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Cover illustration: Castle Gate, in Price Canyon, Utah, ca. 1898. Mary Ann Burnham Freeze, who traveled through the canyon in 1892, called it “a grand sight” (see p. 131). Detroit Photographic Company. LOT 13923, no. 232, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, DC 20540, <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print>.

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LETTER

More on Elijah Ables

Additional research on Elijah Ables provides an interesting glimpse of his elusive Cincinnati years, discussed in my previous publication: “‘A Negro Preacher’: The Worlds of Elijah Ables,” *Journal of Mormon History* 39, no. 2 (Spring 2013): 165–254.

At some point in 1842, Ables relocated from Nauvoo to Cincinnati, which had the nation’s largest population of free blacks and was the largest trade center between the seaboard and the frontier. Elijah, then in his thirties, was single; but interracial marriage would have violated Nauvoo city law. Joseph Smith was likely referring to Ables when he commented: “Go into Cincinnati or any city, and find an educated negro, who rides in his carriage, and you will see a man who has risen by the powers of his own mind to his exalted state of respectability.”¹ Ables moved into east Cincinnati, a black ghetto known for prostitution and gambling;² but by the end of the decade, Ables was married with a son and lived a comfortable life as a carpenter and an active member of the LDS branch.

That spring, Elders Phineas Young and Franklin D. Richards were working in the Cincinnati branch. By May, Richards was dismayed by dissension “among the Saints,” whom he found “discordant” and “unworthy the name of Christ.” Richards felt it was almost “as though the council of Satan and his notaries

had made an enactment that the work of God should not prosper in this city.”³ He sent Phineas to Nauvoo for counsel from his brother, Brigham Young.

The evidence suggests that the rising troubles stemmed from an intricate—and tumultuous—relationship between the Mormon and abolitionist communities in Cincinnati. On March 14, 1842, Phineas informed Brigham that he had baptized a “very wealthy and a very influential man by the name of Colonel Rees Price.”⁴ City chronicler Charles Cist wrote of Price as though he needed no introduction; his reputation was a “fixed fact of absolute notoriety.”⁵ Price, an 1834 delegate to a Whig convention in support of the National Bank, was honored by official introductions at public events.⁶ Wealthy from a masonry business that spanned the city, Price had committed much of his public life to the abolitionist cause. He served on the executive board of the Ohio Anti-Slavery Society and as a member of its Committee on Political Action.⁷ When anti-abolitionist mobs attacked an anti-slavery newspaper in Cincinnati in 1836, Price publicly criticized their actions. The mobs were indulging in “all abuses, and tyrannies, and usurpations . . . without shame or restraint” while the “weak continue, without hope, to be the prey of the powerful.”⁸

This sentiment did not sit well with Cincinnati’s racially charged

environment. When Lane-educated teachers took work instructing poor blacks, locals often claimed that they had “disgraced themselves by engaging in such an employment.” When a white Lane student gave directions to a black woman visiting the campus, “it was regarded by the community as part of a settled design to carry into effect the scheme of equalization.”⁹

In fall 1841, another race riot exploded in the city. Mobs were targeting the city’s “prominent abolitionists.”¹⁰ A mob seized the press of recent abolitionist presidential candidate, James Birney, and threw it in the river.¹¹ Another threatened the store of William Donaldson.¹² Price had supported Birney’s presidential candidacy in 1840 and also served with Birney on the Ohio Anti-Slavery Society general board.¹³ The Latter-day Saints had witnessed the consequences firsthand of being overly welcoming to the black population. Between Price’s abolitionist activities and Ables’s preaching, Mormonism could have seemed hardly different from the radicals who had once filled the halls of Cincinnati’s Lane Theological Seminary.

No other Mormon documentation of Price’s relationship exists, but his obituary states that he believed the time would come when human beings would be “endowed with powers similar to those ascribed to Jesus Christ,” provided they prove their devotion to eternal principles.¹⁴ Price’s rhetoric aligned with Mormon ideas such as reverence for the Constitution, the imminent establishment of Christ’s kingdom, and the forthcoming destruction of the United States. Price also shared the growing sense of Mormon Anglophilia, arguing that

the “followers of the Lord will, next to America, *take the British Isles.*” However, he also claimed that “the Zion of the Holy One of Israel will be built in Ohio”—a clear deviation from the conventional wisdom that Zion would someday be built in Missouri.¹⁵ Price and Ables certainly knew each other; Price joined the Mormon community at approximately the same time that Ables arrived in the city.

In June 1843, Ables found himself standing before an apostolic disciplinary council. Apostles Orson Pratt, Heber C. Kimball, and John E. Page ordered Ables to restrict his preaching to the African American population.¹⁶ The exact nature of the offense remains unknown, but Price’s prominent abolitionism almost certainly affected the outcome.

Unwilling to discipline Price for views they themselves embraced but frightened at the prospects of another Missouri, the apostles felt bound to distance the Mormon people from the abolitionist Price lest they should fall victim to more mob violence like that experienced by early Jackson County settlers in 1833. They probably believed that restricting Ables’s preaching activities to fellow residents of the Cincinnati slums would help to neutralize criticism that Mormons were promoting racial equality.

By January 1844, Price was being identified as a “new prophet,” suggesting that he had probably broken with the Saints within months of the apostolic ruling on Ables’s proselytizing.¹⁷ Price may, in fact, have been reacting to the apostles’ decision to restrict Ables’s preaching ac-

tivities. In addition to clamping down on Ables's preaching activities, the meeting had resulted in a reorganization of the branch structure; Price could not have avoided hearing of the meeting's proceedings.

Communitarian Christian Andrew Smolnikar recalled visiting "Gen. Rees E. Price, formerly an elder in the Mormon Church" in November 1844.¹⁹ By that point, "the rich general" had "become a prophet," preaching that Jesus Christ's "first birth" was near. Smolnikar also reported Price's dabbling in spiritualism; he observed that Price had assumed the persona of Napoleon I's generals and decreed that Smolnikar was "Pope Andrew I," a move Smolnikar thought to be merely an overture to win his (Smolnikar's) affections.²⁰

Smolnikar had a special hatred for the Mormon faith. In 1864, he recalled the dead Joseph Smith's spirit possessing a cow; "George K___," a Smolnikar disciple, chased it, fell into a river, and drowned. A month later, an evil spirit attacked Smolnikar in the night, its "ten fingers . . . infixed into my neck." He finally repelled this "murderous spirit," which he identified as Joseph Smith's. After a conversation with Price, Smolnikar described a lightning storm during which an angelic companion directed: "Go to Nauvoo, and the whole mystery will be discussed." Smolnikar allegedly made the trip and claimed to have discerned all of Mormonism's mysteries, which he would make "known in due time."²¹

Price remained committed to his radical principles. He and his family regularly attended séances in an effort to speak with their kindred dead,

and abandoned American democracy as "false to justice and righteous liberty." The "principles of democracy are beastly. The body assumes the sovereign, and the wicked head assumes it lawful to yield obedience to its impulses; and thus the federal head yielded or gave power unto a beast." Price praised William Lloyd Garrison as "the Abolitionist" who had "shaken the Confederacy to its centre, and made its heart quake with a fear of a dissolution."²² In 1849, an Anglican bishop called Price "the most pleasantly deranged man with whom I am acquainted." A friend observed that Price was "undoubtedly insane on religion; but innocent tender-hearted, benevolent, kind and harmless." But on matters of "justice, goodness, purity, conscientiousness, benevolence, harmlessness," Price was "the sanest of the sane."²³

Ables stayed in Cincinnati until 1853, probably lacking the resources to relocate. There is no evidence of Ables aligning himself with Price's movement. He briefly gave lodging to Joseph Smith's brother, William Smith, following the dissolution of Smith's church in Covington, Kentucky.²⁴ His decision to come to Utah reveals his institutional fidelity, even as his faith community had begun to alienate him.

Research on the relationship between race and Mormonism continues to grow in exciting ways. Max Mueller's forthcoming dissertation promises to be highly illuminative and contribute to the discourse in unprecedented ways. Jared Hickman's and Jared Tamez's ongoing work also has tremendous promise

to promote a rigorous discussion of Mormon racial constructs. As these scholars flesh out Mormonism's racial narrative, it will help the Mormon people come to grips with their future as a global faith community.

