

Journal of Mormon History

Volume 35
Issue 1 WINTER 2009

Article 1

2009

Journal of Mormon History Vol. 35, No. 1, 2009

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/mormonhistory>



Part of the [Religion Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

(2009) "Journal of Mormon History Vol. 35, No. 1, 2009," *Journal of Mormon History*. Vol. 35 : Iss. 1 , Article 1.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/mormonhistory/vol35/iss1/1>

This Full Issue is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at DigitalCommons@USU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journal of Mormon History by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@USU. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@usu.edu.



Journal of Mormon History Vol. 35, No. 1, 2009

Table of Contents

ARTICLES

- Eating Vegetables to Build Zion: RLDS Children in the 1920s *David J. Howlett*, 1
- In the Wake of the Steamboat Nauvoo: Prelude to Joseph Smith's Financial Disasters *Joseph I. Bentley*, 23
- "One Long Funeral March": A Revisionist's View of the Mormon Handcart Disasters *Will Bagley*, 50
- James G. Bleak: From London to Dixie *Brandon J. Metcalf*, 117
- Chief Kanosh: Champion of Peace and Forbearance *Edward Leo Lyman*, 157

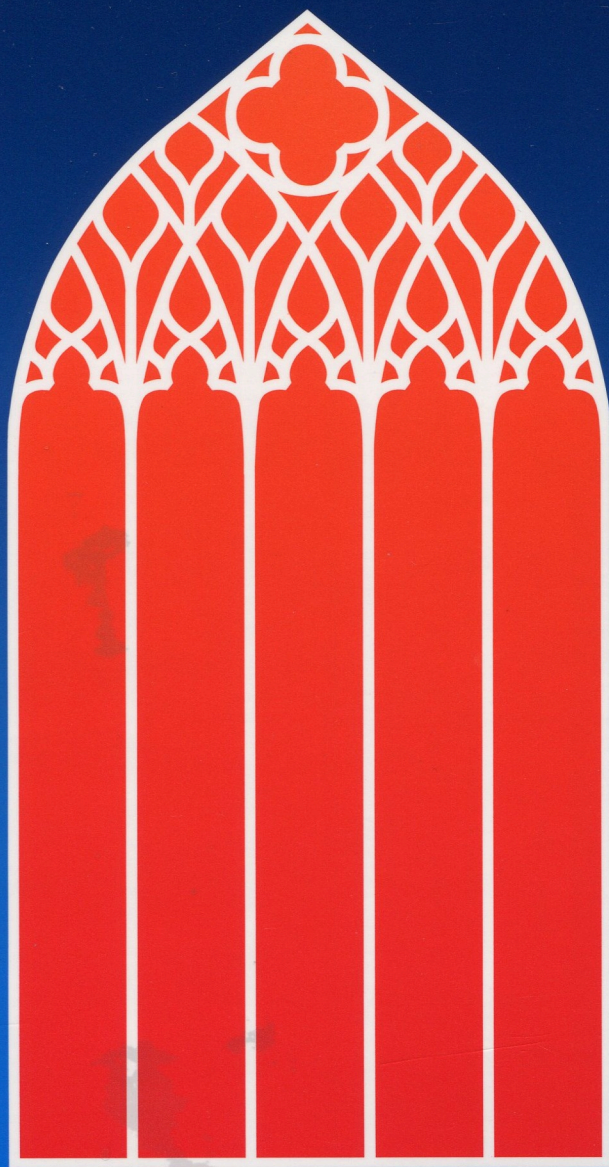
REVIEWS

- Daniel Walker Howe. *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815–1848* *John C. Thomas*, 208
- Vern Grosvenor Swanson. *Dynasty of the Holy Grail: Mormonism's Sacred Bloodline* *Scot Denhalter*, 213
- Susan Arrington Madsen. *The Second Rescue: The Story of the Spiritual Rescue of the Willie and Martin Handcart Pioneers* *Polly Aird*, 221
- David G. Stewart. *The Law of the Harvest: Practical Principles of Effective Missionary Work* *Henri Gooren*, 228
- Jeffery E. Sells. *God and Country: Politics in Utah* *Cheryll Lynn May*, 231
- Laurie F. Maffly-Kipp and Reid L. Neilson, eds. *Proclamation to the People: Nineteenth-Century Mormonism and the Pacific Basin Frontier* *Kenneth Baldridge*, 234
- Kip Sperry. *A Guide to Mormon History Sources* *Erin Jennings*, 239
- Linda Wilcox DeSimone, ed. *Fanny Stenhouse's Exposé of Polygamy: A Lady's Life among the Mormons* *Jennifer Reeder*, 241
- William D. Russell, ed. *Homosexual Saints: The Community of Christ Experience* *John D. Gustav-Wrathall*, 245
- Philip Jenkins. *Mystics and Messiahs: Cults and New Religions in American History* *Richard Lyman Bushman*, 250
- Frederick Harold Swanson. *Dave Rust: A Life in the Canyons* *J. Sherman Feher*, 253
- Rand H. Packer. *A Lion and a Lamb* *Susan L. Fales*, 257
- Robert C. Freeman, ed. *Nineteenth-Century Saints at War* *Curtis R. Allen*, 260
- Richard Lyman Bushman. *Mormonism: A Very Short Introduction* *Edward Leo Lyman*, 265
- Amy Oaks Long, David J. Farr, and Susan Easton Black. *Lorin Farr: Mormon Statesman* *Linda Lindstrom*, 269

BOOK NOTICES

- George W. Givens. *The Language of the Mormon Pioneers*, 272
- Michael B. Oren. *Power, Faith, and Fantasy: America in the Middle East, 1776 to the Present*, 272
- John R. Llewellyn. *Polygamy under Attack: From Tom Green to Brian David Mitchell*, 275
- Kathryn R. Abajian. *First Sight of the Desert: Discovering the Art of Ella Peacock*, 276
- Max E. Robinson and Clay M. Robinson. *Echoes from the Cliffs of Capitol Reef National Park*, 277
- William Taylor. *Rescued by Mao*, 278
- Vione Schow. *Phay Vanneth: Dead or Alive?*, 279

JOURNAL OF MORMON HISTORY



WINTER 2009

JOURNAL OF
MORMON HISTORY

WINTER 2009

CORRECTION: Our thanks to the readers who supplied some additional information for Irene M. Bates, "The Wives of the Patriarchs," 34, no. 3 (Summer 2008): 85–109. The death date for Clarissa Smith (p. 98 note 37) is February 14, 1854. Also, Patriarch Joseph F. Smith II was the son of Hyrum Mack Smith, eldest son of President Joseph F. Smith. Thus, he was the nephew (not the half-brother) of President Joseph Fielding Smith.

Mission Statement of the Mormon History Association

The Mormon History Association is an independent organization dedicated to the study and understanding of all aspects of Mormon history. We welcome all who are interested in the Mormon past, irrespective of religious affiliation, academic training, or world location. We promote our goals through scholarly research, conferences, awards, and publications.

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

Articles appearing in this journal are abstracted and indexed in *Historical Abstracts and America: History and Life*, published by ABC-CLIO, and in *Religion Index One: Periodicals*, published by the American Theological Library Association.

© 2009 Mormon History Association
ISSN 0194-7342

Copies of articles in this journal may be made for teaching and research purposes free of charge and without securing permission, as permitted by Sections 107 and 108 of the U.S. Copyright Law. For all other purposes, permission must be obtained from the author. The Mormon History Association assumes no responsibility for contributors' statements of fact or opinion.

Staff of the Journal of Mormon History

Editor: Lavina Fielding Anderson

Executive Committee: Lavina Fielding Anderson, Sherilyn Cox Bennion, Breck England, G. Kevin Jones, Jennifer L. Lund, Carol Cornwall Madsen, Kahlile B. Mehr, Patricia Lyn Scott

Editorial Staff: Elizabeth Ann Anderson, Barry C. Cleveland, Linda Wilcox DeSimone, John S. Dinger, Sherman Feher, Scarlett M. Lindsay, Linda Lindstrom, Craig Livingston, H. Michael Marquardt, Stephen R. Moss, Jerilyn Wakefield

Editorial Manager: Patricia Lyn Scott

Book Review Editor: Tom Kimball

Assistant Review Editor: Linda Wilcox DeSimone

Indexer: Marjorie Newton

Business Manager: G. Kevin Jones

Composer: Brent Corcoran

Designer: Warren Archer

Board of Editors

Polly Aird, Seattle, Washington

Douglas D. Alder, St. George, Utah

Samuel Brown, Salt Lake City

Todd Compton, Cupertino, California

Paul M. Edwards, Independence, Missouri

B. Carmon Hardy, Orange, California

Ardis E. Parshall, Salt Lake City

Janet Burton Seegmiller, Southern Utah University, Cedar City, Utah

Jonathan A. Stapley, Bellevue, Washington

John C. Thomas, BYU—Idaho, Rexburg, Idaho

The *Journal of Mormon History* is published four times a year by the Mormon History Association, 10 West 100 South, Suite 610, Salt Lake City, UT 84101 {MHA_SLC@msn.com}, (801) 521-6565. It is distributed to members upon payment of annual dues: regular membership: \$45; joint/spouse membership: \$55; student membership: \$20; institutional membership: \$55; sustaining membership: \$125; patron membership: \$250; donor membership: \$500. For subscriptions outside the United States, please add \$15 for postage, in U.S. currency, VISA, or Mastercard. Single copies \$15. Prices on back issues vary; contact Patricia Lyn Scott and Linda Thatcher, executive directors, at the address above. Also a fully digitized copy of all back issues up through 2004 is available on DVD for \$40. Contact Pat and Linda or order online at www.mhahome.org. The *Journal of Mormon History* exists to foster scholarly research and publication in the field of Mormon history. Manuscripts dealing with all aspects of Mormon history are welcome, including twentieth-century history and contemporary history, regional and local history, folklore, historiography, women's history, and ethnic/minorities history. First consideration will be given to those that make a strong contribution to knowledge through new interpretations and/or new information. The Board of Editors will also consider the paper's general interest, accuracy, level of interpretation, and literary quality. The *Journal* does not consider reprints or simultaneous submissions.

Papers for consideration must be submitted on paper (not e-copies) in triplicate, with the text typed and double-spaced, including all quotations. Authors should follow the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th edition, and the *LDS Style Guide*. The *Journal's* style guide is available on the Mormon History Association's website {www.mhahome.org}. Send manuscripts to the *Journal of Mormon History*, 10 West 100 South, Suite 106, Salt Lake City, UT 84101.

JOURNAL OF MORMON HISTORY

Volume 35, No. 1
Winter 2009

CONTENTS

ARTICLES

- Eating Vegetables to Build Zion: RLDS Children
in the 1920s *David J. Howlett* 1
- In the Wake of the Steamboat *Nauvoo*: Prelude to
Joseph Smith's Financial Disasters *Joseph I. Bentley* 23
- "One Long Funeral March": A Revisionist's View of
the Mormon Handcart Disasters *Will Bagley* 50
- James G. Bleak: From London to Dixie *Brandon J. Metcalf* 117
- Chief Kanosh: Champion of Peace
and Forbearance *Edward Leo Lyman* 157

REVIEWS

- Daniel Walker Howe. *What Hath God Wrought: The
Transformation of America, 1815–1848* *John C. Thomas* 208
- Vern Grosvenor Swanson. *Dynasty of the Holy Grail:
Mormonism's Sacred Bloodline* *Scot Denhalter* 213
- Susan Arrington Madsen. *The Second Rescue: The Story
of the Spiritual Rescue of the Willie and Martin Handcart
Pioneers* *Polly Aird* 221
- David G. Stewart. *The Law of the Harvest: Practical
Principles of Effective Missionary Work* *Henri Gooren* 228
- Jeffery E. Sells. *God and Country: Politics
in Utah* *Cheryll Lynn May* 231

- Laurie F. Maffly-Kipp and Reid L. Neilson, eds.
*Proclamation to the People: Nineteenth-Century Mormonism
 and the Pacific Basin Frontier* Kenneth Baldrige 234
- Kip Sperry. *A Guide to Mormon History Sources* Erin Jennings 239
- Linda Wilcox DeSimone, ed. *Fanny Stenhouse's Exposé
 of Polygamy: A Lady's Life among the Mormons* Jennifer Reeder 241
- William D. Russell, ed. *Homosexual Saints:
 The Community of Christ Experience* John D. Gustav-Wrathall 245
- Philip Jenkins. *Mystics and Messiahs: Cults and New
 Religions in American History* Richard Lyman Bushman 250
- Frederick Harold Swanson. *Dave Rust:
 A Life in the Canyons* J. Sherman Feher 253
- Rand H. Packer. *A Lion and a Lamb* Susan L. Fales 257
- Robert C. Freeman, ed. *Nineteenth-Century Saints at War*
 Curtis R. Allen 260
- Richard Lyman Bushman. *Mormonism: A Very Short
 Introduction* Edward Leo Lyman 265
- Amy Oaks Long, David J. Farr, and Susan Easton Black. *Lorin Farr:
 Mormon Statesman* Linda Lindstrom 269

BOOK NOTICES

- George W. Givens. *The Language of the Mormon Pioneers* 272
- Michael B. Oren. *Power, Faith, and Fantasy: America in
 the Middle East, 1776 to the Present* 272
- John R. Llewellyn. *Polygamy under Attack: From
 Tom Green to Brian David Mitchell* 275
- Kathryn R. Abajian. *First Sight of the Desert: Discovering
 the Art of Ella Peacock* 276
- Max E. Robinson and Clay M. Robinson. *Echoes from the
 Cliffs of Capitol Reef National Park* 277

William Taylor. *Rescued by Mao* 278

Vione Schow. *Phay Vanneth: Dead or Alive?* 279

EATING VEGETABLES TO BUILD ZION: RLDS CHILDREN IN THE 1920s

David J. Howlett

ON JULY 14, 1927, LAVEN LONS and 120 other children wrote short letters to Frederick Madison Smith, the prophet-president of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Smith had been hospitalized for a foot injury and operation, and their teachers had suggested the project of writing to him in the hospital. In one continuous, run-on sentence, Lons wrote, “Mr. Smith One thing i want to try to be happy all the time, and try to keep Indep clean so when people come from other countryies say that Indep. most be Zion, I am a girl in the 6th grade my name is Laven Lons.”¹ Based on distinctive Latter Day Saint beliefs, Lons believed that her hometown of Independence, Missouri, would be Zion, the New Jerusalem of the latter days. Lons also presented an early twentieth-century RLDS eschatological vision for Zion focused on civic sanitation, personal agency, emotional disposition, and international outreach. In

DAVID J. HOWLETT {david-howlett@uiowa.edu} is a Ph.D. candidate in religious studies at the University of Iowa. He thanks Jed Woodworth, Ronald E. Romig, Denise Kettering, Susan Arrington Madsen, Susan Ridgely, Jodi Eichler-Levine, the graduate students at the weekly meetings of the Religion Graduate Student Organization at the University of Iowa, and the journal’s anonymous reviewers who helped with sources or offered critiques of earlier versions of this essay.

¹“Notes from Children, 1927,” Frederick Madison Smith Papers, P45, f41, Community of Christ Library-Archives, Independence. All notes identified as from children are in this collection.



RLDS President Frederick Madsen Smith, and his grandson, Lyman Edwards.

other words, the RLDS Zion that Lons envisioned would be a very modern incarnation of the kingdom of God.

Laven Lons and her classmates made up a large, but often ignored group in American religious history—children. As an emerging field, children’s history promises to open relatively unexplored vistas on the history of Christianity. With methodological insights developed by critical theorists and children’s historians, I explore the hopes and aspirations of Midwestern working-class Reorganized Latter Day Saint children in the 1920s, with a particular focus on their agency. This article, using the 121 notes by RLDS children to President Smith, analyzes children’s discursive interpretations of the RLDS symbol of “Zion,” by which they meant the kingdom of God on earth, as they conscientiously tried to fulfill the teacher’s assignment of explaining how “a boy or girl can build Zion.” Through a close reading of these sources, I contend that we can glimpse how RLDS children gave meaning to their experiences of illness and healing, anticipated their future vocations, negotiated gendered expectations, and expanded their denomination’s living, collective tradition with their terse additions. I argue that RLDS children, like other twentieth-century, working-class Protestant children, embraced middle-class roles that they would occupy as adults and expanded the rhetorical boundaries that adults prescribed for them. Through discourse on Zion, working-class RLDS children envisioned alternative futures for themselves beyond their mundane and sometimes difficult day-to-day realities. Finally, I reflect on how this case study provides insight into the role of children as historical actors within American religious history.

CHILDREN’S HISTORY

Essential context for this examination is the emergence of children’s history as a professional field, and its problems and promises in offering better understandings of American religious history. The field of children’s history can trace its genesis to the French *Annales* school of the late 1950s and early 1960s. In his influential *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*, Phillipe Aries opened children’s history as a field for serious historical interrogation.² Later works discredited some of Aries’s overgeneralizations, such as the claim of radical discontinuity between early-modern and modern un-

²Phillipe Aries, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*, trans. by Robert Baldick (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962).

derstandings of childhood.³ Nevertheless, Aries helped spur further reflection by historians on the classification, roles, and agency of children in history. Historians have asked such questions as: Did children experience history differently than adults in various eras? How did perceptions of childhood differ from era to era? How much historical agency should historians grant children in their accounts? How have children shaped history?⁴ The latter two questions have particularly been the focus of recent children's history. Many children's historians now argue that the history of childhood must include the voices of children, much as historians in previous generations have argued for including the voices of slaves, women, and the working class. Like these classes, the study of children's history is hampered by the lack of or limitations on first-person contemporary accounts, while literate children are privileged over the uneducated or ill-educated.

Religious studies scholar Susan Ridgely notes that children are "the 'purloined letters' of religious studies: like the key piece of evidence in the Edgar Allan Poe story, children are some of the most obvious participants in religious life . . . yet all but a few scholars continue to overlook them."⁵ Sounding this clarion call for action, Ridgely has pioneered the field of children's religious history, arguing for the importance of children as historical actors. Her path-breaking 2005 work on contemporary Southern Catholic children's first communion experiences added age as an analytic category on par with gender, race, and class. However, few American religious historians or American historians in general have followed her lead and either omit children's agency altogether or omit religion when they treat twentieth-century children.⁶

Children's historians are often guilty of the latter. For instance, in his award-winning recent book, *Huck's Raft: A History of Childhood*

³Linda Pollock, *Forgotten Children: Parent-Child Relations from 1500–1900* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

⁴Barbara Beatty, "The Complex Historiography of Childhood: Categorizing Different, Dependent, and Ideal Children," *History of Education Quarterly* 40, no. 2 (2000): 201–2.

⁵Susan Ridgely Bales, *When I Was a Child: Children's Interpretations of First Communion* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 12. She goes by Susan Ridgely.

⁶This is only beginning to change. Religious studies scholar Robert Orsi is currently working on a book to be published by Harvard University

in *America*, Steven Mintz treats religion as an increasingly less significant factor in the lives of American children as his story progresses from the seventeenth century to the twentieth century. While Mintz includes reflection by twentieth-century children on their relationships with the opposite sex and their own, he does not include children's reflections on their relationships to their religions.⁷ Mintz's error of omission has been followed by many, if not most of his colleagues in children's history.⁸

In contrast to the general omission of children and religion, several historians of the Mormon experience have begun to bring children into the larger narratives of early Latter Day Saint history. Susan Arrington Madsen and Fred E. Woods, in particular, have tried to tell the stories of nineteenth-century Latter-day Saint children who journeyed to "Zion" in the American West.⁹ While these historians' aim was not a radically revisionary narrative, they provide a beginning

Press on growing up Catholic in twentieth-century America. "Robert Orsi," <http://www.religion.northwestern.edu/faculty/orsi.html> (accessed March 27, 2008). An essay that presages his forthcoming work can be found as "Material Children: Making God's Presence Real for Catholic Boys and Girls and for the Adults in Relation to Them" in his *Between Heaven and Earth: The Religious Worlds People Make and the Scholars Who Study Them* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2005), 73–109.

⁷For instance, see Mintz's chapter 11, "Revolt of Modern Youth," in *Huck's Raft: A History of Childhood in America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004), 213–32.

⁸David I. Macleod's overview of childhood in the Progressive Era pigeon-holes religion under a small section titled "Values and Roles," while Joseph M. Hawes's study of American children between 1920 and 1940 devotes only a few pages to religious educational institutions and YMCAs. For both historians, religion, let alone children's religious reflection, does not provide a major mode of analysis in their narratives. See David I. Macleod, *The Age of the Child: Children in America, 1890–1920* (New York: Twayne, 1998), 131–33, and Joseph M. Hawes, *Children between the Wars: American Childhood, 1920–1940* (New York: Twayne, 1997), 29, 39, 49, 95–103. Also sometimes problematic in this emerging field is a consensus on what ages constitute childhood: Is it limited to prepubescent youngsters only, or does it trail into a gray area of "youth" that ends with one of the usual markers of adulthood such as marriage, economic independence, military services, etc.

⁹Susan Arrington Madsen, *I Walked to Zion: True Stories of Young Pio-*

point for scholars interested in asking new questions of early Mormon history.

In the larger academic world, a cadre of psychologists, psychiatrists, and sociologists have given greater attention to the relationship between twentieth-century children and religion than most historians.¹⁰ Child psychiatrist Robert Coles particularly has advanced the study of children's religious lives. As he noted in his 1990 book, *The Spiritual Life of Children*, many, if not most, late twentieth-century America children wondered and thought deeply about their own religious faith. While children may not have asked sophisticated existential questions, they certainly apprehended some basic existential problems and participated in religious practices significant to their lives.¹¹ Undoubtedly, children generations before them also deeply reflected on and participated in religious traditions.

The religious lives of children have not been historically inconsequential, though historians may miss this in their larger narratives, just as historians often miss the religious lives of the adults they study. For instance, Coles documented how several poor African American children during the civil rights movement used their religious faith to overturn the systems of racial discrimination constraining their everyday lives.¹² Few historians, though, have followed Coles's lead in taking seriously the historical contributions of religious children.¹³

In the early twentieth century, RLDS children occupied a

neers on the Mormon Trail (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1994); Susan Arrington Madsen, *Growing Up in Zion: Stories of Young Pioneers Building the Kingdom* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1996); Susan Arrington Madsen and Fred E. Woods, *I Sailed to Zion: True Stories of Young Pioneers Who Crossed the Oceans, 1840–1890* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book-Cinnamon Tree, 2000).

¹⁰Kenneth E. Hyde, *Religion in Childhood and Adolescence: A Comprehensive Summary of the Research* (Birmingham, Ala.: Religious Education Press, 1990), David Hay and Rebecca Nye, *The Spirit of the Child* (London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2006), Christian Smith and Melinda Lundquist Denton, *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

¹¹Robert Coles, *The Spiritual Life of Children* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1990).

¹²*Ibid.*, 19–20.

¹³Exceptions include Susan Ridgely Bales, *When I Was a Child*; Anne

place that was, at the time, seen as almost wholly generated by the values and wishes of their parents but, simultaneously, their own as the “future” of the Church. Yet I argue that children were more than simply small automatons mimicking adults or simply important because they represented the future of the Church. Children, I will assert, were important historical actors in their own right who actively contributed their own voices to their denomination’s discursive tradition. By placing RLDS children within their denominational context in what follows, we can better assess their historical contributions.

RLDS CHILDREN AS KINGDOM BUILDERS: PARTICIPATION IN DENOMINATIONAL LIFE

In the mid-nineteenth century, the Reorganized Latter Day Saints emerged in the American Midwest as one of many heirs to Joseph Smith Jr.’s Restoration movement. Led from 1860 to 1914 by Joseph Jr.’s moderate and congenial namesake son, Joseph Smith III, the RLDS Church grew from a few hundred largely rural members in Wisconsin, Illinois, and Iowa to more than seventy thousand members at the time of Smith’s death who were spread across the United States, French Polynesia, Australia, England, and Canada.¹⁴ Late nineteenth-century RLDS members focused their energies on evangelism and a largely unsuccessful campaign to disassociate Joseph Smith Jr.’s name from polygamy.¹⁵ The Mormons who followed Brigham Young declared a formal retreat from polygamy in 1890 that became firmer and finally solid over the next twenty years. With the end of this important boundary that differentiated the RLDS from the LDS, early twentieth-century RLDS members increasingly fo-

Boylan, *Sunday School: The Formation of an American Institution, 1790–1880* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1988), 152–59; Agnes Rose Howard, “‘The Blessed Echoes of Truth’: Catechisms and Confirmation in Puritan New England” (Ph.D. diss., University of Virginia, 1999), 247–58; and E. Brooks Holifield, “‘Let the Children Come’: The Religion of the Protestant Child in Early America,” *Church History* 76, no. 4 (2007): 750–77. These scattered exceptions simply prove the rule.

¹⁴Roger Launius, *Joseph Smith III: Pragmatic Prophet* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 292; “Recorder’s Report,” General Conference Minutes, 1916, Community of Christ-Library Archives.

¹⁵Launius, *Joseph Smith III*, 247–67.

cused on a distinctly millennialist Restorationist appropriation of the Protestant Social Gospel. Such a syncretic theological vision sought both broad societal reform and the establishment of a perfected community where the Saints would gather to usher in the millennial reign of peace.¹⁶ As Frederick Madison Smith, Joseph III's son and successor, counseled in a revelation in 1938, the RLDS Saints were to work together so "that mankind may be blessed by and find peace in those religiously social reforms and relationships which have been divinely imposed as a great task of achievement" (RLDS D&C 137:6a). Church members summed up this eschatological social vision in one word—Zion.

Yet Zion was more than simply a reform program. For early twentieth-century RLDS members, Zion formed the central distinctive denominational term in the RLDS Church's cosmic language, much as the term "holiness" took on special meaning for Nazarenes, or "sanctuary" for Adventists. Members wrote novels about Zion.¹⁷ Priesthood members, from the prophet to the priests, preached thousands of sermons about Zion. Youth were exhorted to be "Zion builders."¹⁸ Following early Restorationist revelations by Joseph Smith Jr., thousands of RLDS members moved or "gathered" to Independence and anticipated the physical construction of Zion through envisioned cooperative communities.¹⁹ Zion was a community, a purpose, a cause, and a dream—it was even an adjective. Early twentieth-century

¹⁶I describe this transition filtered through an examination of RLDS novels in "Zion as Fiction: Gender, Early RLDS Novels, and the Politics of Place," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 25 (2005): 93–106.

¹⁷Grace B. Keairnes, *A Reasonable Service: A Story of Practical Zionism* (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1922).

¹⁸Elbert A. Smith, *Zion Builders Sermons* (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1921).

¹⁹"Independence Makes Ready as Latter Day Saints Begin Their Great Movement to 'Zion,'" *Kansas City Star*, October 1928 in "Newspaper Clippings, 1924–31," microfilm 923, Community of Christ Archives; David J. Howlett, "'The Making of a Steward': Zion, Ecclesiastical Power, and RLDS Bodies, 1923–31," *Journal of Mormon History* 32, no. 2 (2006): 1–37. According to Ronald E. Romig, Community of Christ archivist, email to David Howlett, June 4, 2008, "Like the Latter-day Saints, the concept of the gathering continued to be an ideal of the Reorganization, but direction about specific implementation varied greatly over time and circumstance.

RLDS talked of “Zionic ideals,” “Zionic enterprises,” “Zionic redemption,” and “Zionic principles.”²⁰ Children, in addition to adults, helped define this polymorphous religious symbol.

In this context of rapid change, denominational growth, and the flowering of Zionic theology, RLDS children became increasingly important objects of attention to their elders. Liberal antebellum Protestants emphasized the innocence of children.²¹ RLDS adults also saw children as sinless until they reached the age of moral accountability, defined as a religious tenet at age eight. As actors in a gradual process of moral perfection that RLDS leaders envisioned would bring about the kingdom of God on earth,²² children held the future millennial reign within their grasp. Like most Protestant churches, RLDS adults started Sunday School programs for children beginning in the 1860s, followed by a church-wide Sunday School curriculum, and then a children’s magazine that lasted until the economic constriction of the Great Depression.²³ Such attention can be linked to several factors. Historian Steven Mintz argues that a pastiche of late nineteenth-century American social reformers responded to industrialization and urbanization with strategies to control, nurture, and transform working-class children into effective workers, citizens, and Church members. With mixed motives and backgrounds, these Progressive-era reformers largely succeeded in universalizing “middle-class ideals of

Perhaps the greatest instances of semi-formalized gathering occurred during the period in which the Church was headquartered at Lamoni, Iowa, followed by a brief institutional emphasis during the presidency of Frederick M. Smith, in Independence, Missouri, in the 1920s and early 1930s.”

²⁰Keairnes, *A Reasonable Service*; RLDS D&C 136:3c.

²¹Congregationalist Horace Bushnell’s 1847 work *Christian Nurture* is the classic statement of this reevaluation of original sin and children’s moral development. See Sidney E. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1972), 613; Boylan, *Sunday School*, 147–52.

²²Launius, *Joseph Smith III*, 170.

²³The earliest references to an RLDS Sunday School appear in “California Semi-Annual Conference,” *True Latter-Day Saints’ Herald* 6, no. 10 (November 15, 1864): 152. *Autumn Leaves*, the first RLDS children’s magazine, issued its first volume in 1888, was renamed *Vision* in 1929, and was discontinued in 1932.

childhood as a period devoted to play and education.”²⁴ While late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century RLDS members were hardly middle-class and were largely rural residents, they still incorporated dominant bourgeois values into their personal habits and ideals.²⁵ As a result, like some other Americans, the RLDS Saints idealized children and childhood. Coupled with a widespread theological shift in antebellum American denominations (including Joseph Smith Jr.’s movement) that emphasized personal agency over predestination,²⁶ RLDS adults recognized children as increasingly important individuals in church life.

Beyond broad changes in American social thought in the middle class, several key RLDS church leaders studied under America’s preeminent child developmental expert, G. Stanley Hall. While writing his psychology dissertation under Hall at Clark University, F. M. Smith interrupted his academic work to be ordained prophet of the RLDS Church in 1915 but completed his degree in 1916.²⁷ Church education specialist Floyd McDowell, a member of the RLDS First Presidency, also studied under Hall and earned his education Ph.D. in 1918.²⁸ Such study brought a broad awareness of contemporary psychological and modernist religious thought into RLDS adult discourse.

Beyond a shift in adult perceptions and programs that viewed children largely as passive recipients to be shaped by institutional programs and values, RLDS children also became important historical actors. For instance, children participated in cross-generational prayer and testimony meetings and wrote poetry for the RLDS chil-

²⁴Mintz, *Huck’s Raft*, 155, 184.

²⁵David J. Howlett, “The Body of Zion: Community, Human Bodies and Eschatological Futures among Reorganized Latter Day Saints, 1908– 1934” (M.A. thesis, University of Missouri-Kansas City, 2004), 81–87.

²⁶Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1989), 162–82.

²⁷Paul M. Edwards, *The Chief: An Administrative Biography of Fred M. Smith* (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1988), 114.

²⁸F. Henry Edwards, *The History of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints*, Vol. 7: 1915–25 (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1970), 709–11.



Howard Harpham, who went under appointment as an authorized minister of the gospel at age thirteen, is the boy standing front and center with his hair parted in the middle putting popcorn in his mouth. The group of attendees at the RLDS general conference, April 6, 1930, is enjoying a snack in the basement of the RLDS Auditorium in Independence. The three people standing in the front on the left are apparently Peter Deustcher, A. J. Ogleive, and Edna Ogleive. The young woman who is making the popcorn has not been identified, nor has the couple standing behind the boys on the left. The taller boy (hand in the popcorn box) next to Harpham is Glen Vrdenberg. Photograph, D1629.1, Community of Christ Library-Archives.

dren's literary magazine.²⁹ In at least one extraordinary case, an RLDS "boy preacher," who went "under appointment" (meaning that he was authorized to preach) at age thirteen, caused quite a stir among Church members in Oklahoma as he proclaimed the gospel in public settings.³⁰ The novelty of the boy preacher gave new power to his message. RLDS children, then, ministered to adults and children

²⁹Irene Lewis, "Good and Bad Deeds," *Autumn Leaves* 40, no. 6 (June 1927): cover. Lewis was twelve at the time her poem was published.

³⁰Harpham later became an advocate for pacifism before World War

in extraordinary and ordinary ways.

RLDS children also raised funds for Church causes. In the early twentieth century, American RLDS children donated pennies that purchased a boat, “the Ship of Zion *Evanelia*,” used by missionaries in the Society Islands.³¹ It is true that this fund-raising program was sponsored and organized by adults and that children probably donated money given to them by their parents, yet children were not mere instruments to adult ends. Critical theorist Michel de Certeau’s influential distinction between “strategies” and “tactics” helps to clarify this adult and child interaction.³² For Certeau, “strategies” may be conceived as institutions and structures of power that circumscribe something as “proper.” In contrast, “tactics” are the ways individuals create space for themselves within these “strategic” constraining structures. This may be constituted by resistance or by strategies of “making do;” that is “employing makeshift creativity to get sufficient small wins to smooth out the habitat and make it more livable.”³³ In this model, RLDS children can be seen as “tacticians” “making do” on the “strategic” ecclesiastical landscape. By navigating the structures within which adults placed them, children gained small but not inconsequential measures of power and community recognition. While a child’s individual agency was constrained by these mediating parental and institutional structures, they still manifested important agency.

The power of structural constraints should not be minimized. Early twentieth-century RLDS children had to deal with the same economic uncertainties that threatened their families’ well-being. Like most children in early twentieth-century America, RLDS children in Independence, the Church’s headquarters, came largely from working-class families aspiring to middle-class respectability.³⁴ Even the children of RLDS appointees (full-time ministers) could be classified as working class due to the extremely low wages earned by their fa-

II. Howard Harpham, “Don’t Go to War,” *Saints’ Herald* 86 (1938): 935.

³¹Frances [Marietta Walker], “Mother’s Home Column,” *Saints’ Herald* 39 (1892): 425; “The Gospel Boat,” *Saints’ Herald* 41 (1894): 615.

³²Michel De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), xix.

³³Mary Louise Gomez, Jennifer C. Stone, and Nikola Hobbel, “Textual Tactics of Identification,” *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* 35, no. 4 (2004): 395.

³⁴This generalization comes from my analysis of more than two hun-

thers. Working for the Church meant sacrificing a great deal, and these conditions of economic uncertainty could lead to unstable family life.

While perhaps not representative of all RLDS children, Mary Gooch provides one example of the turbulence that affected working-class children. Mary was born in 1916 in the Willows, a Kansas City home for unwed mothers, and was adopted by an RLDS couple, Hampton and Cordillia Gooch. Hampton speculated in mineral rights and consequently made several lucrative investments but also made several disastrous ones. During a period of plenty, Mary's family lived across the street from the future U.S. President Harry S. Truman. During a period of financial hardship, Mary's father worked for the RLDS Church as a caretaker in an Independence mansion that had been converted for Church classroom space. When Mary was twenty-one but still living at home, Hampton Gooch committed suicide, probably related to financial reverses. Mary helped support the family.³⁵ While many middle-class Americans since the late nineteenth-century have imagined childhood as a time of carefree bliss, in reality, many children have faced serious familial losses, deprivations, or abuse.³⁶ Although Mary's life as an adult was relatively secure and stable, her childhood and youth were marked by serious financial uncertainty, frequent moves, and hardship that were perhaps more common than the sentimentalized image.

“WE WANT TO HELP BUILD ZION”: CHILDREN AND THE PROPHET, 1927

In 1927 when Mary was ten, she, along with 120 other students ages five to fourteen, attended a week-long religious summer school session on the RLDS Independence “Campus,” a few blocks from the then under-construction RLDS Auditorium. When students and teachers heard news that the RLDS prophet, Frederick Madison Smith, had been hospitalized, they sent short notes describing how

dred stewardship applications by RLDS families from 1923 to 1931. These families sought to join envisioned “Zionic” cooperative communities. See my “‘The Making of a Steward’: Zion, Ecclesiastical Power, and RLDS Bodies, 1923–31,” *Journal of Mormon History* 32, no. 2 (Summer 2006): 1–37.

³⁵Ronald E. Romig, Interviewed by David Howlett, July 16, 2006, Independence. Gooch was Romig's mother-in-law.

³⁶Mintz, *Huck's Raft*, 2.



Mary Elizabeth Gooch (Holmes) in the early 1920s. Photo courtesy of Anne Holmes Romig.

they would help build Zion, the topic suggested by their teachers. Smith sent the notes on to the Church historian, writing in his cover letter: "Here is another matter which may in the future have historical interest."³⁷ In fact, the children's notes offer us a rare glimpse of how they appropriated and transformed Church discourse, as well as how they envisioned both their corporate and personal eschatological futures.

To the question, "how I will help build Zion," children answered in ways that ranged from the commonplace to the surprising. Often students informed the president that they would help their parents with chores. One six-year-old dictated to a teacher that she could "be kind and carry the clothes pins for Mother." A seven-year-old prohibitionist assured President Smith that he would not "smoke or drink whiskey." Another student pragmatically told Smith that "I am making dore stops to keep dores open." This prosaic task lends itself to an irresistible metaphor. Several students narrated kingdom-building ways that seemed to disavow acts that their parents might have caught them doing. One eight-year-old boy wrote that he "don't tell lies Never swear Go to S Sunday Don't dig hole in sod Don't kill birds Kill snake." In sum, children volunteered small ways that they could build Zion in areas where they seemed to have a measure of control.

Undoubtedly reflecting their class instruction, many students emphasized physical cleanliness as a positive kingdom-building attribute in their notes to the president.³⁸ One second-grade boy wrote that he built Zion with these activities: "I must clean my teeth everyday, clean my body, eat vegetables." A six-year-old told a teacher that he wanted "to give the health book he made to some little boy who didn't come to summer school so that he, too, might be healthy." Yet cleanliness extended beyond the physical body for the children of Zion. One nine-year-old boy wrote that he would "keep face clean keep mind clean keep yard clean keep cellar clean . . . make home beautiful." A nine-year-old girl emphatically stated, "We

³⁷F. M. Smith, Letter to S. A. Burgess, November 8, 1933, in "Notes from Children, 1927."

³⁸For an example of this emphasis more generally in official RLDS discourse, see A. W. Teel, "Hygiene of Beauty for Women and Handsomeness for Men," *Saints' Herald* 77 (April 9, 1930): 424. Teel was the RLDS Church physician, a specially set-apart office in this era; and he regularly contributed articles to the *Saints' Herald*, the official RLDS periodical.

want to help build Zion. We are trying to not talk in Church we are trying to keep our hearts and are home and are minds clean." Many students volunteered that they would "pick paper and trash from streets and sidewalks" to build the kingdom. Active, clean Zion bodies could make a clean city and clean homes, and vice versa. This pattern of responses related to hygiene and cleanliness reflects the broader American value, popularized during the Progressive era, of cleanliness, tidiness in public places, disdain for dirt, cleaning city streets, killing flies, etc.³⁹ The modern RLDS Zion was not just the "pure in heart" as described in Joseph Smith Jr.'s revelations; it was also the pure in body and sidewalk surfaces. In such a confluence of cleanliness, utopian cityscapes, and spiritual purity, the child's body served as a synec- doche of Zion, or a "part" that could be taken for a "whole."⁴⁰

Yet, according to the visions of the children, Zion was not only to be a place of physical purity; it was also to be a place of healing brought about through ethical acts of caring for the other. An eleven-year-old girl wrote that she would help build Zion by reading "stories to my little sister when I get home from school." Caring extended beyond the home, too. "I'm going to help the poor people," scrawled an eight-year-old boy in nearly illegible writing. "Help sick people get well by praying," added another girl. Many students expressed their regret that President Smith was in the hospital. "We are sorry you have a sower foot," empathized a ten-year-old girl. "I hope you get well soon so you can be with the church," wrote another. One young girl expressed her anxiety for her family's future: "Brother Smith my mother is very sick all her life, so will you pray for her." She included her return address, one of few children who did so, possibly hoping President Smith would write back or visit. For RLDS children, Zion would be a place where individuals could give and receive healing and hope.

Many students eagerly explained their occupational goals to the president. Interestingly, male students never mentioned any role other than "missionary." In contrast, several girls told the president that they wanted to build Zion through various future occupations. "I

³⁹Mintz, *Huck's Raft*, 176.

⁴⁰For a discussion of how groups may employ synecdochal relationships, see David Hillman and Carla Mazzio, eds., *The Body in Parts: Fantasies of Corporeality in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Routledge, 1997), xiv.

am a campus girl,” wrote one, “and I want to be a nurse. But I wish that I was a nurse to day so that I could take care of you.” Several girls wanted to be music teachers; others wanted to be stenographers. Even if these occupations were culturally feminized, RLDS girls could still envision a future in which they had occupations outside the home that helped build the kingdom. One articulate fourth-grade girl even informed Smith: “When I grow up I want to be a good missionary.” Although RLDS women’s missionary roles were then confined to the wives of appointee-missionaries, this girl saw herself as an adult who would also spread the good news of Zion to the world.

A missing topic in these children’s discussions of the kingdom was that of race. Although African Americans were not prohibited by policy from membership or ordination (for men) in the RLDS faith at that time, it seems probable that most of these 121 children were white. As Roger Launius has noted, during the period between the two world wars, “the [RLDS] Church appeared to become less concerned with racial equality” than it had in the previous decades.⁴¹ RLDS African American priesthood members had served proselytizing missions in the late nineteenth century.⁴² However, due in part to real prejudice by Church members in both the North and South, the RLDS Church ended concerted proselytizing among African Americans after the first years of the twentieth century and did not begin again until the 1940s. “Officially the Church’s policy had not changed,” noted Launius, “but in practice blacks were ignored—and

⁴¹Roger D. Launius, *Invisible Saints: A Study of Black Americans in the Reorganized Church* (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1988), 195. To date, Launius has written the only serious study on RLDS members and race.

⁴²For an overview of LDS and RLDS conceptions of race, see Craig R. Prentiss, “‘Loathsome unto Thy People’: The Latter-Day Saints and Racial Categorization,” in *Religion and the Creation of Race and Ethnicity: An Introduction*, edited by Craig Prentiss (New York: New York University Press, 2003), 124–39. For specific information on African Americans and Mormons, see Newell G. Bringhurst, *Saints, Slaves, and Blacks: The Changing Place of Black People within Mormonism* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1981), esp. 165–77 and the bibliographic essay (238–40); and Newell G. Bringhurst and Darron T. Smith, eds., *Black and Mormon* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004).

to ignore is to discriminate.”⁴³ Yet, ten-year-old Maynard Whetstone’s note to the Church president declared that he “would like to be a missionary & help the Black people to learn of God.” Written on a small scrap of paper, Whetstone’s comments were literally marginal. The black community living in Independence was segregated, and the Church had no plan for evangelizing or integrating them in the 1920s. RLDS adults did not necessarily envision the same future as Whetstone. Still, for one brief moment, the Church president was reminded by a child that Zion was to include people from all races.

This last example—racial inclusivity—suggests one way in which children may have envisioned Zion differently than their parents. Such differences should not be overlooked. It helps scholars get beyond seeing children as simply “sponges” who soak up adult ideas or parrots of set phrases taught them by adults. Of course, all humans say commonplace phrases, imitate others, and, at times, simply say what they imagine others want to hear—including scholars who model their arguments on previous scholarship as I have done.⁴⁴ Certainly, some of the RLDS children who wrote letters to F. M. Smith probably included content to please their teachers, just as we might imagine that some of their parents engaged in similar rhetorical tactics when RLDS priesthood members made home visits. Children clearly included information that showed how well they had absorbed adult teachings. Yet when we listen carefully for children’s expressions against their larger cultural background, and especially for differences, we begin to see children as actors with their own distinctive visions and practices.⁴⁵ Based on the fragmentary evidence from the notes, an RLDS child’s vision for Zion, like Maynard Whetstone’s vision of an inclusive Zion, might have been distinct from an adult vision—or at least distinct in its emphasis.

RLDS children’s eschatological visions of Zion perhaps provide such a distinction in emphasis. Conspicuously absent from each child’s note was any mention of impending apocalyptic doom. Undoubtedly many of their parents believed that the last days were upon them, judging from the poems of eschatological destruction printed

⁴³Launius, *Invisible Saints*, 195.

⁴⁴I take this particular argument from Susan Ridgely Bales, *When I Was a Child*, 57–58.

⁴⁵My thanks to Susan Ridgely who pressed me to think of differences between children and adults in this essay.

regularly in the official RLDS periodical, the *Saints' Herald*.⁴⁶ Adult Saints envisioned themselves as establishing economic justice in Zion, while the world would be plunged into destruction and chaos. Like the coming collapse of capitalism that Marxists anticipated in the 1920s and 1930s, many RLDS adults anticipated the coming collapse of world systems that would position Zion as the supreme answer to the world's problems.⁴⁷ Yet the general RLDS emphasis on "building Zion" could possibly favor agency by individuals to establish the kingdom over outside divine intervention or apocalyptic destruction. Second-grader R. S. Budd typified this emphasis in his statement of kingdom building. "Must drink milk and eat vegetables to make my body strong to help get ready for Jesus to come," dictated Budd to his teacher. In a similar vein, as children informed the prophet of their kingdom-building career goals, they again emphasized their roles as capable agents of progressive change. RLDS children, then, envisioned themselves as actors in a great cosmic drama. In their future occupations as well as in their every-day lives, children believed that they would help bring lasting peace and a brighter future to the world.

An interesting longitudinal study would be to follow these children into adulthood. Such a study lies far beyond the scope of this article. However, I can provide one anecdotal example of what happened to these RLDS children as they grew into adulthood. Mary Gooch, at age twenty-six, married Ivan W. Holmes, an accountant for Sheffield Steel (later Armco) in Kansas City, raised her children in middle-class security, and enjoyed travel and family life. She wrote several articles for the *Saints' Herald* and an RLDS children's magazine, *Stepping Stones*. Like many of her generation, she tried to provide a more stable home environment for her children than she had known

⁴⁶For a reprinted sampling of some of these poems, see Alvin Knisley, *Infalible Proofs* (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1930).

⁴⁷For a discussion of RLDS Zion eschatology in the 1920s and beyond, see my "The Death and Resurrection of the RLDS Zion: A Case Study in 'Failed Prophecy,' 1930-70," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 40, no. 3 (2007): 112-31; and Richard A. Waugh, "Heterotopia: The Postmodern Zion" in *Restoration Studies, Vol. 7*, edited by Joni Wilson and Ruth Ann Wood (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1998): 133-47.

as a child.⁴⁸ Further study could tease out how her adult participation, values, and beliefs were shaped by her childhood religious experiences.

RLDS CHILDREN AS HISTORICAL ACTORS: TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS

To borrow the phrase of childhood psychiatrist Robert Coles, childhood is a pilgrimage into the future. Like pilgrimage, childhood carries with it a liminal quality, or a sense of being between two worlds.⁴⁹ Like other twentieth-century American Sunday School children, RLDS children occupied a space between identities. Seen as “future adults” with potential contributions to make, they were assigned a space of real but limited power and responsibility—important to the Church’s life but much less than full participants. It is possible to argue that their power lay in their liminality; as children, they literally constituted the RLDS future and hence could not be taken for granted. They embraced the hygienic values of middle-class Americans whose ranks they would join in the 1950s. RLDS girls anticipated expanding public roles in the Church and society which have been fulfilled. At least one RLDS child marginally anticipated renewed discussions of racial equality within his denomination. RLDS children, then, did not project mere utopian visions without practical consequences.

Still, if we see children only as transitional figures and as potential futures, we might miss their contributions as actors in their own right in their own time. Reconfiguring what we think constitutes a faith community helps us see children as active participants in their denominations. Philosopher Alisdair McIntyre suggests that a religious tradition can be conceived as “an historically extended, socially embodied argument, and an argument precisely in part about the goods which constitute that tradition.”⁵⁰ In this model, religious traditions are really conversations in which people argue about and agree on what it means to be part of a community. I posit that such ar-

⁴⁸Romig, Interview.

⁴⁹Victor Turner popularized the now ubiquitous term “liminality” in his anthropological studies in the late 1960s. He applies this term to pilgrimage in his influential essay “The Center Out There: Pilgrim’s Goal,” *History of Religions* 12, no. 3 (1973): 191–230.

⁵⁰Alisdair C. McIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (Notre

guments and agreements can be both at the literal level, such as letters to a Church magazine, or through practices, such as popular devotional practices that develop without official sanctions of an ecclesiastical authority. Certainly, there are “louder” and “softer” voices in a tradition, but all voices make up a tradition.

When thought of in this way, scholars have a powerful argument for why “outsider” groups should be included in larger communities, despite their exclusion by many in these communities. To borrow an example from the LDS movement, Latter-day Saints are Christians not because other Christians agree that they are or because Latter-day Saints follow certain minimal practices that other Christians do. Instead, Latter-day Saints are Christians because Christianity itself is an ongoing argument about what constitutes being Christian. Latter-day Saints self-identify as Christians and participate in this extended argument, and are thus part of the tradition, no matter how marginal their voices may be in the community of two billion world-wide “Christians.” Similarly, children, I argue, help constitute any religious tradition at any historical moment through their participation in a community.

As RLDS children scribbled marginal notes on small scraps of paper about how “a boy or girl can build Zion” or earnestly dictated to their teacher how their acts of service or future intentions were kingdom-building activities, they gave meaning to their present lived experiences and added to their denomination’s collective tradition. RLDS children participated in a dialogue between themselves, their teachers, and their prophet for how the kingdom would take shape in their present and their future. With one- to two-sentence notes, RLDS children certainly did not provide complete blueprints for the kingdom. Yet, as critical theorist Frederic Jameson notes, not all utopian texts need to provide such plans to be effective. Instead, some texts simply “open the space into which [a solution] is to be imagined.”⁵¹ By simply responding to a question about how they could help build the kingdom of God, RLDS children opened space in which they could imagine alternative futures for themselves and their

Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), 222, as quoted in Edward E. Curtis IV, *Islam in Black America: Identity, Liberation, and Difference in African-American Islamic Thought* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), 4.

⁵¹Frederic Jameson, *Archaeologies of the Future: The Desire Called Utopia*

denomination. Furthermore, even with fragmentary statements, children revealed how the eschatological narratives of the RLDS hierarchy could be meaningfully integrated and altered into their own unfolding personal stories, just as the collective tradition expanded with their terse additions.

In sum, RLDS children participated in a discussion of how heaven and earth were to meet together. To participate in such a cosmological discussion was to literally participate in a world-making act. In a study of peripheral colonial agents, anthropologists Jean and John Comaroff concluded that ordinary men and women, not simply hierarchical agents, participate in “the making of collective worlds—the dialectics, in space and time, of societies and selves, persons and places, orders and events.”⁵² Ordinary children, I would add, also participate in the making of collective worlds. This case study of RLDS children highlights one way in which religiously oriented children in early twentieth-century America participated in such cosmological creation. In a more practical vein, this study also suggests that no denomination’s history is complete without the addition of the story as seen through the eyes of its children—the liminal agents who make the future.

and Other Science Fictions (London: Verso, 2005), 409; Jameson’s concept, applied to the Book of Mormon, may be found in G. St. John Stott, “A Conjectural Reading of the Book of Mormon,” *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 42, no. 4 (2006): 455.

⁵²John Comaroff and Jean Comaroff, *Ethnography and the Historical Imagination* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1992), 12.

IN THE WAKE OF THE STEAMBOAT NAUVOO: PRELUDE TO JOSEPH SMITH'S FINANCIAL DISASTERS

Joseph I. Bentley

ALTHOUGH JOSEPH SMITH WAS NO STRANGER to accusations of fraud, one of the most serious began in the summer of 1842. Struggling to keep his head above financial water, he petitioned for bankruptcy by taking advantage of the federal Bankruptcy Act, passed the year before (1841) precisely to give relief to burdened debtors. His petition was denied for reasons that went beyond the strict merits of the case to attack him as an individual. The chief piece of chattel for which Smith was being held personally liable was the steamboat *Nauvoo*, a symbol of the Mormons' bright economic

JOSEPH I. BENTLEY {joseph.bentley@cox.net} is guest instructor at BYU Law School, past international chair of the J. Reuben Clark Law Society, chair of the Council for Mormon Studies at Claremont Graduate University, secretary of the Howard W. Hunter Foundation, director of LDS Orange County Public Affairs, and is serving as volume editor in the legal series of the Joseph Smith Papers Project. An earlier draft of this paper was presented at the Mormon History Association annual conference, on May 24, 2007, in Salt Lake City. For a fuller treatment of the legal ramifications of this topic, see Dallin H. Oaks and Joseph I. Bentley, "Joseph Smith and Legal Process: In the Wake of the Steamboat *Nauvoo*," *Brigham Young University Law Review* 2, no. 3 (1976): 735–82, and, in abbreviated form under the same title in *BYU Studies* 19, no. 2 (Winter 1979): 167–99. I cite this second article herein.

hopes. When it ran aground in November 1840 with considerable damage after just two months of operation, in its wake came a cascade of intensifying financial calamities that ended in economic catastrophe for the Prophet and his burgeoning city. Before the legal tangle was sorted out, it produced more than sixty court documents, all to be published as part of the Joseph Smith Papers Project. This article explains the brief Mormon segment of that steamboat's history, the legal tangles it generated, and the consequences for Joseph Smith and his Church. It also, incidentally, focuses briefly on American "celebrities" whose colorful histories intersected briefly and almost accidentally, but intriguingly, with that of the Mormons in Illinois.

The story begins with a physical obstacle: the Des Moines rapids. On August 31, 1840, the First Presidency emphasized what had already become apparent—that Nauvoo was the new gathering place for the Saints, to be anchored by another temple to God.¹ Many Mormons, including most foreign immigrants, had to come up the Mississippi River to reach their new Zion. The biggest obstacle to navigation was an eleven-mile limestone outcropping just below Nauvoo. This series of rapids is now tamed by construction of the Keokuk Dam and Lock No. 19, first completed in 1913 and rebuilt in 1957, but still marking the division between the upper and lower Mississippi. Passage was possible only through a narrow channel along the Iowa side. It was so hazardous that large steamers had to off-load their cargo onto smaller boats or overland vehicles.² This obstacle presented both a challenge and a commercial opportunity to some industrious Latter-day Saints.

The year 1840 was the very threshold of what is considered the golden age of steamboat travel on the Mississippi River (1840–60). Plying the turbulent "Father of Waters" by steamboat had begun in 1820 and expanded every year. The railroad had not yet reached the West, and the region's rivers served as its principal highways. The 5,000-mile-long Mississippi traversed virtually the entire nation, from north to south. In addition to the whiteknuckler Des Moines

¹Joseph Smith, *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, edited by B. H. Roberts, 2nd ed. rev., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1932–51), 4:183–87, hereafter cited as *History of the Church*.

²Donald L. Enders, "The Des Moines Rapids: A History of Its Adverse Effects on Mississippi River Traffic and Its Use as a Source of Water Power to 1860" (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1973), 16, 31, 36–38, 69–70.

rapids between Keokuk, Iowa, and Nauvoo, Illinois, came a second obstacle: an even longer fourteen-mile chain of rapids starting a few miles above Nauvoo, at Rock Island, Illinois. Wrecked steamers attempting navigation passage were strewn along both of these treacherous chains.³

Congress charged the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers with the task of making the river navigable, starting with the Des Moines rapids. It would take over a hundred years to complete the entire undertaking, ultimately including the creation of some twenty-nine dams, locks, and holding lakes up and down the river. Commenting on the process of transforming the “Father of Waters” into a dependable commercial channel, Mark Twain called it “a job transcended in size by only the original job of creating it.”⁴

The first officer to be given this challenging task was First Lieutenant Robert E. Lee, age thirty. In this, his first major military assignment, he excelled magnificently. Leaving his Virginia home in June 1837, he stopped at Louisville, Kentucky, to pick up two “machine steamers” capable of blasting and raising submerged rocks. He made one of them his headquarters and named it the *Des Moines*. On his first trip upriver during the low-water season, however, the *Des Moines* got snagged on rocks, ironically in the Des Moines rapids. Lee had to leave it there until October when the water level rose enough to dislodge it. Meanwhile, he surveyed nearly a hundred miles of the upper Mississippi, using as his headquarters another wrecked steamer that he found abandoned in the Rock Island rapids.⁵

After saving the harbor of St. Louis from impinging reefs and sandbars, Lee began blasting and removing rock in the Des Moines

³Patrick O’Brien, “Early Navigation on the Upper Mississippi River,” in *Gateways to Commerce: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ 9-foot Channel Project on the Upper Mississippi River*, http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/rmr/2/chap1.htm (accessed May 18, 2008).

⁴S. K. Nanda and Michael A. Ports, “Snag Boats to Satellites: A History of the Upper Mississippi River Navigation System,” quoted in Jerry R. Rogers, Glenn O. Brown, and Jürgen D. Garbrecht, eds., *Water Resources and Environmental History* (n.p.: American Society of Civil Engineers, 2004), 98, <http://scitation.aip.org/getabs/servlet/GetabsServlet?prog=normal&id=ASCECP000140040738000013000001&idtype=cvips&gifs=yes> (accessed May 18, 2008).

⁵Stanley F. Horn, “The Training of a Soldier,” *The Robert E. Lee*

rapids during 1838. By 1839 he had straightened and widened the channel there from thirty to fifty feet and lowered it to a depth of five feet, removing more than two thousand tons of rock. Meanwhile, he was promoted to the rank of captain. However, the national depression that had begun in 1837 continued to worsen. In 1840 Congress ordered him to discontinue all operations and auction off his equipment, including his headquarters boat, the *Des Moines*. He greeted this order with “chagrin and mortification,” feeling deep personal misfortune at having to stop when the work was only half finished. Nonetheless he achieved great fame for “an astounding engineering feat” by starting to bring the mighty Mississippi under control.⁶

Congress’s decision proved a tempting opportunity for a group of five Mormon entrepreneurs, including Joseph Smith. At a public auction held at Quincy, Illinois, on September 10, 1840, they purchased the *Des Moines* and other river equipment from Captain Lee as the U.S. government’s selling agent. This surplus boat weighed 93 tons, was 120 feet long, and was about half the size of the average Mississippi steamer—hence, admirably suited to negotiate the rapids. It was designed to be one of the new city’s first commercial enterprises, a fact its new owners underscored by naming it the *Nauvoo*.

The five purchasers were Peter Haws as principal,⁷ with four endorsers: Joseph and Hyrum Smith, George Miller (soon named the

Reader, edited by Stanley Horn (N.p.: Kessinger Publishing, 2005), 43–44, <http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&id=4bqvh9AhTbAC&dq=Robert+E.+Lee+Reader+Stanley+Horn&printsec=frontcover&source=web&ots=zhKPbvcSH8&sig=7ZO3JLE8gnJedujtgeL8tjsN4mQ#PPA17,M1> (accessed May 18, 2008).

⁶Rick Britton, “What a Beautiful Country It Is” in *Robert E. Lee on the Mississippi*, <http://www.leearchive.info/shelf/britton/index.html> (accessed May 18, 2008). See also Douglas Southall Freeman, *Robert E. Lee: A Biography*, 4 vols. (New York: C. Scribner’s Sons, 1934–35), 1:chaps. 9, 11.

⁷Born 1796 in Young Township, Leeds County, Ontario, Canada, Haws was married in 1825 and was baptized in Canada prior to 1839, when he moved to Kirtland, Ohio. He served a mission to Illinois with Erastus Snow in 1839 and moved to Nauvoo soon afterwards. He was an alternate on the Nauvoo High Council (1840–41) and a founding member of the Nauvoo Agricultural and Manufacturing Association (1841–45) and of the Nauvoo House Association (1841). In business, he owned a steam-operated sawmill and was a miller, farmer, and merchant in Nauvoo. Haws was or-

third bishop of the Church),⁸ and Henry W. Miller⁹ (unrelated to George). They had virtually no cash; but they had no difficulty in arranging the acquisition on credit, supplied as they were with letters of recommendation from Thomas Carlin, governor of Illinois, and

daind a high priest on December 18, 1841 and served two more missions in 1843: first, with George Miller to Alabama and Mississippi and then with Amasa Lyman to collect funds in Illinois and Indiana for the Nauvoo Temple and Nauvoo House. He was a member of the Council of Fifty (1844) and practiced polygamy in Nauvoo. With Lucian Woodworth, he visited Lyman Wight's colony in Texas in 1848. Upon his return, he spoke openly against Brigham Young and claimed the Council of Fifty held powers superior to the Twelve. He was excommunicated for apostasy in January 1849 in Council Bluffs. By 1854, he was living in the Humboldt River area of Lovelock Valley, Elko County, Nevada and, by 1855, in California, where he died. "Peter Haws," Biographical Register, typescript, n.d., Historical Department Library, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter cited as LDS Church Library).

⁸George Miller was born at Lexington, New York, in 1807 and moved to Iowa in 1837, soon converting to Mormonism in Illinois in 1839. In business, he was a carpenter, farmer, builder and stock merchant. In the Church he was appointed bishop on January 5, 1841, to replace Edward Partridge, deceased and was president of the high priests in 1841. He was also a commanding officer in the Nauvoo Legion and a founding trustee of the Nauvoo House Association in 1841. As head of the building committee, he was assisted by Peter Haws and many others in bringing timber and over a million board feet of milled lumber from Wisconsin to build the Nauvoo Temple and Nauvoo House in 1842-44. He was appointed to the Council of Fifty in 1844 and the Nauvoo City Council in 1845. He started west with the first Mormon pioneers in 1846 but rejected Brigham Young's leadership and was excommunicated in 1848. He later was associated with Lyman Wight in Texas and James J. Strang in Michigan, 1847-56. He died in Illinois in 1856 at age sixty-two. See *History of the Church*, 286; Glen M. Leonard, *Nauvoo: A Place of Peace, A People of Promise* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book/Provo, Utah: BYU Press, 2002), 246; Lyndon W. Cook, "A More Virtuous Man Never Existed on the Footstool of the Great Jehovah," *BYU Studies* 19 (Spring 1979): 402-7.

⁹Henry Miller was named president of the Freedom Stake in Payson, Illinois, in October 1840 and one of five special trustees for financial and temporal affairs of the Church in January 1846, suggesting a certain degree of affluence. Leonard, *Nauvoo*, 148, 588.

Richard M. Young, then representing Illinois in the U.S. Senate. The purchase price was nearly \$4,866, and Lee accepted a promissory note due in eight months.¹⁰

Governor Carlin proved less than friendly to Joseph when he twice approved writs of extradition to Missouri, in 1841 and 1842. As an Illinois state judge, Richard Young later presided over the 1845 trial of five accused assassins of Joseph and Hyrum Smith. All five of those defendants were acquitted.

This transaction had another connection to the murders of the Smith brothers. Concurrently with their purchase of the steamboat, the Mormons sold off a five-sixth interest in the *Des Moines* to a consortium of two brothers (Charles and Marvin Street) and a third party, Robert F. Smith (no relation to Joseph).¹¹ As a justice of the peace and as captain of the Carthage Grays, Robert Smith ordered Joseph and Hyrum Smith committed to Carthage Jail in June 1844, where they were murdered. Their assassinations came just four months after Joseph, Hyrum, and the others had sued the Streets and Robert F. Smith to collect the balance of their unpaid note, on February 7, 1844. That suit was dismissed the year after Joseph and Hyrum's deaths.¹²

As soon as the Mormons acquired their steamboat, they put it to

¹⁰The original promissory note and thirty-seven other documents comprise an eighty-seven-page collection of reports by and correspondence between the U.S. Treasury Department and various U.S. attorneys, marshals, and cabinet members, catalogued as Records of the Solicitor of the Treasury, Record Group 206, part 1, 1841–52, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (hereafter cited as Treasury Papers).

¹¹Oaks and Bentley, "Joseph Smith and Legal Process," 169.

¹²The dismissal date was May 22, 1846. Hancock Circuit Court Docket Book D, 443, accession number 4401, LDS Church Library; see also Oaks and Bentley, "Joseph Smith and Legal Process," 171. Born August 2, 1806, in Philadelphia, Robert F. Smith first came to Illinois in 1833 as a harness maker and saddler. In 1843 he was elected to replace Thomas Sharp as chairman of the Anti-Mormon Central Corresponding Committee that controlled the Anti-Mormon Party in Hancock County. He retained that office until after September 1846, when he was severely wounded while commanding the anti-Mormon forces in the Battle of Nauvoo. As justice of the peace, he ordered Joseph and Hyrum Smith to be confined in Carthage Jail without a hearing in June 1844. Also, he was captain and top commander of

work transporting passengers and freight up and down the Mississippi. One month earlier on August 10, 1840, they had hired two river pilots, William and Benjamin Holladay.¹³ The complaint filed April 23, 1841 said that “Defendants represented themselves to be skillful and competent pilots with understanding of the steam boat channel of the Mississippi river.” The *Nauvoo* had been plying the Mississippi for less than two months when it ran aground on November 14, only two months after the purchase. Sufficiently detailed records do not exist to establish how many runs up and down the river the *Nauvoo* had made by that point, but the damage was serious enough that it never operated again under Mormon control.

By coincidence, however, it had taken on a passenger at dawn, the Reverend Daniel P. Kidder, at Fulton City, Illinois, about 150 miles above Nauvoo. His published 1842 account in *Mormonism and the Mormons: A Historical View of the Rise and Progress of the Sect Self-Styled Latter-day Saints* is the only known first-hand evidence of the wreck and is the first of many publications for which he became well known.¹⁴

As Kidder tells the story, he did not know until he was aboard,

the Carthage Greys, the militia company that Governor Thomas Ford assigned to “protect” the prisoners when they were murdered. During the Civil War he recruited volunteers and was appointed regimental colonel in the 16th Illinois Infantry and later commanded a brigade in Sherman’s march to the sea. Brevetted a brigadier general and offered a major’s commission after the war, he declined and returned to his farm in Hamilton, Illinois, where “he died as one of the wealthiest landowners in the county on April 23, 1893.” LeGrand L. Baker, *Murder of the Mormon Prophet: Political Prelude to the Death of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Eborn Books, 2006), 118–19, 633–34, 799–800.

¹³Students of western history will immediately recognize the name “Ben Holladay,” and it is tempting to claim him as another “celebrity sighting” in the *Nauvoo* affair. However, identifying him turned out to be unexpectedly difficult; and at this stage, his identity can be neither confirmed nor denied. See Appendix.

¹⁴Born in 1815 in Darien, New York, Kidder graduated from Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut (1836), and became one of the first missionaries to the Amazon Basin as a Methodist-Episcopal minister. Returning to the United States from Brazil in 1840, he launched a prolific career as a writer and editor of many evangelical books and articles, starting

that the oddly named *Nauvoo* was owned and manned by Mormons. Even worse, he said, Joseph Smith in person was acting as “chief director of the whole concern.” The Mormon leader, he claimed, made haste “to chastise with severe words any who offended” him, either with remarks expressing doubt about Mormonism’s truthfulness or criticizing its leaders, whether these remarks were made aloud or whether Smith “discern[ed] what was in the heart of others.” Kidder had two days to observe Joseph Smith in action and claimed to be present when Joseph’s “prophetic knowledge” failed him on the downriver trip, thereby “running the boat out of her proper course, and driving her upon rocks, at a moment when he himself was assisting the pilot at the wheel!”¹⁵ Kidder’s agenda, obviously, was exposing Joseph as an imposter, and he used this incident in his preface to set the theme he developed in the rest of the book.

So far, investigation of other primary and secondary sources have failed to mention this wreck. The *History of the Church* does not mention the shipwreck or any of Joseph’s activities in relation to a steamboat. Although the boat was damaged, apparently no one was injured.

Joseph Smith certainly did not see himself as responsible for the wreck. On November 30, 1840 he and his co-owners hired counsel and had a writ issued in Carthage to arrest the Holladays for “taking possession of said Steam boat *Nauvoo* as pilots . . . but intending to injure the plaintiffs . . . willfully and with intent to destroy said boat ran the same upon rocks and sandbars out of the usual Steam boat channel of said river.” They “greatly injured the hull and rigging”—more specifically, that “twelve or thirteen of the bottom timbers of said boat are cracked or split.” The plaintiffs claimed \$2,000 in damages to the boat plus \$1,000 in lost profits. The sheriff arrested both of the Holladays on November 30, 1840, but they were immediately re-

off with an anti-Mormon work, *Mormonism and the Mormons: A Historical View of the Rise and Progress of the Sect Self-Styled Latter-day Saints* (New York: G. Lane & P.P. Sandford, 1842). He later became a professor of “practical theology” at seminaries in Illinois and New Jersey, and died in 1891 in Evanston, Illinois See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daniel_Parrish_Kidder (accessed May 18, 2008).

¹⁵Kidder, *Mormonism and the Mormons*, 3–5.

leased on bail and apparently fled from the state.¹⁶ On April 23, 1841, the Mormons filed a civil action in “trespass on the case,” a form of breach of contract against the Holladays, with the Hancock County Circuit Court in Carthage. The case was dismissed on May 7, 1841, at plaintiffs’ request, likely because the defendants had disappeared and recovering damages was impossible. I have been unable to find any further details about the fate of the steamboat. As far as I can tell, it did not sink, so perhaps the Streets, who owned a majority interest in the enterprise may have taken it over and rehabilitated it.

This wreck dashed any hopes the operators had of paying off their note to the United States when it came due on May 10, 1841. When the default became apparent, Captain Robert E. Lee promptly on June 10 asked Charles B. Penrose (the Solicitor of the Treasury but no known relation to later British-born Apostle Charles W. Penrose) and John Bell (Secretary of War) to sue the Mormons for collection. (Bell ran for U.S. President in 1860, finishing third to Abraham Lincoln.) Since all signers of the note were then living in Illinois, Montgomery Blair, then U.S. Attorney for Missouri and later a member of Lincoln’s first cabinet, transferred the case to Justin Butterfield, U.S. Attorney for Illinois. Moving the paperwork took several months; but on April 3, 1842, Butterfield filed suit in Springfield to collect the debt. A month later on May 4, a summons was served on all defendants; but the sheriff reported back that Peter Haws, the actual principal, was “not found.” (The Treasury Papers identified the other four

¹⁶Capias for arrest issued by Hancock County Circuit Court and bail bond notation by Sheriff W. D. Abernethy, both dated November 30, 1840, Doc. 3183, Affidavit of Samuel Hicks, filed with the same court on November 30, 1840, Doc. 3184; declaration or complaint in Case no. 285, Miller, Haws, Smith & Smith vs. Holladay, filed with the same court by plaintiffs’ attorneys Walker, Little & Morrison April 23, 1841, Doc. 4156; dismissal order in Case No. 125, May 7, 1841, Docket Book C, p. 84, Hancock County Circuit Court Records, Doc. 4404. All of the numbered documents are in the LDS Church Library. See also Oaks and Bentley, “Joseph Smith and Legal Process,” 170. Contemporary procedure would be very different, but in the nineteenth-century it was customary for the plaintiffs to have an arrest warrant issued, thus requiring the defendants to post bail (November 30, 1840). The witnesses were not subpoenaed until April 3, 1841, after a Samuel Hicks, possibly the plaintiffs’ attorney, filed an affidavit. The actual suit was filed almost three weeks later on April 23.

cosigners as “sureties.”) Federal judge Nathaniel Pope in Springfield called up the case three times on successive dates. No defendants appeared at any of the three dates, so on June 11, he entered a default judgment for \$5,212—the original note plus interest and the costs of the suit.¹⁷

Judge Pope plays no minor role during this period of Joseph Smith’s life. In December 1842 and January 1843, he occupied the bench and discharged Joseph from a Missouri writ of extradition on charges of complicity in the attempted murder of ex-Governor Lilburn W. Boggs. He was also the judge in charge of Joseph’s bankruptcy case, more fully discussed below. Pope was undoubtedly the most prominent federal judge in Illinois. Before Illinois became a state, he was the territorial secretary and then its delegate to the U.S. Congress. His actions were the most responsible for Illinois’s achieving statehood in 1818 and in configuring its ultimate boundaries. In 1819, he was appointed to the bench as a federal judge, where he remained until his death.¹⁸ With twenty-two years of experience in hearing federal cases, the fifty-eight-year-old jurist was a legal heavyweight in the state; and his default judgment seemed appropriate. It became Joseph’s second financial mishap involving the *Nauwoo*, and its repercussions would outlast his life.

Justin Butterfield, the U.S. Attorney for Illinois, was the driving force in the legal proceedings to collect the steamboat debt. One of the ablest attorneys in the state with a practice in Chicago and Springfield, he had been appointed to his current position by the John Tyler (Whig) administration, which took office in 1840. And although he later appeared as Joseph’s attorney in the 1842 extradition hearing before Judge Pope (his only legal representation of the Mormon prophet), he vigorously pursued collection of the debt and obstructed Joseph’s attempts to obtain a discharge in bankruptcy which

¹⁷Complete Record of the United States District Court for the District of Illinois, Vol. 1, no. 1600 (1819–27, Federal Records Center, Chicago), 529–31. This is the only case that is not within the 1819 to 1827 time period covered by that volume and is the next-to-last entry in the volume. See also Oaks and Bentley, “Joseph Smith and Legal Process,” 172–73.

¹⁸Paul M. McClelland, *Nathaniel Pope, 1784–1850, A Memoir* (Springfield, Illinois, privately printed 1937); also see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nathaniel_Pope (accessed April 7, 2007).

would have eliminated the debt.¹⁹

Why didn't the Mormons pay the \$5,000 note owed to the U.S. government, or even appear in court to contest the suit or negotiate a settlement of the debt? First, from a legal perspective, Joseph Smith and the other three cosigners may have been only secondarily liable, and hence had a possible defense against collection, since the principal, Peter Haws, wasn't even served. But there is no record that they sought legal advice on the issue. Under the circumstances, a lawyer would have probably advised choosing one of the options above, since the consequences of taking a default judgment were so severe, including the possible seizure of real property.

Second, it seems likely that the four Mormons simply lacked the means to come up with even a partial payment. Times were hard in the United States, and nowhere harder than in Illinois. The Panic of 1837 and the resulting depression that had forced the sale of the *Des Moines/Nauvoos* in the first place had strained everyone to his financial limit. In Illinois, the two largest banks failed in 1840 and 1841, and what little commerce existed was on a near-barter basis. The Mormons were among the most cash-strapped in the state. They had incurred tremendous debts in acquiring land to build up Nauvoos and were falling behind in making payments to Isaac Galland and Horace Hotchkiss. Also, the very means which they were counting on to enable payment—cash that would be generated by the *Nauvoos*—were wrecked with the steamboat.

Third, they probably attributed at least some of their financial pain to the federal government already. Up to 15,000 Saints had been driven from their homes in Missouri. In the process, they lost huge sums of money, much of which had been paid to the federal government for homesteads in northern Missouri. In early 1840, Congress had rejected a mammoth "memorial" signed by 3,419 Saints.²⁰ Thus, at a time when there were many demands on their limited cash, it is easy to understand why motivation was lacking to give the federal government top priority.

Fourth, on May 6, 1842, one month before the default hearing and judgment on June 11, and two days after the sheriff served his summons for debt, ex-governor Lilburn W. Boggs was shot at his home in Missouri. Though seriously wounded, he survived. Joseph

¹⁹Oaks and Bentley, "Joseph Smith and Legal Process," 184, 187.

²⁰U.S. Senate, Record Group 46 (1840–44), April 5, 1844.

could prove his presence in Nauvoo on that day but was still accused of being an accomplice and spent most of the summer in hiding to avoid being seized or extradited back to Missouri, a measure with which Illinois Governor Thomas Carlin was cooperating.

Fifth, and perhaps most significantly, Joseph and Hyrum had just filed for bankruptcy. If their petition had been successful, the steamboat debt and all of their other financial obligations would have been discharged.²¹ However, Joseph's petition was denied, leading to his third financial disaster in Illinois connected with the steamboat obligation.

