¹⁷*The United States Postal Service.*

¹⁸John, *Spreading the News*, 113.

¹⁹*The United States Postal Service.*

tain that mailed newspapers, including controversial ones, were mailed and delivered.²⁰ From 1775 until the Civil War, the general post office required every postmaster in the country to prepare in duplicate (1) “accounts current,” a general financial statement; (2) “accounts sent,” a list of every letter sent from the office; (3) “accounts received,” a list of every letter received by the office; and (4) “the postbill,” a receipt for every packet of letters sent in the mail. After 1829 every postmaster had to prepare a special tally of all newspapers and magazines he sent or received. Up until 1864 postmasters received a commission on almost every transaction they performed.²¹

To mail a letter, the sender addressed it to a person in such-and-such a town (no street or house numbers were necessary), and then handed it to his or her local postmaster. On the outside, the postmaster wrote above the address the amount of the postage, which was determined by the number of pages. Before 1863, postage on a letter paid only for its delivery from post office to post office, meaning citizens had to pick up their mail at the local post office. Post offices posted lists of names for which mail had come, and local newspapers often printed lists of letters waiting to be picked up at the post office.

Outside the main cities, the vast majority of post offices “consisted of nothing more than a counter in the corner of a store, tavern, law office, or apothecary shop.”²² In many smaller towns, the storekeeper doubled as the postmaster. The general store was the community gathering place, the merchant knew elementary accounting, he knew everybody in the community, he owned property (the store) so he could be bonded, and he was generally a respected citizen.²³ Fitting this pattern, in Kirtland the Newel K. Whitney store had served as the post office. Today’s restored Whitney store features a rack of mail cubicles in the west end of the ground floor.²⁴

In Independence, where a post office opened in 1827, the postmaster while the Saints were in Jackson County was Jones Hoy Flour-

²⁰John, *Spreading the News*, 37, 42.

²¹Ibid., 103–6. “Mail” technically was defined as a packet of letters accompanied by the postbill and tied together with twine (143).

²²John, *Spreading the News*, 113.

²³Summerfield, *The U.S. Mail*, 48.

²⁴According to Keith W. Perkins and Donald Q. Cannon, eds., *Ohio and Illinois*. Vol. 3 of SACRED PLACES (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2002), 11–12, Whitney had been the postmaster in Kirtland for seven years before

noy (sometimes listed as James H. Flournoy).²⁵ In some communities, every member of the postmaster's family was involved with the postal services. There were no set hours and no days off.²⁶ In small cities and towns, the post office furniture typically was simple, consisting of a table with a drawer underneath it and two alphabet cases,

Mormonism reached the town, and continued his service afterward, but they provide no documentation. Official U.S. Post Office records identify Whitney as Kirtland Mills postmaster from December 29, 1826, to March 1830 or 1831, when he was replaced by Ariel Hanson, who is listed in the subsequent 1832–43 volume. Post Office Department, Record of Appointment of Postmasters, October 1789–1832, Vol. 6 (A-L), ca. 1828 to ca. 1832, National Archives Microform Publication M1131, 1980. According to the U.S. Department of State, *A Register of Officers and Agents, Civil, Military, and Naval, in the Service of the United States on the 30th of September 1831* . . . (Washington, [D.C.]: William A. Davis, 1831), 260, Hanson was postmaster at Kirtland Mills by mid-1831. Newel K. Whitney's papers in the L. Tom Perry Special Collections and Manuscripts Division, Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, contain no postmaster-related materials.

²⁵Richard G. Schultz, *Missouri Post Offices 1804–1981* (St. Louis, Mo.: American Philatelic Society, 1982). Among local signers of the July 1833 declaration ordering Mormons to leave Jackson County was James H. Flournoy, identified as the postmaster. See also Parley P. Pratt, *History of the Late Persecution Inflicted by the State of Missouri upon the Mormons* . . . (1839; rpt., Mexico, N.Y.: Oswego County Democrat, 1840), 6. The committee “resolved, that a copy of these proceedings be posted up at the post office in this place, for the information of all concerned.” Flournoy is identified as Jones Hoy Flournoy, appointed June 14, 1831, as Jackson's first postmaster in *Record of Appointment of Postmasters: 1832–Sept 30, 1971* (Series m–841), Missouri, Jackson Through Montgomery Counties, Roll 72, first handwritten page, first line, National Archives, Washington, D.C. Annette Curtis, email to Bill Hartley, May 13, 2005. My thanks to Independence history experts Bill and Annette Curtis for this information. Mrs. Curtis has also identified Flournoy in the 1830 federal census for Jackson County. He was born December 12, 1798, and married Clara Hickman in 1828. Pearl Wilcox, *Jackson County and Twentieth Century Pioneers* (Independence: Jackson County Historical Society, 1976), 152–53, notes that three Flournoy brothers (Jones H., Hoy B., and Solomon) all came to Jackson County in 1826, settling first in the eastern part of the county and purchasing land at the first sale of property lots.

²⁶Summerfield, *The U.S. Mail*, 48.

one on top of the other. Incoming mail was sorted by name and put into the cases; the lower case held letters and the upper case held newspapers.²⁷

The U.S. Postal Service had so organized the stagecoach lines “that one could travel by stage throughout most of the Union by 1830.”²⁸ Stagecoaches rarely averaged more than four miles per hour on main routes—less than a hundred miles per day if running day and night. (This practice, which required moonlight or lanterns hung from the coach, was resorted to only when they were behind schedule.) Eight miles per hour was considered quite fast; special horse expresses reached twelve miles per hour. Stagecoaches carrying mail were embellished with designations like “U.S. Mail” or “Mail Stage.”²⁹ In the coaches, mail was carried in leather bags.³⁰

Mormon-related records for the study period indicate that stagecoach routes and mail routes were plentiful. For example, Oliver Cowdery, when explaining in 1835 the location of what we now call Hill Cumorah, gave as a reference point “the mail road from Palmyra, Wayne County, to Canandaigua, Ontario County.”³¹ In 1829, when Joseph Smith was anxious to find out what happened to Martin Harris and the 116 pages of Book of Mormon manuscript, he went by stagecoach from Harmony, Pennsylvania, to Palmyra. A well-known story of stagecoach travel involves Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and Newel K. Whitney who returned to Kirtland from Missouri, leaving Independence on May 6, 1832. Their planned itinerary was St. Louis, Vincennes, Indiana, and on to New Albany, Indiana, near the falls of the Ohio River (by present-day Louisville, Kentucky). However, just before reaching New Albany, the horses spooked and dashed off as runaways. Finding themselves in danger, Joseph Smith and Bishop Whitney jumped off, the latter breaking his leg and foot in several places. Elder

²⁷Cushing, *The Story of Our Post Office*, 483.

²⁸Fuller, *The American Mail*, 157; Cathleen Schurr, “History of the United States Postal Office,” *American History Magazine*, December 1997, About American History webpage, <http://americanhistory.about.com/library/prm/blpostoffice2.htm> (accessed December 2008).

²⁹John, *Spreading the News*, 91.

³⁰Cushing, *The Story of Our Post Office*, 114–15.

³¹“Letter VII to W. W. Phelps,” *LDS Messenger and Advocate* 1, no. 10 (July 1835): 158.

Rigdon continued on, but the other two stayed at a public house in Greenville, Indiana, until Whitney was well enough to continue on. Joseph wrote his wife, Emma, from Greenville, on June 6, 1832, telling her about the accident.³²

Prior to 1836, despite continuing improvements in service, “the mails were uncertain,” mail service was “unbelievably slow for the expanding economy of the country,” and postal rates were “burdensomely high.”³³ One reason for slowness was that dirt roads, always rough at the best of times, often became impassable because of rain, snow, and mud, serious rutting, and lack of bridges.³⁴ Also, a postmaster’s priority in a given town might not be the mail.³⁵ Erratic service also resulted because of the “inclinations” of contractors carrying the mail between post offices. “Unwarranted delay of the posts was commonplace,” one postal history notes, “and the morale of the service was low.”³⁶ To cite one example of slowness, in July 1833, a letter from the Eugene Branch, in Indiana, three miles east of the Illinois state line, required about twenty-four days to reach Kirtland—longer than mail from Independence, which was twice Eugene’s distance from Kirtland.³⁷

In densely populated areas and especially between major centers, mail service attempted to run on a daily basis. In more outlying regions it might be offered twice-weekly or weekly. Many mail routes were very short, serving only local areas. Consequently, a letter going between Kirtland and Independence would pass through many cities and small towns along the way. As yet there was no primary east-west post road; the then-developing National Road had barely been opened to Columbus, Ohio, from the east, and would not reach Vincennes, Indiana, or Vandalia, Illinois (then the state capi-

³²Joseph Smith, Greenville, Floyd County, Indiana, Letter to Emma Smith, Kirtland, Geauga County, Ohio, June 6, 1832, photocopy at LDS Church History Library, holograph at Chicago Historical Society, Chicago.

³³Summerfield, *The U.S. Mail*, 51.

³⁴Cushing, *The Story of Our Post Office*, 483.

³⁵Cullinan, *The Post Office Department*, 48.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Joseph Smith and Frederick G. Williams, Letter to John Smith, July 2, 1833, at the Eugene Branch, Joseph Smith Letterbook 1:50–51.

tal), until the 1840s.³⁸

It appears that mail left Independence once a week by stagecoach. In 1833, a stage ran weekly between Independence and Fayette, Missouri, a short distance from Columbia, Missouri. Coaches ran regularly between the Fayette/Columbia area to St. Louis.³⁹ Mail to Ohio from Missouri could travel by stagecoach along various land routes or by stagecoach from St. Louis to Louisville, Kentucky, and then by steamboat up the Ohio River. (By 1819, stagecoaches ran between St. Louis and Louisville, Kentucky, by way of Vincennes, Indiana—a three-day trip.)⁴⁰ In contrast, Kirtland apparently had daily mail service. Sidney Rigdon hastily wrote his July 2, 1833, answer to the three letters from Missouri, received “in the mail of today,” so that “our reply may go with tomorrow’s mail.”⁴¹

Locals seemed aware of the regular stagecoach routes and of mail schedules, which were posted or available at their post office. Knowing times and places, travelers could instruct correspondents about where they could receive mail. For example, William E. McLellan, busy on a preaching route in 1833, received mail along the way. On May 2, in Illinois, he noted in his diary: “To day we received a letter from Br Phelps from Zion [Missouri].” Thirteen days later, on May 15, in a different place, he received two letters—one from Zion and one from a cousin.

³⁸The National Road from Virginia reached Columbus, Ohio, in 1833 and Springfield, Ohio, five years later. Work began in Illinois in 1830 and was completed to Vandalia, Illinois, in 1839. Seymour Dunbar, *A History of Travel in America*, 4 vols. (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1915), 2:692; Merritt Ierley, *Traveling the National Road* (Woodstock, N.Y.: Overlook Press, 1999), 96, 105; and Philip D. Jordan, *The National Road* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1948). Present-day U.S. 40 and Interstate 70 generally follow the trace of the National Road in Indiana and Illinois. Henry Tanner Schenck, Map of “United States of America,” 1832, MAGIC Historical Scanned Map Collection, posted by the University of Connecticut Libraries, <http://magic.lib.uconn.edu/cgi-bin/MAGIC>, clearly shows 1831 roads including those on the later route of the National Road.

³⁹Howard L. Conard, ed., *Encyclopedia of the History of Missouri* (New York: The Southern History Company, 1901), 5:367–68.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, 5:368.

⁴¹Smith, Rigdon, and Williams to “The Brethren in Zion,” July 2, 1833.

“My good Sister Russell gave to me the postage of both of my letters,” he noted.⁴² (Unless special arrangements were made, the recipient paid the postage, not always willingly. See discussion below.)

Missionaries sometimes used the postal service to try to set up meetings in advance of their arrivals. In 1832, for example, Parley P. Pratt “sent an appointment by the mail carrier” to his next town, saying the elders would preach if townspeople would get together that evening. At dark, when they checked into the town’s hotel, the landlord “said the mail carrier brought the news of our appointment, but he believed it had been neglected to be given out.”⁴³

Regular mail continued during winter months. When snow was deep, coaches on runners or sleighs carried the mail. On March 3, 1831, Joseph Smith noted receiving a letter from Oliver Cowdery in Independence dated January 29, 1831. That letter was no more than four weeks in transit—probably less. Cowdery had also written in haste: “I have but a short time to write to you my beloved brethren as the mail leaves this place in the morning.”⁴⁴

Although this speed is impressive in the context of the time, it is clear that some mail between Independence and Kirtland never arrived. Cowdery, who reached Kirtland from Jackson County on August 9, 1833, wrote the very next day to Missouri leaders, responding to their suspicions that information was being withheld from them. He reassured them that the brethren in Ohio had spared no pains or labors to communicate with them and had answered questions from Zion immediately. “I have every reason to believe, that we have often lost valuable information,” Cowdery explained, meaning lost in the mails.⁴⁵

Usually a person could not know when to expect a letter unless arrangements were set up beforehand. With that in mind, Cowdery wrote from Kirtland to William Phelps in Missouri on August 10, 1833, urging, “Don’t fail to write once a week for you know

⁴²Shippo and Welch, *The Journals of William E. McLellin*, 119, 122.

⁴³Parley P. Pratt Jr., ed., *Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985 printing), 61–62.

⁴⁴Joseph Smith, Letter to Hyrum Smith, March 3, 1831, Box 2, fd. 2, Joseph Smith Papers, LDS Church History Library.

⁴⁵Revised Plan of the House of the Lord, August 1833, 2 pp., in hand of Oliver Cowdery, LDS Church History Library.

my anxiety.”⁴⁶

Mail Delivery Time

In the early 1830s, a letter sent by regular mail service between Independence and Kirtland, either direction, averaged three to four weeks travel time. For example, in a December 10, 1833, letter to Edward Partridge and others in Liberty, Missouri, Joseph Smith noted that “this morning the mail brought Bros. Partridge & Carrels (Corrill’s) letters & also Bro Williams [Phelps], all mailed at Liberty Nov 19th.” That mail was twenty-one days in transit.⁴⁷ Earlier, two other letters from Missouri had each taken twenty-eight days, while two others arrived in twenty-five and twenty-one days respectively. During the summer of 1833 when travel conditions were presumably optimal, one hefty letter from Ohio took thirty-four days to reach Independence. To provide a benchmark, a traveler covering the nine hundred miles in person needed ten days to three weeks, depending on mode of transportation.⁴⁸

Letter Covers, Addresses, and Seals

For the earliest letters in America, a correspondent would write on one side of a sheet of paper, fold and seal it, then write the address on the outside. A variation was to fold a blank sheet on the outside of the letter sheet, sealing and addressing the blank outer wrapper (or cover). Both forms preceded the use of envelopes.⁴⁹ However, a 1794 regulation directed that each sheet be charged the single letter rate. Thus, a folded letter consisting of a single sheet was charged at the

⁴⁶Oliver Cowdery, with Joseph Smith Postscript, Letter to William Phelps and Others, August 10, 1833, in Edward Partridge Family Record, 16–18, MS 3594, LDS Church History Library. In 1831 Cowdery had expressed a similar “anxiety” to receive a weekly letter when he was part of an advance party in Missouri. Oliver Cowdery, Letter to Dearly Beloved Brethren, May 7, 1831, Joseph Smith Letterbook 1:12–13.

⁴⁷Joseph Smith, Letter to Edward Partridge and Others, December 10, 1833, Joseph Smith Letterbook 1:453–56.

⁴⁸Based on my chronology of 1833 letters, my file.

⁴⁹Royden H. Lounsbury, “American Postal Markings from Colonial Times to the 1850s: The Unexhibited Exhibit of Royden H. Lounsbury.” This is a photographic record of covers and letters bearing colonial-period postmarks, with commentary, arranged chronologically. George Bernadt, *Postal Markings of New York State 1792–1956*, attempts a catalog of the

quarter-ounce rate. If a single letter sheet had a wrapper, the rate was double. If there was a third sheet, the rate was triple. Anything above one ounce was charged the single letter rate times the number of quarter ounces the letter weighed. To save postage, the writer often wrote on both sides of a page and around the edge. In the late 1840s, envelopes made their appearance and, by 1855, accounted for the majority of letters mailed.⁵⁰

Letters, or letters with their covers, were folded and secured by seals or wafers. Seals were made by melting colored wax and pressing the drop on the outside of both the upper and lower flaps with a small round stamper. An alternative was closing the letter with a moistened paste wafer, often colored, near the inside edge of the final flap and then pressing the flap down so that the wafer was on the inner side. Such precut round wafers were sold in boxes. A drawer or compartment in inkstands held wafers. John Whitmer, who arrived in Missouri on January 5, 1832, noted in his account book before the month's end that he bought quills, an ink stand, and a box of wafers.⁵¹

Illustrative of addresses, postal fees, and wafer sealings are several letters preserved at the LDS Church History Library. For example, Joseph Smith in Kirtland wrote to Martin Harris in Palmyra on February 22, 1831. On the letter's wrapper is written the mailing point: "Kirtland Mills, O." While the letter itself is dated February 22, the cover has a handwritten date of February 23, or the date when it was posted. The letter has a discoloration, showing the location of a wax wafer, smaller than a present-day U.S. dime. It also bears the postmaster's computation of the cost: 18 $\frac{3}{4}$ cents.⁵²

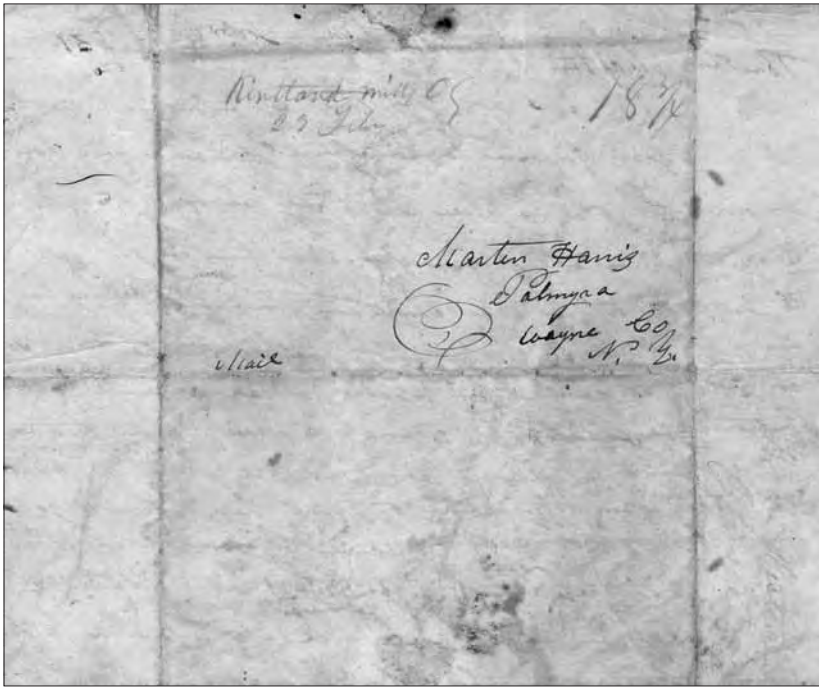
As another example, Joseph Smith in Kirtland wrote on March 3, 1831, to his brother Hyrum in Harpersville, New York, but the

stampless period.

⁵⁰Vernon S. Stoupe, article, *North Carolina Postal Historian*, 1995, excerpted in "What Is Postal History," at National Postal Museum website: www.postalmuseum.si.edu/statepostalhistory (accessed October 4, 2008).

⁵¹Joe Nickell, *Pen, Ink, & Evidence: A Study of Writing and Writing Materials for the Penman, Collector, and Document Detective* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1990), 91–92; John Whitmer Account Book, January 1832–May 1878, MS 1159, LDS Church History Library. Inkstands were also called "standishes."

⁵²Joseph Smith, Letter to Martin Harris, February 22, 1831, 1 page plus wrapper, holograph, Box 2, fd. 3, Joseph Smith Collection.



The outside of Joseph Smith's letter from "Kirtland Mills Oh" (upper left-hand corner) to Martin Harris in Palmyra, Wayne County, New York. The postmaster has written the postage due, 18 $\frac{3}{4}$ cents, in the upper right corner. Courtesy LDS Church History Library, Joseph Smith Collection, MS 155, Box 2, fd. 2.

postal date hand-written on the cover is March 9. The postage was 25 cents. The wrapper has a small, round wafer stain on its flaps.⁵³ Joseph's letter to Emma from Indiana (noted earlier), written on June 6, 1832, has the postal date on the wrapper of June 7 and the postal cost of 18 $\frac{3}{4}$ cents in the upper right-hand corner, still the required location for a stamp. No seal mark is visible.⁵⁴

⁵³Joseph Smith, Kirtland, Ohio, Letter to Hyrum Smith, Harpersville, New York, March 3, 1831, Box 2, fd. 2, Joseph Smith Papers, endorsed "Kirtland Mills O / 9 March / 25" ("25" means 25 cents).

⁵⁴Joseph Smith, Letter to Emma Smith, June 6, 1832.

and my last vision class- one which I am in
 want again and give thanks to God just at the break
 of Day which Encourd the best and happiest night
 of my life- the balance of which I owe to God
 to whom be glory Power Honor Dominion and life
 for ever and ever Amen
 Brethren my Love to you all and May the Blessings of
 God rest on you, take Courage for God is about to
 help us with great Power and bestow Much wisdom
 I will also state to you that I have had a Vision
 where important things are seen in which Alexander
 Campbell's doctrine was marching out of the pit- and
 May God bless him. You will Joseph Bosworth
 Feb 17th 1834 Hear not for is with us

Mr Joseph Smith
 Kirtland Orange Co
 Ohio

Feb 19
 Kirtland
 Ohio
 Feb 19 1834

Feb 17 1834
 Joseph Bosworth
 Vision

Joseph Bosworth, Letter to Joseph Smith at Kirtland, February 17, 1834. The round circular mark above the address is the red stain of the wafer used to seal the letter. Courtesy LDS Church History Library, Joseph Smith Collection, MS 155, Box 2, fd. 3.

Postage Costs

Postage could be paid in advance by the writer, collected from the addressee upon delivery, or paid partially in advance and partially upon delivery. Most often the recipient had to pay the postage. In 1835, Joseph Smith complained about receiving letters about inconsequential matters that cost him 25 cents postage. This was a common occurrence, he said, one that “subjected” him to a great deal of expense. “If people wish to be benefitted with information from me, common respect and good breeding would dictate, them to pay the postage on their letters.”⁵⁵ The Post Office Department issued its first postage stamps on July 1, 1847. From then on, the sender paid the postage.⁵⁶

As noted above, the number of sheets determined the cost of a letter; but until 1845 when rates were changed, a second factor was the distance a letter traveled. Handed a letter, the postmaster wrote the postage amount in the upper right corner. Historian Dean Jessee noted:

Between 1816 and 1845, the cost for sending a single sheet letter less than 30 miles was six cents; not over 80 miles, ten cents; not over 150 miles, 12 ½ cents; and not over 400 miles, 18 ¾ cents. Greater distances cost 25 cents. Letters of two or more sheets required additional postage in proportion. If a letter weighed more than an ounce, the postage quadrupled. For many, postal communication was a luxury. Prior to 1847, when postage stamps were authorized, the option of collecting postage from the addressee had led to many abuses including the payment by the addressee for letters containing offensive and

⁵⁵Joseph Smith Sketch Book, 1835–36, December 5, 1835, in Dean C. Jessee, ed., *Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, rev. ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book/Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 2002), 126.

⁵⁶On March 3, 1847, Congress authorized U.S. postage stamps. The first general issue stamps went on sale in New York City, July 1, 1847. One, priced at five cents, depicted Benjamin Franklin. The other, a 10-cent stamp, pictured George Washington. Clerks used scissors to cut the stamps from pre-gummed, non-perforated sheets. Only Franklin and Washington appeared on stamps until 1856, when a five-cent stamp honoring Thomas Jefferson was issued followed by a two-cent Andrew Jackson stamp in 1863. Until government-issued stamps became obligatory on January 1, 1856, other payment methods remained legal. *The United States Postal Service: An American History*.

insulting messages.⁵⁷

According to John Whitmer's account book in Missouri, in 1832 he twice paid 25 cents for "letter postage" and once paid 18 $\frac{3}{4}$ cents.⁵⁸ Whitmer, like Joseph, complained to senders about postage costs. He chided Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in Kirtland on July 29, 1833: "Early Monday morning," he said, "we received letters from Kirtland containing all the patterns &c. postages \$1.50 by wt [weight], which in single letter would have been but \$1.00." In 1833, \$1.50 was an extraordinarily high price to pay for postage. In 2007 dollars, an 1833 dollar was the equivalent of \$25.47, so he would have paid \$38.21 for this single letter. The twenty-five cents he had paid earlier was the equivalent of just over \$6.37.⁵⁹ These were not insignificant amounts.

Pens and Ink

Writers used pen and ink, as well as many different sizes and types of paper for their letters. Pencils did not come into common use until the 1840s. In early 1832, John Whitmer bought "quills," an "ink

⁵⁷Joseph Smith Sketch Book, 1835–1836, 5 December 1835, in Jesse, *Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, 126. Jesse's sources for this summary are Summerfield, *The U.S. Mail*, 57–58. The 18.5 cents domestic rate was changed to 18.75 cents in 1825 to correspond with Spanish colonial coins used to pay postal charges—using a one-half *real* coin equivalent to 6.25 cents (a picayune) and a one *real* coin equivalent to 12.5 cents, or together 18.75 cents. "Coins minted by the United States were notably scarce in the period before 1851. . . . The coins of Great Britain, Portugal, France, and Spain and their dominions circulated widely in the United States with official sanction, most with legal tender status, until 1857 when such status was withdrawn. The American monetary system was based on the silver content of the Spanish eight-*reales* coins. The multi-tiered postal rates in effect before 1845 were largely based on the circulating eights of these Spanish dollars rather than on decimal divisions. . . . The silver coinage included 8 reales (dollar), 4 *reales*, 2 *reales*, 1 *real* (one bit), $\frac{1}{2}$ *real* (picayune) and $\frac{1}{4}$ *real* (cuartilla) pieces." Richard Frajola, "Paying the Postage: 1776–1921," <http://www.rfajola.com/> (accessed October 4, 2008).

⁵⁸John Whitmer's Account Book.

⁵⁹For dollar value comparisons by years, see Samuel H. Williamson, "Six Ways to Compute the Relative Value of a U.S. Dollar Amount, 1790 to Present," www.measuringworth.com (accessed October 4, 2008).

stand,” paper, and a “paper of ink powder.”⁶⁰ Manufactured steel point pens did not come into general use until the 1840s. Goose quills worked best, but quills from a raven or crow sometimes were used. A feather’s flexibility was important, and it could be sharpened to such a point that quite small writing was possible, while the edge was not so sharp that it pierced the writing surface.

To make a quill pen, the feathers were trimmed close to the shaft, the end was pared to something approaching a point and slit for flexibility. Then “the writing edge had to be shaped to suit the user and style of writing.”⁶¹ “No pen is so light and responsive in the hand as a well-prepared and tempered quill,” a contemporary said, “none so obstinate as a poor one.”⁶² A quill point or “nib” needed constant recutting because it quickly wore down with use. It had to be dipped in ink frequently to be replenished. “No man can make two quill pens exactly alike,” an expert said, “and if one is a little harder or softer than the other, a difference in the hand-writing is perceptible.”⁶³

Iron-gall ink was the most common variety,⁶⁴ and as early as the 1780s, people could buy “ink powder” along with ink stands to mix it in. Writing sand was used to blot or absorb excess ink to keep it from smearing or pooling.⁶⁵ Erasures were possible in two ways: (1) immediately wiping off the still-wet ink, usually with the little finger, or (2) scraping off the dried ink with a knife.⁶⁶

Newspapers, Pamphlets, Magazines, Packages

Letters were only one kind of mail. Newspapers were another.