Russell W. Stevenson
Provo, Utah

Notes

1. Joseph Smith, Journal, January 2, 1843, 41–42, http://church.historycatalog.lds.org/primo_library/libweb/pages/dvds/dvd20/b1f1-6/seg20.sp Joseph (accessed March 13, 2013).
2. Nikki Taylor, *Frontiers of Freedom: Cincinnati's Black Community, 1802–1868* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2005), 186.
3. Franklin D. Richards, Letter to Brigham Young, May 8, 1842, Brigham Young Office Files, Reel 54, LDS Church History Library.
4. Phineas Young, Letter to Brigham Young, March 14, 1842, Brigham Young Office Files, Reel 57. Young recorded that he had baptized Price “last evening.”
5. “The Eclectics,” *The Cincinnati Miscellany or Antiquities of the West: And Pioneer History and General and Local Statistics Compiled from the Western General Advertiser* (Cincinnati: Robinson and Jones, 1846), 2:275.
6. “Resolutions of the People of the First Congressional District of Ohio,” *Congressional Edition*, Document 270, 241:3; “German Pioneers,” *Cincinnati Daily Times*, May 29, 1872, 4.
7. *Report of the Third Anniversary of the Ohio Anti-Slavery Society* (Cincinnati: Ohio Anti-Slavery Society, 1838), 3. See also *Narrative of the Late Riotous Proceedings against the Liberty of the Press in Cincinnati* (Cincinnati: Ohio Anti-Slavery Society, 1836), 46 and “Outrage in Cincinnati,” *Pennsylvania Freeman*, August 3, 1836, 3. URLs for newspaper articles available on request.
8. “Outrage in Cincinnati,” *Pennsylvania Freeman*, August 3, 1836, 3.
9. Taylor, *Frontiers of Freedom*, 95.
10. “Reign of Terror Again in Cincinnati,” *Liberator*, September 24, 1841, 154; see also “Dreadful Riot and Loss of Life,” *Ohio Statesman*, September 8, 1841, 2.
11. “Dreadful Riot and Loss of Life,” *Ohio Statesman*, September 8, 1841, 2.
12. Reign of Terror Again in Cincinnati,” *Liberator*, September 24, 1841, 154.
13. For Price's support of Birney, see Deposition of Henry B. Coffin, in *Journal of the Senate of Ohio* (Columbus: Samuel Medary, 1840), 415.
14. “Historical Obituary,” *Cincinnati Commercial Tribune*, January 21, 1877, 8.
15. Joseph Smith, Letter to Isaac Galland, September 11, 1839, <http://josephsmithpapers.org/paperDetails/letter-to-isaac-galland-11-september-1839?tm=expanded&dm=text-only&zm=zoom-right&p=2&s=&sm=none> (accessed March 16, 2013).; “A New Prophet,” *Public Ledger*, January 2, 1844, 3; emphasis Price's.
16. Newell Bringhurst, “Elijah Abel and the Changing Status of Black People within Mormonism,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, 12 (Summer 1979): 23.
17. “A New Prophet,” *Public Ledger* [Pennsylvania], January 2, 1844, 3.
18. Scott G. Kenney, ed., *Wilford Woodruff's Journal, 1833–1898*, typescript, 9 vols. (Midvale, Utah: Signature Books, 1983–85), 2:265.
19. Andrew Smolnikar, *The Great Message to All Governments and All Nations: For the Introduction of Christ's Peaceable Reign on Earth* (Philadelphia: King and Baird, 1864), 92.
20. Andrew Smolnikar, *Secret Enemities of True Republicanism* (Springhill, Penn.: Robert Eldridge, 1859), 165. For

further documentation of Price's participation in spiritualist channeling, see Napoleon Wolfe, *Startling Facts in Modern Spiritualism* (Cincinnati: Self-published, 1874), 380.

21. Smolnikar, *The Great Message to All Governments*, 92.

22. Rees E. Price, Letter to William Lloyd Garrison, published as "An Explanatory Letter," *Liberator*, June 1, 1855, 87.

23. "Home News," *Cincinnati Daily*

Gazette, June 7, 1872, 4; Christine Mersch, *Delhi: Cincinnati's Westside* (Mount Pleasant, S.C.: Arcadia Publishing, 2005), 107; "Taft and Reese Price," *Cincinnati Commercial Tribune*, January 19, 1882.

24. "A Prophetic Family Arrangement," *Covington Daily Union*, June 5, 1850, 2; see also "United States Census, 1850," index and images, FamilySearch, <https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/MXQC-PTN> (accessed March 24, 2013; Elija Able, 1850).

THE AFFAIR OF THE “RUNAWAYS”: UTAH’S FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH THE FEDERAL OFFICERS

PART 1

Ronald W. Walker

AT THE END OF SEPTEMBER 1851, four of the men appointed by Washington to help run the affairs of the Territory of Utah left their posts and charged the local people with misconduct and disloyalty. Historians have been slow to take a serious look at the beginning of the controversy. Who were these men? Why did they choose to leave? Did their charges have merit? How did Mormon leaders respond? The answers to these questions tell a great deal about pioneer Utah—and about Mormons leaders and the men appointed by Washington. These answers open a window to a distant but important past.¹

The episode began early. Since its start, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, or Mormons, had been besieged and

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¹I owe debts to Matthew J. Grow for sharing with me his research notes on Thomas L. Kane and to William P. MacKinnon, who read an early version of the manuscript and offered many helpful suggestions. The fullest previous treatment of the controversy remains B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehen-*

threatened. Its storied hegira took members from New York to Ohio and then to Missouri and Illinois. At each point, hostile officers, civil and military, had stirred difficulties, and the Mormon leader, Brigham Young, was determined never to fall under such influence again. In 1846, when his people were on the plains of Iowa en route to Utah, their last stop in their mass migration, Young wrote U.S. President James K. Polk. Young wanted Polk to know, unmistakably, how the Mormons felt. His people were loyal Americans, Young insisted (they had just enrolled about five hundred of their men to fight in the Mexican War), and they wanted a U.S. territorial government once they arrived in their new destination. At the time their hoped-for promised land lay in the Great Basin and was part of upper Mexico, but everyone assumed this land was destined soon to fall under American sway. While a U.S. territorial government was “one of the richest boons of earth,” Young told Polk that his people would retreat to “deserts,” “islands,” or “mountain caves” rather than have Washington appoint men over them who might delight in “injustice and oppression, and whose greatest glory . . . [might be] to promote the misery of their fellows, for their own aggrandizement or lustful gratification.”² The Saints were looking over their shoulder. Rumors had reached them that their old opponent, Lilburn W. Boggs, a former governor of Missouri, was seeking appointment in the West.³

Young’s letter showed how fragile the Mormon psyche was. As Young told Polk, his people’s troubled past had left their “love of country or rulers . . . well nigh extinguished.”⁴ Yet at the same time, Mormons saw themselves as patriots and responsible citizens. These two opposite tugs—alienation and love of country—could push the Saints

sive History of the Church of Jesus Christ, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1930), 3:520–44, although in subsequent years historians have addressed some features of the episode. See Leland H. Gentry, “The Brocchus-Young Speech Controversy” (M.A. thesis, University of Utah, 1958), and Wayne K. Hinton, “Millard Fillmore: Utah’s Friend in the White House,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 48 (Spring 1980): 112–28. This article is the first in a two-part series; a second article will deal with the national crisis that followed the departure of the officers.

²Brigham Young, Letter to James K. Polk, August 9, 1846, Brigham Young Office Files, LDS Church History Library.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

in polar directions, especially when one of their orators stood behind a podium or pulpit. Young’s letter to Polk, full of these opposites, nevertheless came down on the side of working within the American system. His plaintive hope was to have Washington appoint men from among the Mormons—or at least men who were not opponents. Young, like many in the West, wanted home rule.

During the next several years, the Saints made this same appeal to Washington again and again. In April 1847, just as their pioneer parties were about to strike out for Utah, they renewed their petition for a friendly territorial government; and once in Utah, in February 1848, they tried another time.⁵ When Washington turned a deaf ear, the Saints prepared a gigantic petition that ran twenty-two feet and contained 2,270 signatures, apparently hoping that size might count for something.⁶ It asked for the appointment of Church officers to political office, beginning with Brigham Young, who was proposed for governor. Apparently rank-and-file Mormons needed reassurance: “The Gentile ceremonies will have an effect because the Priesthood is not regarded,” Young told a congregation.⁷ As always during this early history, the Saints wobbled between their millennial hopes of their theocracy and the practical need to stay in the mainstream. As usual under Young’s leadership, they opted for the latter.