Declaring bankruptcy was a brand-new option in American finance. To help relieve debtors from the nationwide depression that had begun with the Panic of 1837, Congress on August 19, 1841, passed a bankruptcy act that became effective on February 1, 1842. It was the first bankruptcy law in the United States that permitted a debtor to file a voluntary petition and thereby discharge all his debts by listing and then surrendering virtually all of his assets.²² (Wearing apparel and necessary household articles of debtor's family not exceeding \$300 in value were exempt.) A court-appointed trustee or "assignee" would then take title and liquidate these assets and pay his creditors according to a set of priorities specified in the act. Appropriately, debts due the United States and bankruptcy administration costs took priority over all other debts.

On April 14, 1842, two full months before the default judgment, Joseph and other Mormons hopeful of finding relief through this act met with Calvin A. Warren. He was a Quincy lawyer who had just successfully filed his own petition for bankruptcy and was becoming a leader in the bankruptcy business. (Later Warren helped to defend those persons accused of murdering the Smiths.) Joseph Sr. had been jailed for debt in New York, so Joseph Jr. knew how oppressive debt could become. He expressed some doubt about the new law: "The justice or injustice of such a principle in law, I leave for them who made it, the United States."²³ Although it was difficult to disentangle Joseph's personal debt from debts incurred on the Church's behalf, when he added them up, his obligations amounted to just over

²¹Bankruptcy Act of 1841, chap. 9, 5 Stat., 440-49. See Oaks and Bentley, "Joseph Smith and Legal Process," 173-77.

²²Ibid, 177.

²³*History of the Church*, 4:594.

\$73,000.²⁴ But ultimately he decided to avail himself of the relief promised by this federal law. Not only had he suffered as heavily as anyone, but some of those owing him debts were in turn declaring their own bankruptcy. Then on April 18, Joseph rode to Carthage with Hyrum, his clerk, Willard Richards, and nine other hopeful petitioners to file with the clerk of the Hancock County Circuit Court on behalf of the federal District Court in Springfield. The steamboat debt was the first one listed and, after his death, became the second largest debt in his estate. (The largest debt was owed to Horace R. Hotchkiss & Co. of New York, the real estate firm from which the Church and Joseph had purchased most of the land for Mormon settlement.) The petition listed assets of nearly \$20,000 but, as noted above, his debts were more than treble that sum.²⁵

Just three weeks after Joseph applied for bankruptcy, the U.S. Treasury Department issued a circular officially discouraging U.S. Attorneys from opposing any bankruptcy applications, a measure in keeping with the act's intention of supplying debt relief. Although the Bankruptcy Act of 1841 was repealed March 1843, the U.S. District Court Clerk for Illinois reported that no bankruptcy discharges had been refused by any court and that only eight of the 1,433 applications had been opposed in Illinois. The low figure was not unusual, as nationally only 765 debtors were refused a discharge of their obligations for any reason, with only thirty refused due to fraud.²⁶ But Joseph and Hyrum Smith were two of the eight who were opposed in Illinois.

²⁴The bankruptcy petition itself has never been found, but see the complete schedule of Joseph's debts, apparently prepared for filing his petition in bankruptcy, in Fawn M. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History: The Life of Joseph Smith, the Mormon Prophet*, 2d ed. rev. (1945; New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971), 266.

²⁵Oaks and Bentley, "Joseph Smith and Legal Process," 177-80. The other nine who filed for bankruptcy at the same time were not involved in the *Nauvoo* case: Samuel H. Smith, Jared Carter, Elias Higbee, John P. Green, Henry Sherwood, Reynolds Cahoon, Vinson Knight, Arthur Morrison and George Morey. *The Wasp*, May 7, 1842, 3/2-4 (page/columns).

²⁶Status report from James F. Owings, Illinois District Court clerk responding to request from Daniel Webster, U.S. Secretary of State, January 3, 1843, in 2 Sen. Exec. Doc. No. 19, 27th Cong., 3d Sess. 173-74 (1842-43); Oaks and Bentley, "Joseph Smith and Legal Process," 180. In practice there were few protections for creditors and unlimited opportunities for fraud by

Treasury Solicitor Charles B. Penrose authorized Justin Butterfield to “take the necessary steps” to oppose them.²⁷ On October 1, Butterfield filed formal objections to discharge both Smith petitions in the Springfield federal court. Penrose and Robert E. Lee were determined that the steamboat debt must be paid.

Opposition was largely based on a series of letters John C. Bennett had published in the Springfield, Illinois, *Sangamo Journal*. Starting the same month that Judge Pope issued the default judgment against Joseph Smith and others for nonpayment of the steamboat debt, Bennett launched a wide range of accusations against Joseph Smith, which Butterfield cited in his letters to the Treasury Solicitor.²⁸ John C. Bennett, a mercurial and charismatic entrepreneur, had swept into Nauvoo in September 1840 and had risen meteorically in Joseph Smith’s favor and civic responsibility. By January 1841, he was mayor of Nauvoo and assistant president of the Church. But by late June 1842, he had been excommunicated for adultery and was launched on his new career as exposé writer and lecturer. Although his letters to the *Sangamo Journal* are best known for the early publicity Bennett gave to the secret practice of polygamy, in his July 4, 1842, letter, he also accused Joseph of hiding assets from his creditors and fraudulently conveying property by recording deeds after the law was passed. (Most of the criminal charges against Joseph Smith were some version of fraud or disorderly conduct.)

Butterfield took Bennett’s claims seriously, even going to Nauvoo and Carthage in September 1842 to examine land records. On October 11, he wrote to the Solicitor of Treasury that he had found enough conveyances to sustain Bennett’s accusations of fraud and reported that he had successfully blocked Joseph’s bankruptcy petition at the court hearing on October 1. However, Judge Nathaniel Pope ordered these cases to be set over for further hearings in Spring-

debtors, leading to a hasty repeal of the law only one year after its effective date, on March 3, 1843. *Ibid.*, 189.

²⁷Penrose, Letter to Justin Butterfield, August 12, 1842, Treasury Papers. See also Oaks and Bentley, “Joseph Smith and Legal Process,” 180–82.

²⁸John C. Bennett, Letter to the Editor, *Sangamo Journal*, July 9, 1842, 2/6–7 and July 15, 1842, 2/6–7; Justin Butterfield, Letter to Charles B. Penrose, Solicitor of the Treasury, August 2, 1842, Treasury Papers. See also Oaks and Bentley, “Joseph Smith and Legal Process,” 180–85.

field on December 15.²⁹

There is considerable reason to believe that Butterfield's objections to discharge could have been overcome if Joseph had had better legal counsel. The bankruptcy law said that a deed would be "utterly void" if made "in contemplation of bankruptcy," as that would constitute a fraud. The government had the burden to prove that the debtor had been contemplating bankruptcy when making the deed. The law also said that any conveyance made "more than two months before the petition is filed" was presumed to be valid and legal.

The main deed in question was a huge transfer of 239 town lots in Nauvoo (about 300 acres) which Joseph as an individual made to himself as trustee for the Church. That deed of transfer was signed and notarized on October 5, 1841, well before the law's effective date of February 1, 1842, and well outside the two-month presumption period. However, the deed was not recorded in Carthage until April 18, the same day Joseph filed for bankruptcy. Bennett claimed that it was signed just before the filing, then fraudulently backdated just before it was filed. If this accusation was true, then the deed would have been "deemed utterly void."³⁰

Neither Bennett nor Butterfield gave any evidence to support the charge of fictitious backdating. In fact, there is substantial contrary evidence. First, the October 5, 1841, deed on its face contains sworn statements signed in Nauvoo by two witnesses—Willard Richards and Ebenezer Robinson, an authorized justice of the peace and notary—that the deed was in fact signed on that date.³¹ Second, perfectly valid deeds were often not officially recorded for long periods of time. That was particularly true because Nauvoo did not have a Registry of Deeds until March 10, 1842,³² and city clerks could not record deeds. Third, during the six months between the signing of the deed and its recording in Carthage, there is no record that Joseph vis-

²⁹Justin Butterfield, Letter to Charles B. Penrose, Solicitor of the Treasury, October 11, 1842, Treasury Papers; Objections to discharge of Joseph Smith under Bankruptcy Act of 1841, October 1, 1842, LDS Church Library. See also Oaks and Bentley, "Joseph Smith and Legal Process," 182.

³⁰Bankruptcy Act of 1841, chap. 9, Sec. 2, 5 Stat., 442. *Ibid.* See also Oaks and Bentley, "Joseph Smith and Legal Process," 176, 182–84.

³¹In 1976 this deed was in Box 4, fd. 7, LDS Church Library. See Oaks and Bentley, "Joseph Smith and Legal Process," 176.

³²Even after the Nauvoo registry was established on March 10, 1842,

ited Carthage. Therefore, he would have had no opportunity to register the deed there without making a special trip on horseback, and at least four of the months would have had notoriously unpleasant weather. Finally, October 5 was the logical date for the deed. It was the last day of LDS General Conference, at which the Quorum of the Twelve had agreed that Joseph should separate Church property from his own assets and convey to his own ownership enough Church property to support his family.³³

Butterfield successfully opposed both Joseph and Hyrum's attempts to be discharged in bankruptcy, but the case was put over to December 15. Once again, Butterfield assured his superiors in Washington, D.C., that he would defeat Joseph Smith's application by causing the allegedly fraudulent conveyances to be set aside, then executing the expected judgment against Joseph's assets. On December 15, however, Butterfield permitted Hyrum to be discharged in bankruptcy and recommended approval of a proposal made by Joseph's representatives in Springfield to settle the entire debt to the United States on the following terms: The note would be paid off in four equal annual installments, secured by a mortgage on real property worth double the amount of the debt.

Why such a change of heart? Because by then Butterfield had become Joseph's own lawyer! Soon after the October 1 hearings, Joseph Smith's attorney, Calvin A. Warren, and Joseph's counselor, Sidney Rigdon, engaged Butterfield to oppose Missouri's efforts to extradite Joseph back to that state for the Boggs shooting. Butterfield then persuaded Thomas Ford, the newly elected governor who had just taken office on December 8, 1842, to countermand his predecessor's approval of the extradition and to support Joseph's position. On Butterfield's advice Joseph had himself arrested in Nauvoo on December 26, 1842, and the case was successfully tried in Springfield on January 4–5, 1843 before the same Judge Pope in charge of Joseph's bankruptcy matter. In a highly notable habeas corpus decision, Judge Pope granted Joseph a complete release from the extradition or

it was still the normal practice to record them in the county office in Carthage, as only two deeds were recorded in Nauvoo before Joseph's April 18, 1842, recording in Carthage. See Nauvoo No. 02432R, LDS Church Library, Salt Lake City.

³³*History of the Church*, 4:412–13, 427; Oaks and Bentley, "Joseph Smith and Legal Process," 184–85.

der.³⁴ Obviously, conflict of interest rules (to the extent that they existed at all) were different then. A modern attorney would not have taken the extradition case, since that would have been contrary to the best interest of Butterfield's existing client (the United States).

To add to these ironies, Joseph paid Butterfield's fee of \$500 with only \$50 in cash and the rest with two notes, which Butterfield willingly accepted, thereby evidencing some respect for Joseph's financial integrity.³⁵ When Butterfield inquired of Penrose whether these terms were acceptable, Penrose made a prompt counteroffer on January 11, 1843, to Butterfield. Joseph must pay one third of the debt in cash and the remainder in three equal annual installments, to be secured by the same property initially proposed to Butterfield.³⁶ It is unclear whether Butterfield ever received this letter, since he sent a second inquiry to the Treasury Solicitor on May 25, 1843.³⁷ There is no record of any further communication on this subject; and on June 27, 1844, Joseph and Hyrum were murdered at Carthage Jail.³⁸ For the moment it appeared that efforts to collect the steamboat debt or to conclude the bankruptcy matter had passed into history. But this

³⁴Oaks and Bentley, "Joseph Smith and Legal Process," 187-88; *History of the Church*, 5:173-79.

³⁵*History of the Church*, 5:232.

³⁶Charles B. Penrose, Solicitor of the Treasury, Letter to Justin Butterfield, January 11, 1843, Treasury Papers; see also Oaks and Bentley, "Joseph Smith and Legal Process," 188.

³⁷Justin Butterfield to Charles B. Penrose, Solicitor of the Treasury, May 25, 1843, in *Treasury Papers*; Oaks and Bentley, "Joseph Smith and Legal Process," 188.

³⁸For an account of the murder and subsequent trial of the accused assassins, see Dallin H. Oaks and Marvin S. Hill, *Carthage Conspiracy: The Trial of the Accused Assassins of Joseph Smith* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1975). Joseph Smith and Justin Butterfield did have several cordial subsequent communications on other subjects. For example, on March 19 and April 2, 1843, Joseph exchanged letters with Butterfield concerning the incarceration of Orrin Porter Rockwell, who was held in a Missouri jail for allegedly shooting ex-Governor Boggs. *History of the Church*, 5:303, 308, 326. Butterfield also visited Nauvoo in October 1843, when Joseph spent considerable time "preparing some legal papers," then "riding and chatting" with Butterfield. *Ibid.*, 6:45-46. Joseph sent letters to Butterfield on other matters in January and May 1844. *Ibid.*, 6:179, 406.

was not to be the final conclusion.³⁹

It was the same unpaid steamboat debt that wrecked Joseph's efforts to be discharged in bankruptcy in 1842 that ultimately encumbered his estate after his death. In July 1844 Joseph's widow, Emma Smith, was appointed to administer the estate. However, she was six months pregnant and soon failed to post the bond required by the court. On September 19 the court revoked her authority as the estate administrator and appointed a Mormon creditor of the estate named Joseph W. Coolidge to replace her.⁴⁰ During his four-year administration, Coolidge sold all the liquid personal property, realizing approxi-

³⁹Five weeks after the martyrdom, Justin Butterfield included the following cryptic entry in his report to Penrose of the June 1844 term of the District Court: "I defeated Joseph Smith the Mormon Prophet from obtaining the benefit of the Bankrupt Act." He also stated that he would next travel to Quincy to gather further evidence and then file a bill in chancery against the assets of Joseph Smith. Butterfield, Letter to Penrose, August 6, 1844, Treasury Papers. Before that could occur, however, the Whig administration was turned out of office that year with the election of James K. Polk, a Democrat, and so that action was not pursued. Thus, other historians have erroneously stated or implied that Joseph received a discharge in bankruptcy. See B. H. Roberts, *The Rise and Fall of Nauvoo* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965), 132–33; Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 266; Della S. Miller and David E. Miller, *Nauvoo: The City of Joseph* (Santa Barbara, Calif.: Peregrine Smith, 1974), 31–32. See also Oaks and Bentley, "Joseph Smith and Legal Process," 189. On July 4, 1843, one year before Butterfield's stated intention to proceed against Joseph Smith's assets after defeating him in bankruptcy application, the federal circuit court with jurisdiction over the default judgment had sent a federal marshal out with another writ to pursue any assets of the served defendants. On December 18, 1843, the marshal returned the writ with this endorsement: "No property found of the defendants, subject to said execution." The steamboat debt remained unpaid for another nine years.

⁴⁰Joseph Wellington Coolidge was born May 31, 1814, in Bangor, Maine, moved to Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1817, to Tazewell County, Illinois, in 1834, to Caldwell County, Missouri, in 1839 and to Hancock County, Illinois, in 1840. He joined the LDS Church in Missouri before 1838. A captain in the Nauvoo Legion and member of the city council there, he was ordained a high priest before 1845 and officiated in the temple baptistry. In business he was a carpenter, miller, and lumber dealer. He participated in plural marriage and was a member of the Council of Fifty. He also was a

mately \$1,000 to pay funeral expenses and the costs of estate administration.⁴¹ After Coolidge moved west with the Saints who followed Brigham Young, the court appointed John M. Ferris, another Mormon creditor, as administrator on August 8, 1848. Ferris was much more vigorous and began to assemble the real property in an effort to pay more creditors.⁴²

Before Ferris could sell off any land, however, the United States under Zachary Taylor's Whig administration took the final step that stifled payment to any other creditors. After conferring with Justin Butterfield (then in Washington, D.C., as U.S. Commissioner of the General Land Office), U.S. Attorney Archibald Williams in August 1850 filed a long creditor's bill with the federal circuit court in Springfield to collect the steamboat debt, by then amounting to \$7,870, including costs and interest.⁴³ He invoked the court's unique powers to act in equity as a chancery court, to sell all Illinois properties owned or

member of the Nauvoo police force and along with Joseph Smith was sued by Charles A. Foster for "assault and false imprisonment" after arresting Foster for interfering in the arrest of Augustine Spencer just before the martyrdom, in April 1844. He moved to Winter Quarters, Nebraska, in 1846, to Council Bluffs, Iowa, in 1848, and to nearby Coonsville (later Glenwood), Pottawattamie County (later Mills County), Iowa, in 1849. He apparently lived briefly in San Francisco in 1860 and met with Joseph F. Smith in Salt Lake City in 1870 before returning to Glenwood. There he served on a railroad board of directors (1848-61) and as postmaster (1860-71) until his death January 13, 1871. "Joseph Wellington Coolidge," Biographical Register, typescript, LDS Church Library.

⁴¹Among these bills was an invoice I found in 1968 in the Carthage Courthouse vault for \$44, filed by Artois Hamilton for costs of boarding Joseph and his entourage at the Hamilton House in Carthage both before and after the martyrdom, then preparing the bodies of Joseph and Hyrum Smith for transport to Nauvoo on June 28, 1844, the day after the martyrdom.

⁴²Oaks and Bentley, "Joseph Smith and Legal Process," 189-91.

⁴³Complete Record of the United States Circuit Court for the District of Illinois, Vol. 4, no. 1603, pp. 486-506 (June 18, 1841 through July 17, 1852 (Federal Records Center, Chicago; hereafter Chancery Records). U.S. Attorney Archibald Williams was also the cousin of Colonel Levi Williams, the lead defendant in the state of Illinois's trial of the accused assassins of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, all of whom were declared not guilty. Robert S.

transferred by Joseph prior to his death.⁴⁴ Before it was over, the massive suit named Emma and all heirs of Joseph Smith, plus more than a hundred other defendants who had acquired land from Joseph. At issue were some 312 town lots and 29 tracts of land—well over four thousand acres. The transcript runs to 211 pages, by far the longest legal document involving Joseph Smith. The sole basis for the suit was Joseph’s alleged conveyances of this land made in his individual capacity and as trustee for the Church with intent “to hinder, delay and defraud his creditors”—the same charges first raised by John C. Bennett and Justin Butterfield in 1842.⁴⁵ Archibald Williams asked the court to set aside all such conveyances as void and to sell the property to pay off the steamboat debt.⁴⁶

The judge in this case was Thomas Drummond, newly appointed by Zachary Taylor as a federal judge in 1850 in the U.S. Circuit Court for the District of Illinois. An Illinois legislator with Abraham Lincoln, he had, for ten years, served with considerable distinction as an Illinois state court judge. This was his first big federal case, but he went on to serve for another thirty years as a distinguished federal judge in Illinois.⁴⁷

Significantly, the court said nothing at all about fraud, even

Wicks and Fred R. Foister, *Junius and Joseph: Presidential Politics and the Assassination of the First Mormon Prophet* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 2005), 68, 72, 229, 251, 287.

⁴⁴Following English precedents, certain American courts were designated as “chancery courts with powers of equity.” In addition to hearing cases under the common law, these courts were empowered to apply extraordinary remedies that went beyond those usually provided under the common law if necessary to achieve fairness and justice. See Henry C. Black, “Equity,” in *Black’s Law Dictionary*, 4th ed. (St. Paul, Minn.: West Publishing, 1951), 634. Here, for example, the remedy being sought was to revoke or set aside all conveyances deemed fraudulent. Since the U.S. Bankruptcy Act of 1841 had long since been repealed and a new bankruptcy law had not been enacted, there was no clear remedy or mechanism for doing that under general common law in America.

⁴⁵Chancery Records, 492, 495–96, 499, 505, 620.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, 504–5. See also Oaks and Bentley, “Joseph Smith and Legal Process,” 192–93.

⁴⁷According to Thomas C. MacMilian, *The Scots and Their Descendants in Illinois* (1919), <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/america/>

though it had been urged for many years. Instead, it applied three legal theories to seize and sell real property that Joseph Smith had once owned. First, Drummond ruled that the June 11, 1842, default judgment that Nathaniel Pope had entered against Joseph Smith and others became a lien against all properties individually owned by Joseph at that time or at any time thereafter, taking precedence over all claims of others to property acquired from Joseph after that date. It also took precedence over the claims of any family members who inherited property after Joseph's death. Second, he invoked an 1835 state law that prevented a church from owning more than ten acres.⁴⁸ There is no evidence that Joseph or other Church leaders were ever aware of this limitation. Third, as a result, all parcels Joseph had owned as sole trustee-in-trust for the Church that exceeded the ten-acre statutory limitation were legally deemed to be his own individual property and therefore subject to foreclosure of the judgment lien.

Following the practice common in such complex cases in equity, the court appointed attorney Robert S. Blackwell as a special "master" to inspect the properties listed in the complaints, examine title records for such parcels, and make recommendations to the court on

illinois.htm, (accessed April 10, 2008), Drummond was "a patriot in the true sense, never a partisan. His attitude towards the bar was invariably considerate, dignified, modest, firm. He ranks with the great judges who have adorned the United States Courts of this country." See also "Abraham Lincoln and His Friends," http://www.mrlincolnandfriends.org/content_inside.asp?pageID+31&subjectID=1 and "Thomas Drummond" in *Judges of the United States Courts*, <http://www.fjc.gov/servlet/tGetInfo?jid=650> (both accessed April 10, 2008). Oaks and Bentley wrongly assumed that the presiding judge, not clearly identified in the chancery records, was again Nathaniel Pope. However, Pope died in January 1850. Thomas Drummond was the judge.

⁴⁸Chancery Records, 620. Actually, the Illinois law under which Joseph Smith held Church lands as trustee restricted such holdings to no more than five acres. See "An Act Concerning Religious Societies," February 6, 1835, Section 1, [1835] *Rev. Laws of Illinois*, 147-48. However, by the time of the chancery court decision, the statutory limitation had been raised to ten acres. Law of March 3, 1845, Chap. 34, section 1, [1845] *Rev. Stat. Ill.* 198. See Oaks and Bentley, "Joseph Smith and Legal Process," 194-95.

questions of fact and law. The judgment lien theory upon which the court ultimately relied first appeared in Blackwell's first report, December 31, 1850.⁴⁹ After receiving that report, the court appointed Charles B. Lawrence as special commissioner to conduct foreclosure sales after the court approved each of the master's reports and specified the various lands to be sold.⁵⁰

As a result, on April 18, 1851, Lawrence sold ninety-eight lots and six tracts at the Nauvoo House for a total of \$2,710.30.⁵¹ At the Carthage Courthouse on November 8, a second sale disposed of fifty-one lots and fourteen tracts for \$7,277.75. And finally, on May 3, 1852, four more tracts "with improvements" were sold in Quincy at the Adams County Courthouse for \$1,160.35, making a grand total of \$11,148.35 in sales proceeds. Over 95 percent of these proceeds came from the sale of properties Joseph had held as trustee-in-trust for the Church.⁵² Who was most harmed by this series of foreclosures and sales? Ironically, it was the estate and successors of General James Adams, a prominent Mormon convert and close friend of Joseph Smith. He had conveyed 1,760 acres to Joseph Smith as trustee, in payment for Adams's half interest in—a double irony—another steamboat. In May

⁴⁹Chancery Records, 643, 651–53. Specifically, the court held: "That the said deceased [Joseph Smith] at the time of the reneition [sic] of said Judgement and for a long time thereafter was seized in fee of [meaning that he held] the following real estate upon which said Judgement at the time of the death of the said deceased was a lien."

⁵⁰Ibid., 637–48, 653–54.

⁵¹Ibid., 669–74.

⁵²By the time of the settlement, the Church owned no more than a token amount of the property being sold. No action seems to have been taken against the Church, then based in Utah, to recover losses resulting from the poor title of the land sold by Church trustees prior to the Saints' departure in 1845. Perhaps either warranty deeds were not given, or the prospect of a lawsuit against a far-distant party was simply too burdensome, especially in light of the fact that most affected landowners were able to repurchase their lands for modest sums at the judicial sales. Oaks and Bentley, "Joseph Smith and Legal Process," 198. Incidentally, the United States government acquired land by bidding in part of the debt it was owed without having to put up any cash. As a result, the federal government's name appeared on the title to many Nauvoo properties, mystifying LDS researchers who were unaware of these historic auctions.

and June 1843, Joseph purchased the *Maid of Iowa*, doing so, for an unknown reason, in Emma's name.⁵³ During the public auction at the Carthage Courthouse on November 8, 1851, Adams's land brought \$4,800—representing 43 percent of the total gross sales proceeds.⁵⁴

But the ironies were not yet complete. Finally, the only claim that would take legal priority over the judgment lien was the dower interest of Joseph's widow, Emma.⁵⁵ The judge awarded her one sixth of all cash proceeds realized from the foreclosure sales. She and her second husband, Lewis C. Bidamon, apparently used the proceeds to buy back the Mansion House and other properties at the final foreclosure sale on May 3, 1852.⁵⁶ Next to the federal government, which received \$7,870.23, the next largest amount (\$1,809.41) went to Emma. The remaining \$1,468.71 of the \$11,148.35 in total proceeds went for legal and court expenses and other administrative costs.⁵⁷ The estate assets being exhausted, no other creditors received any payment at all.

⁵³This boat, the *Maid of Iowa*, was small compared to the *Nauvoo*, only 60 tons and 115 feet long. But it had a happier career, faithfully delivering freight and passengers to the wharf at the end of Parley Street until June 1843, when it was sold to a Wisconsin river captain. Leonard, *Nauvoo*, 149; Donald L. Enders, "The Steamboat *Maid of Iowa*: Mormon Mistress of the Mississippi," *BYU Studies* 19, no. 3 (Spring 1979): 321, 326, 335; *History of the Church*, 5:386, 417–18; 7:395.

⁵⁴James Adams died in August 1843. Obituary notice, *Nauvoo Neighbor*, August 16, 1843, 3/6; *History of the Church*, 5:537. After Joseph's death, the successor Church trustees reconveyed to the executor of Adams's estate the entire 1,760 acres, either in recission of the original arrangement or as a repurchase of Adams's 50 percent ownership in the *Maid of Iowa*. Hancock County Deed Records, Book "N," p. 453; Oaks and Bentley, "Joseph Smith and Legal Process," 197–98.

⁵⁵A surviving wife was entitled to a statutory dower interest (one-third) in all real property held by her husband at death. Since a husband took and held real property subject to his wife's dower interest, the dower interest ranked ahead of any subsequent creditor's claim or lien. Oaks and Bentley, "Joseph Smith and Legal Process," 194–95.

⁵⁶Emma's dower interest here was an estate for life in one-third of all real estate; but in this case, the judge valued her interest for life as equivalent to an immediate one-sixth of all cash proceeds if Emma would relinquish her dower claim, which she did. Chancery Records, 654–55.

⁵⁷Oaks and Bentley, "Joseph Smith and Legal Process," 196–97.

From Palmyra days, Joseph Smith was persistently accused of being a fraud and a scoundrel. The massive *Nauvoo* debt collection case was just another opportunity for such charges to be leveled; but in this case, the charge remained unproven. However, more was at stake than Joseph's reputation. Although buying the steamboat *Nauvoo* on credit was not the beginning of his financial woes and was not even his largest debt, it became a critical factor whose effects outlived Joseph himself. The *Nauvoo's* wreck in November 1840 ultimately capsized Joseph Smith's attempts to obtain a discharge in bankruptcy and led to the foreclosure of scores of Nauvoo town lots and outlying parcels previously owned by Joseph or the Church. And finally, a focus on this case and its cascade of legal actions provides celebrity sightings of some illustrious figures of the period.

APPENDIX: THE HOLLADAYS

Given the cameo appearances of other American celebrities in this episode of the *Nauvoo*, the possibility must be considered that this Ben Holladay was the famous "Stagecoach King" and friend of Brigham Young. However, genealogical research by Erin Jennings,¹ to whom I express deep appreciation and admiration for her assistance, leaves such an identification uncertain. Here are the main points, laid out for the next researcher who wants to pick up this intriguing puzzle. To keep individuals straight, the well-known historical figure is designated "Stagecoach Ben" while the hapless pilot of the *Nauvoo* (in partnership with William Holladay) is designated "Steamboat Ben." The unanswered question, at this point, is whether they were the same man.

Stagecoach Ben Holladay (1819–87) had a father named William (1750–1833) and an older half-brother also named William (1790–bef. 1850), but the brother lived and died in Kentucky. This Ben Holladay was in Missouri in 1839–40, setting up a tavern/hotel and "dram shop" in Weston. He had also been a "courier" and aide-de-camp for Alexander Doniphan during the Mormon War of 1838, a genuine intersection with Mormon history. However, there is no indication that he ever piloted, though he may have owned, a riverboat.²

For him to be present on a Mississippi riverboat, however, we would

¹Erin Jennings {erinjennings@sbcglobal.net} of Jonesboro, Arkansas, is the author of "The Consequential Counselor: Restoring the Root(s) of Jesse Gause," *Journal of Mormon History* 34, no. 2 (Spring 2008): 182–227.

²J. V. Frederick, *Benjamin Holladay, the Stagecoach King* (New York: Arthur C. Clark, 1940); "Ben Holladay," wikipedia.org/wiki/Ben_Holladay

have to hypothesize that he went to St. Louis at least by August 1842 (the hiring date) to obtain supplies and furs and further hypothesize that he had persuaded his brother William to leave Kentucky and join him temporarily in Missouri. There is no documentation either for or against these two hypotheses.

Trying to identify the second partner, William Holliday, seems more promising but makes a connection to Stagecoach Ben less probable. It seems very likely that he was Captain William (“Rouser”) Holliday (also Halliday and Holladay) (1816–68) of nearby Keokuk. However, his parentage is less certain than his profession. Captain William (“Rouser”) may have been the son of Stephen Holliday (1791–1824), a printer, who, like Stagecoach Ben, came west from Kentucky with his brother Benjamin (“Newspaper Ben”) Holliday, co-founder of the *Missouri Intelligencer and Boone’s Lick Advertiser*.³ Newspaper Ben died in Howard County, Missouri, but had been a riverboat man in his early days, building and operating “a chain of flat boats between Louisville and New Orleans,” around 1809–11.⁴ This enterprise provides a possible link to Captain William, his putative nephew. It seems improbable that two unrelated Hollidays would have been in business together; but their relationship, if any, is not known. Erin Jennings hypothesizes the uncle-nephew relationship on the basis of family naming patterns.⁵

Captain William was born in Kentucky in 1816; he is identified on the

(accessed April 7, 2008); Becky Bartholomew, HistoryToGo. Utah.Gov, *History Blazer* (1996), http://localhistory.kclibrary.org/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/Local&CISOPTR=31585&CISOBX=1&REC=4 (accessed April 7, 2008).

³By 1840, Newspaper Ben, then age fifty-six, had sold out most of his business interests, including the newspaper, had gone into horse racing with a partner, Sterling Price, another villain in the Mormon War story, and was living in Fayette, Missouri, just north of Columbia, with his wife and three children.

⁴Anna Lee Brosius Korn, “Major Benjamin Holliday, 1786–1859: Founder of *Missouri Intelligencer and Boone’s Lick Advertiser*,” *Missouri Historical Review* 14, no. 1 (October 1919): 18.

⁵Captain William named a few of his children Sarah, William, Virginia, Samuel, George, and Lizzie. The name “Virginia” is particularly significant since no other Holliday family in Missouri during this period had a child named Virginia. However, William’s purported uncle Benjamin (Newspaper Ben) had more than nine siblings with the known names of four being: Elizabeth, Virginia, George, and Samuel, and his mother was named Sarah. Thus, there is a match with five out of the six names. Further-

October 1852 census for Keokuk, Lee County, Iowa, as a thirty-five-year-old "Pilot &c."⁶ Confirmation of his profession is his listing, with a specialty of "Upper Mississippi," in the standard steamboat directory.⁷ He also advertised in the *Potosi [Wisconsin] Republican*, June 24, 1854, as master of the *Hindoo*, a packet making "regular trips" between Potosi and St. Louis. "This boat has been thoroughly repaired, and is under the charge of efficient and gentlemanly officers" who promised "safe and punctual" trips. As late as 1864, he was an officer of the Upper Mississippi Pilots' Association.⁸ Interestingly, William Holliday was a master mason in No. 29, Hardin Lodge, in Keokuk, in 1852.⁹ He was known locally by the nickname "Rouser," into which can be read an implication of recklessness.¹⁰

Stagecoach Ben was the second cousin of Newspaper Ben and would have been about the same age as William ("Rouser"). (William was twenty-four in 1840, and Stagecoach Ben was twenty-one.) There is thus a reasonable likelihood that the two young men were in business together. This may have been more likely than piloting as a partner with Newspaper Ben, who in 1840 would have been age fifty-six, by then comfortably retired from business pursuits and engaged in raising his family in Fayette, Missouri, far removed from the Mississippi.

The fact that a subpoena was issued for [Isaac] Newton Waggoner, the well-known steamship pilot, suggests that he was involved somehow with the two Hollidays (William and Steamboat Ben), either in a business venture or perhaps as recommending them to the Mormons. Waggoner and Captain William would surely have been acquaintances. This hypothetical scenario suggests the possibility (unproved) that, although hired as a pilot, Steamboat Ben (who would, in this case, have also been Stagecoach Ben) was not actually a pilot at all but was represented as such by William, who planned to do

more, the 1850 census shows that William's presumed sister, Virginia, was living in his household (they are near the same age). In fact, even after William died and his second wife, Margaret, remarried, Virginia was still living in the household and was identified as "sister."

⁶<http://iagenweb.org/lee/census/keo1852/keocen-h1.htm>.

⁷James T. Lloyd, *Lloyd's Steamboat Directory, and Disasters on the Western Waters* . . . (Cincinnati, Ohio: James T. Lloyd & Co., 1856), 300.

⁸"U.M.P.A.," *Burlington (Iowa) Weekly Hawkeye*, September 3, 1864.

⁹IAGenWeb Project, Lee County Iowa Genealogy, "Lee County Masonic Lodge 1847-1856," <http://iagenweb.org/lee/organization/masoniclodge.htm> (accessed June 11, 2008).

¹⁰Col. J. M. Reid, *Sketches and Anecdotes of the Old Settlers and New Comers* (Keokuk, Iowa: R. B. Ogden, Publisher, 1876), n.p.

all of the piloting himself. Hence, if he had taken the wheel at a time when the boat was wrecked, his inexperience may have allowed the ship to be driven onto the rocks.

If Benjamin Holliday (Steamboat Ben), is not Stagecoach Ben, he becomes a much dimmer figure, although there are numerous Ben Hollidays in Missouri for this time period. It is not known if Captain William Holliday had a close relative named Ben, and a direct relationship cannot be established at this point between Captain William's branch of the family and Stagecoach Ben's branch. No Ben Holliday appears in *Lloyd's Directory* as a riverboat pilot.

“ONE LONG FUNERAL MARCH”: A REVISIONIST’S VIEW OF THE MORMON HANDCART DISASTERS

Will Bagley

AS 1855 DREW TO A CLOSE, all was not well in Brigham Young’s Great Basin Kingdom. A plague of locusts that had been developing since the previous year became a crisis—an apostle estimated that grasshoppers had destroyed one fifth of Utah’s crops by July 1854—and the following winter was bone dry. An even worse grasshopper infestation returned in the spring of 1855. By late April the *Deseret News* reported that the pestiferous creatures were “threatening to destroy all vegetation as fast as it appears.”¹ By mid-May, the party that accompanied Governor Young to the capital at Fillmore “found nearly all the wheat eat up by the Grass hoppers all the way from

WILL BAGLEY {wlbagley@xmission.com} is a Wallace Stegner Centennial Fellow at the Tanner Humanities Center and the Wallace Stegner Center at the University of Utah. Utah State University Press published his biography, *Always A Cowboy: Judge Wilson McCarthy and the Rescue of the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad* in 2008. He is the editor of the Arthur H. Clark Company’s KINGDOM IN THE WEST series. Volume 12, of the series, *Innocent Blood: Essential Narratives of the Mountain Meadows Massacre*, edited with David L. Bigler, appeared in October 2008. The Clark Company will issue the first volume of a planned tetralogy, *The Long and Perilous Journey: The Story of the Oregon & California Trails*, in 2009.

¹D. Robert Carter, “Fish and the Famine of 1855–56,” *Journal of Mormon History* 27, no. 2 (Fall 2001): 95, 97.

Salt Lake City,” a distance of 150 miles.² The territory “seems to be one entire desolation,” Apostle Heber C. Kimball wrote to his son in England at the end of May 1855, “and, to look at things at the present time, there is not the least prospect of raising one bushel of grain in the valley this present season. Still,” he added hopefully, “the grasshoppers may pass away, so as to give us a chance to sow wheat late, and also some corn.”³

By July, when not a drop of rain had fallen, a full-blown drought developed, creating suffocating clouds of dust. The parched canyons, north and south, began to burn. Embittered Utes told Andrew Love of Nephi that “the Mormons cut their timber & use it & pay them nothing for it, & they prefer burning it up.”⁴ Kimball’s hopes that late plantings could produce a crop proved optimistic. “There are not more than one-half the people that have bread,” the apostle reported glumly the next spring, “and they have not more than one-half or one-quarter of a pound per day per person.” Famine stalked the territory. Even Kimball and Brigham Young put their families on rations.⁵

Young himself had to “say something with regard to the hard times” as 1856 began. “I do not apprehend the least danger of starving, for until we eat up the last mule, from the tip of the ear to the end of the fly whipper, I am not afraid of starving to death.”⁶ At the same meeting, Jedediah Grant, Young’s counselor in the First Presidency, took the same bold tack: he was “glad that our crops failed. Why? Because it teaches the people a lesson, it keeps the corrupt at bay, for they know that they would have to starve, or import their rations, should they come to injure us in the Territory of Utah.”⁷ But during that grim winter and spring of 1856 thousands of desperately worried

²Scott G. Kenney, ed., *Wilford Woodruff’s Journal, 1833–1898*, typescript, 9 vols. (Midvale, Utah: Signature Books, 1983–85), May 15, 1855, 4:320.

³Heber C. Kimball, Letter to William Kimball, May 29, 1855, *Millennial Star* 17 (August 18, 1855): 518–19.

⁴Andrew Love, Journal, July 26, 1855, photocopy of holograph, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City.

⁵Heber C. Kimball, Letter to William Kimball, April 13, 1856, *Millennial Star* 17 (July 26, 1856): 476.

⁶Brigham Young, January 27, 1856, *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (London and Liverpool: LDS Booksellers Depot, 1855–86), 3:196.

⁷Jedediah M. Grant, January 27, 1856, *Journal of Discourses*, 3:201.

Utahns were already surviving on grass and thistle roots as they watched their livestock starve.

To complicate matters, almost five thousand new settlers had arrived in the territory in 1855, the third largest emigrating season Utah had yet witnessed, but it came at a substantial cost. "When br. Erastus Snow arrived, on the 1st of this month, he came in the morning and informed me that he had run me in debt nearly fifty thousand dollars; he said, 'Prest. Young's name is as good as the bank,'" Young complained to a September congregation. Snow obviously considered that he had been authorized to borrow the equivalent of a million of today's dollars, but Young was not happy. Speaking in the Bowerly, he said that Snow had used his name "without my knowing anything about it" and had "run us in debt almost fifty thousand dollars to strangers, merchants, cattle dealers, and our brethren who are coming here." Young said men who had taken Snow's drafts wanted their money immediately, and he felt "hunted, like one that is their prey ready to be devoured. I wish to give you one text to preach upon, 'from this time henceforth do not fret thy gizzard.' I will pay you when I can and not before." Young added, "It is the poor who have got your money, and if you have any complaints to make, make them against the Almighty for having so many poor. I do not owe you anything."⁸ Recalling such debts five years later, he observed, "I cannot chew paper and spit out bank notes."⁹

THE GATHERING

To this day, one of the thirteen Articles of Faith that form the foundation of the Latter-day Saint faith proclaims, "We believe in the literal gathering of Israel and in the restoration of the Ten Tribes; that Zion (the New Jerusalem) will be built upon the American continent; that Christ will reign personally upon the earth; and, that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory." Although this doctrine has receded in importance and has no particular salience today, it was a key belief for early Latter-day Saints who anticipated the Second Coming in their own lifetimes. Failure to heed the call was dangerous. When John Jaques's sister-in-law questioned the wisdom of the handcart plan, he rebuked her in the pages of the *Millennial Star*:

⁸"Remarks," September 16, 1855, *Deseret News*, September 26, 1855, 226.

⁹"Remarks," October 6, 1860, *Deseret News*, October 17, 1860, 258.

“Joseph Smith prophesied that those who would not gather to Zion when their way was opened, should be afflicted by the devil.”¹⁰

Brigham Young stoutly and repeatedly preached the urgency of gathering. The Church existed “to roll on the work of the last days, gather the Saints, preach the Gospel, build up cities and temples, send the Gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth, and revolutionize the whole world.”¹¹ Escaping from “Babylon,” or the larger society, was necessary for both temporal and spiritual salvation; Zion would provide the only safety in what was seen as the havoc and chaos that would precede the Millennium. A sympathetic U.S. Army observer, Lieutenant John W. Gunnison, concluded that the citizens of Utah were “satisfied to abide their time, in accession of strength by numbers, when they may be deemed fit to take a sovereign position,” but Brigham Young was impatient to set in motion the events that would usher in the Second Coming.¹² He wanted to “show what the Lord is going to do in the latter days, the great miracles he will perform, the gathering of his people, the saving of his Saints, the building up of Zion, the redeeming of the house of Israel, the establishing of the New Jerusalem, the bringing back of the ten tribes, and the consuming of their enemies before them, overthrowing kingdoms, &c., &c., and this is proclaimed to both Saint and sinner.”¹³

Thus, the urgency of gathering had both spiritual and political motivations; and its dramatic achievements—a total of sixty to seventy thousand emigrants arrived before the transcontinental railroad was completed in 1869—cannot conceal the lamentable fact that the Mormon gathering to Zion was consistently underpowered, underfinanced, and, most significantly, underfed. In 1849, the Church set up

¹⁰Stella Jaques Bell, ed., *Life History and Writings of John Jaques, Including a Diary of the Martin Handcart Company* (Rexburg, Ida.: Ricks College Press, 1978), 74, quoting *Millennial Star*, June 14, 1856, 367. Smith’s actual quotation was, “I prophesy, that that man who tarries after he has an opportunity of going, will be afflicted by the devil. Wars are at hand; we must not delay.” Quoted in Robert Bruce Flanders, *Nauvoo: Kingdom on the Mississippi* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1965), 43.

¹¹Brigham Young, September 16, 1855, *Journal of Discourses*, 3:5.

¹²John W. Gunnison, *The Mormons, or, Latter-day Saints, in the Valley of the Great Salt Lake* (1852; rpt., Brookline, Mass.: Paradigm Publications, 1993), 23.

¹³Brigham Young, June 8, 1862, *Journal of Discourses*, 10:26.

the Perpetual Emigrating Fund (PEF) as a revolving account to help bring poor converts to Utah, trying to stretch scarce resources; it also developed plans such as the Ten and Thirteen Pound Companies to expedite European emigration to the Great Basin.¹⁴ But now, “There must be a change in the way of the gathering, in order to save them [the poor] from the calamities and the scourges that are coming upon the wicked nations of the earth,” Wilford Woodruff said.¹⁵ Brigham Young sincerely believed that faithful Latter-day Saints must seek refuge in Zion to avoid the horrors of the pending apocalypse that would soon ravage Babylon. He foresaw the last days as a “sermon that will be preached with fire and sword, tempests, earthquakes, hail, rain, thunders and lightnings, and fearful destruction.”¹⁶

From a less millennial perspective, Mormon leaders felt a deep sympathy with their poor European converts and sought to deliver them from the desperate conditions that Charles Dickens described so powerfully and which most of them had experienced firsthand as missionaries. Certainly the Church’s own resources were stretched thin. The concept of the handcarts was, itself, an attempt to stretch them further. However, one of the unforeseen negative consequences of poverty on both sides of the ocean was that Brigham Young and his agents failed to allocate enough resources to ensure that Church-supported-and-sponsored emigration was safe and successful. This article thoroughly examines the combination of ambition, mismanagement, hope, misguided faith, tightfistedness, and bad luck that took such a toll on all ten handcart companies.

By the end of 1855, the Perpetual Emigrating Fund had brought 3,441 emigrants to Utah.¹⁷ The inspiration for the handcart scheme was rooted in the fund’s many problems. Despite much creative financing, the plan was quickly mired in debt, which even the 10 percent annual interest rate often imposed on its patrons failed to miti-

¹⁴For an excellent study, see Polly Aird, “Bound for Zion: The Ten and Thirteen-Pound Emigrating Companies, 1853–54,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 70, no. 4 (Fall 2002): 300–325.

¹⁵Wilford Woodruff, October 6, 1856, *Journal of Discourses*, 4:96.

¹⁶Brigham Young, July 15, 1860, *Journal of Discourses*, 8:123.

¹⁷PEF clerk John T. Caine, Report to Alfred Cumming, February 1, 1860, quoted in James Buchanan, *Message of the President*, House Exec. Doc. 78, 36th Congress, 1st Session, 1860, Serial 1056, 46.

gate.¹⁸ A frontier economy as cash-starved as early Utah's offered few opportunities for new emigrants to repay the principal, let alone the interest; and as the 1850s progressed, such prospects were getting worse. During the winter of 1855–56, Brigham Young reported a catastrophic loss in the territory of “probably two thirds of our entire stock.”¹⁹ The crushing drought, which lasted until 1857, further devastated Deseret's already troubled economy. By early 1855, the outstanding balance that 862 debtors had created since 1849 owed to the PEF totaled more than \$100,000. After Erastus Snow reported the extent of the PEF's expenditures in September 1855, Young made clear to an audience in the Old Tabernacle that debt repayment was a high priority: “I want to have you understand fully that I intend to put the screws upon you, and you who have owed for years, if you do not pay

¹⁸PEF clients signed a contract promising that, after their arrival in Utah, “we will hold ourselves, our time, and our labour, subject to the appropriation of the Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company until the full cost of our emigration is paid, with interest if required.” “Emigration Department,” *Millennial Star* 18, no. 2 (January 12, 1856): 26. B. H. Roberts claimed that these terms were not vigorously enforced and that the usual interest rate of 10 percent was not imposed in cases of misfortune and if “there was anything like promptness in the payment.” Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1930), 3:410. Yet at the conclusion of his handcart articles, John Jaques wrote that the PEF company should “freely and fully cancel the indebtedness for passage, if any remains, of every member of this unfortunate and sorely tried emigrant company,” and further urged: “If anybody ever worked his passage, to the uttermost farthing, these poor emigrants did. They paid not only the principal, but the interest also, with the latter rigorously compounded. They paid it in the hardest and most precious and most costly coin—by enduring daily hard labor, wasting fatigue, and pinching privations, by passing through untold hardships, by suffering cold and hunger, wretchedness and starvation, nakedness and famine, by frozen limbs and injured health and broken constitutions and many by giving their earthly all.” John Jaques, “Some Reminiscences,” *Salt Lake Daily Herald*, January 19, 1879, 1.

¹⁹Brigham Young, Letter to Charles C. Rich, April 3, 1856, Brigham Young Collection, Historical Department Library, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter LDS Church History Library). As with many items from this collection, I am indebted to Ardis E. Parshall for her generosity in sharing it with me.

up now and help us, we will levy on your property and take every farthing you have on the earth.”²⁰ Those who wanted to leave the territory found that Young’s statement was not an empty threat.²¹

The fund was only one factor contributing to the LDS Church’s dire financial straits. “The people must know that I know how to handle money and means,” Young said a year later, “and I never supposed that anybody had a doubt of it.”²² In fact, Brigham Young’s record of financial mismanagement, for a variety of reasons, is impressive. He took an interest so keen in local industries that it amounted to micro-management; and his ambitious plans required importing industrial machinery to manufacture iron, sugar, pottery, paper, wool, and salt. Leonard Arrington’s magisterial economic history documents losses of \$12,000 invested in pottery in 1853, at least \$8,500 spent on a paper mill by 1857, and more than \$100,000 on the failure of the Deseret Manufacturing Company to make sugar from beets. Fifty-two ox teams were to haul the heavy boilers, vacuum pans, pumps, and raspers for the sugar factory across the plains in 1852, only to stall in Echo Canyon when winter set in. Hauled into the valley in the spring of 1853 and set up in today’s Sugarhouse, it commenced operations; but by 1856, it was abundantly clear that no one in Utah had the skills required to make sugar successfully. As for the Deseret Iron Company, when it folded in 1858, it had directly expended at least \$150,000 “to produce nothing more than a few andirons, kitchen utensils, flat irons, wagon wheels, molasses rolls, and machine castings.”²³

Yet despite the failure of these enterprises, Brigham Young had

²⁰Brigham Young, September 16, 1855, *Journal of Discourses*, 3:6.

²¹For barriers to leaving Utah, see Polly Aird, “‘You Nasty Apostates, Clear Out’: Reasons for Disaffection in the Late 1850s,” *Journal of Mormon History* 30, no. 2 (Fall 2004): 146–50.

²²Brigham Young, “Remarks,” *Deseret News*, November 12, 1856, 283.

²³Leonard J. Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom: An Economic History of the Latter-day Saints, 1830–1900* (1958; rpt., Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press and the Tanner Trust Fund, 1993), 114–15, 117–20, 127. As Morris A. Shirts and William T. Parry, “The Demise of the Deseret Iron Company: Failure of the Brick Furnace Lining Technology,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 56, no. 1 (Winter 1988): 23–35, point out, a variety of technological and mechanical problems caused the failure of the Iron Mission, despite the heroic efforts of its missionaries. For the sugar effort, see Charles L.

accumulated a personal fortune. In April 1855, “Young consecrated to himself as trustee-in-trust [of the LDS Church] a long list of real and personal property valued at \$199,625”—more than \$4 million dollars in 2005—including an African servant girl worth \$1,000.²⁴

Young’s desire to create enterprises that would “let home industry produce every article of home consumption” is easy to defend: Given Utah’s harsh environment, the territory’s economy desperately needed expansion.²⁵ But as the handcart disasters revealed, Young operated what is best understood as a command economy; and for two decades, he tightly controlled how the community developed its resources. As he said in 1867, “The man whom God calls to dictate affairs in the building up of his Zion has the right to dictate about everything connected with the building up of Zion, yes even to the ribbons the women wear; and any person who denies it is ignorant.”²⁶ Cooperative efforts—irrigation, agricultural, and settlement projects—showed considerable success using this model, as would organizing a rescue effort. But such a system lacked a competitive edge and failed to promote individual initiative. The staggering loss of life among the 3,210 oxen that hauled 513 tons of freight to Utah in 1855 suggests a possible consequence of this approach. In November, Brigham Young reported that 722 of the animals had died, a mortality rate of 22.5 percent among the six trains he listed. But 47 percent of the oxen who had hauled Erastus Snow’s church train to Utah were also dead.²⁷ By the next spring, “a great part of the church herd perished” due largely to the devastating drought that was ravaging the territory.²⁸ But it also probably reflected the lack of interest herdsman showed in the welfare of animals they were assigned to tend but did not own—and the loss of

Schmalz, “The Failure of Utah’s First Sugar Factory,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 56, no. 1 (Winter 1988): 36–53; Will Bagley, “Why Didn’t the Sugar House Make Sugar?” *Salt Lake Tribune*, April 15, 2001, B1.

²⁴Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, 146–47; and “The Inflation Calculator,” <http://www.westegg.com/inflation/> (accessed August 13, 2006).

²⁵Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, 113.

²⁶Brigham Young, February 3, 1867, *Journal of Discourses*, 11:298.

²⁷Brigham Young, “To Those Who Are Engaged in Freighting on the Western Waters,” *Deseret News*, November 21, 1855, p. 292, col. 4.

²⁸William Chandless, *A Visit to Salt Lake; Being a Journey across the Plains, and a Residence in the Mormon Settlements at Utah* (1857; rpt., New

these animals immensely complicated planning for the 1856 emigration.

As a result, Brigham felt encouraged to revive what he called “my old plan.” As Robert Lang Campbell, a former clerk in Joseph Smith’s office, carried the mail east from Salt Lake on May 21, 1850, his party had met a Scotsman pushing a wheelbarrow, who told the Mormon couriers that several companies had offered to haul his provisions and bedding. The hard-charging Scot “thanked them kindly, but wished to be excused, as he could not wait on the tardy movements of a camp. He never was afraid of the Indians stealing his horses, and he never lost any rest dreading a stampede.” Campbell wrote from Kanesville that one of the Mormons, John O. Angus, called the wheelbarrow man “the fulfillment of a Mormon prophecy. Three years ago he had heard a Mormon prophet declare that they would travel the plains with wheelbarrows.”²⁹

While no other documentation of this prophecy has been found, LDS Church leaders began seriously considering cheaper ways to cross the plains as early as 1851. “Some of the children of the world, have crossed the mountains and plains, from Missouri to California, with a pack on their back to worship their god—Gold,” proclaimed the First Presidency, then consisting of Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and Willard Richards. (Richards authored this general epistle.) “Some have performed the same journey with a wheel-barrow, some have accomplished the same with a pack on a cow.” Others had made the trek with wagons or carts made “without a particle of iron, hooping their wheels with hickory, or raw hide, or ropes, and had as good and safe a journey as any in the camps, with their well wrought iron wagons.” Faithful Mormons could do the same. “Families might start from Missouri river, with cows, hand-carts, wheel-barrows, with little flour, and no unnecessaries, and come to this place quicker, and with less fatigue than by following the heavy trains with their cumbrous herds, which they are obliged to drive miles to feed. Do you not like this method of travelling? Do you think salvation costs too much? If so,

York: AMS Press, 1971), 143.

²⁹Robert Campbell, July 7, 1850, “Interesting News from the Plains,” *Frontier Guardian*, July 24, 1850, 1–2.

it is not worth having.”³⁰

**“CAUSE THE NATIONS TO TREMBLE WITH FEAR”:
THE HANDCART PLAN**

If this 1851 epistle was a trial balloon, the response was not so enthusiastic that Church leaders acted on it immediately. It was not until late September 1855 that Young instructed Franklin D. Richards, British Mission president, to implement “my old plan,” because “we cannot afford to purchase wagons and teams as in times past. . . . Make hand-carts, and let the emigration foot it, and draw upon them the necessary supplies, having a cow or two for every ten.” He laid out his reasons: “They can come just as quick, if not quicker, and much cheaper—can start earlier and escape the prevailing sickness which annually lays so many of our brethren in the dust.”³¹

Two days before this letter to Richards, Brigham Young had written to Apostle John Taylor in New York, which shows that he had given a carpenter’s thought to specifications for the carts:

Take good hichory [sic] for the axle trees, and make them say, two inches in diameter at the shoulder and 1¼ at the point, say four and a half feet from point to point, make the hubs out of hardhack or iron wood, or if they cannot be had, get young hickery [sic], small and tough and turn them out about six inches long and five or six inches in the diameter—drive the spokes in bracing while the hub is green so it will tighten while seasoning, the same as Chairs are made—line the inside with good sole leather for [the hub] boxes—make spokes of good tough hickory long enough so as to make the wheel about four and a half or five feet high, it draws much easier high than low. The axle should be up high enough for a man to draw on the level—the rims should be split out of hickory like the rim to a spinning wheel, only thicker, fastened and lined with green hides when they can be obtained. The boxes made out of ½ or ¾ inch stuff—the whole to be made strong but as light as possible. They will have to be provided a few cows but they should be of the best quality. If it is once known that such a company is on the plains there will be no difficulty in having

³⁰“Sixth General Epistle of the Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,” *Deseret News*, November 15, 1851, p. 2, col. 4.

³¹Brigham Young, Letter to Franklin D. Richards, September 30, 1855, “Foreign Correspondence,” *Millennial Star* 17 (December 22, 1855): 813.

the brethren from this place meeting them with provisions nearly if not quite half way. Many of them that will come have friends here that will be on hand for this business. In this way we can still operate, and I believe successfully too, much more so than yoking up wild Buffaloes, as you remember you once proposed as an alternate.³²

Tight finances made the handcart plan appealing, especially given the shortage of oxen. However, the decision was not a clear choice between “handcart brigades or suspend[ing] operations.”³³ After the 1856 disaster, the Church spent no PEF money on the last five handcart trains. The majority of Mormon emigrants still came by wagon train even during 1857, 1859, and 1860 when the handcarts were used. Rather, as this article documents, Brigham Young chose to spend the Church’s scarce dollars on freight operations and other speculative ventures. The “down-and-back” system that formally replaced handcarts in 1861 ultimately proved to be the most effective way of transporting converts to Utah.³⁴ Mormon freighters were already experimenting with such a system in 1856, as Abraham O. Smoot’s activities that spring suggest.

In late October 1855, the First Presidency issued another general epistle announcing the handcart plan. It called on all the faithful to “gather up for Zion and come while the way is open before them; let the poor also come, whether they receive aid or not from the Fund; let them come on foot, with hand carts or wheel barrows.” The handcarts would save “the immense expense every year for teams and outfit for crossing the plains” and the new system would eliminate “the expense, risk, loss and perplexity of teams” so that more Saints could “escape the scenes of distress, anguish and

³²Brigham Young, Letter to John Taylor, September 28, 1856, Raymond Taylor typescript, John Taylor Family Papers (1883–1994), Ms0050, Special Collections, Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City.

³³“Leaving No One Behind: The Story of the Handcart Pioneers,” <http://www.lds.org/newsroom/showpackage/0,15367,3899-1-34-2-447,00.html> (accessed August 13, 2006).

³⁴For an excellent examination of the subject, see William G. Hartley, “Down-and-Back Wagon Trains: Travelers on the Mormon Trail in 1861,” *Overland Journal* 11, no. 4 (Winter 1993): 23–34; and William G. Hartley, “Brigham Young’s Overland Trails Revolution: The Creation of the ‘Down-and-Back’ Wagon-Train System, 1860–61,” *Journal of Mormon History* 28, no. 1 (Spring 2002): 1–30.

death which have often laid so many of our brethren and sisters in the dust." The presidency promised to send faithful and experienced leaders with suitable instructions "to some proper out-fitting point to carry into effect the above suggestions." However, participants "are expected to walk and draw their luggage across the plains, and . . . they will be assisted by the Fund in no other way." As this decree made clear, all who received aid in 1856 from the PEF would be required to use handcarts, so the handcart parties were often referred to as the P.E. Fund passengers, company, or emigration. But the decree also contained an implicit promise: "Let them gird up their loins and walk through, and nothing shall hinder or stay them."³⁵

The epistle took a hard line with those who quailed at the prospect of walking twelve hundred miles: "If any apostatize in consequence of this regulation, so much the better, for it is far better that such deny the faith before they start than to do so, for a more trifling cause, after they get here." The epistle again stressed the primacy of faith: "If they have not faith enough to undertake this job, and accomplish it too, they have not faith sufficient to endure, with the saints in Zion, the celestial law which leads to exaltation and eternal lives."³⁶

British convert John Jaques penned an enthusiastic endorsement of the scheme for the *Millennial Star*: "Know ye not that it is the holy ordinance of the Lord, revealed through His Prophet Brigham, for the redemption of the humble, faithful poor, and that it will be blessed and sanctified of Him to the salvation of thousands who are not too proud to be saved in His appointed way, while many of those who despise that way will be left to perish in Babylon?" Jaques, who had joined the Church in 1845, personally embraced the plan and amplified the promise of safety implied in the epistle: "The Lord has promised, through His servant Brigham, that the hand-cart companies shall be blessed with health and strength, and be met part way with teams and provisions from the Valley. And I am not afraid to prophesy, that those who go by hand-carts, and continue faithful and

³⁵"Thirteenth General Epistle," *Deseret News*, October 13, 1855, 268–69, <http://www.lds.org/churchhistory/library/source/0,18016,4976-8202,00.html> (accessed July 22, 2006).

³⁶*Ibid.*

obedient, will be blessed more than they have ever dreamed of.”³⁷

The year before, Brigham Young, despite the devastating winter that added new holes to Utah’s belt-tightening, had ordered Erastus Snow in St. Louis to find a steamboat engine, apparently to use on the Great Salt Lake. Snow attempted to comply but reported in February 1855 that he had showed Young’s specifications to several experienced engineers and machinists who “all speak very discouraging of your contemplated experiment.” The experts estimated that the specified engine would weigh 13,000 pounds, and all agreed “that if we get up the article you call for, it will not give satisfaction neither in making Salt or propelling your boat.”³⁸

Undeterred, Young ordered Apostle Snow to purchase an engine and ship it overland. Obediently, Snow loaded five wagons with the disassembled parts and sent them west in the summer of 1855 with the Salt Lake-bound “Church Train” under Isaac Allred. Underpowered and undermanned, Allred’s train crawled west at a glacial pace, and gave up only about thirty miles beyond the Missouri River and ten miles west of the horrific scene where wolves had pawed up the graves of more than thirty Mormon emigrants who had died of cholera in June 1855 at Deer Creek in Kansas. Allred’s teamsters dragged the five wagons “into a farmers yard & placed them in his care till next spring,” the company’s clerk wrote in August.³⁹

Despite the famine winter of 1855–56, Young did not give up on

³⁷John Jaques, “Emigration by Hand-Carts,” *Millennial Star* 18, no. 24 (June 14, 1856): 370. Jaques’s hard experience with the Edward Martin Company did not fulfill his prophecy.

³⁸Erastus Snow, Letter to Brigham Young, February 20, 1855, Brigham Young Collection. Abraham Smith, a Chicago shipwright, offered his services after he learned from the newspapers that Young intended “to build a Steamer to run on Salt Lake.” Abraham Smith, Letter to Brigham Young, June 24, 1856, Brigham Young Collection. I must thank Edwina Jo Snow for alerting me to the existence of this steam engine while I was preparing comments on her excellent paper, “Tortoise Race: Ox-Train Freight-ing and the 1855 Mormon Overland Emigration,” presented at the 2006 Mormon History Association meeting in Casper, Wyoming.

³⁹Isaiah Moses Coombs, Diary, August 9, 1855, holograph, LDS Church Library, <http://www.lds.org/churchhistory/library/source/0,18016,4976-4703,00.html> (accessed August 6, 2006). The grave of my great-great grandmother, Julia Ann Grant Bagley, was probably among those rav-

his steamboat engine. In April 1856, he dispatched Abraham O. Smoot and Ira Eldredge to rescue the stalled equipment. Before Erastus Snow headed back to St. Louis in April, Young spelled out his expectations: "You will attend to this business very carefully and strictly, particularly with regard to the steam engine, as I wish it brought on this season perfect in every particular, and should you find the least essential portion lacking it will be necessary for you to see that any such deficiency is made up."⁴⁰ Even more ambitiously, Young wanted to import machinery to the territory for a woolen mill that same season. He received word from James H. Hart, presiding elder in St. Louis during Erastus Snow's absence, that the mill weighed an estimated "45 Tons" and would require about twenty "extra strong wagons" to transport it to Utah.⁴¹

"I MAY BE OBTUSE": MISCOMMUNICATION AND CONFUSION

Ironically, as the handcart plan rolled forward, the Mormon leader had already come up with another visionary undertaking that might have made the handcart system successful: the Brigham Young Express and Carrying Company (also known as the Y.X. or B.Y.X. Company). Its strategy was to develop a series of "ranch forts" along the trail, where substantial settlements would provide way stations for emigrant, mail, and freight traffic at key locations such as the Loup Fork of the Platte River, Deer Creek, Devil's Gate, and the Last Crossing of the Sweetwater. Young planned to use the federal mail contract he won through Hiram Kimball as the foundation for this major freighting operation. Historian Norman F. Furniss accurately captured the scope of this ambitious plan when he noted that control of the mails would let Young inspect all the official correspondence coming into the territory, and "it is possible that Young even hoped to use the company as an instrument to control the economic life of much of the West."⁴²

Before word of Kimball's contract arrived, the venture began as a private business proposed on January 9, 1856, that would compete

aged by wolves.

⁴⁰Brigham Young, Letter to Erastus Snow, April 10, 1856, Brigham Young Collection.

⁴¹James H. Hart, Letter to Brigham Young, September 23, 1855, Brigham Young Collection.

⁴²Norman Furniss, *The Mormon Conflict, 1850-1859* (New Haven,

directly with the government's mail service. Later that month, the Utah Territorial Assembly incorporated the "Deseret Express and Road Company" at the end of its annual session. The first of two mass meetings in Salt Lake revealed the proposed corporation's expansive vision of "establishing a daily express and passenger communication between the western States and California, or, more extendedly, between Europe and China." Both Mormon and non-Mormon leaders in Utah supported the proposal, and the *Deseret News* warned: "Unless the powers at Washington are more alive to the rapid strides of internal progression, they may soon bid farewell to their transportation of the mails."⁴³

The express was organized as a joint stock company in early February 1856, and Brigham Young announced its plans to engage "in the transportation of letters and papers, and, so soon as may be of passengers and freight." The large and enthusiastic audience that gathered in the old tabernacle subscribed for a thousand miles' worth of shares—Governor Young offered "to take stock and furnish 300 miles of the route" on his own hook. The assembly "unanimously voted to sustain the chartered company in carrying a daily express from the Missouri river to California, and in extending the line as fast and as far as circumstances may permit."⁴⁴ Not everyone was so enthusiastic, with a famine stalking Utah. After a rousing meeting at the end of January promoting the plan, Hosea Stout thought "many large speeches were made to 'Buncum' but everyone seems to be in favor of such."⁴⁵

To start operations, Young assigned veteran South Pass trader Bill Hickman to carry the mail from Independence to Fort Laramie and Porter Rockwell to take it from Laramie to Salt Lake.⁴⁶ "Forts will be established along the line at distances of twenty-five miles—seventy in number, I believe," John G. Chambers, an 1853 PEF emigrant,

Conn.: Yale University Press, 1960), 52.

⁴³"Mass Meeting," *Deseret News*, January 30, 1856, 4–5.

⁴⁴"Express Line" and "Mass Meeting," *Deseret News*, February 6, 1856, 5.

⁴⁵Juanita Brooks, ed., *On the Mormon Frontier: The Diary of Hosea Stout*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1964), January 26, 1856, 2:590.

⁴⁶Harold Schindler, *Orrin Porter Rockwell: Man of God, Son of Thunder* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1983), 224–26.

wrote from Salt Lake. "Whether this scheme will fail in consequence of the scarcity of provisions remains to be seen."⁴⁷

Despite Brigham Young's plan to provide self-sufficient stops along the trail that could sell supplies to passing emigrants and the take-charge tone of the October 1855 epistle, he unaccountably failed to think through the requirements of his plans. He called nineteen men as missionaries to begin building the necessary supply stations, but the general lack of both men and money in the territory meant that the system could not hope to play much of a role in helping the first handcart trains.⁴⁸ Young had always appointed someone "to superintend the emigration in the West," but this year, Church leaders in the East waited in vain for instructions.

By late November 1855, Apostle John Taylor wrote Young that he had "carefully considered" the requirements of handcart emigration and appointed a committee in St. Louis made up of missionaries who had walked across the plains to determine what supplies a cart and four persons would need. They suggested sixty pounds of breadstuffs and sixty of meat, a pound of tea and some sugar, twenty pounds of cooking utensils, plus clothing, bedding, and a tent, for a total of 449 pounds. In addition, there should be a cow for each two carts or eight persons and a wagon with three yoke of oxen for every ten carts. "The above is predicated upon the calculation of being met [with additional supplies] at the upper crossing of the Platte or the Devil's gate," Taylor cautioned Brigham Young.⁴⁹ Taylor expressed public support for the scheme—but with qualifications: "In regard to the feasibility of the enterprise, men of course, differ in their opinions, and we must confess that on its first introduction our prejudices were strong against it; we thought it looked too much like hard work for men to perform labor that has hitherto only been considered proper for beasts of draught and burden," Taylor wrote in *The Mormon*, published in New York, "but like many others with whom we have conversed on this subject, the more we investigate it the more are we satisfied of its practicability."⁵⁰

A year later, Taylor, recapping events of the past year, acknowledged receiving Young's orders regarding "the manufacture of

⁴⁷John G. Chambers, *Western Standard*, May 17, 1856.

⁴⁸Schindler, *Orrin Porter Rockwell*, 226.

⁴⁹Taylor, Letter to Young, November 21, 1855.

⁵⁰"Hand Carts for the Plains," *The Mormon*, December 1, 1855, 2.

Hand-Carts, their size, material, dimensions &c. and various instructions pertaining to the emigration, not only in relation to an early start, but also positive instructions that *no indebtedness should* be incurred.”⁵¹ These instructions did not name an emigration agent for the summer of 1856, but the capable and compassionate Taylor “felt it a duty incumbent upon me to make all preliminary arrangements for the furtherance of the interests of the emigration.” He informed Young of this independent action in January 1856, three months after the First Presidency’s epistle, and confessed his reaction to the hand-cart plan: “At first sight it looked rather like ‘Jordan’s a hard road to travel.’”⁵² Still, Young did not follow up with detailed instructions. In his letter in February 1857, after the dimensions of the disaster to the Willie and Martin companies had become apparent, Taylor expressed the frustration that he and his associates had felt about who Brigham Young had intended to manage the 1856 emigration: “I may be obtuse and so may those who were with me; but however plain your words might be to yourself on this matter, neither I nor my associates could understand them.”⁵³

Taylor continued to fill the executive vacuum during the spring of 1856, knowing that the first emigrant-bearing ships had sailed from England by February. At St. Louis Taylor ordered one hundred carts built out of seasoned wood to Young’s specifications. He warned Young in January 1856 that contracting for them farther west was dangerous because of shoddy workmanship. He himself had purchased a wagon wheel at Kaneshville to his regret. “If the wheels should break down on the road,” Taylor cautioned, “the company would be ruined.”⁵⁴ By late April 1856, Taylor felt “deeply solicitous for the welfare of the travelling Saints, and more especially am I anxious that everything shall be conducted properly, with due care and safety, and as far as may be practicable, for the comfort of those who may be going by hand-carts.” It was, he noted, “a new project, and will require our greatest attention and vigilance.” As directed, Taylor’s agents surveyed a new northern route from New York to the frontier and made

⁵¹John Taylor, Letter to Brigham Young, February 24, 1857, 5–6, Brigham Young Collection; emphasis Taylor’s.

⁵²John Taylor, Letter to Brigham Young, January 18, 1856, Brigham Young Collection.

⁵³Taylor, Letter to Young, February 24, 1857, 5–6.

⁵⁴Taylor, Letter to Young, January 18, 1856.

preliminary arrangements for campgrounds.

These valiant efforts and hard work undoubtedly prevented untold suffering, although they were inadequate to meet the enormous need. Young, in addition to not naming an emigration agent in the eastern United States, had not designated a similar agent in Europe, leaving European Mission President Franklin D. Richards to manage as best he could from Liverpool. In early April 1856, Brigham Young proudly informed Apostle Charles C. Rich, then in California, that Richards had asked Taylor to “make arrangements for the transmission [by handcart] for . . . 10,000 souls.”⁵⁵

On June 30, Young expressed only optimism to the harassed Taylor, who spent the spring and summer in St. Louis, Washington D.C., and New York: “We are pleased with the start the hand cart trains are making this season and have no fears but the plan will prove eminently successful,” he wrote confidently. “It must be a novel sight to see the Saints gathering at Iowa City and starting out with their hand carts on foot for home, will it not prove another testimony to the world of the workings of the Lord with His people! and is the time far distant when the name of the people of God and their Zion & the fame thereof will cause the nations to tremble with fear.” Responding to Taylor’s warning about the urgency of meeting the emigrants with supplies, Young was reassuring in that same June 30 letter: “We expect to start teams with provisions to meet the emigration so soon as we can get flour from the present harvest.”⁵⁶ Since the grain harvest in Utah is usually in August, Young clearly expected the handcarts to make it nearly the whole way on their own without reprovisioning. Although Taylor’s panel of experts had recommended allocating a wagon and three yoke of oxen for each fifty persons “to convey the sick, &c.,” Young rejected the suggestion on July 28. “I will say that it is all right not to provide wagons for infirm persons to accompany the hand carts for it would encourage infirmity or rather laziness which is quite as bad. There would soon be but few able to walk if such arrangements were made. We have hauled such characters with worn out, broken down cattle long enough & we hail this year’s operations

⁵⁵Brigham Young, Letter to Charles C. Rich, April 3, 1856, Brigham Young Collection; John Taylor, Letter to Franklin D. Richards, March 4, 1856, LDS Church Library.

⁵⁶Brigham Young, Letter to John Taylor, June 30, 1856, Brigham Young Collection.

as breaking through and throwing off an immense burden which has long oppressed us.”⁵⁷

Meanwhile, multiple causes of a disaster in the making were piling up: The late start of the last Mormon emigrants from Britain, lack of a leader assigned to run the plan, the uncertainty about how large that year’s emigration would be, and difficulties in building enough handcarts.⁵⁸

THE SUFFERINGS OF THE PEOPLE: THE FIRST THREE TRAINS

The first three of the year’s five handcart trains left Iowa City between June 9 and 23, 1856, under the command of Edmund Ellsworth, a son-in-law of Brigham Young, Daniel D. McArthur, and Edward Bunker. The three parties totaled almost eight hundred men, women, and children, mostly converts from England, Wales, and Scandinavia, with about thirty former Waldensians from Italy’s northern provinces who joined Ellsworth’s company. They mustered a total of 158 handcarts supported by only eight wagons, half of the 10:1 ratio Taylor’s experts had recommended.⁵⁹

In addition to the five handcart companies, thirteen wagon and freight trains, plus several unidentified companies, accompanied the Mormon overland emigration in 1856. (See Table.) After the departure of Edward Bunker’s third handcart train, Jacob Croft, Canute Pe-

⁵⁷Brigham Young, Letter to John Taylor, July 28, 1856, Brigham Young Collection.

⁵⁸Handcart expert Don Smith labeled as myth the story that handcarts were built of green wood and so fell apart on the arid plains. Carrie A. Moore, “Most Handcart Treks Successful, BYU Historian Says: 150th Anniversary Includes Discussion and Re-Enactments,” *Deseret Morning News*, June 10, 2006, <http://deseretnews.com/dn/view/0,1249,640185890,00.html> (accessed July 18, 2006). However, a handcart builder near Iowa City in late July 1856 wrote in a letter to the editor, “If a brother comes in camp and don’t catch hold of an axe and cut down a tree for to make hand carts, or break in a pair of oxen, or make himself useful in some way, he is but little respected. This is the place to make a man know himself.” *The Mormon*, August 16, 1856, 2, <http://www.lds.org/churchhistory/library/source/0,18016,4976-8716,00.html> (accessed August 11, 2006).

⁵⁹These numbers are from the LDS Church’s Mormon Pioneer Overland Travel website: <http://www.lds.org/churchhistory/content/0,15757,3957-1-2117,00.html> (accessed November 16, 2007).