⁶⁰John Whitmer’s Account Book.

⁶¹Ray Nash, *American Penmanship, 1800–1850* (Worcester, Mass.: American Antiquarian Society, 1969), 57.

⁶²Ibid.

⁶³Ibid., 59.

⁶⁴Iron-gall ink is made from iron salts and tannic acid extracted from the galls of oak or other kinds of trees. (Galls are swellings of plant tissue caused by fungi or insect parasites.) Fermentation or hydrolysis of the tannin extract releases gallic acid that yields a dark ink. The fermented extract is then combined with iron sulfate and a binder like gum arabic.

⁶⁵Tamara Plakins Thornton, *Handwriting in America: A Cultural History* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1996), 19–41; Joyce Irene Whalley, *Writing Implements and Accessories: from the Roman Stylus to the Typewriter* (Detroit: Gale Research Company, 1975), 16.

⁶⁶Nickell, *Pen, Ink, & Evidence*, 64.

By federal policy, newspapers received special treatment and could be mailed for far less than a single-page letter. While postage for a single-sheet letter cost between six and twenty-five cents, depending on distance, newspapers cost only one cent to mail within the state, and 1.5 cents out of state (25 cents and 38 cents in year 2007 dollars). In effect, the government subsidized the mailing of newspapers, something Congress felt was in the public's interest. From Independence, W. W. Phelps sent monthly issues of the *Evening and the Morning Star*, probably to most subscribers, through the mail.

In 1792 Congress established that newspaper editors could exchange papers with each other at no charge, thus facilitating the spread of news throughout the country. As a result, local newspapers freely reproduced articles from other newspapers.⁶⁷ Articles reprinted in Mormon newspapers throughout the rest of the nineteenth century are a significant source of what was being said about the Mormons elsewhere in the nation.

The rate for mailing magazines and pamphlets was 1.5 cents in-state and 2.5 cents out-of-state, equivalent in 2007 to 38 cents and 64 cents, respectively.⁶⁸ However, the postal system would not deliver packages until a parcel post service was established in 1913; until then, private express firms delivered packages.⁶⁹

Hand-Delivered Letters

These high postage rates encouraged correspondents to send letters by friends and acquaintances rather than through the mails.⁷⁰ Whenever someone was going between Missouri and Kirtland, correspondents seized upon the opportunity for hand delivery, bypassing the postal system.

Saints making those trips walked, rode stagecoaches, or traveled

⁶⁷John, *Spreading the News*, 36; Williamson, www.measuringworth.com.

⁶⁸John, *Spreading the News*, 36; Kiebowicz, *News in the Mail*, 49; Summerfield, *The U.S. Mail*, 45; Fuller, *The American Mail: Enlarger of the Common Life*, 111–13; Williamson, www.measuringworth.com.

⁶⁹John, *Spreading the News*, 39.

⁷⁰Fuller, *The American Mail: Enlarger of the Common Life*, 61–62. According to John, *Spreading the News*, 156, “Prior to the passage of the Post Office Acts of 1845 and 1851, each of which reduced the basic letter rate, few Americans ever sent or received a letter through the mail.”

by river steamboat, and they sometimes used two or all three modes during one trip. For example, on August 13, 1831, Joseph Smith left Independence to return to Kirtland. He traveled by canoe and “by land” to St. Louis, then by stage to Kirtland, arriving on August 27—a two-week journey.⁷¹ On April 1, 1832, he and others started for Missouri from Hiram, Ohio. First they rode by wagon to Warren that day, reached Wellsville the next, and Steubenville on the third. They left on April 4 by river steamboat down the Ohio River. At Wheeling, they took passage on the steamer *Trenton*. At Louisville they boarded the *Charleston* for St. Louis, then went by stage about 300 miles to Independence, arriving on April 24. This was a three-week trip.⁷² Parley P. Pratt said a trip he took to Missouri in July 1832 began on a stage-coach to the Ohio River, where he boarded a steamboat to St. Louis. There he took another steamer up to Independence.⁷³

In August 1833, the Church presidency sent a revised plan for the City of Zion and a modified temple design to Zion, not by mail but by special messengers Orson Hyde and John Gould, for reasons of security and personal instruction.⁷⁴

COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS DURING THE JACKSON COUNTY CRISES

By July 1833 Joseph Smith was urgently instructing Missouri Saints to begin constructing the “City of Zion” and its temple. “We send by this mail a draft of the city of Zion with explanations,” the First Presidency wrote on June 25, and plans for a temple “to be built immediately.”⁷⁵ But by the time that letter reached Independence, Zion’s leaders had been forced to sign agreements to leave the county. In mid-July, several hundred antagonistic residents met and issued an ultimatum demanding that the Mormons leave the county “peaceably if they will or forcibly if they must.” When LDS leaders hesitated, the crowd turned violent, literally tearing down the Mormon printing establishment and throwing both the press and the printer’s family out

⁷¹*History of the Church*, 1:206; Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 1:361–62.

⁷²*History of the Church*, 1:266; Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 1:379–80.

⁷³Pratt, *Autobiography*, 64–66.

⁷⁴Joseph Smith, Letter to Vienna Jacques, September 4, 1833, Joseph Smith Collection, Box 2, fd. 3.

⁷⁵Smith, Rigdon, Williams, and Harris to Brethren in Zion, June 25, 1833; *History of the Church*, 1:362–68.

of doors. Next, they vandalized the Mormon store several blocks away, unrolling bolts of cloth in the street. Finally, they took presiding Mormon officer Edward Partridge, tarred and feathered him, and threatened other Church elders. Such bullying tactics achieved their objective; and three days later, the Mormon leaders signed an agreement to leave the county within six to nine months. When this trouble broke out, Oliver Cowdery hurried to Kirtland to personally deliver the news.

As soon as he arrived in Kirtland, he wrote the letter to Church leaders in Missouri mentioned above in which he discussed the mail's unreliability. He explained that he had just learned that, back in June, the First Presidency had sent a draft for the "house of the Lord & a plan of the city" to Missouri. The reason he mentioned that mailing, he said, is so "that you may know that such things have been sent should any accident happen that you do not obtain them."⁷⁶ Those plans, mailed about June 25, arrived in Independence five weeks later, on July 29, just after Cowdery had left for Kirtland. Joseph Smith added a postscript, full of empathy, to Cowdery's letter.

Meanwhile, in their July 29 letter acknowledging receipt of the temple and city plans, Missouri leaders voiced "inexpressible anxiety to hear the word of the Lord concerning Zion."⁷⁷ In that letter, Phelps appealed to Cowdery to "write the first mail after you arrive at Kirtland, whether the tidings be favorable or not." On August 18, Joseph Smith wrote to anxious Missouri leaders and verified that the Lord had communicated to him by the Holy Ghost, "after much prayer and supplication," that He would deliver Zion, but that "God is pleased to keep it hid from mine eyes the means how exactly the thing will be done." He lamented the slowness of letters: "[At] the thought that this letter will be so long coming to you, my heart faints within me."⁷⁸

For their part, Kirtland leaders eagerly awaited regular reports from Missouri, which did not come. On October 10, Frederick G. Wil-

⁷⁶Smith, Rigdon, Williams, and Harris, to Brethren in Zion, June 25, 1833.

⁷⁷John Whitmer, Letter to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, July 29, 1833, Joseph Smith Letterbook 2:52–55.

⁷⁸Joseph Smith, Letter to William Phelps, John Whitmer, Edward Partridge, Isaac Morley, John Corrill, and A. Sidney Gilbert, August 18, 1833, Joseph Smith Collection.

liams of the First Presidency, in a letter to Missouri Church leaders, complained about the lack of mail and reliable information:

It is a long time since we have received any intelligence from you, save a letter . . . from Elder John Whitmer, which informed us that he had written four letters since Elder Oliver Cowdery left, but we have not received any of them, nor any others from Zion, except one from Bishop Partridge, of August 13th, and have had no information, to be depended upon, concerning the riot, and the situation of the brethren in Zion: and considering that the enemy have commenced intercepting our letters, I direct this to Mrs. Billings, thinking, by so doing, that you may get it.⁷⁹

Meanwhile, Missouri Saints embraced assurances from Kirtland that they would not have to leave Zion. In September 1833, the Colesville Branch which had moved to Missouri by then, pledged to donate money or labor for the temple in Independence.⁸⁰ Missouri leaders followed Joseph Smith's instructions to petition the courts for help, hiring the law firm of Doniphan, Atchison, Rees, and Wood for that purpose. They also petitioned the governor, an act that "seemed to enrage the mob."⁸¹ Between October 31 and November 6, Missourians violently forced the Saints from Jackson County. Because the Prophet needed to know this terrible news as soon as possible, on November 6 and 7 Phelps wrote a letter from Liberty, Clay County, Missouri, to Church headquarters telling about the mobbings and exile of the Saints. His letter took a month to reach Kirtland.⁸²

As a result, Joseph Smith and Kirtland leaders did not hear about the expulsions until late in November. By November 12, they had "received some letters from our brethren in Missouri" but it was "hard to draw from them anything decisive as to the probable lengths that those deprecators will go." The lack of more information, Oliver Cowdery worried, might be due to "fear that their let-

⁷⁹Letter printed in *History of the Church*, 1:417. Mrs. Billings is not identified.

⁸⁰Newel Knight, Journal, Allen Version, undated entry in September 1833, photocopy, LDS Church History Library. Seven individuals pledged money or labor.

⁸¹*Ibid.*, n.d., but positioned in late 1833 materials.

⁸²Liberty's post office began in 1829, two years after Independence had mail service.

ters might be intercepted.”⁸³ On November 19, two weeks after the expulsions, Joseph Smith wrote to a Canadian friend: “We have received letters from our breth[r]en in Missouri of late, but we cannot tell from their contents the probable extent that those persons who are desirous to expel them from that country, will carry their unlawful and unrighteous purposes.” Meanwhile, on that same date, Bishop Partridge wrote from Missouri to Joseph Smith “in haste” seeking advice “upon the subject of the lands & also I want wisdom & light on many subjects . . . I am anxious to hear from you.” He looked for some “comforting word from the Lord” through Joseph Smith.⁸⁴ News of the expulsion finally reached Kirtland on November 25 when messengers Orson Hyde and John Gould arrived from Missouri and “brought the melancholy intelligence of the mob in Jackson county persecuting the brethren.”⁸⁵

Both Mormon centers desperately needed more information from the other. Kirtland needed to know the full extent of what had happened, and Missouri leaders begged for counsel regarding what to do next. On December 5, Phelps’s November 6–7 letter finally reached Kirtland. Joseph Smith immediately answered, expressing “great anxiety . . . with regard to the true state of affairs in Zion.” Because Phelps’s information did not match the descriptions of the situation Hyde and Gould had given him, “it is difficult for us to advise.”⁸⁶

Five days later, on December 10, Joseph Smith again wrote to Missouri leaders. That morning’s mail had brought letters from Partridge, Phelps, and John Corrill, all dated November 19 at Liberty. Regarding what to do next, he admitted that “there are two things of which I am ignorant and the Lord will not show me . . . and they are these, Why God hath suffered so great calamity to come upon Zion . . . and again by what means he will return her back to her inheritance.” Obviously, lack of communication between earth and heaven was compounding the lack of communication between Missouri and

⁸³Oliver Cowdery, Letter to Samuel Bent, November 12, 1833, Oliver Cowdery Letterbook, Henry Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

⁸⁴Edward Partridge, Letter to Joseph Smith, November [19], 1833, Joseph Smith Collection.

⁸⁵*History of the Church*, 1:446.

⁸⁶Joseph Smith, Letter to Edward Partridge, December 5, 1833, in Joseph Smith Letterbook 1:65–70.

Ohio. Joseph Smith felt anguish that Missouri followers were “now as strangers and pilgrims on the earth, exposed to hunger, cold, nakedness peril, sword &c.” and admitted that “when I contemplate this, it is with difficulty that I can keep from complaining and murmuring against this dispensation” but added: “I am sensible that I ought not to murmur only in this, that those who are innocent are compelled to suffer for the iniquities of the guilty.” He counseled the Mormons in Liberty to “retain your lands even unto the uttermost,” seek redress “of your enemies,” and “pray to God day and night to return you in peace and in safety to the Lands of your inheritance.” To Phelps he said, “collect all the information, and give us a true history of the beginning [sic] and rise of Zion, and her calamities.”⁸⁷

On December 15, six weeks after the expulsions, Phelps wrote a letter describing the “gloomy prospect” facing the scattered Saints. “Brethren, if the Lord will, I should like to know what the honest in heart shall do? our cloths [sic] are worn out—we want the necessaries of life, and shall we lease, buy, or otherwise obtain land where we are, to till that we may raise enough to eat?” After their persecutions in Jackson County, if they “have got to be persecuted from city to city, and from synagogue to synagogue, we want to know it.” They hoped for better things, Phelps said, but “shall wait patiently for the word of the Lord.”⁸⁸

Finally, on December 16, Joseph Smith recorded a revelation (D&C 101) dealing with many questions and concerns he and members felt regarding Zion’s future. Three days later, knowing how urgently Missouri Saints needed the word of the Lord, he sent William Pratt and David Patten to hand-carry the revelation and dispatches to the Saints in Clay County.⁸⁹ That county became the Missouri Saints’ next stopping place.⁹⁰ Plans to build the city and temple in Zion were put on hold, and Mormon mail exchanges between Jackson County and Kirtland never resumed.

⁸⁷Joseph Smith, Letter to Edward Partridge and Others, December 10, 1833, Joseph Smith Letterbook 1:70–75.

⁸⁸W. W. Phelps, Letter to “Dear Brethren,” December 15, 1833, *Evening and the Morning Star* 2 (January 1834): 128.

⁸⁹*History of the Church*, 1:467.

⁹⁰The next spring Joseph Smith led Zion’s Camp to Missouri and saw firsthand the displaced Saints’ situation.

CONCLUSION

In a hierarchal church and one committed to sending emissaries into the world to gain converts and give leadership, communication is vital. Leaders need to send instructions and to learn what is going on among the followers and delegated leaders working away from Church headquarters. In the foundational years of Mormonism, except for personal visits, letters were the primary medium of communication. Back-and-forth correspondence shared information and instructions, identified problems, provided solutions, motivated and inspired, warned, shared good news, and conveyed bad news.

Most letters exchanged in the 1831-33 period did so through the U.S. Postal Service which, relying primarily on stagecoaches, was agonizingly slow between distant points. Some decisions had to be made based on inadequate information. As the 1833 crisis in Zion shows, the exchange of letters generated as much or even more frustration than the solutions. For the next seven years, mail continued to be the main communications link between Church leaders in northern Missouri and Church headquarters in Kirtland, until the First Presidency vacated Ohio and joined the body of Saints in Caldwell County, finally ending the awkward long-distance communication situation.

WHAT WE WILL DO NOW THAT NEW MORMON HISTORY IS OLD: A ROUNDTABLE

Session facilitator Keith A. Erekson's introduction: At the annual meeting of the Mormon History Association in Sacramento in May 2007, approximately forty-five people gathered to participate in a discussion session. This new conference session format featured, not readings of prepared papers, but conversation and debate by those who had read the assigned material and come ready to discuss it. Jan Shipps's review of Richard Bushman's award-winning *Rough Stone Rolling* (2005) and Bushman's response to Shipps provided the starting point for considering the question "What do we do now that 'New Mormon History' is old?"¹ The conversation proved so lively that many people stayed in the room talking while the conference lunch went on without them.

Sensing a general excitement and interest in discussing the future of Mormon history, I invited nine other young scholars from various disciplinary backgrounds and with a variety of research interests to put their thoughts on paper in ways, as I suggested, "personal, passionate, and predictive." The authors wrote with the common experience of participation in the discussion session but without reference

¹Jan Shipps, "Richard Lyman Bushman, the Story of Joseph Smith and Mormonism, and the New Mormon History," *Journal of American History* 94, no. 2 (September 2007): 498–516; Richard Lyman Bushman, "What's New in Mormon History: A Response to Jan Shipps," *ibid.*, 517–21. We express our thanks to Edward T. Linenthal, editor, and the staff of the *Journal of American History* who made these readings available free of charge to members of the Mormon History Association. The session was organized under the auspices of the Mormon History Association's Young Scholar Initiative.

to each other's responses. I did a round of editing/author response on most of them, arranged them in a somewhat conversational flow, and submitted the results to the *Journal of Mormon History*. The results represent the beginning of a dialogue, since they did not do further refinement of their responses after reading those of the other participants. The responses that follow address strengths of the field, glaring omissions, pet peeves, hopes, lines of research, and personal connections. Some common themes arise—such as the need for context and theoretical framing—but the individual authors nevertheless recommend different approaches and solutions to the problems at hand. Several propose names for the current and future study of Mormon history; a few question the very idea of naming.

This polyphonic expression of a collective research agenda is, in itself, a conscientious departure from the New Mormon History paradigm in which a Church historian, operating from a central archival setting, assigned research tasks to the squires in Camelot. In publishing the discussion here, we invite the conversation to continue on blogs, at conferences, and in scholarly publications by all who, like us, find the future of Mormon history to be an exciting, relevant, and significant topic.

Getting Around the Dichotomy Squared

*Keith A. Erekson*²

IN A REVIEW OF Richard Lyman Bushman's recent biography *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling, a Cultural Biography of Mormonism's Founder* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005), Jan Shipps describes the volume as the "crowning achievement" of "an intellectual movement that . . . seems to be rapidly passing into history."³ She dates the movement's origins to developments in the 1960s, including the establishment of the Mormon History Association and the founding of *Dia-*

²KEITH A. EREKSON {kaerekson@utep.edu} is an assistant professor of history, University of Texas at El Paso. He holds degrees in sociology (2000) and history (2002) from Brigham Young University and a Ph.D. in history (2008) from Indiana University. He has published articles on Mormon history, public history, and history teaching and is currently preparing a manuscript about popular interest in Abraham Lincoln in the early twentieth century.

³Jan Shipps, "Richard Lyman Bushman, the Story of Joseph Smith

logue: A Journal of Mormon Thought. She traces its flourishing in the 1970s as well as its restriction and retreat in the 1980s and 1990s. This story has been told in secret code words for many years—both in forlorn footnotes longing for the bygone “Camelot Era” and in weather-beaten sighs about the “graying of the MHA.”⁴

Though my eight-year-old would be quick to tell you that I, too, could qualify for a gray-hair club, I want to strike a conscientiously generational stance in these opening comments. I am one of America’s “Bicentennial Babies,” having been born two hundred years after 1776 and in the same year that James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard’s *The Story of the Latter-day Saints* landed on store shelves (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976). When Leonard Arrington ended his day job at the Church Historian’s Office, I began attending all-day school. While Mark Hofmann prepared his forgeries, I prepared for baptism into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. For me, September 1993 marked not the end of an era in Salt Lake City, but the beginning of my senior year of high school in the suburbs of Baltimore. Thus, to me and my generation, the New Mormon History movement is the subject not of memoir, but of a review of the literature.

Possessing this vantage point on the literature on Mormon history, the phrase “New Mormon History” appears less than inspirational. In the first place, dichotomizing all study of the Mormon past as either “new” or “old” just seems too simplistic. Furthermore, if what took place before I was born was “new,” that does not rhetorically leave us anywhere to go, except perhaps to “post-new” or “retro-new.” But as I read the essays by Shipps and Bushman, I was struck by

and Mormonism, and the New Mormon History,” *Journal of American History* 94, no. 2 (September 2007): 498, 516.

⁴Interestingly, historians employed by the federal government also “speak nostalgically of the boom days of the 1970s, when new offices were established, historians were hired, and professional organizations were created.” Like Mormon historians, they also note a decline in activity during the 1990s as the federal government was downsized. At a recent gathering of the Society for History in the Federal Government, however, Betty K. Koed suggested: “Perhaps it is time to broaden our discussion of federal history beyond the confines of that thirty-year window, to see those events—the boom and the bust—as just marks on a continuing timeline.” Koed, “(Still) Live from D.C.: Historians in the Federal Government,” *The Public Historian* 30, no. 2 (May 2008): 7.

the observation that a closer look at the rhetoric just might provide the compass by which we can mark out alternative paths in the future.

Shipps notes rightly that Bushman's *Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984) both laid the groundwork for the full biography and also served as a significant touchstone in the New Mormon History movement. In source notes in that initial volume, Bushman laid out the world of Mormon history as marked by an essential divide between believers and nonbelievers (189). Shipps also cites the volume of bibliographic/ historiographical essays by Ronald W. Walker, David J. Whittaker, and James B. Allen, *Mormon History* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001), which effectively categorized practitioners of Mormon history by their place of employment—Church-owned institutions or otherwise. Tracing the movement through the “Arrington Spring” to the fall of the “September Six,” Shipps concludes that New Mormon History “survived, but in bifurcated fashion” in the institutions of Signature Books and the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Latter-day Saint History at Brigham Young University.

So my first question is directed at the rhetoric of the New Mormon History: Did its practitioners in fact create something new and unified between two periods marked by dichotomized historical practice, or, does the “New” in “New Mormon History” best refer to the professionally trained and amply footnoted new wine poured into the same old belief-defined bottles?

Toward the end of her essay, Shipps implies the latter, hinting that, by pursuing such issues as the religious revival of 1820 in Palmyra or the date of the restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood, the New Mormon Historians actually only engaged in a form of sophisticated apologetics. And her insinuations were not lost on Richard Bushman who responded to Shipps's review by carefully laying out the landscape of Mormon apologetics in order to construct them as—that's right, another dichotomy—“the other major current in Mormon intellectual life.”⁵ So, in the nuanced mathematics of New Mormon History, the original dichotomy between believers and unbelievers has been squared into four: New Mormon Historians and regular apologists on one side who now face off against the publications of Signature Books and the public comments of Republican presidential hopefuls.

⁵Bushman, “What's New in Mormon History: A Response to Jan Shipps,” 517.

The time has come to move beyond the squared dichotomies of New Mormon History. Mark Twain did not earn a Ph.D. in history from a distinguished eastern university; but after only a brief visit to Salt Lake City—chronicled in his hilarious *Roughing It* (1872)—he sensed that “all our ‘information’ had *three* sides to it, and so I gave up the idea that I could settle the ‘Mormon question’ in two days.”⁶ While the New Mormon Historians were themselves in grade school, Wallace Stegner noted that the field of Mormon history contained so many more sides than three that it was an “enormous, repetitious, contradictory, and embattled . . . morass.”⁷ We must construct an understanding of the Mormon past and the writing of its history that exists between a dichotomy and a morass. Perhaps the poverty of these two options accounts in some measure for the recent inflow of religious studies scholars who seek, by their own theoretical applications, to make sense where historians have simply dichotomized.

Can we begin to conceptualize the field in terms of sources, evidence, and historiographical arguments? Is there a place for the new historicism of Stephen Greenblatt or the cultural analysis of Clifford Geertz or Victor Turner? In addition to meticulously compiled bibliographies of every book written about Mormon history, would not the field benefit from something like Beverly Norton’s *Guide to Historical Literature*—a resource that would summarize major works and developments and that could be updated regularly?⁸

What if we also used our research findings to speak to issues beyond Mormon history? Should we really be satisfied to earn a degree in the East just to bring it back to the West and stare at ourselves? The histories of the early Republic and the American West can certainly

⁶Mark Twain, *Roughing It* (Hartford, Conn.: American Publishing Company, 1872), 136; emphasis mine.

⁷Wallace Stegner, *The Gathering of Zion: The Story of the Mormon Trail* (Salt Lake City: Westwater Press, 1964), 313.

⁸Catherine Gallagher and Stephen Greenblatt, *Practicing New Historicism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001); Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973); Victor W. Turner and Edward M. Bruner, eds., *The Anthropology of Experience, with an Epilogue by Clifford Geertz* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986); Mary Beth Norton, ed., *The American Historical Association’s Guide to Historical Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

inform Mormon history, but why don't we also identify and argue for the ways that a deeper understanding of Mormon history can inform *American* history, politics, and culture? Why didn't Daniel Walker Howe have to draw heavily on Mormon history and theory to write his Pulitzer Prize-winning history of the United States from 1815 to 1848?⁹ Can we think and write in such a way that articles in the *Journal of Mormon History* would be cited by scholars in the United States and elsewhere? What if—to paraphrase the former presidential hopeful whose eloquent and persuasive speech about religion in America won him the nomination and the presidency—what if we asked not what historical scholarship could do for Mormon history but what Mormon history can do for historical scholarship?

The Unexplored Drama within the Drama

*Rachel Cope*¹⁰

I WOULD LIKE TO BUILD upon Keith Erikson's suggestion that we use our research findings to speak to issues beyond Mormon history; but I will begin with a personal note. I am at work on a dissertation about the religious nature of nineteenth-century female revival experiences in upstate New York. If someone had forewarned me this would entail re-living some of the conditions of the time period, I may have chosen a different university, another field, and a more relaxing topic—something like the impact of Caribbean vacations on the emotional and spiritual health of twenty-first-century women. But alas, I decided to

⁹Daniel Walker Howe, *What God Hath Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815–1848* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007). See John C. Thomas's review, *Journal of Mormon History* 35, no. 1 (Winter 2009): 208–13.

¹⁰RACHEL COPE {rcope232@yahoo.com} is a doctoral candidate in history, Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York. Rachel graduated magna cum laude with a B.A. in history in 2001 and with an M.A. in history in 2003, both from Brigham Young University. Her dissertation is tentatively titled, "In Some Places a Few Drops and Other Places a Plentiful Shower": The Continuing Religious Impact of Revivalism on Nineteenth-Century New York Women." Her research interests include women's history, religious history, revivalism, conversion, and female authorship.

expose myself to subzero temperatures, an interminably dull and listless sky, daily blizzards, an apartment with an arctic chill, religious chaos, and an array of critters who somehow manage to get into my apartment and hotel rooms. I now understand why Joseph and Emma Smith moved to Ohio!

My personal travels form a part of my focus on female religious journeys—ranging from nineteenth-century journals to personal stories shared by my nun and minister friends, to the increasing solidification of my own faith. Differences certainly exist, but I have been intrigued to discover common questions, goals, and motivations that make us so alike: John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* still rings true. This contextualization of contemporary religious experience has proven helpful on levels both intellectual and spiritual.

Perhaps my stay in convents has been most insightful, as illustrated by an experience I recorded in my journal in November 2007 and slightly edit here:

This evening, I was sitting on my bed in my gray fleece pants and an over-sized BYU sweatshirt. Sister Jeanne entered my room and sat next to me. She was wearing red sweat pants and a large, white Sisters of St. Joseph T-shirt. The irony of our attire brought a broad grin to my face. She shared the history of the Sisters of St. Joseph with me, and then asked if I would share the history of my faith with her. We were both intrigued by what the other shared, she being particularly touched by the fact that I was Christian. I have always been moved by her faith and long to emulate her tender example of purity. This sweet, elderly nun then clasped my hands and, looking deep into my eyes, said, "God bless you for your goodness." I smiled because I felt the same about her. I think we are kindred spirits. Her faith informs mine, and I believe mine had just added to hers.

How is it that a twenty-eight-year-old Mormon woman can connect so readily with a ninety-year-old nun? And why is it that our stories are so seldom explored and our religious contexts so rarely connected?