The second counterpoint was the fear of outsiders running Utah’s government, which was a troubling possibility during the summer of 1850. As the political rumors grew louder and more ominous, Young took a new tack. He withdrew the petitions for a territorial government and threatened Washington with an independent Mormon state. While this option would end the hope of financial aid from

⁵Thomas L. Kane, Letter to Willard Richards, April 25, 1847, Brigham Young Office Files; and Brigham Young, Letter to Thomas L. Kane, February 9, 1848, Brigham Young Draft Letterbook, LDS Church History Library. For a more extended treatment of these efforts, see Ronald W. Walker, “Thomas L. Kane and Utah’s Quest for Self-Government, 1846–51,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 69 (Spring 2001): 100–119.

⁶Dale L. Morgan, *The State of Deseret* (Salt Lake City: Utah State Historical Society, 1940), 26.

⁷Brigham Young, Remarks, March 12, 1849, General Church Minutes, LDS Church History Library.

Congress, it had the appeal of avoiding outside magistrates.⁸ The people called their proposed new provisional state “Deseret,” after a passage from their Book of Mormon that suggested cooperation and work (Ether 2:3). The Mormons were following a time-tested tactic. By threatening independence, they were trying to get Washington to organize a favorable local government. Tennessee, Texas, and more recently Oregon had used the same ploy, while New Mexico and California were employing it, too.⁹

To represent them in Washington, Utahns would eventually have three men. The first was Dr. John M. Bernhisel, who had been sent east when the Mormons were still hoping for a territorial government. He was everything that supposedly the first generations of Mormons were not: He was refined, temperate, and educated (he received medical training at the University of Pennsylvania), and he knew how to work behind the scenes. One of his friends described him with an apt metaphor: Bernhisel was like a plough horse, he said—patient, reliable and never making a misstep. But a quarter horse—sleek and fleet—he was not.¹⁰

The second delegate was Almon W. Babbitt. Young had chosen him when looking for a Democrat to balance Bernhisel’s Whig loyalties—and, possibly, to counter Bernhisel’s bland and quiet-working personality. Babbitt knew how to mix and mingle. He claimed to have influence with such senators as Stephen A. Douglas and Augustus C. Dodge, who, according to Babbitt’s own telling, had promised to use “all their influence” against any motion regarding the Latter-day Saints that was not personally and formally endorsed by Babbitt.¹¹ It is likely that Young knew what he was getting. “I dont care if he drinks Champagne & knocks over a few Lawyers & Priests all right—he has a right to fight in hell,” Young told a congregation when Babbitt was

⁸Peter Crawley, “The Constitution of the State of Deseret,” *BYU Studies* 29 (Fall 1989): 7–22.

⁹Morgan, *State of Deseret*, 7–8 footnote.

¹⁰Thomas L. Kane, Letter to Brigham Young, January 5, 1855, Brigham Young Office Files, LDS Church History Library; Gwynn W. Barrett, “Dr. John M. Bernhisel: Mormon Elder in Congress,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 36 (Spring 1968): 143–67.

¹¹Robert Campbell, Statement, October 19, 1849, Brigham Young Office Files, Reel 86, Box 74, fd. 1.

sent east.¹² Three times the Church had disciplined Babbitt, and Joseph Smith had received a revelation that pointed out his faults. “He aspireth to establish his counsel instead of the counsel which I have ordained,” said the revelation, “even that of the Presidency of my Church; and he setteth up a golden calf for the worship of my people” (D&C 124:84). After serving as one of the Church’s property managers in Nauvoo, Babbitt had almost given up on Mormonism and was making his way to the California goldfields when Young learned that Babbitt was in Salt Lake City and reached out to reclaim him. It was an act that later Young may have come to regret.

The third representative was neither a Mormon nor a lukewarm Mormon. Thomas L. Kane was a young, wellborn Philadelphian, who first came to know the Mormons during their 1846 trek west when he had visited their camps in Iowa. To his surprise, Kane found that he liked these people and especially Young, despite not having much sympathy for their religion. After several weeks, the romantically inclined Kane decided to make the Latter-day Saints one of the great causes of his life, much to the mild chagrin of his family. For the next three and a half decades, this small-framed, intense man worked in the Saints’ behalf, usually behind the scenes and without any formal appointment or portfolio. It was enough for him to sense a need and then meet it.¹³

At first, U.S. President Zachary Taylor appeared ready to help the Mormons.¹⁴ “Old Rough and Ready” Taylor, whose fame rested upon the battle laurels of Palo Alto and Monterrey during the Mexican War, was hoping to finesse the growing sectional disputes about slavery in the western territories. Taylor’s idea was to admit the provisional governments of New Mexico and California into the Union and thus avoid a contentious debate in Congress. Utah might also be admitted as an eastern part of California, with the understanding that

¹²Brigham Young, Remarks, July 8, 1849, General Church Minutes.

¹³Matthew J. Grow, *“Liberty to the Downtrodden”*: Thomas L. Kane, Romantic Reformer (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2009); David J. Whittaker, ed., *Colonel Thomas L. Kane and the Mormons, 1846–1883* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2010).

¹⁴Joseph Young, Letter to Brigham Young, June 13, 1849, Brigham Young Office Files.

the Saints would soon have their own star on the American flag.¹⁵ The unwieldy scheme went nowhere; and Taylor, after listening to billingsgate about the Mormons, developed reservations. When Bernhisel visited the Executive Mansion in March 1850, he described Taylor as “an exceedingly plain man in the fullest sense of the term, in person and intellect.” He would not now, it was clear, be offering the Saints any favors.¹⁶ Babbitt confirmed Taylor’s opposition. “Before twenty members of Congress,” Babbitt told Young, Taylor had said that “he would veto any bill passed, state or territorial, for the Mormons—that they were a pack of outlaws and had been driven from two states and were not fit for self-government.”¹⁷

Taylor’s words became the reason for much pique and anger in Utah, and for several months the Mormons despaired of ever receiving a friendly government. Then the political landscape suddenly changed. Taylor took ill after presiding over a fund-raising event for the Washington Monument; and less than a week later he was dead, probably a victim of food poisoning.¹⁸

Mormons saw no reason to mourn. “The late illustrious chief magistrate entertained some strong prejudices and used much harsh language against our community,” said Bernhisel. “Poor man! He had gone to give an account of his deeds done in the body, and has, I doubt not, ere this, learned that Mormonism, so called, is as true and enduring as the throne of the most High.”¹⁹

Upon the death of Taylor, Vice-President Millard Fillmore assumed the presidency. His political resumé was not especially distinguished. He had first been elected to the New York State Legislature

¹⁵Roberts, *Comprehensive History of the Church*, 3:437–40; Edward Leo Lyman, *Amasa Mason Lyman: Mormon Apostle and Apostate* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2009), 178–80.

¹⁶John M. Bernhisel, Letter to Brigham Young, March 21, 1850, Brigham Young Office Files.

¹⁷Almon W. Babbitt, Letter to Brigham Young, July 7, 1850, Brigham Young Office Files.

¹⁸“Death of the President of the United States,” *Boston Daily Evening Transcript*, July 10, 1850, quoted in “Zachary Taylor,” *Wikipedia* (accessed April 29, 2013).

¹⁹John M. Bernhisel, Letter to Brigham Young, August 9, 1850, Brigham Young Office Files.

in the early 1830s as a member of the Anti-Mason Party. He next served four terms in the U.S. House, where he transformed himself into a Whig. Still later he became New York State's first elected comptroller and made an unsuccessful bid to become governor. He was put on the Whig ticket in 1848 when the party needed an anti-slave northerner to balance Taylor, a Louisiana planter and slave-owner.²⁰ While serving as vice-president and presiding over the Senate, Fillmore had watched the chamber's bitter debates over slavery. After becoming president, he put his political weight behind conciliation and the proposals that eventually became known as the Compromise of 1850. As part of the log-rolling, Utah was finally recognized as a U.S. territory, with the right to decide slavery for itself. Politicians knew, however, that geography and climate made Utah an unlikely place for slaveholding.²¹

After more than five years of sending petitions to Washington, the Saints at last had a territorial government, although it came with the usual losses and compromises. Illinois Senator Stephen A. Douglas, in a personal letter to the Mormons, explained some of the background. He claimed that some of President Taylor's furious anti-Mormonism had survived him; and when it came time to choose a name for the territory, Congress had supplanted “Deseret” with “Utah” in an effort to neutralize opponents. He hopefully suggested the distinctive name might be restored once statehood was achieved.²² Douglas's friendliness dated back to when the Saints were headquartered in Illinois.