TABLE
THE TEN MORMON HANDCART COMPANIES

<i>Company</i>	<i>Left</i>	<i>No. People</i>	<i>No. Carts</i>	<i>Arrive SLC</i>
<i>Five in 1856</i>				
Ellsworth	06/09/56	275	52	09/26
McArthur	06/11/56	222	480	9/26
Bunker	06/23/56	300	60	10/02
Willie	07/15/56	500	120	11/09
Martin	07/28/56	575	146	11/30
<i>Two in 1857</i>				
Evans	05/22/57	149	28	09/11-12
Christiansen	06/15/57	330	68	09/13
<i>One in 1859</i>				
Rowley	06/09/59	235	60	09/04
<i>Two in 1860</i>				
Robinson	06/06/60	233	43	08/27
Stoddard	07/06/60	126	22	09/24

Source: William G. Hartley, "Handcarts," in Allan Kent Powell, ed., *Utah History Encyclopedia* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1994), 243. Some of these numbers are ap-

erson, and John Banks led wagon trains west before James Willie left Iowa City in July. After August 1, wagon parties under the command of William B. Hodgetts, Dan Jones and John A. Hunt, Abraham O. Smoot, Orrin Porter Rockwell, John C. Naegle, Henry Boley, Benjamin L. Clapp, J. W. Hawkins, and Benjamin Matthews set out from the Missouri. Many of these trains were hauling freight for Salt Lake merchants, while others were identified as "Church trains," but the sources are unusually silent about who contracted for the Church train cargos, and who stood to profit from them is cloaked in mystery. For example, who funded A. O. Smoot's operation is never spelled out. In addition, some 153 known individuals went overland with unidentified companies. Many of these trains carried both passengers and freight, and the last to depart, notably the Hunt and Hodgetts

trains, often shared the trials that afflicted the Willie and Martin companies.⁶⁰

Rebecca Bartholomew and Leonard J. Arrington concluded that Young had “sent routine supply wagons to several companies out to several companies he knew to be on the road: Abraham Smoot’s Church supply train, the Walker and Gilbert and Garrish private merchant trains, an immigrant company from Texas, and the Church herd with accompanying wagons.” The authors note that B. H. Roberts “raises the question of what became of these supply trains, which seem to have played no role in the rescue.”⁶¹

As Dan Jones made clear, some of the goods he and about twenty-five men were left to guard at Devil’s Gate that year “belonged to the last season’s emigrants. The wagon companies freighting them through agreed to deliver them in Salt Lake City”: some of this freight probably belonged to handcart emigrants. “These goods were to be taken in and delivered as by contract,” Jones claimed, but when Salt Lake merchant and recent apostate Thomas S. Williams tried to claim the freight he apparently had under contract, Jones refused to deliver it because Williams lacked “an order from the right parties.”⁶²

The problems inherent in the new system became apparent immediately. Even Ellsworth’s first company had to wait more than a month at Iowa City for its carts to be built. “Our hand-carts were of a poor description,” Ellsworth himself complained on reaching Salt Lake, “but they had to be experimented upon, and the experiment made this season has been at our expense.”⁶³ The initial companies received the best-built carts that year, but even so, they began breaking down immediately. “We had them to eternally patch, mornings, noons and nights,” Daniel McArthur later told Wilford Woodruff. In

⁶⁰Again, this analysis is based on data from the LDS Church’s Mormon Pioneer Overland Travel website.

⁶¹Rebecca Bartholomew and Leonard J. Arrington, *Rescue of the 1856 Handcart Companies*, Charles Redd Monographs in Western History, Series No. 11 (Rpt., Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1992), 5 and 52 note 14.

⁶²Daniel W. Jones, *Forty Years among the Indians: A True and Thrilling Narrative of the Author’s Experiences among the Natives*. (1890; rpt., Los Angeles: Westernlore Press, 1960): 106–10.

⁶³Edmund Ellsworth, “Account of His Mission By Elder Edmund Ellsworth, and His Experience in Leading the First Hand-Cart Company,” *Deseret News*, October 8, 1856, 243.

addition to the physical fatigue of hauling the handcarts was the mental fatigue of their noise: "They mowed and growled, screeched and squealed, so that a person could hear them for miles." McArthur spent two weeks at the Mormon frontier depot at Florence, Nebraska, refitting the vehicles.⁶⁴

All three parties experienced large defections. Twiss Birmingham noted that fifty members of Bunker's Welsh Company "stopped on the road," while the Ellsworth Company's official journal listed thirty-three members who had "backed out."⁶⁵ Some of these problems were the inevitable accompaniment of transcontinental travel, not attributable to the handcarts. Midsummer weather on the plains produced violent extremes, and the people suffered from heat stroke, lightning strikes, and rattlesnake bites.

Perhaps most seriously, there was never enough to eat. One of Edmund Ellsworth's wagons contained, not food, but soap. Although the problems of short rations would take a murderous toll among the Willie and Martin companies, hunger accompanied the earlier trains as well. "At night we often went to bed without supper," remembered Mary Powell Sabin, a twelve-year-old making the trek with her family. She was captivated by the beauty of the campsite at Deer Creek. "It was so charmingly sylvan with little groves here and there and a bright clear creek lined with timber" that she proposed to her father, "Let's build a little log house and stay in this place always." He asked what they would do for food. "Do as we're doing now," Mary said. "Go without."⁶⁶

"There was very little food to cook and we were too tired to cook it," Lotwick Reese recalled. "We had very very hard times, with scarcely enough food to sustain life and body." At Fort Bridger Reese's mother traded everything the family owned, "a few silk handker-

⁶⁴Daniel D. McArthur, Report to Wilford Woodruff, January 5, 1857, Journal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (chronological scrapbook of typed entries and newspaper clippings, 1830-present), under date of September 26, 1856, 3, LDS Church Library.

⁶⁵Andrew Galloway, Edmund Ellsworth Emigrating Company Journal, LDS Church Library, <http://www.lds.org/churchhistory/library/source/0,18016,4976-2888,00.html> (accessed April 2, 2007).

⁶⁶Mary Powell Sabin, Autobiography, 1926, 10-14, LDS Church Library.

chiefs, etc.,” for something to eat.⁶⁷ William Knox Aitken wrote that they arrived “wearied and worn down, the bones almost through the skin, not only of myself but of all that were in the company, having walked from Iowa city to the Great Salt Lake city, a distance of 1,350 miles, and were half starved to the bargain, our whole allowance being 12 ounces of flour per day, and we did not even get so much.”⁶⁸

“I never was so hungry in my life,” Archer Walters wrote. “My children cry with hunger and it grieves me and makes me cross.” At that point, Ellsworth had cut the ration to a half pound of flour per day. Walters had the impression that this situation was not debilitating: “I can live upon green herbs or any thing and do go nearly all day without any and am strengthened with a morsel.” Despite Walter’s optimism, however, in 1937 the family believed he “died from dysentery caused by eating corn-meal and molasses, and aggravated by his weakened condition and lowered resistance resulting from exposure, under-nourishment, and physical exhaustion during the thirteen hundred mile journey of the first handcart company.” The so-called “relief” wagons met his company near today’s Glenrock, Wyoming, but the handcart pioneers were expected to pay for the flour.⁶⁹ The grim reality (discussed below) is that, until October, there was no organized charitable or Church-sponsored effort to supply the handcart companies. Twiss Bermingham noted that the flour would cost “18c per lb. [payable] when we get to the city.” Bermingham considered that the “conduct of the men from the Valley who came to meet us was disgraceful.”⁷⁰

All three of the first handcart captains faced charges of abusive leadership. Archer Walters complained about “some young sisters

⁶⁷Lotwick Reese, “History,” in Joyce Doerfler Hunter, comp., *The Life Story of Lavina Reese Hunter Doerfler*, copy at LDS Church Library, <http://www.lds.org/churchhistory/library/source/0,18016,4976-2946,00.html> (accessed November 16, 2007).

⁶⁸William Knox Aitken, “Adventures of a Mormon,” *London Advertiser*, August 9, 1857. Aitken left Utah the next spring with “300 souls in all . . . all determined to get off or die.”

⁶⁹Archer Walters, Journal, July 1, 22, and September 1, 1856, LDS Church Library. Walters’s journal was serialized in the *Improvement Era* from October 1936 to April 1937. He died a few miles west of South Pass: the story of his death appeared in the *Improvement Era*, April 1937, 253.

⁷⁰Twiss Bermingham, “To Utah—By Hand,” *American Legion Maga-*

with Bro. Ellsworth always going first which causes many of the brothers to have hard feeling.”⁷¹ Margaret Stalle Barker charged that Ellsworth badly mistreated the Italian converts in his party, “even depriving them of food.” Barker repeated claims that Ellsworth “sold part of the food that should have gone to the saints.” As her father, Jean Pierre Stalle, was dying of starvation, his wife, Jeanne Marie Gaudin-Moise, “climbed to the wagon to have a few last words with her husband. Ellsworth came with a rope and cruelly whipped her until she was forced to get down.”⁷² Still, others considered Ellsworth’s leadership inspired. Teenage Mary Ann Jones recalled that a large band of Indians stopped his train on the Platte River and demanded food. “They were in war paint and were very hostile. Captain Ellsworth asked all of us to pray for him while he talked to them. He gave them some beads and they let us go on. For this we were very thankful,” she remembered. “I have never regretted the trip,” she wrote years later, but at that point, she was Ellsworth’s plural wife. Ellsworth married both her and a second woman from his handcart party, Mary Ann Bates, on the same day in October 1856.⁷³

Ellsworth was not the only handcart captain who managed to combine courtship with leadership. One telling vignette of the Martin Company captures the hunger of the emigrants, the high-handed behavior of the captain, and his favoritism. Far out on the plains, Edward Martin loaded a hundred pounds of flour onto Elizabeth Sermon’s cart, ordering her not to touch the flour or let her children ride. Finally, she recognized the injustice. “I stopped my cart at noon that day, took the flour out of my cart and threw it on the ground. I told the Captain Martin if I and my children could not eat some of it, I would not draw it any further, it is my duty to look after my husband

zine, July 1937, 27, 58–61.

⁷¹Walters, *Journal*, July 1, 1856.

⁷²Barker, *Reminiscences*, in Rebecca Cardin Hickman, “History of Susanna Goudin Cardon,” 8, item 2, in “Biographical Sketches of the Cardon family, 1934–1960,” LDS Church Library.

⁷³Mary Ann Jones Ellsworth, *Diary [sic] of Mary Ann Jones (Age 19) on Her Trip Across the Plains*, LDS Church Library. For the marriages, see LeRoy R. and Ann W. Hafen, eds., *Handcarts to Zion: The Story of a Unique Western Migration, 1856–1860, with Contemporary Journals, Accounts, Reports; and Rosters of Members of the Ten Handcart Companies* (Glendale, Calif.: Arthur H. Clark Company, 1960), 57.

and family first.” Martin told her she must be obedient and threatened to leave her “on the plains as food for the wolves.” Sermon retorted, “Brother Martin, leave those two girls you have in your carriage for food to the wolves, not me.”⁷⁴

Another single young woman, Elizabeth Lane Hyde, went lame in the Black Hills. Despite her disability, Edward Bunker refused to let her put a small bundle on a wagon. John Cousins, a fellow traveler “carried me on his back through many rivers, and when Captain Bunker put me out of the wagon at Laramie River, he picked me up and carried me through the water.”⁷⁵ According to an Icelandic veteran of Daniel McArthur’s company, the train’s thirty children were gathered together every morning and sent ahead in one bunch, apparently to keep them from holding up progress. “They were driven along with willows and had to keep walking as long as they could. No use to cry or complain. But along during the day when it was hot they were allowed to rest and were given food. They were often 2 or 3 miles ahead of us,” Thordur (later called Theodore) Dedrickson remembered. “It was hard for parents to see their little 5 and 6 year olds driven along like sheep.”⁷⁶ This practice continued, for 1857 handcart emigrant C. C. A. Christensen, later famous as a folk-artist, remembered that early in the morning “the children who could walk—some even under the age of four—were sent ahead, accompanied by their sisters, partly to avoid the dust and partly to walk as far as possible before the burning sun and exhaustion would make it necessary to put them in the handcart.”⁷⁷

Daniel McArthur’s “Crack Company” and Edmund Ellsworth’s party competed to see who would be the first handcart train to reach the Salt Lake Valley. Ellsworth pushed on during a rainstorm in Echo

⁷⁴Elizabeth Sermon Camm, Letter to “My Dear Children,” March 16, 1892, LDS Church Library.

⁷⁵Elizabeth Lane Hyde, “Autobiography [sic] of Elizabeth L. Hyde,” *Woman’s Exponent*, August 15, 1896, 29.

⁷⁶Theodore Dedrickson, “One of the First,” in Kate B. Carter, ed., *Our Pioneer Heritage*, 20 vols. (Salt Lake City: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1958–77), 7:486–87.

⁷⁷C.C.A. Christensen, “By Handcart to Utah,” translated by Richard L. Jensen, *Nebraska History*, Winter 1985, 337–44, <http://www.lds.org/churchhistory/library/source/0,18016,4976-4958,00.html> (accessed April 9, 2007).

Canyon until after dark on September 22, to preserve his lead. “Knight coming on and the people very weary traveling, our Captain persisted in continuing our journey over a divide, which made it very hard to ascend and descend a distance of six miles, and all in the dark—and no light only as the lightening flashed, the [rain] pouring down in torrents all the time,” returning missionary William Butler recalled. Although Butler was ill, he “was left behind to travel or die.” He gave himself a priesthood blessing; and “from this very moment the pain left me and I was able to resume my journey, it being very dark, insomuch that I could not see the road. I fell down a great many times over all manner of rocks, steep places and holes.” He met an Italian convert with his little girl. “I tried to get him to come along with his hand cart, but not understanding his language, nor he mine, so he did not follow me.—he died during the night, and they fetched him into camp in the morning.” Next he stumbled across a young English girl, apparently six-year-old Hannah Clarke, “who was alone and had lost her way—she was crying and in great trouble.—I went to her, and fetched her into Camp,—the gratitude of the girl and her parents and relatives. was unbounded,” Butler recalled. The next day the company “gathered up the dead and buried them.”⁷⁸ The camp’s clerk loyally reported, “The wagons hauling the tents did not arrive in camp until midnight, and the emigrants suffered considerable from the cold through being wet; yet all seemed cheerful.”⁷⁹

Ellsworth won the race, but not by much. The First Presidency, a militia detachment of Nauvoo Legion lancers, a brass band, and a large crowd greeted the first two handcart companies to emerge from Emigration Canyon on September 26, 1856.⁸⁰ Despite his sometimes callous rhetoric, Brigham Young was not a heartless monster: the gauntness and exhaustion of these pioneering parties left the prophet visibly shaken. Charles Tredeser, an eyewitness, reported:

⁷⁸William Butler, Journal [sic], Daughters of Utah Pioneers, Collection, 1828–1963, reel 11, item 3, LDS Church Library, punctuation added. An expurgated version of Butler’s account appeared in Daughters of Utah Pioneer Lesson Committee, comp., *An Enduring Legacy*, 12 vols. (Salt Lake City: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1978–89), 8:79–80.

⁷⁹Andrew Galloway, Journal, September 22, 1856, in *Journal History*, September 26, 1856.

⁸⁰“The First Hand-Cart Companies,” *Deseret Weekly News*, October 1, 1856, 236.

“Bro. Brigham was introduced to them as they formed in line, and he was so much affected with the spectacle, he could only say: My good people I am glad to see you, God bless you all. He hurried away, he could say no more.”⁸¹ William Butler of the Ellsworth Company also remembered that Brigham Young “felt very bad for the sufferings of the people.”⁸²

Mormon estimates indicate that thirty members of the first three handcart companies died, a fairly standard death toll for overland travelers. Despite the obvious problems with the handcart system, all the Mormon authorities hailed it as a great success. “Prest. Young has declared from the beginning that it was a practical safe operation, his sayings in this, as in all other cases have proven true,” Wilford Woodruff wrote after watching the first two handcart companies arrive.⁸³ “And thus has been successfully accomplished a plan, devised by the wisdom and forethought of our President, for rapidly gathering the poor,” the *Deseret News* announced. Brigham Young told the Ellsworth party “that we had fulfilled a prophecy.”⁸⁴ The McArthur Company arrived later the same day. The third company, under the direction of Edward Bunker, left Iowa City on June 23 and reached the Salt Lake Valley on October 2. But the last two handcart companies still on the trail would not fare so well.

**“THEY EXPECT TO GET COLD FINGERS AND TOES”:
BLUNDERS AND DISASTER**

Three weeks before these first handcart companies reached the Salt Lake Valley, Franklin D. Richards was optimistically dispatching the last two—the Martin and Willie from Florence. “The operations of the season are likely to turn out quite as favorably with regard to cost of outfit as we have at any time expected or hoped,” he reported on September 3 in a letter later printed in the *Millennial Star*. “But for the lateness of the rear companies everything seems equally propitious

⁸¹Charles Tredese, “Correspondence from Great Salt Lake City,” *The Mormon*, November 29, 1856, 3.

⁸²Butler, Journal.

⁸³Wilford Woodruff, “Correspondence from Utah,” September 30, 1856, *The Mormon*, November 15, 1856, 3.

⁸⁴“The First Hand-Cart Companies,” *Deseret Weekly News*, October 1, 1856, 236; Sabin, Autobiography, 14.

for a safe and profitable wind-up at the far end.”⁸⁵ Richards had just made the most deadly blunder of 1856. James Willie’s handcart train left the emigration depot at Florence on August 16, while poorly organized detachments of Edward Martin’s party did not leave the Missouri until early in September.

Richards himself followed in his comfortable and swift carriage, passing both companies and reaching Great Salt Lake City on October 4. He met three small parties “who had come out with flour for the companies” near South Pass in late September, but they were not part of Brigham Young’s plan, announced to George Q. Cannon and insisted upon by John Taylor, to send supplies out to meet the emigrants. Patriarch John Smith was heading east to meet his brother with two men; he turned around to return to Salt Lake City with Richards. On their way back, they met three or four wagons under a William Smith and a man named Talcott, the *Deseret News* reported during the third week in October.⁸⁶ “It was common for traders to travel east from Salt Lake to meet incoming trains and sell them goods,” historian Tom Rea observed. “The three small resupply parties that Richards encountered were probably such traders.”⁸⁷

This raises a perplexing question: what happened to the relief trains that figured so prominently in planning the system? By the end of September, Brigham Young had not sent a single wagonload of supplies to reprovision the Willie and Martin trains: he did, however, send “a relief wagon with flour” that reached A. O. Smoot’s “Church Train” at the Upper Crossing of the Platte on October 2. “The promised supply stations had not been established for the first migration in 1856, and the relief wagons that were to meet the emigrants in Wyoming often did not arrive until long after they were desperately needed,” historian Lyndia McDowell Carter concluded.⁸⁸

The low quality of the handcarts provided to the last two companies—and the delay in building them—proved equally problematic.

⁸⁵Franklin D. Richards, “Foreign Correspondence,” *Millennial Star* 17 (October 25, 1856): 682.

⁸⁶Franklin D. Richards and Daniel Spencer, “Journey from Florence to G. S. L. City,” *Deseret News*, October 22, 1856, 258.

⁸⁷Tom Rea, *Devil’s Gate: Owning the Land, Owning the Story* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2006), 264 note 18.

⁸⁸Lyndia McDowell Carter, “The Mormon Handcart Companies,” *Overland Journal* 13, no. 1 (Spring 1995): 11.

“The carts were poor ones, with wooden axles, leather boxes, and light iron tires, and the squeaking of the wheels, through lack of sufficient grease could often be ‘heard a mile,’” recalled John Jaques, who traveled in the Martin Company.⁸⁹ “We expected to find these vehicles already at hand on our arrival at Iowa City,” Elizabeth Kingsford remembered. “This work consumed between two and three weeks of time, in which we should have been wending our way to Salt Lake City.”⁹⁰ As with the first three companies, the poorly built carts proved to be difficult to use and broke down with alarming regularity. Danish handcart captain John A. Ahmanson, who reached Utah with the Willie Company in December 1856 (only to turn around and leave forever the next April), called these vehicles “*tohjulede Menneskepiner*,” which has been translated as “two wheeled instruments of human torture” but might be bettered rendered as “two-wheeled torture devices.”⁹¹

“When we had a meeting at Florence, we called upon the saints to express their faith to the people, and requested to know of them, even if they knew that they should be swallowed up in storms, whether they would stop or turn back,” a defensive Franklin D. Richards later explained. “They voted, with loud acclamations, that they

⁸⁹Jaques, “Some Reminiscences,” January 19, 1879, 1.

⁹⁰Elizabeth Kingsford, *Leaves from the Life of Elizabeth Horrocks Jackson Kingsford* (Ogden, Utah: n. pub., 1908), 2.

⁹¹Edith Matteson and Jean Matteson, “Mormon Influence on Scandinavian Settlement in Nebraska,” in *On Distant Shores: Proceedings of the Marcus Lee Hansen Immigration Conference, Aalborg, Denmark, June 29–July 1, 1992*, edited by Henning Bender, Birgit Flemming Larsen, and Karen Veien (Aalborg, Denmark: Danes Worldwide Archives and Danish Society for Emigration History, 1993); digital copy at <http://www.xmission.com/~nelsonb/nebraska.htm> (accessed August 15, 2006). John A. Ahmanson, *Vor Tids Muhamed* [The Mohammed of Our Times] (Omaha, Neb.: Press of the Danish Pioneer, 1876), 24, republished as *Secret History: A Translation of Vor Tids Muhamed*, trans. by Gleason L. Archer (Chicago: Moody Press, 1984), 35. Archer translated the phrase awkwardly as “two-wheeled man-tormentors.” As the original title indicates, Ahmanson was not a fan of Brigham Young. He was wealthy enough to own a wagon; but at Franklin D. Richards’s request, he led the ninety-three “indigent Danes” in James Willie’s fifth company on foot, “even though it was obvious that that journey would prove extremely difficult.” *Ibid.*, 28–29.

would go on,” which Richards said would “bring the choice blessings of God upon them.” Had not the Lord’s anointed promised those who embarked on this untested scheme that “nothing shall hinder or stay them”? Speaking on October 15 with the first rescue party still a week away from the Willie Company, Richards was startlingly optimistic. “About one thousand” Saints were still on the trail “with hand-carts,” he acknowledged. “[They] feel that it is late in the season, and they expect to get cold fingers and toes. But they have this faith and confidence towards God that he will over-rule the storms that may come in the season thereof and turn them away, that their path may be free from suffering more than they can bear.”⁹² Richards’s mistake must be seen as a tactical error that was part and parcel of Brigham Young’s larger strategy of getting as many people to Zion as cheaply as possible. The inexperienced European Saints’ willingness to trust him locked in the bad decision, even though better counsel was at hand.

Mormon Battalion veteran Levi Savage Jr., returning from a mission to the Far East after circling the globe, had never crossed the northern plains before, but a decade’s experience in the Far West gave him a clear picture of the challenges that lay ahead. In Iowa City on August 12, camping with the Willie Company, he recorded in his journal: “I myself am not in favor of, but much opposed to taking women & Children through destitute of clothing, when we all know that we are bound to be caught in the Snow, and Severe colde w[e]ather, long before we reach the valley.” Savage was exactly right: on September 5, the company journal recorded that snow stopped the first handcart company, led by Ellsworth, in its tracks not far west of today’s Casper, Wyoming. The previous night, “it got very cold & rained for several hours so that we could not Light a fire.”⁹³ On August 13, forty-two-year-old returning missionary James Willie, captain of the fourth company, exhorted the five hundred Saints under his command “to go forward regardless of Suffering even to death.” Willie had crossed the plains in 1847 with Jedediah Grant’s company and again on his way to four years of service in the British Mission.

Willie then gave Savage permission to speak, even after Savage

⁹²Franklin D. Richards, “Discourse,” *Deseret News*, October 15, 1856, 252–53.

⁹³Andrew Galloway, Ellsworth Company Journal, September 4–5, 1856, LDS Church Library.

warned that he could not support Willie's decision. The veteran frontiersman "Said that we were liable to have to wade in Snow up to our knees, and Should at night rap ourselvs in a thin blanket. and lye on the frozen ground without abed; that was not like having a wagon, that we could go into, and rap ourselves in as much as we liked and ly down. No Said I.—we are with out waggons, destitute of clothing, and could not cary it if we had it. We must go as we are." He did not oppose the handcart system, he added loyally. "The lateness of the Season was my only objection." Savage "Spoke warmly upon the Subject, but Spoke truth, and the people, judging from appearance and after expressions, felt the force of it. (but yet, the most of them, determond to go forward if the Authorities Say so.)" Willie was unwavering and discounted Savage's concerns. "I had Spoken nothing but the *truth*," Savage wrote, underlining the word "and he and others knew it."⁹⁴

John Chislett, one of the Willie Company survivors, wrote one of the first and most powerful recollections of the handcart experiment. "Levi Savage used his common sense and his knowledge of the country," he recalled. "He declared positively that to his certain knowledge we could not cross the mountains with a mixed company of aged people, women, and little children, so late in the, season without much suffering, sickness, and death." He ascribed to Savage a statement not in Savage's journal but true to his character. One of the leaders, William Kimball, Heber's oldest son, scoffed "that he would guarantee to eat all the snow that fell on us between Florence and Salt Lake City." In Chislett's telling, Savage said, "Brethren and sisters, what I have said I know to be true; but, seeing you are to go forward, I will go with you, will help you all I can, will work with you, will rest with you, will suffer with you, and, if necessary, I will die with you. May God in his mercy bless and preserve us. Amen."⁹⁵

Cascading mistakes created the catastrophe that played out between the Platte River and South Pass that fall. Brigham Young's response to the disaster has been highly praised. On October 4, Franklin D. Richards's "Swiftsure train" of returning missionaries reached the valley and informed Brigham Young that more than a thousand people were still hundreds of miles from Salt Lake. Young ordered

⁹⁴Levi Savage, Journal, August 12, 13, 1856, holograph, LDS Church Library.

⁹⁵"Mr. Chislett's Narrative," in T. B. H. Stenhouse, *The Rocky Mountain Saints* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1873), 817.

parties to head for South Pass with supplies not only for the last handcart companies, but for about 450 emigrants struggling west with the wagon trains under William Hodgetts and John Hunt, and, as it turned out, Smoot's groaning freight wagons. (He did not, as is commonly reported, halt the church's semi-annual conference to start the rescue effort.)⁹⁶ Young delegated responsibility to raise forty teamsters, sixty spans of mules or horses, and twelve tons of flour to the city's bishops. He underestimated the number needing rescue somewhat: "There are still 970 Saints on the plains with the Hand Carts, some of them will not be in untill November," he informed Silas Smith on October 4, the day Richards's "Swiftsure" wagon train reached Salt Lake Valley.⁹⁷ A month later, Young wrote to George Q. Cannon: "We were not aware of their being upon the plains until the arrival of F. D. Richards, Daniel Spencer and others of the returning missionaries."⁹⁸

This statement shades the truth. On June 19, Daniel Spencer had written to Young from Iowa City—the letter was printed in the *Deseret News* on August 6—describing the departure of the first two handcart companies and the organization of Edward Bunker's third train. The first two parties were "interspersed with very old and very young. They are not more than ordinarily strong, and the lists will show that they have not an extra supply of men. But they are all strong in God, and have faith in the fulfillment of the words of his prophets." Spencer expected the emigrants who had sailed from England on the *Thornton* and *Horizon* to arrive within days: "They will together have

⁹⁶Hafen and Hafen, *Handcarts to Zion*, 122–23. On November 30, Young spoke at the Sunday morning meeting giving instructions about receiving the Martin Company, which arrived that day, and cancelled the afternoon meeting. This incident, which happened almost two months after the October conference, has been assigned to the more dramatic first public announcement, where Young said, "Go and bring in those people now on the plains." He then warned, "You will sink to Hell, unless you attend to the things we tell you." *Ibid.*, 121; emphasis in original.

⁹⁷Brigham Young, Letter to Silas Smith, October 4, 1856, Brigham Young Collection.

⁹⁸Brigham Young, Letter to George Q. Cannon, November 4, 1856, in Roger Robin Ekins, ed., *Defending Zion: George Q. Cannon and the California Mormon Newspaper Wars of 1856–1885*, Vol. 5 of the KINGDOM IN THE WEST (Spokane, Wash: Arthur H. Clark Co., 2002), 214.

nearly 1200 souls to go by the hand carts,” Spencer reported.⁹⁹

“We have received advices that about two thousand Saints are expected to cross the plains this year on foot with hand carts,” Young informed George Q. Cannon on August 4, reporting the content of Spencer’s letter. “Over eight hundred had started, and the remainder were to start in a few weeks per last advices.” Young knew that the window for setting out to cross the plains safely was open only from late April to early August at the latest. There was, arguably, time to send a message east with explicit instructions to Richards and Spencer not to send out any more companies that season. Instead, Young seems to have held two contradictory ideas simultaneously. The first was that Richards and Spencer would automatically halt the emigrants. After Richards and Spencer arrived in Salt Lake, Young explicitly stated that “they would [should] have known better than to rush men, women and children on to the prairie in the autumn months, on the 3d of September, to travel over a thousand miles.”¹⁰⁰ But in his August 4 letter to Cannon, he seems to have assumed a trouble-free passage. He expressed no worry, concentrating instead on what he considered the good news: “Thus you perceive that the work is rolling forth, and many of Israel are gathering home to Zion.”¹⁰¹

However, the hazardous situation did not escape at least one member of the First Presidency. At the end of August, Daniel H. Wells, wrote to Louis Robison at Fort Bridger, “We have received no definite news concerning the Hand cart trains consequently do not know when we shall visit your place. Our trains are sure to be very late.”¹⁰²

**“SUCH OPERATIONS WILL FINANCIALLY USE US UP”:
THE RESCUE**

A popular view is that the rescuers mobilized immediately at

⁹⁹Daniel Spencer, “Correspondence,” June 19, 1856, *Deseret News*, August 6, 1856, 178.

¹⁰⁰Brigham Young, “Remarks,” November 2, 1856, *Deseret News*, November 12, 1856, 283.

¹⁰¹Brigham Young, Letter to George Q. Cannon, August 4, 1856, Brigham Young Collection. One can only speculate on how Brigham Young might have reacted had Richards actually had the good sense to stop the last two handcart trains at the Missouri.

¹⁰²Daniel H. Wells, Letter to Lewis Robison, August 30, 1856, Brigham Young Collection.

Brigham Young's command, backtracked the trail, gathered up the suffering handcart pioneers, and swept them into the Salt Lake Valley in a matter of days. In fact, the rescue was a long-drawn-out struggle against savage weather, crippling human debilitation, and strained resources. As a result, the rescue was too late even for some of the living. Once again, the mustered supplies were inadequate to meet the needs. "The brethren and sisters so opportunely relieved expressed unbounded gratitude for the prompt, energetic and ample aid sent to their relief," trumpeted the *Deseret News*. "And well might they be astonished to meet clothing, provisions, men and teams so liberally and bountifully provided without money and without price, a circumstance so entirely unusual in their former experience."¹⁰³ Like much that appeared in the Church's official organ that fall about the handcarts, this picture was not entirely true. Brigham Young shifted responsibility for the rescue onto the weary shoulders of his followers, who were still reeling from the consequences of drought and famine. The response was indeed generously heroic, but it was barely adequate to meet the demands of the crisis.

Historian David L. Bigler has called the two-month struggle "the most desperate rescue operation in western history." By the time the belated relief wagons rolled out of Salt Lake City on October 7, the final two handcart companies had taken a terrific beating. "Seventeen pounds of bedding and clothing proved inadequate to keep exhausted emigrants warm," Bigler wrote. "First to droop and die were the old and infirm. Soon the burial ritual each morning began to include the bodies of younger members, mainly men." The trek became, remembered Samuel Jones of the Martin Company, "one long funeral march." Even after the first rescue party found the Willie Company at the Sixth Crossing of the Sweetwater on October 21, 1856, the ordeal continued. "The relief they provided was only temporary, just enough to get the company moving again, but inadequate to stop its suffering."¹⁰⁴

Still twenty-seven hard miles from South Pass and 257 miles from Great Salt Lake City, the Willie Company climbed over

¹⁰³"The Companies Yet on the Plains," *Deseret News*, November 26, 1856, 301.

¹⁰⁴David L. Bigler, *Forgotten Kingdom: The Mormon Theocracy in the American West, 1847-1896*, Vol. 2 of KINGDOM IN THE WEST (Spokane, Wash.: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1998), 111-13, 115. The Jones quotation is

Rocky Ridge, through deep snow on October 23, 1856. "A Severe day. The wind blew awful hard, and colde," wrote Levi Savage, who was serving as a captain of a hundred. The train's few surviving teams were hauling wagons "loaded down with the Sick, and children" so thickly stowed he feared some of them would smother. Long after dark, exhausted survivors staggered into camp, where "but few tents were pitched, and men, women, and Children Sit shivering with colde around their Small fires." Just before daylight a wagon arrived with the stragglers. "Some badly frozen; Some dying, and Some dead. It was certainly heartrending to hear Children crying for mothers, and mothers, crying for Childrin," Savage wrote.¹⁰⁵

Almost 120 miles behind the Willie train, Edward Martin's party had ground to a complete halt just a few miles beyond an arduous crossing of the ice-choked North Platte River on October 19. Fifty-six men, women, and children had died of starvation and exposure by the time the company reached the Red Buttes. Here they stayed, unable to make even a mile of progress in the deep snow until, on October 28, Joseph A. Young, Daniel W. Jones, and Abel Garr, riding horseback found the immobilized train. They brought word that supplies were waiting for them fifty miles away at Devil's Gate. "When they first made their appearance," wrote James Godson Bleak, later the chronicler of St. George, "I do not think there was one in Camp but shed tears of joy."¹⁰⁶

With this new hope, the survivors of the Martin Company staggered on. But even after reaching the six rescue wagons at Devil's Gate in early November, the Martin Company's suffering intensified.¹⁰⁷ The teamsters had already given supplies to the Willie Company, so the food that remained "was soon exhausted among so many hungry souls," survivor Samuel Jones re-

on page 113.

¹⁰⁵Savage, Journal, October 23, 1856, LDS Church Library.

¹⁰⁶James Godson Bleak, Journal, October 28, 1856, LDS Church Library, <http://www.lds.org/churchhistory/library/source/0,18016,4976-7523,00.html> (accessed September 5, 2006). For an indepth examination of Bleak and particularly his England-and-emigration diary, see Brandon J. Metcalf, "James G. Bleak: From London to Dixie," this issue.

¹⁰⁷Jaques, "Some Reminiscences," *Salt Lake Daily Herald*, December 15, 1879, 1.

called.¹⁰⁸ To complicate matters, the Hodgetts and Hunt trains, carrying freight and some 450 additional mouths to feed, caught up with the last handcart party on October 14 as the Martin Company was crossing the North Platte near today's Casper, Wyoming. Snow stopped all travel, and it took more than two weeks for all these trains to reach Independence Rock, only fifty miles to the west. Just beyond Devil's Gate, the soaked and exhausted emigrants crossed the ice-choked Sweetwater with the heroic assistance of David P. Kimball, George W. Grant, Stephen W. Taylor, and C. A. Huntington. "The water and ice took me up to the waist, and the clothes had to dry on me. That was a terrible night," Samuel Jones wrote.¹⁰⁹ The party sought refuge in what they called Martin's ravine, "a little cove in the mountains where the wind could not have such a clean sweep at us," thirteen-year-old Heber McBride later remembered.¹¹⁰ The exact locale of this site, now known as Martin's Cove, is not certain, but the presumed spot has become a pilgrimage site for modern Mormons.

"We stayed in the ravine five or six days on reduced rations," Samuel Jones continued. "One night a windstorm blew down almost every tent. Many perished of cold and hunger at this place." The battered survivors waited out relentless blizzards and grinding cold for almost a week, then abandoned most of their carts and staggered on. Fifty years later, Jones could still recall "the pinched, hungry faces, the stolid absent stare, that foretold the end was near, the wide and shallow open grave, awaiting its numerous consignments. The start from that place in the wagons when the camp broke up; the looks of the living freight; the long cold rides, the longer nights; the pitiless sky, the lack of sleep; many dozing down by the fire and turning at intervals all through the night, and so on, and on."¹¹¹ This ordeal continued all the way to the valley.

In an odd exercise of what Mormon leaders called "theo-democracy," at the same October conference where Brigham Young had ordered the first wagons back along the trail, Heber C. Kimball moved "that Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and Jedediah M. Grant go

¹⁰⁸Jones, "Experience of S. S. Jones," 20.

¹⁰⁹Ibid.

¹¹⁰Heber McBride, *Autobiography*, ca. 1868, typescript, 9-15, LDS Church Library.

¹¹¹Jones, "Experience of S. S. Jones," 20.

back to help the P. E. Fund Emigrants.” The motion was “Unanimously negated,” but twelve days later Brigham Young decided to take Kimball, Grant, and Daniel H. Wells “to visit the Shoshones near Forts Bridger and Supply and Green River crossing, and to cheer the hearts of the emigrants.”¹¹² Three days later at East Canyon, Young “was so suddenly seized with a severe attack of illness that . . . he returned to the city in the evening.”¹¹³ The other three men also cut short their plans to meet the incoming handcart emigrants.

At that point, men, women, and children were suffering and dying in the snow-choked mountains; but rather than acknowledging their misery, Heber C. Kimball lashed out on November 2 at his concerned congregation in the Old Tabernacle: “There is a spirit of murmuring among the people, and the fault is laid upon brother Brigham.”¹¹⁴ The comment inspired a remarkably revealing set of remarks from the leader he was defending: “There is not the least shadow of reason for casting such censure upon me,” Brigham Young responded in the same meeting. He then cast about for a more likely target for the public’s anger and found it in “elders [in the] East” and “our Elders abroad.” Had he been able to manage the emigration from Liverpool, Young claimed that he could have brought many more people to Utah “provided I could have dictated matters at every point. That is not boasting; I only want to tell you that I know more than they know,” he preached. “But what have we to do now? We have to be compassionate, we have to be merciful to our brethren.” The rest of the remarks dealt not on the needs of the starving, freezing emigrants, but with the expense of the rescue. “It will cost this people more to bring in those companies from the plains, than it would to have seasonably brought them from the outfitting point on the Missouri river,” he complained. “We need all our teams and means to prepare for those persons who are coming, instead of crippling us by taking our bread, men and teams and going out to meet them.” Continu-

¹¹²“Minutes of the Semi-Annual Conference, October 6, 1857,” *Deseret News*, October 15, 1856, 256. As noted, the reference to PEF emigrants means the handcart pioneers in 1856, since the fund underwrote no other sort of travel in 1856.

¹¹³Jaques, “Some Reminiscences,” January 19, 1879, 1.

¹¹⁴Heber C. Kimball, “Remarks,” November 2, 1856, *Deseret News*, November 12, 1856, 282.

ing the present system of ox trains “will financially use us up.” He bitterly remarked that he had been “about half mad ever since, and that too righteously, because of the reckless squandering of means and leaving me to foot the bills.” Yet again he publicly scolded Erastus Snow for incurring “over sixty thousand dollars of indebtedness incurred for me to pay. What for? To fetch a few immigrants here, when I could have brought the whole of them with one quarter of the means.” He rambled on: “I cannot help what is out of my reach, but I am on hand to send more teams, and to send and send, until, if it is necessary, we are perfectly stopped in every kind of business.” He could send more teams, he acknowledged, “but I do not intend that the fetters shall be on me another season.”¹¹⁵

Apparently believing his rhetoric had reduced the crisis to manageable proportions, Brigham Young turned his attention to his cherished steam engine. On October 16, Salt Lake County sheriff Robert Taylor Burton and George D. Grant’s relief train met Abraham O. Smoot’s Church train eighty miles east of Fort Bridger at the Big Sandy. They provided his train with eighteen or nineteen men, “several span of horses & mules & wagons, also Beef, Flour & Vegetables.”¹¹⁶ Smoot’s freight train was in desperate shape, but these diverted animals and supplies could have helped rescue starving handcart pioneers.

On October 28, as disaster overwhelmed the last two handcart companies, Smoot reported to President Young from Fort Bridger. Traveling about a week ahead of the Willie Company, the twenty-two heavily laden “Church Wagons” in his freight train had kept crawling forward despite “a long & tedious snow storm” that had battered the party “for the last 7 or 8 days.” They had managed to reach the fort, but the teams had given out. Continuing on was not possible. Now Smoot informed Young that he thought he would store “the Books, Thrashing machine, your Engine & fixtures & a part of the nails, glass & groceries & perhaps a portion of the Dry Goods” at the post for the

¹¹⁵Brigham Young, November 2, 1856, *Journal of Discourses*, 4:69.

¹¹⁶Caleb Grant, Report, December 12, 1856, in Church Emigration Book, LDS Church Library.

winter.¹¹⁷ Smoot's train left "8 Wagons & their freight" behind when it left the fort on October 30.¹¹⁸

Smoot's decision seems to have been a prudent one, but Brigham Young had other ideas. Franklin Benjamin Woolley, one of Smoot's teamsters, recalled that the train continued on to Echo Canyon. Here "Bro Smoot received a letter from Bro Young directing him to bring all the goods in and if he had not enough teams to call upon the brethren who were out in the mountains with ox teams to assist the hand cart emigrations, to assist in bring[ing in] the wagons."¹¹⁹ Smoot's clerk, Caleb Grant, confirmed that, on November 3, "we met an express from the Governor, stating that some one was to return & bring on from Bridger the wagons & freight we had left there as well as several useless & tired out cattle left there by us."¹²⁰

Smoot assigned the twenty-two-year-old Woolley and a single companion to do the job. On November 4, the two met the survivors of James G. Willie's company on Bear River. Willie was unable to walk, and rescue leader William H. Kimball had departed that morning for Salt Lake to "report the condition of things in the mountains." He left the party in charge of Mormon Battalion veteran William Hyde and a man named Gould. Two days earlier, the Willie Company "had not teams enough to haul the feeble that were left behind." Now the company learned "that President B. Young had sent word that some freight still lying at 'Fort Bridger' was to be brought in this season & that some teams and men of our company were needed to go on to 'Bridger,'" William Woodward wrote in the camp journal. "Several teams & men were selected for the trip."¹²¹ Woolley recalled he had to do "considerable talking to some of the brethren who feared the season was too late to venture back to the

¹¹⁷Abraham O. Smoot, Letter to Brigham Young, October 28, 1856, Brigham Young Collection. "Had I met at or near the South Pass 40 yokes of good fresh cattle as I anticipated we should have been able to have brought all the Freight in," Smoot told Young, "but, why they have not met me, you know better than I."

¹¹⁸Grant, Report, December 12, 1856.

¹¹⁹Franklin Benjamin Woolley, *Autobiography* [ca. 1856], 15, LDS Church Library, <http://www.lds.org/churchhistory/library/source/0,18016,4976-2799,00.html> (accessed July 31, 2006).

¹²⁰Caleb Grant, Report, December 12, 1856.

¹²¹William Woodward, James G. Willie Emigrating Company Jour-

fort with cattle.”¹²² Willie’s party was still eighty miles from Salt Lake. The Martin Company was still trapped at Martin’s Cove, where the next day their “ration of flour was reduced to 4 oz. and 2 oz for the children.”¹²³

The month of November—now full winter—ground on. Bad news poured into Salt Lake from the mountains. “It is not of much use for me to attempt to give a description of the situation of these people,” George D. Grant wrote to Brigham Young from Devil’s Gate on November 2, but his report provided grim details on the extent of the disaster and the condition of the Martin train and its “between five and six hundred men, women and children, worn down by drawing hand carts through snow and mud; fainting by the way side; falling, chilled by the cold; children crying, their limbs stiffened by cold, their feet bleeding and some of them bare to snow and frost.” The sight was almost too much for “the stoutest” of these veteran frontiersmen, “but we go on doing all we can, not doubting nor despairing,” Grant reported. “Our company is too small to help much, it is only a drop to a bucket, as it were, in comparison to what is needed.” Grant reported that only about one in three of the members of Martin’s company was able to walk. “Some of them have good courage and are in good spirits; but a great many are like children and do not help themselves much more, nor realize what is before them.” Accompanied by Abel Garr, Joseph A. Young arrived in Salt Lake at 4:00 A.M. on November 13 and delivered the grisly report to his father.¹²⁴

Two days earlier, an express rider had brought distressing news “from Fort Bridger to the effect that C N Spencer & John Van Cott having been to the Sweet Water and hearing nothing of the last train of Hand Carts had returned and returning had caused all the teams which had gone on the road to help them” to likewise turn back to

nal, November 4–9, 1856, LDS Church Library, <http://www.lds.org/churchhistory/library/source/0,18016,4976-7439,00.html> (accessed September 5, 2006).

¹²²Woolley, *Autobiography*, 15, LDS Church Library.

¹²³Bleak, *Journal*, November 5, 1856.

¹²⁴George D. Grant, “The Companies Yet on the Plains,” and “Express,” both *Deseret News*, November 19, 1856, 293.

ward the valley, wrote Hosea Stout.¹²⁵ Lewis Robison and Thomas D. Brown had sent the letter with courier John Tobin five hours after Spencer and Van Cott had arrived at the post at 1:00 P.M. on November 9. They had been to Independence Rock, where they found the snow ten inches deep and heard no news about the last two handcart companies. Fearing for their own safety, they turned back. “At 5 this eveg. judge our surprise on seeing the arrival of 50 or 60 good fat teams bound for the city!” Robison wrote to Young on November 9. The relief effort was collapsing. Robison reported that only George Grant’s ten wagons were still attempting to find the Martin Company and “the balance are pretty near all on the return! Our Beef is out, & we have a very small supply of flour here.” Robison blamed Van Cott and Spencer—“these noble philanthropists”—for the breakdown of the relief effort, which was clearly in bad shape. “Some are complaining that they could go no farther for want of provisions, others out of the same Co[mpan]y are offering their flour for sale to me,” Robison added.¹²⁶

Brigham Young immediately dispatched William H. Kimball, Joseph Simmons, James Ferguson, and Hosea Stout “as an express to go and turn the teams East again.” Stout reported that seventy-seven teams “had now arrived at Fort Bridger and was now only waiting word from Prest. Young.” On the morning of November 12, they met Van Cott near the summit of Big Mountain, less than twenty miles from Salt Lake, Spencer having slipped by the men and “gone home in the night.” Van Cott “justified himself for returning and abandoning the Hand Cart Company as he could get no information of them and had concluded they had returned to the states, or Stopt at Larimie, been killed by the Indians or other wise gone to the devil and for him to have gone further was only to loose his team and starve to death himself & do no good,” Stout reported. “So on these vague conclusions he had not only turned back but had caused all the rest of the teams to return and thus leave the poor suffering Hand carters to their fate.” Kimball reprimanded Van Cott “severely for his course”; and after Kimball read him a letter from Brigham Young addressed to “Brethren on the Road,” the chastened Van Cott “turned back and

¹²⁵Brooks, *On the Mormon Frontier*, November 11, 1856, 2:605.

¹²⁶Lewis Robison, Letter to Brigham Young, November 9, 1856, Brigham Young Collection.

went with us.”¹²⁷

Meanwhile, the Willie Company struggled west into the Great Salt Lake Basin. Eight more members of the company, ranging in age from eight to sixty-six years, died before they reached the valley. A snowstorm caught them in Echo Canyon on November 5 and left the people “much exposed to cold from lying on the cold ground.” It continued snowing most of the next day, November 6, as the company forded the Weber River. “The camping ground presented a most dismal appearance, as we rolled on to it there being much snow on the ground & it being late at night,” camp journalist William Woodward wrote.¹²⁸

Abraham O. Smoot’s church freight train rumbled into Great Salt Lake City on November 9, the same day as the survivors of the Willie Company. Three days later, the *Deseret News* saluted the handcart veterans and “the thankful and joyous spirit they manifested.” The article reported, inaccurately, that the train’s mortality rate had been far less than that in many wagon companies. “The eminent feasibility of the hand-cart movement had been previously demonstrated,” the *News* trumpeted, “its healthfulness is now proven by the experience of this company.”¹²⁹

Back at Fort Bridger, Franklin Woolley “succeeded in obtaining enough [men and teams] to answer my purpose and brought everything in, in good condition.” His obedient teamsters dragged the steam engine, threshing machine, nails, glass, and dry goods out of Fort Bridger and, with Herculean effort, brought their cargo the rest of the way over Big Mountain and into the Salt Lake Valley on before the shattered remnants of the Martin Company arrived on November 30. The *Deseret News* did not report Woolley’s arrival or even mention the steam engine. Perhaps Brigham Young parked it in some corner of his estate over the winter, since it disappears from the historical record for months. Exactly what Young intended to do with a steamboat on the Great Salt Lake is not clear. William Chandless, a sympathetic British visitor to Salt Lake in 1855, heard “it was in contemplation to start a small steamer on Salt Lake, that in high water might run up the Jordan near the city and connect it with the most northern settle-

¹²⁷Brooks, *On the Mormon Frontier*, November 12, 1856, 2:605–6.

¹²⁸Woodward, Willie Emigrating Company Journal, November 4–9, 1856.

¹²⁹“Arrivals,” *Deseret News*, November 12, 1856, 285.

ments; or even up Bear River, if emigration should come by a more northerly route than at present.” Chandless observed that importing such machinery involved “vast expense and difficulty” and made such “a scheme, even if otherwise practicable, quite visionary, until the Mormons have extended their ironworks; machinery, if imported, could be applied to fifty more useful purposes.”¹³⁰

The steam engine might have been part of an ambitious plan to transport coal from Sanpete County, across Utah Lake, and down the Jordan River, even though the Jordan was not navigable and it would have required substantial effort to make such a plan feasible.¹³¹ Alternatively, it may be that the Mormon leader actually had no clear idea about its purpose, for, in March 1857, Young sent the engine south to the iron works at remote Cedar City to replace two 30-horsepower engines that had arrived a year earlier “but had not worked well.” The Deseret Iron Company paid \$2,181 for the engine it had not requested.¹³²

The Martin Company staggered westward from Devil’s Gate in a kind of fatalistic numbness for almost another month. It was not until the party reached Fort Bridger in late November that enough wagons arrived that the survivors could be loaded aboard and hauled into the valley. “Notwithstanding some deaths and the suffering and frost bites since leaving the North Fork of the Platte,” the *Deseret News* cheerfully proclaimed, “we can plainly recognize the kind hand of an overruling Providence in opening a way of escape for so many, in dictating wise and timely counsels to the living Oracles.”¹³³ It did not report the number of fatalities among the Martin Company, which was the hardest hit, nor was any count made of the permanent injuries caused by malnutrition and frostbite requiring amputation.

“We have quite a task upon us this season,” Brigham Young had announced in the old adobe tabernacle on November 30, the last Sunday of the month, “for when the last hand-cart company arrives and is comfortably disposed of, we still have about 400 more brethren and

¹³⁰Chandless, *A Visit to Salt Lake*, 140.

¹³¹I am indebted to Lyndia McDowell Carter for this suggestion.

¹³²Shirts and Shirts, *A Trial Furnace*, 379–80. Young canceled another order for a steam engine for the iron works that he had sent to Erastus Snow. Horace S. Eldredge, Letter to Brigham Young, May 25, 1857, Brigham Young Collection.

¹³³“Arrival,” *Deseret News*, December 3, 1856, 309.

sisters who are yet beyond Fort Bridger, probably near Green river." He was speaking of the last independent wagon companies, made up of emigrants who had financed their own passage and commercial freight wagons. They were stranded 170 miles from Salt Lake on Green River, Young said, "subsisting upon cattle that drop down through weakness and exposure, which is certainly hard fare. Still, do not be scared, for they will eat and live and come here." He assigned the task of raising fifty more relief teams to Utah and Tooele counties.¹³⁴

Brigham Young announced that the afternoon meeting would be cancelled to prepare for the Martin Company survivors, then expected momentarily. "The Bishops will distribute them as the people can receive them," he ordered, pledging himself to shelter those who could not find other homes. Praying for their welfare was good, he advised, but it would not replace "baked potatoes, pudding, and milk. . . . Some you will find with their feet frozen to their ankles; some are frozen to their knees and some have their hands frosted. They want good nursing," he said. "We will continue our labors of love, until they are able to take care of themselves, and we will receive the blessing. You need not be distrustful about that, for the Lord will bless this people; and I feel to bless them all the time, and this I continually try to carry out in my life."¹³⁵

The congregation spilled out of the tabernacle on the southwest corner of the Temple Block onto East Temple Street just as the Martin Company arrived. "The meeting of the emigrants with relatives, acquaintances, and friends was not very joyous. Indeed it was very solemnly impressive," recalled John Jaques. Friends and strangers took the survivors into their homes "while they thawed the frost out of their limbs and recruited their health and strength." With impressive understatement, Jaques concluded, expressing the belief that "none of the emigrants would be willing to endure another such a journey under any circumstances whatever. One in a lifetime is enough."¹³⁶

Even before the arrival of the Willie Company on November 9, the extent of the disaster had shocked the inhabitants of Great Salt Lake City and the debate over who was to blame for the debacle had al-

¹³⁴Brigham Young, "Remarks, November 30, 1856," *Deseret News*, December 10, 1856, 320.

¹³⁵*Ibid.*

¹³⁶John Jaques, "Some Reminiscences," *Salt Lake Daily Herald*, December 22, 1878, 1.

ready begun. Speaking in the Old Tabernacle on November 2, Heber C. Kimball had rebuked the congregation, mimicking their reproaches: "What an awful thing it is! Why is it that the First Presidency are so unwise in their calculations?"¹³⁷ An angry Brigham Young had demanded: "What is the cause of our immigration's being so late this season? The ignorance and mismanagement of some who had to do with it." He tempered this chastisement with the grudging admission: "Still, perhaps, they did the best they knew how." He was reluctant to "attach blame to either" Daniel Spencer or Franklin D. Richards, but then his fury broke out again: "But if, while at the Missouri river, they had received a hint from any person on this earth, or if even a bird had chirped it in the ears of brs. Richards and Spencer, they would have known better than to rush men, women and children on to the prairie in the autumn months, on the 3d of September, to travel over a thousand miles." Young tacitly admitted that his own desire for a massive emigration that season may have made his lieutenants overzealous: "We have not expressly, and with a penalty, forbidden the immigration to start late." But he completely rejected the question of his own accountability and threatened: "If any man, or woman, complains of me or of my Counselors, in regard to the lateness of some of this season's immigration, let the curse of God be on them and blast their substance with mildew and destruction, until their names are forgotten from the earth."¹³⁸

Young's two counselors loyally agreed. Kimball blamed Satan: "The devil has tried to hedge up the way, so that we should not bring about the wise plans devised by our President, and has tried to make those plans look as disagreeable and as miserable as possible." Kimball added a threat of his own: "Not one of you will ever go through the straight gate into the kingdom of God, except those that go through by that man."¹³⁹ Jedediah M. Grant extended Brigham Young's defense to the whole First Presidency: "I do not believe that the biggest fool in the community could entertain the thought that all this loss of life, time, and means, was through the mismanagement of

¹³⁷Heber C. Kimball, "Remarks, November 2, 1856," *Deseret News*, November 12, 1856, 282–83.

¹³⁸Young, "Remarks," November 2, 1856, 283.

¹³⁹Kimball, "Remarks," 282–83.

the First Presidency.”¹⁴⁰

On November 16, with the desperate Martin Company still limping through the mountains, Brigham Young again addressed the Saints. “I believe it is better for the people to lay down their bones by the way side, than it is for them to stay in the States and apostatize,” he said. The Saints had the power and ability to help the handcart victims, so it became their duty to do so. “But if there had been no other way the Lord would have helped them, if he had had to have sent his angels to drive up buffaloes day after day, and week after week.”¹⁴¹ Despite his sympathy for the survivors, Young minimized their misery, writing expansively but inaccurately to George Q. Cannon on December 7, 1856: “The relief so promptly, freely, liberally and timely sent from here was so blest in rescuing them that but few, comparatively, have suffered severely, though some had their feet and hands more or less frosted; yet the mortality has been much less than attends well fitted animal trains traveling in good season.”¹⁴²

**“THE HAND CARTS NOW OR DIE”:
THE HANDCART MISSIONARIES AND THE 1857 TRAINS**

“We are not in the least discouraged about the handcart method of travelling,” Brigham Young asserted boldly after the Willie Company’s arrival. The First Presidency, unable to admit the handcart experiment had failed and refusing to give up the plan, officially pronounced it a success in a general epistle on December 10, 1856: “This season’s operations have demonstrated that the Saints, being filled with faith and the Holy Ghost, can walk across the plains, drawing their provisions and clothing on hand carts. The experience of this season will of course help us to improve in future operations; but the plan has been fairly tested and proved entirely successful.” The epistle also claimed that the system was “as easy as and indeed easier than that method hitherto practiced; and the women endured the trip

¹⁴⁰Jedediah M. Grant, “Discourse, November 2, 1856,” *Deseret News*, November 12, 1856, 284.

¹⁴¹Young, “Remarks, November 16, 1856,” *Deseret News*, November 26, 1856, 298.

¹⁴²Ekins, *Defending Zion*, 216.

quite as well, in comparison, as the men.”¹⁴³

Despite such assurances, the disaster that befell the Willie and Martin companies “turned people against handcart travel,” historians LeRoy and Ann Hafen concluded. “A dramatic and successful demonstration of the efficiency of handcart travel was needed. This might have the desired psychological effect and restore the humble vehicle to favor.”¹⁴⁴ On February 1, 1857, Heber C. Kimball hinted that the First Presidency planned to send the missionaries called that spring east in handcarts.¹⁴⁵ On the morning of April 23, 1857, Brigham Young gave a rousing send-off to about seventy “Handcart Missionaries” bound for the Missouri River equipped with redesigned handcarts.¹⁴⁶

In contrast to the ten celebrated westbound handcart trains, this hand-picked company is practically forgotten. Its purpose was to demonstrate that the handcart system was eminently workable when properly managed. These missionaries had a number of advantages over the European converts who made up most of the handcart emigrants. Their simple presence in Utah showed they were veteran frontiersmen who already reached the isolated territory over the long trails from the Missouri River, California, or other points in the Far West. They did not have to endure a stressful trans-Atlantic sea voyage and an exhausting train trip but could make a fresh start. Although their early departure virtually insured they would encounter extreme weather while crossing South Pass, the party could count on improving conditions rather than face a steadily deepening winter. Significantly they were all male, and

¹⁴³Hafen and Hafen, *Handcarts to Zion*, 144; and “Fourteenth General Epistle,” *Deseret News*, December 10, 1856, 313–14, <http://www.lds.org/churchhistory/library/source/0,18016,4976-8764,00.html>, (accessed July 22, 2006). The epistle was accurate on one point: modern studies show that women not only endure ordeals involving starvation as well as men, but they survive at higher rates. The epistle also recommended improvements in the design of the handcarts and sending the “very aged and infirm” in a separate train. “By observing these suggestions it is believed that, with one four or six mule team to each two hundred persons, the emigration will be much facilitated at a still lessened expense.”

¹⁴⁴Hafen and Hafen, *Handcarts to Zion*, 143–44.

¹⁴⁵Heber C. Kimball, “Remarks,” February 1, 1857, *Journal of Discourses*, 4:208.

¹⁴⁶See Karen Ann Griggs, “Handcarts Going East: The 1857 Missionaries,” *Journal of Mormon History* 35, no. 1 (Spring 2009): forthcoming.

nearly all of them were young and healthy.¹⁴⁷ As Ann Eliza Webb Young put it, “They had the advantage in everything.”¹⁴⁸ Most significantly, they each carried more than one hundred pounds of provisions: these benefits allowed them to cross the last five hundred miles to Florence, Nebraska, “in 18 days traveling from 25 to 35 miles per day & our Load averageing from 150 to 200lbs,” as British convert and Salt Lake actor Phillip Margetts wrote.¹⁴⁹

Perhaps the handcart missionaries’ greatest asset was their devotion to the cause, which Margetts expressed in lyrics he set to the tune of the “O Susanna”:

Some men would ask, “why do you start
with carts, come tell, I pray?”
We answer when our Prophet speaks
the Elders all obey;
Since Brigham has the way laid out
that’s best for us, we’ll try,
Stand off you sympathetic fools,
the hand carts now or die.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷Canadian missionary John N. Wakley, age thirty-seven, was an exception. He suffered from recurring bouts of rheumatic fever and was just beginning to learn to read. “The nights were cold and the missionaries must sleep on the ground, and John suffered greatly,” his youngest daughter recalled. According to his companions, sometimes he needed to cling to his cart simply to rise from the ground in the morning. “Therefore, when I think of that valiant band of men, the handcart missionaries, I always seem to see the figure of my father, always in the rear, but determinedly facing east and never ready to quit,” she wrote. See Ida Wakley Brown, “Pioneer: The Life of John Nelson Wakley,” Chapter 4 of Darrel La Mar Wakley, *Downey and Beyond*, digital family history, <http://www.ida.net/users/lamar/pioneer1.html> (accessed November 18, 2007).

¹⁴⁸Ann Eliza Young, *Wife No. 19, or the Story of a Life in Bondage* (Hartford, Conn: Dustin, Gilman & Co., 1875), 227.

¹⁴⁹Phillip Margetts, Letter to Elizabeth Margetts, June 14, 1857. My thanks to Michelle Margetts for providing her transcription of her distinguished ancestor’s holograph letter.

¹⁵⁰Phillip Margetts, “Correspondence,” *Deseret News*, May 20, 1857, 88.

Ann Eliza Webb Young's credibility is easily attacked, especially since she thought the handcart system ended with the trek of these missionaries, but her comments are based on information from her father, wagonwright Chauncey Webb. Webb, who directed construction of the 1856 carts, was on his way east in 1857 to build wagons for the BYX Company. Webb overtook the handcart missionaries at Devil's Gate, where, according to his daughter, he "found them completely jaded and worn out. In truth, they were almost dead from weariness. They travelled slowly, making long stops to rest, and finally they reached the Missouri River in a perfect state of exhaustion. They left their carts there with the utmost willingness, showing wonderful alacrity at abandoning a 'divine' scheme."¹⁵¹

The missionaries themselves hailed the trek as a great success: "We traveled with our hand-carts across the plains to Florence, Nebraska Territory, without horse, mules, cow, or any other animal to assist: drawing in them our provisions, bedding, cooking utensils, tents, &c., at which place we arrived in the full enjoyment of health on [June 10, 1857], making the entire trip from point to point in 48 days," read the official report by Daniel Mackintosh, the "Clerk of the Hand-Cart Company." He added, "but out of that number, we lay by to rest, repair carts, &c., 7½ days, which would make the total number of traveling days 40½, and we would remark that we are satisfied that the trip can be accomplished in a shorter period, say from 30 to 35 days."¹⁵²

Margetts's letter to his wife was also upbeat, but virtually every sentence begins with enthusiasm and concludes with a more realistic description: "I will not attempt to relate to you all the incidents which happened on our trip suffice it to say that in all our hardships the Lord was with us & blessed us," then added fervently, "and thank God it is over now." He praised the system as "the prettiest way to travel that ever was but we traveled quick which made it hard work for some." Even his expressions of affection reveal the difficulty of the trek: "I thought of you when I have come into Camp with my feet all—all Blisterd & fatiged in body with no one to Console me but him

¹⁵¹Ann Eliza Young, *Wife No. 19*, 227.

¹⁵²Daniel Mackintosh, "Correspondence of Elder Daniel Mackintosh," *The Mormon*, July 4, 1857, 3, <http://www.lds.org/churchhistory/library/source/0,18016,4976-8890,00.html> (accessed July 26, 2006). My great-great-grandfather, David Brinton, was captain of the fourth ten in the party.

witch is above all. Then as soon as we arrived in Camp the next thing was to do another half days work that was to get Chips & Cook supper.”¹⁵³

Good publicity did not conceal the fact that several hundred disillusioned Mormons, including a large number of handcart veterans, desperately wanted to escape the promised land they had sacrificed so much to reach. As early as January 7, 1857, Brigham Young wrote to George Q. Cannon, who was then editing the *Western Standard* in San Francisco: “It is rather warm for the wicked, and we expect when spring comes there will be a scattering out of such as cannot abide righteousness.”¹⁵⁴ He claimed that he would be glad to see them go but insisted that emigrants who owed money to the PEF pay up before departing. While such demands were perhaps understandable, given the cash-starved economy, it added a final bitterness to the feelings with which many of the disillusioned departed.

For example, eight members of the Hillhouse family came to Utah in 1856 with the second handcart company under Daniel McArthur. When they tried to leave the next spring, Jeannette Hillhouse recalled that they were pursued and captured by “a posse of seven mounted Danites” who, “with drawn revolvers” ordered them to return “under penalty of instant death.” They did, in fact, arrest her husband, apparently for debts owed to the Church; but Jeannette pressed on with her three-year-old and baby, saying her family “had starved while there for want of work.” She apparently joined a party of some three hundred defectors that included William Aitken, who had also come in Daniel McArthur’s second handcart company. Aitken said that they had only “a little provisions” but were “all determined to get off or die.”¹⁵⁵

Frederic Loba, a Swiss apostate, told an improbable tale to the *New York Times*. Brigham Young had organized four hundred “Wolf

¹⁵³Phillip Margetts, Letter to Elizabeth Margetts, June 14, 1857.

¹⁵⁴Brigham Young, Letter to George Q. Cannon, January 7, 1857, *Western Standard*, February 21, 1857, 2, in Ekins, *Defending Zion*, 234.

¹⁵⁵Jeannette Hillhouse, “Story of the Hillhouse Family,” in Mrs. E. F. Hollibaugh, *Biographical History of Cloud County, Kansas: Biographies of Representative Citizens* [Kansas City?]: Author, 1903), 539–45; and Aitken, “Adventures of a Mormon.” Jeannette Hillhouse established a successful “dress-making establishment” in Plattsmouth, Nebraska, where her husband joined her more than two years later after barely escaping the fate of the Fanch-

Hunters” whose duty “was to assassinate every person who should attempt to leave the Valley without permission of the Prophet.”¹⁵⁶ Leonard Arrington claimed, “There is no evidence that debtors were abused or that the indebtedness was held *in terrorem* over them,” but block teachers were required to file annual reports on the status of each family’s debt to the PEF and its ability to pay.¹⁵⁷ The restrictions of their freedom to travel were dramatic and strictly enforced. “Those too poor to pay what they owed, such as most PEF emigrants, had no choice but to remain in Utah,” concluded Polly Aird in her article on 1857 defections.¹⁵⁸

THAT WEARISOME JOURNEY OVER THE PLAINS: THE HANDCART TRAINS OF 1857, 1859, AND 1860

In the wake of the Martin and Willie company tragedies of 1856, and after the comedic charade of the handcart missionaries the following spring, five more handcart parties crossed the plains: two in 1857, one in 1859, and two final trains in 1860. The turmoil caused by the Utah War dramatically reduced all Mormon emigration in 1858.

Disturbingly, despite the December 1856 epistle’s pledge “to improve in future operations,” the five handcart companies that followed those of 1856 still suffered from food shortages and mismanagement.¹⁵⁹ The PEF offered no support, and all later handcart emigrants had to pay their own way at an estimated fifty dollars apiece, or more than one thousand contemporary dollars.¹⁶⁰ Given the hard lessons of 1856, the lack of responsibility represented by sending the 1857 handcart trains west without enough supplies to reach South Pass is breath-

er Party while traveling with the “Dukes” train through southern Utah in September 1857. For more, see Bagley and Bigler, *Innocent Blood*, 157.

¹⁵⁶Frederic Loba, “Utah and the Mormons,” *New York Times*, May 1, 1858, p. 4, cols. 5–6.

¹⁵⁷Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, 102.

¹⁵⁸Aird, “You Nasty Apostates, Clear Out,” 136, 150.

¹⁵⁹Traditionally, the westbound handcart companies are numbered sequentially so that the first five traveled in 1856, while the sixth through tenth followed between 1857 and 1860.

¹⁶⁰Whether this estimate included the cost of a handcart is not clear. See the Christiansen Company narrative, <http://www.lds.org/churchhistory/library/narrative/0,18046,4981-1-88,00.html> (accessed November 16, 2007). “The fare was \$20.00,” according to Theodore

taking. In the wake of the 1856 handcart disasters, Young did take positive steps to avoid a similar catastrophe. In April 1857, the Deseret Express was transformed into the Brigham Young Express and Carrying Company. At Young's request, early in 1856 John Taylor had sent Bishop Andrew Cunningham to establish the first of some seventy-five planned Y.X. supply-and-relay stations at Beaver Creek near the Loup Fork, some 925 miles east of Salt Lake. In June 1857 Horace Eldredge appointed Joel Hills Johnson to preside over the settlement on Beaver Creek, now named Genoa "after the birthplace of the great discoverer of the American continent."¹⁶¹ In Salt Lake, Brigham Young was working hard to add more stations at critical points in today's Wyoming, such as Deer Creek, near today's Glenrock; Horseshoe Creek, now two miles from Glendo; La Bonte Creek, ten miles south of Douglas; and at Devil's Gate, Rocky Ridge, and Fort Supply, an existing Mormon settlement near Fort Bridger.¹⁶²

"The Y.X. Co. is in a flourishing condition, we are sending out from 40 to 65 animals every mail, which we wish to increasingly continue until we get the road stocked with 1800 horses & mules," Young informed George Q. Cannon on the Fourth of July. "We have sent Elders A. O. Smoot & N. V. Jones with 80 men, to locate permanent stations in the Black Hills, which we design as resting places to those of our emigration who have not means to come through, or who may be too late as was the case last fall. Of course we shall plentifully supply them with provisions &c."¹⁶³

But the government terminated Brigham Young's mail contract shortly after it ordered troops to Utah, and all the investment in the Y.X. Express literally went up in smoke. "Nearly \$200,000 was expended during the winter of 1856-57 to establish way stations, purchase teams and wagons, hire help, and to buy equipment and other supplies," historian Leonard Arrington concluded. "The resources of

Dedricksson, an 1856 handcart pioneer. Biographical sketch, *Our Pioneer Heritage*, 7:486-87.

¹⁶¹Joel Hills Johnson, Journal, June 1 and 9, 1857, <http://heritage.uen.org/companies/Wc18f9c7f10851.htm> (accessed August 24, 2008).

¹⁶²Stanley B. Kimball, *Historic Resource Study: Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trail* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior/National Park Service, 1991): 69-70, http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/mopi/hrst.htm (accessed July 18, 2006).

¹⁶³Young to Cannon, July 4, 1857, in Ekins, *Defending Zion*, 242.

the Church were almost exhausted in this venture.”¹⁶⁴

The result was hunger for the 1857 handcart pioneers. The 149 members of Israel Evans’s sixth handcart company, Robert Fishburn recalled, “finished up everything we had in the company in the shape of provisions,” before reaching Fort Laramie. Evans informed his charges there were supplies stored at Horseshoe Creek and “then asked us how we felt about handing over our outfits, which consisted of our handcarts, teams and wagons, tents, cooking utensils, etc., to the Church when we arrived in Salt Lake City,” in exchange for enough food to complete the journey. “We very willingly agreed to hand them over rather than starve.” Fishburn admitted that his companions “could not help but feel that somebody was at fault for the scanty supply of provisions furnished us.” Still, he loyally added, “we could not do otherwise than acknowledge the hand of a kind and over-ruling Providence in blessing his servant Brigham with wisdom and foresight sufficient to cause such an abundance of provisions to be sent out and stored at different points.”¹⁶⁵

“We were only poorly supplied with provisions when we left Florence and had a thousand miles of wilderness to cover before we could expect any more,” acknowledged C. C. A. Christensen, traveling in the seventh company. The smoked pork, beef jerky, sugar, coffee, and salt initially provided for the handcart trekkers “lasted only about three weeks in most cases, and after that there was naturally flour, flour, flour, and only flour to eat. With this they baked bread, cooked porridge, gruel, soup, coffee, pancakes, and several other nice dishes, but still it was just flour, flour, and flour; and at one point the flour was scarce, too.” He summarizes: They were “subjected to almost every deprivation that people could bear and endure, and that for all of thirteen weeks.”¹⁶⁶

Ironically, the Utah Expedition, sent to the territory to restore federal authority, establish a military department, and insure that Brigham Young accepted his replacement as governor, helped to feed the hungry handcart trains. When the 330 members of Christian

¹⁶⁴Leonard J. Arrington, “Mormon Finance and the Utah War,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 20, no. 3 (July 1952): 219–37.

¹⁶⁵Robert Fishburn, “Pioneer Autobiographies,” in Daughters of Utah Pioneer Lesson Committee, comps., *Chronicles of Courage*, 8 vols. (Salt Lake City: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1990–97), 2:205–6.

¹⁶⁶Christensen, “By Handcart to Utah,” 337–44.

Christiansen's seventh handcart company ran out of supplies on the Sweetwater River, a captain in the army's provision train "approached us and said in a kindly way, that one of his oxen had a crushed foot," Carl Dorius wrote. "If we could use it we were welcome to have it. This came as a blessing, because the company had been without any meat for several weeks. It was a real treat. We ran out of food and sent to Salt Lake City for provisions which came too late to help. One tenth of the company died for want of care and nourishment."¹⁶⁷

That fall, in an eerie repeat of the previous fall's killing weather, the U.S. Army encountered a blizzard, subzero temperatures, and "famished mules" at South Pass. Army sutler William Carter, who later built a ranching and trading empire near Fort Bridger, recalled November 8–9, 1857, as "an awful night. . . . The wind swept with wild fury drifting the snow around us and up across our road. At every half mile a mule was turned loose unable to proceed any further."¹⁶⁸ Similar conditions had killed more than two hundred Latter-day Saints, but "only one man died" during the army's arduous march, "and he had been the victim of lockjaw," concluded historian Norman F. Furniss. He attributes this survival rate to Colonel Philip St. George Cooke's leadership and adequate rations for the men.¹⁶⁹ Late in 1857, Captain Jesse Gove's detailed inventory of the Utah Expedi-

¹⁶⁷Carl Dorius, Journal, translation from Danish reproduced in Earl N. Dorius and Ruth C. Rasmussen, *The Dorius Heritage* (Salt Lake City: E. N. Dorius, 1979), 86–88. Two other members of the company also recalled the same incident with gratitude. James Jensen, "Reminiscences: Biography of James Jensen by J. M. Tanner," 12–41, in *Journal History*, September 13, 1857, 12, 16–22; "Recollections of Kersten Erickson Benson Coming to Zion in 1857," 1–3, in Benson Biographical File, LDS Church Library, <http://www.lds.org/churchhistory/library/source/0,18016,4976-4956,00.html> (accessed July 20, 2008).

¹⁶⁸William A. Carter, Diary, November 9–10, 1857, Wyoming State Archives, from typescript copy of holograph by David L. Bigler. See also William A. Carter, "Diary of Judge William A. Carter Describes Life on the Trail in 1857," *Annals of Wyoming* 11, no. 2 (April 1939): 75–113.

¹⁶⁹Furniss, *The Mormon Conflict*, 118. Historian John Eldredge's research indicates that the dragoons may have sustained an additional casualty during the blizzard, when a ricochet killed a soldier who was executing dying mules. Personal communication with Will Bagley, notes on Utah

tion's supply wagons at Fort Bridger counted "some 800 heavy wagon loads, 6000 lbs. each," which did not include the three supply trains Lot Smith's raiders burned.¹⁷⁰ These figures represented a ratio of almost one wagon for every three soldiers, based on the army's paper strength of 2,500 men, but a ratio of nearly 2:1 to support its actual total of 1,500 men. In contrast, historian William Hartley estimated that the Willie and Martin companies had only twelve wagons to support 1,075 emigrants.¹⁷¹

"Of course it was a dreadfully hard journey and like the other companies we suffered from lack of food," recalled Hannah Lapish, who traveled with Daniel Robison's ninth handcart party in 1860. She traded her jewelry on the trail for seven hundred pounds of flour that ran out by the time her train reached Green River. "Our company was one of the last companies to make the journey in that pathetic way," she remembered. "We handcart people will never outlive the memory of those experiences."¹⁷²

William Atkin remembered that George Rowley's eighth handcart company found a large bed of prickly pear cactus and "tried many ways to cook them so we could eat them. Some took the last morsel of bacon they had, peeled the prickly pears and fried them, others peeled and boiled them, while other placed in the fire and roasted them, but all to no purpose."¹⁷³

Henry Hobbs, also traveling with the George Rowley Company,

Westerners' fieldtrip, June 29, 2007.

¹⁷⁰Jesse A. Gove, *The Utah Expedition, 1857-1858: Letters of Capt. Jesse A. Gove, 10th Inf., U.S.A., of Concord, N.H., to Mrs. Gove, and Special Correspondence of the New York Herald*, edited by Otis G. Hammond (Concord: New Hampshire Historical Society, 1928), 98, 99.