Contemporary situations have thus taught me that Lucy Mack Smith's experiences shed light on the religious conversion of Catherine Livingston Garrettson to the Methodist Church in 1787 and vice versa. Furthermore, knowledge of Presbyterian accounts expands my understanding of Quaker narratives. In short, context is key. And yet, historians would not turn to Mormon history in an attempt to understand the questions that were being asked by those at-

tending the revivals of the Second Great Awakening. Nor would they review the experiences of Martha Hughes Cannon in an effort to understand female education in nineteenth-century America, or Jane Manning James as an example of an African American who underwent religious conversion.

It is time to move past the issue of whether a revival was taking place in Palmyra, New York, in 1820, and instead to broach the larger theological questions and concerns that ignited religious interest. Joseph Smith's response to revivalism can and should shed light on that of Jonathan Pearson, who eventually became a professor of mathematics, botany, and chemistry at Union College in Schenectady, New York. In the significant year of 1830, he recorded in his diary: "I have so many minds about the subject [of religion] that I hardly know what to conclude about it. . . . It is lamentable that those who call themselves the worshipers of the same God should be so disunited and so as not to go to each other's meeting in some cases. These things seems to be inconsistent with the character of the followers [of] Christ and I think it to be better if they would be more united."¹¹ What, historians should ask, do Joseph Smith and Jonathan Pearson's accounts teach us about nineteenth-century religious culture? And, how might we, as scholars, enable Mormon history to inform others?

Continuing to build upon my obvious interest in women's history, I think it is telling that the only comment about women's history in the context of Jan Shipps's article simply states, "Under the leadership of Carol Cornwall Madsen, one of Arrington's major initiatives, women's history, was carried forward at the institute. Madsen's biographical study of LDS Relief Society president Emmeline B. Wells, who represented Utah in the National American Woman Suffrage Association for nearly thirty years, is one of the premier accomplishments of the women's studies dimension of the New Mormon History" (512). If, as Wallace Stegner proposed, Mormon "women were incredible,"¹² then why are accomplishments in women's history worth mentioning in only two sentences? Does the rhetoric of "major initiative" exceed our actual successes? And should this initiative expand to include more male as well as female scholars?

¹¹Jonathan Pearson, Diary, July 18, 1830, Special Collections, Schaffer Library, Union College, Schenectady, New York.

¹²Wallace Stegner. *The Gathering of Zion: The Story of the Mormon Trail* (1964; rpt., New York: Bison Books, 1992), 13.

Conventional wisdom holds women's history to be limited by a lack of sources or a lack of attention and interpretation. Whitney Cross justified his omission of women in his classic *The Burned-Over District* as follows: "Although women had reached the threshold of their modern freedom, they were still so much the forgotten members of society that little satisfactory direct evidence about them has survived. Properly, they should dominate a history of enthusiastic movements, for their influence was paramount."¹³ I am a first-hand witness that many archivists throughout the state of New York still believe Cross's assertions. On numberless occasions I have been provided with documents relating to the beginning of the women's rights movement in Seneca Falls, and everyone wants to show me a letter signed by Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Women's history thus seems to consist of women's movements. But no one seems to believe that any women wrote about their revival experiences. Contrary to these discouraging comments, I have found enough material to keep me busy for my entire career, several times over. The sources are endless.

In speaking of women in the scriptures, Neal A. Maxwell, then in the presidency of the Seventy, concluded, "The story of the women of God, therefore, is, for now, an untold drama within a drama."¹⁴ Yet in the context of Mormon history, lack of documentation should not be an issue because I have found far more than I previously believed possible. Thus, female stories can and should be explored. Is it possible that the problem is not a lack of materials but rather a lack of probing questions? Are we failing to truly grapple with the evidence we have? And are we still waiting for the time foreseen by Emmeline B. Wells: "But although the historians of the past have been neglectful of woman, and it is the exception if she be mentioned at all; yet the future will deal more generously with womankind, and the historian of the present age will find it very embarrassing to ignore woman in the records of the nineteenth century."¹⁵ We can all recognize the myopic limitations of Whitney Cross's statement, but is it possible that our actions, or lack thereof, simply mirror his assertions?

¹³Whitney R. Cross, *The Burned-Over District: The Social and Intellectual History of Enthusiastic Religion in Western New York* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1950), 84.

¹⁴Neal A. Maxwell, "The Women of God," *Ensign*, May 1978, 10.

¹⁵Emmeline B. Wells, "Self-Made Women," *Woman's Exponent* 9 (March 1, 1881): 148.

Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, a women's historian in the 1970s, described a conclusion she had reached: By emphasizing male oppression of women, she had in fact become a "historian of men," when she actually wanted to be a "historian of women."¹⁶ We can and certainly should apply this insight to women's history, but can we also apply it to Mormon history in general? Are we allowing ourselves to tell the history of Mormonism, or, are we still so entangled in our past oppressions, that we are continuing to place too much emphasis on our victimhood? Are we still trapped in the insider/outsider debate described so well by Laurence Moore?¹⁷ Have we yet received an invitation to sup at Martin Marty's Republican Banquet?¹⁸

Finally, how should the telling of Mormon history improve over time? Gerda Lerner noted that larger narratives—the details that we choose to underscore as well as the information we decide to limit or omit—shape the present and subsequently influence the future. She explained, "If we see ourselves as victimized, as powerless and overwhelmed by forces we cannot understand or control, we will choose to live cautiously, avoid conflict and evade pain. If we see ourselves as loved, grounded, powerful, we will embrace the future, live courageously and accept challenges with confidence. Another aspect of history-making, namely, its function in the healing of pathology, is recognized and ritualized by most systems of psychology. People traumatized by abuse or negative childhood experiences . . . are helped to retell their story in a more positive, perhaps in a more realistic framework."¹⁹ Lerner thus makes it clear that time, context, and perspective can lead to more positive reinterpretations of the past.

Perhaps the story of Mormons as victim is less accurate than the story of Mormons as spiritual pilgrims committed to the quest for spiritual growth—a theme that can be explored in a variety of contexts. The former focuses on tragedy and failure caused by enemies, the latter on endurance, redemption, and healing that occurred in

¹⁶Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "Politics and Culture in Women's History: A Symposium," *Feminist Studies* 6 (1980): 61.

¹⁷R. Laurence Moore, *Religious Outsiders and the Making of Americans* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

¹⁸Martin E. Marty, *Religion and Republic: The American Circumstance* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989).

¹⁹Gerda Lerner, *Why History Matters: Life and Thought* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 199–200.

Mormon lives. We must make Mormon histories more effective works, remember the forgotten participants in Mormonism's past, and employ new lenses to help us explain why Mormon history matters.

Restorationist Studies: The Future of the New Mormon History

*David J. Howlett*²⁰

A RECENT REVIEW OF Philip Goff and Paul Harvey's revisionist textbook, *Themes in Religion and American Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), concluded that Mormons have become the big winners in current American religious scholarship. In nearly every thematic chapter in Goff and Harvey's volume, for instance, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints received at least passing mention, if not significant attention.²¹ Like the "evangelical thesis" that swept the field of American history in the 1980s, linking evangelicals to nearly everything that became "American" in the present, Mormons are now posed as the quintessential modern Western religious faith, made in America and exported to the world. With only slight satire, "studying Mormons" could be added as one of the entries on the popular blog "Stuff White People Like," along with the re-

²⁰DAVID J. HOWLETT {david_howlett@uiowa.edu} is a doctoral candidate in religious studies at the University of Iowa. He holds an M.A. in history from the University of Missouri-Kansas City (2004) and a BSE in social studies education from the University of Central Missouri (2001). His dissertation is tentatively titled "Parallel Pilgrimage: Cooperation and Contestation among Latter Day Saint Denominations at the Kirtland Temple, 1966–2008." His research interests include pilgrimage studies, religion and the body, American eschatological thought, and religion and children. He currently serves as a board member for the John Whitmer Historical Association.

²¹Douglas L. Winiarski, review of *Themes in Religion and American Culture*, edited by Phillip Goff and Paul Harvey, *Church History* 75, no. 3 (2006): 704.

cent entries on “statistics” and “girls with bangs.”²² Studying Mormons, at least for the present, is hot.

With renewed enthusiasm for all things Mormon in the larger academic community, what new school of scholarship could be emerging? While it is still somewhat inchoate in form, I believe that “restorationist studies” is emerging from the old New Mormon History. What characterizes this new school of academic analysis? A short explanation of my constitutive terms (“restorationist” and “studies”) sheds light on what I think has come into being recently in the field.

By “restorationist,” I mean that this field of studies focuses on religious and quasi-religious movements historically related to Joseph Smith’s fractious nineteenth-century church. I explicitly avoid “Mormon” since some of these movements abhor the term but may use some metaphor of “restoration” to identify themselves. Additionally, the term “restorationist” explicitly connects these groups to a much larger family of Christian faiths in the early nineteenth century, including the modern Disciples of Christ and the Church of Christ in all its forms. Some historians, like Mark Noll, have already begun to classify at least one historic Latter Day Saint movement within the family of other “Restorationist churches with origins primary in the first half of the nineteenth century.”²³ By using the grouping “restorationist,” I do not mean to posit some eternal “essence” that all restorationist faiths have; I only wish to acknowledge an ongoing genealogical relationship between groups that continues to this day.

Do restorationist studies scholars have a familiarity with the Community of Christ, the Latter-day Saints, and the Disciples of Christ in the same way that scholars of evangelicalism study Southern Baptists and independent evangelicals? Perhaps not, but restorationist studies scholars do not study the Latter-day Saints or Community of Christ without linking them to a much larger cultural framework beyond the group. While insular histories of individual families or ancestors con-

²²“Stuff White People Like,” <http://stuffwhitepeoplelike.com/> (accessed August 21, 2008).

²³Noll places the Community of Christ within this category, though he places the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the category of “American-founded religions related to Christianity.” See his *The Old Religion in a New World: The History of North American Christianity* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 2002), 284–86.

tinue to be written without any reference to larger historical narratives, restorationist studies scholars are mainly interested in fitting their own studies into a broader comparative context. The New Mormon History itself birthed such an interest. Restorationist studies continues this interest but takes such contextualization one step further. For instance, the New Mormon History gave scholars a study of Mormon ordinances in Gregory Prince's *Power from On High: The Development of Mormon Priesthood* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1995). Prince's excellent study focused on the complicated evolution of Mormon ritual practices and offices, but it did not place such changes in dialogue with other Christian ritual practices or movements. Restorationist studies, on the other hand, has produced studies like John-Charles Duffy's work on the decline of ritual nudity in Mormon temple practices.²⁴ Duffy's study placed these ordinances in the theoretical framework of ritual studies and thus invited more than just Mormon insiders into the scholarly conversation about his subject.

My last point shows that restorationist studies necessarily implies an interdisciplinary approach to scholarship. Emerging restorationist studies scholars draw upon the tools of literary studies, religious studies, anthropology, sociology, and, of course, history. Lest one be concerned that history will become unimportant in restorationist studies, critical theorist Frederic Jameson's mantra to "always historicize" has become the watchword in many of the humanities and social sciences in the past few decades.²⁵ Methods of inquiry, not just the narratives described by scholars, are now seen as "itineraries" rather than static, eternal tools.²⁶ History has come to dominate current modes of inquiry.

Of course, the disciplinary departments that house emerging restorationist studies scholars shape their emphasis in disciplinary approach. Nevertheless, scholars from all disciplines in emerging restorationist studies draw upon each other's work and methods. I am amazed that, despite the many different programs and schools where

²⁴John-Charles Duffy, "Concealing the Body, Concealing the Sacred: The Decline of Ritual Nudity in Mormon Temples," *Journal of Ritual Studies* 21, no. 2 (2007): 1-21.

²⁵Frederic Jameson, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1981), 9.

²⁶Thomas A. Tweed, *Crossing and Dwelling: A Theory of Religion* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006), 7-27.

new scholars are being trained, most of these scholars are influenced by the same theoretical tools and somehow make time to read the latest blockbuster book in the “old” New Mormon History. Who didn’t read Bushman’s *Rough Stone Rolling* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005)? Who can’t tell you what Dan Vogel argues in *Joseph Smith: The Making of a Prophet* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2004)? Who didn’t get their hands on a copy of Givens’s *A People of Paradox: A History of Mormon Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007)? Most of my historian colleagues are aware of ethnographic methods and have read the latest religious studies texts by Robert Orsi or Thomas Tweed.²⁷ Additionally, despite dazzling differences in their areas of specialization, scholars in restorationist studies read and critique each other’s latest manuscripts and articles, email one another citations for their research projects, and care about the criticism and standing they receive from one another. A new community, necessarily fluid, has emerged from the old New Mormon History.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not note that my description of restorationist studies oddly enough describes my own interests, training, and religious background. I chose to pursue my doctoral studies in a religious studies department—a necessarily interdisciplinary field. I am enthralled with theory (though not always bright enough to use it well). And perhaps most importantly, I actively participate in the ecumenically minded Community of Christ. (Most Community of Christ members do not want to be labeled as “Mormons.”) My advocacy of restorationist studies, then, is something of a projection of my own autobiography. However, as Hans Georg Gadamer argued long ago in his foundational work, *Truth and Method*, our own “prejudices” or biases are not necessarily bad; they are actually necessary.

Our biases allow us to ask interesting questions. A prejudice becomes a serious problem, in Gadamer’s view, when it already presumes a complete answer to a question posed. At that point, one no longer engages in a conversation but only in a monologue.²⁸ Restorationist studies, while presuming some minimal answers (such as the uncontroversial notions that change is normal and the Restoration movement is

²⁷Ibid.; Robert A. Orsi, *Between Heaven and Earth: The Religious Worlds People Make and the Scholars Who Study Them* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2005).

²⁸Hans Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, rev. ed., translated by Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall (German edition published in 1960;

connected to other Christian and non-Christian movements), does not posit answers to things such as whether a faith is ultimately “true” or simply a “social construction.” Instead, restorationist studies provides a framework for asking interesting questions—at the least, questions interesting to me; at most, interesting to many scholars within our field. If current trends in American religious history are any indication of the future, restorationist studies scholars should find an eager audience beyond the bounds of the scholarly organizations and institutions that cultivated the New Mormon History.

Performing Mormon History

*Megan Sanborn Jones*²⁹

AS A THEATRE SCHOLAR and practitioner, my studies in traditional Mormon history have admittedly been secondary to my primary interest in American religious performance traditions. What I have seen of Mormon history, both in writing and at the 2007 Mormon History Association conference, suggests that it mirrors the path of general history. Early works evidence an obsession with origins and a teleological outlook of the development of religious practice and cultural arts divided into two distinct camps: apologists and skeptics. Jan Shipps suggests that New Mormon History reconciles this division in some ways as an “intellectual and historiographical movement that carried the story of the Latter-day Saints into the cultural main-

New York: Continuum, 2004), 268–371.

²⁹MEGAN SANBORN JONES {msjones@byu.edu} is an associate professor of theatre and media arts, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. She received her bachelor’s and master’s degrees in theatre from BYU and her Ph.D. in theatre history and criticism from the University of Minnesota, Twin-Cities. Her scholarship is on religious performance in nineteenth- and twentieth-century America and has been published in *Theatre Journal*, *The State of the Art*, and *Theatre Topics*. Her first book, *The Performance of American Identity in Anti-Mormon Melodrama*, is forthcoming from Routledge Press. She is also a director/choreographer with credits including *Angels in America II: Perestroika* (Loring Playhouse, Minnesota), *Great Expectations* (ARTE, Utah), *Crazy for You*, *Holes*, and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (BYU).

stream.”³⁰ While the New Mormon History may have found a place between apologists and skeptics, however, it remains a study of origins, documents, and text.

Recent reevaluations of general history provide alternate methodologies that move beyond the scope of typical research, Mormon or otherwise. Postcolonial theory’s emphasis on the subaltern proposes a decentering of the grand narrative toward a multiplicity of narratives.³¹ Postmodern theory requires a reevaluation of the very nature of the subject of inquiry.³² New Historicism,³³ Terry Eagleton’s ethical Marxism,³⁴ and other contemporary critical theories also present alternate ways of viewing the past that could benefit the close study of Mormon history. A recent methodology that illuminates history generally and Mormon history in particular is performance studies.

Performance studies, an academic discipline that emerged from the collaboration between theatre critic and practitioner Richard Schechner and social anthropologist Victor Turner, hypothesizes that (1) performance is central to the human condition and as such, all behaviors and activities can be analyzed as performances, and (2) objects or things (such as paintings, architecture, or written histories) should be regarded as practices, events, and behaviors that can be

³⁰Jan Shipps, “Richard Lyman Bushman, the Story of Joseph Smith and Mormonism, and the New Mormon History,” *Journal of American History* 94, no. 2 (September 2007): 498.

³¹For more on postcolonial studies, see Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), and its expansion by Chinua Achebe, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Homi Bhabha, and Trinh Minh-ha. For an introduction to postcolonial theatre studies, see Helen Gilbert, *Post-Colonial Drama: Theory, Practice, Politics* (New York: Routledge, 1996).

³²Postmodern theory, as first articulated by Jean-Francois Lyotard, has been applied variously to consumerism in Frederick Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1991), to media culture in Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995), and to theatre in Kerstin Schmidt, *The Theater of Transformation: Postmodernism in American Drama* (Amsterdam, the Netherlands: Rodopi, 2005).

³³Catherine Gallagher and Stephen Greenblatt, *Practicing New Historicism* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000).

³⁴Terry Eagleton, *After Theory* (London: Penguin Books, 2004).

read as performance. The marriage of anthropology and performance naturally promotes a shift toward examining past and present practices that focus on the individual, on material culture, and on embodied (living) history.³⁵

I believe that the future of Mormon history could benefit from adopting any of the contemporary theoretical methodologies that are in circulation in general historiographical practice. I further believe that such adoptions/adaptations are already happening as the rising generation of scholars trained in these styles begins contributing to the ongoing dialogue of Mormon history. As a performance critic, I would like to suggest three basic tenets of performance studies that intersect with Mormon history in productive ways. These are not meant to be prescriptive but are additional sites that Mormon history could investigate and interrogate.

First, behavior is the object of study. This concept recenters interest in daily practice—how people behave(d) in certain times, places, situations. It suggests that historical texts are not fixed polemics but are, in fact, performances that are acting a certain way for a certain audience under certain conventions. Focusing on behavior encourages new ways of seeing primary source documents such as journals and letters. It puts value on living Mormonism both in the past and today. It also provides a complex way for understanding current writing in Mormon history. For example, in Richard Lyman Bushman's response to Shipps's review, he calls for Mormon historians to write from a position of faith.³⁶ Here he is *behaving* as a Mormon and a historian. The performance of this position enriches and complicates his response and is a fruitful area of study.

Second, research is a combination of critical studies and artistic practice. In performance studies, the historian not only functions as a critic but also as an artist—actively involved in performance itself. Viewing Mormon history from this standpoint foregrounds the active and rich history of Mormon performance, from ritual to pageants. Mormons have long been actively involved in per-

³⁵Richard Schechner, *Performance Studies: An Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2006). See particularly Chapter 1, "What Is Performance Studies?" (1–27).

³⁶Richard Lyman Bushman, "What's New in Mormon History: A Response to Jan Shipps," *Journal of American History* 94, no. 2 (September 2007): 507–10.

forming arts, from the Salt Lake Theatre to regional dance festivals to the Hill Cumorah Pageant. Terryl L. Givens presents the most cohesive overview of the history of Mormon arts to date in his *People of Paradox*. His work, balanced between a general overview of the historical trends in Mormon performance and a close reading of important texts, remains grounded in script-based drama.³⁷ There is room for more work on Mormon performance as historians who also participate consider the implications of simultaneous artistic practice and critical study.

Third, fieldwork as “participant observation” is adapted from anthropology and put to new uses. Moving research out of the archives and into the field opens up an enormous range of topics in Mormon history and suggests that contemporary studies are as valid as those of the nineteenth century. The historian as participant observer can study any performance of Mormonism that allows for public participation, from attendance at church to teaching in a classroom to directing a roadshow. Researching and writing as a participant observer makes clear the position of the historian as a subjective narrator of events. Such a stance allows a unique method of balancing apologetics and scholarly distance; it forces the historian to move between the two worlds and to consider these negotiations as part of the record.

I am fascinated by the ways in which the Mormon past can be examined as a performative event, and I believe that performance studies can enrich other studies of Mormon history. Performance studies assumes that performance is not limited to works of theatre on a stage but includes daily life practices, ritual, and play. These elements are integral to Mormon culture. Performance studies allows the historian to reconsider cultural, political, and social production outside a reliance on the written word.

Performance studies also has particular relevance to Mormon studies where the representation of Mormonism throughout history can be read as a carefully mediated performance that follows scripted conventions, is costumed through dress standards, enacts rehearsed modes of behavior, and is presented to achieve a specific audience outcome. Most exciting for me is how performance studies complicates narrow (re)presentations of the Mormon history by opening the

³⁷Terryl L. Givens, *People of Paradox: A History of Mormon Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), esp. chaps. 7–8, 13–14.

field of study from primary historical events to a validation of all human activity as the proper object of critical evaluation. The study of Mormon history, from its inception to New Mormon History and beyond, will be deeper and richer as it moves to consider the enacted traditions and lived experiences of Mormon culture: performing Mormon history.

Context and the New-New Mormon History

*Matthew Bowman*³⁸

ACCORDING TO THE PEW FORUM on Religion and Public Life, we Mormons are very satisfied with ourselves, with what we believe to be our uniqueness, our singular significance, our blazingly new ideas and practices.³⁹ These attitudes are, of course, rooted in the soil of the Mormon theology of restoration, and have flowered into a broader cultural marker, but the idea also turns up in a great deal of the best of our academic work.⁴⁰ The notion of uniqueness is popular, in part, because it leads to an argument that frequently teaches us something useful. For example, applying it to Mormon intellectual history helps to emphasize the naive radicalism of a homespun faith. Religious thinkers like Joseph Smith and Brigham Young broke laws of Christian thought they were likely not even aware existed. Or sociologists might note that Mormonism is the most successful of America's

³⁸MATTHEW BOWMAN {mountbowman@aim.com} is a doctoral candidate in American religious history at Georgetown University. He holds a master's degree in American history from the University of Utah (2004), and a B.A. from the same institution (2002). He is currently writing a dissertation titled "Making Christians: Reformed Evangelicals, Pulpits, and Pews in New York City, 1880–1940." He's interested in evangelicalism, fundamentalism, the American progressive era, and, with some frequency, Mormonism.

³⁹Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, *U.S. Religious Landscape Survey* (Washington, D.C.: Pew Research Center, 2008) 72–75.

⁴⁰See, for example, Terryl L. Givens, *By the Hand of Mormon: The American Scripture That Launched a New World Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 5–8, 178, 242–45; Richard L. Bushman, *Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984) 7.

homegrown faiths and locate reasons why this is so: its flexible but sturdy priesthood hierarchy (odd for a fiercely democratic antebellum America), its lay ministry, and the religious legitimacy gained of its extensive new scripture.

But the appeal to uniqueness has unfortunately obscured as much as it has revealed. It sometimes leads to naive celebration but also limits historians methodologically, blinding them to the complexities of cultural development that frame the growth of even the most seemingly original religious concepts. The next step in Mormon history is therefore contextualization—placing the Mormon past in its landscapes: religious, social, intellectual, and material. Even the concept of uniqueness that I'm commenting on here can be contextualized and understood within broader concepts of American religious exceptionalism.⁴¹ Now, of course, scholars like Lawrence Foster have been telling us for a long time that other religious groups practiced forms of plural marriage or, like Sterling McMurrin, that Mormon thought can be placed within the tradition of Christian theology, or, like Nathan O. Hatch, that many churches in antebellum America declared the right of the common person to receive communication from God, or, like Patricia Nelson Limerick, that the patterns of western settlement swept up the Mormons.⁴²

This work is good and useful—although I would argue that more on all these topics and others needs to be done. The problem, though, is that much of the comparative work of this sort is retrospective and abstract, rather than contextual and closely analytical. Strangely, we still don't really know how the Mormons who ventured into polygamy

⁴¹On American religious exceptionalism, see, for example, Ernest Tuveson, *Redeemer Nation: The Idea of America's Millennial Role* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1968).

⁴²For the authors mentioned, see Lawrence Foster, *Religion and Sexuality: The Shakers, the Mormons, and the Oneida Community* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1984); Sterling M. McMurrin, *The Theological Foundations of the Mormon Religion* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah, 1965); Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1989); Patricia Nelson Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1987). See also William Deverall, "Thoughts from the Farther West: Mormons, California, and the Civil War." *Journal of Mormon History* 34, no. 2 (Spring 2008): 1–19.

explained the contemporary marital experiments of John Humphrey Noyes. We don't know what Joseph Smith thought of the natural theology of William Paley or how Brigham Young viewed economic utopias like Oneida, Brook Farm, and New Harmony. Far too little work has been done on Heber J. Grant's understanding of the temperance crusade or the ways in which Joseph Fielding Smith engaged with the burgeoning fundamentalist movement.⁴³ And it seems bizarre that we try to understand Joseph's ideas about God, Brigham's about the United Order, Heber's about the Word of Wisdom, or Joseph Fielding's about evolution without paying attention to the air they breathed. The problem is that, while many historians have traditionally approached Mormonism from the inside, as the only example of everything, others now approach it from the outside, as one example among many.

The comparative work we've done exists more on the page than in the past. Mormon historians need to swallow our pride and recognize that insights can be gained if we position Mormon history as a subfield. We need an integrative new-New Mormon History, one that approaches Mormonism as a phenomenon fully in—if not of—its time and place, one that understands that Mormons looked not only up, but around them as they struggled to solve problems of theology, of organization, and of simply surviving in a vaguely (and sometimes specifically) hostile Protestant America. To fully understand their minds and hearts and decisions, we need to know what the Mormons rejected or learned or wanted to learn from others. Over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, they faced the same conundrums as other Americans: a democratic culture and an “empty” continent that transformed old social structures, the market revolution, the rise of science and scientism, the challenges of industrialization, urbanization, the modern academy to traditional culture, and in the twentieth century an increasingly globalized world. These were all things that complicated terribly old assumptions about the place and

⁴³On these respective topics, see Spencer Klaw, *Without Sin: The Life and Death of the Oneida Community* (New York: Allan Lane Press, 1993); William Paley, *Natural Theology* (1802; New York, Oxford University Press, 2006); Robert S. Fogarty, ed., *American Utopianism* (Itasca, Ill.: Peacock Publishers, 1972); Norman Clark, *Deliver Us from Evil: An Interpretation of American Prohibition* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1976); Ronald Numbers, *The Creationists* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992).

role of human beings in the universe. The solutions the Mormons reached were not—at least, not totally—unique. Many became distinctively Mormon, but none emerged from a vacuum.

Where might this sort of history lead us? First, it means that future scholars of Mormon history will need to command knowledge broader than that of merely Mormonism itself—even specializing in other fields. The fact-digging of the New Mormon History has unearthed the raw material. Now it is time for a scholar trained in Christian theology to approach the minds of Orson Pratt or B. H. Roberts and to place them within the currents of nineteenth-century American Christianity. It is time for a historian from the new field of Atlantic history to position the British and Polynesian missions of the nineteenth century within the transatlantic world (and perhaps Mormon students of the Pacific missions can help blaze trails for the still-nascent Pacific history).⁴⁴ It is time for someone familiar with the institutional theories of the new political history to take on the Church Welfare Program and to place the politics of J. Reuben Clark and Heber J. Grant in the context of that transformative period.⁴⁵ How might the Church's embrace of cultural conservatism in the 1960s and 1970s fit in with what we know about the role of religion in the rise of the conservative movement?⁴⁶ To what extent might Utah Territory's experience during the turbulent 1880s have been shaped by the previous American

⁴⁴See Bernard Bailyn, *Atlantic History: Concepts and Contours* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2005), and Jon Sensbach, *Rebecca's Revival: Making Black Christianity in the Atlantic World* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006).