The new territory cut the huge land claims of Deseret down to size. From a Texas-sized territory occupying the middle of the Great West, Utah was given the land between the Green River on the east and the great Sierra Nevada on the west, and with the north-south borders provided by the 42nd and 37th parallels of latitude. These last boundaries followed no natural landmarks, and Bernhisel grouched, “The ignorance of the collected wisdom of the nation in regard to

²⁰Hinton, “Millard Fillmore, 112–14.

²¹Holman Hamilton, *Prologue to Conflict: The Crisis and Compromise of 1850* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1964).

²²Stephen A. Douglas, Letter to Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and Willard Richards, March 6, 1851, Brigham Young Office Files.

our region of country . . . is most profound.”²³

Congress had left the most important question hanging. Were Utahns going to get their own civil leaders in the new territorial government? During the anxious time before the great compromise, Young had laid out the Mormon argument. Some of the “ablest Politicians” have forgotten “that all Republican Government emanates from the people,” he wrote Bernhisel in a revealing passage. “The people have the “right to dictate. . . . [T]hey are the Parents and not the child.”²⁴ Young’s views were similar to those of Douglas, who was championing the constitutional theory of “popular sovereignty” or local decision-making to keep the slave question out of the halls of Congress.

The ink on the Compromise of 1850 was hardly dry when the Mormons began to lobby. “The people of Utah cannot but consider it their right, as American citizens, to be governed by men of their own choice, entitled to their confidence, and united with them in opinion and feeling,” Bernhisel wrote to Fillmore. This “right” of self-government was important because of “the peculiar circumstances of the community of Deseret,” Bernhisel said, referring, of course, to the long-standing anti-Mormonism.²⁵

Bernhisel had been cultivating relations with Fillmore from the time Fillmore was vice-president and found him to be friendly and cooperative.²⁶ The president acknowledged that the Saints had been “shamefully abused” and promised to nominate territorial officers “from among your members.” As the negotiations continued, Fillmore wanted to know whether Young, if appointed as Utah’s gover-

²³John M. Bernhisel, Letter to Brigham Young, September 7, 1850, Brigham Young Office Files.

²⁴Brigham Young, Letter to John M. Bernhisel, July 29, 1850, Copybook, LDS Church History Library. I have corrected the spelling and grammar of this letter, which, in its archival form, appears to be a preliminary or draft copy.

²⁵John M. Bernhisel, Letter to Brigham Young, September 12, 1850, Brigham Young Office Files, and John M. Bernhisel, Letter to Millard Fillmore, September 16, 1850, Journal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (chronological scrapbook of typed entries and newspaper clippings, 1830–present), LDS Church History Library.

²⁶John M. Bernhisel, Letter to Brigham Young, March 21, 1850, Brigham Young Office Files.

nor, would politically support his administration. Fillmore also wanted to know if Utah would return a Whig as its delegate to Congress. "It had been intimated to me in high quarters," Bernhisel told Young in a letter marked "*strictly private and confidential*," "that if the people of Utah wish any favor of this Administration, they should elect a Whig delegate to Congress." Bernhisel knew that this information, conveyed by him to Young, might be seen as personal ambition. "I have no aspiration for that office," he assured Young.²⁷

It took two months for Bernhisel's letter to reach Young, but once Young got it, he quickly responded. "We feel inclined, as soon as an organization [of the territory] can be gone into under the [organic] act to elect a delegate," Young told Bernhisel. "We think some of nominating a Whig for delegate who is now in Washington City, feeling assured that although he may have no aspirations to that office, yet that we can rely upon on his eminent capability and acceptance."²⁸ Young's words, while jocular, were also serious. He was telling Washington that he was willing to meet Fillmore's concerns.²⁹

Although Young's letter failed to reach Washington in time to affect negotiations, they were moving forward. By late summer, Kane had joined the talks. Although his doctors had told him sternly to go to the West Indies to recuperate from one of his sick spells, he had remained in Philadelphia to monitor events. He won his stubborn gamble; and while still weak, he left Philadelphia for Washington in the autumn to try and get Mormons appointed to the territorial offices.

Kane and Fillmore had become acquainted when both worked in the anti-slavery "Free Soil" movement a few years before. They found that they liked each other.³⁰ Now, when Kane met with Fillmore at the Executive Mansion, the president was still deciding whether he should appoint Young. While opposing the "principle of

²⁷John M. Bernhisel, Letter to Brigham Young, September 15, 1850, Brigham Young Office Files.

²⁸First Presidency, Letter to John M. Bernhisel, November 20, 1850, Brigham Young Office Files.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Thomas L. Kane, Letter to Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and Willard Richards, July 29, 1851, Thomas L. Kane Papers, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

monarchy and centralism by naming a Viceroy or Governor-General over the Mormons as a subject people,” Fillmore knew that the choice of Young would be unpopular, in part because it would mix the Mormon Church with the Utah state.³¹

Fillmore had a counterproposal: Would Kane accept the Utah governorship? The nomination would please the Mormons, yet avoid the political shoals. Kane declined, perhaps because of personal and family reasons but mainly because of loyalty to Young. The refusal led back to Young. Was Kane willing, as a gentleman, to vouch for Young, the president asked? The question, now quaint, came when the ideals of courtly behavior still guided men.³² In response, Kane praised Young’s “excellent capacity, energy and integrity” and his “irreproachable moral character,” a judgment based on his “intimate personal knowledge.” The chivalrous give-and-take had an unspoken subtext: Rumors were circulating that the Saints had a secret plural wife system, and Fillmore wanted to know if these were accurate. Kane’s honor-bound statements were convincing, however, and before the interview was over, Fillmore pronounced himself “fully satisfied.”³³ Kane gave similar assurances to members of Congress, who were also concerned about possible Mormon plurality.³⁴ As improbable as it may now seem, Kane did not know about the Saints’ polygamy. He had apparently let his sentimental belief in Mormon innocence get the better of him, though he had the opportunity of knowing better had he looked around. Nor had the Mormons been forthcoming. Perhaps they assumed, or hoped, that Kane knew but was honoring their own policy of publicly saying

³¹Thomas L. Kane, Letter to Franklin Pierce, September 3, 1854, “Correspondence between Thomas L. Kane and Brigham Young and Other Church Authorities, 1846–1878,” Thomas L. Kane materials, Edith Romney typescript collection, LDS Church History Library.

³²Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982); Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *The Shaping of Southern Culture: Honor, Grace, and War, 1760s–1860s* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

³³Kane to Pierce, September 3, 1854.

³⁴John W. Gunnison, Letter to Albert Carrington, December 25, 1852, in Brigham D. Madsen, ed., “John W. Gunnison’s Letters to His Mormon Friend, Albert Carrington,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 59 (Summer 1991): 280.

little or nothing about their practice. From the time polygamy had been introduced at Nauvoo, everything had been a “wink and a nod.”³⁵

The failure to inform their most influential man in the East was full of possible embarrassment. Equally troubling was the wheeling-and-dealing of Almon Babbitt, who was proving that Young had chosen too well when seeking a partisan. Writing to Young, Kane described Babbitt as a “small politician but a rough one of the Missouri Stamp”—apparently a reference to Missouri’s tumultuous senator, Thomas Hart Benton.³⁶ Kane believed that Babbitt was continually “weaving paltry[,] peter funk combinations, incubating trivial[,] five pennybit leagues, making declarations and pledges whose inconsistency he was at no pains to reconcile, and confiding to everybody the keeping of secrets that he had no power to keep himself. One could have believed nature to have gifted him with a kind of instinct opposed to truthfulness.”³⁷ This severe criticism was echoed by Bernhisel, who was staying at the National Hotel (“the centre of politics, fashion and folly”³⁸) and who knew what some of the other Congressmen were saying. “The Senators in Congress,” he would later say, “could not comprehend how . . . [the Mormons] came to elect such an immoral man.”³⁹ It was not just turpitude, but Babbitt’s energy in working at cross-purposes, which during a time in late 1850 threatened the slate of Mormon candidates. Babbitt’s maneuvers had already cost one of two

³⁵Ibid., 280. I describe the subsequent Fillmore-Kane episode at some length in Part 2.