¹⁷¹William G. Hartley, "Handcarts," in *Utah History Encyclopedia*, edited by Allan Kent Powell (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1994), 243.

¹⁷²Hannah Lapish, Recollection, cited as "Journal" in Handcart Stories, 37-40, LDS Church Library, <http://www.lds.org/churchhistory/library/source/0,18016,4976-5930,00.html> (accessed July 22, 2006); ellipses omitted. Lapish was the woman whom Sarah Beesley described as "very enthusiastic about" the handcart story.

¹⁷³William Atkin, "Handcart Experience," serialized in *St. George Union*, May 14, 1896, to November 14, 1896. Also in *Heart Throbs of the West*, 6:380-94; and <http://www.lds.org/churchhistory/library/source/0>,

describes their suffering west of South Pass in 1859. "Many of the Saints are faint worn & weary & comming in hours after the rest," Hobbs wrote. "Much of this weakness is caused through the lack of food." He also observed: "Some who have not a sufficient quantity of clothes suffer the cold nights."¹⁷⁴ John S. Stucki of Stoddard's tenth and last handcart company had "just half as much as is considered an average person needs to live on." One of the last two trains went three days without food.¹⁷⁵ "We didn't have any trouble with the Indians," Sarah Beesley, also in George Rowley's 1859 handcart company, recalled. "In fact they saved our lives at various times, such as when they gave us food." She also remembered that California overlanders "often pitied us and gave us food. Yes, I crossed the plains with a handcart once but I am thankful I have never had to again."¹⁷⁶

"Brigham Young has sent out mule teams with 2,500 lbs. of flour and 500 lbs. of bacon, to meet the first hand-cart company of Mormon immigrants," the *New York Times* reported in 1860 as the last of the handcart trains approached Utah. Despite the Mormon leader's best efforts, however, the emigrants' heartrending accounts demonstrate that their needs continuously overwhelmed the available supplies. For example, at one pound a day, the 359 emigrants in the last two handcart trains in 1860 would consume all that flour in a little more than a week. Yet Young convinced even a skeptical newspaper correspondent that he extended "a most fatherly care over his hand-cart brethren and sisters who 'endure to the end' of that wearisome journey over the Plains."¹⁷⁷ Despite the good press and the supply wagon that had reached his party on the trail, the captain of the ninth handcart company, Daniel Robison, wrote to Young in 1860 a week before reaching Salt Lake to report that he had "served out the last of our provisions" that morning on the Weber River. Many in his

18016,4976-4672,00.html, accessed October 10, 2006.

¹⁷⁴Henry Hobbs, Journal, August 19, 22, 1859, holograph, LDS Church Library, <http://www.lds.org/churchhistory/library/source/0,18016,4976-4680,00.html> (accessed July 20, 2006).

¹⁷⁵John S. Stucki, *Family History Journal of John S. Stucki* (1932; rpt., Bountiful, Utah: Doc Goodie, 1997), <http://www.lds.org/churchhistory/library/source/0,18016,4976-6167,00.html> (accessed August 11, 2006).

¹⁷⁶Beesley, "Reminiscences," 34.

¹⁷⁷"From Utah. The Mails—Indian Troubles, August 17, 1860," *New York Times*, September 11, 1860, 8.

company, which had “quite a number sick,” would be “out of provisions to night as they had to breakfast this morning out of what was served to them.”¹⁷⁸

The *New York Times* reported the October 1860 semi-annual general conference at which Brigham Young announced that “the hand-cart system had been pretty well tried, and, though successful in the proper season, yet it was not altogether satisfactory.” It was as close as the Lion of the Lord ever came to acknowledging that the scheme had failed, but he also announced a new policy that one of Mormonism’s finest historians has recognized as an “Overland Trails Revolution.”¹⁷⁹ The Mormon leader now planned “to send ox-teams from this city in the Spring, with missionaries, the teams to return in the Fall with merchandise and emigrants. It appears that this is to be the method of immigration and trade for the immediate future. Last Spring such a train went from here, and it has lately returned with the same oxen, reported in excellent condition, and with scarcely a casualty,” the *New York Times* continued. “One thing was pretty well indicated at Conference—that the Mormon hand-cart system of immigration has had its day.” The correspondent attributed the change to “the awful disasters of the hand-cart expeditions” of 1856, which “still grate horribly on the memory, the remembrance being kept alive by numerous crippled unfortunates, who were frost-bitten during that time of wretchedness, and who ever and anon obtrude upon the site in the streets of this city and the settlements of the territory.”¹⁸⁰

**“DREADFUL STORIES”:
THE HANDCART DISASTERS AND HISTORY**

And what happened to the steam engine after its exile to south-

¹⁷⁸Daniel Robison, Letter to Brigham Young, August 24, 1860, Brigham Young Office Files. Robison later recalled that Bishop Henefer let his company dig potatoes, which, along with fish from the Weber River, gave everyone a “treat.” He also remembered seeing young girls harnessed to their handcart, with “some pushing, some pulling all day long through the hot, dry sand, with hardly enough food to eat to keep life in their bodies.” Daniel Robison, *Life Sketch*, 1900, available at <http://www.alexanderrobison.org/download.htm> (accessed May 28, 2008).

¹⁷⁹Hartley, “Brigham Young’s Overland Trails Revolution,” 1–30.

¹⁸⁰“FROM UTAH. Arrival of Judge Kinney—The Mormon Conference, October 6, 1860,” *New York Times*, November 9, 1860, 5.

ern Utah? Its subsequent history is murky, but at a few minutes past 10 P.M. on February 11, 1870, "President Young discovered that the shed containing the steam engine which runs the DESERET NEWS press was on fire. He immediately gave the alarm and a number of police officers and a crowd of citizens were quickly on the spot and by their united efforts the fire was soon extinguished." The cause of the fire was "involved in mystery," the *Deseret News* reported, but the machine incurred little damage. The *News* thanked "the many present who extended their aid" for "the promptness and energy displayed on the occasion and especially to Bros. William Calder and John Acomb."¹⁸¹ After the arrival of the transcontinental railroad in the territory nine months earlier, steam engines were no longer a rarity in Utah, so whether this was the historic piece of equipment in question is unclear. But given the special vigilance President Young gave to this particular device, perhaps he had formed an enduring bond with the steam engine A. O. Smoot had brought overland in 1856 at the cost of so much suffering and sacrifice.

With the passage of time, a historian could expect the memories of handcart veterans to soften. This is not, surprisingly, the case. Examined in context, even their most positive remarks on the system disappear into tales of hardship and distress. Priscilla M. Evans's oft-quoted comment, "we thought it was a glorious way to go to Zion," referred to the first leg of her 1856 journey across Iowa with Edward Bunker's company; the rest of her brief narrative is a chronicle of hunger and suffering, relieved only by entertaining encounters with Indians. "After months of traveling we were put on half[-]rations, and at one time before help came, we were out of flour, for two days. We shook the flour sacks to thicken the gravy but had no grease of any kind," she wrote.¹⁸² Even C. C. A. Christensen's happy recollection of how his fellow handcart pioneers "greeted with songs of delight the rising sun which let them see Salt Lake City for the first time" included the details that these ragged survivors were "clothed in rags, with almost bottomless shoes on their feet," with "their lips half eaten

¹⁸¹*Daily Desert News*, February 12, 1870, reprinted in the *Desert Weekly News*, February 16, 1870, p. 20, col. 1. My thanks to Dr. John Gary Maxwell for bringing this item to my attention.

¹⁸²Priscilla M. Evans, *Autobiography* [ca. 1914], item 2, 39–41, LDS Church Library, <http://www.lds.org/churchhistory/library/source/0,18016,4976-2931,00.html> (accessed November 19, 2007).

up by saleratus dust.”¹⁸³

The fanciful articles printed in the *Deseret News* in the wake of the 1856 decimation and the Fourteenth General Epistle claimed that the handcart “plan has been fairly tested and proved entirely successful”; however, they were simply an attempt “to keep the full horror of the disaster from becoming public, especially in England,” historian David L. Bigler has observed. “But it would be safe to estimate the total number of deaths at well over two hundred, or at least one in five of the last two companies, with many others maimed for life.” The number of those who lost limbs or were otherwise permanently disabled has never been calculated. Like the steam engine, many of them found themselves in the remote settlements of southern Utah. “One thing is certain,” Bigler noted, “the handcart disaster of 1856 was the greatest single tragedy in the history of the nation’s move west in the nineteenth century.”¹⁸⁴

An accurate count of all the handcart fatalities may not be possible. “Censuses of the dead were never taken,” historian Tom Rea observed.¹⁸⁵ In 1960, the Hafens estimated that “about 250” people died while traveling with the ten handcart trains.¹⁸⁶ In 1998, BYU Church history professor Susan Easton Black, relying on experts such as Melvin Bashore, Lyndia McDowell Carter, William G. Hartley, Gail G. Holmes, Michael N. Landon, and Fred E. Woods, presented a low estimate of 252 deaths and a high estimate of 340 or more. Carter, the best expert on the subject, “notes that a lack of accurate detailed records makes determining mortality figures extremely difficult,” but she estimated that between 202 and 267 members of the Willie and the Martin companies alone died on the trail, while perhaps more than seventy handcart pioneers traveling with the other eight trains also died.¹⁸⁷ Current official LDS Church sources document 252 deaths among the first five handcart companies, while the last five companies of 1857, 1859, and 1860 suffered twenty-five fatalities.

¹⁸³Christensen, “By Handcart to Utah,” 344.

¹⁸⁴Bigler, *Forgotten Kingdom*, 118. Bigler cited John Chislett’s estimate that about 150 members of the Martin Company died and James Willie’s report that seventy-seven died in his company.

¹⁸⁵Rea, *Devil’s Gate*, 98.

¹⁸⁶Hafens, *Handcarts to Zion*, 193.

¹⁸⁷Susan Easton Black and others, “I Have a Question,” *Ensign*, July 1998, 40–44.

Only Oscar Stoddard's tenth company claimed to have no deaths.¹⁸⁸ But 1860 emigration agent George Q. Cannon, now an apostle, had prophesied, that, if Stoddard's train "would be humble and faithful[,] not one of them should die on the road to the Valley." Stoddard admitted that a family that had joined his train at the Loup Fork in Nebraska had a sick daughter but she "died in East Canyon, a few miles below the foot of the Big Mountain and was buried there," just short of the valley.¹⁸⁹

These figures reflect only the deaths mentioned in the trail sources, ignoring the large number of those who died shortly after reaching Great Salt Lake City. Several contemporary reports suggest that the total death toll was higher. In response to the exaggerated claim of Frederick Loba, a Swiss apostate, that "*two hundred persons were all that survived*," a correspondent told the *New York Times* in 1858, "The facts are bad enough." This anonymous correspondent claimed that he saw the handcart trains arrive: The first two trains were "in pretty good condition, much fatigued and worn down by their long and arduous march; but the deaths were only about the usual average of emigrant wagon trains." Deaths had been numerous in the Willie Company, "and the survivors were in a wretched state—sick, helpless, destitute of clothing, and in some cases frozen." He claimed that only one-third to one-half of the Martin Company survived, "and on their arrival were in such suffering that many died soon after they arrived. I believe if they had had one hundred miles further to travel, they would all have died." He estimated that "about 500 in all died on the plains, or immediately after their arrival in the settlements."¹⁹⁰ This estimate is no doubt high, but the number of handcart pioneers who died in 1856 on the way to Utah or from the effects of the trek probably exceeded three hundred.

¹⁸⁸See the company narratives and individual journals at the LDS Church's Mormon Pioneer Overland Travel website available at <http://www.lds.org/churchhistory/content/0,15757,3957-1-2117,00.html> (accessed November 16, 2007). For the Willie and Martin death toll, see Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 4:102.

¹⁸⁹Oscar O. Stoddard, Report, in *Journal History*, September 24, 1860, 4.

¹⁹⁰"Mr. Frederick Loba and the Mormons—Highly Interesting Details," *St. Louis Missouri Democrat*, rpt., *New York Times*, May 18, 1858, 4. The

Attempts to tell the entire handcart story sometimes take the position that the Willie and Martin companies merely suffered from a late start exacerbated by poor management but that, in the words of H. H. Bancroft (or, more probably, Franklin D. Richards), “the hand-cart scheme was perfectly feasible.” Contemporary historian Howard A. Christy concluded that the handcart plan “clearly proved its feasibility by the fact that eight of the ten emigrant handcart companies had made the trip as successfully as any wagon company.”¹⁹¹

But at what cost had they achieved this “success,” and was this terrible suffering necessary? True, many if not most handcart survivors lived out their lives as devout Latter-day Saints, and many accepted the experience as a test of faith. They believed that their hard passage had made possible their subsequent lives in Utah, where they had opportunities beyond imagining in their European homelands. “Despite the drudgery and the tragic drama, most of the handcart emigrants felt they had reached their goal and that was what mattered, not what they had gone through to get there,” historian Lyndia McDowell Carter concluded.¹⁹² So, did the end justify the means? Most of those who recorded their experience believed it did and credited Brigham Young for rescuing them. But having survived the experience, few glorified it. “Don’t ask me anything about that,” Sarah Hancock Beesley responded years later when someone pressed her to tell her experience as a handcart pioneer in 1859. “Those are dreadful stories and I don’t see why we shouldn’t try to forget them. I say ‘Bury them with the dead who died on the plains.’ My children have often tried to get me to write my handcart story

anonymous reporter realized that “this communication may have the air of sympathy with the Mormons,” but insisted: “I write neither for nor against them—my only object being to correct a few errors that I thought might have been imbibed by the unwary reader of Mr. Loba’s statements, as well as give a few instances that have come under my own observation.”

¹⁹¹Bancroft quoted in Howard Christy with Christy’s commentary in “Weather, Disaster, and Responsibility: An Essay on the Willie and Martin Handcart Story,” *BYU Studies* 37, no. 1 (1997–98): 9. Richards is widely believed to have written much of the text used in Bancroft’s *History of Utah*.

¹⁹²Carter, “The Mormon Handcart Companies,” 14.

but I will not.”¹⁹³

“1856 was the year of the handcart craze, the three first of which were the craze, and the two last that started from the frontiers so late were crazy,” recalled Samuel S. Jones, who remembered he was in the craziest company of them all, Edward Martin’s.¹⁹⁴ “To all, the journey, with its great and incessant toils, its wearing hardships, and wasting privations, was a hard and bitter experience, wholly unanticipated,” wrote John Jaques, secretary in the offices of Church presidents John Taylor and Wilford Woodruff. “But to many, and especially to women and children who had been delicately brought up and tenderly cared for, and who had never known want nor been subject to hardships previously, as well as to the weakly and elderly of both sexes, it was cruel to a degree far beyond the power of language to express, and the more so for the reason that the worst parts of the experience were entirely unnecessary, because avoidable by timely measures and more sagacious management.”¹⁹⁵

Others were even more forthright about whom they held accountable for so much needless suffering. Elizabeth Camm, who watched her husband die and who amputated her own children’s feet during the Martin Company trek, felt that the missionaries tried to cheat her unbaptized husband while he was buying railroad tickets. “Oh Eliza, you have got among a bad lot,” he reproached her. “All they want is my money. God’s Servants look after the Souls of the Saints, not their purses. Haven’t you done wrong in leaving our home?” he asked. At Iowa City she watched as her treasured possessions and clothing were sold at auction for a pittance. “I noticed it was all bought mostly by Elders from the Valley, they knew the value of it in Utah—so did I when I got there with nothing to wear.” The emigration agents failed to provide the wagons they had promised to transport baggage, personal property, children, and the sick. These wagons

¹⁹³Sarah Hancock Beesley, “Reminiscences,” in *Handcart Stories*, 28–34, LDS Church Library.

¹⁹⁴Jones, “Experience of S. S. Jones,” September 1, 1906, 20. He added, “This is not written in any spirit of complaint. I cannot recall a rebellious spirit or feeling on the trip. We started for Zion, and to help build up the same in the valleys of the mountains, and thank God we are here.” He remained a Mormon stalwart despite his hard experience. The article concluded with a verse from “Come, Come Ye Saints.”

¹⁹⁵Jaques, “Some Reminiscences,” January 19, 1879, 1.

“were all loaded with merchandise, they told us, for President Young’s store in Salt Lake,” she recalled, “but that is to his account.”¹⁹⁶

The handcart system never mastered the problem of providing enough food for people who could not haul it themselves in their small human-powered carts. The rationing system that brought even the last “successful” handcart emigrants to the brink of starvation is baffling, and none of the possible explanations for this deficiency is comforting. Yet the failure to adequately provision the handcart train was so consistently repeated that it had to be a matter of policy rather than mere oversight or incompetence. The people who trusted their lives to the missionaries who ran the companies praised compassionate leaders like Daniel McArthur, Levi Savage, George Rowley, and Christian Christiansen, but the immigrants were too often ruthlessly exploited and sometimes cheated. It proved to be an abusive and needless scheme, since the world did not end as Brigham Young predicted it would. It is an inescapable fact that the system resulted in the largest loss of life in the three decades of overland wagon travel on the Oregon, California, and Mormon trails, killing in its first year at least five times as many men, women, and children as perished under very different circumstances with the Donner Party in the Sierra Nevada.

“What have you brought us to, you, yourself in shafts drawing like beasts of burden, your children hungry and almost naked, myself will soon be gone, and My God, what will become of you and the children?” Joseph Sermon asked his wife as he lay dying of starvation and, she said, a broken heart.¹⁹⁷ Essentially, to save money, Brigham Young resorted to turning men, women, and children into beasts of burden and created a system that exploited poor converts to Mormonism. Ultimately, it replaced draft animals with human beings and placed more value dollars on dollars than life itself. “Oh it was so hard,” said Sarah Beesley.¹⁹⁸

Historians have argued ever since 1856 over who was responsible for the disaster. Like Brigham Young, most of them lay the blame on Franklin D. Richards. Young charged his most talented subordinate, Apostle John Taylor, with “saving one and incurring three dol-

¹⁹⁶Elizabeth Sermon Camm, Letter to “My Dear Children,” March 16, 1892, in Joel Edward Ricks Collection, LDS Church Library.

¹⁹⁷Ibid.

¹⁹⁸Sarah Beesley, quoted in Carter, “The Mormon Handcart Companies,” 2.

lars expence” while trying to provide leadership for the handcart emigration. “You must have been misinformed—it is false in toto, and without any foundation or semblance in truth,” Taylor responded vigorously. “I am prepared to meet any man on this or any charge, at any time or place. I have records of my acts which I am not afraid to have scrutinized.”¹⁹⁹

Taylor cast the situation in its true light:

The Hand-Cart system was to me, and to us all, a new operation. I considered that the utmost care and prudence was necessary. I wanted if a train started, to know that it would go through. I knew of the weakness and infirmity of many women, children and aged persons that were calculated to go, [but] I did not consider that a few dollars were to be put in competition with the lives of human beings. I believed it better for a smaller company to go through safe, than for a larger one to perish on the way.²⁰⁰

Taylor forthrightly identified the fundamental problem with the handcart system: it placed more value on money than on human life. By compelling inexperienced and impoverished converts to do the work of animals²⁰¹ on starvation rations, it made overland emigration unnecessarily difficult, if not downright cruel, and led to a loss of life that is ultimately unjustifiable.

So, who was to blame? Even the 1856 handcart veterans seldom asked the question; and when they did, they came to mixed conclusions. John Jaques asked himself who he blamed for his “hard and bitter experience” as a handcart pioneer. “I blame nobody. I am not anxious to blame anybody,” he wrote. “I am not writing for the purpose of blaming anybody, but to fill up a blank page of history with matters of much interest.”²⁰² Others were more direct: “Whether Brigham was influenced in his desire to get the poor of Europe more rapidly to Utah [or] by his sympathy with their condition, by his well-known love of power, his glory in numbers, or his love of wealth, which an increased amount of subservient labour would enable him to acquire, is

¹⁹⁹John Taylor, Letter to Brigham Young, February 24, 1857, 5–6, Brigham Young Collection.

²⁰⁰Ibid.

²⁰¹See John Taylor, “Hand Carts for the Plains,” *The Mormon*, December 1, 1855, 2.

²⁰²Jaques, “Some Reminiscences,” January 19, 1879, 1.

best known to himself,” wrote handcart-veteran John Chislett. “But the sad results of his Hand-Cart scheme will call for a day of reckoning in the future which he cannot evade.”²⁰³

Few cultures celebrate calamities, but historical disasters such as the hard fate of the Donner Party, the Chicago fire, or the sinking of the *Titanic* hold an odd fascination for Americans. Yet modern Mormonism’s strange attraction to this appalling catastrophe forms a singular addition to the canon. The elevation of the handcart debacle to the status of a sacred legend of the Mormon people may well be unique.

During Brigham Young’s lifetime, no faithful Latter-day Saints ever wrote about the handcart disasters, leaving the story to be told by dissenters and apostates. As Lyndia Carter observed, “a shroud of silence came down for many years and the event was never discussed” because “these handcart company deaths made the church look bad [and] they made Brigham Young look bad.”²⁰⁴ In contrast, Mormons today fondly embrace and celebrate this tragic tale as a testament to their ancestors’ faith and fortitude, while the Corporation of the President has spent millions of dollars acquiring and developing the property now known as the Handcart Ranch near Devil’s Gate and expending political capital in arranging a long-term lease with U.S. Bureau of Land Management for government-owned property.

The volunteer guides at the LDS Church’s Handcart Ranch have told visitors that the reason so many women alone had to push and pull their way across the plains in 1856 was that their husbands had enlisted in the Mormon Battalion, an event that actually took place in 1846. In August 2002, one bright young LDS visitor asked how her grandfather could have served in the Mormon Battalion and still be listed among the handcart rescuers. Edward Bunker, Levi Savage, and Daniel Tyler were all battalion veterans. The guide had apparently never considered the chronological impossibility of events happening simultaneously in 1846 and 1856. Fortunately, the LDS Church History Department has launched an effort to improve the historical narratives provided to visitors at LDS Church historical sites like the Handcart Ranch. Despite such efforts, as this article underwent final revision in 2008, a Salt Lake paper reported how during “the women’s

²⁰³“Mr. Chislett’s Narrative,” 313.

²⁰⁴Christopher Smith, “Tragic Handcart Account Evolved Over the Years,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, June 30, 2002, A1.

pull” on a Sandy, Utah, Canyon View Stake handcart reenactment, all the men and boys were “sent off—having symbolically died or joined the Mormon batallion [sic]—leaving the women to face Rocky Ridge on their own.”²⁰⁵

No one should ever discount the heroism of those who suffered or died during the handcart ordeal, or ignore the selfless acts of courage by the men and boys who risked their lives to save the victims of this ill-conceived experiment. Nothing could honor that memory better than to deal with this story as honestly as the survivors did in their diaries and memoirs, which Juanita Brooks said “picture the labors and suffering of the handcart pioneers as one long torture.”²⁰⁶ It is time to honor this story and these heroic people with the truth.

²⁰⁵Jessica Ravitz, “Modern-Day Mormon Pioneers: An Outsider Looking In,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, August 23, 2008, B1, B3.

²⁰⁶Brooks, *On the Mormon Frontier*, 2:601, note 74.



James Godson Bleak (1829–1918). Courtesy LDS Church History Library.

JAMES G. BLEAK: FROM LONDON TO DIXIE

Brandon J. Metcalf

DURING 2006, NUMEROUS ARTICLES, documentaries, books, conferences, and even websites commemorated the sesquicentennial of the James G. Willie and Edward Martin Handcart tragedy.¹ The death toll in these two companies, trapped by winter snows in pres-

BRANDON J. METCALF {bmetcalf@utah.gov}, no relation to Bleak, is an archivist at the Utah State Archives in Salt Lake City. He received an M.A. degree in public history from California State University, Sacramento. This article, part of a larger study of Bleak's life and writings, is expanded from a paper presented at the 2007 Mormon History Association conference in Salt Lake City. Brandon thanks Ronald O. Barney and Michael N. Landon for their insightful comments and suggestions.

¹See Andrew D. Olsen, *The Price We Paid: The Extraordinary Story of the Willie and Martin Handcart Pioneers* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2006); Heidi Swinton and Lee Groberg, *Sweetwater Rescue: The Willie and Martin Handcart Story* (American Fork, Utah: Covenant Communications, 2006); Chad M. Orton, "Francis Webster: The Unique Story of One Handcart Pioneer's Faith and Sacrifice," *BYU Studies* 45, no. 2 (2006): 117-40; Chad M. Orton, "The Martin Handcart Company at the Sweetwater: Another Look," *BYU Studies* 45, no. 3 (2006): 5-37; Susan Easton Black, "The Struggle to Survive: Willie and Martin Handcart Pioneers," *Pioneer* 53, no. 3 (2006): 3-11. The State Historical Society of Iowa in the summer of 2007 published a special commemorative issue on the Mormon handcarts (backdated as the 2006 Spring/Summer issue of the *Annals of Iowa*). The annual

ent-day Wyoming, was the highest in American overland history.² Many more would have perished were it not for a concerted effort by Church leaders in Salt Lake City to mount a rescue. The journal of Martin Company member James Godson Bleak (pronounced Blake), a survivor of the ordeal, was quoted frequently in 2006 by many of those commemorating the tragedy. Yet surprisingly little has been written about Bleak beyond his involvement in the 1856 handcart journey. Most have never heard of Bleak and even fewer are familiar with the man, his life, or his contributions to Mormonism in pioneer Utah. Bleak is representative of the many Latter-day Saint pioneers who remain in obscurity, their potential for enriching our understanding of Mormon and Utah history still untapped. By omitting such individuals from the story, we limit our scope and fail to obtain a complete picture of the past. While Bleak remains relatively unknown, his story transcends that of the everyday pioneer in light of his intellect, personality, responsibilities, and prolific writings.

meeting of the Mormon History Association, which convened in Casper, Wyoming, May 25–28, 2006, included a number of plenary sessions and papers dedicated to the tragedy. The Great Platte River Road Archway in Kearney, Nebraska, hosted a two-day celebration on June 2–3, 2006, followed a week later by the Iowa City Mormon Handcart Trek Commemoration, June 9–11, 2006. This three-day event featured numerous papers delivered by prominent handcart historians, interactive events, and an address by LDS Church President Gordon B. Hinckley. Lee Groberg's television documentary *Sweetwater Rescue: The Willie and Martin Handcart Story*, aired on PBS in Utah on October 1 and debuted nationally on December 18, 2006. Finally, a popular website related to the 1856 companies, sponsored by *BYU Studies*, tracked the daily travels of the Willie Company and at this writing (May 2008) is still accessible at <http://handcart.byu.edu/>.

²The Donner-Reed company, trapped in the snows of the Sierra Nevada in 1846, experienced a higher mortality rate as a percentage of total company members. However, the contrast in scale is significant. The Donner-Reed company numbered fewer than ninety persons, while the combined members of the Martin and Willie companies totaled more than a thousand. Donald K. Grayson, "Donner Party Deaths: A Demographic Assessment," *Journal of Anthropological Research* 46, no. 3 (Fall 1990): 223–42, and his "Human Mortality in a Natural Disaster: The Willie Handcart Company," *Journal of Anthropological Research* 52, no. 2 (Summer 1996): 185–205.

JAMES G. BLEAK'S EMIGRATION DIARY

Bleak's lifetime spanned eighty-eight years, but this article focuses on his activities over an eight-year period from 1854 to 1861 drawing heavily on his earliest known journal. There are few nineteenth-century Mormons whose surviving records surpass the sheer volume of Bleak's.³ His writings are significant not only for their copious nature, but also for their substantive contributions to our understanding of pioneer Utah.⁴

Bleak commenced writing his journal in February 1854 and concluded in February 1860, with occasional gaps ranging from several days to a few months in the latter portion of the record. The volume includes 145 pages plus a seven-page appendix, added at a later date, that chronologically lists Bleak's thirty-five⁵ children by four wives as well as the text of James and Elizabeth Bleak's 1859 patriarchal blessings.⁶ Bleak apparently transcribed the holograph journal from an earlier version (perhaps a pocket diary) written in Pitman shorthand.

³Bleak was a prolific writer from the 1850s until his death in 1918. His voluminous journals and correspondence are primarily housed in four repositories: the L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; the Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City; unprocessed James G. Bleak collection, Special Collections and Archives, Val A. Browning Library, Dixie State College, St. George, Utah; and the LDS Church History Library, Salt Lake City. In addition, a pair of letter books is available on microfilm at the Huntington Library, San Marino, California. Utah State University (Logan), Southern Utah University (Cedar City), and the University of Utah (Salt Lake City) also maintain Bleak manuscripts in their holdings. Moreover, there is also a strong probability that some of his papers are still in private possession.

⁴This brief treatment does not attempt to examine Bleak's remarkable St. George years but rather provides context and lays the groundwork for his later accomplishments. A forthcoming article will examine Bleak's St. George years and his contributions as historian, chronicler, and religious and civic leader of nineteenth-century southern Utah.

⁵Most sources number Bleak's children at thirty-three but his journal records the births of eldest sons George (1847) and James (1848) who apparently did not survive infancy.

⁶Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints may receive patriarchal blessings from ordained patriarchs, an ecclesiastical office in the Church. Such blessings are considered sacred and the Church mem-

Several clues support this scenario. For example, remnants of shorthand appear in his entries from April 16 through September 12, 1858. In these instances, the dates are written in Pitman while the actual text is recorded in longhand.⁷ On several occasions, Bleak recorded entries out of chronological order, placing asterisks where entries rightly belonged and simply inserting the incorrect entry between two later dates.⁸ A final piece of evidence is Bleak's September 24, 1856, entry in which he parenthetically cites a *Deseret News* article that was not published until a month later.

Bleak provided access to his journal to at least one of his associates in his later years. In a 1907 newspaper column on the Martin Handcart Company, fellow handcart pioneer Josiah Rogerson noted, "I have before me the very valuable diary of the [sic] Mr. J.G. Bleak, church historian of southern Utah." In his article, Rogerson proceeded to establish a timeline of significant events pertaining to the Martin Company directly from Bleak's record.⁹ At some point, Rogerson produced a shorthand copy of Bleak's journal to which he added information not found in the original. The eight-page Rogerson manuscript strictly covers the handcart portion of Bleak's journal spanning from July 7 to November 30, 1856.¹⁰ In 1907 Rogerson authored a series of articles on the Martin Company that appeared in

ber receives a verbatim transcript of the patriarch's words. James and Elizabeth Bleak received their patriarchal blessings on June 12, 1859, in North Ogden from Charles W. Hyde; Bleak copied both into his journal.

⁷Isaac Pitman began lecturing on his new shorthand method in England in 1837. By the time Bleak reached adolescence, it was widely used among secretaries and clerks throughout Britain. According to LaJean Purcell Carruth, Bleak's shorthand is that of a novice as evidenced by his use of vowels which are optional in Pitman shorthand. Bleak likely acquired the skill in England while employed as a clerk. Despite his limited experience with shorthand, Bleak was an obvious choice for clerk and auditor of accounts for the London Conference of the British Mission.

⁸James G. Bleak, Journal, 1854–60, microfilm of holograph, Historical Department Library, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter LDS Church History Library), Salt Lake City. For example, see entries for May 10, 1854, October 26, 1855, and January 11, 1856.

⁹Josiah Rogerson, "Martin's Handcart Company, 1856," *Salt Lake Herald*, October 13, 1907, 5.

¹⁰James Godson Bleak, Journal Transcription, LDS Church History

the *Salt Lake Herald* from October to December; he may have intended to write a full-length history of the company but it never came to fruition. Aside from being known as a Martin Company member, Rogerson also conveyed information about the infamous 1857 Mountain Meadows Massacre and recorded the subsequent trials of John D. Lee.¹¹

Following Bleak's death in 1918, his journal remained in the custody of his descendants. But before long, its whereabouts was largely unknown. Since it had disappeared, Caroline S. Addy did not have access to Bleak's "very valuable" journal in the 1950s while writing her master's thesis, which remains the only existing substantive biography of Bleak. Throughout her thesis, Addy cited Bleak's later diaries liberally but never referenced the 1854–60 journal. To complete her thesis, Addy leaned heavily on personal interviews and family records provided by numerous members of the Bleak family. If Addy had had access to this significant volume, she certainly would have used it extensively. Instead, that portion of her study relied solely on a biographical sketch and a summary of Bleak's handcart experiences.¹² In fact, Rogerson's 1907 reference to the journal was the last time anyone had verified its existence. However, in the spring of 1996, almost nine decades later, a descendant in possession of the volume contacted the LDS Church and subsequently donated the jour-

Library. Rogerson's partial shorthand copy of the Bleak journal was transcribed by LaJean Purcell Carruth in 2006. Rogerson had a reputation for willfully altering information in his writings and this is the case with the Bleak transcript. LaJean Purcell Carruth, email message to Brandon Metcalf, August 2, 2007, printout in my possession.

¹¹For the best treatments of the Mountain Meadows Massacre, see Juanita Brooks, *The Mountain Meadows Massacre* (1950; rpt., Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962); Will Bagley, *Blood of the Prophets: Brigham Young and the Massacre at Mountain Meadows* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2002); Ronald W. Walker, Richard E. Turley Jr., and Glen M. Leonard, *Massacre at Mountain Meadows* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008). For a review of current treatments related to the massacre, see Richard E. Turley Jr., "Recent Mountain Meadows Publications: A Sampling," *Journal of Mormon History* 32 (Summer 2006): 213–25.

¹²See Caroline S. Addy, "James Godson Bleak, Pioneer Historian of Southern Utah" (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1953), 4–10.

nal to the LDS Church History Library.¹³

JAMES G. BLEAK'S BACKGROUND

Born in Southwark, Surrey County, England, on November 15, 1829, James Godson Bleak was the third of six children born to Thomas Nelson Blake and Mary Godson Blake,¹⁴ and one of two to live beyond infancy. The other survivor was James's younger brother John. Thomas, a furrier by trade, died when James was fourteen. Bleak abruptly ended his formal schooling upon his father's death and went to work as a clerk for a distributing firm owned by William Henry Smith; he also apprenticed as a silversmith.¹⁵ When he was sixteen, Mary also passed away, leaving James and John orphans. John followed two years later, and eighteen-year-old James was left the sole survivor of the Thomas Blake family.

Bleak's loneliness was alleviated in the fall of 1849 by his marriage to a young silk weaver, Elizabeth ("Betsy") Moore.¹⁶ Bleak quickly forged a strong kinship with Elizabeth's parents, John and

¹³Michael N. Landon, LDS Church archivist, interviewed March 1, 2007. The date of acquisition was April 18, 1996. The LDS Church History Library received a letter from the donor, a Bleak descendant, regarding her desire to have the department examine the journal. Landon met with the donor and she agreed to donate the item.

¹⁴When James altered the spelling from "Blake" to "Bleak" is unclear. One family story claims that the change took place when the family migrated to England from Ireland, but this is clearly not the case as evidenced by the Bleaks' October 1849 marriage certificate which uses "Blake." According to another family anecdote, James made the change shortly before his arrival in America to avoid being confused with another immigrant, perhaps Benjamin Blake. Based on marriage and census data, this story seems nearer the truth. Aside from the 1849 marriage certificate, the death certificates of James's parents—Thomas (1844) and Mary (1846)—also use the Blake spelling. Thus, Bleak adopted the alternate spelling some time between October 1849 and May 1856. The 1860 U.S. Census misspells his name as "James G. Blake," confirming the proper pronunciation. U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860, Salt Lake County, Schedule 1, 17th Ward, Great Salt Lake City, Post Office district, p. 177.

¹⁵Addy, "James Godson Bleak," 4.

¹⁶Elizabeth Moore was born March 6, 1828, in London. Numerous family histories and even Bleak himself estimate the date of marriage as



*Elizabeth Moore Bleak
(1828–99). Courtesy
Daughters of Utah
Pioneers, Salt Lake City.*

Eunice Moore. However, the Moores did not embrace the religion that would so profoundly alter the lives of their daughter and son-in-law. Rather, they lived out their days in London, relying solely on periodic letters from James to keep abreast of the family's happenings.¹⁷ Any letters Elizabeth may have written to her parents have not survived, but James usually acted as scribe while Elizabeth dictated

June or July 1849, but the marriage indisputably took place on October 14, 1849, at St. James the Great Church just northeast of central London in Bethnal Green. Bleak marriage certificate, James Godson Bleak Family Records, call number Q929.273 B 614, LDS Family History Library. Elizabeth and James had twelve children; the first two did not survive infancy. Elizabeth died at age seventy-one on December 19, 1899. "Obituary," *Deseret Evening News*, January 20, 1900, 8; Addy, "James Godson Bleak," 57.

¹⁷Bleak continued his correspondence with his in-laws until Eunice's death in 1875. For the first few years, the communication was one sided, and Bleak sometimes chided the Moores for their negligence: "We have not

items to include in the letters. The letters were often signed “Jas. & Elizth Bleak.” Bleak’s correspondence with his in-laws provides a significant description of the 1850s emigration experience and, coupled with his detailed journal of the trek from London to Utah, portended his future literary work that furnished later generations with a greater understanding of the culture of Mormonism and the settling of southern Utah.

Bleak first encountered the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in December 1850. It appears that a neighbor and friend, Joseph Lewis Thompson, who was also a fellow silversmith at Aines and Cater, invited Bleak to an LDS meeting in the Whitechapel area.¹⁸ The local branch president, Henry Savage, preached, then invited the congregation to come forward and take whatever literature they desired. Bleak “stepped forward and looked over the tracts and books” and his “eye caught the title of one book—Doctrine and Covenants.” He desired to peruse the volume, but a young man told him it was only “for those holding the Priesthood.” Offended, Bleak prepared to leave. Having observed the incident, Henry Savage intervened and provided Bleak with the book and some tracts. In the midst of their conversation, Savage noticed that Bleak’s “eyes were weak and that it was with difficulty that I read the titles to the tracts.” Savage offered to “administer to [Bleak] for the benefit of your eyesight.” Bleak declared that, when he arrived at the meeting, he “could scarcely see anything” and “the gas lights on the streets were halos of rainbow colors”; but following Savage’s blessing, everything appeared “clear and

received a letter from you since we left England. Now, I have not any relations, that is no near relations to write to me and therefore I am not troubled about it, but I should like Betsy to hear from her relations Father Mother brothers sisters and all.” James G. Bleak, Letter to John and Eunice Moore, November 3, 1859, Moore Family Papers, LDS Church History Library.

¹⁸*Joseph Lewis Thompson Family*, compiled, edited and parts written by William Howard Thompson (St. George, Utah: Dixie College, 1976), 5. According to this source, Mormon missionaries visited the two families in 1848; but in a later journal, Bleak stated: “In Dec[embe]r 1850 I heard the Gospel of Christ as revealed through the Prophet Joseph and was baptized for remission of my sins in Feb[ruary] 1851.” James G. Bleak, Journal, November 15, 1880, photocopy of holograph, James Godson Bleak Papers, 1864–95, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City.

bright” from then on.¹⁹ This experience was not only the genesis of Bleak’s conversion but of his lifelong faith and devotion to the LDS Church. Its impact was profound and immediate. Bleak “continued to attend the [LDS] services and after a thorough investigation of the principles of the Gospel” he was baptized by Thomas Johnson within two months of the Savage blessing.²⁰

THE LONDON PHASE

It is no coincidence that Bleak’s first journal entry is dated February 6, 1854. It was the very day he was “called to preside over [the] Whitechapel Branch” in the London Conference of the British Mission, and the event sparked a lifelong passion for journal keeping. Just twenty-four years old, Bleak assumed the leadership of the Church’s largest branch in London.²¹ Six months after his call as branch president, he received the additional assignment to serve as clerk and audi-

¹⁹Bleak quoted in Nephi Miles Savage, “Memoire [sic] of Henry Savage and Family,” n.d., typescript made in 1936, 22, Utah State Historical Society. Nephi was Henry Savage’s son. He apparently interviewed Bleak in 1909 or 1910, about sixty years after the event, when compiling his memoir. How long Bleak’s vision remained “clear and bright” is uncertain, for he did use eyeglasses in his later years. Bleak explained to Nephi: “I am now 80 years of age, and I can see to read fine print without glasses. However, I am near sighted, and wear glasses on that account” (p. 23; strikeovers silently omitted).

²⁰Ibid., 23. The Savage memoir inaccurately claimed that Henry Savage baptized Bleak. Other sources confirm that Bleak was baptized by Thomas Johnson on February 8, 1851. Savage baptized Elizabeth on June 27, 1851, four and a half months after her husband. Whitechapel Branch, London Conference, Record of Members collection, 1836–1970, LDS Church History Library; Bleak, Journal, title page.

²¹The Whitechapel Branch included Latter-day Saints that resided in or near Whitechapel, a suburb east of London. The branch was created October 21, 1848, with Henry Savage as president. British Mission, Branch and Conference histories, Whitechapel Branch, n.d., not paginated, LDS Church History Library. According to a biographical sketch by grandson Samuel Bleak, Bleak had served as second counselor in the branch to President Thomas C. Armstrong, beginning in 1852. Samuel Bleak, “A Brief Sketch of the Life of James Godson Bleak,” n.d., photocopy of typescript, in Biographical files, Sons of Utah Pioneers Library, Salt Lake City.

tor of the London Conference. He recorded scores of blessings, baptisms, confirmations, and ordinations in which he participated as well as visits made to branch members as part of his duties. In this portion of his journal, Bleak scrupulously logged every church meeting which he attended, yet he often failed to record any substantial detail about these meetings, his family life, his employment, or everyday life in urban London. At first glance, such minutiae may seem irrelevant, but Bleak's attention to the daily dust offers glimpses into the root of his overpowering commitment to his faith. Orphaned as a teen, Bleak's membership fulfilled two of his most powerful inner needs: kinship, and answers to his inevitable questions regarding death and salvation. Moreover, his letters to Elizabeth's parents suggest that the Church and the goal of gathering to Utah provided him hope for better opportunities than his homeland had to offer.

Notwithstanding the brevity of many of his entries, the record reveals Bleak's unwavering dedication to his flock and provides a unique perspective of Mormonism in 1850s London. A typical week in Bleak's journal demonstrates his commitment and the vigorous schedule he maintained as branch president:

Sunday [May] 7th [1854]. Confirmed Eliz. Watson. The afternoon Meeting disturbed by the Editor of the Wesleyan Times, who, called one of the brethren a liar! while the brother (Elder Albin) was bearing his testimony.

Monday [May] 8th. I attended Tract Meeting.

Tuesday [May] 9th. Attended Scripture Class & presented to the class the summary of the evidence on the subject of "The necessity of Immediate Revelation in our day."

*Thursday [May] 11th. Visited some Saints and attended Mutual Instruction Classes.

Friday [May] 12th. Attended service, afterwards attended the Council.

*Wednesday [May] 10th. Confirmed S[iste]r Williams.

Sunday [May] 14th. Attended 4 Meetings as usual.²²

The three years between Bleak's conversion and his appointment as branch president saw a rapid decline in the membership of the London Conference. The opportunity for British members to gather to Utah increased with the implementation of the Perpetual

²²Bleak, Journal, May 7–14, 1854. As noted earlier, Bleak used an asterisk throughout his journal to identify entries that were not in chronological order.

Emigrating Fund (PEF) in September 1849. The concept of gathering to a central place had been deeply rooted in LDS doctrine since Kirtland days. Church members were instructed to gather, not only to establish a communal stronghold, but also to prepare a Zion for the approaching millennium.

The dynamics of gathering the Saints became much more complex with the opening of the British Mission in 1837.²³ Thousands of European converts flocked to Church headquarters in Nauvoo, Illinois, during the 1840s, and Church leaders implemented an even larger-scale emigration plan after relocating to the Great Basin. The PEF provided loans to finance the passage of faithful Saints with the understanding that they would repay the fund once they were established in Utah. The fund was nearly depleted by 1855 because of increased demand coupled with a severe drought and insect infestation in the Utah Territory that greatly reduced the harvest. A cheaper method of traveling became essential.

Brigham Young had suggested the handcart plan as early as 1851. The Sixth General Epistle, dated September 22, 1851, noted:

Some of the children of the world, have crossed the mountains and plains, from Missouri to California, with a pack on their back to worship their god—Gold. Some have performed the same journey with a wheel-barrow, some have accomplished the same with a pack on a cow. . . . Families might start from Missouri river, with cows, hand-carts, wheel-barrow, with little flour, and no unnecessaries, and come to this place quicker, and with less fatigue, than by following the heavy trains, with their cumbrous herds, which they are often obliged to drive miles to feed. Do you not like this method of travelling?²⁴

Young shelved the idea in favor of traditional wagon travel for about four years, until the circumstances of 1855 prompted him to an-

²³For the beginnings of the British Mission, see James B. Allen, Ronald K. Esplin, and David J. Whittaker, *Men with a Mission: The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in the British Isles, 1837–1841* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992); V. Ben Bloxham, James R. Moss, and Larry C. Porter, eds., *Truth Will Prevail: The Rise of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the British Isles, 1837–1997* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

²⁴“Sixth General Epistle of the Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,” *Millennial Star* 14, no. 2 (January 15, 1852): 17–25; “Sixth General Epistle of the Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,” *Deseret News (Weekly)*, November 15, 1851, 2.

nounce that they could no longer “afford to purchase wagons and teams as in times past.” He viewed the handcart plan as the remedy and insisted that the handcarts would “come just as quick, if not quicker, and much cheaper.”²⁵ Plans were set in motion in the fall of 1855, and Church agents in England and America prepared to initiate the experiment during the spring of 1856.

Bleak typified the sentiment of many British Saints anxiously awaiting the prospect of emigration but frustrated by the difficulties it presented. In February 1855, almost a year before the handcart plan was announced, he recorded, “For some days past I have been asking the Lord to open my way to go home to Zion[.] [T]his day I received a promise that I should be supplied with the means for which I feel grateful.”²⁶ Eleven months later Elder James D. Ross attended the Whitechapel Branch to present Bleak’s impending immigration to Utah Territory “before the Saints” and “very warmly call[ed] on them to assist” Bleak financially.²⁷ While the Bleaks were in no way affluent, their moderate funds, coupled with donations from Church members, were sufficient for them to emigrate without the assistance of the Perpetual Emigrating Fund.

Bleak later explained that he had initially sent funds to the British Mission office in Liverpool to purchase a team of oxen to comfortably transport himself, his wife, and their four young children from Iowa City to Salt Lake City. But upon learning that the other members of his branch who were emigrating that year would travel by handcart and having “always striven to set a becoming example in temporal and spiritual matters to the brethren and sisters entrusted to his care,” Bleak abandoned his plan to travel by wagon and chose to “be numbered on the hand-cart list.” He insisted that the money saved be forwarded to “other faithful Saints who did not have means to gather to Utah that year.” Obviously, this decision was a hard one for Bleak; he had originally been concerned enough about his family (“his wife being unused to travel, and . . . the four children were of tender years,

²⁵Brigham Young, Letter to Franklin D. Richards, September 30, 1855, *Millennial Star* 17, no. 51 (December 22, 1855): 813. For an overview of the 1856–60 handcart companies and their management, see Will Bagley, “‘One Long Funeral March’: A Revisionist’s View of the Mormon Handcart Disasters,” this issue.

²⁶Bleak, *Journal*, February 24, 1855.

²⁷*Ibid.*, January 27, 1856.

ranging from six years, the oldest, to eleven months, the youngest”) to disregard the instructions of Church leaders to travel by handcart. His change of heart was a measure of his and Betsy’s compassion for others and their desire to be obedient.²⁸

ABOARD THE *HORIZON*

Like most of their contemporaries, the Bleaks traveled the 200 miles from London to Liverpool by rail. On May 21, the Bleaks arrived in Liverpool, which James described as “the dirtiest place we ever saw” and immediately boarded the *Horizon* having nowhere else to spend the night.²⁹ The *Horizon* was a spacious three-mast ship with three decks that nearly doubled the average weight of 1850s windships.³⁰ Carrying 856 Mormon passengers, the *Horizon* left Liverpool harbor under the command of Captain George Reed on May 23. Three-fourths of the passengers aboard the *Horizon* were fully or partly financed by the Perpetual Emigrating Fund, making them not only the largest company of the year, but also the company with the largest percentage of PEF emigrants. At least two events delayed the voyage. One was a “belligerent display” between three or four of the ship’s crew which resulted in “a number of the crew [being] sent ashore, and we had fresh men in their places.”³¹ Second, while Bleak was on guard “two ‘stow aways’ were obliged to leave their hiding place, and were fed and kept prisoners till this morning when they were sent ashore as prisoners.”³² These incidents, although causing a brief delay, did not factor into the handcart disaster that befell the company later. The Saints aboard the *Horizon* were already dangerously behind schedule. They

²⁸Scribo [James G. Bleak], “An Item of Hand Cart Experience,” *Juvenile Instructor* 37 (June 15, 1902): 365–66. At the time of their departure, Bleak’s family consisted of himself (age twenty-six), Elizabeth (twenty-eight), Richard (six), Thomas (four), James Jr. (two), and Mary (eleven months).

²⁹James G. Bleak, Letter to John and Eunice Moore, May 23, 1856, Moore Family Papers; Bleak, Journal, May 21, 1856.

³⁰Conway B. Sonne, *Saints on the Seas: A Maritime History of Mormon Migration, 1830–1890* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1983), 73; Conway B. Sonne, *Ships, Saints, and Mariners: A Maritime Encyclopedia of Mormon Migration, 1830–1890* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987), 98.

³¹John Jaques, Letter to Franklin D. Richards, May 29, 1856, *Millennial Star* 18, no. 26 (June 28, 1856): 411.

³²Bleak, Journal, May 24, 1856.

had barely left Liverpool when they “should have been setting out from the Missouri.”³³ Contributing to the company’s late departure was the lack of available ships in Liverpool due to bad weather and the conclusion of the Crimean War in March 1856.³⁴

While Reed was the captain of the ship, thirty-seven-year old returning missionary Edward Martin, served as the Saints’ ecclesiastical leader aboard ship. Born in Preston, England, Martin was one of the earliest British converts to Mormonism in 1837. In 1841 he and his wife emigrated from England to Nauvoo. He had served with the Mormon Battalion, settling in Salt Lake City in 1848, and had returned to his homeland as a missionary in 1853.³⁵ Martin was assisted by two counselors: Jesse Haven, a cousin of Brigham Young, and sixty-eight-year-old George P. Waugh. Martin oversaw the general welfare of the company, Haven saw that the Saints followed instructions, and Waugh was responsible for administering to the sick.³⁶ Passengers were divided into nine ecclesiastical wards with “nine cooks, and ten men in each watch of the guard which is kept up night and day.” Martin busied himself from dawn to dusk, visiting “every part of the ship six or seven times a day.”³⁷ Prayer meetings were held morning and evening, and the main deck was to be cleared by 9:00 p.m. every night. Specific instructions were given related to “cleanliness, economy and wisdom in the use of food, serving our provisions, and parents looking af-

³³Wallace Stegner, *The Gathering of Zion: The Story of the Mormon Trail* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), 227. See also William G. Hartley, panel moderator, “Causation Factors and the 1856 Mormon Handcart Disaster,” plenary session, Mormon History Association conference, Casper, Wyoming, May 2006, audio recording, available from Mormon History Association.

³⁴See articles in *Annals of Iowa* 65, nos. 2–3 (Spring/Summer 2006): Don H. Smith, “Leadership, Planning, and Management of the 1856 Mormon Handcart Emigration,” 137; Fred E. Woods, “Iowa City Bound: Mormon Migration by Sail and Rail, 1856–1857,” 166–67.

³⁵Olsen, *The Price We Paid*, 230–35.

³⁶John Jaques, Diary, June 4, 1856, as quoted in Stella Jaques Bell, *Life History and Writings of John Jaques including a Diary of the Martin Handcart Company* (Rexburg, Ida.: Ricks College Press, 1978), 95.

³⁷Edward Martin, Letter to Franklin D. Richards, May 29, 1856, *Milennial Star* 18, no. 26 (June 28, 1856): 411.

ter their children.”³⁸ Provisions consisted primarily of rock-hard biscuits, salt pork and beef, peas, rice, tea, sugar, pudding, and dried fruit. A great deal of time was dedicated to manufacturing tents and wagon covers for the ensuing trek across the prairie with canvas being distributed among the nine wards.

Aside from mentioning frequent Church meetings and some whale-watching, Bleak faithfully recorded the daily weather as well as several births, deaths, and illnesses on board. The Bleaks remained relatively healthy on the *Horizon* except for seasickness and two-year-old James Jr.’s bout with measles. The Bleak children were numbered among those who made “themselves happy, both above and below deck” engaged in playing marbles, skipping rope and “tugging at the ropes with sailors.”³⁹

Of the American landfall, Bleak recorded simply: “Monday [June] 30th We were towed into Dock. I first landed on American soil.” Prior to 1855 the majority of Mormon emigrant ships docked in New Orleans owing to the absence of a railroad line connecting Atlantic seaports with the Mississippi River. But beginning in March 1855 Mormon ships abandoned the New Orleans route, docked primarily in New York and Philadelphia, and proceeded westward by rail. The *Horizon* was a little unusual in that it was only the third out of fourteen Mormon ships sailing from Liverpool to dock in Boston since the New Orleans route was discontinued in 1855.⁴⁰ In a letter to his in-laws, Bleak summarized the voyage: “We had a pleasant journey of 34 days across the Atlantic. Betsy was not sea sick at all and I was sea sick one day. The children were all very healthy, with the exception of James who had the measles on board.” He described their food aboard ship as being “of the very best quality, and in such abundance that we have not been able to use more than half of the quantity al-

³⁸Jaques, Diary, June 4, 1856, 105.

³⁹John Jaques, Letter to Franklin D. Richards, *Millennial Star* 18, no. 26 (June 28, 1856): 412; Elizabeth White Steward, Autobiography, as quoted in Ruth Johnson and Glen Fostner Harding, *Barnard White Family Book* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1967), 187; Mary Goble Pay, Autobiography, 1, 1896–1909, typescript, LDS Church History Library.

⁴⁰Sonne, *Saints on the Seas*, 30–31, 108, 151.

lowed to us.”⁴¹ Unbeknownst to Bleak, the upcoming leg of their journey to Zion would be anything but “pleasant” and definitely not well-provisioned.

WITH THE MARTIN COMPANY

Two days after disembarking in Boston, most of the company boarded a train bound for Iowa City—the westernmost extension of the railroad at the time—where they would load their belongings on handcarts and begin the 1,300 mile trek on the well-traveled overland trail to Salt Lake City. While a number of Bleak’s counterparts complained about the discomfort of the westward train ride, Bleak’s writings reflect gratitude for what he described as “first class carriages, with stuffed seats covered with crimson silk velvet which was very acceptable as we had to sleep 5 nights in the carriages.” Bleak described America as a “most beautiful country” with a climate “hotter at present than in England; but agrees with us all first rate, we are very brown.” He advised that those arriving in America ought “to come to the Western States and not to stay in the Eastern Cities as wages are much better in the west than in the east and living is also cheaper.”⁴²

The Martin Company was the fifth and final handcart company to leave Iowa City in 1856, the inaugural year of the handcart plan. Over half of the approximately 3,400 immigrants who reached Utah in 1856 came by handcart. Also, more than a dozen wagon companies traveled the Mormon Trail during the 1856 season. The first three of the handcart companies were fairly small and arrived in Utah by October 2 with comparatively little trouble. The James Willie and Edward Martin companies became the fourth and fifth handcart companies, respectively. Willie’s group of about 500 and Martin’s 575 made them by far the largest companies of the year. The Willie Company left Iowa City three weeks before the Martin Company and remained about a week and a half ahead of Martin until November. By then, relentless snowstorms put the Martin Company three weeks behind Willie. In the end, starvation and exposure claimed the lives of over seventy members of the Willie Company be-

⁴¹James G. Bleak, Letter to John and Eunice Moore, July 24, 1856, Moore Family Papers. Bleak assured his in-laws that the children “enjoy most excellent health.”

⁴²*Ibid.*

fore their arrival in Salt Lake City on November 9. The Martin Company concluded its journey to Utah on November 30 after losing a fourth of its members.⁴³

The main body of the Martin Company arrived in Iowa City on July 8, and Bleak caught up the following day after remaining in Davenport with thirty others to see after the luggage.⁴⁴ Whatever lofty expectations Bleak and his companions may have conjured up in their minds of a pristine fleet of handcarts ready to roll out onto the plains quickly vanished. Church emigration agents had been physically unable to construct enough carts to outfit such large companies so late in the season. As the emigrants arrived, some of them were trained to assist in the construction of handcarts. "In the Carpenter shop and sheds, fifteen to twenty men, were at work on the hand-carts. They so continued from peep of day till dark at night . . . till the last hand cart necessary was finished."⁴⁵ The rest of the camp spent the next three weeks "attending to camp duties, cutting wood, Hunting Cattle, Prun-

⁴³For year-by-year emigration statistics, see Melvin L. Bashore, "Pioneers Crossing the Plains," *Church News*, July 5, 1997, 4. A listing of the known 1856 Mormon emigrant companies is available at www.lds.org/churchhistory/library/pioneercompanylist-chronological/0,15765,3968-1,00.html. The exact number of deaths in the Martin Company continues as a topic of debate among historians. I have used the more conservative number of 135–50 deaths in my calculation. See Lyndia McDowell Carter, "The Mormon Handcart Companies," *Overland Journal* 13 (Spring 1995): 13; Howard A. Christy, "Weather, Disaster, and Responsibility: An Essay on the Willie and Martin Handcart Story," *BYU Studies* 37, no. 1 (1997–98): 51; William G. Hartley, "The Place of Mormon Handcart Companies in America's Westward Migration Story," *Annals of Iowa* 65, nos. 2–3 (Spring/Summer 2006): 118.

⁴⁴Bleak, Journal, July 8, 1856; Samuel Openshaw, Diary, July 10, 1856, carbon copy of typescript, LDS Church History Library. Due to damage to the railroad bridge connecting Rock Island and Davenport, it was necessary to unload the freight, transport it across the Mississippi River by ferries, and reload it on rail cars bound for Iowa City.

⁴⁵"Extracts from James G. Bleaks [sic] Diary," James G. Bleak pioneer file, History Department, Daughters of Utah Pioneers, Salt Lake City. This fragmentary typescript of unknown origin highlights Bleak's Boston-Iowa City leg of the journey. The account expands upon corresponding entries found in Bleak's 1854–60 journal. It is unknown if Bleak himself authored

ing luggage. &c.” anxiously awaiting the completion of their handcarts, hastily constructed at least partially of green lumber.⁴⁶

Like most of their fellow travelers, the Bleaks had likely “never pitched a tent, slept on the ground, cooked outdoors, [or] built a campfire” prior to their venture onto the dusty plains.⁴⁷ But whatever skills they may have lacked in wilderness survival were far less problematic than the arduous task of pulling a handcart mile after mile, day after day. Even in ideal conditions, handcart travel was physically exhausting. The emigrants had no protection from the elements, and the energy required to pull carts through all sorts of terrain and inclines physically and mentally pushed the companies to their limits. But as Lyndia Carter observed, “Of all the routine problems the handcart people endured, hunger was the worst” as they were “al-

the piece and, if so, when he created it. It is possible that Bleak kept multiple diaries and that the excerpts were transcribed from them. Curiously, more than half of the six-page extract is a word-for-word copy of pages from Daniel W. Jones’s *Forty Years among the Indians: A True Yet Thrilling Narrative of the Author’s Experiences among the Natives* (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor’s Office, 1890), 63–69. The manuscript clearly was not transcribed from Bleak’s larger and more comprehensive 1854–60 diary upon which this paper is based.

⁴⁶Regarding construction of the handcarts from green, unseasoned wood, see Stegner, *The Gathering of Zion*, 239; Olsen, *The Price We Paid*, 56; Carter, “The Mormon Handcart Companies,” 5; James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints*, 2d ed., rev. and enl. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992), 293. Handcart historian Don H. Smith strongly disputes the claim that the handcarts were hastily constructed of green lumber. Smith insists that lumber and supplies were on hand when the group arrived and that the carts were partially built of green wood by design rather than out of desperation. However seasoned or unseasoned the wood used to construct the handcarts might have been does not change the fact that the vehicles required frequent repairs along the trail. In any case, the company spent three weeks in Iowa City while handcarts were constructed, a delay that would later result in unimaginable human suffering and death when the company became trapped by snow in present-day Wyoming. See Carrie A. Moore, “Most Handcart Treks Successful, BYU Historian Says,” *Deseret News*, June 10, 2006, B8; Don H. Smith, “Leadership, Planning, and Management of the 1856 Mormon Handcart Emigration,” 155–57.

⁴⁷Stegner, *The Gathering of Zion*, 221.

lowed only a scanty supply of food for sixty days.”⁴⁸

Bleak reported that the Martin Company left Iowa City on July 26. Initially the company was divided in two—one led by Edward Martin and the other under Jesse Haven. Upon his arrival in Florence, Franklin D. Richards merged the two under Martin’s direction. In addition to the estimated 576 members of the Martin Company, a number of *Horizon* emigrants traveled with the Hodgetts and Hunt wagon companies, two independent companies assigned to travel behind Willie and Martin to render assistance if necessary.⁴⁹ Exhaustion and illness plagued the company long before the early snows arrived, and Bleak was not immune to the rigors of life on the trail. By mid-September, fatigue and illness struck Bleak so severely that one morning he could walk no further and “was obliged to leave” his handcart after drawing it for only a mile. Deliverance came in the form of Francis Webster, a former member of Bleak’s Whitechapel branch in London.⁵⁰ In Bleak’s words, Webster heroically “persuaded me to get on his handcart and drew me 17 miles.” Three others pulled Bleak for another four miles that day through central Nebraska’s deep sand, “for which Kindness I feel grateful, and pray God to bless them with health and strength.”⁵¹ The following day Bleak noted that while he was “still very ill” he mustered up the strength to draw his handcart

⁴⁸Carter, “The Mormon Handcart Companies,” 11.

⁴⁹For more on the Hodgetts and Hunt wagon companies, see Melvin L. Bashore, “On the Heels of the Handcart Tragedy: Mormondom’s Forgotten 1856 Wagon Companies,” *Annals of Wyoming* 68 (Summer 1996): 38–49.

⁵⁰Bleak mentions Webster a number of times in his journal. Bleak rebaptized and confirmed Webster in October 1855 and performed the marriage of Francis and Elizabeth Webster two months later. Bleak corresponded with Webster long after their arrival in Utah, and the two remained lifelong friends. Webster settled in Cedar City and served in numerous ecclesiastical and notable civil positions including Cedar City mayor and member of the territorial legislature. He is also remembered for being the “unnamed old man in the corner of a Sunday School class” who arose to silence criticism of the Willie and Martin handcart saga. Orton, “Francis Webster,” 117–40; Andrew Jenson, *Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia: A Compilation of Biographical Sketches of Prominent Men and Women in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 4 vols. (Salt Lake City: Andrew Jenson History Company and Deseret News, 1901–36), 1:533–34.

⁵¹Bleak, Journal, September 15, 1856.

“through the blessing of God.”

Conditions rapidly declined over the coming weeks as a result of their lack of food and the onset of a series of merciless snowstorms beginning on October 19. “Our ration of flour was reduced from 1 pound to 12 oz for adults, and from 8 oz for my children to 6 ounces a day,” Bleak recorded on October 16. Nine days later, their rations were “reduced to 8 oz of flour for adults and 4 oz for child[re]n.”⁵² By this time the Bleaks were among hundreds of snowbound Saints near the Red Buttes, just west of present-day Casper, Wyoming.

These severe circumstances took a relentless toll in lives, and the suffering left the company demoralized. Fortunately, three members of the rescue company sent out by Brigham Young arrived on October 28, the very day that Bleak recorded that “56 of our Comp[an]y died” over the previous week and a half. When the rescuers “first made their appearance” Bleak did “not think there was one in Camp but shed tears of joy.”⁵³ Yet their troubles were far from over. Rations continued to be reduced and heavy snowfall prevented travel for a number of days. “No travelling,” Bleak wrote on November 5. “Weather very severe. S[iste]r Mary Harper died aged 64. Our ration of flour was reduced to 4 oz. and 2 oz for the children. making 1 lb a day for the 6 of us. Through the blessing of our Father we felt as contented, as when we had 1 lb per head.”⁵⁴

On November 9 Bleak reported that he “suffered very much to day with my feet, which are frost-bitten,” yet he “walked the 5 miles not wishing to burden the teams.”⁵⁵ At this point, the company abandoned nearly all of the handcarts, and the debilitated travelers struggled onward for another week until additional wagons drawn by mule

⁵²Ibid., October 16 and 25, 1856.

⁵³Ibid., October 28, 1856; James Loynd, “The Martin Handcart Company,” 11, microfilm of manuscript, 1926, LDS Church History Library, confirms that fifty-six deaths had occurred in the days before the arrival of the rescue company.

⁵⁴Bleak, Journal, November 5, 1856.

⁵⁵Ibid., November 9, 1856. According to family tradition, Elizabeth pulled James in their handcart for a period of time in early November. Further details of Elizabeth’s heroics are detailed in an account of a man identified as “Jimmy” (presumably James Bleak) who burst into tears at the prospect of crossing a river. His wife insisted that she would pull the handcart until one of the rescuers was summoned and carried “Jimmy” on his back.

teams arrived from the Salt Lake Valley. The final 260 miles were covered at a much faster pace. Exactly five months after setting foot in Boston, the Martin Company finally entered Salt Lake City on November 30.

Upon his arrival in Salt Lake City, Bleak wrote, "I feel to rejoice greatly and give praise to God for my safe arrival in Zion with my wife and children after a journey of 6 months and 1 week."⁵⁶ Bleak later explained that his family's arrival was the literal fulfillment of a prophecy uttered by an unnamed woman Saint in his Whitechapel branch through the gift of tongues in a testimony meeting shortly before departure. Bleak understood the essence of the pronouncement even before another member arose and gave the following interpretation: "I, the Lord, am well pleased with the offering made by my servant Elder B[leak]; and notwithstanding he shall see the angel of death laying waste on his right hand and on his left, on his front and on his rearward, yet he and his family shall gather to Zion in safety, and not one of them shall fall by the way."⁵⁷

Bleak had just endured the worst experience of his life; but in a

See Lynne Watkins Jorgensen, "The Martin Handcart Disaster: The London Participants," *Journal of Mormon History* 21 (Fall 1995): 192–93; John Jaques, "Some Reminiscences," *Salt Lake Daily Herald*, December 15, 1878, 1; Aaron Jackson, [Reminiscences], in *Utah Pioneer Biographies*, 44 vols. (Salt Lake City: Utah Genealogical Society, 1935–64), 15:6. Elizabeth's handcart story is corroborated by James's obituary in the *Washington County News* (St. George), February 7, 1918, 1.

⁵⁶Ibid., November 30, 1856. The two eldest Bleak children—six-year-old Richard and four-year-old Thomas—walked the entire way for at least the first month as James recorded in his journal on August 28. The two younger Bleak children undoubtedly rode in the handcart the entire journey. The Bleaks were fortunate to have all six family members arrive in Salt Lake quite healthy aside from James's feet. Little Thomas did have two close calls along the way. He was found without a "heart beat or other sign of life" one morning after an extremely cold night, and he nearly drowned in the Green River on another occasion. In both instances, James anointed and blessed Thomas and explained that the child was saved "by God's power." See Scribo [James G. Bleak], "An Item of Hand Cart Experience," 366–67; Thomas N. Bleak, Untitled manuscript, Biographical files, Sons of Utah Pioneer Library, Salt Lake City.

⁵⁷Scribo [James G. Bleak], "An Item of Hand Cart Experience," 366.

letter to his in-laws penned just three days after entering the valley, his buoyant outlook continued as evident in his November 30 entry: “We should not have been so long performing the journey but we were detained on the road in consequence of the snow falling considerably towards the latter part of our journey.”⁵⁸ There are a few possible explanations for Bleak’s blatant omission of the horrific details in his letter. Perhaps he did not wish his in-laws to feel unnecessary worry over their daughter or grandchildren, especially since the entire family had survived. It may have been that he did not want doubts to circulate among British Saints that might have discouraged some from making the trek to Zion. A third possibility is that Bleak may have realized in retrospect that his determination to continue the journey so late in the season reflected poorly on his judgment. Another possible factor may have been his desire to affirm his religious convictions and the rightness of his decision to emigrate to his non-Mormon in-laws. Whatever the reason, Bleak’s letter omits the tragedies and suffering associated with the journey—the deaths, the subzero temperatures, the extensive illness, the near-starvation, and gruesome effects of frostbite. Rather, he paints a picture of a beautiful prairie with abundant fruits and a breathtaking landscape. Almost in passing, he reported, “Our health as a general thing has been very good[.] Betsy has enjoyed better health on the whole of the journey than she did at home. Mary is rather poorly, at present and I have my feet frostbitten in consequence of which I am not able to do any thing like work and do not expect to be able for at least 2 months.”⁵⁹

This almost-casual mention greatly minimizes the seriousness of the frostbite. It was, in fact, so severe that his flesh dropped away from his heels, and he was unable to walk for two and a half months after his arrival in the Salt Lake Valley. His right foot never did fully recover from the ordeal, and he recorded his suffering and pain often in later years. Thirty-five years after the trek, he was measured for a custom pair of shoes “for ease to my tender right foot remnant of my

⁵⁸James G. Bleak, Letter to John and Eunice Moore, December 3, 1856, Moore Family Papers.

⁵⁹*Ibid.* Bleak mentions the deaths of two individuals with whom the Moores were acquainted, but he avoids detailing the appalling severity of the trek.

Hand cart journey across the plaines.”⁶⁰ It is difficult to compare Bleak’s report to those of other Willie and Martin survivors, as few letters sent across the Atlantic from them have been recovered. However, it is interesting that his personal journal entry is written in the same upbeat tone as his letter to his in-laws. It tells us something of his resilient personality. James Bleak was not a complainer, and he refused to allow his misfortunes to make him bitter or cynical.

Upon their arrival in the Valley, James was “carried into” Jackson’s blacksmith shop;⁶¹ and later in the day, the entire Bleak family was graciously taken into the homes of Seth Blair and Edward Stevenson. Brigham Young had insisted that the handcart pioneers be “distributed in the city among the families that have good and comfortable houses.”⁶² The willingness of Blair and Stevenson to care for the Bleaks likely went beyond Brigham’s directive as they were especially empathetic to the plight of the emigrants, having witnessed ca-

⁶⁰James G. Bleak, Journal, April 9, 1892, Bleak Papers, Utah State Historical Society.

⁶¹James G. Bleak, Journal, September 25, 1878, Bleak Papers, Utah State Historical Society. Bleak noted: “Stayed with bro Angus M Cannon all night. Thus sleeping in a home; built very nearly on the site of Jacksons Blacksmith shop where I was first carried into.” This shop belonged to Henry C. Jackson (1819–1905), a skilled blacksmith who converted to Mormonism in his native England in 1846, emigrated to America in 1848, and arrived in the Salt Lake Valley in October 1852 with the James C. Snow Company. Jackson practiced his trade in Salt Lake City before relocating to Paradise, Utah, in 1861. Jenson, *Biographical Encyclopedia*, 1:766. According to Nicholas G. Morgan’s “1850s Pioneer Map of Great Salt Lake City,” Jackson owned lot 3 in block 78 on 100 South, between 100 West (now 200 West) and 200 West (now 300 West). Subsequent city directories and Sanborn Fire Insurance maps confirm that Angus Cannon’s property was indeed “very nearly on the site” of what was once Jackson’s property. Both structures were located on the south side of the block directly east of what is now Energy Solutions Arena. An advertisement for the Deseret Tin Shop further pinpoints the location of Jackson’s shop. *Deseret News*, January 23, 1856, 367.

⁶²*Deseret News*, December 10, 1856, as quoted in LeRoy R. Hafen and Ann W. Hafen, *Handcarts to Zion: The Story of a Unique Western Migration, 1856–1860* (Glendale, Calif.: Arthur H. Clark Company, 1960), 139; Scott G. Kenney, ed., *Wilford Woodruff’s Journal, 1833–1898*, typescript, 9 vols. (Midvale, Utah: Signature Books, 1983–85), 4:496–97.

tastrophe on the trail firsthand just eighteen months prior to the Bleak family's arrival. Blair's 1855 wagon train was violently struck by cholera and a third of the company succumbed to the disease. Eventually Blair also became ill and had to abandon the company, leaving Stevenson to provide leadership for the pathetic group for the remainder of the trek.⁶³ For Stevenson and Bleak, the connection was more personal as the two had become acquainted in London as early as January 1853.⁶⁴ Weary and crippled, Bleak felt profound gratitude for the compassion extended to his family by Blair and Stevenson. He tenderly recorded, "For this kindness I pray God to bless them and to cause the spirit of increase to rest upon every blessing they have, and supply them with every blessing they need."⁶⁵

NORTH OGDEN AND THE UTAH WAR

On Christmas Day the Bleak family left Salt Lake City and relocated fifty miles north in the community of North Ogden. First settled in 1850, North Ogden was briefly vacated in early 1851 to avoid hostile Indians; but by the spring of 1851, Mormon settlers returned

⁶³See Michael N. Landon, "Welcoming Arms Greeted Newcomers," *Church News*, December 30, 2006, 11.

⁶⁴Bleak, Journal, July 5, 1854. On this date Bleak recorded, "Elder Stephenson [sic] of Gibraltar Mission visited branch." Three days later, Stevenson "spent the afternoon with me [Bleak] at home." He visited the Whitechapel Branch again in January 1855 before returning to America. Edward Stevenson was born in Gibraltar, Spain, in 1820, and his family came to America in 1828. He joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1833 and was called to the Gibraltar Mission in August 1852 at the same meeting that Orson Pratt publicly announced the church's practice of plural marriage. Stevenson reached Liverpool on January 5, 1853, and spent a few weeks in England before proceeding to Gibraltar. Thus, the two may have crossed paths as early as January 1853. After less than a year in Gibraltar, Stevenson returned to England, largely due to the outbreak of the Crimean War, and sailed from Liverpool aboard the *Chimborazo* on April 17, 1855. Stevenson assumed leadership of Seth Blair's cholera-infested company two months later on June 25 and arrived in Salt Lake City in mid-September. Jenson, *LDS Biographical Encyclopedia*, 1:214–216; Joseph Grant Stevenson, "The Stevenson Family History: Consisting of Biographical Sketches of the Joseph Stevenson Family" (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1955), 120–37.

⁶⁵Bleak, Journal, November 30, 1856.

to the area, constructed dugouts and log cabins, and set about planting crops. By 1852 the town was divided into four-acre blocks and streets, and canals were routed into the settlement from nearby streams. Thus, when the Bleaks arrived in North Ogden, the infrastructure was in place, a ward was established, and farms had been yielding crops for a few years.⁶⁶

The Bleaks spent the first few weeks of 1857 attending various Church meetings and writing letters to friends and acquaintances. A milestone event occurred on February 12—more than two months after their arrival in Utah—when Bleak recorded that he walked “to meeting for the first time this Evening.”⁶⁷ For their first year in Utah, the Bleaks boarded with Church members in North Ogden and were given lots in which to raise crops. Bleak acknowledged that, for the first few months, he was not “able to do any thing towards maintaining my family,” but “thanks be to the Lord and our brethren, we have not yet wanted for food.”⁶⁸

Bleak’s clerical abilities were quickly recognized; and within three months of reaching North Ogden, James was appointed clerk of the local high priests’ quorum, then later as scribe for the local patriarch. He was strong enough in the spring of 1857 to plant crops to sustain his family. By the summer, Bleak found employment as a school teacher for sixty dollars a month, alleviating several trying months of extreme poverty and famine.