⁴⁵Stephen Skowronek and Karen Orren, *The Search for American Political Development* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004). A suggestive model might be Lizabeth Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919–1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), which explores the particulars of one local community's engagement with the institutions the New Deal erected.

⁴⁶See, for example, the rhetorical shifts explored by Susan Friend Harding, *The Book of Jerry Falwell: Fundamentalist Language and Politics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001), and the institutional mobilization Jerome Himmelstein documents in *To the Right: The Transformation of American Conservatism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).

trauma of Reconstruction?⁴⁷

All of these questions will help us reconceptualize Mormon history as American, or Atlantic, or Christian history and, in so doing, expose connections, meanings, and depths that have heretofore remained invisible. Furthermore, contextualization can extend not merely to the stuff of the past but also to present theoretical and methodological models. Sociologists Rodney Stark, Thomas O’Dea, Mark Leone, and Armand Mauss have employed the tools of their discipline to interpret the meaning-making methods of Mormons.⁴⁸ However, much more could be done in sociology—studies of conversion, of organization, of gender dynamics all are needed. The study of Mormon religious ritual, for example, is barely in its infancy, with virtually all such work being done on temple rites.⁴⁹ However, other Mormon rituals—Sunday worship, ordinances like baptism and blessing, even such semi-sacred forms as family home evening or the Mormon funeral—deserve their own studies, using both the anthropological models of scholars like Clifford Geertz, Victor Turner, and Catherine Bell and the tools that theologians like Bryan Spinks, Geoffrey Wainwright, and

⁴⁷An interesting example is explored in Joe Richardson, *Christian Reconstruction: The American Missionary Association and Southern Reconstruction* (Atlanta: University of Georgia Press, 1986).

⁴⁸Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Mormonism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004); Armand Mauss, *The Angel and Beehive: The Mormon Struggle with Assimilation* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994); Thomas O’Dea, *The Mormons* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1957); Mark Leone, *The Roots of Modern Mormonism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1979).

⁴⁹Marcus von Wellnitz, “The Catholic Liturgy and the Mormon Temple,” *BYU Studies* 21, no. 1 (Winter 1981): 3–35; Kathleen Flake, “‘Not to be Riten’: The Nature and Effects of the Mormon Temple Rite as Oral Canon,” *Journal of Ritual Studies* 9, no. 2 (Summer 1995): 1–22; For other anthropological work on Mormonism, see David Clark Knowlton, “‘Hands Raised Up’: Corruption, Power, and Context in Bolivian Mormonism,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 40, no. 4 (Winter 2007): 47–70; and Douglas Davies, *The Mormon Culture of Salvation* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate Publishing Group, 2001). Neither is a strictly historical work.

Gregory Dix offer.⁵⁰ Of course, the question here is about history writing. I would argue, though, that the insights of anthropology or sociology encourage a final, and important, and historical contextualization.

The question of the relationship between scholarship and faith has dogged the new Mormon historians in a way that did not bother predecessors like Andrew Jenson or George A. Smith, who seemed less interested in the common practice of their faith than in its theology, institutions, leaders, and power structures.

However, we should remember that Leonard Arrington encouraged his fellows to pursue the social history of Mormonism as a way to get at what the religion meant to the average believer.

Since his plea, scholars like Thomas Tweed and Robert Orsi have demonstrated that such interdisciplinary tools are of prime value for such a goal.⁵¹ They encourage the historian to take religion seriously as an interpretive category rather than as merely an epiphenomenal coping strategy or discourse of power; they force us to ask, "What is religion? How does it create meaning for everyday people? How do they use those meanings to guide the rest of their lives?" Contextualization, then, brings us back around again to a deeper, richer, understanding of what the New Mormon History sought all along.

⁵⁰Clifford Geertz, *Interpretation of Cultures* (1973; rpt., New York: Basic Books, 2000); Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1969); Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); Brian Spinks, *Reformation and Modern Rituals and Theories of Baptism* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate Publishing Group, 2006); Geoffrey Wainwright, *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Theology, and Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980); Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (1949; rpt., New York: Continuum Press, 2005).

⁵¹Thomas Tweed, *Our Lady of the Exile: Diasporic Religion at a Cuban Catholic Shrine in Miami* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); Robert Orsi, *The Madonna of 115th Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem, 1880–1950*, 2d ed. (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2002).

Fashioning a Newer Mormon History

*J. Spencer Fluhman*⁵²

I BEGIN WITH THE UNINTERESTING assertion that Mormon history is well on its way toward its next phase. Most have long known where it “should” be going. The imperatives are axiomatic: yes, we must know more about twentieth-century Mormonism; yes, Mormonism’s international component demands sustained attention; yes, greater attention to non-Mormon contexts is critical; yes, we are still getting around to a better social history of Mormonism; yes, identity politics should matter less.⁵³

Even so, historiographical change takes time and the field shows no sign of releasing its grip on founding figures, the nineteenth century, the American setting, and monographs that interest few outside Mormon history circles. In fact, it appears as certain that Mormon history will never inch itself away from its traditional fascinations as it does that additional layers must be developed.

The current task for professional historians—and the small army of doctors, lawyers, and computer programmers who both enrich and help to ghettoize Mormon history—remains what it has long been. Caught between the expectations of multiple audiences, my generation of scholars will work to realize a Mormon history fully at home in varied academic discussions without leaving behind non-academy readers, those with perhaps the greatest personal investment in Mormon history.

⁵²J. SPENCER FLUHMAN {fluhman@byu.edu} is assistant professor of Church history and doctrine at Brigham Young University. He holds a B.A. in Near Eastern Studies from Brigham Young University (1998) and advanced degrees in history from the University of Wisconsin-Madison (2000, 2006). He is currently preparing a history of nineteenth-century anti-Mormon thought, tentatively titled *A Peculiar People: Anti-Mormonism and the Making of Religion in Nineteenth-Century America*.

⁵³See Grant Underwood’s call for a robust social history of Mormonism penned some two decades ago: “Re-visioning Mormon History,” *Pacific Historical Review* 55, no. 3 (August 1986): 403–26. Whether one conceives of such a project as “social history,” the history of “lived” Mormonism, or the “history of Mormon practice,” we still know too little about the Mormonism of the masses or the Mormon masses themselves.

Recent titles that position Mormon history as a window on mainstream historical problems signal an important transformation.⁵⁴ Long criticized for its insularity, Mormon history will remain “unnaturally pure,” as Jared Farmer has recently written of Utah history, until our narratives connect in meaningful ways with other histories.⁵⁵ Broader histories, moreover, will have no reason to incorporate Mormon history until we demonstrate why doing so makes sense. Making these kinds of connections is hard work, however. Colleagues outside Mormon history are typically impressed with the precision of Mormon history, but intellectual “cross pollination” demands more than archival immersion. A newer Mormon history will retain these legendary concerns but will not mistake extensive footnoting for interpretative significance. I routinely push my Mormon-history-minded undergraduates far from the Mountain West for graduate school. A “native son” myself, I do so because of my conviction that engagement with theoretical concerns beyond Mormonism will make for better Mormon history.

Mormon history will be enlivened by its engagement with multiple academic fields, but “ours” must more fully engage “their” interpretative priorities. Long embedded in Western history, Mormon history now figures in other fields more prominently than ever before. In 1953, David Brion Davis expressed surprise that, to that point, Mormonism had been treated “as everything but a religion.”⁵⁶ Only in the past few years has Mormon “religion” found its place in the academy—the resurgence of American religious history and the flowering of religious studies has demanded increased attention on Mormonism. Each field is better for it. While these trends in the academy have provided more room for Mormon history, scholars of Mormonism have yet to fully return the favor. Too many still write with woeful

⁵⁴Examples include Sarah Barringer Gordon, *The Mormon Question: Polygamy and Constitutional Conflict in the Nineteenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002); Kathleen Flake, *The Politics of American Religious Identity: The Seating of Senator Reed Smoot, Mormon Apostle* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2004); Jared Farmer, *On Zion's Mount: Mormons, Indians, and the American Landscape* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2008).

⁵⁵Farmer, *On Zion's Mount*, 14.

⁵⁶David Brion Davis, “The New England Origins of Mormonism,” *New England Quarterly* 26, no. 2 (June 1953): 147–68.

ignorance of the religious and historical contexts for the Mormon story.

Mormon history folks are justifiably giddy with the recent advance of Mormon studies programs, but these developments force hard questions on the field. While programs at Claremont Graduate University and Utah State University will undoubtedly advance the academic study of Mormonism, it is unclear if they will amount to more than a new opportunity for LDS students, and possibly a few others, to “stare” at themselves, as Keith Erikson puts it in the opening essay of this roundtable. A related question might be asked of Mormon studies consultations and sessions at national scholarly conferences. While my own instinct is to laud these developments and to bask in Mormonism’s new-found relevance, to this point few “outsiders” fill the seats. I chuckled to myself in a session on Mormonism at a national conference where one scholar kept using “we” in a way that made it clear he understood the session to be, essentially, Brigham Young University “on location.” Merely carving out new outposts of interpretative insularity would be a shabby seizure of our historical moment.

That said, I remain haunted by John Corrigan’s comments at the 2007 American Society of Church History conference in Salt Lake City. Corrigan, commenting on three Mormon history papers, wondered in his response about the absence of anything “distinctively Mormon” in the presentations.⁵⁷ I was left to wonder if he sensed a strained detachment in the papers’ tone or if, to him, the authors had in some way muted Mormonism’s distinctiveness in their work. Either option provokes me. It may be that Corrigan’s comments point to problems for historians of Mormonism quite unlike that of insularity. A newer Mormon history must inevitably wrestle with the question of Mormonism’s particularity, a dilemma that in turn relates to the glaring question of popular audiences. The *New Mormon History*, despite its admirable concern for scholarly credibility, moderation of tone, and even-hand-

⁵⁷John Corrigan, session comments, “Mapping Religious Identity: Salt Lake City and Mormonism,” American Society of Church History, Salt Lake City, Utah, April 2007, notes in my possession. Session papers included Martha Sonntag Bradley, “The Performance of Religious Identity in the Center Spaces of the LDS Church”; Steven L. Olsen, “Mapping Mormonism through Community Celebrations”; and Thomas Carter, “Mansion on the Hill: Temple Siting and the Secularization of the Nineteenth-Century Mormon City.”

edness, largely failed to achieve a wide audience. I don't hear many advocating a return to nineteenth- or early twentieth-century methodology or partisanship (though some still tread in those paths), but more than one modern historian has bemoaned the loss of readership. Some Mormon history books sell well, it is true, but modern academic specialization has undeniably come with a cost.

Some scholars will not care that popular audiences have little appetite for anything beyond what a colleague calls historical "Twinkies" (sugary, yes, but hardly intellectually nourishing). As one employed to teach mostly LDS students, though, I confess to caring deeply about the widespread amnesia I find in my students. Armed with virtually no framework for understanding change in their religious tradition, they crave historical understanding.

For those of us bored with traditional patterns of polemical/apologetic exchange, the quest for a moderate, scholarly, and accessible Mormon history remains a pressing one. Perhaps a newer Mormon history will create room for a distinctively Mormon epistemology, one that builds on post-modern respect for discourse on the cultural periphery and that might better honor Mormon self-representations.⁵⁸ Richard Bushman has recently made just such a plea, reminiscent of George Marsden's impassioned calls in the 1990s, but knowing what, exactly, such epistemological flexibility would mean for our methodologies or interpretations remains to be seen.⁵⁹ Or it may be that a newer Mormon history will more effectively blend historical narrative and argumentative sophistication. Better narratives, crafted with professionalism and fearlessly told, might, as Simon Schama has written, more fully "bring present and past lives into di-

⁵⁸For an analysis of the intellectual problems attending such a development, see John-Charles Duffy, "Faithful Scholarship: The Mainstreaming of Mormon Studies and the Politics of Insider Discourse" (M.A. thesis, Religious Studies, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, 2006).

⁵⁹Richard Lyman Bushman, "What's New in Mormon History: A Response to Jan Shipps," *Journal of American History* 94, no. 2 (September 2007): 517–21; George M. Marsden, *The Soul of the American University: From Protestant Establishment to Established Nonbelief* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), esp. 429–40; George M. Marsden, *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

rect, vivid communication.”⁶⁰ I could hope for nothing more from the fields—and the stories—that both excite and challenge me. I am eager to see what we come up with.

Mormon Cultural Studies

*Lisa Olsen Tait*⁶¹

FIRST, THE OBLIGATORY DISCLAIMERS. I am not a historian, so I can't speak to specific issues of historiography. I am also (relatively) young and so in a real sense the New Mormon History in all its iterations and controversies *is* history to me. This point, however, is important when considering how scholarship on Mormon history and topics will develop in coming years. Those of us doing research now will encounter the New Mormon History as a baseline for our own work and will be at least as much influenced by the theories, imperatives, and contingencies of scholarship in our own disciplines as by the particulars of previous controversies. At the same time, we of the postmodern generation are acutely aware of our own situatedness, and the bifurcated nature of the secular-faithful stances will continue to be an issue, at least on a personal level.

I think we are seeing a movement beyond Mormon “history” to a broader field of Mormon studies—even, I hope, Mormon cultural studies.⁶² This development reflects and is driven by the general movement in the academy toward interdisciplinary, theory-informed approaches that have, in one sense, made historians and tex-

⁶⁰Simon Schama, “Clio Has a Problem: History’s Muse Has Been Muffled, A Historian Argues, Her Poetic Voices Stilled,” *New York Times Magazine*, September 8, 1991, 30–34.

⁶¹LISA OLSEN TAIT {ltait@q.com} is a doctoral candidate in English at the University of Houston. She received her bachelor’s (1991) and master’s (1998) degrees in English from Brigham Young University. She is currently at work on her dissertation, with the working title “*The Young Woman’s Journal and Its Stories: Gen(d)erational Dynamics and Cultural Transition in 1890s Mormondom.*” Her research interests focus on nineteenth-century history and culture, especially women writers and periodicals. She was awarded a University Fellowship by the University of Houston.

⁶²I recognize to some extent a distinction between “cultural studies”

tual critics of us all. I recognize that these developments have been highly contested, and I'll return to that subject later. For now, I want to describe what I see happening and use some of the issues and questions I've encountered in my own work to suggest areas for future development.

In my field of literary studies, the trend in recent decades has been away from the study of texts as self-contained objects of formal or aesthetic analysis and toward examination of the complex relationship of literary texts to their cultural, historical, and ideological fields of production. Many of us in this field see ourselves as doing "cultural studies" or "historicist criticism," and we draw on the resources (both source material and theoretical approaches) of many other disciplines. We recognize that literary expression is an important form of cultural work and a valuable source of understanding of how people see themselves and their relation to the world, as well as an integral part of the historical record.

I am working with Mormon Home Literature of the late nineteenth century—the sentimental, melodramatic stories and serialized novels that appeared in LDS periodicals beginning in the late 1880s, warning young Mormons of the dangers of straying from the fold. Home Literature was defined as a field of study by scholars such as Richard H. Cracroft, Neal E. Lambert, Edward A. Geary, and Eugene England in the late 1970s and early 1980s.⁶³ Their consensus was that this stuff was of poor quality and bore only superficial resem-

in the generic sense in which I employ the term here and "Cultural Studies" in the sense of the high-theory, Marxist, and poststructuralist approaches that sometimes define the field in more narrow and explicitly political terms. While I believe there is great potential for both, I don't think we have to fully embrace the latter in order to benefit from the former.

⁶³See, for example, Richard H. Cracroft and Neal E. Lambert, eds., *A Believing People: Literature of the Latter-day Saints* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1974), 257–58; Eugene England, "The Dawning of a Brighter Day: Mormon Literature after 150 Years," *BYU Studies* 22 (Spring 1982): 131–60; and Edward A. Geary, "The Poetics of Provincialism: Mormon Regional Fiction," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 11, no. 2 (Summer 1978): 15–24. A recent discussion of Mormon fiction in relation to the New Mormon History is Lavina Fielding Anderson, "Fictional Pasts: Mormon Historical Novels" in Newell G. Bringhurst and Lavina Fielding Anderson, eds., *Excavating Mormon Pasts: The New Historiography of the Last*

blance to true Mormon values; its value was in establishing the *idea* of Mormon literature—which later, better authors tried to develop. The questions these scholars brought to Home Literature texts were based on a concept of “literary” as a privileged category and of literary criticism as an evaluative undertaking.

My own approach to Home Literature, based on the work of feminist and historicist scholars, has been driven by a different concept of “literature”—one that sees the concept of “literary” itself as historically situated and constructed. The questions I have brought to bear on these texts relate to how they function for their authors and writers within their cultural and historical setting. Why, then, did Mormons turn to writing fiction at the time they did—a time of intense pressure and transition within their community—and what was the concept of “literary” that made their work possible? Addressing these questions requires a radical recontextualization of literary texts that reads them dialogically with other texts and historical sources.⁶⁴

My current project is a study of Susa Young Gates’s *Young Woman’s Journal* in the 1890s, examining this magazine as a literary and cultural text in light of the pressures and transitions underway in Mormonism at the time. I keep running up against questions that point, I think, in the direction of a cultural studies approach. And while I’ll phrase these questions in terms of my specific project, I hope it will be evident that they can be applied far beyond it.

What, for example, was the function of class in late nineteenth-century Mormondom? The *Young Woman’s Journal* provides clear evidence that there were economic and social stratifications in the community, but what, exactly, were they, and how did they function? And how does this development relate to mainstream culture of the time? Were Mormons really middle-class Americans all along, or

Half Century (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2004), 367–94.

⁶⁴It has always been recognized, to some extent, that literary texts are themselves part of the historical record. As I see it, the development of aesthetic and formalist approaches to literature, which came to the fore in the mid-twentieth century (and which were called, incidentally, the New Criticism) was itself an attempt to distinguish literature from history as a field of study. This was, in turn, part of the larger development of academic disciplines in the modern educational system and an attempt to define “objective” standards for the field at a time when scientific discourse dominated the academy.

were there ways in which they resisted and modified such values? How did Gates and her contemporaries understand “class”? How did they reconcile such distinctions with the founding egalitarian ideals of their community? We need more work on “average” and “underprivileged” Mormons of all periods, examining the relationship between material and social conditions and people’s practice and understanding of Mormonism.

Race is another vexed subject about which the *Young Woman’s Journal*, with its missionary reports and accounts of visits by leaders to outlying settlements, supplies provocative glimpses. The period I am studying represents something of a high point for white racial supremacy, and the project of constructing an American identity in the face of massive immigration and social change was a manifestly racial one. How did racial identity construction play into Mormons’ assimilation into mainstream American culture? How did it affect the assimilation of various convert-immigrant groups into Mormonism? And what of the existence of Mormon “colonies” in the midst of racial “others”? Closely related to issues of race are those of imperialism, another important context for the development of Mormonism. Beginning with the use of the term “colonies” for outlying Mormon settlements, we might ask how imperialism enabled Mormonism (or vice versa)—rhetorically or otherwise.

Gender is another subject on which there has been some excellent work done, but which needs more attention. As always, there is a great need for more recovery work and primary research. Most studies of Mormon women have embraced the “separate spheres” paradigm, but this view has been increasingly questioned; and Mormon women, with their highly visible participation in politics, education, and other “public” endeavors—all celebrated in the *Young Woman’s Journal*, alongside calls for greater domesticity—provide a rich avenue for examination of gender constructs. Previous work on Mormon women has been slanted disproportionately to elite women and to gender alone; we need work that examines gender in relation to other facets of social positioning.

I have framed these areas for future work in terms of class, race, and gender, which, as we all know, have become the reigning triumvirate of cultural analysis. I recognize that some will be resistant to this agenda on many levels. Race, class, and gender are inherently uncomfortable issues, and it is easy to use them in overly reductive ways. Emphasizing difference and stratification can easily become its own kind

of bias. Nobody wants to read an account that reduces Mormon experience to exploitation of the “proletariat” by the “elites.” And yet, there were very real differences and stratifications in Mormonism that profoundly shaped individuals’ experience of Mormonism. These forces need to be examined.

The enabling assumption of Mormon studies has been that of Mormon exceptionalism—Mormonism as the story of how Mormons became a different, unique people who then gradually negotiated the resistance of the outside world to become more like everyone else in American society. And Mormon uniqueness has been an important basis for inserting Mormon studies into the larger academy. But looking at sources like the *Young Woman’s Journal*—which has much in common with contemporary women’s magazines—invites us to interrogate the assumption of Mormon exceptionalism. It’s not that there was nothing unique about Mormons, but a cultural studies perspective invites us to begin with the assumption that Mormons were a lot like everyone else, an approach that, in turn, points us toward an entirely new set of questions and approaches. Ultimately, I believe, this approach can render the exceptionalist aspects of Mormonism even more visible.

I think we who do work on Mormon topics will find increasing acceptance within the mainstream of the academy to the extent that we find ways to radically recontextualize Mormonism and bring it into conversation with larger questions and approaches current in our disciplines. Some, I know, grumble at such urging. I’ve been on the receiving end at recent MHA conferences of more than one intense denunciation by older scholars of theory, interdisciplinarity, and historicism as “fads” and “self-indulgent” uses of “jargon.” To some extent, such criticisms are valid; furthermore, change in general and transitions in paradigms are uncomfortable, especially for those who see their well-honed skills being challenged and/or replaced. At the same time, however, scholarship never takes place outside the constraints of “current” theory and approaches. More importantly, scholarly careers are built on entering the ongoing academic conversations and demonstrating awareness and competence on their terms. Call it careerist faddism, but this pattern has ever been the case.

The question of how to incorporate Mormon topics in our scholarship, then, is still an open one, in terms of what will enable us younger scholars to get jobs and publications. Especially if we want to

find avenues for our work beyond the historical-publishing complex (as I call it) of mainstream Mormonism (i.e., the LDS Church and BYU)—which was the locus for much of the New Mormon History—it becomes all the more important that we younger scholars find ways to incorporate our work into the larger conversations of the disciplines we enter.

Post New Mormon History: A Manifesto

*W. Paul Reeve*⁶⁵

POST NEW MORMON HISTORY pushes Mormon historical scholarship in new interdisciplinary, transnational, temporal, comparative, and theoretical directions. It pays homage to the New Mormon History generation of scholars who have established a firm bedrock of study based upon the rigors of academic history but recognizes that it is time to move beyond insular questions of the past to engage a broader academic community and, indeed, a broader world community.

Post New Mormon History is less concerned with inward-looking attempts to prove or disprove truth claims than with outward-looking attempts to explore the impact that those claims have had upon the diverse peoples who have variously accepted, rejected, or attempted to modify and challenge Mormonism.⁶⁶ What impact, in other words, has Mormonism had upon peoples across time and space? How has that impact shaped their lives and, as a result, shaped

⁶⁵W. PAUL REEVE {paul.reeve@history.utah.edu} is an associate professor of history at the University of Utah and associate chair of the History Department. He holds a B.A. (1992) and M.A. (1994) in history from Brigham Young University and a Ph.D. (2002) in history from the University of Utah. The University of Illinois Press published his first book, *Making Space on the Western Frontier: Mormons, Miners, and Southern Paiutes*, in 2007 and the Mormon History Association awarded it the Smith-Pettit best first book award in 2008. He is currently researching nineteenth-century notions of Mormon physical otherness for his next book project, tentatively titled, "Religion of a Different Color: Race, Whiteness, and the Mormon Body."

⁶⁶For examples see, Dean L. May, *Three Frontiers: Family, Land, and Society in the American West, 1850–1900* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Todd M. Kerstetter, *God's Country, Uncle Sam's Land: Faith and Conflict in the American West* (Urbana: University of Illinois

the broader communities, cultures, and nations within which Mormonism operates? What lessons does a study of the Mormon past teach about boundary and identity negotiations, about religious freedom and concepts of citizenship in the United States and internationally? How does Mormonism enrich our understanding of religion as a motivating force in people's lives, and how does religion force us to think differently about violence, gender, power, family, race, class, the environment, and the complex relationships between churches and states?

Post New Mormon Historians stand on the frontiers of Mormon cultural regions throughout the world and study the points of intersection between Mormonism and its broader historical, cultural, social, economic, geographic, racial, and gendered environments. They seek to understand the impact of those environments upon Mormonism as well as Mormonism's impact upon those environments. They recognize the international dimensions of Mormonism and seek to explore them in all of their manifestations.

Post New Mormon History recognizes no temporal barriers to its scholarship and seeks to understand Mormonism in a twentieth and twenty-first-century context as well as that of the nineteenth century. It encourages the exploration of topics and themes that further enlighten our understanding of Mormonism's emergence as a global phenomenon. It explores the ramifications of that process at the ever-changing peripheries as well as at the center.

Post New Mormon History accepts theories from a variety of disciplines and seeks to engage, employ, modify, challenge, and even transcend those theories through the Mormon lens. It values interdisciplinarity but nonetheless remains firmly rooted in the rigors of historical scholarship. It seeks new avenues of historical inquiry at the same time that it welcomes the vigorous interpretation and rein-

Press, 2006); Jared Farmer, *On Zion's Mount: Mormons, Indians, and the American Landscape* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2008); Sarah Barringer Gordon, *The Mormon Question: Polygamy and Constitutional Conflict in Nineteenth Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002); Kathleen Flake, *The Politics of American Religious Identity: The Seating of Senator Reed Smoot, Mormon Apostle* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); and W. Paul Reeve, *Making Space on the Western Frontier: Mormons, Miners, and Southern Paiutes* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006).

terpretation of the bedrock Mormon narrative.

Post New Mormon History embraces scholars of all faiths or of no faith who study the various restorationist traditions which trace their roots to Joseph Smith. It recognizes the impossibility of objectivity and acknowledges the biases that all peoples bring to their work. It simultaneously strives to employ the highest standards of the historian's craft in its research and writing. With the American Historical Association, it grants that "when applied with integrity and self-critical fair-mindedness, the political, social, and religious beliefs of historians can appropriately inform their historical practice."⁶⁷ It seeks to avoid self-righteous history in light of Gordon B. Hinckley's frequent admonition to avoid self-righteousness.⁶⁸

Post New Mormon History frankly acknowledges the fragmentary nature of the historical record and therefore the limits of historical knowledge. In light of those limits, it encourages multiple perspectives and respectful dialogues to shape and reshape our understanding of the Mormon past. It values primary sources and seeks to treat those sources with scholarly sensitivity to the relevant culture, context, and circumstances of their origins. It encourages open access to primary sources and seeks to preserve evidences of the Mormon past in all of its forms.

In short, Post New Mormon History calls for an integration of the study of Mormonism into broader transnational, interdisciplinary, temporal, comparative, and theoretical avenues of inquiry. It seeks to open new doors and to further pursue Mormonism's various intersections with peoples and places across time and space.

⁶⁷American Historical Association's Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct, <http://www.historins.org/PUBS/FreeProfessionalStandards.cfm> (accessed August 18, 2008).

⁶⁸For examples, see Gordon B. Hinckley's statements in the *Ensign*: "Thanks to the Lord for His Blessings," May 1999, 88; "Living in the Fullness of Times," November 2001, 4; "Personal Worthiness to Exercise the Priesthood," May 2002, 52; "An Ensign to the Nations, a Light to the World," November 2003, 82; and "Closing Remarks," May 2005, 102.