³⁶“Text of Conversation between Thomas L. Kane and Wilford Woodruff, November 25, 1849,” Thomas L. Kane materials, Edith Romney typescript collection, LDS Church History Library.

³⁷Thomas L. Kane, Letter to Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and Willard Richards, February 19, 1851, Brigham Young Office Files. See also Thomas L. Kane, Letter to Brigham Young, September 24, 1850, Brigham Young Office Files.

³⁸Bernhisel to First Presidency, March 21, 1850.

³⁹John M. Bernhisel, July 19, 1851, Church Historian’s Office Journal, LDS Church History Library. “History of Brigham Young,” July 19, 1851, 21:55, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Church History Library.

appointments, Kane said, and “nearly lost the whole.”⁴⁰

Others had a more favorable view of Babbitt. Texas’s Senator Samuel Houston, writing to Young, claimed that Utahns had “every reason to be proud of the able & energetic manner” of Babbitt. Babbitt’s “prudent and discreet course” had removed “much of the prejudice previously imbibed against the People of Utah,” Houston believed.⁴¹ When the dust settled and the Senate had finished its work, Utahns had five of the territorial appointments and outsiders four. Young was governor and superintendent of Indian Affairs, the last of office being *ex officio*. Zerubbabel Snow of Ohio, recently rebaptized, was one of the three district judges. Other Mormons given office included Seth M. Blair (U.S. attorney), Joseph L. Heywood (U.S. marshal), and Stephen B. Rose (U.S. Indian subagent). “The appointing power has been far more liberal to us, than it has ever been to any other Territory,” Bernhisel told Young.⁴² The non-Mormons included Territorial Secretary Broughton D. Harris, Indian Subagent Henry Day, Chief Justice Lemuel G. Brandebury, and Utah Judge Perry E. Brocchus.

News of the appointments reached Utah after the usual transcontinental delays. The first hint came when a Utah citizen read a report published in a California newspaper and told Church leaders upon returning to Salt Lake City. Then, on a “dull” and “muddy” winter day at the end of January 1851, the eastern mail arrived with the more certain reports of the New York City newspapers. Young at the time was about a dozen miles north of the Mormon headquarters. A military escort and a band of musicians was dispatched to give him the news. Young’s return to Salt Lake City was a personal triumph, with speeches and serenades in one village after another. He reached headquarters shortly after sundown, perfect timing for the skyrockets

⁴⁰“History of Brigham Young,” quoting Church Historian’s Office Journal, 21:55; also see Kane to Young, Kimball, and Richards, February 19, 1851, Brigham Young Office Files. Babbitt had his own version of events, complaining that he had encountered difficulties during the selection of officers from “the House of our friend,” a possible reference to the friction between himself and Kane. Almon W. Babbitt, Letter to First Presidency, February 14, 1851, Brigham Young Office Files.

⁴¹Samuel Houston, Letter to Brigham Young, February 18, 1851, Brigham Young Office Files.

⁴²John M. Bernhisel, Letter to Brigham Young, November 9, 1850, Brigham Young Office Files.

and fire wheels fired from the roof of the merchant establishment of Livingston and Kinkead. When the celebration ended, Young thanked everyone for their attentions and blessed them. He then retired with about a dozen Church leaders for dinner and “agreeable conversation.”⁴³

The long quest for a local, U.S.-sanctioned government had been realized. Yet the times were uncertain. Bernhisel, in another of his reports, feared that the Compromise of 1850 had just papered over difficulties between North and South, and the United States was still heading for a breakup.⁴⁴ His dire forecast fit the Mormons’ views of the last days, which held that events were on the precipice. One option for the Mormons was to retreat into their own world and await Armageddon, like many other millennial-believers in history. A leading LDS historian, Klaus Hansen, suggests that the idea of a millennial kingdom is “by far the most important key to an understanding of the Mormon past,” and Hansen’s argument has been taken up by later writers in one form or another. Hansen argues that the Saints established a Council of Fifty that seemed to have an independent, millennial stir about it.⁴⁵

Yet at every point in their quest for a territorial government, Church leaders remained actors in the present-day drama. They intended to participate in real events until the Lord and the final days overtook them, and there were solid, practical reasons for doing so. When Douglas wrote to the Mormons about their territorial status, he held out the prospect of federal funds for land survey and roads; he also said that the future could be enhanced by a Washington-funded national wagon road, a transcontinental telegraph, and perhaps a railroad to Utah and to the Pacific.⁴⁶ Meanwhile, the organic act—Utah’s charter for government—provided \$20,000 as a down payment to

⁴³Brigham Young Office Journal and Historian’s Office Journal, both January 28, 1851, LDS Church History Library.

⁴⁴Bernhisel to First Presidency, March 21, 1850.

⁴⁵Klaus J. Hansen, *Quest for Empire: The Political Kingdom of God and the Council of Fifty in Mormon History* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1967), preface. For a more recent formulation, see David L. Bigler and Will Bagley, *The Mormon Rebellion: America’s First Civil War, 1857–1858* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2011).

⁴⁶Douglas to Young, Kimball, and Richards, March 6, 1851.

build a territorial capitol building. It also promised an annual appropriation of \$20,000 or more to run the government, and another \$5,000 for a library. These outlays, when calculated in the values of the time, were liberal.⁴⁷

Utahns responded with symbols of their own. During the awkward period between the old and new governments, the State of Deseret lawmakers authorized the cutting of a block of marble “from the best stone to be found in the State” for the new Washington Monument. Finally, the legislature confirmed the previous laws of Deseret insofar “as they do not conflict with Federal law.” Utahns wanted easterners to know that they recognized national sovereignty. Then the legislature dissolved itself into that of the new Territory of Utah, *sine die*.⁴⁸

A few days after learning of his appointment, Young went before Daniel H. Wells, the chief justice of the old State of Deseret, and took the oath of his new office. Critics would later complain that this move showed a disdain for territorial procedure and that Young should have waited for the arrival of the new territorial secretary. Babbitt, writing from Washington at about the same time that Young took his oath, warned that nothing should be done about organizing the territory’s government until the new officers arrived.⁴⁹ The local people, however, were acting according to their reading of the organic act, which prescribed that the governor’s oath could be taken before any judge or justice “authorized to administer oaths and affirmation by the laws now in force therein.”⁵⁰ Young was trying to get the new government up and running as quickly as possible.

The organic act set out other procedures. Executive power lay with the governor, who had the authority to command the territory’s militia and supervise Indian relations (the joining of these two offices was unusual in U.S. territorial history) . He also had the authority to approve local laws, grant reprieves and pardons, and grant the com-

⁴⁷“An Act to Establish a Territorial Government of Utah,” September 7, 1850, printed in Orson F. Whitney, *History of Utah*, 4 vols. (Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon & Sons, 1892–1904), 1:447–49.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 1:454, 456–57, 479.

⁴⁹Babbitt to First Presidency, February 14, 1851. For recent criticism, see Bigler and Bagley, *The Mormon Rebellion: America’s First Civil War, 1857–1858*, 43.

⁵⁰“An Act to Establish a Territorial Government of Utah,” 1:447.

mission for the officers in the territory. The governor was also required to take a census prior to the territory's first elections to make sure that the districts for the new legislators were properly drawn with an equal number of voters.

The duties of the territorial secretary were those of a recorder and treasurer. He had the territorial seal, which, in theory, meant that no state paper was legal without its stamp. In addition, the secretary paid the government's expenses and sent copies of local laws to Washington for deposit and review. The legislature had two branches—a thirteen-member Council and a twenty-six-member House of Representatives. The territory's most important federal judicial officers were the chief justice and two district judges. These men each presided over one of Utah's three judicial districts and heard the most important cases of civil and criminal law. They also heard appeals from county probate and justice-of-the-peace courts and were authorized to come together as the territory's three-man supreme court.⁵¹

Senator Douglas was proud of his role in getting Utah's new charter through Congress. "I prepared, reported, & [sustained] your Territorial Law," he told Young. "You will find it [to be] a very liberal charter—at least as liberal as any that were passed [previously by] the Congress of the United States."⁵² However, the question was not the generosity of the organic act, but whether it could work in Utah, which depended upon the men chosen to administer it.