In April 1857, Bleak returned to Salt Lake City to attend his first general conference. He immediately recognized Brigham Young “having dreamed of him three times before I left England.” In one of the meetings held in the Bowery, a collection was taken “to raise \$125 for President B[righam] Young.”⁶⁹ The Church president had asked the congregation to “do me the favor of giving me one hundred and twenty five dollars in money during this Conference. I will let the brethren and sisters throw in their dollars, or half or quarter dollars, just as they please, and I want to do what I please with the

⁶⁶Richard C. Roberts and Richard W. Sadler, *A History of Weber County* (Salt Lake City: Utah State Historical Society and the Weber County Commission, 1997), 69–70.

⁶⁷Bleak, Journal, February 12, 1857.

⁶⁸James G. Bleak, Letter to John and Eunice Moore, May 12, 1857, Moore Family Papers.

⁶⁹Bleak, Journal, April 9, 1857.

amount.”⁷⁰ As Bleak “had no cash, I gave my ring” as did Sabra Savage and Polly Phelps.⁷¹ Notice was later given that Brother Brigham had received what he needed and he desired “the owners of the rings to receive them back.” But Bleak ignored the request and returned to Seth Blair’s residence for the night.

The following day Bleak recorded:

I attended Conference in the morning. Notice was given from the stand that there was a letter for me. I went to the stand for it, [and] as I was receiving it President Young said to the clerk if any person applies for the one ring remaining, send them to me. I having heard what he said desired that he would keep it. He asked if it belonged to me. I said yes, that I had no cash and therefore gave my ring which I wished him to accept. He blessed me in the name of the Lord and said he had as much as he wanted then and wished me to take back my ring which I accordingly did. He asked the clerk to take my name and residence.⁷²

Bleak’s willingness to contribute all he had in this instance is representative of what one historian has called the “less visible church members whose loyalty ultimately determined whether initiatives, projects, or programs were successfully completed or derailed by indifference or malcontent.”⁷³ Not only did the Bleak family have no cash at this time, but they were so impoverished that, upon his return home, Bleak gratefully recorded that a neighbor kindly gave his family a half bushel of “Potatoes and some onions which was very acceptable as we had no food.”⁷⁴ This experience illustrates Bleak’s unshakable devotion to his Church despite his own family’s destitution. His offer to donate his wedding ring for Brigham’s unspecified purposes and his initial refusal to take the

⁷⁰Journal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (chronological scrapbook of typed entries and newspaper clippings, 1830–present), April 6, 1857, LDS Church History Library.

⁷¹Church Historian’s Office Journal, April 8, 1857, holograph, CR 100 1, LDS Church History Library; also 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, 2002), 1:17.

⁷²Bleak, Journal, April 9, 1857.

⁷³Ronald O. Barney, ed., *The Mormon Vanguard Brigade of 1847: Norton Jacob’s Record* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 2005), 10.

⁷⁴Bleak, Journal, April 11, 1857.

ring back goes beyond run-of-the-mill pioneer stories of sacrifice. This altruistic act is another example of Bleak's inherent generosity, enduring devotion, and selflessness. These traits define his life, and the ring account is reminiscent of his decision in London to forego crossing the plains in a wagon in hopes of subsidizing another's emigration to Zion.

Bleak and his family arrived in the Utah Territory during the height of the Mormon Reformation. On April 19, Bleak wrote, "I attended meeting twice. Sacrament ministered for the first time since the reformation. I volunteered to act as Sunday School Teacher."⁷⁵ Aimed to cure the Saints of their spiritual lethargy, the movement was spearheaded by Brigham Young and his second counselor Jedediah M. Grant. A twenty-seven-question catechism designed to determine an individual's worthiness was distributed to bishops and home missionaries who visited their assigned blocks to evaluate the spirituality and obedience of each family. Church leaders preached fiery sermons from the pulpit throughout the territory calling for repentance and reform. Administration of the sacrament ceased in ward meetings beginning in mid-November, and rebaptism became widespread in the spring as an outward sign of rededication. The massive rebaptism effort and the return of the sacrament in April effectively concluded the eight-month Reformation. Church leaders were convinced that their efforts had drastically improved the "spiritual tone of the community" and the movement was deemed a success.⁷⁶ Bleak's frostbitten foot prevented his rebaptism during the Reformation, but he remained eager to rededicate himself and "asked Bishop [Thomas] Dunn to let me be rebaptized as soon as circumstances would permit as I think my foot is well enough to have that or-

⁷⁵The Bleaks were members of the North Ogden Ward in the Weber Stake from December 1856 until their move to Salt Lake City in the fall of 1859.

⁷⁶Paul H. Peterson, "The Mormon Reformation of 1856–1857: The Rhetoric and the Reality," *Journal of Mormon History* 15 (1989): 77. Threats by Brigham Young in December 1856 to forcefully remove Gentiles and apostates encouraged their exodus. By the following July, Brigham noted that the territory had rid itself of such "filth." Brigham Young, Letter to George Q. Cannon, July 4, 1857, Brigham Young Letterbooks, LDS Church History Library, as cited in *ibid.*, 77.

dinance performed.”⁷⁷

By spring 1857 a complex sequence of interrelated events nearly a decade in the making further strained federal and Mormon relations and culminated in an order for roughly one third of the U.S. Army to march to the Utah Territory to end a rumored Mormon rebellion in what became known as the Utah War.⁷⁸ Although the army was officially sent as an escort for newly appointed Territorial Governor Alfred Cumming, Church leaders were well aware that many of the approaching troops openly bragged of their intent to crush the Mormons. In hopes of averting or at least stalling the army’s invasion, Brigham Young mobilized the territorial militia, also known as the Nauvoo Legion. The militia was divided into geographic military districts, and districts were further organized into companies, battalions, regiments, and platoons.

Despite his painful frostbitten feet, Bleak enlisted in the Weber Military District and took part in two marches in the fall of 1857. Bleak “drilled in ranks for the first time” on August 12, his “frosted foot not allowing it sooner.”⁷⁹ Under Colonel Chauncey West, the regiment drilled almost daily, holding itself ready to march on a moment’s notice. Bleak, a resident in Utah Territory for a mere eight and a half months, with no military experience, was appointed sergeant in the Third Platoon. On October 20 his regiment received orders to proceed north through the Malad Valley, approximately fifty miles

⁷⁷Bleak, Journal, June 3, 1857. Bleak’s rebaptism did not take place until August 9. “In the afternoon I was rebaptized by Franklin G. Clifford and confirmed by Bishop Thomas Dunn.” Dunn was a Mormon Battalion veteran, one of the early settlers of North Ogden in 1851, presiding elder over the North Ogden Branch, and then first bishop of the North Ogden Ward (1853–63). Roberts and Sadler, *A History of Weber County*, 70; Jenson, *LDS Biographical Encyclopedia*, 4:559.

⁷⁸For the most recent scholarship on the Utah War, see William P. MacKinnon, ed., *At Sword’s Point, Part 1: A Documentary History of the Utah War to 1858* (Norman, Okla.: Arthur H. Clark Company, 2008).

⁷⁹Bleak, Journal, August 12, 1857; Weber Military District muster roll, August 12, 1857, Utah Territorial Militia records, Series 2210, Utah State Archives, Salt Lake City. Although a number of Martin handcart survivors participated in the Utah War, this does not diminish the extent of Bleak’s sacrifice hiking through snow-covered canyons while not fully recovered from the painful after-effects of severe frostbite.

north of North Ogden in present-day southeastern Idaho, in case the army approached via Soda Springs. Discouraged by the Mormon raids in Wyoming, the de facto leader of the U.S. Army—Colonel Edmund B. Alexander—had decided on October 6 to enter Utah by the northern route. Bleak's mission was terminated when Mormon scouts brought word that Alexander had suspended his march and retreated south on October 19. Alexander's indecisiveness, the difficulty of traversing the terrain, lack of forage for the animals, deteriorating weather, and the prospect of continual harassment by the Mormon militia all factored into the decision to abandon the attempted northern invasion.⁸⁰ Bleak returned home briefly. In mid-November orders came to march east to Echo Canyon, a sixteen-mile gorge just west of the Wyoming-Utah border along present day I-80, and assist those stationed near Cache Cave in fortifying the steep, narrow red rock canyon. Never involved in any combat, Sergeant Bleak's primary duties throughout his three-week sojourn in Echo Canyon consisted of erecting wickiups and cutting brush. By early December, it was clear that the army had settled into winter quarters near Fort Bridger, and all but a handful of Mormon legionnaires were dismissed from their posts.

As if the events of the previous winter, summer, and fall had not been stressful enough, Elizabeth was carrying the Bleaks' fifth child during the height of the Utah War. While James drilled and marched to remote locations at a moment's notice, a pregnant Elizabeth was left to provide for herself and four small children. Fortunately, by the time John Bleak was born in January 1858, affairs in the territory had settled down while the army waited out the winter. During this lull, Bleak resumed attending church meetings and bought a house for his family. In March "instructions were given in

⁸⁰Col. Edmund B. Alexander, Letter to Colonel S. Cooper, October 9, 1857, as quoted in LeRoy R. Hafen and Ann W. Hafen, eds., *The Utah Expedition, 1857-1858: A Documentary Account of the United States Military Movement under Colonel Albert Sidney Johnston, and the Resistance by Brigham Young and the Mormon Nauwoo Legion* (Glendale, Calif.: Arthur H. Clark, 1982), 71; MacKinnon, *At Sword's Point*, 380-81; William P. MacKinnon, email message to Brandon Metcalf, July 26, 2007, printout in my possession; David L. Bigler, *Forgotten Kingdom: The Mormon Theocracy in the American West, 1847-1896* (Spokane, Wash.: Arthur H. Clark, 1998), 153-54.

relation to pulling up stakes and moving South.”⁸¹ This move south was a strategic evacuation of the northern settlements mandated by Brigham Young to avoid an armed confrontation with the military and to garner public sympathy in the East. The Bleaks were initially directed to head south on April 5, but these orders were rescinded and the family remained in North Ogden for an additional two months.

During this period of limbo, Bleak attended a public meeting held in the old Tabernacle that gives a glimpse into the fiery atmosphere of 1858 Utah. Newly appointed Governor “[Alfred] Cumming appeared for the first time in public, & addressed the meeting, having disturbed our religious exercises by having Prest B. Young called off the stand when preach’g.”⁸² Young introduced Cumming as the governor of Utah, and Cumming then delivered a thirty-minute discourse, professing friendship for the Saints and outlining his intentions. Tempers were high, and Cumming wrote Secretary of State Lewis Cass that the congregation “exhibit[ed] more frenzy than I had expected to witness among a people who habitually exercised great self-control.”⁸³ When Cumming mentioned the troops entering the territory, the “wildest uproar ensued” effectively ending the speech. The emotional outburst was only curbed by “the efforts of Brigham Young” and order was restored “before the adjournment of the meeting.”⁸⁴

Bleak and his family moved to Lehi in early June and returned to North Ogden in mid-July, three weeks after the U.S. troops established camp on the west side of Utah Lake.⁸⁵ One historian observed that the intangible costs associated with the move south were extensive. Wards ceased to function as they had before the army’s invasion of Utah. Long after the Saints returned to their homes, “ward meetings throughout most of Utah were held only on an as-needed ba-

⁸¹Bleak, Journal, March 28, 1858.

⁸²Ibid., April 25, 1858.

⁸³Governor Alfred Cumming, Report to Secretary Lewis Cass, *House Executive Documents*, 35th Congress, 2nd Sess., quoted in B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1930), 4:395.

⁸⁴Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of the Church*, 4:390–96.

⁸⁵Bleak, Journal, June 8 and July 7, 1858.

sis.”⁸⁶ This situation continued for at least a year, with Bleak writing a year later on July 24, 1859:

I have not any thing very particular to record since my last entry. I have attended my Quorum Meetings regularly. It is very rare for us to have a Ward Meeting. A spirit of darkness has been resting upon the people with very few exceptions since our return from the South, now about 12 months. Great numbers have gone to California and the States from the Valley. Wickedness has increased to a giant degree. Whiskey drinking and its consequences have been manifested among the people; but the Saints of God expect siftings in the Church until none are left but the “Pure in Heart.”⁸⁷

A feeling of melancholy seemed to cloak the Saints during this period—a reversal from the infectious enthusiasm that swept the region following the 1856–57 Reformation.

Aside from the disruption of normalcy caused by the uncertainty and anxiety of the U.S. Army occupation, the remainder of 1858 passed rather uneventfully. Bleak harvested his crops and taught school. For the most part, schools in 1850s Utah were organized within the structure of the local Mormon wards and classes convened in the meetinghouse, although North Ogden constructed a separate school building in 1852. They were essentially “quasi-public Mormon schools, controlled by trustees appointed by Mormon bishops” that “reflected Mormon community values, used Mormon scriptures as supplemental texts, and were supported in part by tuition from patrons and in part by local taxes.”⁸⁸

Perhaps seeing few prospects in North Ogden, Bleak made multiple trips to Salt Lake City in the fall of 1858 and contacted several Mormon merchants including William Godbe “in relation to obtain-

⁸⁶Richard D. Poll, “The Move South,” *BYU Studies* 29, no. 4 (Fall 1989): 84–85.

⁸⁷Bleak, Journal, July 24, 1859. Entries in the 1859 portion of Bleak’s journal are much more sporadic than those for 1854–58. After five brief entries in January, he did not write again until April 1; then nearly four months passed before he made his next entry on July 24.

⁸⁸Frederick S. Buchanan, “Education in Utah,” in *Utah History Encyclopedia*, edited by Allan Kent Powell (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1994), 153–54; Roberts and Sadler, *A History of Weber County*, 223.

ing employment” but was unsuccessful.⁸⁹ Bleak returned to teaching in North Ogden but still harbored his desire to find clerical work. From his adolescence, clerking had seemed a compatible vocation and was certainly less strenuous than farming for the still-recovering handcart survivor. It was only a matter of time before an opportunity presented itself.

MOVE TO SALT LAKE CITY

In October 1859 Bleak was hired as clerk and business manager of the *Mountaineer* newspaper, housed in the basement of the Council House on South Temple in Salt Lake City. The *Mountaineer* was a short-lived weekly newspaper founded in August 1859 by attorneys Seth Blair, James Ferguson, and Hosea Stout in response to the attacks of the anti-Mormon *Valley Tan*. Although the *Mountaineer* was owned and edited by Mormons, it was not an official Church paper with the status of the *Deseret News*, even though the *News* did grant Blair, Ferguson, and Stout “a little assistance till their press and type arrive.”⁹⁰ It was unofficial policy for the *Deseret News* to disregard attacks of local rivals, which encouraged the emergence of a third paper to combat the anti-Mormon sentiments printed in the *Tan* and vigorously oppose the accusations of the federally appointed judges. The *Valley Tan* and the *Mountaineer* volleyed charges and counter-charges back and forth until 1861 when both papers were discontinued, primarily because of a lack of paper in the territory and the evacuation of Camp Floyd.⁹¹

On November 18, Elizabeth and the five children joined James in Salt Lake City a month after he began working. According to the 1860 census, the family resided in the Seventeenth Ward which encompassed the area immediately north and two blocks west of the

⁸⁹Bleak, Journal, September 25, 1858.

⁹⁰“A New Enterprise,” *Deseret News (Weekly)*, August 24, 1859, 4. According to Bleak, the *Mountaineer*’s press and type were brought from California using funds provided by Brigham Young. “‘Jim’ Bleak of St. George,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, July 26, 1897, 3.

⁹¹Monte Burr McLaws, *Spokesman for the Kingdom: Early Mormon Journalism and the Deseret News, 1830–1898* (Provo, Utah: BYU Press, 1977), 172–73; J. Cecil Alter, *Early Utah Journalism* (Salt Lake City: Utah State Historical Society, 1938), 324–27; Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of the Church*, 4:522.

temple block. By the next year, they were living in Sixteenth Ward, which was due west of Seventeenth Ward.⁹²

One week after Elizabeth's arrival, President Daniel H. Wells informed Bleak that the time had come for the Bleaks to receive their temple endowment. Bleak had almost certainly requested this blessing, as was common in 1850s Utah. James and Elizabeth "rec[eive]d our Endowment" on December 3, 1859, and were sealed as husband and wife later that day by Brigham Young in the Endowment House.⁹³ Just why the Bleaks waited three years after their arrival in Utah to receive their temple rites is unknown; but it seems reasonable to assume that Bleak's feet, the move to North Ogden, the Utah War, and the constant struggle to earn a living precluded taking this step sooner.

Aside from his employment with the *Mountaineer*, the record of Bleak's activities during 1860 and the first half of 1861 is sketchy. His journal ends abruptly in February 1860 and his next extant journal does not commence until 1864. Bleak partially filled the gap with a newsy letter in 1860 to Elizabeth's parents. Aside from discussing the growth and characteristics of the children, Bleak humorously wrote that if he were to return to London "scarcely any of my former acquaintances would know the fleshy-red-faced fellow now addressing

⁹²Census, Salt Lake County, 1860; Salt Lake County Assessment Rolls, 1861, Series 18188, Utah State Archives; St. George Company Roster, in James G. Bleak, "Annals of the Southern Mission," 88, holograph, MS 318, LDS Church History Library, in *Selected Collections*, 1:19.

⁹³Bleak, Journal, December 3, 1859; *The Family Record of James Godson Bleak: Ancestors and Descendants, Formerly of London, England, Now of St. George, Utah Terr.*, microfilm, LDS Family History Library, Salt Lake City; Endowment House Sealing Records, December 3, 1859, microfilm, Special Collections, LDS Family History Library; Ronald O. Barney, email message to Brandon Metcalf, April 22, 2008, printout in my possession. Before the completion of the Salt Lake Temple in 1893, the Endowment House was used as a temporary temple where approximately 2,500 marriages were performed annually. Dedicated in 1855, the two-story structure stood in the northwest corner of the temple block for more than thirty-four years. Lisle G Brown, "Temple Pro Tempore': The Salt Lake City Endowment House," *Journal of Mormon History* 34, no. 4 (Fall 2008): 1-69; Lamar C. Berrett, "Endowment Houses," *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 4 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 2:456.

you” as “a young lady who was acquainted with me in London, told me the other day, that if I got any fatter I should become quite homely in my looks.”⁹⁴

Bleak married his first plural wife, Caroline Gosnold in November 1860—just three months after her arrival in Utah. The marriage was performed by Brigham Young in the Endowment House and within a year a son was born to Caroline and James.⁹⁵ Unfortunately, no known record has survived explaining the events leading up to the marriage or, more importantly, how James, Elizabeth, or Caroline viewed the arrangement.

CLERK AND HISTORIAN FOR THE SOUTHERN MISSION

With the final edition of the *Mountaineer* published in July 1861, Bleak found temporary clerical work prior to receiving a call to move his family to southern Utah. His family was one of 309 called in the October 1861 general conference to relocate to St. George as part of Brigham Young’s push to establish a Cotton Mission. A small number of families had been sent to the area as early as 1857 but achieved only moderate success in producing cotton.⁹⁶ With the onset of the Civil War, cotton supplies from the East were curtailed, and Church leaders deemed it necessary to redouble their efforts at raising their own cotton. In a letter to Orson Hyde, Brigham Young explained that those called “will become permanent settlers in the southern region, and that they will cheerfully contribute their ef-

⁹⁴James G. Bleak, Letter to John and Eunice Moore, March 9, 1860, Moore Family Papers; strikeovers omitted.

⁹⁵Caroline Blanche Gosnold was born March 27, 1830 in Westminster, Middlesex County, England. She joined the LDS Church in 1855, crossed the Atlantic on the *William Tapscott* in 1859, and came west in the Jesse Murphy Company in 1860. James and Caroline were married November 24, 1860. Caroline had two more children after moving to St. George. She died of apoplexy in the St. George Temple on December 1, 1881. “The Family Record of James Godson Bleak,” microfilm 393291, LDS Family History Library; “Names of Emigrants,” *Mountaineer*, August 18, 1860, 206; “Arrival of Companies,” *Deseret News (Weekly)*, September 5, 1860, 4; “Died,” *Deseret News (Weekly)*, December 7, 1881, 720.

⁹⁶Leonard J. Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom: An Economic History of the Latter-day Saints, 1830–1900* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1958), 216.

forts to supply the Territory with cotton, sugar, grapes, tobacco, figs, almonds, olive oil, and such other articles.”⁹⁷ Shortly after these settlers received their assignments, Bleak was appointed and set apart as clerk and historian for the Southern Mission “in the Historian’s office under the hands of apostles Orson Pratt and George A. Smith, the latter being Church Historian.”⁹⁸ Bleak’s calling as historian is unique among outlying Mormon settlements, providing further evidence not only of his distinctiveness, but that Church leaders were taking notice of his intellectual abilities. While a number of Latter-day Saint communities such as San Bernardino had an appointed clerk, there is no record of any other historian being called and set apart by George A. Smith. Meetings were held throughout the month at Brigham Young’s schoolhouse where “much instruction of a practical nature” was given to the newly called missionaries. Young specifically outlined where the city would be located and “said it should be named St. George.”⁹⁹

As the company prepared to move south, Bleak received an additional assignment. Brigham Young instructed Bleak to marry fifteen-year-old Jane Thompson. Jane was the daughter of Joseph and Penelope Thompson, longtime friends and neighbors of the Bleaks from their days in the Whitechapel Branch. As mentioned earlier, Thompson had introduced Bleak to Mormonism and the two were employed by the same company as silversmiths. In 1854, Thompson

⁹⁷Brigham Young, Letter to Orson Hyde, October 13, 1861, Manuscript History of the Church, 440–41, CR 100 102, LDS Church History Library.

⁹⁸James G. Bleak, “Annals of the Southern Mission,” 102. I have been unable to pinpoint the exact date of Bleak’s appointment and setting apart. He was however unanimously sustained by the St. George Camp as clerk and historian at the first meeting held in the settlement on December 4 “half a mile due east of where the Temple now stands” under the direction of Apostle Erastus Snow.

⁹⁹Bleak, “Annals of the Southern Mission,” 100. Some questions still arise about the origin of St. George’s name. For example, see Lynn Arave, “St. George Likely Named after an LDS Apostle,” *Deseret News*, July 8, 2007, B2. The settlement was clearly named for Apostle George A. Smith. Church Historian’s Office Journal, October 9, 1861, in *Selected Collections*, 1:17; Manuscript History, 469; Andrew Karl Larson, *I Was Called to Dixie* (St. George: Andrew Karl Larson, 1961), 107.

left his wife and eight children in England for a job in Providence, Rhode Island. The family rejoined him in Rhode Island the following summer; and six years later, Jane headed west with her brother William, his wife, and their child in 1861 in the Ira Eldredge Company. The Thompsons and Bleaks arranged by letter for Jane to lodge with the Bleaks upon her arrival in Salt Lake until her parents arrived. Jane “readily made herself useful in the Bleak household” being “entirely at ease with Uncle James and Aunt Betsey as these friends had long been called.”¹⁰⁰

While “at first opposed to the idea” of marrying Bleak, Jane “herself talked with Brigham Young and learned from him the wisdom of his advice.”¹⁰¹ James and Elizabeth had previously vowed to care for Jane, and leaving her to fend for herself in Salt Lake City was not an option. Jane noted that despite some initial reluctance from both parties, she and James were married on October 26 in the Endowment House by Daniel H. Wells just a week prior to their move to Dixie.¹⁰² The family now consisted of James, his three wives, five sons, and two daughters. The Bleaks traveled in two wagons with a supply of clothing and enough food to sustain the family for eighteen

¹⁰⁰“Brief Sketch of the Life of Jane Thompson Bleak written by her daughters, Rose B. Ramsey and Jennie B. Nelson,” ca. 1938, Jane T. Bleak Pioneer File, History Department, Daughters of Utah Pioneers, Salt Lake City; “Jane Thompson,” in *Joseph Lewis Thompson Family*, 363–65. The Ira Eldredge Company left Florence, Nebraska, July 1, 1861, and arrived in the Salt Lake Valley September 13–15. Jane became Bleak’s favored wife, and the two were married for fifty-six years. Jane died May 20, 1942, in St. George. For specifics on the 1861 Eldredge Company, see Ira Eldredge Emigrating Company, Journal, July–September 1861, trail excerpt, www.lds.org/churchhistory/library/pioneercompanysources/0,16272,4019-1-10,00.html (accessed July 14, 2007).

¹⁰¹“Brief Sketch of the Life of Jane Thompson Bleak,” 3.

¹⁰²“The Family Record of James Godson Bleak,” microfilm 393291. Brigham Young and Wilford Woodruff witnessed the ceremony. Two decades later, James married Jane’s niece, Matilda Irene Thompson, in the St. George Temple on February 3, 1882, with J.D.T. McAllister officiating. At the time, James was fifty-two and Matilda was twenty. They had seven children. A few months following James’s death Matilda married Joseph S. Smith on June 18, 1918, in the St. George Temple. She died August 26, 1937, in St. George. “Local Column Overflow,” *Washington County News* June 20, 1918, 1; “Death Claims Dixieite after Short Illness; Buried Here

months. They arrived in St. George on December 1, 1861, Jane's sixteenth birthday, and Bleak immediately assumed a prominent position in the new settlement as a member of the twelve-member Camp Council, a committee to petition the legislature for an appropriation "to make good roads in this County," and a committee to choose school teachers and organize schools.¹⁰³ By late January 1862, following two months of dwelling in tents and wagons, the "settlers began to move from the main Camp to the lots assigned them by President Erastus Snow."¹⁰⁴ The Bleaks settled three blocks west of the current site of the Tabernacle. Except for a thirteen-month mission to England in the 1870s, Bleak resided in the heart of St. George for the rest of his life—another fifty-six years.¹⁰⁵

EPILOGUE

In just five and a half years, Bleak evolved from the little-known president of Whitechapel Branch to colonizer and pioneer historian of the Southern Mission.¹⁰⁶ This appointment did not come by coincidence. Church leaders, both in North Ogden and at Church headquarters, obviously took notice of Bleak's intellectual abilities over the course of his five years in Utah. These years proved to be a most important prelude to his later accomplishments and responsibilities. In the fifty-six years that followed, Bleak served on the St. George High Council, in the stake presidency, as stake patriarch, as tithing clerk, as St. George Temple recorder, on the city council, as city recorder, as clerk of numerous businesses and organizations, as assistant editor of

Saturday," *Washington County News*, September 2, 1937, 1.

¹⁰³Bleak, "Annals of the Southern Mission," 105–15. The twelve-member council consisted of Bleak, Robert Gardner, George Woodward, Daniel D. McArthur, William Carter, Angus M. Cannon, Benjamin F. Pendleton, Ute Perkins, William Lang, William Fawcett, Israel Ivins, and Lysander Dayton.

¹⁰⁴*Ibid.*, 123. Removal from the camp tents and wagons began on January 23, 1862.

¹⁰⁵Of the 309 families who accepted the 1861 call to settle the region in and around St. George, nearly a fifth packed up and returned to the northern settlements within the first year. Bleak, "Annals of the Southern Mission," 87–97; Larson, *I Was Called to Dixie*, 105–6.

¹⁰⁶Hafen and Hafen, *Handcarts to Zion*, 140; Addy, "James Godson Bleak," 7–15.

the *Millennial Star* during his mission, as president of the St. George Board of Education, and also as court clerk and postmaster.¹⁰⁷ Bleak's move to Utah afforded him opportunities and social status, the likes of which he would never have obtained had he remained a clerk in England. While relatively unknown in Utah as a whole, Bleak was prominent among the residents of southern Utah. As historian and clerk, he traveled to conferences and gathered sources for his history of the region. He sat in council for nearly sixty years as clerk and served as an unofficial advisor to such prominent Church leaders as Brigham Young, Wilford Woodruff, and Erastus Snow.¹⁰⁸ Bleak's influence went beyond Utah when he made his way back to his homeland as a missionary in 1872. His service there as assistant editor for the *Millennial Star*, the official periodical of the LDS Church in the British Isles from 1840 to 1970, afforded him the opportunity to help supply the British Saints with sermons, epistles, doctrine, and Church history.

Bleak's importance as chronicler of the Southern Mission cannot be overstated. His 1854–60 journal and correspondence with his in-laws were only a prelude to his later important writings. Foremost among them is his "Annals of the Southern Mission," a lengthy and valuable history of southern Utah, which deftly provides modern observers with a proper understanding of that region of nine-

¹⁰⁷Addy, "James Godson Bleak," 31–42; Preston Nibley, "James G. Bleak Was Active in Early Settlement of St. George," *Church News*, December 31, 1955, 16. Bleak died in St. George, age eighty-eight, on January 30, 1918, of bronchitis complicated by "general run down condition and old age." James G. Bleak, Death Certificate, January 30, 1918, Washington County, Series 81448, Utah State Archives. Funeral services were held on February 1 in the St. George Tabernacle. Bleak's obituary appeared in the *Deseret News*, February 13, 1918, B4; and the *Washington County News* (St. George), February 7, 1918, 1.

¹⁰⁸Addy perhaps did not give Bleak's influence on local leadership enough merit. She credited Bleak's London background as providing him with the refinement that gave him positions of local prominence in a frontier town like St. George; but downplayed or minimized his significance by asserting, "While never helping to determine the policies of the church, he sat in many of the councils of its leaders." Addy, "James Godson Bleak," 2. This is a question that begs for further exploration into Bleak's post-1861 life.

teenth-century Utah. Written as part of Bleak's duties as historian of the Southern Mission, the "Annals" cover more than 2,000 pages, span from 1847 through the end of 1900, and remain an essential source in documenting southwestern Utah and more especially the history of the Church in southern Utah. The manuscript was not completed until 1907 as the result of what Bleak nonchalantly referred to as his preoccupation with numerous civic and ecclesiastical responsibilities.¹⁰⁹ In addition to the substantial "Annals," Bleak remained an avid journal keeper well into the twentieth century. The extant paper trail is quite an impressive compilation of material, its sheer volume daunting to the would-be biographer: the "Annals," more than thirty journals, two letter books, and a cornucopia of correspondence strewn about in numerous manuscript collections and archival repositories. Bleak is really an anomaly among the chroniclers in the territorial period. Few match his literary accomplishments in either volume or substantive contribution to our modern knowledge of pioneer Utah.

James Bleak embodies the countless rank-and-file Church members whose lives and contributions are less visible and often overlooked in Mormon history irrespective of their accomplishments. Without the indefatigable determination of lower-echelon adherents like Bleak, the prospects for the success of Mormonism would have been dim. He epitomizes the fortitude and devotion that became the hallmark of his contemporaries who proved to be the backbone of pioneer Utah in the face of adversity and inconvenience. Moreover, Bleak's fascinating account of his odyssey from England to St. George provides us with a unique perspective through the eyes of a partici-

¹⁰⁹James G. Bleak, Letter to Susa Young Gates, January 7, 1901, Susa Amelia Young Gates Papers, LDS Church History Library. Referring to the "Annals," Bleak explained, "It is a great labor, and has long been upon my mind. In the incessant travel, labor and responsibility of the past 39 years I have done but little more than make notes for such a history; for my responsibilities in St. George Stake, Tithing, County, City, and Ecclesiastical matters, as well as some 24 years Temple service has prevented that concentration of thought which is necessary for the compilation of such a History." His schedule was so demanding that the First Presidency released him from all assignments in 1900. According to Jane Bleak, the final portion of the "Annals" was deposited in the Church Historian's office in October 1907. Jane T. Bleak, Letter to Susa Young Gates, March 17, 1908, Gates Papers.

pant in the pivotal events of 1850s Mormonism: the mass emigration of British Saints, the handcart tragedy of 1856, the Reformation, the Utah War and its accompanying “move south,” and the colonization of southern Utah. Yet a most important aspect of Bleak’s legacy, not to be overlooked, goes beyond his valuable historical writings or commendable intellectual abilities. His enduring commitment and determination in the midst of recurring episodes of what seemed to be undeserved hardship is an inspiring example of the capacity of the human spirit to overcome tribulation and discouragement despite immense and seemingly insurmountable obstacles.

CHIEF KANOSH: CHAMPION OF PEACE AND FORBEARANCE

Edward Leo Lyman

KANOSH, CHIEF OF THE PAVANT (UTE) BAND in central Utah, was perhaps the most significant Native American leader in Utah during the first generation of Anglo-American settlement (1847-75). He interacted with his white neighbors over a much longer period and maintained an unblemished record of peace and friendship, in contrast to his contemporaries, Wakara, Black Hawk, and others. It is no exaggeration to say that those who knew him best regarded him with the greatest affection and admiration.¹

Unfortunately, Kanosh left virtually no personal observations of his changing challenges during his era of prominence (1843-81)—a

EDWARD LEO LYMAN {lionman011@earthlink.net} is a longtime historian, now retired, who has been fascinated with Kanosh since he started fishing on Corn Creek as a boy.

¹Several local historians who preserved oral traditions not otherwise recorded include Ellen George Bird, "Indian Chief Kanosh," holograph, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah (hereafter Perry Special Collections); E. L. Black, "Chief Kanosh and Kanosh Town," Utah Territorial Capital Museum, Fillmore, Utah; J. Noble Anderson, "Indian History," 4, in Sadie Rogers, "Historical Excerpts about Millard County Written by Other People," typescript, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City; Maude Crane Melville, "Chief Kanosh," also in "Historical Excerpts," 197. See also Hyrum S.

lamentable gap shared by almost all Native Americans of his generation; but the effort of reconstructing his probable mental world from the records and memories of his white contemporaries is well worth the effort.

Some have come to regard Kanosh as Brigham Young's overly pliant tool.² On the contrary, he was an intelligent leader and pragmatist who, with marked success, negotiated a delicate balance between cooperation and independence for his people over three decades. This article recounts instances of his devotion to pursuing peace, even at the risk of his own life; discusses his strategy of advocating his people's adoption of advanced farming techniques, describes his stance during the perils and injustices of the Utah Black Hawk War (1865–69), including the murder of fellow Ute, Chief Sanpitch, and his only partially successful efforts to avoid his band's forced removal to the Uintah Indian Reservation. I hypothesize that Kanosh and some associates avoided removal by becoming participants in Paiute farm-villages whose people were not included in the Ute mandate to move.

A particularly valuable source of relevant insights is Thomas Callister's correspondence with Brigham Young and to a lesser extent, Apostle George A. Smith. Callister, Fillmore's bishop and Millard County regional bishop, maintained a consistent correspondence with Brigham Young from 1864 to 1875, frequently reporting conversations with Kanosh, whom he regarded as a personal friend.

BACKGROUND AND FIRST CONTACT

Three main Ute bands (technically virtually all of the tribe in Utah were Northern Utes) occupied the two-hundred-mile stretch in

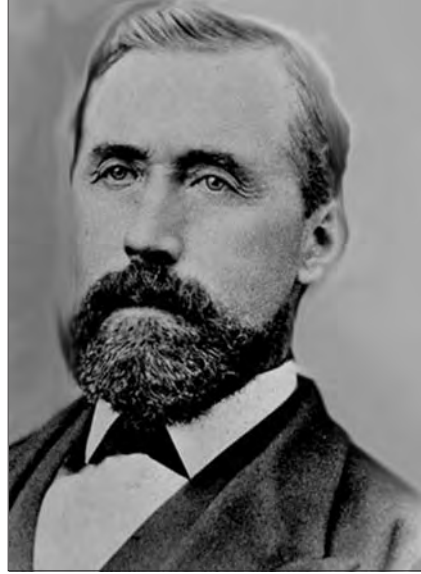
Lewis, "Kanosh: The Pavant Chief as Farmer, Peacemaker and Latter-day Saint (M.A. thesis: Brigham Young University, 2001), whose first chapters record appreciative memories by Millard County contemporaries; and Hyrum S. Lewis, "Kanosh and Ute Identity in Territorial Utah, *Utah Historical Quarterly* 71 (Fall 2003): 332–47. See especially Lewis, "Kanosh: The Pavant," chap. 1 notes 1–2, and chap. 2 note 3, for statements praising Kanosh's intelligence and character.

²Floyd O'Neil, of University of Utah, a very knowledgeable authority on Ute Indians, who assisted with this manuscript, expressed that negative opinion of Kanosh in a conversation with me in 2006, as have others among his Uintah associates.



Young Kanosh. Provenance of this image is unclear. Frank A. Beckwith, later close to Kanosh village inhabitants, once identified it as created by Solomon Carvalho in 1853, but it may depict a man too old to have been Kanosh in 1853. Courtesy Utah State Historical Society.

Bishop Thomas Callister of Fillmore, longtime friend and confidant of Chief Kanosh. Courtesy Old State Capitol Museum, Fillmore, Utah.



central Utah between Utah Valley and Beaver: the Timpanogos Utes of Utah County, Kanosh's Pahvant band which occupied southeastern Millard County, and Walkara's Sanpete (Sanpitch) Utes, who lived from Spanish Fork Canyon throughout Sanpete County and into Juab County near Nephi.

A small renegade band, the Weber Utes (Cumumbahs), ranged north of Salt Lake Valley.³ Another Ute band (Shibereche) resided farther eastward from Sevier County to the Fish Lake Mountain area. The Weeminuche band lived in Wayne, Piute, Grand, and San Juan

³Franklin H. Head, "Report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.," in *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior for the year 1866* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1867). Successive reports in this annual series are cited as *Annual Report* by year (found in the U. S. Congressional serial set). According to this report, the Weber Utes, almost unknown to modern scholars, numbered about 600. For clarity, I use contemporary town and county names for Utah sites, even though some of them had not been established at the time of the episode being described. Efforts over several months to work with a cartographer to produce a map showing contemporary county lines, place names, and tribal regions failed to produce the desired results; but my rough-draft map is available on request.

counties, as far south as the LaSal Mountains and Moab.⁴ The Uintah Utes occupied a considerable segment of the Uintah Basin in Uintah and Duchesne counties, the eventual location of the federal Ute reservation.

Kanosh was born around 1828, the son of Kash-ee-bats, a Timpanogos Ute Chief and one of his wives, Wah-Goots, who was part Mexican.⁵ Kanosh and his mother were reportedly wintering in the California desert in about 1842–43 when they learned that Kash-ee-bats had been assassinated by Timpanogos band rivals. They quickly returned to Utah. Over the next few years, Kanosh “won for himself” the position of head chief of the Pavant Ute band with whom he chose to affiliate.⁶ Pavant traditional territory was twelve miles south of Fillmore and twenty miles north of Cove Fort (built in the 1860s); their hunting domain included Clear Lake, the lower Sevier River on the west, and the (Oak Creek) Canyon Range to the north.⁷

Kanosh was twenty-three when he first encountered Mormon settlers, led by Anson Call, only weeks after Fillmore was established in September 1851. Kanosh and his Pavant associates generally indicated they desired peace with their new neighbors.⁸ The single Pavant village was situated on Corn Creek, twelve miles southwest of Fillmore. George Washington Bean, a missionary and interpreter to the Indians, who first met Kanosh in 1851, described him as “an Indian of

⁴Most Colorado Utes even today consider themselves Southern Utes and include the Elk Mountain Utes (Monticello and Moab, Utah) as part of their tribal group. Conversation with tribal leader James Jefferson, June 2008.

⁵Flora Diana Bean Horne, ed., *Autobiography of George Washington Bean, A Utah Pioneer of 1847, and His Family Records* (Salt Lake City: Salt Lake City Printing Co., 1945), 70. See also Elizabeth Kane, notes of Col. Thomas L. Kane, “Interview with Chief Kanosh (December, 1872),” 9, Thomas L. Kane Papers, Perry Special Collections.

⁶Black, “Chief Kanosh,” 1. When Kachuch, the Pavant headman, died, Kanosh succeeded him. Virtually nothing is known of Kachuch.

⁷John W. Powell and G. W. Ingalls, *Annual Report, 1873*, 8, state that Kanosh was the older brother of Pi-an-ump, principal chief of the Goshutes west of Pavant lands.

⁸Horne, *George Washington Bean*, 70. The *Deseret (Weekly) News*, November 29, 1851, 2–3, reported that Kanosh “professed very great friendship and promised good behavior.”

some experience,” which suggests a natural maturity.⁹

During Fillmore’s first Independence Day celebration on July 4, 1852, Kanosh and his men mistook the pioneers’ gunfire and flag waving as preceding an attack. He and sixty armed warriors with painted faces rode toward Fillmore. The Mormons welcomed them with considerable apprehension but also with a food-laden table and an invitation to join in the celebration. Kanosh had his men wipe the war paint from their faces and enter heartily into the proceedings, including feasting on an ox butchered and “roasted in true barbecue style.” The potentially disastrous situation had been transformed into one of “rejoicing and friendship.”¹⁰

In the spring of 1857, James and Jeanette Duncan founded Meadow, six miles north of Corn Creek. Two years later, Peter Robison and Peter Boyce of Fillmore and Round Valley, settled on Corn Creek about three miles downstream from Kanosh’s village. The Mormon village was called both Petersburg and Lower Corn Creek. According to government records, both Meadow and Petersburg trespassed within the twelve-square mile area that had been government-designated as Ute land.¹¹ About a dozen other Mormon families also moved into the area. Despite their proximity to Kanosh’s people, these LDS farmers obviously felt safe in building homes on their farms, rather than starting out in a fort or even in the village itself. In 1862, Apostle George A. Smith organized an LDS branch for them.¹² When a government survey crew approached Pavant lands in the summer of 1860, Kanosh briefly expressed grave concern over the encroachment but soon realized there was no immediate threat to his domain.¹³

Almost certainly, like his contemporary, Ute Chief Wakara in Sanpete County, who had also initially welcomed their new neigh-

⁹Horne, *George Washington Bean*, 70–71.

¹⁰Edward Leo Lyman and Linda King Newell, *A History of Millard County* (Salt Lake City: Utah Historical Society, 1999), 55.

¹¹J. W. Powell and G. W. Ingalls, *Annual Report, 1873*, 59.

¹²Peter Robison, Letter to Brigham Young, January 19, 1860, Brigham Young Papers (hereafter Young Papers), Historical Department Library, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter LDS Church Library). See also Lyman and Newell, *A History of Millard County*, 99.

¹³“Progress of Surveying Party,” *Journal History of the Church of Je-*

bors, Kanosh had no idea how rapidly Mormon population and land-use demands would increase in just one generation. Nor could either man have understood the Anglo-American concepts of property ownership. However, Kanosh seems to have immediately grasped that superior Mormon weaponry would ultimately have made armed conflict fatal for his people. He also appreciated aspects of the settlers' lifestyle and therefore adopted a realistic and peaceable policy toward his neighbors which he fervently advocated, despite considerable injustice and exploitation, for more than thirty years.

Kanosh's "peace" policy was doubtless influenced markedly by the fate of many of his father's Timpanogos band near Utah Lake. In March 1849, Brigham Young had sent settlers into Utah Valley, which John Alton Peterson, an expert on the Black Hawk War, has termed "the most important northern Ute stronghold." Young's spokesman-interpreter, Dimick B. Huntington, pled with Timpanogos headmen to give the Latter-day Saints a chance to show that they could live together in peace. But less than a year later, on February 8, 1850, occurred "the bloodiest week of Indian killing in Utah history." Mormon militiamen killed all but thirteen of the band's approximately eighty warriors, along with an unspecified number of women and children. Other women and children were captured. By 1865, comments Peterson, "the Timpanogos Utes had essentially ceased to exist."¹⁴ Although most Mormons have never heard of this massacre, Ute leaders never forgot it. It may have been pivotal in Kanosh's thinking, but there is no documentary evidence on which to base such a conclusion.¹⁵

sus Christ of Latter-day Saints (chronological scrapbook of typed entries and newspaper clippings, 1830-present), August 15, 1860, LDS Church Library.

¹⁴John Alton Peterson, *Utah's Black Hawk War* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1998), 52-57, 386. He probably overstates the extermination. Some survivors doubtless moved to southern Utah County to live with other Timpanogos Utes near Spanish Fork and Spring Lake. See also Howard A. Christy, "Open Hand and Mailed Fist: Mormon-Indian Relations in Utah, 1847-52," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 46 (Summer 1978), 220-27.

¹⁵Another unforgettable massacre occurred later even farther north on the Bear River in extreme southern Idaho. On January 27, 1863, Colonel

RISKING HIS LIFE FOR PEACE

Kanosh's long career as a peacemaker is often mentioned in histories.¹⁶ But oddly, two dramatic instances in which he definitely risked his life for whites are seldom noted. The first occurred in 1853 when members of his own Pavant band killed Captain John W. Gunnison and seven of his government railroad survey crew near Hinckley, Utah. Passing emigrants had murdered an elderly Pavant, and the victim's son and other Pavants retaliated. Kanosh had tried unsuccessfully to prevent the attack and, at the request of government investigators, courageously entered the raiders' camp to retrieve property that the Indians had taken as booty. European artist and traveler Solomon Carvalho, then traveling with Brigham Young, learned firsthand of Kanosh's act and praised him as a "pacific chief." Some of the Indians, "exasperated at his interference," aimed "several arrows" at him. "His indomitable courage alone saved him," wrote the admiring Carvalho. Kanosh reclaimed most of the surveyors' property.¹⁷

In the second episode, about two months after the Mountain

Patrick Edward Connor quietly (to prevent Mormons from warning the Indians) led four full companies of California Volunteer cavalry 220 strong, along with some seventy infantrymen incorporated into the U.S. Army in Utah during the American Civil War, to attack a Shoshone village. When the slaughter was over after several days, there were between 224 and 300 Shoshone men, women, and children dead on the scene. It was one of the largest massacres of human beings in the history of the American West. David L. Bigler, *Forgotten Kingdom: The Mormon Theocracy in the American West, 1847-1896* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1998), 228-32. Kanosh later asked Brigham Young how the Pavants might protect themselves from Connor, and Young simply assured him they were not in danger. *Journal History*, May 16, 1863. Kanosh doubtless also learned about the Sand Creek Massacre in Colorado in 1864, in which Colonel John Chivington's militiamen killed some 200 Cheyenne and Arapaho, including women and children. Robert M. Utley, *Frontiersmen in Blue: The United States Army and the Indian, 1848-1865* (New York: Macmillan Publishing, 1967), 294-97.

¹⁶Carlton Culmsee, *Utah's Black Hawk War: Lore and Reminiscences of Participants* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1973), 49, 66-68; Israel Call, "Summary of Activities of Anson Call in the Settlement of Pahvant Valley, 7, in Rogers, "Historical Excerpts about Millard County;" and Lewis, "Kanosh: The Pavant Chief," 45-73.

¹⁷Solomon Carvalho, *Incidents of Travel and Adventure in the Far West:*

Meadows Massacre in September 1857, Brigham Young wrote a safe-passage letter for several non-Mormon merchants traveling from Salt Lake City to southern California. One was William Bell, who claimed to have lived seven years in Utah. Young enlisted Kanosh and Jacob Hamblin to escort this party through the most dangerous part of the route. Near his own village, Kanosh, anticipating trouble from some of his own people, rode behind the wagons out of the view of his village. When a war party charged toward the company, Kanosh unhesitatingly rushed out to intercept them and explained that Brigham Young was allowing the travelers to pass. Parashant, “an old patriarch of the tribe” who had approved the Gunnison massacre four years earlier, made an impassioned speech in favor of killing the emigrants. Kanosh called for those in the war party who would obey him, not Parashant, to come to his side. About two-thirds did. Then, Kanosh, glowering at Parashant, warned the opposing party that, if they chose to fight, it would be a battle to extermination—that he, the company members, and his loyal warriors would not leave a single opponent alive. After Parashant backed down, Kanosh directed his brother, Hunkitter, a noted marksman, to kill anyone who left the village before he returned.¹⁸ These are two dramatic examples of Kanosh’s persistent policy of maintaining harmony between his own people and whites, even at considerable personal risk.¹⁹

With Col. Fremont’s Last Expedition (1857; rpt., Philadelphia: Jewish Society of America, 1954), 264. Carvalho painted Kanosh’s portrait.

¹⁸John L. Ginn, “Mormon and Indian Wars: The Mountain Meadows Massacre and Other Tragedies and Transactions Incident to the Mormon Rebellion of 1857, Together with the Personal Recollections of a Civilian Who Witnessed Many of the Thrilling Scenes Described,” n.d. but ca.1890s, typescript, LDS Church Library. Ginn identifies some of the other merchants as Jack Mendenhall, Charley Ashton, John Garber, and Michael Virginia. However, his long account contains numerous inaccuracies and embellishments. See also S. F. Atwood, Letter to editor, *Deseret News*, Journal History, June 1, 1856, for Kanosh’s decisive action against Indian stealing. He also stressed that the Indians had prospered since contact with the Mormons.

¹⁹Ronald W. Walker, Richard E. Turley Jr., and Glen M. Leonard, *Massacre at Mountain Meadows: An American Tragedy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 175–77, drawing on essentially hostile emigrant wit-

ADOPTING FARMING

Because Kanosh had spent part of his childhood at a California mission and could speak Spanish fluently,²⁰ he may have been particularly attuned to cultural diversity. Certainly he recognized the advantages of American farming over hunting-gathering practices and led his people toward agriculture.²¹ It was a strategy that his Mormon neighbors respected and willingly facilitated.

The Pavants were probably already the most successful Native American agriculturalists in the region, but as early as his first contact with Mormon settlers in the fall of 1851, Kanosh asked to be “instructed in tilling the soil.”²² In 1854, Kanosh dictated a letter to a friendly neighbor asking Brigham Young for oxen, plows, and other farming implements, which may have actually been promised the sea-

nesses traveling with Mormon freighters through the massacre region immediately after the tragedy, assert that Pavants harassed and threatened the Turner-Dukes emigrant company near Beaver. They imply, but do not document, that Kanosh was still at Salt Lake City a week after the meeting with Brigham Young. As a result, they suggest, Kanosh’s fellow Ute chief, Ammon, of the Beaver area (he had returned from Salt Lake City within four days of meeting with Young), intervened to deflect the Pavant threat to the emigrants. I question their implication. I have never seen reliable evidence of Kanosh’s friendly interactions with Ammon—on the contrary, some hostility—nor have I seen any documentation of Pavants threatening emigrants or operating in any way outside their band’s domain southward toward Beaver. It is true that Parashant and his sons were then sufficiently warlike, but better source material is needed to determine even their hostile activities in the Beaver area. See also pp. 120–24 for these authors’ discussion of whites supposedly poisoning Pavants at Corn Creek.

²⁰Horne, *Autobiography of George Washington Bean*, 70; Lee Reay, *Lambs in the Meadow* (Provo, Utah: Meadow Lane Publications, 1979), 45–47. Maude Crane Melville, an early Kanosh resident, stated, “It was always told us that Chief Kanosh was of Spanish descent. We know that he could talk Spanish very fluently, and quickly, but he delivered his English slowly and hesitatingly as though he were unfamiliar with our idiom.” Quoted in Rogers, “Historical Excerpts,” 197.

²¹Gustive O. Larson, “The Ute Treaty-Spanish Fork, 1865,” *BYU Studies* 14 (Spring 1974): 362–63.

²²“Sketch of a Trip to Pauvan [sic] Valley,” *Deseret (Weekly) News*, December 13, 1851, 3. The unnamed chief, doubtless Kanosh, remarked “that he was not fond of roving and wished to be instructed in tilling the soil.” At

son earlier.²³ In 1855, federal officials, including Brigham Young, established the Corn Creek Indian Farm, one of only three in the territory during the period.²⁴ By 1856, Dimick Huntington reported that this farm's resources included as many as nineteen draft animals with their accompanying harness and implements. In 1858, Jacob Forney, then the territorial Indian agent, reported that the Pavants had harvested wheat from eighty acres and were farming successfully.²⁵

Drought was not a problem since Corn Creek ran year round; but grasshoppers and crickets were destructive. The "hopper" invasion of 1859 proved particularly severe, and the Pavants spent the ensuing winter in a "starving condition."²⁶ Although Major A. Humphries, then the local Indian agent, reported the problem, he does not mention providing any assistance. Humphries also took it upon himself to order "farming operations at Corn Creek suspended" with the result that no crops were apparently harvested in 1860.²⁷ In 1861, his successor, Henry Martin, reported that Humphries had decamped

that time, the Pavants also "professed great friendship."

²³John A. Ray, Letter to Brigham Young, February 16, 1854, Brigham Young Papers. See also Almon W. Babbitt, Letter to editor *Deseret News*, December 4, 1853, which reported that farm implements had been promised that year.

²⁴Lawrence G. Coates, "A History of Indian Education among the Mormons, 1830–1900" (Ph.D. diss., Ball State University, 1969), 94, 104. See also Anson Call, Letter to Church Historian, May 29, 1855, *Journal History*. The arrangement sometimes included an Anglo-American "Indian farmer" to teach farming techniques and oversee the Native Americans in operating the farm. On other occasions, Mormon neighbors helped plow and plant crops. From the beginning of this venture, probably influenced by Kanosh's example and attitudes, the Pavants were considered "good workers" who rapidly mastered farming and successfully transitioned from a more nomadic lifestyle. The other Utah Indian farms were at Spanish Fork and in Sanpete County.

²⁵Jacob Forney, Letter to C. E. Mix, September 6, 1858, and Brigham Young, Letter to George W. Manypenny, June 30, 1858, both in *Annual Report, 1858*, 212, 225. See also Dimick B. Huntington, Letter to Church Historian, September 1, 1856, *Journal History*.

²⁶A. Humphries, Letter to Charles E. Mix, November 12, 1860, in *Annual Report, 1860*, 170.

²⁷Henry Martin, Letter to William P. Dole, October 1, 1861, in *An-*

with many of the farming implements, naturally leaving the Pavants “quite discouraged.” Martin helped revive farming operations, praised the participating Indians as “very industrious,” and reported a harvest of 200 bushels of wheat and 250 of corn that season, with similar or even greater success in 1862.²⁸

Military historian Robert M. Utley concedes that, during this era, the Bureau of Indian Affairs in the Far West presented “attractive opportunities for profiteering at Indian expense” with the result that “the bureau had become badly tainted by corruption.”²⁹ Humphries may have been one of the officials responsible for this sorry record.

The national policy of creating Indian reservations, pressuring Native Americans to move to them, and allowing white settlers to take over the relinquished land reached Utah in 1861, the first year of the American Civil War. Abraham Lincoln designated a large segment of the Uintah Basin in northeastern Utah Territory as such a reservation, an action Congress confirmed on May 5, 1864. In the spring of 1865, Orsemus H. Irish, then Utah Indian Superintendent, summoned leaders of the territory’s various Ute bands (no non-Utes were involved) to a meeting aimed primarily at persuading them to take their bands to the new reservation. They included Kanosh of the Pavants, Sanpitch of the Sanpete Utes, and Tabby and Sowiette of the Uintah Utes; Sowiette had long been head of all the Ute bands. Brigham Young was present at the request of Irish and some of the chiefs.³⁰

The meeting convened on June 6, 1865, under a bowery at the government Indian farm near Spanish Fork, and the resulting understanding was dignified as “the Spanish Fork Treaty.” Irish, translated by Dimick B. Huntington and George Washington Bean, promised that, if the Indians gave up their land and moved to the Uintah Basin, they would receive cash annuities presumably annually, and sufficient additional government funds to establish schools, construct grist and

nual Report, 1861, 137.

²⁸Ibid.; James Duane Doty, Letter to Dole, September 12, 1862, in *Annual Report, 1862, 145.*

²⁹Robert M. Utley, *Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian: 1866–1891* (New York: Macmillan, 1975), 7.

³⁰Peterson, *Utah’s Black Hawk War*, 148; see also Floyd A. O’Neil, “A History of the Ute Indians of Utah until 1890” (Ph.D. diss., University of Utah, 1973), 86–88, 90.

saw mills, purchase farm implements, and build homes and shops. The Indian farm lands at Spanish Fork, Sanpete County, and Corn Creek would be sold to individual buyers; and the proceeds would, Irish claimed, help fund these reservation improvements.³¹

Sowiette had the right to speak first, although there is no record he did. After proper deference to him, Kanosh declared that his people had no land to sell, because “they had given it all to Brigham long ago.” Later, he clarified that the land belonged to both the Utes and the Mormons and expressed hope that “it all remain as it is. . . . Let them all [Latter-day Saints and Indians] live here together.” He wanted to live, die, and be buried where his fathers had. He then candidly commented that, while the Utes trusted Brigham Young, they had less confidence in federal Indian officials, since previous office-holders “would speak one way and act another.” Irish, he asserted, might be a better sort of man, but that was yet to be established. He claimed he did not care much for the presents offered to induce acceptance of the treaty but asserted that his people would gladly accept such gifts anyway. He concluded by saying he recognized no particular advantage to moving out of the area inhabited by the Mormons.³² It is clear Kanosh represented only his own views (and those of his Pavant band) without claiming to speak for the other participants.

Kanosh asked if Brigham Young had previous knowledge of the proposed treaty or if he had studied its provisions. Young did, in fact, have such prior knowledge,³³ but he did not answer Kanosh’s question. Instead, he claimed that certainly the U.S. president had not intended for the Indians to receive the proceeds from the sale of Ute lands but had been persuaded to do so by other advisors. Young encouraged the tribal leaders to accept the terms and “take all they could get from the big chief.”³⁴ He candidly pointed out that the government could take the land anyway, and at least they now had an opportunity to receive “something.” Young admitted that the Mormons

³¹Larson, “The Ute Treaty-Spanish Fork, 1865,” 362–63.

³²Abstract of Correspondence by William Robertson, June 16, 1865, *Journal History*, 3–4. See also E. L. Sloan, Letter to the editor, *Deseret News*, in *Journal History*, June 7, 1865, 1; B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Century 1*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1930), 5:147; and Peterson, *Utah’s Black Hawk War*, 150–53.

³³Peterson, *Utah’s Black Hawk War*, 151–52.

³⁴*Ibid.* President Young had a negative opinion of Lincoln.

“have not been able to pay you enough” for the Indian lands they were now occupying, a rare confession on that crucial subject.³⁵

John Alton Peterson aptly observes that Young and his followers would definitely benefit from this agreement: “The treaty shifted the burden of feeding the Indians from his own people to the government while legally throwing open for settlement lands that he and his people had been squatting on for nearly two decades,” and greatly expanding the possible acreage.³⁶ Other white leaders in other communities had behaved similarly for some three hundred years (and would continue to do so). Mormon participation simply lengthens this record of injustice. While it may be understandable that Young was looking out for the best interests of his people, it is also clear that he was not paying much attention to the well-being of the Native Americans, even though their inexperience and their trust in him probably should have imposed more fiduciary obligations of ethical behavior on him.³⁷

Chief Sanpitch, the main Sanpete Ute leader since Wakara’s death in 1854, delayed more than a day in signing the treaty and, like Kanosh, protested that the Mormons and Utes already “shared” the land on the basis of multiple verbal treaties and small purchases made over past years. He saw no need to change the status quo. Others, including Kanosh, likely continued to more quietly harbor and express

³⁵Journal History, June 8–10, 16, 1865.

³⁶Peterson, *Utah’s Black Hawk War*, 152.

³⁷Christy, “Open Hand and Mailed Fist,” 216–35, presents a more negative but, in my opinion, more accurate perspective of Brigham Young’s actions and motives than is the norm among regional historians. Lewis, “Kanosh: The Pavant,” 7–11, contrasts the “traditionalists” with Christy, apparently considering Christy overly critical. Lewis describes the “synthesis movement,” which he sees as a “more fair treatment to [sic] Mormon-Indian relations” but which is actually overly pro-Young. (I consider this opinion to have been influenced by Lewis’s graduate advisor, Ronald W. Walker.) For my analysis corroborating Christy’s perspective, see Edward Leo Lyman, “Caught In Between: Jacob Hamblin and the Southern Paiutes during the Black Hawk-Navajo Wars of the Late 1860s,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 75 (Winter 2007): 26, which among other issues, describes Young as essentially giving Santa Clara River water rights, traditionally owned by the Tonequint Paiutes, to Swiss emigrants. If there were such an intellectual position, I choose to be in Christy’s camp.

similar feelings.³⁸ However, on the second day of the proceedings, Sowiette, the elderly head chief, approved the plan and announced that all Ute leaders would sign the treaty. Thus, despite some private reservations among other tribal headmen, largely in deference to Sowiette, all the participants signed the treaty. As the deliberations concluded, Kanosh obediently declared that the arrangement was “all good peace and good friendship” and announced he was then ready to receive his presents.³⁹

The U.S. Senate never ratified this “treaty,” and Congress appropriated no funds for the Uintah agency, either then or for the next several years. In 1867, Franklin H. Head, Irish’s replacement, reported that, unless the treaty provisions were soon carried out, the matter would become “embarrassing” to him and to the moderate Ute leader Tabby.⁴⁰ However, no action was taken. Furthermore, neither the Mormons nor the Indian Bureau officials ever told the Utes that the treaty was essentially null and void. Instead, they continued to act as if the Indians were obligated to vacate their former tribal lands (outside of Uintah), even though they were receiving absolutely no treaty benefits except for unimproved Uintah lands.

THE BLACK HAWK WAR

While the older Ute chiefs, including Kanosh, recognized no alternative to accepting Irish’s proposals, other Utes adamantly insisted on war. Violence had already erupted in Spanish Fork Canyon and Sanpete and Sevier counties two months before the Spanish Fork talks and would continue for another four years, until mid-1869, with occasional flare-ups thereafter. John Alton Peterson, the foremost authority on Utah’s Black Hawk War, argues convincingly that Irish made a major blunder in insisting on the Spanish Fork proposal, especially combined with relinquishing title to Ute land outside Uintah and moving the Utes away from their other excellent traditional lands, often in close proximity to the Mormons. Black Hawk, origi-

³⁸Peterson, *Utah’s Black Hawk War*, 151–53.

³⁹Robertson, Abstract of Correspondence, June 16, 1865. Larson, “The Ute Treaty-Spanish Fork, 1865,” 369, quotes Sowiette saying “It is good. We will sign.” Actually it was good only for his band at Uintah.

⁴⁰F. H. Head, *Annual Report, 1867*, 180–81. See also O’Neil, “A History of the Ute Indians of Utah until 1890,” 90, and Peterson, *Utah’s Black Hawk War*, 153.

nally a member of the band of Timpanogos Utes massacred by Mormons in 1850, later emerged as a charismatic tribal leader.⁴¹ “As much as anything,” Peterson stresses, “the initial raids were violent Native American reactions against the reservation system of the United States government.”⁴² Uintah Utes did not participate, since their lands were not threatened. Black Hawk’s allies were almost exclusively bands whose traditional lands were jeopardized—primarily from Fish Lake to the Elk Mountain-Moab area to the southeast.⁴³

The second major blunder was Brigham Young’s interference. Replaced as Utah’s governor in 1858, he had absolutely no legal authority in this matter. Territorial executive officials and the U.S. Army were responsible for dealing with Indian uprisings; but Young chose to keep them uniformed and uninvolved.⁴⁴ He confided to Apostle Orson Hyde on June 11, 1867, near the midpoint of the Black Hawk War: “Our policy has been to say as little to the [U.S. Army] troops or to the officials of government respecting our Indian difficulties as we could possibly help. We prefer settling them ourselves, for their interference would very likely be hurtful and might precipitate a general Indian war.”⁴⁵

In addition to its illegality, this policy allowed Black Hawk, an as-

⁴¹Peterson, *Utah’s Black Hawk War*, 42–79.

⁴²*Ibid.*, 119.

⁴³“Black Hawk,” *Deseret News*, August 21, 1867, *Journal History*, 3, reported that Head had met with Black Hawk (alone, without his warriors) at the Uintah Reservation. The chief reported he had “28 lodges under his sole control; and that he is assisted by 3 Elk Mountain chiefs who had each 10 or 12 lodges with them.” Peterson estimates four fighting men per lodge, although this figure may be high.

⁴⁴Peterson, *Utah’s Black Hawk War*, 252–53, quotes Territorial Governor Charles Durkee, “Annual Address to the Utah Territorial Legislative Assembly, December 10, 1866,” *Governor’s Messages, 1851–1876*, 118, Utah State Archives, Salt Lake City, who made a formal complaint that Young had “illegally employed the Nauvoo Legion against Black Hawk for over a year” and that “Utah’s militia practices were ‘not in accordance with the Territorial Organic Act,’” especially its provision “‘that the Governor shall be commander-in-chief of the militia.’ Mormon military practices constituted a serious breach of law that was openly ‘ignored.’”

⁴⁵Brigham Young, Letter to Orson Hyde, June 11, 1867, *Young Papers*. See also Peterson, *Utah’s Black Hawk War*, 164, for similar advice to

tute political observer, to exploit the tensions between the Mormons and the federal government and pursue his aims without truly effective military opposition. These intra-American conflicts were so severe that a brief armed skirmish actually occurred between U.S. cavalry troops attached to a government surveyor unit led by Joseph Clark and Mormon militiamen in Sanpete County in March 1866, after the Black Hawk War was already a year underway.⁴⁶

Like the Wakara War in 1853 in essentially the same region and involving almost the same bands of Utes (although the Sanpete Utes took more of the lead), the Black Hawk War's major objective also consisted primarily of raiding for livestock. However, the Black Hawk War cost the lives of at least sixty whites and perhaps twice that many Utes and their allies, in contrast to the Wakara War, which numbered between twelve and twenty white fatalities and an equal number of Indian fatalities.⁴⁷ The Black Hawk was fought mainly in Sevier and Sanpete counties and the eastern mountains from Sevier into Wayne and Piute counties. However, Kanosh's Millard County region was, with one exception at Scipio (discussed below) virtually free from any armed conflicts in either war.

In late 1865, soon after the Spanish Fork Treaty, Kanosh appeared to support it and, furthermore, urged outlying bands to avoid supporting Black Hawk directly. Indeed, he played the exemplary role of peacemaker as well as possible, considering the bitter hostilities prevailing between the belligerents. Kanosh steadfastly maintained his policy of peace and solidarity with the Mormon settlers. In that crucial year of 1865, Irish's report that fall also praised Kanosh: "His influence has been beneficial upon the different bands of Indians in central Utah."⁴⁸ On February 21, 1866, Thomas Callister assured Brigham Young that neither Kanosh nor others of his people had yet had any "connection with Black Hawk and his marauding

others in Sanpete. Brigham Young, writing to missionary son Brigham Jr. in England, July 5, 1866, Young Papers, asserted that he would rather that Native Americans would "chastise" his people to bring them back to faithfulness than some other form of chastisement.

⁴⁶Journal History, March 27, 1866.

⁴⁷Howard A. Christy, "The Walker War: Defense and Conciliation as Strategy," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 47 (Fall 1979): 395–420, is, as he admits, notably complimentary of President Brigham Young.

⁴⁸Orsemus H. Irish, Letter to D. N. Cooley, September 9, 1865, in *An-*

band.”⁴⁹ In March, Callister repeated that the local Mormons “generally consider Kanosh and his band rather a protection to this county against Indian depredations.”⁵⁰

On February 11, 1866, Callister had told Young that Kanosh was “very anxious to learn how you felt in relation to him and his band going to Uintah.”⁵¹ This letter counters the assertion of John Alton Peterson and others that Young tacitly encouraged Kanosh to ignore the mandate to move to the Uintah Reservation.⁵² In fact, there is no documentary evidence that Young responded to this request or did anything then but encourage the Pavants and others to accept the government mandate and benefit from it as they might.

DESTRUCTION OF THE KANOSH VILLAGE

At the beginning of what proved to be perhaps the most difficult year for the Pavants, 1866, many members of the band commenced the soul-wrenching process of disengaging from both their traditional lands and ultimately, their tribal leadership ties. In late April, band members demolished their long-time tribal campsite on the southeast outskirts of future Kanosh City. Bishop Callister reported that the Indians had not only “broken up their farm entirely at Corn Creek” but had also burned their corrals and the fences enclosing their traditional fields, thus clearing the formerly occupied lands for convenient settlement by others.⁵³ An unnamed correspondent to Church headquarters corroborated: “Pahvantees were camped at a distance about a half a mile from the Corn Creek settlement, having

nual Report, 1865, 145, described a poor harvest, which he attributed to “incompetent federal agents [his own], along with insect infestations and hostilities of other Indians [that] kept the Pavants from being completely self-sufficient” that year.

⁴⁹Thomas Callister, Letter to Brigham Young, February 21, 1866, Young Papers.

⁵⁰Thomas Callister, Letter to Brigham Young, March 25, 1866, Young Papers.

⁵¹Thomas Callister, Letter to Brigham Young, February 11, 1866, Young Papers.

⁵²Peterson, *Utah's Black Hawk War*, 157–58.

⁵³Thomas Callister, Letter to George A. Smith, April 23, 1866, George A. Smith Papers, LDS Church Library. See below for a description of the new camp and surrounding new farmlands.

abandoned their old campsite, [and] burned their fencing preparatory to moving to Uintah."⁵⁴

Because of two successive poor harvests, Callister reported that the local Indians "are at present very hard run for something to eat having no ammunition to enable them to hunt game."⁵⁵ At this point, most of the Pavant men had become so dependent on rifles that they no longer possessed their former skills with bow and arrow; and given the wartime situation in the territory, whites hesitated to provide any Native Americans with the requisite powder and lead to hunt the deer, still relatively abundant, in the nearby mountains.

On March 25, 1866, Bishop Callister complained to Brigham Young that starving Pavants had become "a great tax on the people."⁵⁶ Obviously, lacking sufficient provisions from the government or Church, the Indians had appealed, with their usual success, to the local Mormons for food. Callister reported that a new (unnamed) Indian agent had recently directed his Kanosh subagent to kill one small beef animal and distribute the meat among the hungry Native Americans, but it was far from meeting the need.⁵⁷ Some government reports still estimated Kanosh's band at over a thousand.⁵⁸ No documentary evidence exists that Brigham Young sent any food to supplement the meager rations that Fillmore's Mormons were able to share with the famished Pavants. Instead, when territorial and Indian Bureau officials loaded four wagons with an estimated \$5,000 worth of provisions headed for the Uintah Reservation, Young had sent along seventy head of beef cattle.⁵⁹ He obviously was encouraging the Ute move to the Uintah Reservation—not allowing, even within the limits of Christian relief for suffering, any support to those who wished to

⁵⁴Journal History, February 7, 1866.

⁵⁵Thomas Callister, Letters to Brigham Young, February 11 and 21, 1866, Young Papers.

⁵⁶Thomas Callister, Letter to Brigham Young, March 25, 1866, Young Papers.

⁵⁷Ibid. See also Thomas Callister, Letter to George A. Smith, April 23, 1866, George A. Smith Papers, which reports that the situation did not improved during the next month.

⁵⁸Powell and Ingalls, *Annual Report, 1873*, 42 (published in 1874).

⁵⁹Franklin H. Head, Report to Secretary of Interior, 1866, 25. See also Peterson, *Utah's Black Hawk War*, 260 and note 51, which cites the "Manuscript History of Brigham Young," 1866, 180, as stating that Young

remain in Millard County.

Significantly, Bishop Callister informed Apostle George A. Smith that he was arranging with Mormon settlers in Petersburg to allow Native Americans who desired to remain in the vicinity to farm unoccupied and less desirable land nearby, offering seed and perhaps some cultivating assistance.⁶⁰ The Pavants moved their camp three miles north and east of their former village, near several springs that flowed adjacent to the bench lands. Callister claimed to believe his people could thus “control [the Indians] better that way than any other [since] many of them are willing to work and will raise their own bread.” The bishop also stated: “This is the best way to *fight* them while they behave themselves, but it takes oh such lots of patience.”⁶¹ Bishop Callister, Kanosh’s closest Mormon friend, seems to be congratulating himself on his patience and overlooking the immense forbearance of the unjustly dispossessed Indians. I therefore read this letter as a signal that Callister’s thinking was undergoing a transition toward the Pavants and that he would have welcomed the disappearance of the responsibility they represented.

THE MURDER OF SANPITCH

If Callister thought his patience was tested, the situation must have been far more difficult for Kanosh to maintain his policy of peace in the face of intensifying famine, war disruptions, and the continuing pressures to undertake the long and emotionally wrenching move to the Uintah Reservation. I hypothesize that his profoundly peaceable nature was tried most severely by Brigham Young’s misguided strategy for resolving the continuing Indian conflict. According to John Alton Peterson, Orson Hyde, who lived in Sanpete County, and Brigham Young, both for a time mistakenly believed that Sanpitch, chief of the Sanpete Ute band, “was the mastermind behind the whole war.” Brigham Young therefore launched a disastrous and secret mission to take Indian hostages. He ordered that Sanpitch and some other presumably friendly Sanpete Utes suspected of “duplicity be captured and held prisoner” until Black

actually sent even more food than that reported.

⁶⁰Thomas Callister, Letter to George A. Smith, March 25, 1866, Young Papers.

⁶¹Thomas Callister, Letter to George A. Smith, April 23, 1866, George A. Smith Papers; emphasis mine.

Hawk was brought to terms.⁶²

General Daniel H. Wells, who was commanding the Nauvoo Legion (as the Utah militia was then still named) under Young's direction and who was also Young's counselor in the First Presidency, issued the orders with the goal of pressuring other senior Ute chiefs, like Kanosh, to capture Black Hawk and force him to make peace. Wells explained Young's thinking to General Warren S. Snow, Sanpete County militia commander.⁶³ All of these Church leaders believed that Native Americans who were truly "friendly" should be "obligated to give us an evidence of their friendship by warning us of the wicked plots of bad Indians." Thus far, Young complained, such "friendly Indians are treacherous, and while professing friendship for us, are conniving with the murderers to aid them in these schemes of plunder and murder."⁶⁴ Young's unwillingness or inability to differentiate friendly Indians from hostile could very easily have driven even friendly Indians into Black Hawk's camp. As a matter of fact, Kanosh would probably have reported on hostile warring Utes' plans, if he ever learned of them.

Snow took Sanpitch and Ankawakits, another Ute chief who had signed the Spanish Fork Treaty and seven other Sanpete Utes prisoner on March 14, 1866, holding them in Manti.⁶⁵ On March 25, Callister wrote to Young that Kanosh "got rather ruffled at the

⁶²Daniel H. Wells, Letter to Warren Snow, March 19, 1866, Utah Territorial Militia Record #1521, Utah State Archives, quoted in Peterson, *Utah's Black Hawk War*, 229–30.

⁶³Peterson, *Utah's Black Hawk War*, 13, 135, 262–63, 269, offers little biographical information on Snow, his ancestor, other than that he took local command after the abrupt resignation of former Mormon Battalion veteran Reddick Allred. Peterson explains that, while Wells was "ostensibly the leading officer of the Nauvoo Legion, Young secretly played the role of commander in chief. Shrewdly distancing himself from involvement in military affairs, he was largely held guiltless by the Indians, while the outstanding implementor of his policy, Brigadier General Warren S. Snow, commander of the Sanpete Military District of the Nauvoo Legion, became their archenemy and symbolic nemesis (and Young allowed that situation to remain)."

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 229, 230–34.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, 230–31. Ankawakits was the brother-in-law of Tabby, chief of the Uintah band. His murder significantly alienated that band from the

taking of Sanpitch and his Indians.”⁶⁶ While Kanosh probably seldom agreed with Sanpitch, he knew that he was not Black Hawk’s ally and that his imprisonment was therefore truly unjust. Callister added that Kanosh would have been willing for Black Hawk and his allies to have been arrested but not persons uninvolved in the hostilities.⁶⁷

On March 16, Sanpitch apparently panicked. He admitted that he had given Black Hawk food but emphatically denied involvement in warlike acts. He did, however, implicate five men from his camp near Nephi who had raided with Black Hawk. He also requested Kanosh and “all the head men of the nation” to unite and capture Black Hawk so that he (Sanpitch) and the others with him could be liberated. He estimated that Black Hawk could be captured within three weeks.⁶⁸ There is some evidence that Kanosh’s Pavants and other Native Americans started to prepare for such an operation, but Snow’s subsequent threatening message regarding the chief apparently thwarted this plan (discussed below).