Converting Mormon History

*Amy Harris*⁶⁹

AS A SOCIAL AND CULTURAL HISTORIAN trained in early modern British and European history, I find that Mormon history lies admittedly outside most of my formal training. However, when I bring that perspective to Mormon history research projects, I am repeatedly struck by the continued emphasis on “history from above” in Mormon historiography. While there are numerous examples of Mormon history that focus on “history from below,” much of Mormon history begins with Joseph Smith and the biographies of Church leaders. (This pattern seems to be particularly true in books.) I am most interested in a New Mormon History that pushes history from below even further—that starts to look at the Mormon experience beyond the context of early America and Joseph Smith or nineteenth-century frontier life and a history that pushes beyond the purely biographical, whether of leaders or of members. Joseph Smith will always garner deserved scholarly attention, but I wonder how our understanding of his impact would expand if we began a story of Mormonism with a convert’s experience. The central question I have is: What would Mormon history look like if we began with the converts instead of the converters?

Essentially, Mormonism is about conversion—even as its seventh- and eighth-generation members make it appear to be bordering

⁶⁹AMY HARRIS {amy.harris@byu.edu} is an assistant professor of history at Brigham Young University and an Accredited Genealogist (AG©) in English research. She received her B.A. in family history/genealogy from Brigham Young University with University Honors in 1998, her M.A. in modern European history from American University in 2000, and her Ph.D. in British history from the University of California Berkeley in 2006. She is currently revising her dissertation into a book manuscript: “Share and Share Alike: Anne Travell and Siblings in Georgian England.” Her historical research interests center on family relations in early modern England. As a part of her genealogical training, she researched early British converts to Mormonism. That research is being expanded into two articles—one detailing the genealogical research and one engaging with Mormon historiography.

on a new ethnicity.⁷⁰ Within generational Mormonism, there is still a language and ethic of conversion; and to those who join the various strains of Mormonism as adults, the rhetoric attached to conversion is even more pronounced.

As Mormonism expands globally, it constantly reconnects with converts' ideas about identity, practice, doctrine, and belief. The experience and importance of conversion is not just a Mormon concern. A recent article in the *Economist* about contemporary conversion (particularly between Christians and Islam)⁷¹ has me thinking that paying attention to the experience and motivation of conversion would allow us to address the global historical issues in Mormon history, get us engaged in twentieth-century history, reconsider some of our earlier analyses of race, class, and gender in Mormonism, and open up new ways of thinking about Mormons within local, but not necessarily American, contexts.

I will be the first to admit that I currently have more questions than answers about how a convert-based history would look, but the questions grow out of my own research. I have been looking at a group of families who were part of the famous United Brethren converts to Mormonism in southwestern England in 1840–41. These families were relatively prosperous carpenters, farmers, and butchers who had already experimented with a variety of dissenting sects before they formed their own version of Methodism and named themselves the United Brethren. When Wilford Woodruff and company appeared on the scene in 1840, the United Brethren joined the Mormons *en masse*. Subsequently they sold their belongings, said good-bye to jobs, family, and homes, and emigrated to America—many of them within a year of converting.

If this story begins with Church leadership from America (as it often does), it becomes an account of Wilford Woodruff's amazing missionary success—casting the converts' experience as tangential to the real story—and it ends abruptly when the group sets foot in Nauvoo in 1841. In other words, it quickly evolves into a story about converters, not converts.

However, beginning the story with the converts themselves re-

⁷⁰Dean May, "Mormons," in *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*, edited by Stephan Thernstrom (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1980), 720–31.

⁷¹"The Moment of Truth," *The Economist*, July 24, 2008.

veals a much longer and more complicated story. In this narrative structure the conversion to Mormonism was only the last—and longest-lasting—in a series of familial conversions dating back to at least the early 1700s. In short, this group of people already had their own ideas about theology, salvation, and Church governance that, even if echoed in Mormonism, cannot be explained solely by a study of Joseph Smith or early American religiosity. Additionally, their experience in America complicates a British historiographical explanation of their conversion as a product of the pressures of industrialization and influence of evangelicalism.

By centering on the converts, this approach would of necessity reach beyond their arrival in Nauvoo and engage a series of questions about conversion. It would also be one way of further exploring one of Terryl Givens's Mormon paradoxes: the tension between authority and individualism.⁷² What did their conversion to Mormonism mean? Initially, for this group, it seems quite clear that it was a doctrinal conversion as they had left other forms of Christianity looking for particular doctrines and church organization. In England their conversion changed virtually nothing of their circumstances as the Mormon leadership kept the United Brethren structure and procedures largely intact. Once they arrived in America, however, they were splintered into various places and incorporated into various Nauvoo wards. Did this stage constitute a second conversion—a social conversion? If so, what did it mean for the history and historiography of Nauvoo and the pioneer eras—eras dominated by immigrant converts?

What of these families' experiences in Utah and in various colonizing missions? They were part of the group called by Brigham Young to colonize the Muddy Mission in southern Nevada, and they were also the same group who voted to leave—with Brigham's approval—the Muddy when conditions proved too harsh. (Again their experience raises questions about individuality and authority).

These families also constantly moved into and out of polygamy—often in unusual ways. One of the women, Martha Rebecca Browett, was one of Orson Hyde's first plural wives. Never free of tension, their marriage lasted seven years, finally dissolving after the death of their infant daughter. Orson encouraged her to marry another man, which she did in a civil ceremony performed by Orson.

⁷²Terryl L. Givens, *People of Paradox: A History of Mormon Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), xiv, 3–19.

Martha Rebecca later divorced this second husband and requested remarriage to Orson. That remarriage never took place. Her brother's plural wives, Elizabeth Harris Browett and Harriet Clifford Barnes Browett, were widowed in 1848. Harriet left Utah for Iowa and died there in 1850; Elizabeth remarried, in a civil ceremony, in 1849. Fifteen years later, she divorced her husband, reportedly so he could marry a woman who did not want to be a second wife. Three years later they remarried (in the Endowment House, but for time only) and Elizabeth joined his household as a plural wife before returning to northern Utah in the 1880s and living as a widow, even though her second husband outlived her. Martha Rebecca's mother, Martha Pulham Browett, was widowed before joining the Church in England. She remained unmarried until her eighty-fourth year when she became a plural wife for the last two days of her life. Can these experiences with plural marriage give us additional insight into the beliefs about eternal marriage and sealings—insights not visible when analyzing temple doctrines as they appear in official rhetoric. And can the integrated experiences of these women teach us something undiscovered in traditional biography?

Beyond this brief example, I would also suggest that beginning with converts' experiences helps us pose new questions and gain new understandings not only of the United Brethren and early Mormonism, but also perhaps of the congregations of "Mormons" in West Africa in the 1960s and 1970s and contemporary, globalizing Mormonism. As a descendant of pioneers (the most recent of my ancestors to join the LDS Church were my great-great-grandparents in the 1870s), I am embedded and interested in the traditional lines of Mormon history, but I am also a member of an increasingly global church and a historian. I think, or at least hope, we are on the verge of seeing the "New Mormon History" become "global Mormon history." Global Mormon history would still have room for Joseph Smith, for leader and member biographies, and for the unique Americanism of Mormon history, but would also *connect* these established lines of inquiry with the dozens of other historiographies that could benefit from a dialogue with Mormon history. Narratives that begin with and remain focused on converts' experiences would be only one of these historiographies but, I hope, one that would deepen our understanding of Mormonism and Mormons—both converts and converters.

History That Reveals Itself

*Patrick A. Polk*⁷³

I SUPPOSE I SHOULD HAVE FORESEEN my academic mentor's quizzical response when I told him of my plans to participate in a meeting of the Mormon History Association. I am, after all, a folklorist whose work primarily focuses on African-derived religious traditions in the Caribbean, Latin America, and the United States. The expression on his face presaged his exasperated comment: "I just don't get this Mormon business." To his mind, my research has now veered into some odd corner of white American religious enthusiasm, a puzzling infatuation with a peculiar movement whose origins and principles appear to him almost antithetical to my scholarly agenda. Short of employing the Urim and Thummim, I wonder if I'll ever really be able to make him see clearly why we should encourage these Saints to come marching into our broader understanding of black Atlantic cultural history.

Of course, I must admit that, if not for an odd and unexpected response to an automated database query (essentially an accident of inquiry), I probably would never have thought Mormonism relevant to my research either. I fear this disconnect will linger despite the increasingly clear reality that African Americans early on found seats, occasionally important ones, within religious traditions or orders that

⁷³PATRICK A. POLK {polk@arts.ucla.edu} is a lecturer in the Department of World Arts and Cultures at the University of California, Los Angeles. He received a B.A in anthropology from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and his M.A. and Ph.D. (2000) in folklore from the University of California, Los Angeles. His dissertation was "Fabric and Power: Vodou Flags, Collective Symbolism, and the Rites of Authority in Haiti." Polk's primary research interests are religion, visual traditions, and popular culture are in the context of the African diaspora. He has conducted research in Brazil, Grenada, Haiti, and the United States. His publications include *Haitian Vodou Flags* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1997), *Botánica Los Angeles: Latino Popular Religious Art in the City of Angels* (Los Angeles: University of California, Los Angeles Press, 2004), and the forthcoming *Conjurers, Healers, and Hoodoo Doctors: Readings on African-American Magic and Folk Medicine*.

have long been regarded as having “lily white” pasts.⁷⁴ The reactions of other Africanist scholars to whom I have mentioned my study of nineteenth-century black Mormons are more heartening. While a few brusquely passed off the subject as irrelevant or something worse, the majority expressed interest in hearing about a set of people who are widely—and occasionally militantly—presumed never to have existed.

I recount this anecdote because it seems to me that blind spots such as this can provide crucial opportunities for Mormon historians to better illuminate key aspects of the Latter-day Saint experience and to integrate those realities into the larger tapestry of American and world history. As anthropologist Ruth Benedict aptly noted long ago, one of the great problems of cultural and historical analysis is that “we do not see the lens through which we look.”⁷⁵ In other words, we need other frames of reference to help us perceive the modes of valuing and disregarding, noting and erasing, remembering and forgetting that highlight certain aspects of the human drama while rendering others invisible.

Lacking such a frame of reference, the often astonishingly thin veneers of presumed factuality can remain nigh impenetrable. Honestly, why did my upbringing and academic training lead me to believe that the Mormon hegira and the African American flight out of slavery simply did not intersect?⁷⁶ Why are peers who study African American prophetic and visionary traditions routinely astounded by

⁷⁴See, for example, Jean McMahon Humez, ed., *Gifts of Power: The Writings of Rebecca Jackson, Black Visionary, Shaker Eldress* (N.p.: University of Massachusetts Press, 1987); Jon F. Sensbach, *Rebecca's Revival: Creating Black Christianity in the Atlantic World* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006); John Patrick Deveney, *Paschal Beverly Randolph: A Nineteenth-Century Black American Spiritualist, Rosicrucian, and Sex Magician* (Albany: University of New York Press, 1996); Nancy E. van Deusen, *The Souls of Purgatory: The Spiritual Diary of a Seventeenth-Century Afro-Peruvian Mystic, Ursula de Jesús* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2004).

⁷⁵Ruth Benedict, “The Science of Custom,” *Century Magazine* 117 (1929): 649.

⁷⁶Not surprisingly, recent scholarship such as Thomas C. Buchanan's *Black Life on the Mississippi: Slaves, Free Blacks, and the Western Steamboat World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004) does not recognize a Mormon landscape. Yet William McCarey, the ex-slave and former paddlewheel employee who excited and then scandalized LDS society in

the concept of black Mormon revelators such as Black Pete and William McCarey? Even if they can get past the conjunction of the first two terms, I can surely count on the addition of the third to throw them for a loop.⁷⁷

Obviously, the reasons for this disconnect are varied and much too complex to outline here. At the heart of the matter though, is a fairly basic question: Whose history is Mormon history? Whose pasts do folks imagine were spelled out in the recesses of a darkened hat? Or whose futures might be brightened by belief in a doctrine of continuing revelation? As a non-Mormon scholar who *knew* that the Restoration had little relevance—other than the negative example of the priesthood ban—to the African American religious experience, my quite accidental tour through some of the more groundbreaking, and perhaps controversial, documentation of Mormonism’s multicultural past has been eye-opening, to say the least.⁷⁸ I would hope that a continuing, if not increasingly important, revelatory objective in the writing of Mormon history will be to bring the realities of Zion’s Camp back out of a wilderness that is both externally enforced and self-imposed.

While some may be more comfortable with images of exodus and models of distinctiveness, the most crucial matter at hand isn’t necessarily developing a detailed comprehension of Mormons as a people apart. Rather, how (in a non-Frontline/PBS kind of way) can the Mormon past be better situated within the American experience? With this question in mind, I look forward to studies that are less con-

the late 1840s, epitomized the mobility and self-creative possibility of that world.

⁷⁷While individuals such as these may have a place in Mormon history (or legend), they have not as yet been properly written into the African American religious past.

⁷⁸See Newell G. Bringhurst, “Elijah Abel and the Changing Status of Blacks within Mormonism,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 12 (Summer 1979): 22–36; Newell G. Bringhurst, *Saints, Slaves, and Blacks: The Changing Place of Black People within Mormonism* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1981); Newell G. Bringhurst and Darron T. Smith, *Black and Mormon* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004); Connell O’Donovan, “The Mormon Priesthood Ban and Elder Q. Walker Lewis: ‘An Example for His More Whiter Brethren to Follow,’” *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 26 (2006): 47–99.

cerned with what would Joseph do (WWJD) and more focused on unapologetic descriptions of how a variety of Mormon Americans—indigenous, immigrant, black, white, straight, gay, lesbian, Republican, Democrat, Socialist, Libertarian, prosperous, penniless—have fashioned lives in the United States. This perspective likely necessitates pushing boundaries, pondering unimaginable circumstances, and willingly presenting narratives that may be deemed offensive, absurd, or even heretical. Speak the truth and shame the devil. And, to turn a Mormon passion into a scholarly principle, always name names.⁷⁹

⁸⁰Relating this point to my own research, popular and academic LDS-related discourses pertaining to William McCarey fail, ironically yet understandably, to mention the names of Mormons with whom he had intimate and lasting relations. For the record, McCarey was betrothed to Lucy Celesta Stanton, daughter of Daniel Stanton, an early and high-ranking participant in the Restoration. The marriage is mentioned in William S. Harwell, ed., *Manuscript History of Brigham Young 1847–1850* (Salt Lake City: Collier's Publishing, 1997), 36; Scott G. Kenney, ed., *Wilford Woodruff's Journal, 1833–1898*, typescript, 9 vols. (Midvale, Utah: Signature Books, 1983–85), February 26, 1847, 3:139; and Nelson W. Whipple, *Journal*, October 14, 1847, LDS Church History Library.

WINGFIELD WATSON: A MIDWEST VISIT, 1908

William Shepard

ON JUNE 11, 1908, WINGFIELD WATSON, then the presiding high priest of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, a small body of Mormons who believed James J. Strang was the successor of Joseph Smith, wrote a newsy, descriptive letter from Independence, Missouri, to his daughter, Jane (“Janey”) Watson Willis, of Boyne City, Charlevoix County, Michigan. Janey had married John Willis on November 1, 1876, at age twenty-four. They had seven children, and the grandsons whom Watson mentions are Fred (born September 23, 1877), Johnny (March 15, 1888), and Tom (June 28, 1891).

Of particular historical interest are three points on his visit: First, the Danielson Plow Company of Independence, owned by the “Brighamite” (LDS) Church, headquartered in Utah; second, his somewhat wary and contested interactions with Joseph Smith III and other Reorganized Church luminaries at Nauvoo, Illinois; and third, his moving description of the melancholy City of Joseph as it appeared in 1908.

Born in Ireland on April 28, 1828, to Protestant parents, Watson immigrated to the United States in 1848 and worked at any employment that was available to the Irish. This included stevedoring in New Orleans, cutting wood above New Orleans, and mining coal in St. Louis, Missouri.¹ In 1850, at the coal diggings at St. Louis, he met and married Jane Chishelm, born February 18, 1824, in Durham County, England. An English immigrant, she had recently lost her husband

WILLIAM SHEPARD{shep@speeddial.net} is the current president

and a son to cholera at St. Louis. Watson later adopted her surviving son, Robert, born September 12, 1845, at Haswell, England. After moving to Grant County, Wisconsin, in 1852 to mine lead and to be near his relatives, Watson's life was forever changed when he read a borrowed Book of Mormon which prompted him to set out to "find the Mormons." He, Jane, and Robert moved to St. Louis where they were baptized by Elder William Gibson in early 1852. He wanted to immediately set out for Utah. However, Gibson advised him to return to Grant County where he could find employment, saying that he would advise them by letter when and where a company would depart for Utah. Badly disappointed, the Watson family started up the Mississippi River by boat. Fate intervened, and they met a Strangite elder, Samuel Shaw, and his wife who were going to Nauvoo to visit family members. Shaw convinced them of the truth of James J. Strang's appointment by Joseph Smith to be his successor and of his ordination by angels to stand at the head of the Mormon Church.

The Watsons arrived at Beaver Island in Lake Michigan in June 1852 with seventy-five dollars, some bedding, and a box of clothes.² After being baptized and confirmed into the Strangite brand of Mormonism in July 1852, they settled on their "inheritance" in the interior of the island where they cleared land, built a dwelling, raised crops, and made a living by selling hardwood to Lake Michigan steamboats. Beaver Island milestones for the family include the births of daughters Janey on October 9, 1852, and Elizabeth on June 16 or 17, 1856. Watson became widely read in the Bible, Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the 1851 edition of Strang's Book of the Law of the Lord. He was ordained to the office of priest in the Strangite Church at an unknown date. He participated in the School of the Prophets³ and in other Strangite religious and social activities. The Watsons loved their prophet, James J. Strang, and their fellow Strangites and remembered

of the John Whitmer Historical Association. His presidential address at the annual meeting, held in Independence in September 2009, will be on Wingfield Watson. With H. Michael Marquardt, he has written *The Forgotten Apostles of the Original Quorum of Twelve*, forthcoming in 2009 from John Whitmer Books.

²*Autobiography*, 19–24.

³Two of his discourses, one on baptism and another on gifts of the Spirit, are in the James J. Strang Collection, De Golyer Library, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas.

this period as “an idyllic interlude” with God’s chosen people.⁴

On June 16, 1856, Watson was “hewing and scoring” timbers for the unfinished Tabernacle when he heard the shots that mortally wounded Strang. His final interaction with his prophet was standing guard over him “lest the enemy thinking he was still living rush in and finish him.”⁵ The dying Strang was removed to his settlement of Voree near Burlington, Wisconsin, where he expired on July 9. Important Strangite leaders also departed from Beaver Island out of fear of Gentile vengeance and bands of Gentiles began terrorizing the leaderless and docile Mormons on July 3. A compulsory exodus generally began at that time.⁶ Watson later told about the experience of his family. Several drunken Gentiles forced them from their dwelling and harassed them during the six-mile walk to the harbor: “G__ ____ you; why don[’]t you go faster? This last was addressed to my own wife who had not yet been quite three days confined to our second eldest child and was scarcely able to walk while I led the way with the babe in my arms.”⁷

The Watsons were loaded on a steamer, *The Keystone State*, on or about July 4 and with others were unloaded on a pier at Chicago, destitute and grieving. Without resources, they returned to Livingston, Grant County, Wisconsin, which they had left four years earlier. Watson resumed his work as a lead miner. Two more children were born here: Thomas (unknown date 1862) and Grace (February 3, 1865). Watson corresponded widely with the scattered Strangites, held family church services, and wrote in support

⁴For Watson’s references to this peaceful, spiritually satisfying period, see “Milo M. Quaife’s interview notes with Watson, Burlington, Wisconsin, December 10–11, 1918; Watson, Letter to Quaife, January 21, 1919; *Autobiography*. Quaife was then superintendent of the Wisconsin State Historical Society.

⁵*Autobiography*, 35. For definitive information on the fatal assault on Strang, see Vicki Cleverley Speek, “*God Has Made Us a Kingdom*”: *James Strang and the Midwest Mormons* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2006), 217–18.

⁶*Ibid.*, 221–35. Speek provides excellent information about the assault on Strang and the forced removal of the Mormons from Beaver Island.

⁷Watson, Letter to John Zahnd, n.d., the *Latter Day Precept*, June 1920, 20. The *Precept* was a monthly Strangite newspaper printed in Kansas City, Missouri, in 1920.

of Mormonism to several newspapers. He was ordained an elder on an unknown date by Apostle Ebenezer Page, brother of John E. Page, during this period.

After ten years in Livingston, Watson, now age thirty-four, was determined to again “find the Mormons.” His correspondence with a group of Strangites in Jackson County, near Black River Falls, in western Wisconsin where the Mormons once harvested pine for the Nauvoo Temple, finally convinced him to move to where his family could fellowship with others of their faith. He was dismayed to find that most of the Strangites had become “Josephites” (members of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints), headed by Joseph Smith III, after that Church took shape in 1860. He wrote in November 1866: “I expected to find a people with whom myself and my children could associate with, and talk of the principles of Gods Kingdom and the glories of the world to come. And it seems to me now, that all my sacrifices, and efforts to keep my children out of the society, and influences of the ungodly were vain.”⁸

In 1868, Watson moved his family to Coldwater, Michigan, to fellowship with Apostle Lorenzo D. Hickey and perhaps other unidentified Church members. Hickey, who had a history of unstable emotional behavior,⁹ had been attempting to get other Strangites to gather near him so they could fellowship together and visit and strengthen the few remaining Strangites. This endeavor also failed due to the scattered condition and poverty of the few members and the fact Hickey was episodically teaching that Strang had secretly slipped in by a window when he briefly stayed with Joseph Smith at Nauvoo in February 1844 and ordained “Young” Joseph or Joseph Smith III as his successor in the prophetic office. As a result, Hickey taught that the Strangites should acknowledge Young Joseph as president of the church. Although this claim was denied by Joseph Smith and Watson, it disrupted the unity and purpose

⁸“Dear Brother,” November 23, 1866, photocopy of holograph in my possession.

⁹For Hickey’s reaction when he confronted James J. Strang and his first plural wife, Elvira Field (masquerading as Charles Douglass) at New York City in October 1849, see Milo M. Quaife, *The Kingdom of Saint James: A Narrative of the Mormons* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1930), 101–5; Speck, “*God Has Made Us a Kingdom.*”

of the remaining Strangites.¹⁰

Letters show that the Watsons were at Coldwater, Michigan, in 1869, but by 1870, the Watson family was pioneering in Charlevoix County, Michigan; and during the next twenty-one years, Wingfield emerged as the glue that held the Strangite remnant together. He collected Strang's newspapers and records, reprinted many of Strang's doctrinal works, and fended off proselytizing efforts from the Josephites by corresponding extensively with the scattered Strangite Saints. He became the leading author of literature arguing the Strangite position: that Strang was a true prophet and that Joseph Smith III had been elevated to the prophetic office by Strangite apostates. Watson and Joseph Smith III conducted a lengthy correspondence. While they appear to have mutually respected each other, some of their letters express intense frustrations with each other because of their irreconcilable beliefs. For example, Smith, responding to Watson's arguments against the Reorganized Church wrote:

Permit me to suggest this, that if I and brethren are so despiingly treating Mr. Strang's work that we are unworthy of the countenance and cooperation of the "lovers of the truth" . . . that Mr. Strang's followers and supporters, . . . may, without any reference to me or my work, or that of my brethren, join themselves together and go on with Mr. Strang's work. It strikes me as a little inconsistent for you . . . to stand like surly dogs, neither going forward yourselves, nor permitting others to go forward in the highway of progress. Our work seems to annoy you terribly; but if it amuse[s] you, as it "does not hurt us any," you may continue to fire away at us, your paper pellets of distress.¹¹

It was during his Charlevoix period when the Strangites were in danger of being extinguished as a church that Watson wrote to an unknown recipient: "I am alone in the earth . . . with my family. . . [but] I

¹⁰See John Cumming, "Lorenzo Dow Hickey: The Last of the Twelve," *Michigan History Magazine* 50 (March 1966): 50–75; see also the Hickey-Watson correspondence.

¹¹Joseph Smith III, Letter to Wingfield Watson, August 8, 1877, photocopy in my possession. A representative Watson criticism of the Reorganized Church is: "I regard it [RLDS] as five times worse than Brighamism, and only another form of apostasy." Wingfield Watson, Letter to "Brother Comstock," March 26, 1887, photocopy in my possession.

will dwell in dens or caves . . . before I yield up my faith.”¹² In June 1877, he wrote an old Strangite missionary: “We are few in numbers scattered among our enemies, and scarcely a dozen remaining true to the faith. We are covered with shame. I feel after all my toil and pains that my children are in the hands of the destroyer, and Gods mercy alone can prevent their destruction and ruin.”¹³

Shortly after Watson held a public debate with William W. Blair of the Reorganized Church at East Jordan, Michigan, in October 1891,¹⁴ Jane and Wingfield, accompanied by their son Tom, now age twenty-nine, moved to Spring Prairie, Walworth County, Wisconsin. Daughter Janey’s marriage to John Willis was not a good match as he was antagonistic to her faith. Grace married Charley Lewis, a member of the RLDS Church, and they moved to Lamoni, Iowa, at an unknown date. Their marriage was also marred by irreconcilable religious differences. Elizabeth, who was only a few days old when the Watsons were driven from Beaver Island, and her husband, Adelbert White, who converted to the Strangite faith, moved to the Burlington area at an unknown time. Robert, Wingfield’s adopted son, married Adell Tubbs, daughter of a Strangite apostle, on January 20, 1866, and they moved to the San Luis Valley in southern Colorado in 1893. Tom married Sophia Richtman, on June 17, 1892, and lived near his parents at Burlington; he died at Burlington in 1917 or 1918.

The move to Wisconsin was influenced by the Strangite belief that the area around the old Voree settlement near Burlington in Racine and Walworth Counties had been sanctified by God to be a place of “refuge and safety.” In about 1907 with the substantial financial assistance of Sophia’s father, Jacob Richtman, then a riverboat captain in the Nauvoo area, they purchased more than a hundred acres of land near Burlington that contained the Voree cemetery, an 1848 stone house built by the Strangites, and the “Hill of Promise” from which, Strang claimed, an angel had directed him to retrieve the “brass plates” in 1846. The Watsons lived on that property in a mod-

¹²Incomplete letter, only pp. 9–12 surviving, photocopy of holograph in my possession. The handwriting is consistent with samples from the Charlevoix period.

¹³Wingfield Watson, Letter to “Brother Nichols and family,” June 7, 1877, photocopy of holograph in my possession.

¹⁴*The Watson-Blair Debate*, East Jordan, Michigan, October 22–26, 1891 (Galien, Mich.: W. J. Smith, 1892).

est frame house until Jane's death in 1908 and Wingfield's at age ninety-four on October 29, 1922.

For some twenty years Watson had been recognized as the *de facto* leader of the Strangites even though some apostles were still living. By 1897, Hickey had withdrawn his support for the interaction with the Reorganized Church and made peace with Watson. As he neared his death, he invited Watson to come to Coldwater, Michigan, in 1897 so he could ordain him a high priest and set him apart to be the presiding high priest over the Strangites. Although the Strangite Church was officially waiting for a prophet of Jewish descent to emerge and assume the presidential mantle, Watson spent the next quarter century visiting Church members whenever possible, continuing to publish tracts, and maintaining an extensive correspondence. During Watson's term as presiding high priest (1897–1922), he provided leadership to perhaps 200 persons scattered throughout the Midwest. This Church, often referred to by its members as a “remnant,” at that time did not have a formal church building but conducted cottage meetings and was sustained by Watson, a few fellow high priests, and some remarkably talented women teachers.