* * *

The first of the outsider officers to arrive in Utah was Utah's new chief justice, Pennsylvania lawyer Lemuel G. Brandebury. Before his appointment, he had lobbied to serve as recorder in the U.S. Land Office in Washington, D.C., and had the support of almost a dozen attorneys in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, who called him "a gentleman of intelligence and business capacity." Members of the state senate and Governor William F. Johnson also wrote letters of recommendation. Disappointed when the Land Office appointment failed to materialize, he received a position in the Solicitor's Office of the U.S. Treasury before seeking a new position in Utah. Significantly, the wheeler-dealer Almon Babbitt placed a favorable letter in his file. Brandebury was selected when another Pennsylvanian withdrew, and the state's patronage spot became

⁵¹Ibid., 1:444–49.

⁵²Douglas to Young, Kimball, and Richards, March 6, 1851.

empty. During the nomination process, Brandebury twice withdrew his application.⁵³ His indecision was not unusual. Washington found it hard to find first-rate men to serve in the distant and rough-and-tumble West. Many who did come left their families in the States, accepted appointments limited to only a few years, and often requested extended leaves—or they might be bachelors, like Brandebury, which was one reason they were available in the first place.

Brandebury arrived in Salt Lake City on June 7, coming across the plains with frontiersman Ben Holladay. From the start, Brandebury and the Mormons failed to establish a good working relationship. Brandebury would later blame Young. Twice, he said, he tried to make an appointment with the governor, and on the second attempt he had come into Young's outer office only to be turned away by a secretary. He believed that Young had intentionally tried to humiliate him, and he cited whispers that he later heard in the community: Young supposedly had told subordinates that he did not want to meet the new chief judge "for none but Mormons should have been appointed to the offices of the Territory, and none but d—d rascals would have come amongst them." Young's supposed discourtesy "afforded much merriment" among the Saints.⁵⁴

Young insisted that he had been ready to receive Brandebury at any time, but that the new judge had retreated to "some private corner, some nook, or way side restaurant" and never made the attempt. To support his case, Young mentioned his usual policy of keeping his office open "more hours than in any other state officer on the Globe," where he greeted all comers.⁵⁵ However, Young made no effort pay a call of his own.

A month after the judge arrived, the Mormons held a fete in his

⁵³Thomas G. Alexander, "Carpetbaggers, Reprobates, and Liars: Federal Judges and the Utah War," *Historian* 70 (Summer 2008): 209–38; Millard Fillmore, Nomination, to Senate of the United States, March 12, 1851, *Journal of the Executive Proceedings of the Senate of the United States*, 32nd Congress, 8:327, 331, www.memory.loc.gov/ammen/amlaw/1wejlink.html (accessed March 22, 2013).

⁵⁴"Report of Messrs. Brandebury, Brocchus, and Harris to the President of the United States," December 19, 1851, in *Message from the President of the United States*, January 9, 1852, 32d. Congress, 1 session, Ex. Doc., Number 25, House of Representatives, pp. 9–10.

⁵⁵Brigham Young, "Beating against the Air," June 11, 1852,

honor. However, when Young's private carriage arrived for Brandebury, he could not be found, and a two-hour search was required to find him. Perhaps Brandebury was making a point, or perhaps he had misunderstood his invitation; Mormon parties began early in the afternoon. Once the event began, Mormon chronicles attest that it was a grand one, with "orchestral symphony," quadrille dancing, and a menu of frontier delicacies, including exotic bear meat. The Saints remembered that the judge wore a soiled shirt and seemed socially inept, but was warmed by the friendliness of the ladies. When the event ended at 2:00 A.M., he was overheard saying, "This is the people for me."⁵⁶

A fortnight later in early July, another party of officers arrived, led by Almon Babbitt. It numbered almost two dozen members and included most of the new territorial offices and their families: Judge Zerubbabel Snow, Territorial Secretary Broughton D. Harris, and two Indian subagents, Stephen B. Rose and Henry Day. The ranks also included Bernhisel, which made for an interesting dynamic. Babbitt and Bernhisel, possible rivals for Utah's new seat in Congress, carried with them the ill feelings of the last year's lobbying.⁵⁷

Sarah Harris, Broughton's wife, wrote a memoir of the trip, which suggested that it had often been unpleasant. At Kanessville (now Council Bluffs in western Iowa), her family had been herded into an overcrowded hall, with only a few feet to spare, where they were expected to live for several days. It was apparently the best the Mormons could do. "It is not to be wondered that some tears were shed by the Secretary's wife as nightfall came on, or that misgivings began to arise in the Secretary's mind as to the wisdom of bringing . . . [his] young

unpublished manuscript, 15, Brigham Young Office Files. Both the draft and polished copies of this document are valuable; my citations are from the latter.

⁵⁶Willard Richards, Letter to Thomas L. Kane, February 29, 1852, Willard Richards Files, LDS Church History Library; "To the Saints, *Deseret News*, June 12, 1852, p. 2, cols. 2-4; page and columns hereafter cited as 2/2-4.

⁵⁷Sarah Hollister Harris, *An Unwritten Chapter of Salt Lake, 1851-1901* (New York: Privately printed, 1901), 9, 25; Brigham Young History, September 11, 1851, 78, LDS Church History Library. The latter citation is sometimes labeled "History of the Church."

girl [wife] into the midst of such unexpected scenes.”⁵⁸ In addition, Sarah and Broughton had two young children to care for.

Near the Elkhorn River in today’s Nebraska, the travelers encountered heavy rain, which continued for several days. The rising water around them meant little grass for their animals, and for a time it seemed that the party might be stranded. Three times during the three-week ordeal, Babbitt returned to Kaneshville for provisions. Several of the overlanders, apparently teamsters, were fatally struck by lightning. Rattlesnakes, driven from their holes by the rising water, appeared on every side. “It is no wonder we almost lost heart,” Sarah remembered.⁵⁹ If Sarah’s memories were accurate, the women in the party approached Zion with curiosity and fear, which centered on Mormon polygamy. Were the rumors true? The Mormons they met on the trail were closely watched for telltale clues. “Many were the conferences we had upon the subject,” Sarah remembered.⁶⁰

As the party approached Salt Lake City, Young sent a welcoming committee to greet them. The committee carried preserved fruits and champagne, the last item apparently from Salt Lake City merchants James M. Livingston and Ben Holliday, who seemed anxious to please the new officers. The hospitality continued in the Mormon city. The Harrises were placed in the home of the good-natured and idiosyncratic Fanny Young Murray, the sister of the Prophet. Soon Brigham Young himself came by. He gave Sarah a peach that had been “ripened to perfection in Young’s orchard.” Young “thought it a notable event,” said Sarah, “and so it must have been to have remained in my mind fifty years.”⁶¹ Utahns were just beginning to grow fruit locally.

The officers brought with them the in-coming mail, which may have included Kane’s letter about Babbitt’s maneuvers, along with another message from Kane that refused fully to endorse the new appointees. “I cannot speak with full confidence of persons not individually known to me,” Kane had carefully written, “still less of the class of persons who are the customary applicants for Executive favor at

⁵⁸Harris, *Unwritten Chapter of Salt Lake, 1851–1901*, 5, 8.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 10–12; “Report of a Company Going West,” *Frontier Guardian* [Kaneville, Iowa], May 30, 1851, 2, in *Journal History*, May 30, 1851.

⁶⁰Harris, *Unwritten Chapter of Salt Lake, 1851–1901*, 15.

⁶¹*Ibid.*, 30–31, 33.

Washington." Nevertheless, Kane wanted the new men to be cordially received, and every sign suggests that they were.⁶²

Babbitt was another matter. For several days, he had delayed making a report to Young of his activities in Washington, which left the Mormons wondering if Babbitt might be playing another of his political games.⁶³ Was he seeking political support to become Utah's representative to Congress? When he finally met with Young a few days later, he was a whirlwind of trouble.