On March 17, Snow and two dozen militiamen surrounded Sanpitch’s village near Nephi and at daybreak captured three of the five alleged raiders. They shot and killed a teenager who tried to escape. Guiding the militia was John Kanosh, sometimes mistakenly referred to as Kanosh’s son. He may well have been an adopted son, but none of Kanosh’s biological offspring reached maturity.⁶⁹ John was, however, sufficiently familiar with the Sanpitch Indians to identify the three accused men. He was also the only witness at the hastily held court martial. On March 18, all three stood silently with arms folded

Mormons. Peterson, 150, lists that chief as a Pavant, but I have seen no corroboration.

⁶⁶Thomas Callister, Letter to Young, March 25, 1866, Young Papers.

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸Peterson, *Utah’s Black Hawk War*, 231.

⁶⁹Wakara had given Kanosh a boy (parentage unknown) probably around 1850. John Kanosh likely resided at the Sanpitch village, perhaps having married a local woman. There are virtually no references to him as an adult in the Pavant band. However, he accompanied two Pavant subchiefs to visit Washakie, the Shoshone chief, in 1869. Journal History, June 12, 1869, lists as his companions Ankartali and Moshoquoque, both of them Kanosh’s subchiefs.

next to open graves and were executed by firing squad.⁷⁰

About this time, Snow ordered that three other Sanpete Utes be imprisoned at Moroni, about midway between Manti and the Juab Sanpitch village. During a community celebration on March 20, they broke out. Two were killed immediately, and the third was tracked down and shot. Next day a Ute woman and little boy who were accused of helping the escape attempt were also pursued and ruthlessly killed.⁷¹

On about April 11, Kanosh hurried to Nephi, near the site of the first executions about a month earlier.⁷² He asked Snow to bring Sanpitch there so Kanosh could “see him prior to his heading into the mountains to capture Black Hawk.” The general, suspecting a trick, refused and reported to Wells that, “if Kanosh does not show his friendship in a proper shape he had better be dealt with at once.”⁷³

Sanpitch and his fellows, still imprisoned at Manti six days after Kanosh’s arrival at Nephi, became convinced that their own lives were in danger. On April 17, they escaped. Two days later they had all been tracked down and killed.⁷⁴ By then, it was unmistakably apparent that Young’s wrong-headed strategy of punishing the innocent so they would hand over the guilty had proved an abject failure.

It would have been only human for Kanosh, rebuffed and humili-

⁷⁰Peterson, *Utah’s Black Hawk War*, 232. See also Bishop C. H. Bryan, Letter to Brigham Young, March 22, 1866, Young Papers.

⁷¹Peterson, *Utah’s Black Hawk War*, 233.

⁷²Thomas Callister, Letter to George A. Smith, April 1, 1866, Journal History.

⁷³Warren S. Snow, Letter to Daniel H. Wells, April 13, 1866, Utah Territorial Military Records #832, Utah State Archives; George A. Smith, Letter to Thomas Callister, March 28, 1866, Journal History. In his typically unreasonable manner, Snow informed Kanosh that if he wished to be considered a friend of the Mormons, he should lead his men into Salina Canyon to retrieve livestock that Black Hawk’s men had stolen from Salina settlers. Although some Millard County militiamen had earlier desired to do just that, they could not persuade Sanpete and Sevier militia, commanded by Snow, to accompany them. Lyman and Newell, *History of Millard County*, 112–13.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, 232, 238–40, states (240): “Sanpitch was overtaken and killed at Birch Canyon on the mountain that now bears his name on the west side of Sanpete Valley” on April 18. A fatally wounded companion died the next day.

ated, his desires for peace and reconciliation essentially trampled and his motives impugned, to have retreated from the situation altogether. Instead, he went to Salt Lake City, reaching there about April 21.⁷⁵ Brigham Young and Kanosh conferred on about April 23, five days after Sanpitch's death. It is not known when Kanosh learned of the murders, but it seems likely he learned about them en route to the city.

No record has survived of Kanosh's thoughts or arguments; but according to a letter from Young to Warren Snow on April 25, he and the Pavant chief had a "long talk" and "reasoned the case" of how the Mormon-Indian hostilities in central Utah might be alleviated. He (Young) had asked Kanosh what else he might have done under existing circumstances. Brigham claimed that Kanosh agreed he (Young) could have done nothing else.⁷⁶

Kanosh may have conceded that, as allies of the Mormons, friendly Indians should have passed on whatever information they had about Black Hawk's plans, but it seems highly unlikely that Kanosh would have agreed that Young's ill-conceived, unfair, and violent hostage plan had been the only course open to him. Kanosh probably never learned the shocking fact that Young had not only condoned the unjust policy but had actually formulated it. The entire chain of events must have severely eroded his trust in Young, coming as it did accompanied by Snow's threats and the murders of friendly Indians.

For his part, Young continued to justify his own action. Furthermore, he never publicly questioned Snow's murders of unarmed prisoners who were not known to be hostile. The Black Hawk War continued with raids on isolated Mormon homes and livestock herders and few direct battle confrontations. Young confided to Snow: "We do not want to kill the Indians . . . but it will not do for us to sit down and see our brethren and sisters killed by them and take no measures to pre-

⁷⁵Kanosh was unfortunately delayed en route. He left one of his several wives at the Spanish Fork Indian farm with four of his horses, his money, and clothing, then continued on to Salt Lake City. On his return, he found all missing. After a perhaps half-hearted search, he returned home and did not hear further of this wife. Callister told Young that Kanosh had decided "her heart was not good," suggesting a history of marital discord. Peterson, *Utah's Black Hawk War*, 260, asserts that Kanosh's wife joined a camp of hostile Utes in Spanish Fork Canyon.

⁷⁶Brigham Young, Letter to Warren S. Snow, April 25, 1866, Young Papers.

vent such occurrences.”⁷⁷

Soon after Kanosh returned home, on May 6, Bishop Callister reported to Elder George A. Smith that “Kanosh continues friendly as usual and is. . . a grand exception among our red brethren.”⁷⁸ But a week later, he also mentioned that the Pavants were “somewhat uneasy hearing so many reports of cruelty to friendly Indians by our [white Mormon] brethren.”⁷⁹

Both General Warren Snow and historian John Alton Peterson have alleged that Utah’s Governor Charles Durkee and the new Indian Superintendent Franklin H. Head had supposedly conferred with Kanosh at Millard County in late March or early April.⁸⁰ John Alton Peterson accepts the view of George A. Smith and Warren Snow that Head and Kanosh were involved in a scheme to help rescue Sanpitch. The evidence for such a collaboration is extremely sketchy: self-justifying reports by Warren Snow and second-hand versions by George A. Smith to Brigham Young of conversations between Kanosh, Durkee, and Head more than a month after they might have occurred. There is no convincing evidence that Kanosh met with Durkee and Head before May, several weeks after Sanpitch’s murder. Kanosh had left for Nephi and Salt Lake City and did not likely encounter the territorial officials en route. Possibly the two federal officials had conferred with Kanosh earlier on their way south toward Beaver, although the meetings were not reported until they were on their return journey. They definitely conferred with Kanosh the second week of May.⁸¹

Even more troublingly, Durkee and Head had met on March 11, 1866, with Young. All three agreed to confer with Sanpitch some time

⁷⁷Ibid.

⁷⁸Thomas Callister, Letter to George A. Smith, May 6, 1866, George A. Smith Papers.

⁷⁹Thomas Callister, Letter to George A. Smith, May 13, 1866, George A. Smith Papers.

⁸⁰Peterson, *Utah’s Black Hawk War*, 236.

⁸¹Ibid., 232, 236–37. Thomas Callister, Letters to George A. Smith, April 23 and May 13, 1866, George A. Smith Papers, mentions that Durkee and Head called on him as they traveled south. They hardly mentioned Native Americans on that occasion and appeared preoccupied with the new “silver rush” near Paranagat, Nevada. See also Thomas Callister, Letter to Brigham Young, May 13, 1866, Journal History.

before Young launched the plan to capture him. Thus, Young used the chief's misplaced trust, possibly stemming from Durkee's and Head's assurances for his safety, as part of the "clandestine plan," in Peterson's words, to bring about his eventual capture.⁸² Thus, Brigham Young blatantly disregarded his implication of cooperating in a peaceful conference with Durkee and Head. Young would almost certainly have interpreted Durkee's and Head's May 11 visit to Kanosh's camp as unwelcome "federal interference."⁸³ But, in fact, the governor and Indian superintendent were carrying out their legitimate duties as territorial officials.⁸⁴

Although no details of their visit have survived, they probably paid Kanosh the courtesy of expressing condolences about the murder of his longtime associate, Sanpitch. In fact, the Mormon leaders should have already tried to accomplish this compassionate goal but apparently had not. As evidence, Head next had a candid conversation with Callister to explain the course the Indian agent "intended to pursue with the Indians." He expressed regret to Callister that Indians who "had had the promise and assurance of protection and safety had been murdered." Callister, in reporting Head's visit to George A. Smith, frankly stated: "Kanosh thinks that the Indians have sufficient cause to lose confidence in [Church leaders'] promises of protection to friendly Indians."⁸⁵ Indeed, Snow's ruthlessness, which Wells and Young as his ecclesiastical/military superiors had condoned, might well have alienated many former allies. Kanosh demonstrated almost superhuman patience by maintaining loyal friendship with the Mormons in spite of all that had happened.

On May 24, Callister penned another letter to Brigham Young, snidely commenting that "Head has been indefatigable in [his] efforts to assuage the feelings of the Indians inclined to be hostile and to stop the troubles arising from marauding savages, with good prospects of success, if he can only have the requisite amount of presents for them, which we hope he has."⁸⁶ As noted, no extant record indicates that Brigham Young volunteered any supplies, either to relieve the Pavants' suffering during the winter of 1865–66 or as "presents" to reassure the

⁸²Peterson, *Utah's Black Hawk War*, 230.

⁸³*Ibid.*, 236–37.

⁸⁴*Ibid.*, 230.

⁸⁵Callister, Letter to Smith, May 13, 1866.

⁸⁶Thomas Callister, Letter to Brigham Young, May 24, 1866, Journal

Indians troubled by the murders. However, when the territorial officials now sought to borrow several tons of flour and other supplies, Young granted their request. These provisions were distributed at the Pavant camp on May 11. Head and Durkee took this step expressly because they considered Kanosh's friendship key to establishing peace.⁸⁷

Durkee and Head also asked Kanosh to send messengers to plead with Black Hawk to come in for negotiations, and the Pavant headman sent the war chief a separate message strongly recommending that he do so. He declined Durkee and Head's request to go to the Uintah Reservation (where Tabby and his Uintah Ute band had resided long before the establishment of the reservation there) and appeal to those Utes for greater cooperation with whites. But he did send a delegation of subchiefs on that mission.⁸⁸ The timing certainly proved wrong for any success to that overture.

One consequence of Kanosh's forbearance was alienation from some of his fellow Ute chiefs. Learning of Sanpitch and Ankawakits' deaths, Tabby became so angry that he almost ordered Dimick Huntington's death. (Huntington may have delivered a dispatch from Young to Tabby at that time).⁸⁹ On May 12, Young attempted to calm the enraged Tabby and his fellow headmen by arguing that Kanosh did not "blame us for what we have done."⁹⁰ The implication that Kanosh may have *approved* Young's actions is certainly inaccurate, although Kanosh may have withheld blame. Still, Tabby and his associates doubtless concluded that Kanosh had become a turncoat. Almost a year later in April 1867, a white reservation official wrote a let-

History.

⁸⁷Ibid.

⁸⁸Peterson, *Utah's Black Hawk War*, 260–61. John Kanosh was part of this delegation, along with three Pavant subchiefs.

⁸⁹Tabby (and some of his associated headmen at Uintah) dictated to a Mr. Kinney a letter to Young, May 12, 1866, Young Papers, strongly protested: "They look upon the killing of their brother Sanpitch in no other light than murder as they know he was innocent." Ankawakits was Tabby's brother-in-law, making his death a family affair. See also Kinney, Letter for Tabby and Others to President Young, August 25, 1866, Young Papers, complaining that they wished Young to tell the Mormons not to kill Indians who wanted peace.

⁹⁰Brigham Young, Letter to Tabby, Sowiette, Toquana, Jim, Joe, and Antero, May 12, 1866, Young Papers. See also Peterson, *Utah's Black Hawk War*, 249–50, 263–65.

ter to Kanosh at Tabby's dictation. Tabby essentially called the Pavant chief a coward and challenged him to fight in the continuing war, accusing Kanosh of being a fool for continuing to trust the Mormons.⁹¹ Such sharp alienation would have further convinced Kanosh to stay away from the Uintah Reservation.

No documentary evidence exists that Brigham Young made any effort to reassure Kanosh after their visit on April 23, although he had been quick to exonerate Warren Snow. More than a month passed before he dictated a letter to Kanosh on June 11 (doubtless sent by Callister), in which he rather defensively stated: "We have never spoken to [you] with two tongues nor wore two faces." He also claimed, "We have never wanted to shed [Indian] blood and when driven to it we have only done it in self defense."⁹² In light of his condoning Snow's questionable military conduct with prisoners during the Black Hawk War, such statements must be regarded with considerable skepticism.

Only one episode of the Black Hawk War occurred in Millard. On June 10, 1866, Black Hawk and a war party killed two Scipio men and stole their livestock. Within a week, James Alexander Ivie, son of one victim, James Ivie, killed the first Native American he encountered, Pannikay, a friendly local Indian. Bishop Callister witnessed the tragic event from a block away and immediately gave Ivie a bitter tongue-lashing, then hurried to Corn Creek to tell Kanosh. The chief's response was that, since "this was the first Indian that has been killed by the Mormons in this valley," he would allow the Mormons to administer justice.⁹³

Callister reported these events to Brigham Young on June 15, and Young responded on June 21 that he wanted Ivie punished to demonstrate justice because "if we permit such an outrage as this kill-

⁹¹Tabby, Letter dictated to Jas. L. Johnson, U.S. interpreter to Kanosh, April 29, 1867, holograph copy in Young Papers, challenged, "If you are anxious to fight us, do not hide, but come out like a man, & do not keep it back."

⁹²Brigham Young, Letter to Kanosh, June 11, 1866, Young Papers.

⁹³Peterson, *Utah's Black Hawk War*, 269-70; Thomas Callister, Letter to George A. Smith, June 17, 1866, George A. Smith Papers; Lyman and Newell, *Millard County*, 112-14. Gabriel Huntsman, June 9, 1866, Fillmore, Letter to the editor of the *Deseret News*, quoted in *Journal History*, reported that Kanosh was then seriously ill.

ing of that Indian to go unnoticed, every Indian who hears of the occurrence will set us down as untrue to our principles.”⁹⁴ Kanosh recommended only very lenient punishment: that Ivie give Pannikay’s son some money and a horse.⁹⁵ It is not known what action was actually taken, although the angry Callister probably insisted on payment of this fine. According to a local history, other Ivie kin had also been out, bent on revenge; but James A. regretted his action for the rest of his life because the “Indian was a friendly one.”⁹⁶

On July 8, Kanosh’s neighbor, Peter Robison, passed on Kanosh’s request that Brigham Young give him a revolver because “he has none to defend himself from hostile Indians.”⁹⁷ This was a sad but realistic commentary on the Pavant leader’s perception of his own vulnerability from other Indians. No answer to this letter appears in Brigham Young’s correspondence, but it seems likely that Young complied.

The Ivie episode essentially ended Millard County’s involvement in the Black Hawk War, although it continued sporadically for two more years. Bishop Callister implied that the Petersburg residents were in danger, but his alarm seemed excessive; and in fact, the actual situation remained as peaceable as ever. Black Hawk finally made peace through personal negotiations with Franklin H. Head, the Indian agent, in 1869.⁹⁸ In poor health, probably from a bullet wound, he went to the struggling Uintah Reservation where he was an exemplary farm laborer until his death in September 1870.

KANOSH’S INFLUENCE: AN APPRAISAL

In 1869, Dimick Huntington reported that, during that last

⁹⁴Brigham Young, Letter to Thomas Callister, June 21, 1866, Young Papers,

⁹⁵Thomas Callister, Letter to George A. Smith, June 17, 1866, George A. Smith Papers.

⁹⁶Stella H. Day, ed., *Builders of Early Millard: Biographies of Pioneers of Millard County, 1850 to 1875* (Springville, Utah: Art City Publishing, 1979), 377.

⁹⁷Peter Robison, Letter to Brigham Young, July 8, 1866, Young Papers.

⁹⁸Abraham Hatch, Letter to Brigham Young, April 17, 1870, Young Papers, reported that Black Hawk was sick but, when he recovered, would visit the Mormon settlements seeking peace. This he did.

phase of the Black Hawk War, several hundred Native Americans, both Shibereche (Fish Lake) Utes and Southern Paiutes, at Panguitch Lake, communicated with Kanosh to determine if the Mormons, and presumably he, wished to fight them. Kanosh firmly stated that he would not fight “and that he could live better by farming.” He assured them that he and the Mormons were their friend and encouraged them to stop fighting. (For several years, some Utes and Paiutes had allied with the Navajos and were raiding Mormon settlements in Washington County. These episodes were essentially separate from the Black Hawk War.)⁹⁹ Both conflicts focused primarily on stealing livestock. Kanosh, who could easily have emerged as the new war chief, made it abundantly clear that he believed all Indians would be better off farming and coexisting with the Mormons.¹⁰⁰

One may wonder why Kanosh demonstrated such consistent forbearance. The answer appears to be that he was truly a man of peace—perhaps more completely than any other leader then involved in Utah affairs. He understood that seeking to maintain cordial relations with white neighbors was the only alternative to war. By then, he well understood that his people’s security depended more on his own fervent efforts than the transitory promises of Mormon leaders whom he had considered friends. He had obviously done better for his people than his more warlike contemporaries, but he undoubtedly recognized that he and his people were on the losing side of continuing developments. It must have been an immensely helpless, powerless feeling. Kanosh probably did not know that Brigham Young had expressed the confident prediction in 1851 that the “Indians would dwindle away,” except for the few children adopted into white homes, who by intermarriage, might thereby become a “white and delightful people.”¹⁰¹

The Ute tribe, while organized into many different bands, recognized a head chief over all the bands. But from the time of the Mor-

⁹⁹Lyman, “Caught In Between,” 22–43.

¹⁰⁰Journal History, June 12, 1869.

¹⁰¹Brigham Young, “History of Brigham Young,” May 13, 1851, 846, quoted in Juanita Brooks, “Indian Relations on the Mormon Frontier,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 12 (January–April 1944): 6. According to Young, “I spoke upon the importance of the Iron County Mission and advantages of the brethren filling it. Advised them to buy up the Lamanite children as fast as they could, and educate them and teach them the gospel, so that many

mons' arrival in 1847, this person had always been Sowiette, who in 1868 claimed to be 132 and was thus too old to function effectively but who, by tradition, could not be replaced while he lived. In his 1868 report to the Secretary of the Interior, Franklin Head lamented that "the various district bands and tribes of Utahs are virtually without an efficient head chief whose authority would be everywhere recognized." As a result, "there was no recognized head chief who can be held accountable for the depredations or whose authority to punish the offenders would be acquiesced in by all."¹⁰²

In 1867, Head's annual report lists 1,500 Pavants in Kanosh's band. Another four thousand comprised the combined bands of Timpanogos Utes, partly under the leadership of Sowoksoobet (Indian Joe); the Uintah Utes, under Tabby; and the Sanpete-Sanpitch band, with no known leader after Sanpitch's death.¹⁰³ In his 1868 report, Head listed Tabby's band as 100 Uintah Utes (almost certainly much too low), 800 Timpanogos Utes still in Utah County, and 400 in the Sanpete-Sanpitch band.¹⁰⁴ Four years later in 1872, John W. Powell, the well-known, one-armed explorer and ethnographer of the West, estimated that Kanosh's band numbered 1,200.¹⁰⁵ The obvious discrepancies indicate the difficulty of properly enumerating such transient people, with virtually no written records.

Even if Kanosh had direct influence only over his own band and nearby Indians, they constituted a solid base from which he could have claimed the head chieftainship whenever Sowiette died. His status would have been strengthened by the deaths of Sanpitch in April 1866 and Black Hawk in September 1870, since his only strong competitor at that point would have been Tabby, Sowiette's brother or

generations would not pass ere they should become a white and delightsome people, and said that the Lord could not have devised a better plan than to have put us where we were in order to accomplish that thing." He concluded: "I knew the Indians would dwindle away, but let a remnant of the seed of Joseph be saved."

¹⁰²F. H. Head, *Annual Report, 1868*, 608–10.

¹⁰³Head, *Annual Report, 1867*.

¹⁰⁴Head, *Annual Report, 1868*, 608–10. Sowiette's age is given on p. 610.

¹⁰⁵Powell and Ingalls, *Annual Report, 1873*, 42 (published in 1874).

half-brother.¹⁰⁶ But Kanosh made no known move to consolidate or expand his power among the Utes.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE MOVE TO THE RESERVATION

Although the Spanish Fork “treaty” remained unratified, both government officials and Mormons continued to press its obligations on the Indians—to terminate their property rights and move to the Uintah Reservation—with only-promised, never-delivered compensation. There is no evidence that either the Mormons or government officials ever admitted to any Indian that the land cessions were legally unenforceable between 1865 and 1873.

Major Powell recognized this persistent injustice, writing in his 1873 report: “This treaty was never ratified by the senate, but the Indians themselves suppose it to be a valid agreement [and] from the time it was signed by them, [they] have, so far as it has been possible for them conformed to its provisions.”¹⁰⁷ In 1868, Head had complained: “I had designed to remove the Pavant tribe to the reservation next spring in time for them to put in their crops, but without additional means to subsist [maintain] them for the first six months it will be impracticable.” He lamented, “It is impossible to make the Indians fully comprehend the reason why, when they have observed their part of the treaty, it is not fulfilled on the part of the government.”¹⁰⁸

All hope of Congressional funding for the Uintah Reservation ended in February 1869, mainly because the Senate’s reservation policy tended toward financial stringency. At about that time, Col. J. E. Tourtellotte, who replaced Head as Indian agent, doggedly expressed

¹⁰⁶Ibid. It is not clear how the Shibereche (Fish Lake) Utes would have voted, but according to John W. Powell, in Powell and Ingalls, *Annual Report, 1873*, 17, “Early in the last summer [either 1872 or 1873] a terrible scourge swept off great numbers of this tribe, until but 144 remain, and these, terrified and humble, sue for peace and promise to work.” This disease was probably smallpox, considering similar epidemics among Native Americans in the West. Something similar apparently happened to the Tonequint Paiutes near the Santa Clara River; I am aware of no documentation of this epidemic. See *San Bernardino (California) Times*, January 23–26, February 12–13, 1877, for a rare reference to a smallpox epidemic among Indians in and near the Mojave Desert.

¹⁰⁷Powell and Ingalls, *Annual Report, 1873*, 56.

¹⁰⁸Head, *Annual Report, 1868*, 612.

his intent to build the reservation without federal assistance. After a weak local agent, George W. Gaffen, was replaced by John J. Critchlow in 1870, this project seemed more feasible. The only Utes the government recognized were at Uintah; thus, from 1871 on, the rest of Utah's Indian agencies were discontinued, and Critchlow reported directly to the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Washington, D.C.¹⁰⁹

The Uintah Utes's ancestral lands included much of the territory designated for the reservation. Their chiefs had willingly attended the Spanish Fork talks and signed the treaty, seeing the agreement as securing their home territories against future white encroachment. However, other bands, including those of Kanosh, Sanpitch, and Joe (Sowokoobet), had many good reasons for apprehension, whatever their public statements of support. They understood that they had no traditional rights or powers in Uintah. As Powell pointed out, removal doubtless created serious political challenges among the Utes. Not only would it cut them off from their inherited traditions and important aspects of their identity, but they must also "join and become recognized as a member" of whatever band owned the land to which they relocated. In a separate treatise on western Native Americans, Powell concluded that such changes, in essence, altered an Indian's nationality, probably affected his ability to provide a decent livelihood for his family, and curtailed other considerations, perhaps ceremonial, dear to him.¹¹⁰ Kanosh and other tribal headmen would have understood that this process also required them to render personal allegiance to the band's leader in their new place of residence.

John Alton Peterson characterized Sanpitch earlier as an ambitious leader who had recognized the threat of this move to his plans and had therefore only grudgingly signed the Spanish Fork Treaty. According to Peterson, "Kanosh had similar reasons to oppose the treaty, but repeated verbal assurances from [Indian Agent] Irish and Young that he and his band would be allowed to remain on their own

¹⁰⁹Larson, "The Ute Treaty-Spanish Fork," 375-77.

¹¹⁰John Wesley Powell, "The Life and Culture of the Ute," *Papers of the Bureau of American Ethnology* (Washington, D.C.: National Anthropological Archives, quoted in Peterson, *Utah's Black Hawk War*, 156-57.

lands in Millard County quieted his concerns.”¹¹¹ However, Peterson’s description of a private arrangement may be inaccurate, since Kanosh, in February 1866, expressed anxiety to know Brigham’s views on the proposed move and since Young in essence refused to help the hungry Pavants while sending generous supplies to Uintah. At that point, Young obviously wanted all the Utes to move to Uintah. However, he may have later changed his mind. Almost certainly, George A. Smith would have told him about Callister’s letter in April 1866 reporting that he was asking local Mormons to help the Kanosh Pavants develop a new farm. I hypothesize that Young eventually allowed, or at least did not counter, the alternative of tacitly disregarding the Spanish Fork “treaty,” but only after most Pavants had already moved to Uintah. This migration is difficult to document, but the government reports between 1866 and 1875 indicate that the Pavant population in Millard County declined from as high as 1,200 to 1,500 to fewer than 100.¹¹² At the end of May 1870, Bishop Callister reported to Brigham Young that “most of our Corn Creek Indians have gone north,” doubtless meaning to Uintah.¹¹³ Apparently it was not a single, mass exodus, since the most direct mention of the emigration in Indian Bureau reports occurs in 1873.¹¹⁴ The only modern history of the Utah Ute tribe reports without documentation that descendants from the Pavant band currently live on the Uintah Reservation.¹¹⁵

In 1875 Culbert King, bishop of the relatively new Kanosh

¹¹¹Peterson, *Utah’s Black Hawk War*, 157.

¹¹²Head, *Annual Report, 1868*, 608–10; *Journal History*, April 28 and September 6, 1878.

¹¹³Thomas Callister, Letter to Brigham Young, May 31, 1870, Young Papers. The Pavants would have had to travel northeast to reach the reservation.

¹¹⁴Powell and Ingalls, *Annual Report, 1873*, 55.

¹¹⁵Clifford Duncan, “The Northern Utes of Utah,” in *A History of Utah’s American Indians*, edited by Forrest S. Cuch (Salt Lake City: Utah State Division of History, 2003), 191–93. However, Duncan also asserts inaccurately that Tintic was a Pavant leader, that the Kanosh group struggled for years to farm the area without government support, and that “in the spring of 1872 Tabby and Kanosh led Utes off the reservation and into the Sanpete Valley to hunt and hold a Ghost Dance,” an undocumented assertion which is possible but unlikely.

Ward, led the local members in baptizing what seems to be most of the Pavants still in the area at a warm spring northwest of Petersburg.¹¹⁶ The Pavants' willingness to accept baptism seems to demonstrate a lack of ill feeling toward the local Mormons. It is not known if a separate LDS branch was established at the new Indian village; but Kanosh and his wife, Sally (who lived in a house in the town of Kanosh), sometimes attended services at Kanosh Ward and the chief sometimes addressed the congregation.

THE FOUNDING OF KANOSH CITY

As already noted, on March 8, 1867, Bishop Callister wrote to Brigham Young expressing concern about the "very scattered condition" and "precarious situation" of the individual farms in Petersburg, should Black Hawk's raiders sweep through the county. He urged a consolidated community on "the new city site," by which he meant the area the Pavants had recently vacated. Although Black Hawk was still an unpredictable element, any fears about Kanosh and his people were at least partly contrived, since the Mormon farmers had felt secure from the first, establishing scattered farms, even though they were encroaching on Pavant land. Callister's letter tacitly acknowledged that the Mormons had their sights set on Kanosh's reservation, which still included "all the south[east]ern portion" of the county. His real reason was timing. If the Mormons moved into the vacated village, they needed to do so that spring so they could plant crops.¹¹⁷

No documentary evidence has been located that Young approved Callister's proposal or that Callister then ordered the Peters-

¹¹⁶George A. Bird, Letter to the Editor, *Deseret News*, May 5, 1875, *Journal History*; see also Amasa M. Lyman, Diary, June 28, 1875, LDS Church Library; Lyman and Newell, *History of Millard County*, 115. The county history was somewhat garbled during editing, resulting in the creation of a band leader named Wynopah. Wynopah was actually a resort at the nearby (probably a mile north of the baptismal site) hot springs during the 1920s. *Journal History*, May 11, 1874, notes that Kanosh had recently been ordained an elder by Dimick B. Huntington, presumably on Brigham Young's instructions.

¹¹⁷Thomas Callister, Letter to Young, March 8, 1867, *Young Papers*. In fact, according to John L. Smith, Letter to George A. Smith, June 10, 1866, *Journal History*, some Mormon farmers were already "fencing in a

Sally Kanosh, reared in Brigham Young's household, was possibly Kanosh's favorite wife. Courtesy Utah State Historical Society.



burg Mormons to move to the new townsite. However, within a few months, probably during the summer of 1867, the plat of this new Mormon town named Kanosh City was surveyed and lots allocated, presumably by the usual method of drawing lots.¹¹⁸ There is no record of payment either to the government land office or to any Native Americans. On September 1, Callister informed Brigham Young that work was “progressing finely” on a fort that would doubtless have

large field on Corn Creek,” certainly the area from which the Pavants had recently moved.

¹¹⁸Leavitt Christensen, *Birth of Kanosh* (Kanosh, Utah: privately printed, 1995), 15–17, reported without documentation that Thomas E. King surveyed the new town site and that George T. Day acted as chain bearer. Volney King, “Millard County, 1851–1875: An Original Journal (Pt. 3),” *Utah Humanities Review* 1 (1947): 390, stated on July 26, 1868: “Just previous to this the town [of Kanosh] was laid off & settled & people of the lower town of Petersburg moved up to it & at a special meeting for the purpose the name of the Chief Kanosh was gave [sic] the town. M. W. Warner claims the honor of suggesting the accepted name.”

been started at Young's direction.¹¹⁹ House-building commenced in the fall of 1867. On March 19, 1868, Callister reported that "Kanosh was fast filling up."¹²⁰ Two months later, in early May, the bishop and his party, accompanied by Fillmore's youth choir, held a meeting in the Petersburg schoolhouse because "there was no place to meet at Kanosh."¹²¹ The new community's farms thrived, even enjoying unusual freedom from frost and insects during its first three years.¹²²

THE NEW PAVANT FARM

It would be only natural for the Pavants, emotionally attached to their traditional lands, to have resented both Indian Bureau officials and the encroaching Mormons; but there are no records of any ill feeling. There is also no record of anyone's intervention to halt the dispossession, nor is Brigham Young's role known in Callister's encouragement for a Pavant remnant to establish a new farm and village. He probably left the final details of this matter up to Indian Agent Franklin H. Head.

The Pavant Utes chose a new farm site three miles northeast of Kanosh City and began cultivation in 1866. Even during that first year, they raised "several hundred bushels of wheat, corn and potatoes."¹²³ Later records, coupled with this early success, suggest that the Indians channeled some water from Corn Creek to supplement

¹¹⁹Thomas Callister, Letter to Brigham Young, September 1, 1867, Young Papers.

¹²⁰Thomas Callister, Letter to Young, March 19, 1868, Young Papers.

¹²¹George A. Smith, Letter to *Deseret News*, May 20, 1868, Journal History. Callister's party members preached and sang at Cove Fort, constructed in 1868 twenty miles farther south as "the most substantially built fort in the territory." The Kanosh Wardhouse was constructed in 1871.

¹²²John Kelly, Letter to the editor, *Deseret News*, July 12, 1868, Journal History. See also A. Milton Musser, Letter to Brigham Young, February 1, 1869, Young Papers, and Thomas Callister, Letter to *Deseret News*, July 25, 1869. Thomas Callister, Letter to Brigham Young, May 31, 1870, Young Papers, and correspondents named Heywood and Redd of Harmony, June 3, 1870, "From the South" (letter), *Deseret News*, Journal History, both stated that the east Millard farms "looked well."

¹²³F. H. Head, Letter to D. N. Cooley, September 20, 1866, *Annual Report, 1866*, 124, 129.

the local springs for irrigation.¹²⁴ In Head's 1867 report, he thought the Kanosh Indians could prosper at the new location if they could be "led to understand that [they] not be made the victims of misdirected energy by laboring in vain." It is an argument to reassure the Pavants that they would not be forced onto the Uintah Reservation. Head reported "abundant evidence that many of the [Pavants] will make good farmers" and, with government assistance, could raise "500 bushels of wheat and 200 of corn, potatoes, etc.," thereby becoming a "self-sustaining people."¹²⁵ It seems unlikely that Head would have made these proposals if he were simultaneously insisting on the move to the Uintah Reservation.

In his 1868 report, Head praised "the worth of and reliability of Kanosh," specifically his leadership in establishing the new farms. The Pavants could "cultivate and care for a large amount of farming land" but would need fencing materials, buildings, and tools, which he did not feel justified in providing at government expense "in view of the proposed speedy removal of the tribe to the Uintah reservation."¹²⁶ This seemingly contradictory position simply reflects his considerable constraints as entailed in the "treaty," compared to what he could legitimately advise the Pavants who wanted to remain in Millard County.

By the end of 1868, Head must have carefully explained to Kanosh and his remaining associates that they could expect no federal aid for the Pavant farm. While there is no documentation on this subject (except similar later cautions to Utah and Sevier County Utes, discussed below), this probable communication is likely what prompted Kanosh at that juncture to dictate a request to Brigham Young for fencing materials, oxen, seeds, a plow, and a wagon so he [and his people] could "raise their own wheat and corn and potatoes

¹²⁴The existence of an early irrigation system is suggested in Joseph J. Pipyarit (Pikyavit), Letter to [Ray Lyman Wilbur] Secretary of the Interior, July 28, 1927; E. A. Farrow, Letter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, August 27, 1927; both National Archives Regional Branch, Denver, Colorado, copies in Utah State Historical Society. These documents record the attempt of the Kanosh Indians to seek redress when an unnamed white user of Corn Creek water shut off their long-promised (probably initially in Callister and Kanosh's time) continuous flow of irrigation water.

¹²⁵F. H. Head, Letter to D. W. Rhodes, July 31, 1867, *Annual Report, 1867*, 182.

¹²⁶Head, *Annual Report, 1868*, 610.

and squashes.”¹²⁷

There is no record that the Church provided any assistance, but I deduce that they did because of the farm’s productivity in 1869. In June 1869, Dimick B. Huntington and Kanosh, jointly interviewed by the *Deseret News*, stated that the Pavants were “feeling well” and that their crops were “doing excellently.”¹²⁸ Agent Head’s report to the Indian Bureau on August 1, 1869, says essentially the same thing. The July 1870 report mentions that at least forty-two acres were under cultivation—far fewer than at the old site, but a good beginning for the declining number of Indians.¹²⁹

TRANSITION: THE PAVANTS WHO STAYED

In about 1869, Head and other federal officials in Utah apparently started treating the Pavants more like Southern Paiutes who had never been required to move to the Uintah Reservation. This approach was doubtless made with the understanding that they could not expect any financial assistance from the federal government if they were outside Uintah. At least two of Kanosh’s subchiefs, Ankar-tali and Moshoquoqe, also stayed; but from that point onward, Southern Paiutes also joined the village. An example is Joe Pikyavit, from the Kaibab band of Paiutes; he married a Kanosh woman and his family played a prominent role at the (later recreated) Kanosh (Paiute) Indian Reservation.¹³⁰

In 2001, Martha Knack, an anthropology professor at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, claimed “that Kanosh was invited by

¹²⁷Kanosh, Letter to Brigham Young, December 13, 1868, Young Papers.

¹²⁸Huntington and Kanosh, interviewed by the editor of the *Deseret News*, Journal History, June 12, 1869.

¹²⁹F. H. Head, Letter to E. S. Parker, August 1, 1869, *Annual Report, 1869*, 227. See also *Annual Report, 1870*, 606.

¹³⁰Frank A. Beckwith, *Indian Joe* (Delta, Utah: DuWil Printers, ca. 1975), 1. “Indian Joe” Pikyavit should not be confused with Sowoksoobet (“Indian Joe”), a Ute from Utah County. Beckwith asserts that Joe Pikyavit was actually a full-blooded Ute, which would be interesting, if possible to document, since most Indians from Pipe Springs-Kaibab were definitely Southern Paiutes. I interviewed McKay Pikyavit (now deceased), a prominent advocate for Southern Paiutes, even at times in Washington, D.C. Other relatives, including women, play prominent roles at the Kanosh Res-

Brigham Young as the sole Paiute representative to the council that ended the Walker War, and he later signed the Treaty of Spanish Fork that terminated the Black Hawk War.” (She is mistaken about the purpose of this “treaty.”) Thus, in her view, Kanosh attended the treaty talks as a Paiute chief while all other attendees were Ute chiefs.¹³¹ The error is understandable. Knack drew most heavily on twentieth-century source materials, when the understanding was widespread that the Kanosh Indian Reservation was Paiute. No scholarly work had yet traced the reservation’s transition from its original status as Pavant Ute to its current status as Paiute.¹³²

No known historical records document that Kanosh ever moved from Millard County.¹³³ I hypothesize that he eventually negotiated a tacit arrangement with Callister, Head, and probably even Brigham Young to stay, especially after most of his band moved to the Uintah Reservation, terminating the possibility that they would try to reclaim their old Millard County lands. I further speculate that Brigham Young encouraged Kanosh to become a naturalized U.S. citizen, which he did in June 1873, so he could thereby claim the new farm near the foothills through the Homestead Act.¹³⁴

KANOSH’S LAST YEARS, AND CONTRAST WITH UINTAH

I doubt that Kanosh tried to discourage members of his band who

ervation.

¹³¹Martha C. Knack, *Boundaries Between: The Southern Paiutes, 1775–1995* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001), 61.

¹³²*Ibid.* Knack claimed that Kanosh “shrewdly bypassed bishops lower on the Mormon echelon to form a personalized dyadic relationship with Brigham Young,” but this judgment ignores Kanosh’s close relationship to Callister.

¹³³Duncan, “The Northern Utes of Utah,” 191–93, states, without documentation, that Kanosh and the remaining Pavants moved to the Uintah Reservation in 1869, although they did not always remain there. I find Duncan’s conclusion unlikely.

¹³⁴Edward Partridge Jr., Journal, June 7, 1873, Utah State Historical Society, reports that Young directed a Millard Stake brother to take Kanosh to Beaver and apply for naturalization, which he apparently did. In June 1873 and the following year, Brigham Young directed some Utah County Utes under Joe to homestead Grass Valley land to avoid being sent to the Uintah Reservation.

decided to move to the Uintah Reservation, even though the reduction of his band also reduced his own status. However, since he could not assure those who stayed of ever receiving federal assistance, it was also a practical approach. But there are no documents establishing such understandings except those relating to Utah and Sevier County Utes.

On May 31, 1870, Thomas Callister reported to Brigham Young that Chief Kanosh, then about forty-two, was dangerously ill. Several weeks earlier, he had been roping a wild horse, his hand had become entangled in the rope, the plunging horse had jerked off his little finger, and blood poisoning had set in. Callister dispatched a Dr. Booth who successfully treated the injury. Callister commented in a major understatement: "We cannot spare Kanosh if he can be saved."¹³⁵

Two years later, in the summer of 1872, Tabby and some of his Uintah band of Utes moved away from their traditional territory in the Uintah Basin and camped near Spanish Fork. They were reportedly moving to the Strawberry Valley which lies midway between Spanish Fork and Uintah. Albert Thurber, bishop of Spanish Fork Ward, reported to Brigham Young's son, Joseph A. Young, that Tabby said they would return to Uintah when the government provided food for them at the reservation. Agent J. J. Critchlow admitted that no food was then available.¹³⁶ However, the matter was amicably resolved before the approaching winter.

Critchlow's annual report to the Secretary of the Interior in the fall of 1873 stated that some 500 Utes, who had passed a brutal winter at the usually cold Uintah Reservation, "seemed well satisfied with the annuity goods forwarded by the Department [of the Interior, Indian Bureau], and the beef, flour and other supplies we were enabled to issue." About 200 adult Indians were valiantly trying to farm on the reservation and had some 200 acres under cultivation.¹³⁷

In the fall of 1872, Colonel Henry A. Morrow, the relatively new commander at Fort Douglas in Salt Lake City, selected Kanosh as one of a delegation to present Ute "grievances to the President of the

¹³⁵Thomas Callister, Letter to Brigham Young, May 31, 1870, Young Collection.

¹³⁶A. K. Thurber, Letter to Joseph A. Young, August 18, 1872, Young Papers.

¹³⁷J. J. Critchlow, Letter to E. P. Smith, September 25, 1873, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1873*, 628, quoted in O'Neil, "A History of the Ute Indians of Utah until 1890," 108.

Albert King Thurber helped establish a final peace with Utes in the Fish Lake region after the Black Hawk War. Some of the lands they were settled on later became part of the Koosharem Indian Reservation. Courtesy Daughters of Utah Pioneers.



United States” in Washington, D.C. A primary grievance was that the government had not ratified the Spanish Fork Treaty or carried out its promises. Kanosh may have understood that such efforts were usually futile. And when he noticed that the delegation included several Ute leaders who had recently caused trouble at Uintah and Sanpete, he withdrew from the group. The delegates did meet with President Ulysses S. Grant, but there is no evidence that the Indians’ condition benefited as a result.¹³⁸

In late 1873, John W. Powell and his associate, G. W. Ingalls, reported to the Bureau of Indian Affairs that some of the Utes in Utah had refused to move to the Uintah Reservation, despite unspecified pressure from some U.S. Army officers. Powell and Ingalls took the Indians’ part; the government’s failure to provide consistent aid made it “unreasonable to expect these Indians to remain on the reservation.” Powell underscored the unfairness of demanding that the Utes comply with the treaty provisions when the government had never ratified it or carried out its agreement, except for providing minimal amounts of food, clothing, and other articles. This aid fell far short of what was needed to establish full-fledged farming opera-

¹³⁸Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of the Church*, 5:162–63.

tions.

Powell added that, in contrast, Kanosh's band was farming so successfully that they usually had an extra "quantity to sell, from which he derives a respectable revenue." Still, Kanosh's village, then reportedly numbering only 134 residents, was "too small to warrant the establishment of a separate reservation for their benefit." Kanosh had expressed a somewhat reluctant willingness to move to Uintah with the rest of his band if they had reason to believe that the government would provide assistance to assure their agricultural success there. However, both Powell and Kanosh knew that the condition was a major stumbling block; furthermore, as Powell stated, "circumstances connected to [Kanosh's] relation to the Mormon church" would make it difficult to move him against his will.¹³⁹

Matters remained essentially unchanged. After the turbulence and life-threatening events of the 1850s and 1860s, Kanosh's last decade was uneventful but marked by painful loss. While Kanosh was in Salt Lake City in June 1869, his wife, Mary, disappeared. Her body, throat cut, was found more than a month later. Another wife, Betsykins, who was reportedly jealous because Mary was pregnant, admitted to the murder and was sentenced to remain in a wickiup without food or water until she died. Mary had been reared in a Mormon home in Payson.¹⁴⁰ Nine years later, Sally, a foster daughter of Brigham Young and possibly Kanosh's favorite wife, died and was buried in her temple clothes.¹⁴¹

In the summer of 1874, crassly disrespectful members of Lieutenant George M. Wheeler's government surveying party desecrated and looted the mountainside graves of Kanosh's young son, Stambo, and the chief's half-brother, Hunkitter. Fillmore resident Reuben A. McBride, a close friend of Kanosh's, reported that "Kanosh hardly knows how to express his indignation" over this sacrilege; and the equally outraged Thomas Callister informed Young that he credited his own "controlling influence over Kanosh and his men" for preventing an outbreak of "the warwhoop and the scalping

¹³⁹Powell and Ingalls, *Report 1873*, 42, 56–57.

¹⁴⁰Thomas Callister, "Fillmore City" (letter), *Deseret News*, July 25, 1869.

¹⁴¹Journal History, December 9, 1878.

knife.”¹⁴² There was some attempt to retrieve the bones and artifacts from the perpetrators, but there was probably never a satisfactory resolution.

In 1876, the hundred residents of his small village harvested wheat from 140 cultivated acres. When Kanosh visited Salt Lake City two years later, he described the farm as “flourishing.”¹⁴³

Kanosh suffered another personal loss in December 1880 when Thomas Callister, his friend for almost twenty years, died at age fifty-nine. Kanosh, who was then fifty-two, spoke at the funeral, held in Fillmore on December 7. In his remarks, he recounted his hopes, now dashed, for Callister’s recovery, linking this loss with the deaths of Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and George A. Smith. What would become of the Pavants now that the great men who had “been our best friends have gone to the Spirit World and left us behind.” Although these friendships had failed at crucial points, there was no rising generation either of Church leaders or even local members who were equally committed to safeguarding Indian interests. Clearly saddened, Kanosh admitted that his heart ached and his spirit mourned because of the changed condition. He promised that while he lived, he would do all the good he could and would cherish in memory all the counsel and advice of the now-gone associates, continuing to affirm belief that at death their spirits too would go “to the Great Father where all is peace and no sorrow,” during a “time of rejoicing.”¹⁴⁴

A year later, Kanosh followed his friend in death. At funeral services held December 12, 1881, in the Kanosh chapel, Elders George Crane and Hans Christenson offered suitable remarks and the choir sang, including the Mormon hymn, “Stop and Tell Me, Red Man.” As his band members took “a last look at their noble chief,” dressed in his temple robes, the reporter continued, “there was one of the most genuine outbursts of grief it has been our lot to witness.” At the city cemetery, Moshquope, the old war chief, spoke in his native tongue “extol-

¹⁴²Reuben A. McBride, Letter to Dimick Huntington, August 18, 1874, Young Papers; Thomas Callister, Letter to Young, August 18, 1874. Wakara’s grave site was apparently also looted at that time.

¹⁴³Journal History, April 28, 1876, September 6, 1878.

¹⁴⁴Remarks made by Kanosh, Chief of the Pahvan[t] Nation at the Funeral of Bishop Thomas Callister in Fillmore City, December 7, 1880,” in Caroline Callister, “Scrapbook,” Mary M. Callister Lyman Papers, LDS Church Library.

ling the virtues of him who for years had been their leader.”¹⁴⁵

That year, the population of Kanosh’s village had dropped to eighty, but they raised approximately 400 bushels of wheat, enough of a surplus to be sold on the open market.¹⁴⁶ Kanosh’s fervent desire for self-sufficiency had been, at least temporarily, fulfilled.

Kanosh’s reputation as a man resolutely committed to peace remained unimpeached throughout his lifetime, and his legacy has stood the test of time. Less well known is his forbearance and patience in dealing with disappointment and even betrayal from presumed friends. His unwavering determination to maintain peaceful relationships with his neighbors and his skill at doing so, despite all slights, deserves more recognition than he has received in the historical record.

ILLUMINATING COMPARABLE SITUATIONS

Although some areas of Kanosh’s life and thought will doubtless remain inaccessible due to a lack of documentation, one situation that does help illuminate what would have been Kanosh’s similar course involves Sowoksoobet (“Indian Joe” to his white neighbors in Utah County), a Timpanogos Ute headman. While Brigham Young was visiting in Provo in June of 1873, Joe and others of his band met with him and “strongly objected to go to the Uintah Reservation against their will.” At that time, they stated as their primary reason that they were Latter-day Saints “and feared persecution at the hands of Gentile government officials,” then Indian “agents and perhaps [also from] the soldiers” stationed nearby.¹⁴⁷ Young insisted that “they would have to dissolve their tribal relations and enter lands by homesteading in order to be free from the effects of the treaty and laws.”¹⁴⁸

President Young had been informed of related developments among the Utah County Utes the month previously. On May 16, 1873, General Henry A. Morrow, recently promoted commander of Fort Douglas, was responsible for all Ute Indians not on the Uintah Reservation. He wrote to Albert K. Thurber, bishop in Spanish Fork

¹⁴⁵Journal History, December 7, 8, 12, 1881. The December 12 letter, “Death of Kanosh,” appears under December 7, 1881.

¹⁴⁶Journal History, August 27, 1881. This news item also reported the beginnings of alcohol abuse problems in the village.

¹⁴⁷Horne, *Autobiography of George Washington Bean*, 166.

¹⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 167.

six miles north of Payson, insisting that the Indians still residing in Thurber's area needed to fully understand their options. By not moving to the Uintah Reservation, the remaining Utes had "severed their tribal relations and henceforth are to get along in the world like the whites without expecting aid from the public," meaning the federal government. Morrow repeated that, "under no circumstances will any aid be given to an Indian off his reservation." He also cautioned Thurber that Joe and his associates should understand these consequences so that they could "take them [steps] with their eyes open."¹⁴⁹ Thurber forwarded this correspondence to Brigham Young. Any accompanying letter from Thurber has not survived, but the implication is that he had passed Morrow's message on to Sowoksoobet and the other Timpanogos Utes.

Five days later, on May 22, 1873, Joseph Tanner, the longtime Payson-Spring Lake Mormon bishop just south of Thurber, wrote to Brigham Young with a similar report. According to his account, during the winter of 1872-73, Morrow had carefully explained to the Timpanogos Utes near Payson, also led by Sowoksoobet, that they would receive no federal assistance unless they moved to the Uintah Reservation. Tanner added that Morrow had warned him not to encourage the Utes in any way to stay in Utah County, a repetition of his warning to Mormons in the summer of 1872 not to harbor Indians in any of their towns, feed them, or encourage them to remain in the area.¹⁵⁰ Tanner assured President Young that Joe's band understood Morrow's instructions but still hoped to settle on land near Spring Lake and on a "large farm in Thistle Valley" up Spanish Fork Canyon. They wanted to "live with the Mormons." Doubtless reinforcing this desire was their candid admission that they could "not get along with the other Indians at the [Uintah] reservation." The Uintah Utes allegedly called the newcomers "Mormons" and threatened to steal their horses.¹⁵¹

Morrow's letters to the Utah County bishops confirm that the highest-ranking U.S. official with responsibility for Utah's non-

¹⁴⁹General Henry A. Morrow, Letter to Bishop A. K. Thurber, May 16, 1873, holograph copy in Young Papers.

¹⁵⁰Bishop Joseph Tanner, Letter to Brigham Young, May 22, 1873, Young Papers. Tanner says he and Indian Joe had received letters from Morrow the previous week.

¹⁵¹*Ibid.*

Uintah Indians accepted that some Utes were living off the reservation, even though his main point was that they did so with the understanding that they could claim no government support while doing so. Thurber's letter also confirms that Kanosh's off-reservation residence was becoming an accepted fact, since Sowoksoobet pointed out, as a precedent, that Kanosh was "not being compelled to leave his home," supposedly because of his peacekeeping function in Millard County. Similarly, some of Sowoksoobet's Payson-Spanish Fork Utes argued that they did not wish to go to the reservation and that they could perform a similar function in southern Utah County if they were permitted to remain.¹⁵²

Tanner had informed Young on May 22 that Joe and his associates desired to confer with him soon, and Brigham Young apparently put such a visit on his itinerary when he visited Utah County in early June 1873. They then organized a peace-establishing and exploration mission southwest to the Fish Lake Mountain and Grass Valley area. Thurber earlier had reported that Black Hawk's Shibereche and Weeminuche Ute allies "could be reached and peaceful relations established."¹⁵³ Another important purpose was the possible establishment of new Indian farms. Young dispatched a party of two dozen men from central Utah on June 15, 1873, including Thurber and longtime Indian interpreter George W. Bean. He authorized them to issue pardons to Indians involved in the Black Hawk War. Also in the group was Chief Tabby ("Tabiona" in Bean's account), the Ute chief at Uintah, who had long been associated with Bishop Thurber in peacekeeping efforts, including before and during the Black Hawk War.¹⁵⁴ When the group arrived in the Fish Lake vicinity in late June, Tabby did most of the preliminary speaking with Chief Pahganeap, also known as the Fish Lake "bishop." Despite an unseasonable snowstorm, up to a hundred Indians gathered at Red Cedar Grove in Grass

¹⁵²Ibid.

¹⁵³A. K. Thurber, Letter to Joseph A. Young (Brigham's son and soon to be Sevier Stake president), July 18, 1872, Young Papers. Thurber reported that several of the Loa Utes (either Shibereche or Weeminuche) who had earlier been "reported hostile," had stayed at his home the previous evening. They had "drawn back from the war ground," meaning they were making overtures toward peace talks. See also Horne, *Autobiography of George Washington Bean*, 167.

¹⁵⁴Thurber, Diary, April 16, 1863, 305; May 13, 1865, 308.

Valley in Sevier County to participate in the historic peace talks. According to Bean, the pledges made there were never broken.¹⁵⁵ The assembled Utes tentatively agreed to settle in Grass Valley, where local Mormon leaders, with Brigham Young's expressed backing, promised to help them claim and make farms and "cultivate the arts of peace and industry."¹⁵⁶

In the summer of 1874, Brigham Young fulfilled this promise by calling Thurber and Bean to move their families to Sevier County; from there, they could supervise work farther south at Grass Valley. The twenty-five-mile-long valley, much of it watered by Otter Creek, was named for grass so tall that it reached their horses' bellies. These farms were established that summer and later became part of the Koosharem (Paiute) Indian Reservation. For the time, however, the Mormon-Indian agreement and land-reservation development was probably unique in the history of the West by occurring without any initial federal government involvement.

Thurber described his mission: "I was called by President Brigham Young to go to Grass Valley and the Sevier country principally to use my influence in the interest of peace with the Indians inhabiting and visiting that country." He and Bean built homes in Richfield, seat of Sevier County. Thurber commenced farming near future Burrville, in the north end of Grass Valley, barely within Sevier County, while Bean located near Coyote Creek in the valley's southern end. Both Utes and Paiutes joined in the farming effort. Like the Pavant village in Millard County, the Utes probably predominated early; but for most of the twentieth century, largely under belated federal supervision, the reservation, now defunct, was primarily Paiute.¹⁵⁷

In the late summer of 1873, An-guh-teshoop (usually known to whites as Chief Red Light) and either a Shibereche or Weemanuche

¹⁵⁵Horne, *Autobiography of George Washington Bean*, 167.

¹⁵⁶Works Progress Administration papers, Box 81, Utah State Historical Society, quoted in M. Guy Bishop, *A History of Sevier County* (Salt Lake City: Utah State Historical Society, 1997), 73-74; "Forts" and "The First Settlements in the Sevier Valley," *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine* 6 (April, 1915): 83 note; Linda King Newell, *A History of Piute County* (Salt Lake City: Utah State Historical Society, 1999), 115-16.

¹⁵⁷Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada, Winona Holmes, director, *Nuwuvi: A Southern Paiute History* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Print-

Ute, settled in Grass Valley with eleven lodges of his band. Sowoksoobet, the Timpanogos Ute headman, followed with twelve lodges. Mogo-no-quits, with his ten lodges, was Paiute.¹⁵⁸ A number of Fish Lake Utes (Shibereche) band, may have also settled at Grass Valley; but it is not likely that many of them remained there long.¹⁵⁹ I continue to study the little-documented issue of how extensively and how long these Utes engaged in farming.¹⁶⁰

In 1876, Thurber reported that the group had harvested about 150 bushels of wheat in the fall of 1875. Significantly, the Indians' "disposition as regards a desire to ramble about from place to place appears to have undergone a complete revolution, their attention be-

ing Service, 1976), 9, states that the Koosharem Band "lived in central Utah near Fish Lake and the present-day Koosharem Reservation. They actually may have been Utes and were probably the same group known as the Fish Lake Utes by the first settlers. However, they associated with Nuwuvi and came to be considered as such" (meaning they became Southern Paiute).

¹⁵⁸G. W. Bean, Letters to Brigham Young, June 20 and August 20, 1874, Young Papers; Bean, Letter to George A. Smith, April 15, 1875, George A. Smith Papers; A. K. Thurber, Letters to President Brigham Young, March 25, 1875, and March 1 and December 15, 1876, Young Papers.

¹⁵⁹J. E. Tourtellotte, former territorial superintendent of Indian Affairs for Utah, Letter to a federal official named Parker, September 20, 1870, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1870*, 143-44, quoted in O'Neil, "A History of the Ute Indians of Utah until 1890," 97. Tourtellotte describes the resistance of the Fish Lake Utes to going to the Uintah Reservation; they wanted their own. Horne, *Autobiography of George Washington Bean*, 167-69; Thurber, *Diary*, 315.

¹⁶⁰In the Powell and Ingalls, *Annual Report, 1873*, 3, Powell recalled visiting with some Shibereche Utes on the Sevier River in 1871: "These people live by hunting and fishing and collect seeds and fruits. They are well mounted, are a wild, daring people and very skillful in border warfare. It is to be safely stated that for the last ten years they have subsisted chiefly on the spoils of war. In their raids they have been associated with the Navajos and Utes who inhabit the country to the east of the Colorado River" (Colorado, Arizona, and New Mexico). He later (p. 17) noted in connection with the same allies: "Great numbers of horses and cattle have been driven away from the settlements, often in droves of hundreds." Tabby, Letter to Brigham Young, May 12, 1866, Young Papers, asserts that these were traded to "Mexicans for guns and ammunition," presumably down the Old Spanish Trail to Santa Fe.

ing now absorbed in settling down, making farms, and desiring to erect and inhabit buildings.”¹⁶¹ As at Kanosh’s new village, an increasing number of residents were Southern Paiutes, who were “proving [to be] the best workers.”¹⁶²

I hypothesize that the Southern Paiutes in Grass Valley and perhaps in Millard County were actually more strongly and permanently influenced by Kanosh’s example than were the Utes. Their willingness to adapt helped at least some of them to survive fairly well when so many others essentially failed. Although such a hypothesis awaits further study, it may be another significant Kanosh legacy along with his precedent for allowing Utes to reside off the reservation.

In his last years, Kanosh spent at least some winters with Sowoksoobet and Angutseib, another older Ute headman near Koosharem. Thurber reports that Kanosh preached in late 1875 to the Grass Valley Indians on the Book of Mormon, recounting Lehi’s journey from Jerusalem and how God had poured out His blessings upon their descendants. He also exhorted his listeners “to do right, that they also might be prospered, according to the predictions of their fathers.”¹⁶³ Another likely contribution, though perhaps not possible to document, is how much Kanosh influenced his fellows in assimilating Mormon beliefs and practices. This influence shows in the lives of the two older Ute chiefs at Koosharem. When Sowoksoobet’s baby daughter died, Kanosh and Angutseib, who were both present, consoled him and the infant was buried with a Mormon-style funeral rather than traditional Indian customs. Sowoksoobet later requested Thurber, who reported this episode, to tell Brigham Young that “my heart is not dead, but I certainly did not understand why I had to lose my last child.”¹⁶⁴

In summation, Kanosh was a man who saw his and his people’s world changed almost as completely as is possible in one lifetime.

¹⁶¹Journal History, January 7, 1876, gives this report from Thurber who was in Salt Lake City as a representative to the territorial legislature.

¹⁶²A. K. Thurber, Letter to Brigham Young, December 15, 1876, Young Papers.

¹⁶³Albert K. Thurber, Letter, *Deseret News*, January 7, 1876.

¹⁶⁴A. K. Thurber, Letters to Brigham Young, December 15, 1876, February 11, 1877, Young Papers. Sowoksoobet’s quotation is in the February 11 letter.

Most of these changes did not better the Utes' situation. Yet Kanosh foresaw, adapted to, negotiated, and led his people into accepting these changes with remarkable and truly admirable equanimity. Such an exemplary person should not be completely forgotten, at least by those who care to learn from the history of the Mormon settlement of the West.

REVIEWS

Daniel Walker Howe. *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815–1848*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007. xviii, 904 pp. Maps, illustrations, notes, bibliographical essay, index. Cloth: \$35; ISBN: 978-0-19-507894-7

Reviewed by John C. Thomas

Former MHA president Dean L. May thought it vital for young Latter-day Saint historians to “broaden, broaden, broaden”—to pay a price of “labor and empathy” to begin to see their faith “as others might,” thereby making it explicable to all. Richard Lyman Bushman noted that few Mormon writers have carefully examined Joseph Smith’s “place in American history,” in part because the issue seemed to pale against an even broader question—what the restoration meant for the future of the world.¹ For those who want to broaden their perspective on the American birthplace of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *What Hath God Wrought* is a very good place to start. Daniel Walker Howe’s learned but accessible survey of antebellum America, part of the Oxford History of the United States, won the Pulitzer Prize for history in 2008. Not only his time frame, 1815–48, but also Howe’s persistent attention to American religious history (including various millennial visions for America), make this book especially helpful for viewing Mormon origins in context. Readers who wonder how well Bushman succeeded in his aim to write a “cultural biography of Mormonism’s founder” in *Rough Stone Rolling* would do well to consult Howe’s rich narrative of seemingly every aspect of American culture.

¹Dean L. May, “Writing from Within a Religious Tradition: A Mormon Perspective,” *Journal of Mormon History* 28 (Spring 2002): 115–16; Richard Lyman Bushman, “A Joseph Smith for the Twenty-First Century,” *BYU Studies* 40, no. 2 (2001): 162–64.

Howe claims to have told a “story,” rather than arguing a “thesis” (849). If so, it is clear that the protagonists in his story are the “improvers”—the reformers and inventors who envisioned economic, social, and spiritual refinement for the nation. To a remarkable degree, these “improvers” agreed that America had a special mission to champion liberty in the world; and though their faiths varied, they often linked American progress to the second coming of Christ. What is also remarkable is the extent to which many of this time saw revelation and reason as natural partners in the cause of liberty, self-improvement, and social reform. America became remarkably literate and increasingly integrated by new transportation and communication technologies. Science and religious faith cohabited happily. Only slowly, and largely after 1848, did these comfortable affinities begin to fray. Of course slavery was always there to haunt the optimists, and abolitionists insistently questioned their countrymen’s contentment. In Howe’s story, in fact, it is apologists for white supremacy who play the role of antagonists—and he points out that many people exhibited mixed outlooks.

The book is dedicated to John Quincy Adams, whom Howe sees as a principled and prescient statesman, president, and legislator—symbol of the improvers. Andrew Jackson, whom Howe finds lacking both in personal style and political ideology, personifies the voice for white male privilege. Adams was a well-educated Unitarian who had no trouble invoking millennial language about America’s mission and shared the postmillennial optimism of many Evangelical reformers. Howe highlights the affinities of the Whigs and the postmillennialists (580); he also believes that men like Adams and Henry Clay held out a more rational course of national development than many Democrats (and pessimistic premillennialists). “Whigs preferred for the United States to concentrate its energies internally, on economic development, education, and social reform.” In contrast, Democrats feared class and race conflict and offered westward expansion as “a safety valve [that would] preserve America as a land of opportunity for white men” (686). Though folks in both camps looked westward, Howe shows how the desire to protect or extend slavery led some Americans to invoke the prospect of continental conquest, even as it made them suspicious of federal initiatives that might have aided economic development within the existing nation.

Howe describes the Whigs’ conception of liberty as “positive,” where freedom “was a means to the formation of individual character and a good society.” The Democrats’ conception of liberty was “negative” because it implied “freeing the common (white) man from the oppressive burdens of an aristocracy” (583). Thus, the Democrats favored “economic uniformity” (assuming that market forces would continue to uphold family farming—including slave farming) and “cultural diversity” (protected by states’ rights), while

the Whigs favored “economic diversity” (market-led modernization aided by public works and monetary policy—likely to eclipse slave-labor at some point) and “cultural uniformity” (largely by education, along with private reform—often religiously sponsored) (583–84). Howe eschews the term “Jacksonian democracy,” since Jackson and many of his partisans’ attachment to extending white male power across the continent came at the expense of slaves, free blacks, Indians, Mexicans, and women. Ironically, the Democrats’ “safety valve” backfired by raising the stakes on slavery so much that it led to the Civil War, which doomed their model society.

Lest one get the impression that Howe’s book is primarily a political history, I must note how widely and deeply and deftly he probes the many facets of American culture—material, literary, ethnic, spiritual, and so on. The opening chapter is an excellent overview of the America in which Joseph Smith grew up. Throughout the book, Howe takes all kinds of ideas seriously, noting how technology allowed those ideas to circulate across the nation. Notably, he highlights the ubiquity of religious discourse and the substantive ways in which religious associations fostered positive liberty. He has an excellent chapter on the religious “awakenings” of the era and argues that postmillennial thinking, fueled in part by material prosperity, became in this period the prevailing religious outlook on America’s future, offering a synthesis of “the faith in progress characteristic of the Enlightenment with biblical Christianity.” It also “legitimated American civil religion, that durable fusion of patriotism, nondenominational Protestantism, and belief in America’s responsibility to conduct an experiment in free government” (289). Howe also admits that this comfortable convergence of ideas faded in the later nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a point that Richard Bushman has made in considering Joseph Smith’s challenge to American culture.²

In this light, it is interesting to explore Howe’s treatment of Mormonism, which mostly occurs in chapters titled “Pursuing the Millennium” and “Westward the Star of Empire” (clues about how he situates Joseph Smith and the Church in the wider American story). How well does Howe comprehend the Mormons and their place in the saga? May regretted that few non-Mormon scholars had “been able to enter the world of Mormonism sufficiently to write persuasively about it,” and he urged them to “deepen, deepen, deepen.”³ Given the scope of the book, Howe’s treatment of early Mormonism is not fully satisfying; but compared to similar efforts (such as Charles Sellers’s *The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815–1846* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1991, esp. 217–25], whose interpretations

²Bushman, “A Joseph Smith for the Twenty-First Century,” 166–68.

³May, “Writing from Within a Religious Tradition,” 116–17.

about economic change and religion Howe challenges), it seems a more serious and respectful and genuinely interested effort to understand.

Years ago Howe joined other scholars at a conference on "Personal and Political Liberty in the Book of Mormon." Surprised at how well the book bore "close analysis," he wrote that his "teaching and writing" would benefit from his new "appreciation . . . for this complex and inspiring work."⁴ So what does Howe say of the Book of Mormon in his magnum opus?

True or not, the Book of Mormon is a powerful epic written on a grand scale with a host of characters, a narrative of human struggle and conflict, of divine intervention, heroic good and atrocious evil, of prophecy, morality, and law. . . . Although it contains elements that suggest the environment of New York in the 1820s . . . the dominant themes are biblical, prophetic, and patriarchal, not democratic or optimistic. It tells a tragic story, of a people who, though possessed of the true faith, fail in the end. Yet it does not convey a message of despair; God's will cannot ultimately be frustrated. The Book of Mormon should rank among the great achievements of American literature, but it has never been accorded the status it deserves, since Mormons deny Joseph Smith's authorship, and non-Mormons, dismissing the work as a fraud, have been more likely to ridicule than read it. (314)

It is a thoughtful and engaging sketch. Granted, Howe goes no further, but perhaps others may take up his challenge to take the book more seriously.

What about "God's will" in U.S. history? Howe ponders the tragedy in America's trajectory after 1844. Had Clay won that year's election, Howe believes, there would have been no Mexican War, gradual emancipation by economic diversification and compensation, dampened sectionalism, no Republican party, and no Civil War. "The decisions that electorates and politicians make have real consequences," he laments (690). Mormons, by the way, said much the same thing as they mourned the assassination of their prophet-candidate that year. Despite the bloody consequences, Lincoln eventually implemented the major policies of Adams and Clay (835). Did that make him the instrument of God's inexorable will, working amidst war and religious declension? If so, had he moved the nation closer to eventual redemption or condemnation?

Howe says some other interesting things about how the Mormons fit in the religious landscape. On the one hand, Joseph Smith's revelations set up a "millenarian critique of the larger society and a collectivist, authoritarian dissent from American individualistic pluralism" (731). On the other hand, "The Mormons did not passively await Christ's millennial kingdom but worked to prepare for it. Their brand of premillennialism was as activist as

⁴Noel B. Reynolds, "The Coming Forth of the Book of Mormon in the Twentieth Century," *BYU Studies* 38, no. 2 (1999): 38–39.

any postmillennialism, and even more certain of a special millennial role for America.”⁵ Howe goes so far as to say that the Mormon outlook constituted an “extreme version of American exceptionalism” (316). What more needs to be known about the revelations and practices of the Church to see how well these labels help us understand the Mormons’ relationship to their neighbors?

Howe also says the Mormons “sought to escape from the United States,” yet “ended up playing a role in extending the United States” (731), and he describes both the westward exodus under Brigham Young and the service of the Mormon Battalion (727–32, 758–61, 813–14). But the irony runs deeper, and closer to his central story, than he notices. It was the Democrats of Jackson County, anxious to preserve local autonomy of the white common man, who forcibly evicted the Saints from their nascent place of refuge in 1833, within the boundaries of the United States, followed up with greater force by Democratic Governor Lilburn Boggs in 1838. Then Democratic Presidents Jackson and Van Buren told the Mormons the federal government could not redress their Missouri losses, leading the Mormons to vote for Harrison’s Whig ticket in 1840. But then the Mormons mystified and alienated both parties by shifting to Democratic candidates in subsequent elections. In frustration, Joseph insisted the Saints would vote for “friends” who protected their civil rights, regardless of party, and then instituted a campaign for the presidency himself that repudiated both parties for failing to apply the Bill of Rights in the states, offering other policies that crossed party lines. When local autonomy in Nauvoo violated freedom of the press in Nauvoo, the Democratic governor quashed it, leading to assassination. The union that emerged from the Civil War was the kind of federalism Joseph Smith had begged for, yet the Republican Party soon turned central powers against local autonomy and “cultural diversity” in Mormon Utah, redefining the First Amendment religion clauses in the process. Considering these twists, what was it about America that Mormons really wanted to escape?

Howe’s answer, that Brigham Young and his followers wanted a place “to implement their theocratic vision of society and prepare for the millennium undisturbed” (727), is incomplete at best. It reflects the historians he cites, as well as his relative inattention to the content of Mormon belief. He attends to the social and cultural make-up of early Mormons more than to the principles the missionaries taught, and he pays more attention to the

⁵For an interesting perspective on this tension of pre- and post-millennial perspectives and programs in Mormonism and Evangelical Protestantism, see Richard J. Mouw, “What Does God Think about America? Some Challenges for Evangelicals and Mormons,” *BYU Studies* 43, no. 4 (2004): 5–21.

Word of Wisdom than any other revelation in the Doctrine and Covenants. This is a thin reading of Mormon doctrinal ideas. With so much talk in Joseph Smith's America about conversion and sanctification, what did Mormon doctrines and covenants offer? What did Joseph Smith's revelations say about God, humanity, and the power of atonement, and how did those ideas play out in a nation divided between "improvers" and conservatives? How did the temple link Mormon doctrines about the millennium and salvation? Such issues stay beyond Howe's reach. When he concludes by stating that nowadays the Mormon "way of life . . . impresses observers as the most 'American' of all," one wonders not only whence it might spring but whether the statement is even true.

Still, Howe's central purpose is not to unlock the inner workings of early Mormonism, but to help us understand and learn from a remarkable era of development and missteps in the young republic. This he does with empathy and stylish labor.

JOHN C. THOMAS {thomasj@byui.edu} currently teaches classes in both American and Mormon history at Brigham Young University—Idaho, where he also serves as Associate Dean of the College of Education and Human Development. He is a member of the editorial board of the *Journal of Mormon History*.

Vern Grosvenor Swanson. *Dynasty of the Holy Grail: Mormonism's Sacred Bloodline*. Springville, Utah: Cedar Fort, 2006. xxii, 537 pp.; 34 color plates, maps, charts, notes, bibliography, timeline, indexes. Cloth: \$39.99; ISBN 1-55517-823-5

Reviewed by Scot Denhalter

Four years after Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code* became one of the most financially successful bestsellers in history, Vern Grosvenor Swanson, director of the Springville Museum of Art, published *Dynasty of the Holy Grail*, a hefty, quarto tome he reportedly had researched by reading more than four hundred books over twenty-eight years.¹

Swanson's purpose "is to provide honest research and sound methodology on the topic because many people do not have sufficient gospel framework to interpret Grail findings. Too often when they receive contrary data

¹Rodger L. Hardy, "Book Takes on 'Da Vinci Code' from an LDS Viewpoint," *Deseret Morning News*, December 16, 2006, <http://deseretnews.com/dn/view/0,1249,640186488,00.html> (accessed May 25, 2008).

or hear false propaganda they often scuttle the little framework they have” (xxi). The contrary data and false propaganda to which he refers are the antecedent writings of “feminist radicals,” “Gnostic polemicists,” and “left-wing radical writers,” culminating in Dan Brown’s blockbuster novel (xx).

Swanson also hints that his book provides a kind of inoculation against Brown’s next novel: “We also have learned that Dan Brown’s next novel will negatively center on the Mormons and Freemasons. Forewarned is forearmed”; and he sums up: “This book needs to be published because almost all the gentile literature on the topic since 1982 has been ideologically corrosive to faith in Jesus Christ” (xxi). He appears to be referring here to the 1982 publication of the controversial *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail* (retitled *Holy Blood, Holy Grail* in the United States), written by TV producers Michael Baigent, Richard Leigh, and Henry Lincoln, which provided the core ideas for Brown’s *Da Vinci Code*. Swanson shares with the authors of *Holy Blood, Holy Grail* the belief that Jesus was married to Mary Magdalene,² that they had children, and that those children (or their descendants) emigrated to Europe and Great Britain. Swanson parts company with these authors on their assertions that Jesus was not of divine birth and that he survived his crucifixion.³

Swanson’s text consists of a preface, an introduction, twenty-two chapters divided among eight parts, a conclusion, and a chronology. In his introduction, Swanson declares his solidarity with a public statement made by LDS Church spokesman Dale Bills: “The belief that Christ was married has never been official Church doctrine. It is neither sanctioned nor taught by the Church. While it is true that a few Church leaders in the mid-1800s expressed their opinions on the matter, it was not then, and is not now, Church doctrine.”⁴ Nevertheless, Swanson equivocates: “I do not teach of Christ’s possible marriage as Church doctrine but only as a probable postulate. . . . For some time now, the leaders of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have been understandably ‘reverentially silent’ on the concept of a married Jesus Christ. Because of historic persecution and possible harm to missionary work, I cautiously enter into a discussion on the topic” (xix, xxi).

In Part 1, “The Grail Covenant of the Old Testament,” Swanson discusses the premortal birthright of the children of Israel, the historical estab-

²Michael Baigent, Richard Leigh, and Henry Lincoln, *Holy Blood, Holy Grail* (New York: Delacourte Press, 2004), 330–37, 357–59.

³*Ibid.*, 327–29, 352–57.

⁴Apparently some fundamentalist authors are aware of the dubious nature of this quotation. In his several publications, including one book devoted exclusively to the United Order, independent fundamentalist Ogden Kraut never quoted it, although he was undoubtedly aware of its existence.

lishment of the ancient nation of Israel, the importance of the tribes of Ephraim and Judah, Israel's division after Solomon's death, and the scattering of the northern ten tribes. To introduce the traditional concept of the grail, he also surveys the various mention of cups in both scripture and legend. Though he does not subscribe to the traditional view that the Holy Grail is a cup of some sort, he offers the odd proposition that this traditional view is symbolized in the LDS sacrament: "On the other hand, the paper or plastic cup of the weekly Sunday LDS Sacrament cannot be ignored in light of the above-mentioned prominent cups" (5). Nevertheless, he makes it clear that he adopts the view (first proposed in *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*, 305–6) that the grail is a person in whose veins runs the blood of Christ.