An incomplete letter from among letters preserved by two granddaughters at Burlington, Wisconsin, through the 1970s contained Watson's self-evaluation:

But in the study of these things, false and true prophets, I have not overlooked other duties. God says “if we treasure up his words in our hearts we shall not be deceived.” I have carried that Law of the Lord written in all four of the Books, and studied them wherever I have been, by night and by day. I did not carry the Books with me all the time but carried them in my memory. I have not interpreted them to suit my own natural, or carnal feelings; I have neither perverted them nor in any way changed the true sense and meaning of any of them. I have never claimed to be perfect, and never could feel to say anything of this kind, yet had I my time to begin again, I might not be able to do much better than I have.

I know my own weakness and faults and feel a good deal worse about them than any body else. The man who tries to serve God, and to work out his salvation, knows his own weaknesses, and the weaknesses of human nature better than any body else. Since James [J. Strang] was taken I have had the whole world to fight against and a very large body of the Mormons also; and they being led by false leaders who ought to be the easiest won have been the hardest hearted, and uncircumcised in heart and ears, of any others. Yet there is the great mass of them will

be redeemed and become a righteous people.¹⁵

John Cummings, then the curator of the Clark Historical Library, Central Michigan University in Mount Pleasant, wrote in 1983:

Without Watson's devotion to the cause of his church and his belief in James J. Strang, most of the literature and the records of the church would have probably been lost. He guarded with great care the files of the *Voree Herald*, the *Northern Islander*, other publications and the church records. His republishing of significant items from the files of the church newspapers and from pamphlets was the performance of a valuable service to the records of history.

Both friend and foe, believer and nonbeliever, have left testimony of the admirable character of Wingfield Watson. Among the members of his church today, he is regarded with an admiration exceeded only by their reverence for Strang himself. His granddaughters and grandsons and the older members of the church remember his gentle character, his steadfast devoutness, and vast knowledge of the scriptures, the Bible and all Mormon testaments from Joseph Smith through Strang.¹⁶

The letter reproduced below (p. 243) was written during an extended trip that Watson, then age eighty, made to visit Strangite Saints in several states. He spent seventeen days in Nauvoo, Illinois, and an undetermined amount of time in the Kansas City and Independence areas. On June 5, 1908, he visited the LDS mission office in Independence where *Liahona: The Elders' Journal* was published. Its June 20, 1908, issue reported:

FOLLOWER OF JAMES J. STRANG

On Friday, June 5, Elder Wingfield Watson, who is presiding high priest of the religious society founded by James J. Strang, made a pleasant call at the editorial rooms of *Liahona: The Elders' Journal*. Elder Watson is past 80 years of age, though he looks many years younger. He is remarkably well preserved, and states that he can take an axe and fell a tree about as well as he ever could. He is a resident of Burlington, Wis.

He states that the society of which he is the head, numbers only a few hundred members whose addresses and standing are known,

¹⁵Incomplete letter, pp. 5-10 surviving; photocopy of holograph in my possession.

¹⁶John Cummings, "Wingfield Watson: The Loyal Disciple of James J. Strang," *Michigan History* 47 (December 1963): 320.

and that they make little effort at proselyting or increasing their numerical strength. Regular Sabbath services are maintained near Burlington, but not elsewhere. Mr. Watson is considering the matter of furnishing for these pages a historical sketch of the movement led by Mr. Strang.¹⁷

Six days later, he wrote a letter to his fifty-five-year-old daughter, Janey, and her three children. Perhaps the least-known allusion in the letter is his description of the Danielsen Plow Company, a subsidiary of Danielsen Manufacturing Company, which had been organized in the mid-1880s in Logan, Utah, by Wilhelm G. Danielsen. Danielsen had joined the LDS Church in Denmark, then immigrated to the United States in 1878. He was an inventor and, by 1885, had received his first U.S. patent for improvements to a traditional horse-drawn plow.

In about 1906, the LDS Church fostered a quiet return to Jackson County, Missouri, which had been designated as the land of Zion and site of Christ's second coming by a revelation to Joseph Smith in September 1830 (LDS D&C 28:9) but from which the Saints had been forced out in 1833. The concept of building a factory in Independence to bring LDS families to the area developed. Danielsen was apparently approached with the idea of incorporating his business and moving it to Independence. Samuel O. Bennion, president of the LDS Central States Mission, who had recently relocated to Independence, was charged with locating and purchasing land to build a factory. In April 1907, Bennion acquired a seventeen-acre parcel of land south of the "temple lot" and immediately south of Pacific Avenue. In May 1907, Danielsen Plow Company was incorporated in Utah with Joseph F. Smith, LDS Church president, as a major stockholder. Ground was broken in Independence for the construction of a facility measuring approximately 250 by 100 feet on June 27, 1907. In October 1907, the stockholders also incorporated in the state of Missouri under the name of Danielsen Implement Company. Construction of the factory was completed in a widely publicized celebration on January 1, 1908.¹⁸

For several years, the facility manufactured plows, selling them on-site and also shipping them to customers and dealers. Unfortu-

¹⁷"Follower of James J. Strang," *Liahona: The Elders' Journal* 6 (June 20, 1908): 28.

¹⁸Information provided courtesy R. Jean Addams, file, "Danielsen

nately, Danielsen was an inventor and not a businessman. The stockholders eventually forced a change in management in an effort to revitalize the company's diminishing returns. In 1914 they leased the facilities to Morris-Blodgett Drop Forge and Tool Company. The LDS Church filed suit against Danielsen in the Independence Division of the Circuit Court because of his refusal to vacate his office as president in 1914–15. He lost the suit and was forced to resign his corporate office and membership on the board; his trustee relationship was also terminated. Not surprisingly, Danielsen rejected his LDS membership, and joined the RLDS Church. The original building remains intact but now contains several additions. The LDS Church continues to own and lease the land. A small parcel from the original seventeen acres was sold to the Gleaner Combine Harvester Corporation many years ago.¹⁹

Perhaps the portion of the letter most interesting to all historic expressions of Mormonism is Watson's description of Nauvoo. More than local color or nostalgia, his portrait of the once-thriving city, slumping ever further into decay, becomes theological ammunition in the contested territory of which surviving church can most persuasively assert its claim to represent God's truth.

TEXT OF WATSON'S LETTER TO JANEY WATSON WILLIS²⁰

Independence, Mo.
June 11, 1908.

Dear Daughter Janey and all the folks; I am here at Independence, Mo. you perceive, and have been round, and visited here and there, and have been in the Josephite church, and the Hedrickites, and been to Kansas City twice since I came through there to come here making three times, in all. It is like Chicago for push, and chatter and noise and business, and bell ringing and rumble of street cars, and blowing of whistles, and clacking of horse shoes, on hard paved streets, and shops, and stores, and tens of thousands of things in there to sell and to buy, and sidewalks crowded with people wanting to buy

Implement Company," April 2008. I express appreciation for his insight and helpfulness.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Wingfield Watson, Letter to Janey Watson Willis, June 1908, copy of holograph in my possession.

and sell and make money.

It is twelve miles from Kansas City to Independence, and you can ride from the one to the other on a street railway which has two tracks and cars running both ways and one passes another every few minutes, so that the noise of the one has hardly died out when another comes then thundering along. They are very little short of being as big as a railroad car, and they go fast and, stop often to take up and let down passengers. Costs 10 cts back and forward each way[.]

There are houses pretty thick all along from one place to the other. The Josephites have a large stone church here²¹ and put on considerable display, and spread. Brighamites, are not here only a little while, and they cant make any display on that account. But they have started a great plow factory to the west of the Temple lot, a quarter of a mile off it is a hundred feet wide by two hundred sixty feet long. It is immense, and has a cement floor over three fourths of its length. They make gang plows with 6 plows, and they tell me that three of them is dragged along with the engine and plows fifty acres a day. The engine wheels are 4 feet across the tire. What do you think of that Fred and Johnny and Tom?

The people east talk of the west as behind the times but in many instances the west is ahead of the east. Just think of their picking a big California log ten feet through and 18 and 20 feet long and putting it on to a railroad car without a man touching it except to put the hooks on it. You should see those great railroad bridges on the Mississippi river. And those great rolling mills where they make railroad steel rails, many of them in a day 34 and 40 feet long. And when they dig down mountains and make many thousand bushels of cement a day.

Nauvoo is dead for more than half of it and the other half is not very much alive more than half of it. While I was there Young Joseph Smith, E. L. Kelly, Heman C. Smith, and Alexander H. Smith²² came to Nauvoo to consider the matter of building a monument to the

²¹This building is the historic Old Stone Church of the Community of Christ, 1012 West Lexington Avenue, across from its Auditorium.

²²Edmund L. Kelley (Watson slightly misspells his name) was the RLDS Church's presiding bishop. Heman C. Smith, a former mission president, was currently an apostle and Church historian. Alexander Hale Smith, Joseph III's brother, was an apostle and also the faith's presiding patriarch.

prophet Joseph.²³ They were feeling of the inhabitants of Nauvoo to see if they would not contribute some thing towards it, but they did not seem to want to do so. They would like to have anything done there to start a little life into the place so as to bring up the price of land and lots, and start other business as, be sides there, and these Mormons feel that were a monument to be put up there they [that] more or less wealth would be drawn into the city by visitors, and on this ground or for this reason they asked the gentile citizens to contribute to this monument; Somehow the thing does not look just right to me. It looks mean to have Mormons seek contributions on a consideration of this kind.²⁴

I staid [sic] about 17 days at Nauvoo, and baptized J. J. Richtmans three children, Mary Annie, J. J. and Gracie Richtman, in the

²³General Conference RLDS Resolution No. 589 authorized the erection of a memorial or monument to the memory of the martyrs, Joseph and Hyrum Smith. The following was adopted: "That the President of the church, the Bishop of the church, the missionary in charge of that field [which includes Nauvoo, Illinois] for the coming year, Presiding Patriarch A[lexander]. H[ale]. Smith, and Elder G. P. Lambert, Bishop of the Nauvoo District, be appointed a committee to carry into execution the purposes for which this fund has been subscribed, and to devise such means as may seem best to them to increase the fund if found necessary; that the sum of one thousand dollars, or such portion thereof as may be necessary, be appropriated in addition to the sum already donated to assist in carrying out the memorial project." *RLDS Conference Resolutions, 1852-1907* (Lamoni, Iowa: Herald Publishing House, 1908), 166-67. Also see Appendix: "Joseph Smith III Memoir Excerpt," p. 247.

²⁴Watson did not mention that Albert Ketchum, a Strangite, noted for his inappropriate interactions with his fellow Strangites, challenged the members of the Reorganized Church to a debate. Before the debate, Ketchum became enraged when Heman Smith would not recognize his credentials, which stated that he was an elder in the "Church of Jesus Christ, organized April 1830." Heman Smith countered that "the courts of the land had recognized the Reorganized Church as the only lawful successor of the church founded in 1830." Ketchum responded "Yes! The Reorganized Church is the legal successor, in a pig's eye!" Joseph III added that Wingfield Watson "then rebuked Ketchum for his crudities and apologized to us." *Ibid.*, 433.

Mississippi.²⁵ I came away on the first of June, and got here the same day at about 3 o'clock P. M. Nauvoo is part on a flat and part on a rise back or east of it. The river makes a horse shoe bend at Nauvoo and in this bend the flat part of Nauvoo is located, and runs upward and back east from the river, and on the top of this rise, the temple stood, but now not one stone stands upon another. Joseph Smith [III] says that there was a good many more houses on this flat part of Nauvoo than is there is now[.] Nearly all the older buildings had fire places left in them. Stoves to cook on were then just coming into being. But fire places are now all out of fas[h]ion. Some of these houses are now dangerous to live in as great cracks are in the walls and some of the chimneys are cracked, or blown down, and roofs are rotten and let the rain in, and the floors are rotting on that account. Silence reigns over the greater part of Nauvoo and the shade trees which are now large trees in their shadows seem to mourn and sigh over the desolation of the place.

The grass grows thick on the sidewalks and have almost hid the brick pavement in many places. And here and there one passes the lilac, and other shrubs brought there for taste and for smell, by the Mormon wives, who had regard for the commandment to beautify and make things to please the eye, and gladden heart. Yes the trees mourn, and the streets mourn and, and the desolate houses rotting down mourn, and the large vacant lots mourn, and the old cellars

²⁵There is some mystery about when Jacob Richtman became a Strangite as his baptism date and place are not found in any known record. Watson indicates that he was a riverboat captain who owned barges that plied the Mississippi River and that the family lived at Alma, Wisconsin, sixty miles north of La Crosse, in 1890. "Dear Janie [sic], Tommy and Sophia," June 3, 1890, photocopy of holograph in my possession. In an 1896 letter he told his daughter Janey, "One of the [Richtman's] sons wives is Nellie Woodward a cousin of yours." As Watson's large family had settled near Livingston, Wisconsin, Nellie is presumably his niece. He also said, "I baptized five of Brother Richtman's family before I left his two sons wives, and three of his daughters." "Dear Janey and all;" September 18, 1896, photocopy of holograph in my possession. By 1908, however, Richtman had settled at Nauvoo. Joseph Smith III commented about a number of Strangites staying in Nauvoo with "a friend named Richtman" who "kept a hardware store and junkshop." Anderson, *The Memoirs of President Joseph Smith III (1832-1914)*, 442.

where the houses once stood mourns. And the desolate highways and streets mourns; and the catholic churches, and the many mighty buildings, costing millions occupying the lots round about where the Temple stood causes mourning; and all this, and these rebellions and usurpations of the leading men there causes us all to mourn, and to sigh every time we think of their abominations which blighted the land under their feet, and caused the land to vomit them out, and to leave not one stone upon another, that is not thrown down and left the place as if no temple had ever been there. “And if my people will hearken to my voice, and to the voice of those men whom I have appointed to lead my people, behold verily they shall not be moved out of their place. But if they will not hearken to my voice the revelations before given unto the voices of those men, whom I have appointed to lead my people (Joseph [Smith, Jr.] and James [J. Strang]) they shall not be blest, because they pollute mine holy grounds, and mine holy ordinances, and charters, and my holy words which I give unto them” [LDS D&C 124:45-46; emphasis Watson’s]. Now there was two appointed to head the church, both Joseph Smith and James [J. Strang], and when the letter of appointment was rejected then they rejected the voice of Gods servants who he hath appointed to lead his people then usurpation commenced, and the pollution of the word of God commenced, and the deception of his people, and forfeited the right to the protection of God and they were driven out. God be with you.

W. Watson.

APPENDIX: JOSEPH SMITH III MEMOIR EXCERPT

Joseph Smith III added this explanation in his memoirs: “A committee was appointed to visit Nauvoo to confer with the citizens there upon the matter of such a memorial. In company with Bishop E. L. Kelley, Alexander H. Smith, Heman C. Smith and George P. Lambert, I was appointed to act on that committee and in pursuance of duty went to Nauvoo, late in May 1908. . . . In the forenoon we held services in our own chapel and in the afternoon, as per arrangement, met with the citizens. Unfortunately for this conference, rain came up the valley and prevented a goodly attendance. When we gathered at the hall we found it not yet open, the only ones about being Mr. Argast, an editor, and a Mr. Dockeath. With both of these men I had former acquaintance. They interested themselves to show us courtesy and cooperation, but it appeared to be quite in vain as far as getting us a good hearing was concerned, for but few came out to hear our plans or to evince any interest in the matter. We had made this move upon being informed that the

Nauvoo citizens were interested in such a project and disposed not only to offer us friendly moral support but to render proper material assistance as well. In our committee meetings we had agreed that we would not ask the citizens for financial help, however, for the reason that we wished no dictation or outside interference in the enterprise. In spite of our disappointment at not receiving a wider hearing, we laid our proposition before the people who did meet and left it for them to present it to their fellow townspeople at some subsequent meeting.” (Mary Audentia Smith Anderson, ed., *The Memoirs of President Joseph Smith III (1832–1914)*, rpt. from the *Saint’s Herald*, November 6, 1834, through July 31, 1937 (Independence: Price Publishing Co., 2001), 442.²⁶)

²⁶My thanks to Ronald E. Romig and Lachlan Mackay for these helpful references.

REVIEWS

S. Michael Tracy. *Millions Shall Know Brother Joseph Again: The Joseph Smith Photograph*. Salt Lake City: Eborn Publishing, 2008. x + 264 pp. Cloth: \$39.99; ISBN: 1-890718-61-0

Reviewed by Jared Tamez

In 2003, an acquaintance showed me an image that he claimed was the only authentic photographic image of Joseph Smith. This was the first time I saw the Scannel daguerreotype, so designated because Katherine Scannel Mitchell had donated it to the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (now Community of Christ) in 1969. Mitchell explained that the daguerreotype had been in her family's possession for many years and that her ancestor, Emily Smith Scannel, was related to Joseph Smith (200).¹ In early 2008, when I heard that a book was forthcoming that would lay out the evidence of its authenticity, I looked forward to its publication. The result is S. Michael Tracy's *Millions Shall Know Brother Joseph Again*, an expanded second edition of his earlier work, *In Search of Joseph* (Orem, Utah: KenningHouse, 1995).

The first paragraph of the Acknowledgments section gives a three-fold purpose to the book. First, "to determine the accurate physical appearance of the Prophet Joseph Smith using all of the primary historical and anatomical resources discovered through forensic research." Second, "to determine if there are any artistic portraits that represents [sic] his true appearance," and third, "to determine if there are any authentic photographic images that have been purported to have been taken of him and test them against the forensic evidence." In the end, Tracy says he will pull all of this information to-

¹See also Ron Romig and Lachlan Mackay, "What Did Joseph Smith Look Like? Possible Early Photographic Image of Joseph Smith, Jr., Studied," *Saints' Herald*, December 1994, 8-10.

gether and present a new “portrait” of Joseph Smith (ix). This portrait is presented on the front cover as a painting executed by Ken Corbett.

Since the subtitle of Tracy’s work is *The Joseph Smith Photograph*, I began my reading with the assumption that this book was written, not to present a new painting of Joseph Smith, but rather to authenticate the Scannel daguerreotype as an actual photographic image of the Prophet. Surprisingly, the Scannel daguerreotype is not actually shown until page 157 (without identification) and not named or discussed until page 200. By the end of the book, however, it is clear that the major purpose of the publication was, indeed, as the subtitle suggests, to prove that the Scannel daguerreotype is an authentic photographic image of Joseph Smith.

Generally, the text suffers from chronic grammatical and stylistic errors. The book also contains a number of errors and expansions of content. For example, during a discussion of the events leading up to the martyrdom at Carthage, Tracy notes that, on the morning of the martyrdom, Hyrum Smith read three accounts out of the Book of Mormon about divine deliverance to cheer the Prophet. Tracy then comments that “the stories of Nephi and Lehi, Alma and Amulek, and the Three Nephites did not enliven Joseph” (62). The footnote directs the reader to *History of the Church* 6:600. But the events recorded on that day occurred the day before the martyrdom, not the day of. Additionally, though the text mentions that Hyrum read Book of Mormon passages about divine deliverance, it does not state how many accounts he read nor further identify the episodes of deliverance. Although Nephi/Lehi, Alma/Amulek, and the Three Nephites are likely candidates, they are Tracy’s speculation and should be labeled as such.

Further, references are missing for a number of important details. For example, Tracy describes a mission by Joseph Smith III to Utah and says he granted permission to reproduce an image of Joseph Smith (163); however, Tracy gives no footnote to substantiate this episode. This pattern of unciting and misciting material continues throughout the book, to the careful reader’s mounting dismay.

Chapter 1, the Introduction, presents a devotional approach to W. W. Phelps’s declaration that “millions shall know Brother Joseph again.” Chapter 2 provides a useful summary of fifteen images of the Prophet Joseph Smith presumably created during his lifetime. These include the Sutcliffe Maudsley profiles and other portraits. In Chapter 3 Tracy sets out to collect and analyze the “word portraits” (written descriptions) of the Prophet.

The devotional tone set in the introduction continues throughout the book. For example, in Chapter 3, Tracy recognizes that not all word descriptions can be taken at face value, so to speak, without some evaluation. Describing his method for evaluating how “true” these descriptions are, Tracy states, “We have applied a careful technique to judiciously separate factual

truths from biased adjectives. This technique is similar to one that all of us should use as we read the scriptures looking for doctrines and principles to apply to our lives. . . . After using this technique a factual list of true physical characteristics has been compiled to compare a wide variety of images of Joseph Smith” (38). There is no mention in the book of source criticism, which attempts to determine the reliability of sources based on historical data. Even in a devotional setting, it seems unlikely that a spiritual search for knowledge should disregard available historical evidence.

Methodologically, Tracy’s discussion of his forty-one “word portraits” is problematic. He arranges them in chronological order according to how old Joseph would have been in the description. Thus, the first description is from an unidentified “neighbor” who describes Joseph when he was fifteen to eighteen years old. Next comes a description of a twenty-four-year-old Joseph, then a twenty-eight-year-old Joseph, and so forth. Some major difficulties in this approach arise because Tracy does not attempt to differentiate between descriptions contemporary to the Prophet and reminiscent descriptions written after his death. The first description is a direct quotation from the 1989 “third edition” of John Henry Evans’s biography of Joseph Smith which first appeared, in 1933. In this entry, Evans summarized and amalgamated written descriptions of Joseph by “Turner” (likely Orsamus Turner), “Tucker” (likely Pomeroy Tucker), and “Hendrix” (likely Daniel Hendrix).² Not only is this description *not* contemporary with the teenaged Joseph Smith, but its component parts were not even written during his life; the earliest Mormon-related writings by the aforementioned “neighbors” were published after Joseph Smith’s death. By putting this description first and offering no other explanation than that it was taken from “A neighbor [sic—actually three] to the Prophet during his youth, 1820-1823,” Tracy has created a situation in which the reader can be easily misled about the accuracy and reliability of the source material presented. And that’s just description number 1.

Chapter 4 seeks to examine the forensic and anatomic information regarding Joseph Smith with the view of applying the results in evaluating a proposed Joseph Smith image. This chapter is perhaps Tracy’s most cohesive. Much of this material previously appeared in his earlier *In Search of Joseph*. Here Tracy argues for the reliability of the death masks and photographs of Joseph and Hyrum’s exhumed skulls as forensic tools with which to evaluate any potential photographic images of Joseph Smith. Using the death masks and phrenological data collected during Joseph’s life, Tracy

²John Henry Evans, *Joseph Smith, an American Prophet*, 3rd ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1989), 37.

concludes that the skull widely accepted as Hyrum's is, instead, Joseph Smith's skull and vice versa. Tracy's discussion of the making of the death masks and the burial, exhumation, and reburial of Joseph and Hyrum's bodies is both interesting and useful. However, recent research calls these conclusions into question.

Chapter 5 discusses the physical characteristics of the Smith family. Tracy states, and I agree, that "this chapter is perhaps the least helpful in understanding specifics about the Prophet's appearance" (111). Here Tracy presents twenty images (paintings and photographs) of Joseph Smith family members including his children, mother, siblings, paternal uncle John Smith, and nephew Joseph F., inviting the reader to note such distinctive Smith family characteristics as profile, hair color, and eye color. Tracy positions photographs of Joseph's four sons next to one of Emma and asserts: "By looking at these images, it is assumed that those features that do not resemble Emma must be from the Prophet or an earlier ancestor" (110). This type of comparison is so subjective, in my opinion, that it cannot be considered a reliable means for evaluating any possible photographic images. Even so, Tracy went on to use these "family resemblances" as a criterion for ruling in or out potential photographs of Joseph Smith in Chapter 9.

Chapter 6 deals with descriptions of clothing and artifacts associated with Joseph Smith. Tracy does note a number of interesting tidbits from documentary sources about the Prophet's clothing, but its usefulness as a means of authenticating a proposed Joseph Smith photograph is limited. The chapter is brief (eight pages), and only one paragraph describes fashion for men in the 1840s. The source given for that single paragraph is the homepage of Gentleman's Emporium, a company that makes and sells replica historical clothing, but that homepage contains no historical information about men's fashion in the 1840s. Tracy seems to have borrowed his information and also his methodology at this point from Patrick Bishop, who claimed to have discovered a daguerreotype of Oliver Cowdery in 2006 in the Library of Congress.³ Bishop also cited Gentleman's Emporium for basically the same description of 1840s men's fashion, but he used the correct URL address (<http://www.gentlemansemporium.com/1840-victorian-photo-gallery.php>). Following this line revealed the source of the information in Tracy's paragraph. However, without any further authority than this commercial website, Tracy also used "clothing" in Chapter 9 as a criterion for evaluating potential Joseph Smith photographs.

Chapter 7 discusses painted portraits of Joseph Smith asking, "[Which] of all these [portraits] are right; or, are they all wrong together?" (123) How-

³Patrick Bishop, "An Original Daguerreotype of Oliver Cowdery Identified," *BYU Studies* 45, no. 2 (2006): 101–11.

ever, instead of a comprehensive historical treatment of Joseph Smith portraits, Tracy opts for a discussion of the “top five” most popular paintings of the Prophet. Tracy does not so much discuss the accuracy of the selected paintings as the reasons for their popularity among Latter-day Saints. He concludes that the five paintings were popular because (1) they were “endorsed” by the LDS Church, and (2) they have the ability to evoke a spiritual witness of Joseph Smith’s divine mission (134).

Chapter 8 discusses the history of photography during Joseph Smith’s life and attempts to identify opportunities when he might have obtained a daguerreian likeness of himself. Though unable to conclusively place Joseph Smith in a daguerreian studio, Tracy does discuss four plausible opportunities, the most likely being Smith’s visit to Philadelphia in December 1839-January 1840. During this time the Prophet had a phrenological examination at an office that lay “only a few blocks away” from a photography studio owned by Robert Cornelius, Paul Beck Goddard, and Joseph Saxton. The second most plausible period, Tracy posits, is when photographer Lucian Foster moved to Nauvoo two months before the death of Joseph Smith.

Unfortunately, Tracy can provide no solid evidence that Joseph Smith ever had a daguerreotype made. Such evidence, however, may exist. An intriguing reference not found in this book comes from Joseph F. Smith’s Sandwich Islands Mission journal. While away from the mission home, Smith received a letter notifying him that fire had destroyed the mission residence. Smith lost his trunk and its contents in the blaze. One of the items he listed as destroyed was, “a deguarian [sic] likeness of my Father unkle [sic] Joseph and Brigham young, a presant [sic] and priceless to me.”⁴ This is the best evidence I know of that a daguerreotype of Joseph Smith was indeed made. Unfortunately, no such image is known or examined in this book.

In Chapter 9, Tracy presents nine proposed daguerreotype images of Joseph Smith and evaluates them for authenticity using the benchmarks created in previous chapters: contemporary portraits (Chapter 2), “word portraits” (Chapter 3), anatomical evidence (Chapter 4), family characteristics (Chapter 5), and clothing style (Chapter 6). He does not explain if these nine are all of the candidate images (or identify who proposed them or when and where they were proposed). If more than nine candidate exist, he does not explain why he selected these nine as the strongest candidates.