First, he claimed for his own use \$2,000 of the \$20,000 Congress had appropriated for the new territorial capitol building—apparently to reimburse his recent traveling expenses—and then refused to turn over the rest. He explained that Secretary of the Treasury Elisha Whittlesey had told him not to release the funds until the new territorial capital was established. Since this last step required the action of the legislature, which was not scheduled to meet until January 1852, Babbitt was laying claim to the entire appropriation for the next half year.⁶⁴

He also opposed two of Young's recent decisions. Young, who wanted to hold elections as soon as possible in order to get Bernhisel in Congress before its next session, had drawn up election districts based upon a census recently completed by the State of Deseret.⁶⁵ Moreover, he had issued the legally required election proclamation by having Willard Richards, the former secretary of Deseret, validate the document. Young's actions skirted the provisions of the organic law, first by not undertaking a new census and, second, by not having the proclamation notarized by Harris, the new secretary. Young justified his acts by insisting that he was within the spirit of the law. A new census would be costly, redundant, and time consuming; and in fact, the necessary census forms did not arrive in the territory until the

⁶²Thomas L. Kane, Letter to Brigham Young, April 7, 1851, Brigham Young Office Files, Church Historian's Office Journal, July 14 and 20, 1851; Journal History, July 19, 1851.

⁶³Church Historian's Office Journal, July 19, 1851; "History of Brigham Young," July 19, 1851, 21:55.

⁶⁴Meeting in Office, abbreviated minutes, July 23, 1851, General Church Minutes; Brigham Young Office Journal, July 20, 1851.

⁶⁵Brigham Young, Letter to Millard Fillmore, September 29, 1851, Brigham Young Office Files.

end of September.⁶⁶ Likewise, Harris's signature and seal seemed to Young to be a technicality, the result of the uncertain conditions of a new territory. When Young issued his proclamation, Harris had not yet arrived, and no one knew when he might assume his duties.

Babbitt may have been trying to pressure Young to support his candidacy, or at least not to support Bernhisel's. Whatever the motive, Young was furious and his tongue sharp. "The great policy in the political world will damn you," Young told Babbitt during a stormy session held in Young's office in July. "You are rotten now with 'Gentileism' . . . I just feel like this: go to hell and be damned [and] don't come here to dictate." Young understood that Babbitt was challenging his leadership and concept of Zion. "I will not have law and the devil," Young went on. He was willing that the judges should have their salaries and their positions, but he wanted them to have no "quarreling" cases—and for that matter, if he had a say in the matter, probably no cases at all. He continued to hope for early elections. "Why are you not with us?" Young asked Babbitt plaintively.⁶⁷

Babbitt's rebuttal confirmed Young's suspicions. Babbitt was against what the Mormons called "theo-democracy"—Young's practice of uniting church and political authority.⁶⁸ Making his case, Babbitt related a visit that he and Douglas had made to the Executive Mansion. Fillmore had expressed concern about Young's possibly be-

⁶⁶Journal History, September 30, 1851.

⁶⁷Brigham Young's Office Journal, July 20, 1851; "Meeting in Office," July 23, 1851, General Church Minutes; Journal History, July 23, 1851.

⁶⁸Joseph Smith had used this term when running for the U.S. Presidency in 1844. "I go emphatically, virtuously, and humanely for a THEO-DEMOCRACY," Smith said, "where God and the people [jointly] hold the power to conduct the affairs of men in righteousness." Joseph Smith Jr., untitled announcement, *Times and Seasons* [Nauvoo, Ill.], 5 (April 15, 1844): 510. Apostle John Taylor later clarified the doctrine. "The proper mode of government is this—God first speaks, and the people have their action." John Taylor, April 6, 1861, *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (London and Liverpool: LDS Booksellers Depot, 1855–86), 9:9–10. In practice, Young and Church leaders nominated men for office, and the people usually agreed with these recommendations, which left non-LDS Utahns complaining about not having a voice. Theo-democracy, for them, had too much theocracy and not enough democracy.

coming "the Prince of this world and the Prophet of the next." Taking his opposition further, Babbitt wanted the census and early election issues decided by the territory's new supreme court, where he expected he might have some influence. Some of these judges owed their appointment to Babbitt's political dealing, or at least they thought that they did.⁶⁹

At the time, the supreme court was unable to function until its third judge, Perry Brocchus, arrived on the scene. Babbitt clearly was pushing for delay on every front and issue. But his motives were more than tactical politics. He and Young profoundly disagreed not only about nature of power in Zion, but also on such matters as law and lawyering. Pettifoggers had been salt in the Mormon wounds from the Church's beginnings, and Young did not like them any better than many Americans did. "There has come up over the land a swarm of lawyers, like the frogs out of the river of Egypt in the day of Moses," said one local historian, who was not a Mormon and who lived half a continent away from Utah, "that penetrate into the kitchens, closets and bedchambers, and, with a few honorable exceptions, are found at marriages in search of divorce cases, and at funerals, hunting partition suits, button-holing clients at market, church and cemetery, 'instant in season and out of season,' [and] kicking for a job."⁷⁰ Scriptures were no more encouraging. Jesus accused lawyers of withholding from the people the "key of knowledge," and the Saints' Book of Mormon told of one case after another of lawyers and judges twisting the law to bring social unrest (Luke 11:46, 52; Alma chs. 10, 14; 3 Ne. 6).

The State of Deseret did not require lawyers for the judiciary; and when appointing men to Deseret's courts, Young chose nonlawyers. Likewise the legislature of Deseret swept aside English common law in favor of simple equity. The Mormons' bishops' courts, led by the men who headed the local congregations, gained a good reputation even among many forty-niners passing through the territory.⁷¹ Young wanted tribunals that could decide a case without the "laby-

⁶⁹Brigham Young's Office Journal, July 20, 1851; [Meeting in Office], July 23, 1851, General Church Minutes, and Journal History, July 23, 1851.

⁷⁰W. H. McIntosh, *The History of Darke County, Ohio* (Chicago: W. H. Beers & Co., 1880), 231.

⁷¹Brigham D. Madsen, *Gold Rush Sojourners in Great Salt Lake City, 1849 and 1850* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1983), 79; Howard

rinths of technical pleadings and learned opinions” which inevitably raised “the spirit of contention, division and litigation, until unity and fraternity become a proverb and truth a nullity.”⁷² As he told one congregation, “We have sent one [Mormon] justice on a mission, and if the other justice don’t look out, we shall send him on a [proselyting] mission to save him [too].”⁷³

Babbitt may have been working behind the scenes before he and Young had their argument. While Young had not invited the new officers to the meeting, most of them dropped by Young’s office for at least part of the exchange, as if by a prior understanding. Secretary Harris told Young that, while he didn’t want to take sides in the argument, he intended to be punctilious with the Treasury Department’s funds. If the bills of the legislators were too high, Harris warned, he would reject them. It was a curious comment: the legislature was not expected to meet for six months. Babbitt, in a private aside to Young, suggested that Harris’s feelings actually ran deeper. If Harris spoke his “true mind,” Babbitt told Young, the new territorial secretary would not pay out a single dollar for the territorial expenses in the coming election. Babbitt and Harris had obviously talked the matter over, and Harris was on Babbitt’s side.

The twenty-eight-year-old Harris was a Dartmouth College graduate and, by training, a lawyer and a newspaper editor. He had been appointed when other Vermonters refused the patronage slot.⁷⁴ A Vermont community history written later in the nineteenth century lauded him as a man of “mental strength,” who possessed “keenness

Stansbury, *Exploration and Survey of the Valley of the Great Salt Lake of Utah* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo & Co., 1852), 130–31; John W. Gunnison, *The Mormons, or, Latter-day Saints* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo & Co., 1852), 64–65.

⁷²Brigham Young, Letter to John M. Bernhisel, February 28, 1852, Brigham Young Office Files.

⁷³Brigham Young, Remarks, General Church Minutes, January 12, 1851, LDS Church History Library.