In Part 2, "The Legitimate Davidic Lineage," Swanson presents the tradition of British Israelism (also Anglo-Israelism) that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was born in England and that Joseph of Arimathea brought Jesus to England as a youth. They further believe that the early Britons, other Celtic tribes of Europe, and many European royal families were direct descendants of the lost ten tribes of Israel.⁵

Part 3, "The Hieros Gamos," contains the specific Mormon material. Against the context of pagan and Gnostic thought on sexual balance, the divine feminine principle, and sacred marriage, Swanson presents a case that Jesus was not only married to Mary Magdalene but may have been a polygamist (78–90). He quotes Orson Hyde's October 1854 general conference address, "The Marriage Relations," asserting that Christ married and had children, thus fulfilling the commandment to multiply and replenish the earth (81). Swanson also cites this address as evidence that early Church leaders believed, in Hyde's words, that "Jesus was the bridegroom at the marriage of Cana of Galilee" and that the resurrected Christ's greeting at the tomb to Mary Magdalene "manifested the affection of a wife." Brigham Young

⁵Many British legends support this notion: Joseph of Arimathea (Jesus's alleged uncle) traveled to Glastonbury, England, after Christ's crucifixion and established an early Christian community. The Stone of Scone might be Jacob's Pillar. Jeremiah may have been the "Olam Fadlah" of Celtic lore. Legends in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* connect Britain to the Mediterranean, to Brutus, a survivor of Troy, and to the tribe of Benjamin. King Arthur is an eighth-generation descendant of Joseph of Arimathea. Paul visited Britain, etc. For British Israelism, see John Sadler, *The Rights of the Kingdom* (1649); Richard Brothers, *Revealed Knowledge of the Prophecies and Times* (1794); and John Wilson, *Our Israelitish Origins* (1840). Connections to America include J. H. Allen, *Judah's Sceptre and Joseph's Birthright* (Haverhill, Mass.: Destiny Publishers, 1902); W. G. Mackendrick, *The Destiny of Britain and America* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1922); H. W. Armstrong, *The United States and Britain in Prophecy* (Edmund, Okla.: Philadelphia Church of God, 2005); and Steven M. Collins, *The Origins and Empire of Ancient Israel* (Self-published, 2002).

praised the “splendid address from brother Hyde” (81), and Bruce R. McConkie commented, “Considering the customs of the day, it is a virtual certainty that one of Mary’s children was being married” [at Cana]” (83).

To support the claim that Jesus was a polygamist, Swanson further quotes Hyde and Jedediah M. Grant in the *Journal of Discourses* and Orson Pratt in *The Seer* (85–87, 85–86, 89–90). Brigham Young in the *Journal of Discourses* sarcastically referred to “relics of barbarism” (polygamy) and termed it “one of the relics of Adam, of Enoch, of Noah, of Abraham, of Isaac, of Jacob, of Moses, David, and Solomon, the Prophets, of Jesus and his apostles”; and “The scripture says that He, the Lord, came walking in the temple, with his train; I do not know who they were unless His wives and children” (86–87; Young was slightly misquoting Isaiah 6:1: “I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple”). Swanson calls these children the “Shiloh Dynasty” (xix, 9).

Parts 4–6 have little Mormon content. In Part 4, Swanson argues that Mary Magdalene is a descendant of Ephraim whose marriage to Jesus healed the “breach” between the tribes of Ephraim and Judah. Part 5 outlines the squabble over legitimacy among the Christian sects during the apostolic period, Mary Magdalene’s travels to England with her children by Jesus, apocryphal tales of apostles’ travels, and alleged connections between the Celtic Christianity of the Culdee, Pelagianism, and the “Shiloh Dynasty.” Part 6, “The Great Apostasy,” brings the story up through medieval grail lore, much of it borrowed from *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*. Although Swanson acknowledges that Baigent, Leigh, and Lincoln were victims of a hoax, he still cites their work (and many of the esoteric and New Age works their book has inspired) to support his own theories. In short, he devotes ten pages of text, many citations, six color plates, and 139 bibliographic references to grail theories that he claims not to believe.

Part 7, “Return of the King’s Son,” adds more Mormon content. Swanson argues that “early British-Israelitism, and not the Knights Templar or the Freemasons, gave [presumably to Swanson] a foundational understanding of Joseph Smith’s revelations on the tribal union between Ephraim and Judah” (257). He cites (but does not quote) Brigham Young as one of several nineteenth-century leaders who taught that the British and Anglo-Saxons were descendants of Ephraim (260). The omitted Young quotation is: “We are now gathering the children of Abraham who have come through the loins of Joseph and his sons, more especially through Ephraim, whose children are mixed among all the nations of the earth. The sons of Ephraim are wild and uncultivated, unruly, ungovernable. The spirit in them is turbulent and resolute; they are the Anglo-Saxon race, and they are upon the face of the whole earth, bearing the spirit of rule and dictation, to go forth from conquering to conquer” (*Journal of Discourses* 10:188).

Swanson also links a number of early twentieth-century LDS leaders to British Israelism: “Most inclined for this idea were Andrew Jenson, B. H. Roberts, Melvin J. Ballard, Anthony W. Ivins, and James E. Talmage” (260). He quotes an article Talmage published in the *Millennial Star* reporting his attendance at a 1925 London congress for the British-Israel-World Federation in 1925.⁶ Swanson also speculates on Mormonism’s relationship to Freemasonry, defends Mormonism as championing the divine female principle, and identifies Joseph Smith’s possible pre-mortal identity as “the archangel *Barchiel* (Uriel), who rules over Jupiter,” a speculation he supports with an astrological explanation: “23 December makes Joseph’s birth sign a Capricorn, which is ruled over by Saturn, but this is deceiving. Joseph’s emphasis is on his birth-Decan governing planet, which is Jupiter” (275).

He also presents a chart laying out Joseph Smith’s “inferred Y-chromosome haplotype,” from data presented at the BYU Genealogy Conference on July 30, 2005 (291 note 82).⁷ An undeniable weakness of Swanson’s thesis is his unfortunate assertion that Joseph Smith’s DNA was handed down “unmutated” over two millennia from Jesus Christ and Mary Magdalene: “Through the non-recombining Y chromosome (NRY) for the male line or the mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) for the female line, [genetic material] is passed down virtually unchanged through the generations. These ‘markers’ might connote the true channel for spirits awaiting mortal birth” (280). Swanson admits that “with every generation, fifty-percent of the DNA material changes” (280); therefore, he is obligated to claim that Joseph’s DNA was handed down “virtually unchanged,” presumably by a miracle, over a span of almost two thousand years because he later argues that both priesthood and royal authority are received genetically. For this reason he insists that the rate of mutation for the Y chromosome is “random and unpredictable” (288, note 53). “According to Ugo Perego [Director of Operations and Senior Project Administrator for the Sorenson Molecular Genealogy Foundation], the Y chromosome has a mutation rate of about 10 percent per generation and is very good at shorter time intervals. But the mutation rate is random and does not affect everybody’s Y chromosomes in the same way.

⁶The British-Israel-World Federation was founded in London in 1919, but its roots lay in the nineteenth century. Then it attracted the patronage of several members of British and European aristocracy. British Israelism is a political/theological ideology claiming special status with God for Great Britain as inheriting Israel’s blessings. Although most proponents accept that their special national status does not abrogate their individual responsibility to achieve salvation by righteousness, British Israelism has produced such extreme forms as the Christian Identity Movement, which claims that non-Caucasians have no souls and therefore cannot be saved.

⁷Brigham Young, August 19, 1866, *Journal of Discourses*, 11:268–69.

Thus, some Y chromosomes can be transmitted for thousands of years with little or no mutation, whereas others will have high mutation rates” (291 note 86). The problem here is that, even though a genetic scientist has given Swanson the average mutation rate for the Y chromosome, Swanson still wants to believe that Joseph’s Y chromosome must necessarily have been inherited unmutated from Jesus Christ.

Swanson’s use of the opaque jargon of genetic science has no real relevance to his theories. His repeated mention of the Jewish project to reveal the “Most Recent Common Ancestor (MRCA)” for the *Kohanim* Y chromosome by tracking “Single Nucleotide Polymorphisms (SNP)” offers absolutely nothing probative for his assumptions, nor do his repeated references to the work done by the Sorenson Foundation. Their “inferred Y Chromosome halotype” simply proves or disproves whether three individual males can claim Joseph Smith as their most recent common ancestor. It says nothing whatsoever about a possible genetic descent from Jesus Christ.

In the end, Swanson does not seem to understand that genetic inheritance is a highly random process. Joseph did, in fact, inherit 50 percent of his DNA from each parent as all people do. Nevertheless, it is highly improbable that he could have inherited exactly 25 percent of his genetic material from each of his four grandparents. Individuals inherit randomly varying amounts of genetic material from their grandparents, and the randomization of genetic inheritance increases geometrically through each receding generation; thus, Joseph had to have had a great many progenitors from whom he received absolutely no genetic material whatsoever.

In Part 8, “Latter-day Israel,” compounds these genetic misunderstandings by claiming that Lucy Mack Smith was a direct descendant from Ephraim through Mary Magdalene while Joseph Sr. descended from Judah through Jesus. Hence, “in his [Joseph Jr.’s] prophetship, we saw the marriage of those two tribes, the birthright and the scepter, making him both Priest and King” (354), even the “New Fisher King” (368). Swanson’s evidence is the well-documented fact that the Council of Fifty anointed Joseph “king” of the theocratic Kingdom of God on earth on April 11, 1844, in Nauvoo (355). The conclusion that priesthood and royal authority can be literally inherited through DNA, while not incongruous with some aspects of nineteenth-century Mormon thought (including the never-implemented theology that male descendants of Aaron, if called, can serve as bishops without counselors), cannot be harmonized with genetic science and reveals a kind of magical thinking on Swanson’s part.

Nevertheless, Swanson carries this notion a step further by claiming that Joseph’s posthumous son, David Hyrum (who was naturally also of the “Shiloh Dynasty”) would succeed him as the Davidic king over all of Israel throughout the world. Referring to Isaiah 11:1 and Ezekiel 34:23–24,

Swanson says, “Tradition has it that one ‘David the Prince’ who is ‘The Branch out of the root of Jesse’ will again unite in the last days, the priesthood and the patriarchal church” (370). As evidence, he offered a quotation from Oliver B. Huntington’s “Journal, typescript, 1:53” (Swanson gives no other information on this source): “At the time of his [David Hyrum’s] birth, it was intimated by old Mrs. Durphee and the others that Joseph the prophet had said that he (David Hyrum, which name Joseph gave him before his death) was to be the David the Bible speaks of to rule over Israel forever, which David spoken of most people took to be old King David.” The second source is a similar story told by Phoebe Wentworth and recorded in the “Church Historian’s Office Journal (September 1, 1861), LDS Church Archives” (370). Swanson speculates that Joseph “entertained hopes” for David as his first child conceived “after Joseph and Emma were sealed in eternal marriage” (370). He also quotes Brigham as recalling Joseph’s prediction that the child with which Emma was pregnant would be a son named David “and on him, in some future time, will rest the responsibility that now rests on me” (370). Young publicly complained in October 1866 general conference that if David Hyrum continued his course (he was then an ardent missionary in the RLDS Church), “he will never preside over The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in time or in eternity” although it would otherwise “be his right” (370–71). (Sadly, David Hyrum became increasingly unstable and died in an Illinois institution for the insane.)

In this increasingly fantastic section, Swanson also opines that the “law of priesthood adoption” was an attempt to adopt other worthy members into the “Shiloh Dynasty” bloodline. “It was initiated by Joseph Smith in Nauvoo and continued until a revelation by Wilford Woodruff halted the practice in 1894” (372). But such an effort seems unnecessary given the number of other nineteenth-century Church leaders who likewise believed they were direct, blood descendants of Jesus Christ. For instance, Swanson quotes Heber C. Kimball as preaching in 1857: “Did you actually know Joseph Smith? Do you know Brother Brigham? No. Do you know Brother Heber? . . . Do you know the Twelve? . . . [I]f you did, you would begin to know God, and learn that those men who are chosen to direct and counsel you are near kindred to God and Jesus Christ, for the keys, power, and authority of the kingdom of God are in that lineage” (368). Swanson sees the early Quorum of the Twelve as the “Knights of the Grail” (373).

Lorenzo Snow was one of these alleged descendants. Swanson tells a story of Christ’s visit to Lorenzo Snow in the Salt Lake Temple when the Lord reveled to him that he “was of the proper lineage” (374). Swanson cites no source for this event, only announcing that “at least four people have mentioned this incident to me” (379 note 77). Swanson continues:

Later during the presidency of Lorenzo Snow, at a solemn assem-

bly in the Salt Lake Temple, apostle George Q. Cannon divulged more concerning the familial relations existing in the Church to the Savior Jesus Christ . . . : “There are those in this audience who are descendants of the old Twelve Apostles—and shall I say it, yes, descendants of the Savior Himself. His seed is represented in this body of men.” . . . After Cannon spoke, Lorenzo Snow confirmed his testimony. Spoken on the 2nd of July 1899 it was recorded by two apostles: “Following President Cannon, President Snow arose and said that what Brother Cannon had stated respecting the literal descendants among this company of the old apostles and the Savior Himself is true—that the Savior’s seed is represented in this body of men.” (374–75; Swanson cites Rudger Clawson as one of the two apostles but does not name or cite the second.)

The fact that anointing the Church president as king (not to be confused with the Second Anointing) continued to at least to John Taylor reinforces Swanson’s version of sacred history (355). He quotes Elder Bruce R. McConkie as a confirmation of the practice of royal anointings: “The Church is a Kingdom. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Eternal King, and the President of the Church . . . is the earthly king . . . the king of the kingdom on earth” (356). Swanson does not explain why the practice was discontinued; nevertheless, were his theory correct, the “royal” gene of Jesus and the “priestly” gene of Mary Magdalene would have randomly separated (possibly meeting up again, recontextualized within a different genetic matrix, and separating once more) with the result that, in the intervening two thousand years, it would have been spread among thousands, if not millions, of their descendants. If the “Shiloh Dynasty” actually existed, then innumerable Americans whose ancestors emigrated from western Europe would share these genes. Though such statistics would likely provide many thousands of potential candidates for Church leadership with each succeeding generation, they also dilute the special genealogical status Swanson takes such pains to establish.

Swanson closes Part 8 with a short survey of literature published on the subject in the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries to demonstrate how the Mormons had the truth long before the Gentile world and predicts a “Second Coming of Joseph Smith” (399) to fulfill his mission of fully establishing Zion, which he had not accomplished in mortality. In his “Conclusion,” Swanson quotes a letter from Hugh Nibley to BYU Fine Arts and Communications dean Lorin Wheelwright, “A common pitfall in reconstructions of the past is the illusion that if one has explained by a proper scientific method how a thing COULD have happened, one has explained how it actually DID happen” (411). With this attempt at a disclaimer, Swanson unravels the core of his thesis. He has convincingly documented that Joseph and other early Church leaders believed that Jesus was married and that they were his genetic descendants. Nevertheless, Swanson fails to acknowledge that they never connected those beliefs in any way with his own grail obsession.

Swanson's *Dynasty of the Holy Grail* does not achieve the purpose he outlines in his introduction. It can neither forearm fellow Mormons against "contrary data" or "false propaganda," nor can it prevent "persecution and possible harm to missionary work." If anything, this book will likely ratchet up anti-Mormon sentiment among evangelicals and also reinforce mainstream Christianity's dismissal of Mormonism as the religion of credulous bumpkins. What is most important, however, is that Swanson's *Dynasty of the Holy Grail* does not serve as a valid interpretation of Mormon history.

SCOT DENHALTER {scotdenhalter@gmail.com} is a teacher and a writer. He is presently ghostwriting a book for the Foundation for Interreligious Diplomacy; its working title is *Why We Fight about God, and How We Can Do It Better*.

Susan Arrington Madsen. *The Second Rescue: The Story of the Spiritual Rescue of the Willie and Martin Handcart Pioneers*. Orem, Utah: Millennial Press, 1998. xii, 148 pp. Photographs, map, appendix, index. Paper: \$12.95; cloth: \$16.95; ISBN: 1-932597-25-5

Reviewed by Polly Aird

Although at first glance *The Second Rescue* appears to be about the James G. Willie and Edward Martin handcart companies of 1856—the two companies that left the banks of the Missouri River too late in the season to avoid snowstorms in Wyoming—it is not. Rather, the book focuses on the Riverton Wyoming Stake of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the members of which researched the names of those in the two companies and their rescuers so as to perform temple ordinances for those not yet endowed and sealed. Later they encouraged the Church to acquire the land where the 1856 rescuers found them, then built monuments to honor both the survivors and the "Second Rescuers."

The result is a faith-promoting narrative, not written with historians as its primary audience. Author Susan Arrington Madsen writes in the introduction, "The story of the Second Rescue will touch the hearts of all who seek to live by the Spirit. In a powerful way, it teaches the importance of families, the significance of temple work, and the workings of the Lord in our daily lives. It is a story that will be especially dear to those who make the journey to Wyoming and sense a feeling of love and triumph at the rescue sites in that rugged land. My greatest desire is to help impart to the reader the powerful spirit of this unique and moving chapter in American history" (xi). Although Madsen has no Mormon pioneer ancestors, when she went to the handcart sites in Wyoming, "I was making a pilgrimage, building bridges to

the souls of many pioneers, living and dead, whom I have come to consider my dear friends. It would be impossible for me to measure the ways their physical and spiritual sacrifices have blessed my life" (xii).

The Second Rescue consists of thirteen chapters, an epilogue, and an appendix. The first chapter recounts the story of the two late-leaving handcart companies in four pages. The succeeding chapters are: (2) the doctrine of proxy baptisms, sealings, and endowments for the dead; (3) the beginnings of the "Willie Project" by the president of the Riverton Wyoming Stake; (4) efforts to obtain computers and CDs from LDS Church headquarters between February and late April 1991; (5) the July 7, 1991, offer by the Ogden Temple presidency to assist in the ordinances; (6) a special stake meeting on July 21, 1991, to introduce the members of the Riverton Wyoming Stake to the project; (7) the beginnings of the temple work itself in August 1991 by Riverton Stake officers and their families; (8) the research done by Riverton Stake members and the resulting spiritual experiences; (9) testimonials of those involved and what their experiences meant to them; (10) the efforts leading up to the Church's purchases in 1992 of land at Rock Creek Hollow forty miles southeast of Atlantic City, Wyoming, where the rescuers found the Willie Company; (11) the design and erection of stone monuments and casting of bronze plaques; (12) the background to the 1996 Church's purchase of part of the Sun Ranch at the entrance to Martin's Cove near Devil's Gate where the Martin Company and two late wagon companies sought refuge from the snowstorms; and (13) the October 1996 construction of a bridge, named the "Veil Crossing," over the Sweetwater River near Martin's Cove. An epilogue by Robert Scott Lorimer, Riverton Wyoming Stake president, summarizes his thoughts on the importance of the "Second Rescue." The appendix consists of rosters of the Willie and Martin Handcart Companies, the Hunt and Hodgett Wagon Companies, and the 1856 rescuers. Unfortunately, there is no bibliography or list of further readings.

The book is handsomely designed and produced, with an appealing size of eight inches high and nine inches wide. The good quality paper is a soft cream color and the format includes sidebars with quotations from the writings of the 1856 company members and photographs. Five photos are of historical personages: James G. Willie, Eliza Cusworth Burton Staker (with a quotation from Eliza in a sidebar), Ephraim K. Hanks, who participated in the original rescue, and the father (who was not among the pioneers) of Bodil Mortensen, a Danish girl who died on the way. Two more photos show Rock Creek Hollow and one Martin's Cove. Seventeen are related to the "Second Rescuers": a member at a computer, the Riverton Wyoming Stake presidency, bronze sculptures of handcart scenes, the construction of the monuments and casting of the bronze plaques, the visitors' center and bridge at Martin's Cove, the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, the

Ogden Temple, and the monument dedications. A painting of Elijah appearing to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery is included as well as a photograph of the Kirtland Temple in the chapter on the doctrine of ordinances for the dead. Finally, ten drawings by children are reproduced, testifying to their involvement in the project.

While this work is sincere and earnest in its intention, it is sugar-coated history that does a disservice to the historical events. The four-page story of the handcart pioneers portrays only a simple story of their faith and sacrifice, skimming over other questions. There is no mention of the leaders' ill-made decision to leave so late in the season. John Chislett, a twenty-four-year-old Englishman in the Willie Company, is quoted in four sidebars and once in the text, but this statement is not one of them: "What a terrible fate for poor, honest, God-fearing people, whose greatest sin was believing with a faith too simple that God would for their benefit reverse the order of nature. They believed this because their elders told them so; and had not the apostle [Franklin D.] Richards prophesied in the name of Israel's God that it would be so? But the terrible realities proved that Levi Savage, with his plain common sense and statement of facts, was right, and that Richards and the other elders, with the 'Spirit of the Lord,' were wrong."¹ In this connection, the title of Chapter 1, "An Early October Snowstorm," is misleading. Snow is not unusual in that part of Wyoming from September onwards, and this storm came on October 19.

Likewise missing is Brigham Young's reaction when he heard from Franklin D. Richards on October 4, 1856, that two large handcart companies were still en route. Young wrote to Orson Pratt in Liverpool, "We had no idea there were any more companies upon the Plains." He had presumed that the leaders in charge of the emigration would not send on any who had arrived on American shores too late in the season. "But so it is, and now too late to remedy," he lamented. The next day President Young called for mule and horse teams, tons of flour, extra teamsters, vegetables, bedding, and clothing of all types to be taken to the last two companies. Young refused to start the fall conference until all was arranged.²

In addition, the deplorable suffering of the pioneers is portrayed only in heroic terms. For example, ten-year-old Bodil Mortensen was traveling with family friends: "While adults wrestled handcarts up the steep trail [of Rocky Ridge], Bodil and the younger children fought their way through the

¹James Chislett, "The Travels of the Willie Handcart Company," October 24, 1856, www.handcart.byu.edu (accessed June 5, 2008).

²Brigham Young, Letter to Orson Pratt, October 30, 1856, *Millennial Star* 19 (February 14, 1857): 99; Samuel W. Richards, Letter to George Turnball, October 7, 1856, *Millennial Star* 19 (January 17, 1857): 41-42.

snow, wind, and freezing temperatures to get to Rock Creek. Exhausted and weak, the intrepid young Danish girl closed her eyes for the last time that day. Her frozen little body was later found by company members; her spirit was now in a safe, warm place. . . . Two men who helped dig the grave died a few hours later and were buried nearby. Their sacrifice has forever made Rock Creek Hollow, in central Wyoming, a sacred place” (4). Bodil is referred to several times (1–4, 5, 19, 33–34, 49).

Although the sidebar quotations from the emigrants and their rescuers add some balance to the book, the main text barely touches on the depth of the tragedy. There is no mention of George D. Grant, the leader in charge of the relief effort, who on November 2 sent back a report to President Young: “Between five and six hundred men, women and children, worn down by drawing hand carts through snow and mud; fainting by the way side; falling, chilled by the cold; children crying, their limbs stiffened by cold, their feet bleeding and some of them bare to snow and frost. The sight is almost too much for the stoutest of us.” He found that only about a third of them could still walk.³

In addition to oversimplifying the history, *The Second Rescuers* lacks a sense of proportion. Six pages, giving the impression of a near-miracle, are devoted to the Riverton Stake’s obtaining two computers and accompanying CDs needed to begin the search for the pioneers’ names and personal data. Too much seems to be made of the story. A total of ninety-nine pages describe in detail the sequence of events that resulted in ordinances for the dead, the monuments and bronze plaques, and the bridge over the Sweetwater River. A ten-page chapter discusses the monuments and plaques; but the inscriptions and/or locations of the monuments are not given except for the first monument. As best I could piece together from the narrative, three monuments honor the dead pioneers: one at Martin’s Cove, one at Rock Creek Hollow, and one at the summit of Rocky Ridge. Two others are at the ends of the “Veil Crossing” bridge, one to honor the emigrants, the other to honor the “Second Rescuers.” An additional large granite monument at Rock Creek Hollow “memorializes the Second Rescue and the blessings associated with it” (75). A plaque on the Riverton Wyoming Stake center describes the “Second Rescue” effort.

Thus, the handcart pioneers actually play a secondary role in *The Second Rescue*. Since the “second rescuers” are the focus of the title, this approach is perhaps not inappropriate; but as a reader, I found myself uneasy. The two efforts were simply not parallel; nor were the efforts of the “second rescuers,” sincerely motivated though they were, commensurate with the ef-

³George D. Grant, Letter to Brigham Young, November 2, 1856, “The Companies Yet on the Plains,” *Deseret News*, November 19, 1856, 5.

forts of the two handcart companies and their initial rescuers. This uneasiness crystallized when I read the following, inadvertently ironic account:

[Riverton Stake] President Lorimer expressed his conviction that the heavy winter storms would hold off until the bridge was completed. The day before the welding was to start [October 16, 1856], the Sun Ranch [near Martin's Cove] was blanketed with two inches of very wet snow. John Creer commented that he thought it was not supposed to snow until the bridge was completed. President Lorimer smiled and responded that the snow was only to wet the grass and reduce the fire hazard, and that there would be no further heavy storms. That was indeed what happened. There were bitter cold temperatures and wind, but only light skiffs of snow. In contrast, neighboring Casper experienced heavy snows. (96–97)

One might well ask if the leaders of the late-starting handcart companies in 1856 were not also filled with the Spirit and did not also fervently believe God would stay the storms to allow the pioneers through safely? Did not the emigrants pray mightily? And yet the snowstorm that hit the starving pioneers with such devastating force arrived on October 19, 1856, 140 years almost to the day when the Riverton members set to work on the bridge, believing their leader's conviction that it would not snow.

Furthermore, one wonders if all those for whom ordinances were done with such fervor would have wanted them. One eleven-year-old Riverton Stake girl was given the name of James Alfred Peacock to research. She finally found a birth record for him and temple ordinances were duly performed (42–43, 61–62). Two problems exist, however. His name was actually Alfred James Peacock, raising the question of whether the reversed name order was a typographical error or whether the young girl found the birth record of someone completely different.⁴ The appendix lists him correctly as Alfred Peacock. Furthermore, on October 12, 1856, Peacock abandoned the Willie Company and turned back to Fort Laramie.

Similarly, a woman and her daughter performed a proxy baptism and endowment for a Scotswoman, "Castina Brown" (67). "Castina" is actually a misspelling of "Christina" given in a *Deseret News* article ("Immigration to Utah") on October 15, 1856. Other sources also give it as Christina, a common name in Scotland, her home country.⁵ Christina Brown had left the Willie Company on October 1, 1856, when the emigrants reached Fort Laramie.

As a third example, a Wyoming bishop performed all the ordinances for Johan or John Ahmanson. Ahmanson was a Dane who had been a mis-

⁴Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Mormon Pioneer Overland Travel, 1847–68, www.lds.org/churchhistory/library (accessed June 5, 2008).

⁵*Ibid.*

sionary in Norway and, although he could afford to travel in a wagon company, agreed to travel with the Willie Company to act as a translator for the Danes. He became disillusioned with Mormonism soon after he arrived in Utah and left early the next spring. In 1876 he completed a book in Danish. In the introduction he wrote, "The purpose of this present little essay is to give to the Danish public a condensed historical account of the origin and spread of Mormonism, and also to unveil the mysterious and deceptive system on which it is based, not only for its genesis but also for its almost unbelievable mysteries and crimes to which it has continually resorted in order to preserve its power and influence."⁶ Although he could certainly have changed his mind in the next life, his choice was clear in this one.

There are problems with the names themselves. The lists given for the companies in the appendix vary considerably from the LDS Church's excellent online database, "Mormon Pioneer Overland Travel, 1847-68." For example, Madsen's Willie Company list includes a "Read, James (21) and family." In actuality, this individual was James Reid from Kilmarnock, Scotland, age forty, who was traveling with his wife Elizabeth (thirty-two), and their children Elizabeth (eleven), James (seven), Mary (three), and John Cumming (one).⁷ Such discrepancies raise questions about the accuracy of the research upon which the proxy temple ordinances were performed.

Michael H. Madsen in his recent article, "The Sanctification of Mormonism's Historical Geography," explores the fairly recent development of conferring sacred status on Mormon historic sites. "A sacred history rooted in sacred space has the potential to greatly enhance group cohesion and identity by virtue of its religious significance," he observes.⁸ One would hope that such sites were well researched before being declared sacred, but *The Second Rescue* contains no description of how the sites were verified. The Martin's Cove location is explained only with "By 1992, careful historical research had confirmed the accuracy of the location of Martin's Cove" (91). What was the research? What did they find? Was it based on artifacts, bones, or descriptions given in diaries? Rock Creek Hollow's gravesite for fifteen pioneers appears even more tenuous: a bishop's tripping over the iron rim of a partially buried handcart wheel and the group's subsequent prayer (70-71). There is no account of excavations being made to confirm it.

Much has happened since this book was published in 1998. The LDS Church attempted to buy the 940 acres of Bureau of Land Management land

⁶John Ahmanson, *Secret History: An Eyewitness Account of the Rise of Mormonism*, translated by Gleason L. Archer (Chicago: Moody Press, 1984), 13.

⁷LDS Church, Mormon Pioneer Overland Travel, 1847-68; "Deaths," *Deseret News*, June 30, 1886, 16.

⁸*Journal of Mormon History* 34 (Spring 2008): 254.

at Martin's Cove. Since it was public land, many people strenuously objected, with the compromise, in 2003, that the Church leased the land for twenty-five years. Tom Rea has written a thorough account of the controversy in his *Devil's Gate: Owning the Land, Owning the Story* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2006). Another problem has surfaced since 1996. The thousands who have walked sections of the trail, pushing and pulling hand-carts in a re-creation of the pioneer companies, have damaged the historic ruts of Rocky Ridge.

The Second Rescue was published before the latest research into locations of events, burial sites, and the number who died. The Mormon History Association conference held in Casper, Wyoming, on May 25–28, 2006, opened with a panel on “Who or What to Blame? Assessing the Multiple Causes of the Willie and Martin Handcart Disaster.” According to the *Casper Star-Tribune*, Howard Christy, professor emeritus at Brigham Young University, “was startled during his visit by how much historical information at Martin's Cove was inaccurate or misleading. ‘It's important to clarify the record,’ Christy said. ‘There is still a profusion of misinformation and apparent errors in historical accounts, especially in the signs at the visitors' center and along the trail at Martin's Cove. Some of the signs are terribly misleading.’”⁹ Surely correcting such misinformation would be a project worthy of “second rescuers.”

The *Deseret News* report of Lyndia Carter's session at the same conference quoted her as saying that past accounts of the Martin Company's tragic events “‘often collapse six weeks' of starvation, hypothermia and death' into five days and four nights at Martin's Cove. . . . We don't have to perpetuate what was the basis of so much that is believed about Martin's Cove. The scholarship was poor that collapses all the events into those few days,' she said, adding, ‘The majority of deaths (among the company) occurred before or after the days at Martin's Cove.’”

Gary Long, from the Cheyenne BLM office, who shared the session with Carter and has researched the trail near Martin's Cove and Rock Creek Hollow, found “‘no evidence those [Willie Company] pioneers were buried there [at Rock Creek Hollow]. But there is strong evidence that the camp site and burial place is the confluence of Rock Creek and the Sweetwater River,' near Willow Creek.” Richard Jensen, respondent in the session and a senior historian in the LDS Family and Church History Department, “lauded Long for his research on Willow Creek and ‘the critical contribution he is making in his work,' adding it's a place where ‘we probably ought to have a commem-

⁹John Morgan, “Historian Says Church Leader Failed,” *Casper Star-Tribune*, May 27, 2006, www.trib.com/articles/2006/05/27/news/casper/fc7d0e6ba05779ee8725717a0067ea26.txt (accessed June 5, 2008).

orative marker. There are 15 burials attributed to Rock Creek. Gary has revised this in a compelling way. I think we need to take seriously that we're three miles off."¹⁰

The sincerity and earnestness of the "second rescuers" were, for me, undercut by these two factors: their willingness to raise monuments to honor themselves and the lack of attention to the actual history of what happened. That they brought more attention to the handcart pioneers cannot be doubted. What is missing is a sense of humility and realization that more sound research needs to be done. It is hard to recommend this book.

POLLY AIRD {pollyaird@earthlink.net} is an independent historian from Seattle, Washington. Her great-grandmother's half-brother, James Reid, was among those in the Willie Company. Polly has been working on the history of Scottish converts in the 1840s and 1850, as well as of Utah in the 1850s.

David G. Stewart. *The Law of the Harvest: Practical Principles of Effective Missionary Work*. Henderson, Nev.: Cumorah Foundation, 2007. 460 pp. Index. Paper: \$19.95. Free copies available for LDS missionaries (and a PDF version for all) through www.cumorah.com. ISBN: 978-0-9795121-0-0

Reviewed by Henri Gooren

This is an unusual book. David Stewart is an active LDS physician who is fully committed to the Mormon Church (7), yet he is very critical of the current missionary programs and practices, which are for the most part based on official LDS Church policies. His aim is expressed on the back cover: "Recent missionary program changes have led to modest improvements, yet annual LDS growth rates remain below 3%, and most converts are lost to the Church." In *The Law of the Harvest*, "Stewart shares proven principles validated by over fifteen years of research into effective missionary programs around the world. *The Law of the Harvest* will help your missionary efforts to reach their divine potential."

Stewart's main target audience is missionaries, both prospective and those currently serving, although his recommendations also aim to help mission presidents and Church authorities. Stewart served his mission in Russia in the early 1990s and has studied missionary programs from many different religions, believing that much wisdom can also be found outside of

¹⁰Carrie A. Moore, "Handcart Story Need Revision?" *Deseret News*, May 28, 2006, B1.

the Mormon Church. His favorite contrasting examples are Jehovah's Witnesses and Seventh-day Adventists, both of which he thinks do a better job in conversion and retention than the LDS Church. Stewart traveled to more than twenty countries and interviewed "hundreds of [LDS] missionaries and members and numerous mission leaders, taking meticulous notes and recording hundreds of case studies" (6).

Although historians are not Stewart's primary audience, students of Mormonism should not overlook this book. It not only provides a useful snapshot of missionary modalities in the first decade of the twenty-first century, but it also compiles statistical data on trends over time that would be more difficult to come by otherwise.

The book is divided into three sections. Section 1 contains scholarly material on LDS growth and retention rates from all over the world. Stewart is far more critical of those growth rates than, for instance, the ebullient predictions of sociologist Rodney Stark with his claims that Mormonism is a "new world religion." For instance, Stewart states: "A closer examination of growth and retention data demonstrates that LDS growth trends have been widely overstated. Annual LDS growth has progressively declined from over 5 percent in the late 1980s to less than 3 percent from 2000 to 2005" (16).

Stewart correctly notes that "barely one in four international converts becomes an active or participating member of the Church" (16). Activity rates, generously defined as members who show up to a Sunday meeting at least once a month, range from a little over 50 percent in the United States to between 20 and 27 percent in Latin America, Europe, and Japan, to 16 percent in Thailand and as low as 10 to 20 percent in the Philippines (38–46). This pattern is confirmed in abundant country census material from various continents. Stewart does not mince words: "We must measure, report, and discuss Church growth in terms of active, faithful, and participating members and focus on building strong, vibrant units, rather than lauding paper membership increases that do not reflect true strength or commitment" (59).

Section 2 contains detailed advice to committed LDS members and missionaries who want to improve their conversion and retention rates. Stewart carefully documents the importance of "fellowshipping" to improve convert retention (273–75). I also found during my research in Costa Rica and Guatemala that a main reason converts dropped out in the first three months was a lack of interest in them from core members.¹ Stewart quotes from research showing that "86 percent of the active converts have close personal ties to other LDS members or relatives" (274). This statistic confirms

¹Henri Gooren, *Rich among the Poor: Church, Firm, and Household among Small-scale Entrepreneurs in Guatemala City* (Amsterdam: Thela, 1999). See esp. pp. 164–65, 207.

findings from conversion research in the social sciences.

Section 2 is neatly summarized in Stewart's twelve-point program designed to produce "nearly 100 percent convert retention" (280). He focuses on the importance of building seven "habits of faith," recommending that prospective converts observe them for at least four consecutive weeks: daily reading in the Book of Mormon for at least a half hour, attending all Church meetings, daily individual and family prayer, obeying the Word of Wisdom, observing the Sabbath day, and conforming to the law of chastity (281–82). These seven habits must be reinforced by "nurturing," or getting ward members to participate in at least two missionary discussions, giving a calling to new converts within a week after baptism, assigning home teachers to the new member, and preparing them for genealogical research and temple proxy baptisms within six weeks of baptism (282). These recommendations fit and partly expand findings² from social scientific research on religious commitment and conversion.

I found new information in an undated Missionary Department survey of U.S. inactives, reporting that "over 85 percent of all inactives retained active testimonies of the restored gospel, but chose not to attend because of Word of Wisdom issues, a lack of Sunday church clothing, a real or perceived offence by local members, a lack of friends in the ward or branch, or feelings of unworthiness" (298). Stewart drily comments, "If an individual stops coming to church for such reasons, one wonders of what an 'active testimony' could possibly consist."

Section 3 presents the principles of effective missionary programs to LDS leaders, speaking to them in a stern but caring voice, supporting his ideas with plenty of references to the Bible and especially the Book of Mormon. As a nonmember, I shall refrain from commenting on this section.

I read this book from my orientation as a critical social scientist, which is perhaps not entirely fair, but I learned a great deal. My main criticism is that Stewart often makes sweeping statements or refers to new information without providing sufficient source material to back it up. Here is one example out of many: "Sociologists estimate that it takes at least three to four weeks for repetitive acts to become habits" (269). I wanted to look this up, and I also wondered whether psychologists might not be more qualified to make these estimates, but there was no citation.

In general, Stewart has a good grasp of the relevant scholarly literature, although he tends to rely predominantly on a few selected sources. (To his credit, these are quite often those most critical of the LDS Church.) He also uses newspaper reports very frequently. Still, I found *The Law of the Har-*

²See, e.g., Lewis Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1993).

vest highly readable and very engaging. I have no doubt that it will be an eye opener for many (prospective) LDS missionaries and for quite a few mission leaders as well—especially those who take mission statistics and target figures too seriously.

HENRI GOOREN {gooren@oakland.edu} is an assistant professor of cultural anthropology at Oakland University in Rochester, Michigan. He received his Ph.D. from Utrecht University in the Netherlands, specializing in Latin America, religion, and development issues.

Jeffery E. Sells, editor. *God and Country: Politics in Utah*. Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2005. xvi pp., 343 pp. Foreword by Harold J. Berman. Editor's preface. Introduction by former Utah State Chief Justice Michael Zimmerman. In Memoriam: Tribute to Craddock Matthew Gilmore. About the Contributors. Notes. Cloth: \$34.95; ISBN: 1-56085-183-X

Reviewed by Cheryl Lynn May

This collection of essays, *God and Country: Politics in Utah*, views the Mormon role in Utah political life primarily from the perspective of the “nons.” The seventeen essays have been penned by religious and political leaders, legal scholars, historians, and observers from the media. “The question, then,” according to editor Jeffrey Sells, who served the Cathedral of St. Mark in Salt Lake City for fifteen years as communications director and associate priest, is to examine “how government and the religious establishment should interact.” But in the very next sentence of his introduction Sells descends from this realm of global abstraction to the actual terrain addressed by most of the essays. “In Utah,” he writes, “there is the prior question about whether there is an established religion, i.e., Mormonism, and whether this has created a disenfranchised minority (those who are not Mormons) who have little or no voice in the life of state government” (xii).

Questions regarding how the Mormon Church exercises political power have been hotly contested virtually since the Church was established in 1830. Most of the essays in this volume focus on the political role of the Church in Utah. The tone of the essays ranges from the moderate and balanced to the strident and polemical, from the abstract and philosophical to the intimate and personal. They all perform the valuable service of helping Latter-day Saints in the Mormon homeland to see Church political strategies and tactics from the viewpoint of thoughtful and articulate observers outside the faith.

The first couple of essays (by Third District Judge Judith Atherton and

editor Sells) review the historical developments that gave rise to the disestablishment and free exercise clauses of the First Amendment. The same strong prohibitions against the legal privileging of or discrimination against particular religious groups are contained in the Utah State Constitution. Atherton, Sells, and other authors make clear that what is being discussed is a de facto rather than a de jure Utah Mormon political establishment.

Since this “establishment” is made up of a set of informal “cultural conventions” and since there have always been “countervailing forces” (Jan Shipp’s terms) on the scene, its true character is slippery and hard to pin down. This gives observers the freedom to interpret LDS political influence as a limited and generally moderate force (as does former Governor Calvin Rampton) or as a pervasive, nefarious conspiracy (as described by historian Michael Quinn).

Long-time Utah journalist Rod Decker acknowledges the Church as “probably the most powerful single interest group in the politics of any American state” (98) but still sees its current influence as marginal rather than central. “Utahns still divide along religious lines,” he comments, “but now, instead of desperate battles over fundamentals, Utahns wage mock battles over symbols, scruples, and small moral points” (97). He recounts five episodes (the first is Apostle Moses Thatcher’s campaign for the Senate in 1895 that angered the First Presidency and eventually cost him his apostleship, and the fifth is the Church’s anti-ERA battles in the 1970s) that outline the arc of Mormon political participation during the last century. He concludes that the Church now engages in less behind-the-scenes involvement than it used to. General Authorities no longer recommend applicants for state jobs, Utah governors no longer give Church leaders yearly briefings on legislative proposals, and there is no longer a place reserved on the Board of Regents, which governs the state college system, for a Mormon General Authority. But he also notes that the Utah faithful are more likely than they were in the 1930s, ’40s, or ’50s to respond to positively to their leaders’ statements on “moral issues.”

D. Michael Quinn’s “Exporting Utah’s Theocracy since 1975” rounds out Part 1 of the book, “Historical and Philosophical Underpinnings.” Most of Quinn’s article recounts the activities of the Church’s Special Affairs Committee under Apostle Gordon B. Hinckley to defeat the ERA in Utah and throughout the nation. The article is helpful in describing the way in which the Church exercised its organizational muscle in the multi-state effort to defeat the ERA in the 1970s, and to outlaw same-sex marriage in recent years. But exaggerated, polemical language in the article diminishes its credibility. Utah is described in the article’s title and elsewhere as a “theocracy,” while several of the more carefully drawn essays (such as those by Jan Shipp, Calvin Rampton, and Judith Atherton) point out important differ-

ences between a theocracy and a community where the majority church exercises a good deal of informal influence.

Quinn describes Church members as “an army of ants” (131) who obey with “lock-step obedience” (132) under the Church’s “military style, central command system” (134). He claims that the Mormon hierarchy played “a decisive role in the ERA’s defeat nationally” (134), while the efforts of evangelical groups, Catholics, and non-LDS office holders are virtually discounted. Such extreme characterizations shift the piece from the realm of scholarly discourse to that of diatribe. However, the Church’s role in the recent Proposition 8 campaign lends some credence to Quinn’s accusation that the Church is stepping over the line in respect to religious facilities being used for political activities.

The final ten essays in the collection are grouped under the title: “The Social Consequences of Religious Dominance.” Some of the pieces fit more comfortably in this section than others. Those that briefly trace the development of the Jewish and Muslim communities in Utah have no specific references to the “social consequences” of the LDS political dominance in the state. These accounts tell a story of distinctive religious groups in Utah that are thriving.

Pastor France A. Davis’s chapter recounts the struggles of the small black community in Utah, with a special emphasis on those who gathered to the Baptist congregation he has led for over thirty years. He points out that, until the 1960s, Utah enforced many of the same discriminatory laws in respect to public entertainments, accommodations, and housing that were common in the American South and elsewhere across the country. He suggests that the Mormon Church’s practice of denying the priesthood to black males (until 1978) and the “curse of a dark skin” mentioned in the Book of Mormon gave Utah Mormons a religious justification for continuing to practice social discrimination even after the legal barriers to civil rights were removed. But Davis’s biographical note at the end of the book might indicate that the Mormon-dominated political establishment is reaching out to the black community to try to redress the shameful exclusionary practices of the past. Davis currently serves on the Utah Board of Regents, the Salt Lake Housing Authority Board, and in many other positions of community leadership. April 19, 1999, was declared by Utah’s (Mormon) governor as “Rev. France A. Davis Day” in recognition of his many contributions to the state.

Other articles in this section criticize the Church position on recent state and local issues including gay rights, gun control, and the construction of the Main Street Plaza. They all claim that in Utah, religious “nons” too often become political “nons” as well. Questions about the extent to which minority rights should trump, or at least blunt, majority rule are always difficult to resolve. The adherence of most Utah Mormons to the Republican

Party and the increasing power of that party's right wing in the last three decades have deepened divisions and sharpened differences.

Of particular note in this section are University of Utah Law Professor Edwin B. Firmage's impassioned plea for a more loving and accepting LDS attitude toward homosexuality and gay partnerships, and Emeritus Law Professor John Flynn's reflections about the sometimes minor, but symbolically important, policies (celebrating the Fourth of July on the third or fifth if it falls on a Sunday, or closing public swimming pools on Sundays) that convince the "nons" that their voices and preferences don't count. He suggests that it is in the interest of Church leaders to "help strike a new balance of political power in the state between Democrats and Republicans and the religious nons and non nons by recognizing that no political party has the right answers to all the issues" (223). The Church has taken some small steps in that direction since this book was printed.

Many of the essays in this collection will make Utah Mormons uncomfortable. They should read them anyway. It is extremely valuable to know how and why some of your well-intentioned and community-minded neighbors disagree with you. Such an understanding will not solve all policy disagreements, but it can point toward steps to lessen suspicion and promote dialogue.

A number of the authors note the negative consequences of Church political actions taken out of the public eye. Rod Decker mentions that "the Church often acts quietly in political matters." The problem is that "discretion breeds exaggerated suspicion of Church control" (103). Flynn comments on the "mistrust, cynicism, and suspicion aggravated by too much secrecy in government: strong-arm, one-party tactics instead of openness and scrupulous due process in deciding public issues" (222) Pastor Davis expresses the feelings of the majority of these thoughtful observers outside the Mormon mainstream: "Whenever one group outnumbers and dominates others, the smaller group is likely to feel unfairly put upon. . . . The larger group, therefore, has the duty to be extraordinarily cautious to be sure that the perception of unfairness and oppression is not rooted in reality" (311). Such thoughtful advice here and elsewhere in this volume deserves an equally thoughtful response from Utah Mormons and those who lead them.

CHERYLL LYNN MAY {cheryll_may@byu.edu} is head curator at the BYU Museum of Art, Provo, Utah. Cheryll received her Ph.D. from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University and taught political science classes for many years at the University of Utah and Brigham Young University.

Nineteenth-Century Mormonism and the Pacific Basin Frontier. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2008, xii, 330 pp. Notes, index. Cloth: \$29.95; ISBN 978-0-87480-918-3

Reviewed by Kenneth W. Baldrige

The Pacific Ocean covers over half the world's surface; the Pacific Basin, the ocean-side regions of the countries abutting it, is an area that could be described simply as, well, huge. Professors Laurie Maffly-Kipp of the University of North Carolina and Reid Neilson of Brigham Young University present twelve articles by themselves and ten other authors to tell how LDS history impacted on and has been impacted by countries making up the Pacific basin.

A brief but insightful foreword by R. Lanier Britsch, professor of history emeritus at Brigham Young University, and the most prolific historian of three of the four areas covered, should encourage readers to investigate what lies between the covers. Maffly-Kipp and Neilson introduce the concept of Mormonism on the Pacific Basin frontier as well as Mormonism's place in the religious perspective of American religion. The main body of the book consists of three essays each on the four areas of study: the west coast of the American continents, Polynesia, Australasia, and Asia. The stamp of approval by Lanier Britsch, the most prolific historian of three of the four areas covered, should itself encourage readers to investigate what lies between the covers.

Maffly-Kipp and Neilson have undertaken a risky academic endeavor by attempting to tell the story of Mormonism within that area and to bring Mormon literature up to a level similar to that offered by Protestant and Catholic faiths. To do so they launch their study from the perspective of LDS Apostle Parley P. Pratt, assigned in 1851 as the first president of the Pacific Mission. In fact, the book's title comes from that of Pratt's pamphlet, *Proclamation! To the People of the Coasts and Islands of the Pacific; of Every Nation, Kindred and Tongue* (5). Using Pratt's Pacific Mission as an umbrella, the editors approach the LDS Church in that vast region as if it were some sort of cohesive unit. Unfortunately, that cohesion never really existed so the umbrella tactic failed in its purpose.

To their credit, Maffly-Kipp and Neilson acknowledge that "a single volume of essays can highlight only a few specific geographical areas and historical moments" (4) but the disclaimer might not be enough to prevent disappointment among readers expecting a more thorough coverage of the topic. Perhaps attempting to cover all four areas was too ambitious and dealing with just two areas might have been more satisfactory. For example, I consider two articles on Parley P. Pratt—neither of which identified much success—as overkill.

Part 1, "Pacific Basin Frontier," sets the parameters of the book. Here Neilsen and Maffly-Kipp have jointly produced the first chapter, "Nineteenth-Century Mormonism and the Pacific Basin Frontier: An Introduction." Unfortunately, problems surfaced almost immediately.

The editors' identification of William James Barratt (which, by the way, Britsch spells Barrett—I have no idea which is correct) as the "first Latter-day Saint missionary in the Pacific" (9) is perhaps, at best, a half-truth. Seventeen-year-old Barratt was an emigrant first, who, before leaving England, was ordained by George A. Smith to act as a missionary as well. Incidentally, while Britsch was unsure whether Barratt baptized anyone, the very thorough research of Neilson and Maffly-Kipp produced the information that he "baptized a future president of the Australian Mission" (9). Unfortunately, their copious notes do not disclose this president's name.

In 1844, Addison Pratt, along with mission president Noah Rogers and Benjamin Grouard, arrived in Tubuai—not Tahiti (3)—where Pratt stayed while Rogers and Grouard went on to Tahiti (8). Maffly-Kipp incorrectly gives 1847 as Grouard's arrival date in Tahiti. Admittedly, some confusion exists because the term Tahiti (only one island) is often used to identify the entire Society Islands, making up part of what is now known as French Polynesia. Tubuai, about 400 miles to the south, is actually part of the Austral Islands group. Page 147 contains another example of the confusion, besides an inconsistent spelling of Tubuai as Tupuai. One of the two Hawaiian missionaries that Walter Murray Gibson sent to Samoa was Kimo Belio, sometimes spelled Pelio, but never, to my knowledge, Pelia (8). Of course, Polynesian names manifest a variety of spellings, so variants are not unexpected. Maffly-Kipp soloed with "Eastward Ho! American Religion from the Perspective of the Pacific Rim" (Chapter 2), originally her 2000 Tanner Lecture. It might better have been placed in Part 2: "Americas," which could have been subtitled "Frustration and Failure."

Part 2 contains three chapters, the first Edward Leo Lyman's well-researched and well-written "The Rise and Decline of Mormon San Bernardino." Lyman sums up the six-year experiment in his final three sentences: "The San Bernardino Settlement acted as a magnet that attracted uncommitted Church members from other Mormon settlements. Thus, the reverse of the church leaders' intended 'gathering' actually occurred. Those whose common bond was their weakening attachment to the principles of the Church . . . and an unwillingness to follow counsel of the church leaders congregated in the settlement that was most distant, both physically and spiritually, from the center of Mormondom" (68–69).

The other two chapters in Part 2 reflect equally frustrating situations. A. Delbert Palmer, former mission president in Chile, wrote his master's thesis on the establishment of the Church in Chile, drawing from it to

co-author, with Mark L. Grover, "Hoping to Establish a Presence: Parley P. Pratt's 1851 Mission to Chile" (Chapter 4). While it is perhaps true that "Chile is the only major country of the world where 3 percent of the population" (91) is LDS, that number pales in comparison to the figures in Tonga (46 percent) and Samoa (36 percent), which I would like to have seen mentioned somewhere in the book.

Before his disappointing experience in Chile, Pratt was the Church's leading defender in San Francisco off and on from 1851 to 1855, sparring vehemently with press and clergy, usually over polygamy. This story appears in Matthew J. Grow's 2003 article, "'A Providential Means of Agitating Mormonism': Parley P. Pratt and the San Francisco Press in the 1850s." While acknowledging that "the Church enjoyed relatively little admiration in the city . . . Pratt, through his own writing talent and the public's interest in Mormonism, also used the mainstream San Francisco press to accomplish his goals of presenting the Mormon side of the debate and increasing the Church's public visibility" (113).

Fortunately, Part 3, "Polynesia," was more positive. Maffley-Kipp's 2000 article, "Looking West: Mormonism and the Pacific World" (Chapter 6) is a 180-degree switch from "Eastward Ho." I found this chapter one of the best in the book, offering a few new insights and the reinforcement of some old ideas. She makes an interesting comment on George Q. Cannon's complaint about the resistance to Mormonism by Protestant groups in Hawaii:

Paradoxically, Cannon may have been exactly wrong in this regard. I would suggest that it was in large measure the attention brought to LDS missionaries through the constant ridicule of religious rivals that attracted the initial interest of indigenous people. Mormonism, a persecuted minority on the American continent, felt the myriad effects of this status and its social consequences in the mission field. Yet even though the missionaries regarded the situation negatively, their marginality had unintended and even positive consequences for their ability to communicate with native people. (127)

She does, however, get bogged down somewhat in the question of the Lamanite or Nephite origins of the Polynesians and Hagoth's role in their history.³ Carol Cornwall Madsen's "Mormon Missionary Wives in Nineteenth-Century Polynesia" and Tracey E. Paneck's "Life at Iosepa: Utah's Polynesian Colony," round out Part 3. Madsen's excellent account was first published over twenty years ago; and having lived twenty-five years in Laie, Hawaii, I thoroughly enjoyed reading of the trials and daily lives of the faith-

³See John-Charles Duffy, "The Use of 'Lamanite' in Official LDS Discourse," *Journal of Mormon History* 34, no. 1 (Winter 2008): 118-67.

ful women who worked so hard in that part of the vineyard. However, I found faintly disrespectful Tracey Panek's reference to one of the most stalwart of the Hawaiian saints as "Napela," omitting any reference to his first name of Jonathan or Jonatana.

Incidentally, *Proclamation* is not the place to look for new writings on the subject. Only three have been written within the past five years; the oldest goes back to 1969. The lack of contemporary accounts was not a serious problem, however.

Part 4 "Australasia" was my personal favorite since it dealt completely and exclusively with Australian and New Zealand. Compared to the other parts, the three essays were much more representative of the areas covered.

Marjorie Newton—the only author to contribute two essays—reminds us in "The Gathering of the Australian Saints" that the weakening of the early Church in Australia by converts' migration to Utah was, in fact, an acceptable consequence of obeying the principle of gathering: "There was never any intention of establishing permanent units of the church overseas before the beginning of the twentieth century, except perhaps in Polynesia" (186). She also performs an important service with her "Pakeha Mormons in New Zealand" by thoroughly covering the "statistically insignificant" work (233) among the European converts, a topic seldom mentioned due to the more successful and colorful mission accounts of missionary labors with the Maori. Her extensive use of branch and mission records enabled her to provide names to highly personalize the accompany tables (235, 238–39). I wish, however, she had mentioned that, in addition to BYU (250), many New Zealanders attended the Church College of Hawaii where, in 1960s, Kiwis held most of the student body offices.

Peter Lineham, a respected New Zealand scholar, wrote "The Mormon Message in Maori Culture," the final chapter in Part 3. I was puzzled by its inconsistent italicization. There seemed to be no reason why such Maori words as *kai* (202), *hapu* (202), *kaumatua* (204), *hui* (205), *karakia* (205), were italicized while *marae* (205), *rangatira* (205), *hapu* (206), *Pakeha* (211), *mana* (215), or *tohunga* (218) were not. I agree with his definition (215) of *kaumatua* (not italicized, incidentally) as meaning "elders" rather than "missionaries" (204). Also, *timuaki* should be *tumuaki* (215) and his *Kaueleinamoku* (204) and *Kauleinamoku* (218) should be *Kaulainamoku* (spelled correctly pp. 171, 177, 325). Also, Matthew Cowley was New Zealand Mission president in 1938–45 rather than 1939–46 (220). And I'm quite sure Lineham didn't interview Brownie Hamon in 1890 (226 note 99).

Because it is the area about which I know the least, I found especially interesting the three chapters in Part 5 on Asia: Neilson's "Meetings and Migrations: Nineteenth-Century Mormon Encounters with Asians," Sandra C. Taylor's "Anodyne for Expansion: Meiji Japan, the Mormons, and Charles

LeGendre,” and Michael J. Lansin’s “Race, Space, and Chinese Life in Late Nineteenth-Century Salt Lake City.”

To cite Britsch’s book as *Unto the Isles* (rather than *Islands*) of the Sea (317) was an unfortunate mangling of the title of an outstanding book. A final problem is that Samuel Woolley’s name is spelled “Wooley” in the index (330).

Eight of the articles are from mainstream LDS-oriented periodicals: *Journal of Mormon History*, *Utah Historical Quarterly*, and *BYU Studies*. Two more article are spin-offs from Ph.D. dissertations, and three are from other regional publications. The introduction by the two editors appears to be the only chapter written especially for this work. That is not necessarily a problem since, nearly always, essays in a collection have already been published.

Overall, while I found individual entries quite interesting, I feel the editors—in rodeo vernacular—threw too big a loop and the calf slipped through. Also, I feel there were too many knots in their rope.

KENNETH W. BALDRIDGE {eightball_7@msn.com}, professor of history emeritus at Brigham Young University-Hawaii, spent six years at Church College of New Zealand and twenty-five years at BYU-Hawaii where he created the course “Church History in the Pacific” and co-founded the Mormon Pacific Historical Society. He now lives in Pleasant Grove, Utah, with Delma, his wife of sixty years.

Kip Sperry. *A Guide to Mormon Family History Sources*. Provo, Utah: Ancestry Publishing, 2007. xvi, 248 pp. Images, appendixes, notes, bibliography, index. Paperback: \$16.95; ISBN 13: 978-1-59331-301-2. Cloth: ISBN-10: 1-59331-301-2

Reviewed by Erin B. Jennings

The mere thought of the endless black hole of research with its plethora of paper (and now paperless) records can be quite daunting for some. However, with a vast wealth of resources, Kip Sperry masterfully compiles a book for neophyte and well-seasoned genealogists alike. Sperry brilliantly maps a route for the reader from chaos to clarity.

Realizing the various religious and cultural backgrounds that genealogists stem from, Sperry’s introduction provides a brief, but concise, synopsis of basic Latter-day Saint information. He continues with Chapter 1, “Historical Background,” and includes a Saint-related timeline spanning over two centuries.

Chapter 2, “Beginning Your Research,” a short chapter for those who are new to the field, outlines steps to beginning research and how to logically proceed. Starting with Chapter 3 and continuing through Chapter 9, Sperry assembles the genealogist’s dream—a compilation of available resources including their format, location, description, content, and URLs (if applicable). In Chapter 3, “Indexes, Finding Aids, and Guides,” Sperry introduces resources used to initially locate individuals—including but not limited to Andrew Jenson’s *Church Chronology* file, heir index, Journal History index, missionary index, Nauvoo-related indexes, and many more.

Sperry takes the researcher a step farther in Chapter 4 with “Compiled and Printed Records.” These include items such as land, biographic and family group records, RLDS deceased membership files, newspapers, pedigree charts, and periodicals. Diving forward into the depths of research with Chapter 5, “Original Records,” a few of Sperry’s suggestions include baptism and confirmation certificates, the LDS deceased members’ file, minutes of meetings, patriarchal blessings, and temple records.

Continuing in Chapter 6, “Migration, Emigration, and Immigration Records,” Sperry recommends additional data collections such as various foreign emigration records and registers, the Mormon immigration index, and the Utah immigration card index.

Oh, what a wonderful addition to research the computer and the internet have made—turning hours of research into a handful of minutes. The internet sites that Sperry highlights in Chapter 7, “Computer Resources and Databases,” include FamilySearch, Early Latter-day Saints, Ancestry, Daughters of Utah Pioneers, and the Godfrey Memorial Library in Middletown, Connecticut. Founded in 1947 by A. Fremont Rider, the Godfrey Memorial Library houses, among other resources, 226 volumes of the American Genealogical Biographical Index, containing approximately 4 million names from more than 800 genealogy-related research books. Sperry also includes items that can be accessed by CD-ROM and/or DVD such as *GospelLink 2001*, *LDS FamilyHistory Suite 2*, and *Selected Collections from the Archives of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*.

In Chapter 8, “Internet Sites,” Sperry devotes almost twenty pages to what he describes as “references to Mormon-related internet sites, biographies, compiled genealogies, descriptions of family history records and collections, digitized records, families residing in a particular locality, genealogical records, historical articles and sites, library catalogs, photographs, specific individuals and organizations (such as the Mormon History Association), and much more” (93).

In the last (but definitely not the least) chapter, Sperry introduces the reader to “Periodicals, Newsletters, and Newspapers.” Compiled within these few pages is a listing of nineteenth- and twentieth-century periodicals

that prove invaluable to historical research. Though there are notably many others not referenced by Sperry, he compiles a colorful list of the most recognizable titles including the *Evening and Morning Star*, *Times and Seasons*, *Journal of Discourses*, *Improvement Era*, *Ensign*, and *Desert Morning News*. Sperry notes that “many genealogical and historical periodicals (including some LDS titles) are indexed in *Periodical Source Index*, often abbreviated as PERSI (published by the Allen County Public Library Foundation, Fort Wayne, Indiana). PERSI is a subject index to genealogy and local history periodicals and is available in book form, microfiche, CD-ROM (Orem, Utah: Ancestry, 1997), and online at HeritageQuest Online, ProQuest {www.heritagequestionline.com}, and also Ancestry.com {www.ancestry.com/search/rectype/periodicals/persi/main.htm}” (113).

Thankfully, Appendix A, “Abbreviations, Acronyms, and Terms,” contains a list of all abbreviations Sperry uses throughout the book. Not only is this appendix extremely valuable to beginning genealogists, it is also quite useful to seasoned, non-LDS ones as well. I even find Sperry’s Appendix A helpful when reading abbreviated footnotes and endnotes from other articles. Appendix B, “Addresses,” includes the “addresses of libraries, archives, and historical societies that house LDS genealogical and historical sources” (137). Doubtless this is a valuable compilation of addresses, but the addition of phone numbers would be an improvement.

I thoroughly enjoyed perusing the pages of Kip Sperry’s book, *A Guide to Mormon Family History Sources*. What he compiles on paper is comparable to what I compile on a computerized spreadsheet. One advantage that my computer spreadsheet file has that Sperry’s paper version does not is the addition of hyperlinks. Perhaps something worth considering for the future is a PDF version of the book, sold on DVD or CD-ROM, with clickable hyperlinks.

ERIN B. JENNINGS {erinjennings@sbcglobal.net}, is an independent historian and serves on the John Whitmer Historical Association board (2006–09). She has published on the Whitmer family and on Jesse Gause.

Linda Wilcox DeSimone, ed. *Fanny Stenhouse’s Exposé of Polygamy: A Lady’s Life among the Mormons*. Logan: Utah State University Press, 2008. viii, 198 pp. Photographs, illustrations, appendix, notes, index. Cloth: \$29.95; ISBN 978-0-87421-713-1

Reviewed by Jennifer Reeder

Known for her emotional 1874 autobiographical account “*Tell It All*”: *The Story of a Life’s Experience in Mormonism*, Fanny Stenhouse revealed the harsh realities of nineteenth-century Mormon polygamy. Her book was distributed across America, Europe, and Mexico at a time of escalating Victorian domestic responsibility and decorum. The effort joined with other exposés, editorials, travel accounts, political cartoons, and novels to contribute to political, legal, and social measures limiting Utah Latter-day Saints’ polygamous practice. *Tell It All*, however, was the second edition of an earlier endeavor. Linda Wilcox DeSimone has edited the original 1872 publication, *Exposé of Polygamy: A Lady’s Life among the Mormons*, as Volume 10 of Utah State University Press’s LIFE WRITINGS OF FRONTIER WOMEN series.

In Fanny Stenhouse’s words, the book is “what I *know* about Polygamy; and in order to set the whole matter plainly before the reader,” a record of her encounter with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints from conversion to disillusion (27). Publication followed her Eastern lecture circuit, where she gained notoriety and influence among an interested public.¹ Stenhouse claims to have written *Exposé*, a “reminiscence,” in the period of two or three weeks. This memoir style of writing allows her to fashion her own life according to the details of her choice, highlighting certain aspects while avoiding other topics entirely.

Stenhouse renders an insightful account of typical nineteenth-century Mormon life. She provides a fair assessment of her experience as the idealistic young, convert wife of an equally devoted convert-missionary, T.B.H. Stenhouse, while he served in Switzerland and England. She describes raising children, serving in the Church, and immigrating to Utah, against the backdrop of poverty, hard work, and particularly, polygamy. Her story contributes significantly to an understanding of the Utah social network and LDS family dynamics of the period.

But it is polygamy that pervades Stenhouse’s account, shading every aspect of her experience. She claims to have “told a *plain story of facts*, and have endeavoured to present a faithful picture of the terrible realities of Mormon Polygamy” (28). In compelling first-person detail, speaking with authority based on experience, she covers significant terrain—the lived practice of the principle, the education and invitation to participate, the emotional distress from cruel and neglectful husbands and jealous wives, the negotiation of religious sacrifice, the stories of failed marriages, and female negotiation in a patriarchal society.

But *Exposé* is more than mere narrative about life among polygamists;

¹See Joan Smyth Iversen, *The Antipolygamy Controversy in U.S. Women’s Movements, 1880–1925: A Debate on the American Home* (New York: Garland, 1997), 102.

Stenhouse scrupulously analyzes the doctrine of polygamy and finds it defective. She argues passionately that polygamy is the result of religious principles distorted by human nature. To support her claim, she attacks the 1843 revelation to Joseph Smith (LDS D&C 132). Relying on “Polygamy: Was It an Original Tenet of the Church?” by Joseph Smith’s son, Alexander Hale Smith, a future RLDS apostle, and quotations from LDS apostles, including Brigham Young, Orson Pratt, Jedediah Grant, and Orson Hyde, Stenhouse concludes that, while some designing men hijacked religious principles to serve base human desires, others acted in blind obedience—and suffered the consequences. Women and children remain the apparent victims. Stenhouse reasons that polygamy is a burden too difficult and unjustifiable to bear: “I have watched the whole system of Polygamy closely, and have tried earnestly to discover wherein it was productive of any good; but in not one single instance could I find, after the most diligent observation, any but the very worst results. On the contrary, it was the same story again and again repeated—evil—evil—evil!” (118)

Likely because of Stenhouse’s personal antipathy toward polygamy, she excludes important information to understand its full context. For example, she never describes women content with polygamy, with positive relationships and family configurations. Nor does she fully characterize those who remained faithful to Brigham Young. In describing her family’s ultimate separation from the Church, she also fails to provide details about their involvement with the Godbeites, an intellectual movement led by an ardent critic of Young in which her husband played a prominent role. Stenhouse also neglects to mention the impact of continued financial distress, or her own strained relationship with her husband, including the torturous impact of his decision to enter plural marriage, his alleged problems with alcoholism and abuse, or his being bitterly rejected by a potential third wife.²

Notwithstanding these failures to fully disclose, *Exposé* is an important contribution to an understanding of the nineteenth-century Mormon experience. As a result, the book becomes a tool of memory, or a conscious construction of identity. Stenhouse’s original work reveals a strong need to mark her personal experience, to give voice to her path of disillusion. Although the memoir lacks objective balance, it speaks strongly and with honest emotion.

As editor, DeSimone provides a framework to accurately display Stenhouse’s experience. She documents Stenhouse’s references throughout the book’s endnotes, drawing on genealogical and family records to piece together the details of her subject. This commentary provides priceless insight

²Ronald W. Walker, *Wayward Saints: The Godbeites and Brigham Young* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 54–56.

into Stenhouse's larger Mormon community, describing an interweaving of people, events, and principles. As well, DeSimone traces changes through each edition of the book. This brief historiography interrogates Stenhouse's motives and displays her effect.

Like Stenhouse, DeSimone struggles with polygamy. In her introduction, she defines the social implications and accusations of sexual impropriety attached to Joseph Smith. However, her theological underpinnings for the practice remain biased; in the shadow of her subject, she writes with slight contempt for the practice rather than with neutrality. She describes the origin of plural marriage as "shadowy," referring to the "furious rate" at which Smith took additional wives, justifying Smith's revelation resting on "God's apparent approval of Abraham and other Old Testament patriarchs having multiple wives and concubines" (2-3). DeSimone's hesitancy reveals a personal disdain undercutting her work.

Context proves crucial. Stenhouse writes at the height of Victorian sentimentality. DeSimone points at Stenhouse's writing style as "full of energy, verve, passion, and emotion . . . criticized from a rationalist, masculinist point of view" (9). In reality, Stenhouse writes according to the manner of her contemporaries. Historian Ann Douglas surmises that the nineteenth-century "process of sentimentalization" obliged "the drive of nineteenth-century American women to gain power through the exploitation of their feminine identity as their society defined it."³ Douglas concludes that, as women became more adept with the press, the mission of their heroines was to free the hero from history.⁴ Here Stenhouse attempts the same: In freeing herself from the bonds of polygamy, she becomes her own heroine. She hopes to rescue potential victims and enlighten others about the dangers of polygamy at the same time she gains public attention and affirmation.

DeSimone presents Stenhouse's original work at a particular time in the present. I wrote this review in the late spring of 2008 when the national press was replete with articles and features on the fundamentalist practice of polygamy in Texas; interest in the lived experience of polygamy remains high. While Fanny Stenhouse is certainly a worthy example of a valid polygamous observation, readers must remember that one encounter cannot represent the whole.

JENNIFER REEDER {jreeder4@gmu.edu} is a doctoral student in American history at George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia. Her interests

³Ann Douglas, *The Feminization of American Culture* (New York: Doubleday, 1988), 8.

⁴*Ibid.*, 185.

include religious women's history, material culture, memory, and new media.

William D. Russell, ed. *Homosexual Saints: The Community of Christ Experience*. Independence: John Whitmer Books, 2008. xi, 264 pp. Appendices, index. Paper: \$19.95; ISBN 978-1-934901-05-2

Reviewed by John D. Gustav-Wrathall

Having been raised LDS, my first contact with the Community of Christ was as a child of about ten. My family and I were on a cross-country road trip somewhere in the Midwest, and I was puzzled as we drove past a church with a sign out in front that read "Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints." My father explained to me that RLDS were people who believed that the true prophet had to be a lineal descendent of the prophet Joseph Smith. Far from satisfying my curiosity, my dad's explanation left me with even more unsettling questions and emotions, not the least of which was consternation at realizing that there were *other Mormons* who did not believe like us.

Now as an adult, gay Mormon who has been excommunicated from the LDS Church, having learned more about Community of Christ history, polity, and faith through reading and through personal acquaintance with individual Community of Christ members, I've found myself with growing respect and gratitude for this community of Saints in which the identities of "gay" and "Mormon" seem able to co-exist less problematically together than for those of us who grew up gay and LDS. Though gay members of this quarter-of-a-million members, worldwide Church still struggle at times to find a full and equal place among the Church's straight members, *Homosexual Saints: The Community of Christ Experience*, edited by William D. Russell, documents the steps taken haltingly, and at times uncertainly, over the last five decades toward becoming a community of Christ in which all are loved and accepted unconditionally, regardless of sexual orientation.

Homosexual Saints first recounts this story in overview, in an extended and detailed introduction (57 pages) in which Russell describes the history of efforts by the Community of Christ to come to terms with new information about homosexuality since the early 1960s. It includes many "official" landmarks, such as the treatment of a gay apostle during the 1950s (released but not excommunicated), deliberations of the Standing High Council and of ad hoc committees, discussions in the official magazine, the evolution of the *Church Administrator's Handbook*, statements by Church leaders, activities and discussions in conjunction with Church forums and conferences, and

World Conference debates and resolutions. There is a lengthy section on the organization, activities, and contributions of GALA (Gay and Lesbian Acceptance, the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender organization for Community of Christ members), and a section on the experience of GLBT people at Church-affiliated Graceland College (now Graceland University).

Following the introduction, the story continues through twenty-six individual narratives by gay, lesbian, and transgender Community of Christ members and former members, and by their friends and family members. These individuals each tell of their own journeys of faith, of the movement from oppression to acceptance, and of the intersections between the two. Russell concludes with an essay, "Christ and Culture in Conflict," reflecting on the theological basis for reevaluating the traditional Christian stigmatization and rejection of homosexuality. Finally, the anthology contains useful appendices, which gather in one place authoritative statements by the governing bodies of the Community of Christ that set the framework for present-day grappling with this issue.

This volume appears at a particular historic juncture. It is published at a time when the Community of Christ is self-consciously reevaluating its policies in relation to the inclusion and ordination of gay and lesbian members and recognition of same-sex relationships. As Russell's valuable introduction on the history of the issue in his church spells out, at the April 2002 World Conference, Community of Christ President W. Grant McMurray seemed to be initiating a new period of liberalization when he made a plea for greater flexibility in responding to the priesthood calls of gay and lesbian members, and when he admitted to having been knowingly present at the ordination of individuals who were in committed same-sex relationships. The following September, however, the Community of Christ's Church Leadership Council, partly in response to the backlash aroused by McMurray's statement, issued its own statement reaffirming a 1982 policy promulgated by the Church's Standing High Council, requiring that gay and lesbian priesthood holders be celibate. Since the reaffirmation of the 1982 policy, the First Presidency and the Church's Committee on Homosexuality have promoted local "Listening Circles," in which Church members could continue to explore and dialogue about homosexuality and about the Church's policies in relation to the membership and priesthood callings of its gay and lesbian members. This volume is clearly presented as a contribution to this historic dialogue.¹

The stories contained in *Homosexual Saints* document a certain

¹In a First Presidency's message reporting on action as a result of the World Conference, Stephen M. Veazey, "Up Front: Next Steps," *Herald*, May 2008, 5, announced work on a "Guiding Principles" statement to provide "the compass for com-

amount of ambiguity in the Community of Christ's responses to its gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender members. The September 2002 reaffirmation of the 1982 policy came with an explicit statement that existing ordinations would remain in force. This means that even with a more strenuous enforcement of the 1982 policy, there are currently gay men and lesbians in openly committed same-sex relationships who are ordained and serving in priesthood callings in the Community of Christ. Church polity in the Community of Christ appears to grant greater latitude to local jurisdictions in adjudicating membership issues and priesthood callings, with the effect that, in some stakes and in some congregations of the Church, gay and lesbian members have experienced intense rejection, having been "silenced" (prohibited from exercising their priesthood) or "excommunicated" (removed from good standing and prohibited from taking the sacrament), though almost never "expelled" (completely removed from Church membership). In other stakes and congregations, gay and lesbian members and priesthood holders have been tolerated, and in some they have been warmly embraced.

This relative inconsistency has, in some ways, been as great a challenge to gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender Church members as if the policy and the culture were more uniformly rejecting. For instance, one writer, Brian Sadler, described how his faithful, active parents expressed unconditional love and support for him as a gay man, which led him to assume that the Church as a whole would receive him in the same way. His expectations were brutally shattered when he became the victim of ugly acts of intolerance from other students at Church-affiliated Park College. But as of the writing of his essay, he was an Aaronic Priesthood holder in his southern California ward (183–84). Another writer, Allan Fiscus, described how, upon learning of his homosexuality, his district president stripped him of all callings and in essence excommunicated him, only to have a later pastor reinstate him with an explanation that the previous district president had

pleting the framework for lifelong disciple formation in the church." These statements will also "shape our guidance on 'Culturally Appropriate Standards of Conduct.' And we will continue to address persistent questions about human sexuality and sexual orientation." The same issue included a letter to the editor whose writer described himself as "weary and annoyed" with the "vitriolic language" of letters to the editors attacking the Church's "policy regarding priesthood and the practice of homosexuality. He quotes the Committee on Homosexuality and the Church's 2007 report announcing its decision not "to provide a set of recommendations for action. . . . It is not that we have no ideas, but rather we have concluded that there is no specific set of actions that will suddenly take away all of the disagreements about this issue that exist in the Church today." The letter-writer observed that the *Herald's* permission of "dismissive language" was "making further dialogue difficult" and called for "equal space" to those "who support the 1982 policy." Robert Lundeen, "Homosexuality," p. 6.

acted inappropriately (156, 159). Many of the stories of gay and lesbian members in the pages of *Homosexual Saints* describe similar histories of mixed messages, inconsistent actions, and disjuncture between Church-wide policy and local practice.