Here, finally, the Scannel daguerreotype appears, slipped in as just one of

⁴Joseph F. Smith, Journal, June 26, 1856, LDS Church History Library, in *Selected Collections from the Archives of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 2 vols. DVD (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, [Dec. 2002], 1:26. My thanks to Stanley Thayne for providing this reference.

a number of possibilities. With so many proposed images of Joseph Smith and no stated criteria for consideration, the possibility seems strong that the author is constructing a series of straw-man arguments to stack the deck in favor of the Scannel daguerreotype, which he will eventually argue is an authentic photographic image of Joseph Smith. For example, one of the images evaluated is of a bearded individual. Tracy goes to some trouble to state outright that the “word portraits” presented earlier make it clear that Joseph had little or no beard (172). Nevertheless, no matter how implausible and for reasons unstated, Tracy sees fit to give it the same consideration as the others, claiming that he will “assume each image is Joseph until proven otherwise” (159).

As I pored over these images and sought clues in Tracy’s text, I consistently had difficulty understanding the basis he used for drawing his conclusions. Aside from the problematic nature of most of his criteria for evaluation (discussed above), Tracy offers no explanation for how he will employ these five benchmarks systematically. For example, Tracy refers to one image as “Joseph Smith/Abraham Lincoln” for its apparent resemblance to future president Abraham Lincoln. Applying the criterion of “written descriptions,” Tracy notes that the image could pass “most of the verbal descriptions of Joseph Smith, except for the rounding or sloping shoulders” (182). However, Tracy does not provide a detailed rationale for how he applies the written descriptions or what constitutes “passing” the descriptions. The next evaluation point, “primary portraits,” consists of a one-sentence rejection: “The image does not compare well to the primary portraits” (182). On the next point, “family characteristics,” he acknowledges that the accuracy of a comparison “is subject to the viewer’s eye” but continues: “We have concluded that the image does not seem to have very similar traits that were passed on to his [Joseph Smith’s] sons” (182). On another point, “anatomical evidences,” Tracy says only that: “The image does not match the anatomical evidence in the jaw area” (182). Earlier Tracy had noted that “Joseph had a more prominent jaw than the man in this image” (181).

Last, Tracy evaluates the Scannel daguerreotype. He again employs his five benchmarks but again without details: “The clothing style does match the 1840s styles. . . . Written descriptions do match Joseph in his early thirties. . . . This image has a resemblance to the primary portraits. . . . This image does compare well to the sons of Joseph” and “The image matches well in all comparisons” (204). Having thus passed all five benchmarks (albeit in conspicuously general terms), the Scannel daguerreotype therefore becomes Tracy’s top candidate for an authentic Joseph Smith image.

Tracy then spends all of Chapter 10 on the Scannel daguerreotype. Here Tracy employs new analytical tools for the first time: exploring provenance, estimating body mass, compensating for differences between the degree of head tilt in the death mask and the image, and so forth. He says, and I agree,

that these considerations are necessary to perform a “good” comparison between the image and the death mask; but why were these seemingly necessary techniques not equally applied to the other eight images? Either Tracy never intended to give the other images equal consideration, which would seriously call into question the validity of his analyses; or he actually did apply them but decided to omit discussion of them, which would seriously call into question his appraisal of his readers’ interest and sophistication.

Tracy concludes that the daguerreotype’s provenance is questionable and therefore relies on biology: “Although it is not absolutely authenticated as Joseph, anatomically it matches his every feature” (231). Tracy concludes with a short description of how artist Ken Corbett used the Scannel daguerreotype and other evidence to produce his painting of Joseph Smith.

In summary, book is attractively illustrated and has much interesting information that is not readily available otherwise—for instance, photographs of the skulls of Joseph and Hyrum. Also handy is Tracy’s description of the manner of their burial and exhumation. He provides helpful summaries of the history of a number of Joseph Smith images and provides little gems of research from diaries and other obscure sources about Joseph Smith’s image and many of his portrayals. These gems, however, instead of being a part of a beautiful tiara, are half buried in so much rough material and problematic analysis.

Ultimately I feel the book largely fails to meet its own stated objectives and does not provide a reliable means for evaluating any possible photographic images of Joseph Smith. Nor does it succeed in presenting the Scannel daguerreotype convincingly as one. Nevertheless, a benefit of this publication is that it will certainly stimulate further interest in the search for an authentic photographic image of Joseph Smith. Tracy should be commended for his efforts and for his years of hard and no doubt devoted work. My hope now is that trained professionals with academic criteria for photographic authentication will undertake future studies of possible photographic images of Joseph Smith and other early Mormons.

JARED TAMEZ {mormonhistory1830@yahoo.com} is an M.A. candidate in history at the University of Utah and is currently editing the Anthony W. Ivins diaries. A more detailed review of this book can be found at his blog, <http://www.juvenileinstructor.org/tracy/>, including the Community of Christ’s statement of copyright violation and information about its suit against Tracy that was settled out of court. See <http://www.juvenileinstructor.org/millions-shall-sue-brother-joseph-again-or-that-book-again/>.

William P. MacKinnon. *At Sword's Point, Part 1: A Documentary History of the Utah War to 1858*. Vol. 10 in KINGDOM IN THE WEST: THE MORMONS AND THE AMERICAN FRONTIER. Norman, Okla.: Arthur H. Clark Company (an imprint of the University of Oklahoma Press), 2008. 546 pp. Notes, bibliography, illustrations, maps, index. Cloth: \$45.00; ISBN: 978-0-87062-353-0

Reviewed by Joseph Geisner

William MacKinnon has been a student of the Utah War for fifty years, also the length of time that this book has been in preparation. MacKinnon, who was mentored by the great Howard Lamar as a student at Yale, has published extensively in *Utah Historical Quarterly*, *Journal of Mormon History*, *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, and a host of the best national historic journals dealing with the Utah War. Most of what I know about the Utah War is because of these writings. In *At Sword's Point*, MacKinnon has presented students and scholars with a page-turning documentary history.

This particular volume covers the Utah War through the pivotal year 1857 and the beginning of 1858 with Volume 2 due out in 2010. This volume has eighteen chapters that basically flow in chronological order, though most chapters are thematic. Chapters 1 and 2 discuss developments leading up to the conflict between the U.S. government and Utah Territory. Chapter 3 covers the Mormon quest for statehood, Brigham Young's health problems, and the Ambrose-Betts affair. In Chapter 4, the Buchanan administration takes office, followed by Buchanan's decision to appoint a non-Mormon governor and have a military escort install him without officially notifying Young (Chapter 5). In Chapter 6, federal appointees flee from Utah Territory in the spring 1857, and Young begins preparations for conflict. Chapter 7 tells the story of the ill-chosen William S. Harney's appointment to head the Utah Expedition and its organization. Chapter 8 discusses the army's vanguard.

The action then shifts to Utah. Young recruits Indians for the coming conflict, sends George A. Smith south to preach resistance, arms the Nauvoo Legion, declares martial law, and directs violent measures within the territory (Chapters 9–12). In Chapter 13, the U.S. Army moves past Fort Laramie to encounter guerilla action by the Nauvoo Legion. In Chapter 14, the U.S. Army reaches Ham's Fork and Albert Sidney Johnston receives his commission. The next three chapters (15–17) appraise Thomas L. Kane's intervention, the reaction in the East to the western conflict, and Johnston's taking command. The final chapter describes the winter-imposed hiatus and

the strategizing of Young, Kane, and Buchanan.

MacKinnon has found numerous diaries, journals, addresses, letters, and newspaper reports that have been quite difficult to locate, many of which have never before been published. I was dazzled by these exciting new documents. For example, a Brigham Young address on August 16, 1857, hitherto unpublished, is an intemperate, even treasonable, line-in-the-sand speech. He calls the U.S. Army a “mob,” vows that they will not “afflict this people,” and orders: “in the name of Isreal’s [sic] God I say, lift the sword and slay them” (239–43). A second example of an important document, also published here for the first time, is a quotation from the diary of Captain John W. Phelps, U.S. Army, “a Vermonter and a member of the West Point class of 1836,” covering the crucial events of October 1857. It vividly captures the sense of frustration the troops felt because of a lack of direction (381–97). A third is a letter from sixteen-year-old Harriet Thatcher, whose Mormon family had recently returned to Utah from California. Just weeks before the massacre at Mountain Meadows, Harriet wrote her fiancé a description of Mormon defiance, whipped up by Brigham Young: “Brigham addressed the audience. . . . [I]t filled the people with fire to think of being driven from their pleasant homes . . . and . . . makes them feel like fighting” (236–38).

James H. Martineau provides a valuable record of George A. Smith’s inflammatory trip to southern Utah in the late summer of 1857. In Parowan, Smith told the Saints the troops were going to hang Young and the other leaders without a trial and that the Mormons would need to flee into the mountains (235–36). According to MacKinnon, a timely reconnaissance mission took Martineau away from Parowan so that he avoided being one of the Mormon murder party at Mountain Meadows on September 11. Martineau’s journal also has an exciting story of its own. The original, still locked in a California safe owned by a descendant, has never been available to scholars; another group of descendants was able to photocopy the original journals and then donated one copy to the Huntington Library and the other to the LDS Church History Library in 2005.¹

Here is a short list of “I didn’t know that!” items:

- Young considered using longbows, crossbows, and arrows against the U.S. Army (272, 359–60); the army, for its part, was equipped with light and heavy artillery in addition to state-of-the-art rifles and various handguns (272, 359–60).

¹See Donald G. Godfrey and Rebecca S. Martineau-McCarty, eds., *An Uncommon Common Pioneer: The Journals of James Henry Martineau, 1828–1918* (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 2008). Noel Carmack is preparing another edition that Utah State University Press will publish.

- Young had an impressively thorough spy network monitoring the U.S. Army and emigrant trains coming toward Utah (244–56, 468, 490–92). The U.S. Army in contrast knew very little about conditions, civilian moods, and defenses in Utah, as disclosed in letters between John B. Floyd, the Secretary of War, and Major Ben McCulloch, a Tennessean who had fought in the Texas revolution, was a Texas Ranger, and U.S. marshal. Floyd asks McCulloch a series of questions ranging from how well the animals will sustain so long a march, to road conditions, and the availability of grazing (174–77). Floyd even asks McCulloch to inquire what type of “reception the troops will meet with in Utah.”
- The Utah War was anything but bloodless, exceeding the body count of “bleeding Kansas” (296).
- Young gave explicit orders to kill U.S. soldiers (318–28, 360).
- The 2,500 figure usually assigned to the Utah Expedition’s manpower is inflated; MacKinnon provides data for reevaluating the actual troop size (118, 221, 459–60).
- Except for the Civil War, the Utah War is the first time a standing army, hostile to the government, was created on U.S. soil (360–61, 450).
- Young’s plans for military activity and Nauvoo Legion presence were geographically vast, including what are now Nebraska, Oregon, New Mexico, and California (331).
- Even the common name of the Utah Expedition—“Johnston’s Army”—is a misnomer (13). (See also MacKinnon’s “‘Who’s in Charge Here?’ Utah Expedition Command Ambiguity,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 42, no. 1 (Spring 2009): 30–64.

The plan of Church leaders to recruit Indians to fight Americans, whether civilians or soldiers, is handled in multiple places. Interesting examples appear in letters from Daniel H. Wells to William Dame and from Brigham Young to Jacob Hamblin and to N. V. Jones (232–34). Young had ambitions to team Indians (“cousin Lemuel”) from Nebraska to California with Mormon militia, gather arms, wait out the troops during the winter, and then unleash the fighting forces. Back-up plans, all discussed seriously, included the possibility that God would destroy the United States over the winter, or that the Saints would lay waste to the Salt Lake Valley and then hide in the mountains, or that they would flee to Canada via Fort Limhi in Idaho (278–83).

One of my favorite letters in *At Sword’s Point* is from George D. Watt to his plural wife, Alice Watt. Watt vividly details the stirring events happening

around him and the harsh conditions these citizen-soldiers were enduring in the Fort Bridger area. They had beef and flour but no salt or cooking utensils. Watt tellingly describes the Nauvoo Legion's somewhat comic raid on the army's cattle and mules at Pacific Springs. The army had anticipated the raid so they secured, hobbled, and chained the animals. Thus, the Nauvoo Legion rode into the corral, striking the guards with their leathers and "yelling like Indians but all to no purpose." Watt's clothing was inadequate for bitter winter, and he lamented, "I am in great need of boots the ones I have on are parting soul from the body" (341-42). But he describes morale as high, claiming that the Mormon soldiers, strengthened by their religious faith, will "strike Terror to the hearts of those who thirst for the blood of the p[r]ophets of God" (341). Watt represents the conflict in unambiguous terms as a righteous campaign to protect their wives, children, and religion.

John Bagley's 1894 recollection also includes the Mormon raid at Pacific Springs, here published for the first time (335-338). The Watt and Bagley records clear up a myth created by John Ginn's account, written a decade after Bagley's, which became a staple for historians, including MacKinnon's early work. MacKinnon does a wonderful job of explaining this error, providing in the process an excellent example of how historical studies should be anything but static.

At Sword's Point is superbly well balanced, perhaps best exemplified by Chapter 12, "Lonely Bones': Leadership and Utah War Violence," modified from his article by the same title in the *Journal of Mormon History* 33, no. 1 (Spring 2007): 121-78. Not only is the writing outstanding, but MacKinnon's important and careful analysis of violence in Utah during this period is simply the best treatment I have seen of this topic. He brings together almost every important record documenting the use or encouragement of lethal force for this period from authors of varying perspectives. This chapter may be the most controversial in the book—appropriately so, since the subject is doubtless the most controversial that Mormon historians of the Utah Expedition must continue to deal with in the future. In my opinion, they would do well to use this chapter as a guide for honesty and structure.

For example, MacKinnon candidly explains Young's public comments about the U.S. government owing Young money and Young's plan to reimburse himself with army property by "putt[ing] my hand on it to pay myself." Then MacKinnon makes a series of restrained and fair observations:

When a territorial governor and militia commander sends such a message, the restraints on subordinates' behavior loosen commensurately and immediately, as with the Mormon theft of hundreds of government- and contractor-owned cattle a few weeks later. Thus was set the tone to society in territorial Utah of the late 1850s. . . .

Complicating this atmosphere was the fact that even some of Brigham

Young's closest associates had difficulty determining his wishes long distance. . . .

Language is far from a military commander's only qualification, but in matters of life and death, its clarity is crucial as well as revelatory about the leader's skill and effectiveness. Brigham Young was a territorial governor and church leader with no formal military experience or education. The phrasing of his discourses, letters and military orders was at times not only unmistakably violent but also filled with code words as well as indirection. At times his utterances were deliberately phrased to avoid non-Mormon comprehension and perhaps even legal jeopardy if intercepted, as Young expected they would be. (326–37)

Another controversial episode that has been largely neglected in earlier treatments is William Hickman's cold-blooded murder of Richard Yates, an unarmed prisoner in his charge (298–312). MacKinnon brings together a wide range of documents from chroniclers that establish, among other key points, that Young ordered the militia to seize all of Yates's property while he was still alive. After the murder, Young wrote inquiring about the "disposition" of the property but asking no questions about the murder even though he was still acting governor of Utah Territory.

MacKinnon takes pains to provide a well-balanced picture of the national context. One example is the illnesses suffered by James Buchanan and Brigham Young almost simultaneously in the early days of the war and the subsequent lack of firm direction that followed (63–64). Another example is the suspension of mail services in June 1857 and the intense disruptiveness of this action for both Utahns and U.S. soldiers (177, 224).

Good history makes a reader to want to learn more. MacKinnon certainly achieves this goal with me by providing, as context to the Utah Expedition, two earlier military expeditions that played a negative role in Mormon and U.S. Army relations. MacKinnon first discusses the massacre of Captain John Gunnison and seven members of his party on October 26, 1853 (42, 47, 48, 50). MacKinnon explains that even though a military inquiry concluded that Indians were the attackers and a Mormon jury found six Indians guilty of manslaughter, the episode is still mired in suspicion and questions. The second "leave-'em-wanting-more" episode is MacKinnon's brief description of Lieutenant Colonel Edward J. Steptoe and his detachment spending the winter of 1854–55 in Utah. The negative interactions that resulted (48–49) may constitute one of the most important reasons for Young's lack of communication with the Utah Expedition's leaders and his determination to keep the army from entering the Salt Lake Valley.²

The illustrations in *At Sword's Point* are examples of the energy with which

²The reader curious about the Gunnison and Steptoe episodes will enjoy con-

MacKinnon has researched this magnificent book. The photographs and engravings depict participants on both sides and, impressively, are drawn from personal collections as well as repositories across the country. (For examples from private collections, see the images of Sergeant-Major Martin Mullins, 204, Private George D. Watt, 343, and James Ferguson, 366.)

My only criticism is minor. I would like to have seen something like Homer's "Catalogue of Ships" in Book 2 of the *Iliad*, which describes the disposition and numbers of the Greek forces. Something similar for the Mormon and army forces in Utah during October 1857 would have clarified the ground for me as I pictured the forces probing each other's strengths and weakness and also in evaluating John Phelps's diary claim that the U.S. forces were outnumbered five to one by the Nauvoo Legion. Perhaps MacKinnon can provide us with something like this overview at the beginning of 1858 in his second volume. He is unquestionably in the best position to provide the most reliable estimates of the numbers on both sides.

The Utah Expedition has generated many historical myths. MacKinnon has pulled back the curtain on the past, exposing us to the realities of the crimes, heroism, mistakes, fears, faith, political blunders, and canny strategies of this important historical episode. Given the publication of Ronald W. Walker, Richard E. Turley Jr., and Glen M. Leonard's very important *Massacre at Mountain Meadows: An American Tragedy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), *At Sword's Point* is a "must have"—the essential background on Utah's worst atrocity. I will be so bold as to say that students of the massacre and the other violence during this period in Utah Territory need *At Sword's Point* to understand that crime.

The world of Mormon studies and Western American history owes William MacKinnon, Will Bagley, general editor of the series in which this book appears, and its publisher, Arthur H. Clark Company, a great debt for bringing this monumental work together. *At Sword's Point* is now the standard for any student, historian, or casual reader studying or researching the first civil war—the Utah War. This is a book that will excite and teach on every page. I can only hope Volume 2 of *At Sword's Point* will come close to or equal this great work; I cannot imagine that it will surpass it.

sulting MacKinnon's, "Sex, Subalterns, and Steptoe: Army Behavior, Mormon Rage, and Utah War Anxieties," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 76, no. 3 (Summer 2008): 227–46); Will Bagley, *Blood of the Prophets: Brigham Young and the Massacre at Mountain Meadows* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2002); and David L. Bigler, *Forgotten Kingdom: The Mormon Theocracy in the American West, 1847–1896*, Vol. 2 in *THE KINGDOM IN THE WEST* (Spokane, Wash.: Arthur H. Clark Company, 1998).

JOSEPH GEISNER {rbssman@gmail.com} and his wife, Suzanne Birch Geisner, provide residential services for the developmentally disabled. He is a lover of books and history.

Alissa York. *Effigy*. Toronto, Canada: Random House Canada, 2007. 432 pp. Hardback: \$32.95; ISBN 978-0-679-31472-1

Reviewed by Dawn Hall Anderson and Dora Hall Dalton

Effigy is an eerie and unsettling tale of a polygamous household in 1867 in Utah's Tooele Valley. Prize-winning Canadian author Alissa York conceived the idea for her second novel when she read a newspaper article about the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (FLDS): "I was shocked to read that the 'plural wives' . . . are often little more than children when they are given in marriage." She began to wonder, "What would it be like to share . . . my husband. There was a buzz around the question— . . . from the beginning it felt like a book."¹

"Sharing," however, is a far cry from the family dynamics York finally envisioned among the four wives of Erastus Hammer, a brutal, vain stump of a man whom each wife despises in different ways. The surface plot line is simple: Mormon horse rancher Hammer kills five members of a wolf pack, missing the dominant male whose nocturnal prowls around the ranch set off a series of events with dramatic consequences for the people who live there, including two ranch hands who are central to the unfolding story. In an artistic series of flashbacks, York shifts from one point of view to another, deftly drawing from each character's reminiscences the curious paths that brought each to this point in their bizarre lives.

The Hammer household consists of oddly obsessive characters, somewhat like the grotesques in southern writer Flannery O'Connor's short stories. Ursula Wright Hammer, the tall and lovely first wife, runs the household and singlehandedly tends the six children, only one of whom is hers. She recounts Mormon lore to the children, embroiders "Wo-Unto-Them" samplers of Book of Mormon scriptures, and rigidly enforces rituals of prayer and proper manners. She also burns with unconsummated love for the martyred Mormon prophet, having been mesmerized from the first time she heard him preach: "The [street preacher's] voice that had so firmly halted her progress now turned and drew her close. She made her way forward through the schooling faithful, growing sensible of the body inside her

¹"Review: *Effigy* by Alissa York," <http://januarymagazine.com/2007/11/review-effigy-by-alissa-york.html> (accessed February 23, 2009).

dress—feeling it turn slippery, sleek as a trout’s” (85).

As first wife, she has the prerogative of naming the children and has given all five of her sister wife’s children variants of Joseph—Josephine, Josepha, “Joseph, Joe and Baby Joe” (81). As York stresses, Ursula “assign[s] each new arrival a variation on the only name she’d ever really loved” (282). The exception is Ursula’s only child, Lavolee, named after Hammer’s father. Now nineteen, Lal struggles to earn his father’s favor and burns with lust for Ruth Groves Hammer, the fecund and voluptuous second wife.

Ruth is an orphaned seamstress from England who dreams of raising silkworms. To realize that dream and escape a lecherous employer, she joined with the Mormons and then, during the 1856 handcart rescue, accepted Hammer’s improbably impromptu offer of marriage. “‘My name is Brother Hammer. Erastus.’ He paused. ‘I have one wife, but she’d welcome another’” (31).

Hammer found his third wife, Thankful Cobbs Hammer, on his “mission” (79) to Chicago where she was eking out a meager living as a bit-part actress. As a wife, she is still on stage, a painted courtesan who takes a perverse pleasure in vying with Ursula for control of Hammer. “Soon she will hear his footsteps in the corridor. When they halt outside her door, there will come a slim silence before the handle turns in its works. It is this silence—this sound-not-sound of being chosen—that lends her every performance its edge” (13). While Ursula cross-stitches cautionary samplers, Thankful handcrafts torrid lingerie, often animal themed. One of Hammer’s “favourites” is “a bed jacket of buff and grey feathers worked in a cunning design. . . . Its front panels mimic the face of an owl. Two well-placed holes allow her nipples to stand in for the glowing eyes” (64).

Taxidermy, described in gruesome detail, is the obsession of the fourth wife, Dorrie Burr Hammer. Hammer found her in Cedar City and married her at age fourteen to immortalize his hunting trophies—his own defining preoccupation. Pale, with scabbed and chemical-scoured hands, Dorrie cannot remember anything before a childhood illness at age seven. Her greatest challenge and pleasure is to restore a certain life to the dead animals. Her greatest dread is the haunting dreams about a wagon train massacre, viewed from the perspective of a sentient crow, who was Dorrie’s first treasured effort in taxidermy.

The other men at the ranch include a Paiute named Tracker, and a new hand named “Bendy” Drown. Fifty-two-year-old Hammer, whose eyesight is degenerating, relies on Tracker for help with the ranch work and his hunts. At this point, most of the entries in Hammer’s “kill book” (10) are actually Tracker’s. Bendy, skilled with horses, earned his nickname as a former circus contortionist.

These characters are improbable human oddities, so it is no mean achievement that York draws the reader into caring about those cast as vic-

tims: Ruth, Tracker, Bendi, and Dorrie. She also displays considerable familiarity with Mormon and western history: the gold rush '49ers and the steamship *California* that carried them, the first great San Francisco fire (1849) and the Pony Express (1860–61), the emigration of Mormon converts from England on the *Thornton* (1856), the Haun's Mill massacre (1838), the martyrdom of Joseph Smith (1844), the Willie handcart company disaster (1856), and the Utah silk industry.

The most accurate rendering of a historical event in the book, and one which York recreates with great sympathy and sensitivity, is the Mountain Meadows Massacre. Her source list for the subject cites both the classic treatment by Mormon historian Juanita Brooks, *The Mountain Meadows Massacre* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1950) and the sharper-edged *Blood of the Prophets: Brigham Young and the Massacre at Mountain Meadows* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2002) by Will Bagley, a productive contemporary historian who considers himself a "heritage Mormon" but is quoted as saying he "never believed the theology since [he] was old enough to think about it."² In recalling the massacre, Tracker refers to "Yauguts" ("crying man," the mocking nickname the Indians gave John D. Lee) and the Mericats (their term for non-Mormon Americans) (115). Clearly, York researched her subject, although her claims for historical accuracy are relatively modest: "While *Effigy* is a work of the imagination, it does cross paths with history" (431).

Mormon historians might wish she had perhaps crossed a few more paths since the small historical errors that surface now and again are distracting. For instance, Dorrie's mother, Helen Burr, relates, "Some three decades have passed since Mr. Burr and myself were baptized by Brother Joseph himself at the temple in Kirtland" (130). Actually, there was no baptismal font in the Kirtland Temple. Sixteen-year-old Ursula could not have heard the Prophet Joseph preach in Independence's town square in 1838 (85–86) because the Mormons had been driven out of Jackson County in 1833. More serious is the mounting list of "possible-but-improbables": a Mormon housewife who sews X-rated lingerie and wears frocks with plunging necklines at family meals, a Mormon man with four wives and no Church position or calling, a successful horse rancher who mismanages and mistreats his horses, a female taxidermist who fleetingly thinks of stuffing a child who wanders by, a beautiful girl who "would have been snapped up by at least a Ward Bishop long since" if she hadn't had a deformed foot (128), and more.

²http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Will_Bagley (accessed February 28, 2009). See also Ronald W. Walker, Richard E. Turley Jr., and Glen M. Leonard, *Massacre at Mountain Meadows: An American Tragedy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 145, 170.

Even more troubling is York's tendency to sensationalize. "I want people to really feel a lot," she commented in a newspaper interview. ". . . I want them to think, but I want them, more than anything, to feel."³ This is every fiction writer's goal, of course, but in York's hands it often leads to a villains-and-victims portrayal. For instance, months out and with supplies dwindling, the struggling and short-rationed Willie Handcart Company is "overtaken by a party of carriages, each drawn by four horses or mules in an unseemly surfeit of power. The carriages, dark and gleaming, disgorged men well dressed and well fed. . . . Saints of high standing, returning from missions abroad. One of the men took the time to deliver a speech concerning the need for continued faith, obedience and prayer. Before they laid leather to horseflesh again, the missionaries requested meat. Captain Willie made them a gift of a sinewy calf. A woman wailed at its slaughter" (330). Clearly, the sanctimonious, well-fed leaders are not about to forego any creature comforts. All the sacrifices are to be made by those lower on the ecclesiastical totem pole. Even more affecting, the woman isn't wailing because it is her calf, but because she is "confusing the skinned carcass with the body of the husband she'd buried in a sandbank some hundred miles before" (330).

In reality, the "Saints of high standing" were the Church agents who had organized the handcart companies in Iowa City and Florence. These missionaries were well known to the emigrants and had, in fact, arranged their passage to America. Mormon missionaries were typically not well heeled; and according to trail diaries, at the time they caught up with the handcarts, the company was still on full rations. The message Elder Franklin D. Richards delivered was one of hope and encouragement before the missionary party raced on to Salt Lake City to arrange for relief wagons.⁴ York ignores this record to create a polarized tale of callous leaders and obediently starving dupes.

Such axe-grinding fiction makes unpleasant reading. In *Effigy* people come in two sorts: the pitiable and the detestable. There are no fathers, Mormon or gentile, who are not abusive and punishing. There is little affection for children, none between wives, and no recognizable religious feeling or belief. The novel's epigraph, from Sylvia Plath's "The Moon and the Yew Tree," resonates with despair:

³Lee Shedden, "Canadian Writer Unearths Secret Life of Mormons," April 15, 2007, *Calgary Herald*, <http://cyclopress.com/alissayork/Effigy-CalgaryHerald.pdf> (accessed February 24, 2009).

⁴Lynn Slater Turner, *Emigrating Journals of the Willie and Martin Handcart Companies and the Hunt and Hodgett Wagon Trains* (self-published, 1996), 30–32, 109; see also LeRoy R. Hafen and Ann W. Hafen, *Handcarts to Zion: The Story of a Unique Western Migration, 1856–1860* (1960; rpt., Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992).

How I would like to believe in tenderness—
 The face of the effigy, gentled by candles,
 Bending, on me in particular, its mild eyes.

“Not in this religion” seems to be York’s final answer.

DAWN HALL ANDERSON {dawnhall78@hotmail.com} is a business manager and freelance editor/writer. She earned a master’s degree in American literature from Brigham Young University, pursued doctoral studies at Penn State, and edited the BYU Women’s Conference volumes for more than ten years. She and her husband, Richard, have four children and four grandchildren. DLORA HALL DALTON {gregdalton@juno.com} is a medical transcriptionist, freelance editor, and voracious reader. She has a bachelor’s degree in English from Brigham Young University. She and her husband, Greg, have five daughters and thirteen grandchildren.

Val D. Rust. *Radical Origins: Early Mormon Converts and Their Colonial Ancestors*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004. xi, 253 pp. Appendix, notes, index. Cloth: \$35; ISBN 0-252-02910-0

Reviewed by George D. Smith

Latter-day Saint converts to the end-of-world warnings of nineteenth-century prophet Joseph Smith may have been pre-disposed to accept Mormonism by their own radical Christian origins. That is Val D. Rust’s central conclusion from his extensive research into early Mormons’ colonial ancestors.

When Smith related his personal conversations with a thousand-year-old angel to inhabitants of the “burnt-over district” of central New York State, they knew he was telling them truth. Coming on the heels of two great spiritual “awakenings,” the “visions” and “translations” of the Mormon prophet fell upon fertile ground. The Prophet presented ancient truths from otherwise unreadable Egyptian hieroglyphics—Smith’s alphabet and grammar of the unknown language preceded that of the French linguist Jean-François Champollion—and confidently explained that God was his “right-hand man.”¹ That assertion made sense to most of his listeners, who, in a mere fourteen years, swelled to number about 15,000—an average of more than a thousand conversions a year through the rest of Smith’s life.

¹Joseph Smith to James Arlington Bennett, November 13, 1843, in *History of the Church*, 6:78.

How did Joseph launch this new religion? Billed as the restored “true” church that would prepare the world for Christ’s second coming, these latter-day saints, like the earliest Christians, expected Jesus to reappear soon. What drew them to the Restoration?

Val D. Rust, professor of education at the University of California, Los Angeles, a specialist in comparative world education, has delved assiduously into “the family histories of early LDS converts” with the intent of providing “a historical account of the Mormon religion’s spiritual roots” (164). What he found might be considered predictable, yet the pattern of interconnectedness to radical Christian migrations is remarkable. Rust discovered that the colonial ancestors of a substantial number of early Mormon converts belonged to communities of Anabaptists and other radical Christians.

Using internet-accessible collections of LDS family history, Rust established a database of some 1,500 converts who affiliated with Mormonism between 1830 and 1834, selecting those who were at least fifteen years old and who had at least one ancestral line traceable back five generations. He was able to identify 583 such converts, about 40 percent of the estimated Church membership accumulated within the first five years (9-10). Rust acknowledges that these five-generation ancestral records are incomplete for many early converts, especially women (12).

From this database, Rust then categorizes the convert families by patterns of migration and place of conversion. From about January 1831 to the end of his study period, Joseph Smith was resident in Ohio, then a magnet for migrants from all over New England, New York, the mid-Atlantic States, and the South. By comparing converts with other Ohio populations, Rust found that Mormon converts “differed dramatically” from the general population of New York and Ohio (17-18). That is, of converts born between 1750 and 1830 and living in New York and Ohio, 59 percent were born in New England versus 20 percent of New Yorkers and only 9 percent of Ohioans.² He characterized those who embraced New England revivalism as a minority who had previously been ostracized and had migrated west in successive generations as a “selective migration” of “restless seekers” (17). Quoting historian Alan Taylor, Rust concludes that migrants out of New England from 1790 to 1835 were those who had embraced “the spiritual power of dreams, visions, and inner voices” (17).

If these data are correct and representative of larger convert populations

²See the statistical migration data collected by the American Local History Network on this point. Table 2, page 18, ostensibly compares the birthplace of converts *living* in New York and Ohio with the birthplaces of other residents of those states; however, the table is mislabeled “born in New York,” making it manifestly impossible for them to also be born in New England, Europe, the South, etc.

for which Rust was not able to find five generations of ancestors, early LDS converts indeed were a “distinctive population” in both New York and Ohio (19). The reader is drawn to imagine a population of restless New England revivalists who were not only marginalized for having dreams and visions in their home states, but who perhaps similarly antagonized the larger communities in New York and Ohio (possibly also Missouri and Illinois), precipitating their sequential expulsion from each state and territory, and finally in 1846 from the United States itself.

Examining the cultural roots of colonial settlers from about 1600 to 1775, Rust focused on the pilgrims of the Plymouth colony, Puritan ancestors in Massachusetts, Maine, and Connecticut, and Anabaptists and Quakers, who settled initially in Pennsylvania. In 1825, Joseph Jr. and Joseph Sr. were briefly hired to seek lost treasure at a Pennsylvania site using seer stones in a darkened hat—a clear departure from traditional Puritan or Separatist lifestyles.

Several writers have observed that Anabaptist migrants to Münster in the industrial Westfalia region of Germany in 1534-35 followed the Dutch prophet Jan van Leyden in recreating Old Testament plural marriage as they awaited the world’s end in the sixteenth century. Evidence is scarce that nineteenth-century Mormons sought to emulate these sixteenth-century “latter day saints” (as they considered themselves), but the later Saints may have been aware of the former ones.³

Rust’s research enhances speculation of that connection between these two “latter day” millennialist communities, three hundred years apart. Several Anabaptist-related faiths took new root in Pennsylvania and neighboring states. Rust discovered that many Mormon converts had Anabaptist ancestors in colonial Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island. The Anabaptist congregation founded by Roger Williams in Providence, Rhode Island, included the forebears of Reynolds Cahoon, Isaac Morley, and the Pratt brothers, Orson and Parley. Descendants of Connecticut’s Anabaptist settlers included Louisa Beaman Smith, Vinson Knight, and Vilate Murray Kimball (95-107).

In identifying alchemy, astrology, and witchcraft practiced among early

³See, for example, Milton V. Backman, Jr., *Joseph Smith’s First Vision* (Salt Lake City, Bookcraft, 1971), 94, which described *Anabaptism Disapproved* (1818) as summarizing the “controversy concerning baptism which divided Protestants” in Joseph Smith’s day. John Greenhow, Letter to editor, *Times and Seasons*, April 15, 1843, 165–66, recalled the “Ana-baptists” in Münster who had “all things [in] common,” including “a plurality of wives.” John C. Bennett, *History of the Saints* (1842; Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 304-5, once assistant president of Joseph’s church, compared Mormons to the sixteenth-century Anabaptists who “gave themselves out for Latter Day Saints.”

convert families to Mormonism (127-39), Rust refers to the “mystical and magical world view” of the Mormon Church documented by D. Michael Quinn in *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1987) and John L. Brooke’s, *Refiner’s Fire: The Making of Mormon Cosmology, 1644–1844* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1994). He also cites Jan Shipps and John Welch’s edition of *The Journals of William E. McLellin, 1831–1836* (Provo, Utah: BYU Studies/Urba: University of Illinois Press, 1994), which documents “discerning of spirits,” “casting out devils,” and “speaking in tongues.” “Once the window between the visible and invisible world was open,” Rust observes, “seerstones, amulets, anointings, divining rods, and [locating] buried treasures were a part of their life experience” (116). He then documents “the reality of magic” in the New World. Although “Puritan reformers and mainstream Protestants” associated folk magic, exorcism, and the occult with the corruption of Catholicism, the older Christian tradition took magic for granted (116–17).⁴

But while reformation leaders “attempted to stamp out mystical practices,” the religious awakening “revitalized . . . mysticism.” Believers “simply turned to sources of mystical experience outside the church” (118). Puritans persecuted Anabaptists and Quakers for their beliefs that spirits, good and evil, dwelled within people. Rust relates alchemy and astrology to Mormon concepts of foreknowledge—deciphering “God’s will” as it was “expressed in the movement of heavenly bodies” (120-24) and cites Quinn’s observation that Joseph Smith “married all of his wives on days that coincided with favorable astrological signs” (126) but fails to associate other Mormon ideas with astrology. His discussion of witchcraft focuses on ancestors of LDS converts mainly in New Hampshire, Connecticut, and Massachusetts (131). Eunice Cole, ancestor of several LDS Cheney family members, was accused of witchcraft in the later 1600s. In Connecticut, a Daniel Pratt accused one Elizabeth Seagers (possibly related to the Mormon Sagers family?) of witchlike dancing in the woods (131–32).

Rust also offers the example of his own great-great-grandfather William Walker Rust, whose ancestral families were both accusers and accused of witchcraft in and around Salem. Some of these families had descendants who were LDS converts. Other Mormon families had ancestors who were also involved in the trials; some were hanged. “Many ancestors” of Joseph Smith were “actively involved in . . . witchcraft hysteria, both as accusers and

⁴See Ronald W. Walker, “The Persisting Idea of American Treasure Hunting,” *BYU Studies* 24 (Fall 1984): 429–59.

accused” (237 note 70);⁵ for example, Joseph Smith’s great-great-grandfather, Samuel, accused two women of being witches, resulting in their hanging (144–45). Rust concludes that “significant numbers of LDS convert ancestors defied the demands of Puritan leaders that they refrain from spiritualist activities; instead, they insisted that they and others had received special gifts or possessed special powers from the invisible world” (139).

In an appendix that many readers may wish to begin with, Rust lists the 583 early Mormon converts who form the basis of his study and connects them to their fifth-generation ancestors. These prominent families establish the Mormon connection with radical Christianity. Future apostles like Parley P. Pratt and Orson Hyde not only understood Joseph Smith’s visions and translations as religious truths but went on to preach this message widely, harvesting scores of converts.

Rust began his book as a “quest to gain some perspective on the radical religious roots of [his] own family” (165), checking his parents’ claim that his Mormon ancestors were themselves descended from “among the first to settle colonial America” (ix). By the time he confirmed this claim, his curiosity had been aroused; and he sought to discover whether his family was typical of other early convert families. At that point, he discovered that a majority of residents of New York had been in the state for one or more generations. Ohio’s residents, in contrast, had been born in the mid-Atlantic and southern states. Mormon converts stood out against this pattern. Typically they had come from New England and had characteristically lived there for several generations, “mostly” in the “more religiously radical towns” (x). Many of these “fringe” families had been expelled for their religious beliefs. Others lived in areas known for unorthodox religious practices, representing a “radical segment of the Protestant Reformation” (x).

Thus, the book is about special forerunners, the seventeenth-century settlers who were ancestors of the earliest converts to the Mormon Church. Most were English. Most resided in radical religious settlements in New England.

Rust challenges historians John Brooke and Jon Butler (*Becoming America: The Revolution before 1776* [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000]), who discount the importance of early New England contributions to America’s indigenous religions. Perfectionist communities of Quakers, Mennonites, Pietists, and Anabaptists settled particularly in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Many of these “Perfectionists” came from Britain; but Dutch, German, and Swiss Mennonites immigrated to Pennsylvania; Dutch and German Pietists went to New Jersey; and in 1681, Quaker William Penn

⁵See also D. Michael Quinn, *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1987), 28.

settled Pennsylvania. In 1710, the first Amish migrated from Germany and Switzerland and also settled in Pennsylvania. Baptist churches settled in Philadelphia.

Butler argues that eighteenth-century Evangelical revivals had more influence in forming America's religious tradition than the Puritans. He pointed to Freemasonry and Rosicrucianism as gaining increasing prominence in America (*Becoming America*, 1–7). Puritan New England had become Yankee New England. Other religious forces in New England were far more radical than Puritanism, especially with the first Great Awakening which began in eighteenth-century New England. Rust suggests that, as the Mormon faith emerged during the Second Great Awakening (ca. 1790-ca. 1831) in Rochester, New York, and New England towns, then spread along the Erie Canal, its characteristically emotional preaching may have found families in radical Christian communities predisposed to participate in this later wave of religious excitement (153–56).

Rust concludes that “radical religious elements coming out of early New England should not be discounted” (155). These groups included Anabaptists, Quakers, Familists, Montanists, Ranters, Gortonists, and Seekers. “Witchcraft came to an end prior to the beginning of the 18th century” (165), even though spiritualism and magic continued. Rust rejects the implication that Mormons were alienated from the American mainstream; rather, Mormon doctrines “reflect almost every facet of the second Great Awakening.” Mormons were Adventists, Millennialists, and dedicated to an ideal economic community.

Rust agrees with Brooke “that Mormon cosmology . . . had deep roots in the American colonial experience” (5). However, Brooke connects Mormons with hermetic groups such as Freemasonry, Rosicrucianism, and various manifestations of the occult, locating Mormon roots in the second (post-1660) migration to New York and the Middle Atlantic colonies. In contrast, Rust concludes that “almost all” of the ancestors of early LDS converts had settled New England during the first migration to New England, long before Brooke's “second wave” (5).

Rust argues that LDS ancestors embraced “a different type of religious radicalism” than Brooke's hermeticism and occultism. Rather, Rust refers repeatedly to the colonial settlements in which Mormon ancestors clustered as “havens for radical religious activity, including Rhode Island, New Hampshire, New London County in Connecticut and Essex County in Massachusetts.” He discovered that “most ancestors” of early Mormon converts were “concentrated in areas of religious radicalism” (9) and that they were “overrepresented in Plymouth Colony, Connecticut, and Rhode Island, and underrepresented in Massachusetts Bay Colony” (27).

Some theoretical questions arise from Rust's database and methodology.

The progenitors of the 583 early LDS converts who met his criteria (baptized 1830–34 with at least one line traceable back five generations) yielded 10,415 (56 percent) of 18,656 possible fifth-generation ancestors (20). A convert has, counting back five generations, thirty-two possible forebears. If no two converts had the same ancestors (which is known not to be the case, given the high percentage of relatives who became Mormon), a possible total of 18,656 would result. (See his Table 3, p. 23, for the identified ancestors.) Rust acknowledges the possibility of double counting, given the shared ancestors (26, 27, 47). Also, since only 56 percent of the possible fifth-generation ancestors are known, the resulting proportions might differ significantly if the missing 44 percent were known.

Rust's book lacks a bibliography which would facilitate reference to his sources. His reliance upon chapter notes requires scanning through the chapters to find initial use of a reference and its full documentation. However, the scope of his research presents a sizeable amount of data to work with. These data can be mined to form and test other hypotheses about the social elaboration of colonial American social migration and the formation of various communities. Although he began his research as a personal quest and articulates particular family goals (e.g., the Mormon faith is a uniquely American religion, the United States is a dedicated Christian nation, and the Garden of Eden is located in the Missouri heartland), the research Rust brings to the table leads the reader to consider some sophisticated questions about social migration and the formation of the new nation.

GEORGE D. SMITH {mismis@well.com} is the author of *Nauvoo Polygamy: ". . . but we called it celestial marriage"* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2008) and other books and articles on Mormon and American history.

Martha Peterson Taysom. *"Glory Is a-Comin' Soon": A History of Mormonism in Indiana*. Kokomo, Ind.: Old Richardville Publications, 1998. iv, 149 pp. Photographs, map, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. Out of print; ISBN 1-891598-01-5.

Reviewed by Keith A. Erekson

Normally, a scholarly journal does not review a book eleven years after its publication. Normally, a scholarly journal does not review a book produced as an undergraduate honor's thesis. But Martha Peterson Taysom's *"Glory Is a-Comin' Soon"* is not a normal book. I first encountered it in a manner outside of the scholarly norm. And the situation under which I have been asked to review it is likewise out of the ordinary.

First, the situational disclosures. At this writing, Taysom is editor-designate of the *Journal of Mormon History* upon the retirement of Lavina Fielding Anderson. When my proposal to clone Lavina was scuttled, I served on the search committee that recommended Taysom to the Mormon History Association's Board of Directors; and, as a member of that board, I voted for her appointment. Though Martha will be the editor when this review appears in print, I undertook this review at the invitation of Lavina and outgoing review editor Tom Kimball, who overrode Martha's initial demurrer. On a personal note, Martha was the first person I met at the first MHA conference I ever attended. Perhaps the conference organizers played with fate as they created a session on Joseph Smith composed of Martha (a longtime resident of Indiana), myself (a young student on my way to a doctoral program at Indiana University), and Geraldine Woodward (the MHA's most valiant Hoosier member). Three months later I moved my family to Bloomington, Indiana, and was pleasantly surprised to find Martha teaching the Gospel Doctrine class in the University Ward.

I first sought out Taysom's history of Mormonism in Indiana for a very unscholarly reason; newly called to the high council, this Marylander needed a crash course on Midwestern Mormon culture. From the pages of Taysom's volume, I noted that Church members in Terre Haute had a history of suspicion toward outsiders; in my talk to the branch in Clinton I mentioned Zion's Camp because that is where they crossed the Wabash River into Illinois; and because I asked locals in Linton about the location of their "Temple" (the nickname for the first Indiana chapel that had been built in 1898), I received a standing invitation to their monthly "pitch-in dinners" (which an ignorant outsider would mistakenly call a "potluck" dinner).

While I went to the book seeking crucial context and anecdotes for addresses, I came away with a sophisticated and thorough analysis of Mormonism in Indiana. Taysom begins with the observation that "histories of Indiana rarely mention the Mormons, and Mormon histories rarely mention the Hoosier State" (iii). The book's three chapters chronicle the convergence of Mormons and Hoosiers in 1830–65, 1865–1920, and 1920–90. During the first period, Mormon missionaries—such as Sidney Rigdon, the Pratt brothers, and Levi Hancock—traversed the state and stopped to "preach by the way" (LDS D&C 52:10). Their optimistic message of an American church and scripture found willing ears among Hoosiers already interested in the primitive gospel and communitarian experiments. In Taysom's words, "The new religion combined a kind of doctrinal intelligibility with a specific plan of action which offered both material and emotional satisfaction" (24).

Drawing on journals, county histories, and minutes of Church conferences, Taysom identifies branches established during the 1830s and 1840s in thirty of the state's ninety-two counties. Indiana newspapers reported the

march of Zion's Camp, and Hoosier converts David Patten, John C. Bennett, and Alexander McRae soon rose to positions of influence in the growing church. Membership in the state dropped after 1846, and by the 1870s the church had "disappeared from the state without a trace" (33).

Chapters 2 and 3 most strongly present Taysom's theoretical argument that a Utah-based "Mormon culture" converged with an "Indiana culture" to produce a distinctive new "Indiana Mormon subculture." Typically, notes Taysom, "new members leave their respective cultures and adopt a Mormon or LDS culture. Unfortunately, for some, this means making all Mormons cultural carbon copies of one another, when people 'over there' begin to resemble people 'over here.'" Taysom—and the twentieth-century Indiana converts she interviewed—rejoice that the "history of Mormonism in Indiana is the story of the merging of two subcultures. The results have failed to produce any cookie-cutter Saints. Instead, Hoosier Mormons are unique and deserving of more attention both by Indiana historians and by Mormon historians" (iii).

From the 1870s to the 1910s, Mormon missionaries from the intermountain West (including John Morgan of the First Council of the Seventy, who was also the nephew of the infamous Confederate raider John Hunt Morgan) remained culturally distinct from Indiana converts, though the two groups united in response to the political pressure and cultural stereotypes engendered by LDS polygamy. During the 1920s and 1930s, Indiana congregations were composed almost entirely of local converts; but after World War II, a growing number of western Mormons relocated to Indiana for schooling and careers. Locals bristled at the call of young Utahns as branch presidents and bishops, warily accepted stronger enforcement of the Word of Wisdom, and felt financially and intellectually inferior to the incoming outsiders. By the 1980s, however, time, exposure, and intermarriage among children produced a Mormon "melting pot" in Indiana. "The Church continues to grow in Indiana," Taysom concludes, "but it is not the Utah Church transferred to the Midwest" and "Indiana Mormonism is not the same as Utah Mormonism. Some find this frightening, other refreshing, and still others comforting." Taysom is probably among those who, she observes, "have come to believe that the Mormon Church, no matter how it has developed in the twentieth century, has finally come home to the Midwest where it all began" (96).

Taysom's model of cultural convergence relies on the contrast between the Church's "center" and its "periphery." Though I am typically wary of this theoretical construct—because it assumes central homogeneity, attributes excessive influence to the "hierarchy," and generally does not explore differences among multiple peripheries—Taysom employs it toward the noteworthy end of identifying and exploring the culture of Mormonism in Indiana.

All three chapters are grounded in good, brief summaries of Mormon history and New Mormon Historiography. Her Hoosiers come to life—one of whom explained that because he was a “free agent” he was free *not* to go to church. She celebrates their “victories” in resisting “the Salt Lake bureaucrats,” as in the case of the Bloomington Chapel that was constructed not according to Utah specs but out of Indiana limestone (90). (She does not mention that the building’s roof leaks every winter.) Taysom observes that Utah Mormons often “express some doubt or concern about his or her worthiness to ‘inherit the celestial kingdom’ (the highest degree of light or glory where one becomes a god), but a typical Indiana response is that, despite a person’s sins, ‘glory is a-comin’ soon.’ By this, the Hoosier Mormon means that the weight of sin should not stand in the way of the hope of a really glorious future” (73–74).

Writing eleven years after Taysom penned that observation, I have a slight vantage point into the impact of her work. In my travels as an editor and researcher throughout the state of Indiana, I noted the presence of her volume in nearly every library and local history society I visited. The book is recommended on numerous genealogy websites, and Taysom summarized her findings in “Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons),” *Encyclopedia of Indianapolis*, edited by David J. Bodenhamer and Robert G. Barrows (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 422. Though grounded in New Mormon History, this book—and its reception—just might provide a glimpse into the future of our craft. Whereas New Mormon History focused excessively on the nineteenth century, Taysom’s work finds its strength in the twentieth; while the former produced studies of territorial Utah communities, Taysom has identified a distinctive community in the Midwest; inasmuch as New Mormon Historians found audiences in journals and societies of their own creation, Taysom has demonstrated that a much broader public can be interested in Mormon history for a variety of unexpected reasons.

KEITH A. EREKSON {kaerekson@utep.edu} is assistant professor of history at the University of Texas at El Paso. He has conducted researched on the practice of history in the Midwest, and for four years he served on the editorial staff of the *Indiana Magazine of History*.

BOOK NOTICES

Christopher Kimball Bigelow. *The Timechart History of Mormonism: From Premortality to the Present*. London, England: Worth Press, 2007. xvi, 31 pp. Maps, photographs, illustrations, charts. \$19.95, ISBN: 1-903025-40-0

Author Christopher Bigelow and editor Jana Reiss draw from extensive resources to produce an unprecedented visual chronology of LDS Church history. Upon cracking open the attractive cover, the reader is confronted with a mammoth eleven-foot-long foldout upon which is featured, in full color, a chronology of the principal events in Mormon history spanning from the council in heaven to the 200th birthday of the Prophet Joseph Smith. (Some dates are approximations, of course.) This display begins by listing major world events at the top of the page with significant scriptural events below. Each page is color coded and accented with vivid images from photos to paintings from artists such as Simon Dewey. The reader can turn the pages of this chart like a book or can expand it to its full length to get a feel for the running sequence of Mormon history. This is only the beginning.

On the back of this chart, the reader will find page after page of easily accessible information. First come a series of maps depicting important places from the Old and New Testaments. Next come Book of Mormon maps with approximate

locations of prominent cities, rivers, and mountains along with a description of major and minor groups associated with Book of Mormon history. A nineteenth-century map traces the migrations and major events of modern LDS history.

After a brief section on basic Mormon ordinances and beliefs, the book launches into a wealth of useful historical information. First, the book lists all 122 temples in operation (as of July 2006), arranged by region, followed by a list of temples under construction or planned, each with its announcement date. The book then details information about each prophet and provides a section on noted theologians (e.g., James E. Talmage, Bruce R. McConkie), literary figures (e.g., Levi S. Peterson, Samuel W. Taylor, and Gerald N. Lund), historians (e.g., Richard Lyman Bushman, Fawn Brodie, Juanita Brooks, B. H. Roberts). Finally, this section ends with a comprehensive list of Church historical sites, visitors' centers, and pag-eants, many with phone numbers for further information. Having perused twenty-nine pages brimming with data, the reader might wonder what remains to be told. Then the other half of the book begins.

After the foldout sheet, the Timechart features a thirty-one-page section entitled "Highlights of Mormon History and Culture"

in a more conventional, though equally vivid, book-like format. Historical treatments include a Joseph Smith chronology and a timeline of significant events involving the translation of the Book of Mormon plus information on each edition of the Book of Mormon up to the current (1981) edition. Detailed sections outlining significant events of the Ohio and Missouri periods follow. Before the section on Illinois, the Timechart provides information on the Doctrine and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price, including dates sections were received and descriptions of the different editions and the changes that occurred from edition to edition.

After the Utah section (complete with information on plural marriage and anti-polygamy legislation though omitting the Mountain Meadows Massacre), the Timechart gives biographical information about major Mormon nineteenth-century figures from Elijah Abel to Lyman Wight in thematic order (e.g. prophets, apostles, other personalities and leaders) plus a listing of the members of the Quorum of the Twelve in order of or-

dination. Sections also include "Who's Who in 20th Century Mormonism," "Modern Day Mormonism," "Mormons in Science, Politics, and Business" (including Mitt Romney and Harry Reid) and sections on professional Mormon athletes, Pulitzer Prize winners, actors, authors, filmmakers, and musicians. The final sections bring together information on Mormonism in each nation where the Church has at least one stake. "New Zealand (first stake 1958): After missionary work started in 1854, thousands of indigenous Maori joined. In 2005 the nation had 25 stakes and nearly 100,000 members." The book wraps up with a section on offshoot groups (from before and after the martyrdom) and a lengthy "Further Reading" section with a listing of books, periodicals (from the *Ensign* to *Sunstone*), and websites (from lds.org to signaturebooks.com).

This vast sweep of LDS history, both visually appealing and intellectually stimulating, would be an enjoyable resource for readers of all ages.

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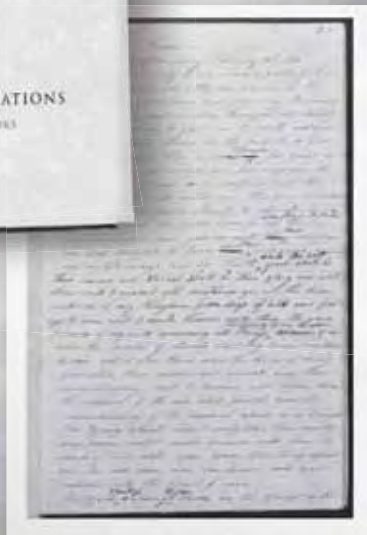
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