Nevertheless, the Community of Christ's relative openness to the participation and gifts of GLBT members has fostered among these same members deep loyalty to their church, and a profound, traditional (almost conservative!) faith and spirituality. Numerous writers described pivotal spiritual experiences in which the Holy Spirit reassured them and comforted them. "I had a significant spiritual experience when I once asked the Lord for enlightenment on David's homosexuality," wrote Hal McKain. "In essence, the Holy Spirit said to me, 'Your son David is different in the area of sexual orientation, and that is okay.' That was the complete message. At the moment I thought, 'This is too simple.' Then I realized that this was all I needed" (63). Ray Biller described his own experience being told by the Spirit that his sexuality was a "gift" and that the Lord had a work for him to do, followed by his father's experience at a retreat of GALA, in which he experienced "the confirming spirit of God" manifesting deep love and acceptance of the retreat participants (88, 91). Stephanie Shaw described the joy she experienced when her same-sex partner, touched by the Spirit at their gay-friendly congregation in St. Paul, Minnesota, was baptized into the Community of Christ. "I couldn't be happier than I am now!" she writes (152).

Particularly poignant were some of the reflections shared about the challenges of wrestling with the issue of homosexuality when communities have been divided by seemingly irreconcilable differences of opinion. Paul Davis, counselor to the Presiding Bishop of the Community of Christ, told of his experience as the pastor of a Community of Christ congregation in Boise, Idaho. When he became aware that the local Metropolitan Community Church, a predominantly gay denomination, needed a place to worship, he invited his congregation to enter a discernment process to decide whether to share their building. Ultimately, the decision was made in the affirmative, despite bitter opposition from a minority within the Community of Christ congregation. One Community of Christ member (not a member of the Boise congregation) wrote a letter attacking Davis and his congregation, accusing them of encouraging the spread of AIDS and endangering children. Referring to the file of letters he had collected over the years from opponents of the decision, Davis reflected on the challenge faced by his congregation:

There was a cost to this decision, in case that is not abundantly clear; but the surprise for me in rereading these letters is how the cost to those who could not find a way to keep their church, if it must be shared with unashamedly gay people, is so much greater than I had ac-

counted for it in my memory. I knew the decision hurt them and, in some cases, made them angry beyond the limits of decency, but I had not seen that theirs was the greatest sacrifice, because it was without redemption. For them there was no gain, only loss. . . . Everyone in these two congregations [including the MCC congregation] has had a hand in this prophetic task, including those who could not see it as prophetic and yet paid so dearly. (211-12)

Larry Cavin described how his interactions with Church members who rejected gay and lesbian members had taught him about the nature of life in community:

One of the things I have learned over the years is that being right or wrong is not always what is important. We have values. We have laws. We have scriptures. We have expectations. And the list goes on. All of these provide assistance in living our lives. But the overriding need is for reconciling love and acceptance of each other as we are and as we hope to become. The cries of others may be loud and clear, and may even come crashing into our lives. Or they may be voices speaking so softly, so tentatively, that we need to listen with our hearts and reach out with healing hands and words. (132)

Homosexual Saints is written by and for ordinary members of the Community of Christ. Most contributors are not polished writers, but they reach out to the reader with an engaging, raw, page-turning honesty. These highly personal firsthand accounts are alternately heart-wrenching and heart-warming, faith-inspiring and thought-provoking.

There is no attempt made in this volume at “balance” in the sense of providing perspectives from those who view homosexual activity as inherently sinful, or from those who are striving for celibacy, committed to a mixed-orientation marriage, or claiming to have changed their sexual orientation. Some may view this volume as less useful for this reason. Certainly, an effort at such inclusiveness would have made the volume much more challenging and might have appealed to a broader readership. But the stated goal of this anthology was simply to tell stories, and this it does. It is historically important as a snapshot of matters as they currently stand in an important church with Mormon roots. It preserves the stories of many gay Community of Christ members and their families in the last third of the twentieth century and the beginning years of the twenty-first. It summarizes the status of a historical policy that seems to be in transition. It offers a genuine Christian perspective on the current church and culture wars over sexuality that is grounded in faith, hope, unconditional love, and reliance upon the guidance of the Spirit. It will speak to Christians of many persuasions outside of the Community of Christ and the broader Mormon community. And regardless of one’s perspective on homosexuality as abstract issue, these are stories and testimonies that deserve to be heard.

JOHN D. GUSTAV-WRATHALL {johnwrathall@earthlink.net} is the author of *Take the Young Stranger by the Hand: Same-Sex Relations and the YMCA* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), and adjunct professor of American religious history at United Theological Seminary in New Brighton, Minnesota.

Philip Jenkins. *Mystics and Messiahs: Cults and New Religions in American History*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000. 294 pp. Notes, index. Paper: \$18.95; ISBN 0-19-514596-8

Reviewed by Richard Lyman Bushman

Philip Jenkins came to the attention of Mormon History Association members at the May 2008 convention in Sacramento when he delivered the annual Tanner Lecture (forthcoming in the Spring 2009 issue of the *Journal of Mormon History*). Jenkins posed the question: Why are Mormons not more successful in Africa? He pointed out that, while the Church has grown significantly, Mormon doctrines of family life and work for the dead correspond so closely to native religions that the Church should be doing better. He attributed the lesser conversion rates to an unwillingness to incorporate African worship styles into Mormon services, activities like drumming and dancing.

Jenkins, Edwin Erle Sparks Professor of Humanities in the Department of History and Religious Studies at Pennsylvania State University, probably knows as much about the contemporary global religious scene as any living scholar. He has published an incredible array of books, ranging from the contemporary search for a believable Jesus and the sources of anti-Catholicism to the face-off between Christianity, Islam, and secularism in Europe and Native American spirituality. He is a scholar who assimilates information and writes about it in one smooth motion. He seems to know everything and has an engaging opinion on virtually every current religious issue.

This older Jenkins book (eight years and nine books ago) deserves Latter-day Saint attention because he addresses the commonly heard charge that Mormonism is a cult. Jenkins attempts to calm the widespread distress over cults that began in the 1960s when expert professionals began to deprogram cult victims. Jenkins reminds his readers that America has always fostered cults. They flourish in our open society with its high-powered religious energies and its lack of a religious establishment. He puts to rest the fear of cults infiltrating society and stealing our young by reminding us that cults and sects have always been with us, and we have survived. He aims to cool off the anti-cult forces that he believes can do more damage than the

cults themselves do. The 1993 Waco siege may have prompted Jenkins's work, since he mentions Waco along with the violent deaths of the Heaven's Gate (1997) and Solar Temple groups (1994) and the Tokyo subway nerve gas attack by the Japanese Aum Shinrikyo organization (1995).

What is a cult? The word recurs in critical comments on Mormonism, always with negative connotations but without precise definition. Jenkins says the term resists easy clarification. "It is all but impossible to define cults in a way that does not describe a large share of American religious bodies, including some of the most respectable" (13). If you say cults hold extreme or eccentric beliefs, then what about the highly popular Creationism that rejects the conclusions of modern science, or the expectation of an imminent Second Coming? Are these extreme and eccentric?

Traditionally sociologists, beginning with Ernst Troeltsch, divided religions into churches and sects: "Churches are larger bodies, more formally structured in terms of hierarchy and liturgy, which appeal to better-off members of society," Jenkins points out. "[S]ects, in contrast, are smaller, less structured, and more spontaneous and draw their members from working-class or lower-class people" (16). Many religions began as sects and evolved into churches. Cults, on the other hand, have more independent origins. Sociologists Rodney Stark and William S. Bainbridge argue, as Jenkins explains, that cults are more innovative than sects and more conspicuously deviant: "Churches are thus defined as 'religious bodies in relatively low state of tension with their environment'; sects are in a high state of tension, but remain within the conventional religious traditions of a society; cults, likewise, exist in a state of tension, but they 'represent faiths that are new and unconventional in a society' or have not prior ties to any established body in the wider society." By that definition, Mormonism at its foundation was a cult, since Mormons pride themselves as having begun anew without prior connection to a previous religion.

But according to Jenkins, the Stark-Bainbridge formulation does not quite work either. All cults have some connection to past religious traditions. They do not come out of nowhere. Mormonism was deeply rooted in Protestant Christianity; Hare Krishna is Hindu. Under close scrutiny, Jenkins finally concludes, none of the definitions of cult hold up:

Cults differ from churches in no particular aspect of behavior or belief, and the very term "cult" is a strictly subjective one; it tells us as much about the people applying that label as it does about the group that is so described. Briefly, cults are small, unpopular religious bodies, the implication being that much of their cultish quality comes not from any inherent qualities of the groups themselves, but from the public reaction to them. We might draw a parallel between cults and weeds, the latter being a much-used term that has no botanical meaning, which refers only to plants which have no obvious use for humanity (18).

Jenkins sees cult formation as coming in waves through our history. In the twentieth century, cults at their peak precipitated something near to “moral panic” (18). Given that Jenkins’s target is the anticult movement, he aims to show that its assumptions have usually been “dubious and ill founded” (24). Anti-cultist origins go back in Protestant history to the sixteenth-century reaction against Jan of Leyden and the Münster prophets and against the Quakers in seventeenth-century England. Enough cult activity had occurred in America by about 1840 that the “modern anticult polemic” was firmly in place (31), the reaction to Mormons, along with opposition to Catholics and Shakers, contributing to the maturation of this rhetoric.

Anti-Mormon polemics came to full flower in the last half of the nineteenth century after the move to Utah. Jenkins does not take a position on the factual basis for the anti-Mormon rhetoric. He begins his three and a half page account of the “Mormon Crisis” by saying “the religion was bedeviled by attacks on its bloodthirsty record,” then gives a one-sentence description of the 1857 Mountain Meadows Massacre of 120 emigrants by Mormon paramilitaries (34). The Mormons were not guiltless, in Jenkins’s book; but on the whole he finds the anti-Mormon crusade overblown and unjust. “The polygamy question,” he states summarily, “now led to one of the most sweeping episodes of religious persecution in American history” (36).

Mystics and Messiahs helps us to understand how Mormons along with other “cults” become the victims of stereotypical anti-cult thinking. A lot of baggage is attached to the word “fanatic.” Religious extremists were universally suspected of licensing sexual promiscuity and violence. “The sexually promiscuous messiah leading his armed devotees to a fortress in the wilderness was a stereotypical figure in Europe centuries before the image reappeared in Utah or Texas” (26). That kind of entrenched thinking immediately seized upon the Nauvoo Legion and plural marriage as the fulfillment of civilized people’s worst fears. “The equation seemed obvious: claims of personal revelation led to violent subversion and unrestrained sexuality, which if unchecked would destroy the social order” (26). That is why Mountain Meadows and plural marriage seemed to define the essence of Mormonism for many Americans. The actions confirmed preformed suspicions of what cultish Mormonism had to be all about. Mormons practiced violence and sexual license because that is what fanatics always do.

Jenkins’s helpful book can be a discouraging read for Mormons. How can Latter-day Saints ever counteract accounts like Jon Krakauer’s *Under the Banner of Heaven* which plays directly to prejudices and fears deeply implanted in his readers? The book seems like perfect truth because it confirms readers’ anxieties about prophets and revelators. On the other hand, Jenkins’s exposition of the long history of anti-cult activity may begin to historicize and thus neutralize prejudiced opposition to Mormonism from

Joseph Smith until today.

RICHARD LYMAN BUSHMAN {rlb7@columbia.edu} is a former president of the Mormon History Association, author of *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005), and holder of the Howard W. Hunter Chair of Mormon Studies at Claremont Graduate University.

Frederick Harold Swanson. *Dave Rust: A Life in the Canyons*. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2007. xxii, 354 pp. Photographs, maps, notes, bibliography, index. Cloth: \$29.95; ISBN 978-0-87480-915-2

Reviewed by J. Sherman Feher

From living in southwestern Utah in my younger years, I have very fond memories of roaming hills, valleys, and rock formations around St. George; traveling throughout the Arizona Strip; and exploring Zion and Bryce Canyon National Parks, and Cedar Breaks National Monument. My experience of this area culminated in my later teenage years as a river guide on the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon. I loved the spectacular scenery and the adventure of river running.

Reading Frederick H. Swanson's biography of Dave Rust has brought back many memories for me, expanded my knowledge and understanding of the Colorado Plateau in southern Utah and northern Arizona, helped me better understand the evolution of the national parks and monuments in this area and introduced me to Dave Rust, a person I did not know until I read this book.

Swanson provides an eloquent overview of Rust's life:

A man seeking to make a big showing in the Utah canyon country of the early twentieth century had few options: gather together a significant cattle herd, as Al Scorup did in the 1880s, or locate a major mineral discovery, as Charlie Steen did in the 1950s, or rise in the world of politics and business like Dave's mentor, Dee Woolley. Dave Rust dabbled in all of these pursuits, but none became anything more than an avocation. He earned little more from his guiding than from his placer and hard-rock prospects, but that was of small concern. It was the landscape of the (Colorado) Plateau Province that commanded his attention. He was intent on mining a rich vein of knowledge (and aesthetics) that ran through the country. That single-minded, lifelong pursuit drew him into the company of his many distinguished guests and immeasurably enriched his own life. In this quest, and in these friendships, he found his mother lode. (296)

Dave Rust's father, George Smith Rust, was an early Mormon pioneer who arrived in the Salt Lake Valley in September 1847. George was called on

an LDS mission to St. Louis in 1854, during which time he baptized and married Eliza Brown in Mormon Grove, Kansas. They moved frequently in the early years of their marriage—from Salt Lake City to Spanish Fork, Payson, Spring Creek, and Burrville/Grass Valley. Dave was born March 10, 1874, in Spring Creek, a few miles west of Payson, the sixth child in a family of seven. Swanson provides some insights into the stark and impoverished life of the Rust family as they moved from Burrville in Grass Valley, some hundred miles south of Payson, Utah, to the rural hamlet of Caineville in Wayne County in 1884.

The prospect they met on the far side of this canyon must have been daunting. The outwash slopes from the (Waterpocket) Fold led down to a series of painted clay hills as barren as the surface of the moon. Beyond them rose sheer rims that delineated treeless mesas. Between the two principal mesas the Dirty Devil River meandered through a cottonwood bottom, in those days still a pleasant stream, flowing several feet deep between gentle banks that permitted irrigation water to be drawn off. Nearby, the cabins of a half-dozen families spread out along the river, in contrast to the usual tightly clustered Mormon villages. . . . The town's setting was hardly lush, but it offered timber and firewood for a homestead. . . . Still, this place promised only unrelenting hard work. It would have taken a hopeful man and woman, perhaps aided by a sense of promised destiny, to see any chance of creating bounty here. (7)

"Primitive place to grow up" was Dave's succinct recollection of his teenage years in this setting. "No school, no post office, few books. . . . Plenty of ledges to climb, a river to swim in." The settlers held dances in a farmer's cabin; Dave recalled that "some of the girls danced barefoot for want of shoes" (7, 8). The family struggled in this harsh environment, raising livestock and growing wheat. Dave's father mined for a time at Tintic, trying to better his family's economic situation.

Dave's schooling was sporadic because of the family's financial situation and his own. He spent some interrupted time at Brigham Young Academy (1894–1903). He also went on a "Church educational mission" to Stanford for one year, a calling that, Swanson speculates, was due to the influence of the Kanab Stake president, Dee Woolley, but apparently did not have enough money to continue that endeavor.

From 1906 when Rust was thirty-two to 1909, with some interruptions, Rust worked on the Bright Angel Trail and Tramway under the mentorship of Dee Woolley, whose daughter, Ruth, Dave married in the Manti Temple in 1903. They became the parents of nine children. Building the tram across the Colorado River at the bottom of the Grand Canyon was a tremendous endeavor that was virtually a wasted effort since a bridge was built across the river a few years later. Little remains of Rust's effort except for a few remnants of the tram, trail, and the cottonwood trees he planted at his tent camp

near what is now Phantom Ranch.

Swanson's vivid writing creates the impression of accompanying Rust—viewing, hiking, riding, floating down the river, exploring, and learning about this visually striking area:

The next morning's climb to the summit of the plateau took only a few hours. The scene that greeted them at the edge of the East Kaibab monocline would have thrilled any young man who had read of the lonesome desert wastes. Here the mountain dropped off abruptly, not in a sudden cliff, but in a graceful swoop reflecting the dramatic flexing of the earth's crust. At the foot of the monocline lay the stone-dry House Rock Valley, bounded on the north by the long line of Vermillion Cliffs. Charles [Berolzheimer] and Arnold [Koehler] excitedly recognized this as one of the scenes from Zane Grey's *Heritage of the Desert*. (132)

Berolzheimer and Koehler were young Easterners from well-to-do families whose high school graduation gift was a trip out west. Over succeeding years, they made a number of trips with Rust.

Descriptions of this type saturate this book and bring the Colorado Plateau to life for the reader. They also explain, in large part, why this book deservedly won the David W. and Beatrice C. Evans Annual Biography Award from the Mountain West Center for Regional Studies, Utah State University, and the 2008 Mormon History Association's Turner- Bergera Best Biography Award.

Interspersed with Rust's business as a guide on the Colorado Plateau were other activities: a teacher, principal, civic leader in Kanab, newspaper publisher, miner, farmer, and member of the Utah State Legislature. Rust wrote seven articles for the *Improvement Era* on nature and his experiences. He was a relatively quiet and unassuming man, who may have had more influence on people outside of Utah who wanted a western wilderness experience than people who lived in Utah. He knew many famous and influential people including river runner and Grand Canyon photographers Ellsworth and Emory Kolb, George C. Fraser, a New York City attorney interested in geology and adventure, novelist Zane Grey, and naturalists George Agassiz and John Muir, to name just a few.

Swanson's book is not technically Mormon history, although it makes a contribution to that field, nor is it confined to Dave Rust, although the biography supplies the framework within which the stories, insights, and history of the area are told. This book is largely about the glories and wonders of nature, Utah's dramatic scenery, and a philosophy of wilderness. Swanson makes this book more than just a story about a man and some beautiful places. Author of at least three previous books, most of them on environment and conservation, and an editor of the writings of George C. Fraser, Swanson has great promise as an author, thanks to his meticulous research, his obvious passion for nature, and his writing skill. Swanson brings to-

gether historical research and documentation that not only breathes life into Dave Rust, but he also provides historical context for the time and place. This was a time in which much of the area had recently been mapped by early explorers and settled by Mormon pioneers. It was also during this time (1880s through the 1920s) when few people had access to or were aware of the area's staggering geomorphology. This period was a bridge in time between the first explorers and the tourists who wanted to make a quick trip by automobile to see something spectacular. Swanson portrays the struggles of trying to convince people of the uniqueness of this area and provide access to these marvels.

Rust's boating experience through Glen Canyon between about 1923 through 1939 are amazing by today's standards. His boat was a fourteen-foot-long collapsible canoe with twenty-two-ounce canvas duck fabric covering a steel frame, over-optimistically advertised as puncture proof. Oars were used instead of paddles. Using this type of boat, even on relatively tranquil waters with a few mild rapids and some sand waves, was quite a challenge. Compared to the wide variety of river-running boats of today, Rust's canoes were truly primitive. Swanson's research indicated that Rust may not have been a swimmer, which magnifies the risk of Rust's boating endeavors.

As good as this book is, it would be enhanced with more maps and photographs. The two maps of the area should be supplemented by more detailed maps tracking some of Rust's journeys and helping the reader understand the magnitude and range of these trips. These maps could also show Rust's trips chronologically, showing how his interests evolved and expanded spatially over time. Swanson includes a few photos of Rust and people that traveled with him, but a few more photos of the little-known areas would help readers appreciate its beauty even more. Also, a few index items do not appear on the given pages, such as "Brigham Young Academy," listed on pp. xvii and 17.

I would also have liked more insight into Rust's family life. How did his wife deal with his lengthy absences? For that matter, how had Rust as a child and youth dealt with his own father's absences while mining for extended periods of time? Were Rust's own extended absences from his family a reflection of his own childhood experience? The children are only mentioned when they are born (quite often when Rust was on a trip) or when they are helping him on a trip. Another unexplored area is whether his Mormon upbringing had any influence on his philosophy of nature and to what degree, if any, he remained engaged in Mormonism as an adult.

This book has expanded my views and vistas of southern Utah and northern Arizona. Based on Swanson's descriptions, it seems likely that he has personally traveled many of Dave Rust's routes and has thereby, at least vicariously, experienced some of Rust's life. It would be hard for a reader to

put the book down without feeling at least a mild tug toward traveling into these canyon areas personally.

J. SHERMAN FEHER {jsfeher@yahoo.com}, a planner in Arapahoe County, Colorado, serves on the editorial staff of the *Journal of Mormon History*, and is an enthusiast of Mormon and Western U.S. history and the outdoors.

Rand H. Packer. *A Lion and a Lamb*. Provo, Utah: Spring Creek Book Company, 2007. xiv, 180 pp. Photographs, notes, bibliography. Paper: \$14.95; ISBN: 978-1-932898-73-6

Reviewed by Susan L. Fales

Rand H. Packer, grandson of Willard and Rebecca Bean, has written what he terms a “love story.” Packer not only celebrates the love of his grandparents for each other, but also their love for the Savior and, as a consequence of that love, their willingness to serve for twenty-four years as missionaries for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Palmyra, New York. He also explores the love that slowly developed between the few members of the LDS Church in the Palmyra area and members of the Palmyra community.

I was intrigued by this book as I have recently been deeply involved in trying to understand the experiences of the directors and caretakers who had worked for a number of years at another important LDS Church historical site—the Joseph Smith Birthplace in Vermont. Indeed, some research about Willard and Rebecca Bean had helped me understand the similarities and the differences of the experiences at the Joseph Smith Farm in Palmyra and the Joseph Smith Memorial Farm in South Royalton, Vermont.¹

Unfortunately *A Lion and a Lamb* did not give me what I was looking for, as it is neither a traditional biography nor a traditional family history. Packer concedes that much has already been written about Willard and Rebecca Bean and their mission to Palmyra (1915–39). In fact Rand Packer’s cousin, Vicki Bean Topliff, has written a highly readable biography of Willard Bean, which has been reprinted several times. She also compiled and edited a beautifully printed two-volume autobiography of Willard Washington Bean.² In addition Packer notes a chapter by David Boone, “Palmyra Revisited,” which is eminently useful in giving the basics of the Willard and

¹Susan L. Fales, “‘The Spirit of the Place’: The Clifford Family and the Joseph Smith Memorial Farm,” *Journal of Mormon History* 33 (Fall 2007): 152–86.

²Vicki Bean Topliff, *Willard Bean, the Fighting Parson: The Rebirth of Mormonism*

Rebecca Bean Palmyra story.³ Perhaps the existence of these more conventional biographies moved him to take another direction with his book.

Packer interweaves, with a rather loose attention to chronology, the “love” themes of his story. From the successful, but somewhat unlikely marriage of Willard, a forty-two-year-old widower with two children, to Rebecca aged twenty-three, to their obvious love for their four children, who were all born in the Joseph Smith frame home. Packer’s story makes it easy to gain an appreciation for the struggles of this family through the many hostile years before friendships, respect, and even love, were developed with their neighbors.

The second love theme—their love for the Savior—is clearly demonstrated by their determination and perseverance among a people who took many years to win over. Such “winning” did not necessarily mean baptism into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the usual goal of missionary work. What they did accomplish was to plant the seeds of the Savior’s message as missionaries, to win friends and to acquire some wonderful historic sites for the LDS Church, including the Hill Cumorah, the Martin Harris Farm, and the Peter Whitmer Farm.

In 1939 the farewell for the family that was held at the Lions’ Club of Palmyra, where Willard enjoyed membership, was a far cry from their initial greeting from hostile neighbors in 1915. A framed testimonial stated: “We are doing honor to a family that came to Palmyra some years ago. When they settled on the Joseph Smith farm, some of our super-pious citizens started a tirade with the object of getting rid of them. But as they proved themselves good citizens, we soon learned to tolerate them, then we learned to admire and respect them, and now we love them.” (166)⁴

What Packer has chosen to do in his “love story” is to write what I would call fictionalized biography. He is completely transparent about his approach as he writes in his introduction: “As much as possible, the written dialogue is the exact words spoken by the individual. The rest of the dialogue is created by the author to allow adequate expression and description of the event” (xiv).

in Palmyra, (n.p.: n.p., 1981); (in 1981, her name is given as Vicki Bean Zimmerman; by 1997, the time of the fifth printing, she was using Vicki Bean Toppliff). See also Vicki Bean Toppliff, comp., *Autobiography of Willard Washington Bean: Exploits of the Fighting Parson, 1868–1949* (Orem, Utah: BYU Printing Services for Toppliff, 2003). Toppliff is the daughter of Alvin Bean, the second child of Willard and Rebecca Bean; Rand Packer is a child of Palmyra Bean Packer, their first child.

³David F. Boone, “Palmyra Revisted: The New York Mission of Willard W. and Rebecca P. Bean, 1915–1939,” in *Regional Studies in Latter-day Saint Church History, New York-Pennsylvania*, edited by Alexander L. Baugh and Andrew H. Hedges (Provo, Utah: BYU Department of Church History and Doctrine, 2002), 139–53.

⁴As quoted in Toppliff, *Willard Bean: The Fighting Parson*, 84.

This approach makes for a compelling and energetic story, and in fact, the use of dialogue simply follows the example of Willard Washington Bean's personal history, where he used dialogue extensively. For example Packer immediately seizes the reader's attention as he begins his story:

"Hey, hey, you over there by the fence line, what do ya think you're doing?"

Willard Bean turned toward the hateful voice yelling at him and his wife Rebecca from across the field. Willard watched fearlessly as the man waved a shotgun in the air and ran toward them, sputtering a stream of angry words. Willard instinctively moved between his sweetheart and the approaching man, readying himself for a fight. . . .

"You must be those Mormons that moved into the old Smith place," growled the assailant.

"We are, and we just wanted to climb to the top of the hill, if that's all right?"

"It ain't all right, and there ain't no Mormon gonna set foot on that hill," yelled the man as he brandished his shotgun in Willard's face. "Now why don't ya climb back in that buggy of yours and git outta here before I do some real damage to ya?"

Willard knew his body was no match for buckshot and was content to bide his time until the two of them were more equally matched. (1)

This type of dialogue is used throughout the book. While the dialogue makes the story fast-paced, easy to read, and engaging, it also makes the story fictionalized biography. Historians and family historians trying to understand the emotional and felt "truth" of the story must also try to sort out fact from fiction. Leon Edel in his *Writing Lives: Principia Biographica*, notes that "a biographer's narrative imagination is fettered by the very nature of his enterprise. He must adhere to fact, so far as fact can be determined. He may be judged by the resourcefulness with which he works within prescribed conditions." More graphically Edel speaks of "searching for the figure under the carpet," where we first must study the "figure in the carpet," and then "grasp what lies on the underside."⁵ As a reader, I wanted Packer to sort out fact from fiction and to show me more of the "figure under the carpet."

Having said that, I found the story of Willard and Rebecca Bean fascinating, and Rand Packer's book did send me off looking for more about the Beans and their Palmyra mission. In that regard, he succeeded in piquing my interest. One of the problems I encountered, however, in my further search for material was that *A Lion and a Lamb* does not provide adequate footnotes or bibliography. Particularly troubling were the omission from the bibliography of Vicki Bean Topliff's two-volume autobiography of Willard Washington

⁵Leon Edel, *Writing Lives: Principia Biographica* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1984), 23, 30.

Bean, the fact that he cited Boone's chapter as though it were a book, hampering the ease of finding the full reference, and his frequent citation of documents in the Palmyra Bean Packer Collection but without ever specifying the location. I finally concluded that it was still in the possession of Palmyra Bean Packer. It is, of course, perfectly valid for Packer to target the audience of Bean family descendants and individuals interested in Mormon history, missionary work, and LDS Church historic sites; but even an amateur author writing for a popular audience should be able to expect help from his publisher in meeting minimal standards for such basic scholarly apparatus as notes.

The love story that Packer referred to in his introduction and that formed the theme of his work was strongly represented in this charming book. We could add to his theme of love by noting that the research and the writing of this book was obviously a labor of love for Packer and that the opportunity he had of spending countless hours with his mother, Palmyra, and learning more about his faithful grandparents were priceless to him. Indeed he did a great service to his family and to the Willard and Rebecca Bean story because of his efforts to recover the documents and the memory of his mother and other family members. The fact that this book was published in 2007 and his mother passed away in June 2008 makes his contribution even more compelling in its reminder for all of us not to wait too long to talk to and interview the people central to the telling of our stories.

SUSAN L. FALES {susan_fales@byu.edu}, is retired curator of Digital Historical Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, and served as program co-chair for the Mormon History Association annual meeting, Sacramento, May 2008.

Robert C. Freeman, ed. *Nineteenth-Century Saints at War*. Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 2006. 200 pp. Photographs, illustrations, notes, index. Cloth: \$24.50; ISBN-10 0-8425-2651-X

Reviewed by Curtis R. Allen

Nineteenth-Century Saints at War is the third book of the excellent SAINTS AT WAR series, enjoyed by a wide audience of (surely) both LDS and non-LDS readers, including me. Robert C. Freeman co-authored with Dennis R. Wright the earlier two volumes, which include contributed personal histories and oral histories of 350 men and women who served during World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War.¹ This book is somewhat smaller and substantially different in format: an an-

¹Robert C. Freeman and Dennis A. Wright, *Saints at War: Experiences of Lat-*

thology about the four nineteenth-century U.S. wars with a Mormon component.

The book consists of an introduction (although not so identified) of the Church's relationship to wars in general, "Renounce War and Proclaim Peace: Early Beginnings," by Andrew C. Skinner; "The Church and the Mexican-American War," by Larry C. Porter; "The Church and the Utah War," by Sherman L. Fleek; "The Church and the Civil War," by David F. Boone; and "The Spanish-American and Philippine Wars," by James I. Mangum. Each has its own introduction and a general outline of the conflict detailing how the Church was affected or involved.

I found it difficult to determine this book's audience. A BYU Religious Studies Center website, which lists the book among recent publications for sale at the BYU Bookstore, emphasized individual accounts, the backbone of the first two volumes, with such phrases as ". . . insights on the experiences of men and women who participated. . . various responses of individual Latter-day Saints and the Church itself."² The copy on the jacket continues this theme: ". . . Latter-day Saints in the United States showed their loyalty . . . seeks to honor those faithful soldiers . . ." An earlier *BYU News* article requested relatives of LDS soldiers of the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, and World War I soldiers to contact the Saints at War office.³

Such advertising is accurate for the first two volumes, which focused on first-hand war experiences, including those of many future General Authorities. However, only nine Mormon soldiers' experiences are recounted in any detail in *Nineteenth-Century Saints*, supplemented by a sprinkling of paragraph-length experiences. Similar coverage is given to non-LDS participants such as Lieutenant Colonel Philip St. George Cooke, commander of the Mormon Battalion, and Brevet Brigadier General Albert Sidney Johnston, commander of the Utah Expedition of 1857–58.

Just nine personal experiences hardly seems satisfactory, nor does there seem to have been much effort to mine the journals, military records, biographies, and family histories that could have at least partially filled the vignette void.

Andrew C. Skinner, author of the introductory chapter, is neither a historian nor a biographer but, as director of BYU's Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, is certainly competent to outline the scriptural principles and related General Authority commentaries on war, particularly given the complex and ambiguous foreign wars of contemporary times. A version of this article appeared in *Meridian Magazine*, an online Mormon periodical, and will be included in *Faithful Heroes*, a film being developed by the Saints at War group at BYU. Skinner discusses defensive war using Captain Moroni from the Book of Mormon and a relevant quotation from President David O. McKay (9, 11).

Readers of the *Journal of Mormon History* are well-acquainted with Larry C. Porter, a distinguished professor emeritus of Church history and doctrine at Brigham Young University. His chapter on “The Church and the Mexican-American War” clearly summarizes that war’s political origins and the Mormon Battalion’s involvement. Most Church members have a basic—though limited—understanding of the battalion’s calling and long march but few have any in-depth knowledge, particularly of individual participants. This work will bring the picture into sharper focus. Porter’s vignette of Levi Ward Hancock’s involvement with the battalion will be new information to most readers, since the presence of a member of the First Council of the Seventy on the march has not been previously emphasized. One of the battalion’s guides was John Baptiste Charbonneau (62). Porter omits mentioning that he was the son of Sacajawea and had accompanied the Lewis and Clark Expedition to the West Coast and back, most of the time being carried on his mother’s back as depicted on the bronzed dollar coin in circulation today.

Another interesting addition would have been Daniel W. Jones’s service in the Mexican War as a volunteer and his three-year stay in Mexico before he found his way to Utah and joined the Church. He participated in the Martin Handcart Company’s rescue, spent the winter at Devil’s Gate guarding the baggage left there to make more room in the wagons, participated in the Utah War in the Nauvoo Legion, helped with the first translation of the Book of Mormon into Spanish, and led a life of service and adventure as discussed in his autobiography, *Forty Years among the Indians* (Salt Lake: Juvenile Instructor Office, 1890).

Lieutenant Colonel Sherman L. Fleek, U.S. Army (retired) is a former chief historian for the National Guard Bureau and has published a book on the Mormon Battalion: *History May Be Searched in Vain: A Military History of the Mormon Battalion* (Spokane, Wash.: Arthur H. Clark, 2006). His exposition of “The Church and the Utah War, 1857–58,” summarizes well the complex details. Except for a few journals, most details about troop movements must be gleaned from military records, many of which had deteriorated quite badly before they were microfilmed. Recent publicity associated with the Utah War’s sesquicentennial gave this article particular significance.

A few minor errors should be corrected in the next printing. The additional artillery battery (98) was not from the Fifth Artillery, since that regiment was formed on May 14, 1861, but from Company A of the Fifth Infantry.⁴ Thomas L. Kane met with President James Buchanan in December 1857, not President Polk (100). Camp Floyd was established in July 1858, not

⁴Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army*, 2 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1903), 1:60. The additional artillery battery was under the command of Acting Captain Jesse L. Reno, the

1857 (106). John J. Crittenden was a U.S. Senator from Kentucky, not Secretary of War, when Camp Floyd was renamed in his honor.

Since about 400 members of the Nauvoo Legion were involved in the effort to stop or delay the army, many journals and personal accounts are available in the LDS Church Archives. For example, Henry Ballard could have been added as an example of a Nauvoo Legionnaire. In 1857 he served under Lot Smith in the Nauvoo Legion and escaped from Lieutenant Cuvier Grover's troops on October 26, 1857, with the bullets kicking up dust around them. He is the father of Apostle Melvin J. Ballard and great-grandfather of Apostle M. Russell Ballard.⁵ Another potential addition would have been future Church president Joseph F. Smith. After his return from a mission in Hawaii, he joined the Nauvoo Legion in 1858 and patrolled the trail from Echo Canyon to near Fort Bridger, watching the army at Camp Scott.⁶

David F. Boone, an associate professor of Church history and doctrine at Brigham Young University, wrote the chapter on "The Church and the Civil War." I very much enjoyed reading the introduction to this chapter and the condensed history of the Civil War. His discussions of Lot Smith's and Robert Taylor Burton's cavalry groups, both organized at the request of the U.S. government to guard the mail and telegraph lines, are useful for the LDS reader who wants to become acquainted with the basics of Church involvement in that conflict.

This chapter also pinpoints the Civil War experiences of three other Church members who served in the Civil War before or after they became members. John Davis Evans, a Welsh convert, emigrated to Utah before the Civil War but returned to Missouri and served with the 7th Union Infantry of that state (120). David Harold Peery was a Virginian who had married a Mormon woman but served in a Confederate unit before he was baptized (130). William Rex, an English convert, joined the Union army at age seventeen, according to Flake, and "served in the campaign of General Sherman" in Georgia (123). However, according to military records, he enlisted May 21, 1864, in Company B, 145th Illinois, one of the many 100-day regiments. Its entire service consisted of garrison duty at St. Louis (June 12-September 23, 1864), when it was mustered out. The regiment was never part of Sherman's

Utah Expedition's ordnance officer. His detachment of about twelve men was supplemented from Company A of the Fifth Infantry, and the revised unit with its heavier guns was known as "Reno's siege train."

⁵Henry Ballard, Journal, October 26, 1857, MS 8237-3A, LDS Church History Library.

⁶Joseph Fielding Smith, *Life of Joseph F. Smith: Sixth President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1938), 195.

forces and was never in Georgia.⁷

Bonne writes: "Henry Wells Jackson may have been the earliest Latter-day Saint soldier to die as a result of injury or disease" (142). Jackson, a member of a District of Columbia cavalry unit, was wounded May 8, 1864, in the Richmond-Petersburg Campaign south of the James River and died in Chesapeake Hospital May 28.⁸ However, the unhappy distinction of being the first LDS soldier to die from battle injuries seems to belong to Patrick Brodie, an LDS convert who, with about twenty English LDS soldiers, was serving with the 41st Welsh Regiment in the Crimean War (1854–55).⁹

A significant omission in this chapter is the story of future General Authority John Morgan. He joined the 123rd Illinois Mounted Infantry in 1862 and was a sergeant at Chickamauga with General William S. Rosecrans's Army of the Cumberland. He also saw action at Perryville, Stone's River, and the Atlanta campaign. His commander's report praised him for placing his regiment's colors on the fortifications at Selma, Alabama, in taking that Confederate town. He later came to Utah, joined the Church, and served in the First Council of the Seventy from 1884 to his death in 1894.¹⁰

Lot Smith's cavalry unit guarding the mail and telegraph routes included several interesting personalities that could have been added to this chapter: for example: a farrier named Ira N. Hinckley, grandfather of President Gordon B. Hinckley and builder of Cove Fort in central Utah, and Corporal Seymour B. Young, who served as one of the First Seven Presidents of Seventy (1882–1924).¹¹

The chapter on the Spanish-American War and the Philippine Insurrection illuminates a conflict seldom mentioned in Mormon history. James I. Mangum, an instructor in the Church Educational System, provides new information on the struggle of LDS leaders in determining appropriate in-

⁷Civil War Soldiers and Sailors System, accessed July 28, 2008, for 145th Illinois Volunteer Infantry, <http://www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/regiments.cfm> (accessed June 6, 2008).

⁸Paul R. Stafford, email to Curtis Allen, June 23, 2008, forwarding email from Lynn Fraser containing typescript copy of a letter from Henry Jackson's brother on June 1, 1864, giving the details of his wounding and death.

⁹Wilford Hill LeCheminant, "A Valiant Little Band: LDS Soldiers in the Crimean War," *Ensign*, January 1981, 21.

¹⁰Nicholas G. Morgan Jr., *The Life and Ministry of John Morgan* (Salt Lake City: Historical Research and Publication, 1965), 9–19; see also *Deseret News 2003 Church Almanac* (Salt Lake: Deseret News, 2003), 79; Philip Oliver, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Carmel, Ind.: Guild Press, 1996), CD-ROM No. 51, LDS Family History Library, US/CAN Access Window.

¹¹Margaret M. Fisher, *Utah and the Civil War* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1929), 28.

volvement for Church members.

This chapter provides details of some prominent leaders of the Utah units sent to fight in the Spanish-American War and in the Philippines. Commanding one of the light artillery batteries in the Philippines was Captain Richard W. Young, 1882 West Point graduate and grandson of Brigham Young (164). The first LDS chaplain in the U.S. Army, Elias S. Kimball (167–72), son of Heber C. Kimball, served in a regiment of engineers commanded by Colonel Willard Young, an 1879 West Point graduate, fourth in his class, and a son of President Young. Finally, Private Charles R. Mabey also served in an artillery battery in the Philippines and later became Utah's fifth governor (181, 185). Omitted is any reference to Sergeant Harry W. Young (Brigham's nephew), and Corporal John G. Young (grandnephew), who were killed in action in the Philippines while serving in one of the Utah light artillery batteries.¹²

Although *Nineteenth-Century Saints at War* does not fulfill the promise of its title to offer details about Saints involved in these wars, it has a place in the SAINTS AT WAR series. That place is in defining the Church's scriptural and historic relationship to war itself and to the specific wars of the Church's early years. Still, more careful historical editing would have increased the book's value while the addition of more military experiences by nineteenth-century Saints would have elevated reader interest.

CURTIS R. ALLEN {curtis_allen@comcast.net} is a retired professional engineer and independent historian with interests in the soldiers of the Utah War and their connections with the Civil War and Indian wars. He recently completed a two-year Church service mission in the LDS Church History Library.

Richard Lyman Bushman. *Mormonism: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008. 120 pp. Photographs, 12 endnotes, three pages of "Further Reading." Paper: \$11.95. ISBN: 978-0-19-531030-6

Reviewed by Edward Leo Lyman

This is a part of a series of some 165 volumes published in the past dozen years, with another thirty-five projected soon. The series includes multiple titles from science, philosophy, and biographies of important world figures. While it includes treatments of Christianity, Islam, and Ju-

¹²Charles R. Mabey, *The Utah Batteries: A History* (Salt Lake City: Daily Reporter Company, Printers, 1900), 125.

daism, the volume on Mormonism appears to be the first on a specific Christian denomination.

While surprisingly comprehensive in the subject matter treated, it exhibits impressive clarity, with some new insights even for veteran Mormon scholars. For example, Richard Bushman explains that LDS beliefs are partly a theology, but also “just as much a sense of history,” an interface he is perhaps better qualified to treat than anyone else in or outside of the Church. As Joseph Smith’s best-known biographer, he stresses Christ’s pre-eminence as the central figure in the church named for him, with Joseph having warned his followers not to idolize their mortal leader. Bushman explained that the Prophet restored “Biblical Christianity [as opposed to common] Credal Christianity” (4). While fitting the crucial series of Restoration developments into other visionary experiences of Smith’s time, Bushman states that the Prophet Joseph saw himself as completing a work that had never previously been fully realized. Bushman’s grasp of Joseph Smith’s life is a great asset to his clarity in explanations; but this work is no repeat biography. Rather, it is a most useful overview of many aspects of the Church.

Part of this work was a “reconceptualization of God” (6) the Father as a being separate from Jesus Christ or the Holy Ghost, though all were harmonious in their shared purpose of helping save humankind. Bushman is doubtless correct that “no single doctrine distinguishes Mormonism more sharply than belief in direct revelation” (27), a subject Church members may have difficulty explaining, but which they mainly accept as an often-gradual process coming mainly through personal inspiration.

Bushman calls the Book of Mormon Joseph Smith’s “calling card to the world” (23–24) and describes it as best understood as an elaboration of the Bible, extending the history of Israel to the western hemisphere. Discussing some of the process of “translating” the golden plates through inspiration, he states: “No one who knew [Joseph Smith] believed he could have written the book himself” (23). Similarly, Bushman considered the Doctrine and Covenants sections consisting of individual divine revelations through him as “evidence of a growing self-awareness about Joseph’s prophetic role” (24). He placed immense stock in these revelations, which were, in his mind, the foundation of his authority and the source of Church policy. Bushman stresses that Joseph did not debate other beliefs but simply announced the new doctrines he received through his divine source.

One of the most useful aspects of the book is its excellent discussion of Latter-day Saint temples, the work done in them, and their purpose, with appropriate observation of the limits imposed on this topic. Bushman describes who is qualified to enter (many Church members and no non-Mormons are not) and correctly notes: “The temples represent the culmination of Mormon life as well as Mormon worship” (55).

Another valuable insight that many Church members may not have noticed is that, in recent years, more LDS leaders and members have begun talking more about the grace of Christ, thereby pulling back from an earlier entrenched aversion to the prevalent Calvinist doctrines that Church spokesmen had so fervently opposed in the nineteenth century. Bushman implies, but does not state, that the Church has more fully adopted the position expressed in 2 Nephi 25:23: "It is by grace we are saved, after all we can do."

In Bushman's excellent treatment of plural marriage, he correctly observes that it "is by far more difficult than any other aspect of the church to assimilate into modern Mormons' self-understanding," adding that they "have trouble explaining to themselves why the practice was instituted" (86, 90). Bushman emphasizes Joseph Smith's professed reluctance to enter the practice and his claims that the Lord pressed the practice upon him. Bushman also stresses that neither current Church leaders nor lay Mormons "show any disposition to return to polygamy" (91). While regarded as a test of devotion in the nineteenth century, polygamy is one test, he asserts, that most modern Mormons are not sure they could have passed themselves (91). On the related subject of Joseph Smith's plural wives, he disagrees with some other (unnamed) observers by claiming that, while the Prophet sexually consummated some of these marriages, sex was clearly not his primary motive. Rather it was mainly aimed at extending his eternal familial relationships: "He did not romance women in order to persuade them but [rather he] explained doctrine" (87). I consider Bushman's treatment of this subject here as actually better than his discussion of it in *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling*.

The *Short Introduction* treats the seldom-discussed discontinuance of the long-stressed gathering to Zion. Bushman summarizes: "[The] meaning of Zion has changed." Now the Church offers refuge from the distractions of the outside world by inviting "people into the multiple Zions in local congregations throughout the world" (47-48, 107).

Bushman's dealing with the once-major issue of blacks and priesthood ordination is particularly well done. He acknowledges that Joseph Smith ordained some African Americans and that it was Brigham Young who completed the ban, which may have partly started during Joseph's time. He correctly points to the twentieth-century problems of the expanding proselytizing in Brazil and the uncertainty of the ethnic origin of many of its citizens as a major motivation for President Spencer W. Kimball's determination to resolve the issue (110-12). Had there not been such severe length constraints imposed by this series, Bushman might have offered a similarly illuminating treatment of like pressures arising at the same time in Africa, particularly Nigeria, and the opposition President David O. McKay earlier en-

countered from other members of the Church hierarchy as he demonstrated interest in lifting the prohibition on black ordinations.

Another refreshing aspect of the little book is the author's discussion of the book of Abraham in the Pearl of Great Price, particularly the fact that the Egyptian scrolls Joseph Smith used to generate the now-canonized account, when translated by modern Egyptologists, found no correlation between the scroll text and the book of Abraham. Bushman explains that the scholars used only scraps of the documents and refers to other Church scholars who theorize that the scrolls were a stimulus for revelation about Abraham rather than actual writings by the ancient patriarch (70). Bushman also mentions similarities between Smith's accounts and more recently discovered Abrahamic era texts (unavailable to Joseph) that present themes and stories resembling the Prophet's writings on the subject (69–71).

While sympathetic to the length requirements, I regret the abbreviated treatment given to the Church's amazing transition into a world-wide institution. Also omitted is a discussion of the correlation program, instituted partly as a result of pressures arising from such expansion and the resulting evolution of national origins of men called to the Church hierarchy.

Only one historical glitch from outside Bushman's areas of expertise slightly detracts from his notable work. In discussing the anti-polygamy raid by the federal government in the late 1880s and early 1890s, he implies that all Mormons were denied the right to vote, hold office, and sit on juries. Idaho Mormons (both polygamists and monogamists) suffered these restrictions, but in Utah, they were imposed only on polygamists. These limitations were part of the proposed Collum-Struble Bill, that would have applied nationally, but the bill was never passed. Another slight misstep to which many observers have recently become more sensitive is the unfortunate use of the term "blackest" to denote extreme sinners (p. 76).

Near the book's conclusion, Bush explains:

The story begins with a God striving to save his children, and in the end he brings all but a few of them into a kingdom of glory. Mormons feel a strong obligation to go along with God, to make the most of their time on earth, to acquire intelligence and knowledge, and to help everyone else along the same path. It is an activist attitude. Salvation requires exertion and constructive effort. . . . The same activist stance carries over to the next life, which they envision as an extension of what happens here. (115)

This masterful summary will certainly become a classic explication of Latter-day Saint doctrine, history, and practice; Though brief, it will stand as the best introduction much of the world is likely to find available on the subject. All readers, even those familiar in greater detail with Mormon history, will benefit from perusing this little book.

EDWARD LEO LYMAN {lionman011@earthlink.net}, a longtime high school and college history instructor, is now retired and residing in Silver Reef, Utah, where he continues to research and write Utah and Mormon history. His biography of Amasa Mason Lyman is forthcoming from the University of Utah Press.

Amy Oaks Long, David J. Farr, and Susan Easton Black. *Lorin Farr: Mormon Statesman*. Orem, Utah: Millennial Press, 2007. v, 353 pp. Photographs, notes, bibliography, index. Cloth: \$29.95; ISBN 978-1-932597-51-6

Reviewed by Linda Lindstrom

According to the authors, Lorin Farr was “to Weber County [Utah] as Brigham Young was to Utah” (iii). Born July 27, 1820, in Waterford, Vermont, he moved with his family at age seven to Charleston, Vermont, where they encountered LDS missionaries in 1832.

“Young Lorin believed the testimony of these two elders the first time he heard them preach in the one-room schoolhouse,” assert the authors. “After that May afternoon in 1832, Lorin’s faith in the restored gospel began to grow. Before accepting the call to be baptized, Lorin often walked to a shady bowery he had built in a nearby grove. Here he prayed for divine confirmation and received a testimony that never shook, even in the face of intense persecution and severe trials” (15).

Farr, along with his parents and a brother, was baptized in the spring of 1832. In September 1837, the Farr family moved to Kirtland, Ohio; and in the spring of 1838, Lorin and his brother left their parents in Kirtland and went to Far West, Missouri. Lorin lived with Joseph and Emma Smith for six months until his parents arrived from Kirtland. This contact established a close relationship between young Farr and the Prophet. In 1840, after the Farris moved to Nauvoo, “Joseph considered Lorin his confidential and trusted friend. Lorin was constantly by Joseph’s side, often seen arm in arm as they walked the streets of Nauvoo” (28). The earlier Pardoe biography (discussed below) is the only source for this statement.

Loren served two short missions from Nauvoo. There is no mention of his reaction to the succession crisis. On January 1, 1845, he married Nancy Bailey Chase, then moved to Winter Quarters in Nebraska and on to Utah in August 1847. In 1850, Brigham Young called the twenty-nine-year-old Farr to be the Church’s leader in northern Utah. For the remainder of his life, he played a significant role in most Weber County happenings.

Farr served as president of Weber Stake for nineteen years, as mayor of Ogden for twenty years, and as a member of the Utah Territorial Legislature (no term of service specified). Although involved in numerous business ventures, he was primarily concerned with freighting, lumber, grain, and woolen mills. He was also instrumental in bringing the railroad to Ogden.

Farr married five plural wives and had a total of thirty-nine children. He served about six months as a missionary in Europe (1870–71) and was called as a patriarch in Weber Stake in 1883 where he served until the end of his life. “When asked in later years what he would like to do with his time, Lorin said that he would do temple work and go to funerals. Lorin did, in fact, remain involved in temple work until the end—he worked in the temple on January 9, 1909, just three days before his death at age eighty-nine” in Hot Springs, Weber County. The authors conclude, “This devotion is evidence of his strong testimony of temple work and its importance in overcoming death and linking families together, doctrines he strived [sic] to teach his family and others. Because of Lorin’s conviction and example, his family continued to be active temple-goers long after his death” (229).

This biography was designed to replace *Lorin Farr Pioneer* (1953) by grandson T. Earl Pardoe. As additional resources became available, David J. Farr, a descendant, states: “I had long contemplated writing a book on Lorin Farr, using current research that T. Earl Pardoe did not have access to when he wrote his biography in 1953” (iv). He received initial assistance from Susan Easton Black, professor of Church history and doctrine at Brigham Young University, in organizing, writing, and editing this book. She then turned the task over to Amy Oaks Long, a family history instructor at BYU and the first of the three authors listed on the title page.

The biography’s announced purpose is to tell of Farr’s significance to his family, the Church, and to northern Utah. The book is divided into eight sections and further subdivided into chapters. Five sections are devoted to various aspects of Farr’s life; two sections include short biographies of his six wives and children; and the final section contains appendices.

The book is written in a straightforward style that concentrates on the narrative and inspirational elements of Farr’s life. It has a handsome cover featuring a portrait of Farr. It also contains numerous photographs and reproductions of documents. The appendices are a timeline of Farr’s life and Farr documents in the L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, and the LDS Church Library. The bibliography and index are, unconventionally, identified as “appendices.”

The book is a loving biography of Lorin Farr. He appears to be the perfect Mormon, business leader, and civic leader. His plural wives all seemed to get along well. If there were any inconsistencies in his character or controversies in his life, they are absent from the pages of the book. The

result is a well-burnished and not quite believable portrait of a sterling character mature far beyond his years. For instance, at age eleven, he immediately recognized that the LDS Church was the restored gospel (13). At seventeen he was “an influential figure in the [Church’s] growth” and helped to plan and lay out the city of Adam-ondi-Ahman (20). At twenty he was Joseph Smith’s constant companion and confidant, studying the city council sections of the Nauvoo charter and making suggestions for improvement (26). The only flaw (and it would not have been seen as a flaw in his own time) is that, given all of his outside interests, he spent little time with his family.

Although the announced reason for this biography is the availability of new sources, the authors cite few primary sources, instead relying heavily on the Pardoe biography and other secondary sources. The pages given on the table of contents are incorrect from Chapter 2 on. The chapters are all fairly short and do not go into depth on any aspect of his life. While the book is a good general overview of Farr’s life, a detailed analysis of his contributions to northern Utah awaits a future biographer.

LINDA LINDSTROM {llindstrom@csolutions.net}, recently retired from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, is an avid student of Mormon and Utah history. She holds a bachelor’s degree in management from Brigham Young University and a master of public administration degree from the University of Utah.

BOOK NOTICES

George W. Givens. *The Language of the Mormon Pioneers*. Springville, Utah: Bonneville Books, 2003. xv, 273 pp. Illustrations, footnotes, bibliography. Paper: \$16.95; ISBN 1-55517-676-3

Connoisseurs of Mormon history will have no doubt experienced the frustration of encountering an unfamiliar word in a journal or letter. “Even historians cannot be expected to be familiar with all the words used by our pioneer forefathers and foremothers,” observes George W. Givens, “thus supporting the need for a reference such as this” (xiv).

Although the author does not claim that every word in a pioneer’s vocabulary appears in this book, it is a useful working dictionary that not only serves as a practical reference tool, but is also a pleasure to peruse. Nearly every entry is accompanied by a quotation from either a Saint or a geographic contemporary. These quotations “will perhaps offer a little deeper insight into Mormon history itself, especially if the footnotes are used to gain a more complete understanding of the specific setting,” suggests the author (xv).

It is interesting to see in what con-

text each word or phrase was used. Many words we use today had very different meanings for the Mormon pioneers. For example, “toilet” meant “a person’s dress or style of dress” (254), not an essential piece of bathroom furniture. Although “light” retains familiar meanings of today, it could also mean “animal lungs” or “glass panes in windows” (143).

Interesting and seldom-used contemporary characterizations are “gormandizer,” meaning “a greedy or ravenous person” (110), while a “popinjay” was “a vain, supercilious person” (188), and a “swain” was “a young man,” usually courting a girl (242).

Givens’s sources are journals, letters, newspaper articles, talks, and lectures. He compiled the definitions from period-specific dictionaries.

Michael B. Oren. *Power, Faith, and Fantasy: America in the Middle East, 1776 to the Present*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2007. xxii, 778 pp. Photographs, chronology, maps, notes, bibliography,

index. Cloth: \$35.00; ISBN 13:978-0-393-05826-0

According to the flyleaf, Michael Oren is a senior fellow at the Shalem Center (no indication of this center's focus), holds degrees in Middle East history from Columbia and Princeton and has been a visiting lecturer at Harvard and Yale. His last book, *Six Days of War: June 1967 and the Making of the Modern Middle East*, was a *New York Times* bestseller.

Oren introduces his book as follows, "In spite of the paramount importance of the Middle East, Americans remain largely unaware of their country's rich and multidimensional history in the area. A majority of them seem to believe that the United States became active in the Middle East shortly after the Second World War, with the advent of the Arab-Israeli conflict or the tapping of Saudi oil. Many would respond incredulously to the claim that relations with a region so physically remote—some thirty five hundred miles separate New York from the closest Middle Eastern city, Sidi Ifni in Morocco—could have influenced the drafting of the Constitution and the creation of the U.S. Navy. Most would be surprised to learn that Americans and Middle Eastern peoples have met not only on oil fields and battlefields but also in the spheres of art, education, and philanthropy. Americans built the first modern university in the Middle East and both the Star Spangled Banner and the Statue of Liberty originated in America's Middle

Eastern experience" (10). This book, indeed, fills the need for a historical account of the United State's interaction with the Middle East from 1776 to the present.

Oren chooses three themes—power, faith, and fantasy—as a framework within which to describe the historical interaction between the United States and the Middle East. But, more importantly, he uses the stories of people to make the history come to life.

He equates the Middle East with the "Orient" which is larger than our current general conception of the Middle East, covering from Iran in the east to Morocco in the west and from Greece in the north to Northern Africa and Yemen in the south.

Mormonism appears at five points:

1. Orson Hyde, sent by "John Smith" (sic) to Jerusalem, erected an altar and pleaded with God to "restore the kingdom unto Israel—raise up Jerusalem as its capital, and constitute [Oren misquotes this word as "continue"] her people a distinct nation and government" (142; compare *History of the Church*, 4:457).

2. Warder Cresson, once a Mormon (also a Quaker and Shaker), served briefly as the U.S. consul in Jerusalem. He spent much of his life helping Jews as an American "restorationist" (142–43)

3. William Wing ("Old Blizzards") Loring, is a former Confederate officer, whom Oren describes as "a one-armed survivor of battles against Comanche, Mexi-

cans, and Mormons.” Loring and other noted officers of the Union and Confederate armies were asked by General William Tecumseh Sherman in 1869 to help advise the Egyptian Army. Loring was chosen to lead the advisers as inspector general (194).

4. Oren describes George Adams as an actor who converted to Mormonism in 1844, became acquainted with Orson Hyde, and desired to copy Hyde’s pilgrimage to Jerusalem but was “excommunicated for lewdness and embezzlement” (220). He formed his own Church of the Messiah, recruited 156 people to go to Palestine in 1856, and changed his name to George Washington Joshua Adams. Oren goes into some detail about the steamer trip from Boston to Jaffa and the struggles of Adams’s group in the Holy Land. Some sixty people died of exposure and sickness, approximately fifty returned to the United States, but forty persons remained in Jaffa. Ultimately, most of the buildings in the settlement known as “Almalikan”—the Americans’ Place—were purchased by German Adventists (225–26). Oren commendably cites Reed M. Holmes’s *The Forerunners* (Independence: Herald House, 1981), along with a handful of other sources, including a rather exotic primary source, “Petition of Colonists to Governor Chamberlain,” August 31, 1867, National Library of Israel, Manuscript Archive, Miscellaneous File 519.

5. William Henry Seward, a former Senator and Secretary of State, went to the Middle East for his first trip in the late 1850s, followed by a

second trip in the late 1860s. According to Oren, while Seward was in Egypt he saw “multiple wives and African slaves [that] reminded him, unfavorably, of Mormonism and the Confederacy” (232).

According to Oren’s sketch of his book’s organization, the first twenty-six “chapters examined in detail the diverse ways in which the United States has interacted with the Middle East since 1776. The purpose was to reveal the richness and substance of that history and to explore the foundations of America’s involvement in the region today. Another goal was to fill a gap in the literature on the relationship between the United States and the Middle East in the 150 years separating the Revolutionary War from the end of World War II” (505). The final two chapters focus on “the past six decades, from the advent of the Cold War to the war in Iraq, a time of intense American engagement in the Middle East.” In contrast to the relatively scarce sources on the 1776–1945 period, “vast quantities” of publications and “many fine studies” deal with the latter period. Oren provides an overview of “crucial turning points and trends” with the goal “to deepen the understanding of the nature of U.S.-Middle East relations” (505–6).

Unfortunately, this book is marred throughout by sloppy editing and proofing. Extensive notes are grouped in general clusters of citations, making it sometimes difficult to identify the source of a particular item. Particularly puzzling is

the fact that Oren's only citation for the Orson Hyde journey to Jerusalem is Truman Madsen's chapter, "The Holy Land and the Mormon Restoration" in the anthology, *With Eyes toward Zion*, Vol. 2, edited by Moshe Davis. Yet a comparison of Madsen's chapter with Oren's shows that the portions of Hyde's prayer that Oren quotes are different from the portions of Hyde's prayer that Madsen quotes. Presumably Oren had access to more information and material on Hyde but cited only Madsen's work (628, 142). Such slippages raise the reader's suspicions that Oren may have taken undue literary license or been less than reliable in his use of sources.

Oren provides a good overview of the subject, but the interested reader may need to backtrack on notes, cross-checking with other sources to determine the veracity of the information in this book.

John R. Llewellyn. *Polygamy under Attack: From Tom Green to Brian David Mitchell*. Scottsdale, Ariz.: Agreka, 2004. 177 pp. Photographs. Notes. Paper: \$15.95; ISBN: 1-888106-76-X

This book summarizes the current state of contemporary polygamy as practiced by Fundamentalist Mormons. Llewellyn's purpose is to acquaint the public with "the practices of each of the Mormon Fundamentalist groups, what they do, and *why they say they do it*. Organized anti-polygamy groups need public support

as they press the government to find realistic solutions" (7; emphasis his). Llewellyn also urges readers "to understand that the vast majority of polygamists do not represent a criminal threat to the peace and dignity of American principles" (8).

The book clarifies the difference between the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the Mormon Fundamentalists (11-13). Llewellyn provides a brief history of how the Mormon Fundamentalists branched off from the Mormon Church but does not deal in any major way with pre-Manifesto (1890) plural marriage.

The book includes detailed profiles of each major Mormon Fundamentalist group and major independent factions: the Corporation of the President of the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (FLDS), the Corporation of the Presiding Elder of Apostolic United Brethren (AUB), the True and Living Church of Jesus Christ of Saints of the Last Days (TLC), the Righteous Branch of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, the Church of the Firstborn of the Fullness of Times, the Independent Mormon Fundamentalists, the Christian Polygamists, the Red Cedar Corporation, the Unified Industries, the Communities of Apostolic United Brethren, the Big Valley Credit Union, and the Latterday Church of Christ (Kingston Co-op Group). Llewellyn analyzes fraud in the AUB and the TLC (44-66). He also deals with recent charges of statu-

tory rape and the abuse of the welfare system (67–108).

Llewellyn proposes some solutions for the treatment of polygamy abuses such as decertifying policemen or other public officials who have plural wives, putting safe houses or courthouses in or very near established polygamist groups to provide help to abused women, and decriminalizing polygamy. Llewellyn includes a disclaimer concerning the latter option: “Decriminalization will not *automatically* open up the world for women and children in the more oppressed polygamist societies like Colorado City, because polygamist leaders will view decriminalization as a threat to their power structure. However, decriminalization would have a positive effect on the next generation. The more open minded government becomes, the more curiosity the children will have about the outside world. The children in Colorado City are already cognizant of the tyrannical propensities of their leaders. Decriminalization will be like opening welcome doors to mainstream society” (142; emphasis his).

Llewellyn, a retired lieutenant in the Salt Lake County sheriff’s office, was at one point a member of the LDS Church. He then joined the Apostolic United Brethren, which he left when “the leadership of Apostolic United Brethren re-postured, claiming ‘all’ the priesthood keys and pretending they were the sole conduit to a celestial exaltation” (171). According to Llewellyn’s biography he is “now a muck-

raker and freelance writer, is recognized as an expert on Mormon Fundamentalism and polygamy. He is also the lead investigator in a lawsuit against polygamist James D. Harmston and his True and Living Church . . . as well as a consultant for the Attorney General’s Office” (172).

Kathryn R. Abajian. *First Sight of the Desert: Discovering the Art of Ella Peacock*. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2005. 142 pp. Painting reproductions, notes. Paper: \$21.95; ISBN 0-87480-799-9

First Sight of the Desert does not, in fact, begin with Kathryn Abajian’s first view of Utah’s sparse and arid landscape. It does, however, open with the experience that opened her eyes in more ways than one. The book is named after Abajian’s favorite Peacock painting. The title’s real significance lies in the fact that the first time Abajian saw Peacock’s *First Sight of the Desert* was the first time she appreciated that “it was a hope-filled image of a land that had, until that moment, seemed desolate to me” (1). It wasn’t until 1985, after Abajian had been married to a Utahn for several years, that she came to appreciate the state’s countryside through Peacock’s artistry. The encounter changed the rest of her life.

Ella Gilmer Smyth Peacock was born in 1905 in Pennsylvania’s green and restricted landscapes, took painting classes starting in her

teenage years, had a career as a draftsman in Pennsylvania, married Bill Peacock in 1939, and raised their child on a farm in Pennsylvania. Both Ella and Bill converted to Mormonism in the late 1960s and moved to Utah almost immediately after when Ella was in her fifties. As Abajian put it, “the wilderness of the West [was] fundamental to her identity and inhabiting it [was] her personal destiny” (59). Peacock lived in Spring City in central Utah for more than twenty years, long after Bill died. Although she never felt that she “belonged” in the conservative Mormon community, she loved the desert which became the inspiration for many of her best works.

Abajian also tells her own story. Born in California, she converted to the LDS faith at twenty-one, enrolled at BYU, and married a Utah Mormon. After they graduated, Abajian and her husband moved to California where they started raising their children, coming to Utah once a year to visit her husband’s family. But Abajian became disenchanted with the faith and the constraints of a marriage, ultimately deciding to leave both. This process coincided with encountering Ella and her art. She says of their first meeting, “I didn’t know it then, but I was ready for someone like Ella. . . . I had just met a woman who realized her purpose and who seemed to possess and inhabit her life fully—a woman doing what she wanted” (9). It was Peacock’s sense of purpose that Abajian craved for herself and couldn’t find within her religion or her family.

After Abajian’s divorce, she devoted herself to researching Peacock’s life and art, she found that she, like the artist, craved an independent life. This book recounts each woman’s story, backgrounded by Peacock’s highly individual art. Peacock’s deliberate solitude was both a strength and a weakness as far as her art is concerned. Abajian sees Peacock’s personal strength, solidarity, and depth of emotion in her paintings, but it also cut her off from colleagues. For example, at Robert Redford’s invitation, Peacock exhibited nine paintings at his first (1984) Utah Artists at Sundance show but declined a follow-up invitation the next year (89). Abajian obtained the information for this biography only after years and years of interviews. While Abajian never relocated permanently to Utah, she found ways to spend large parts of every year in Utah near Peacock.

Max E. Robinson and Clay M. Robinson. *Echoes from the Cliffs of Capitol Reef National Park*. West Jordan, Utah: Ol’ Gran’pa Stories, 2004. 64 pp. Photographs by Hattie Mulford Robinson, Eckersley family, and Utah State Historical Society. No price designated. No ISBN. For ordering information, contact: Ol’ Gran’pa Stories, 9285 S. 4000 West, West Jordan, UT 84088-8921 (801) 280-0682.

Echoes from the Cliffs of Capitol Reef

National Park is a collection of reminiscences from the two brother-authors, who grew up in what is now that park. Max and Clay split their remembrances into seven short essays written in an informal conversational style that recreates their difficult yet peaceful upbringing during the 1920s and 1930s. While Mormonism is mentioned several times, it serves only for contextual clarity and is not a focus of the collection.

“A Trip with the Mail” describes how the boys, at ages three and five, traveled the forty-mile mail run between Torrey and Caineville with their father, the two boys always “on the lookout for outlaws, mountain lions and, more realistically, bighorn sheep” (5–24). “Caineville” tells the heartbreaking yet hopeful story of Max and Clay’s parents starting over in a new town after a jealous act of arson claims their previous ranch home (27–37). Clay Robinson juxtaposes the telling of the story against a return trip to Caineville with his mother more than forty years later, and quotes extensively from her own recollections of the tragedy.

“Echoes of Childhood Fruita” depicts the boys’ childhood school where their mother was the teacher of all eight grades and where four-year-old Clay served as the school’s “mascot” (39–43). Clay also uses this moment to reflect on how present-day “camp grounds and parks” have taken the place of old family homesteads and orchards (41).

“Let There Be Light” praises George Teasdale Eckersley for

bringing electricity to Torrey and Wayne counties—“of course, with considerable assistance from God” (45–51). “Ghosts of Blue Valley” shares the story of Clay’s two miracles during his mission of delivering an old brown mare to Hanksville (52–59), followed by two shorter essays, “Mustangs” and “Responsibility at a Tender Age” (60–64). Illustrated with both period and recent photographs, the text is also accompanied with several sincere poems written by the authors’ father, Ellis Robinson.

William Taylor, *Rescued by Mao*. Sandy, Utah: Silverleaf Press, 2007, 303 pp. Photographs, drawings, map. Cloth: \$24.95; ISBN 13:978-1-933317-87-8

Rescued by Mao is the story of William Taylor, a Latter-day Saint who was hired in July 1941 as a civilian construction worker on Wake Island. Because of Wake Island’s strategic location, it was being built up to serve as a refueling station; and as rumors of war in the Pacific increased, it began to be fortified. On December 8, 1941, Wake Island was attacked by the Japanese. (The attack was actually the same day as the attack on Pearl Harbor, but Wake Island is on the other side of the International Date Line.) The first battle for Wake Island resulted in victory for the United States. However, the Japanese attacked again on December 23, the Americans surrendered, and the military

personnel and civilian workers were taken as prisoners of war. Taylor was transported to Woosung POW Camp in China in January 1942 and then to Kiangwan POW Camp near Shanghai in December 1942.

Taylor's chance for escape came on May 11, 1945, when he was being transported to another camp by train. Using stolen pliers, he forced a window open, and he and another POW jumped from the slow-moving train. Taylor's companion broke his leg in the jump and was recaptured, leaving Taylor alone in China.

Three days later, Taylor was captured by the Chinese Communist Army. He was treated kindly by army personnel and traveled with them by foot and horseback across China: "As I was walking, my thoughts drifted back over the past three and a half years and I was amazed and humbled to realize how fortunate I was to be alive. Musing on these thoughts, I stopped and decided to kneel and give thanks to my Heavenly Father. I really poured out my heart to my older brother, Jesus Christ, recognizing the many, many blessings I had received during the war, prison camp, and the miraculous events since my escape from the Japanese. As I was praying, I felt as if there was somebody, the Spirit probably, nearby. It was a marvelous feeling" (266). (This prayer is the closest Taylor comes to acknowledging his Mormonism, although otherwise unexplained references to "Primary," etc., are sufficient clues for Mormon readers.)

When Taylor and his companions in the Communist Army were

about 350 miles from Yen-an, he was allowed to call the American outpost at Yen-an. On June 27, 1945, he was transported by the U.S. Army to the American outpost at Yen-an.

On July 5, 1945, while Taylor was at the Yen-an airfield awaiting a transport back to the United States, a sedan approached containing two Chinese military officers. One was introduced to Taylor as Chairman Mao, Communist leader of China. Taylor and Mao talked through an interpreter and Mao agreed to have his photo taken with Taylor. This photograph (perhaps color-enhanced) appears on the cover. Three weeks later, Taylor reached the United States, three and a half years after being taken prisoner by the Japanese.

Vione Schow. *Phay Vanneth: Dead or Alive?* Springville, Utah: Bonneville Books, 2002. xi, 185 pp. Paper: \$12.95; ISBN 1-55517-605-4

Vione Schow's *Phay Vanneth: Dead or Alive* is a novel about a Cambodian family, shattered by conflict in their home country, who have sought refuge in Utah. The book's main character, Vanna, a young woman of about twenty years, was separated from her identical twin, Vanneth, when they were about ten years old, while fleeing from Cambodia to Thailand. Her parents were killed. She, her aunt, cousin, and younger sister joined

the LDS Church.

Vanna still hopes that Vanneth is alive and that they can be reunited. Driven by this strong desire, she starts work at an Asian refugee agency about a year after reaching Utah, helping other Cambodian families adjust to American culture, living arrangements, education, and employment. She also uses these contacts to seek information about her sister. The young Cambodian man in whom she is romantically interested, Keo Ly, goes to Thailand, ostensibly on a business trip, but actually to find Vanna's sister, a quest in which he is successful. The two sisters are united at the book's end.

The author, Vione Schow, served as a Relief Society president in an LDS Cambodian branch in West Valley City, Utah. Her novel pro-

vides insights into Cambodian culture, typical living conditions, and their terrifying escape experiences.

During an early scene, when Vanna and Keo Ly are getting to know each other, she explains that she doesn't know if her sister is dead or alive. He responds:

"That has to be worse than knowing everyone in your family is dead. I saw my older brother killed by a plastic bag tied over his head and his hands tied behind his back. I was in prison and suffered some terrible cruelties," Keo Ly told her.

"The hardest thing I have ever had to do was leave my twin sister there, but I had to care for Vanthy. She was just a little child at the time," Vanna explained. . . .

Vanna and Keo understood each other's feelings. (41)


THE PAPERS

Joseph Smith Papers will rank among the most important in the history of American religion.”

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND EDITOR,
JOSEPH SMITH PAPERS CENTER AT YALE UNIVERSITY

...erant preacher, fund-raiser, farmer, scholar, disciplinarian, litigant, commander in chief, family member as well as visionary, healer, and statesman. These roles come vividly to life in this volume, expertly edited according to the highest standards.”

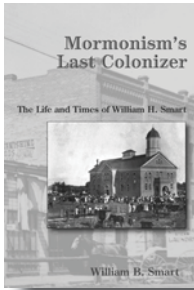
ELIZABETH LUCE MOORE PROFESSOR
OF HISTORY, YALE COLLEGE



...ers is a comprehensive collection of documents, much like the Jefferson and Adams Papers—that will publish, according to the highest standards of scholarly and documentary editing, the original documents created by Joseph Smith and his associates during the work he directed. These documents eventually constitute

Volume 1: 1832-1839

JosephSmithPapers.org



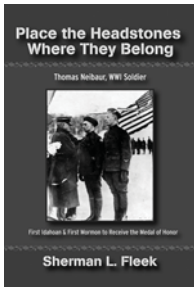
Mormonism's Last Colonizer

The Life and Times of William H. Smart
William B. Smart

Included with the biography is a searchable CD containing William H. Smart's extensive journals, a monumental personal record of Mormondom and its transitional period from nineteenth-century cultural isolation into twentieth-century national integration.

\$44.95, cloth, 6 x 9

Includes CD of Smart journals
ISBN 978-0-87421-722-3



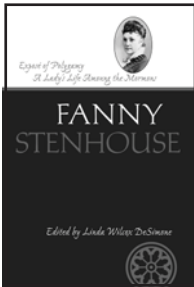
Place the Headstones Where They Belong

Thomas Neibaur, WWI Soldier
Sherman L. Fleek

After a long journey from Sugar City, Idaho, to the Argonne Forest, France, during World War I, young Thomas Neibaur found himself in the core of the American Expeditionary Force's most important offensive.

\$28.95, cloth, 5-1/2 x 8-1/2,

photos and maps
ISBN 978-0-87421-695-0



Life Writings of Frontier Women Series, Vol. 10

Exposé of Polygamy

A Lady's Life Among the Mormons
Fanny Stenhouse

Linda Wicox DeSimone, ed.

After the 1872 publication of *Exposé of Polygamy*, Fanny Stenhouse became a celebrity in the cultural wars between Mormons and much of America. Stenhouse's critique of plural marriage, Brigham Young, and Mormonism was also a sympathetic look at Utah's people and honest recounting of her life.

\$29.95 cloth

approx. 200 pages, 6 x 9, photos

ISBN 978-0-87421-713-1

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS

WWW.USU.EDU/USUPRESS 1-800-621-2736