⁷⁴“Letter to Millard Fillmore from the House of Representatives,” September 25, 1850, in “Letters of Application and Recommendation during the Administrations of James Polk, Zachary Taylor, and Millard Fillmore, 1845–1853,” Microfilm roll #38, U.S. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

and independence of thought and conviction.”⁷⁵ Before leaving the East, Harris had received the help of Mormon leader Jesse C. Little, who apparently knew Harris’s father.⁷⁶ He had also traveled to Washington to meet with President Fillmore, Secretary of State Daniel Webster, and other administration officials. One later rumor in Utah said that during these conversations he had been told to watch the Mormons carefully and to make sure that territorial business was “strictly legal.”⁷⁷ Harris later denied the rumor.⁷⁸

“A new scene for Mr. Harris to behold the Power of the Priesthood,” wrote one of the Church’s secretaries of the dressing-down that Young gave Babbitt.⁷⁹ Harris, however, was not favorably impressed. When he told of the event several months later, he claimed that Young had attempted to browbeat him “by violently abusing a third person in his presence.” He believed the episode had been stage-managed “to let the [new] Secretary know what kind of people he had to deal with.”⁸⁰

Young’s storm and temper were not that unusual. It was something that the local people came to expect as Young, the “Lion of the Lord,” used harsh language to reprove and get his way. He often balanced these remarks with kindness, as he did on this occasion. “You never had a better friend than I,” Young had told Babbitt in the mid-

⁷⁵*Annals of Brattleboro*, Vol. 2, www.rootsbeb.ancestry.com/xxindexVermont/vermont/WindhamBrattleboro/2html (accessed March 11, 2013).

⁷⁶Jesse C. Little, Letter to Broughton D. Harris, March 11 and 24, 1851, Broughton D. Harris Papers, LDS Church History Library.

⁷⁷W. W. Phelps, Letter to Thomas L. Kane, June 25, 1852, Thomas L. Kane Collection, Yale University Library.

⁷⁸B. D. Harris, Letter to President of the United States, January 12, 1852, in *Message from the President of the United States*, January 20, 1852, House of Representatives, 33d. Congress, 1st Session, Ex. Doc. No. 33, pp. 1–2.

⁷⁹Historian’s Office Journal, 1:98, July 23, 1854, LDS Church History Library.

⁸⁰“Report of Messrs. Brandebury, Brocchus, and Harris to the President of the United States,” December 19, 1851, in *Report from the Secretary of State*, appendix to the *Congressional Globe*, House of Representatives, 32nd Congress, 1st Sess., p. 87.

dle of the argument. His cajoling seemed to work. Babbitt turned over the appropriation for the new territorial capitol building to Young, including the money that he claimed was his. The two men outwardly patched things up, but the incident continued to fester.

The next day was Pioneer Day, which celebrated the fourth anniversary of the arrival of the Saints in Utah. It began with an elaborate parade. Bernhisel, Harris, Brandebury, and Snow were given prominence between the general and local Church leaders. When the procession reached the Bowery, the makeshift, outdoor structure the Mormons used for their public meetings, the officers were given seats on the long raised platform that overlooked the gathered thousands.

Daniel Wells, the jut-jawed general of the militia, was the main orator. Some of his remarks were intended for the officers behind him. If these men should find that “we vary in our views, in our sentiments and policy, from that to which they have been accustomed,” he said, it was because of the many difficulties the Saints had experienced. While the nation may have sealed its own destruction because of how they had treated the Mormons, still, the local people bore no grudges and their American loyalty was unchanged. “Never! No never! Will we desert our country’s cause, never will we be found arrayed by the sides of her enemies, although she herself may cherish them in her own bosom.”⁸¹ Wells could not stay away from the injury he felt. His words became a jeremiad, one phrase after another tumbling out in accusation. Because of its persecutions of the Saints, the nation was under the “withering curse” of Jehovah. The Saints’ “innocent blood” and “insulted innocence” stood in accusation. After the Republic’s punishment of turmoil and difficulty, he predicted that Americans would turn to the Saints, who, “panoplied in the power of righteousness and truth,” would step forth to the rescue. “Then will the patriotism of the Saints shine forth, and the ship of State glide swift on the pathway of honor and reknown, emitting glory on all around, and being guided by those who are not ashamed to seek counsel from Him, who is eternal.”⁸²

Wells’s words lacked caution, although many Saints shared his views, including Young. Persecution as well as apocalyptic vision had

⁸¹“Celebration of the Twenty-Fourth of July, 1851, in G.S.L. City,” *Deseret News*, August 19, 1851, 306/1–3.

⁸²*Ibid.*

crafted among them a super-patriotism. The outside officers, unfamiliar with the Saints, were offended by the thoughts of American decay and Mormon superior virtue. They were also offended by how the assembled people appeared to hang on Wells's words, cheering him on. Later when telling of their experience in Utah, the officers made this speech a part of their indictment. It showed, the officers said, the Saints' disloyalty and their gullibility.⁸³

When the Pioneer Day speeches ended, the officers were ushered to one of Young's homes for dinner, along with a group of Church leaders, Gentile merchants, and the wives of Harris, Snow, and Babbitt. Fifty men and three women, Sarah Harris huffed, noting as a further gender offense that it was Young's wives who served the dinner. Nor was she softened when Young seated her and Broughton next to him and tried to make agreeable conversation.⁸⁴

Sarah had another chance to observe Mormon customs a few days later when a second public ball honored the officers. "You [may] see many strange things in this valley, Mrs. Harris," Young said, introducing one of his plural wives. Young apparently was seeking to open a discussion about Mormon plurality, but Sarah closed it. "Yes," she said, deflecting Young, she and her husband had been to the hot springs north of the city and visited the Great Salt Lake. "His countenance changed," she recalled, "and I was glad there was no further time for conversation."⁸⁵

There was a final attempt at social intercourse. The HARRISES were invited to a private tea at the home of prominent Church leader Heber C. Kimball. Sarah had previously met Mrs. Vilate Kimball and one of her daughters and found them to be pleasant and intelligent. But her attitude changed when Mrs. Kimball introduced six of her young sister wives, three of whom were carrying babies. Later in the evening, Young gave a heavy, kneeling prayer. Sarah was overcome with emotion once she got back to her rooms. Her "pent up feelings of disgust, indignation and horror, found vent in a severe attack of hysterics, quite frightening my young husband," who promised Sarah that she would not be subjected to another such ordeal. Eventually, she and Broughton left Fanny Young Murray's home to lodge with

⁸³"Report of Messrs. Brandebury, Brocchus, and Harris," 86-90.

⁸⁴Harris, *Unwritten Chapter of Salt Lake, 1851-1901*, 34-36.

⁸⁵*Ibid.*, 37.

some of the other officers, to “be entirely free from Mormon environment and espionage.”⁸⁶

Perry E. Brocchus, one of the new judges, was the last to arrive in Utah, about a month after the rest. Brocchus was a Virginian, about thirty-five years old, who had settled in Alabama where he practiced law and became a leading Democratic Party newspaper editor.⁸⁷ More recently he worked with Brandebury in the Treasury Department’s Solicitor’s office. For five years, Brocchus had been seeking a judgeship in one of the western territories. Brocchus, a Democrat who was appointed during a Whig administration, may have owed his position to Babbitt and Douglas.⁸⁸ Douglas, in fact, warmly recommended Brocchus as one of his “most desirable friends,” an “accomplished gentleman,” and a “sound lawyer,” whom he predicted would discharge his duties in a most “satisfactory” manner.⁸⁹

One Democrat partisan lauded Brocchus for his “liberal and elevated impulses,” who “opposed proscription for opinion’s sake,” apparently a recommendation that was meant to open his way to serve with the Mormons. Another testimonial described him as a “jolly fine fellow” with a “very extensive acquaintance,” a description which may have come closer to the truth.⁹⁰ Later, Mormons would hear rumors of Brocchus’s heavy debts and sexual adventures. Brocchus had managed “horses and stallions to drive lewd women about,” said one of these whispers.⁹¹ There was also talk that he had taken liberties with a chambermaid in St. Louis and with still other women on a boat coming up the Missouri River, “crowding himself into ladies state rooms, and stealing kisses in their berths, asleep and awake.” The Mormons

⁸⁶Ibid., 39–40, 50.

⁸⁷“Death of Judge Brocchus,” newspaper clipping, Perry E. Brocchus Files, Special Collections, Marriott Library, University of Utah.

⁸⁸See “Letters of Application and Recommendation during the Administrations of James Polk, Zachary Taylor, and Millard Fillmore, 1845–1853,” Microfilm Roll #10, U.S. National Archives.

⁸⁹Stephen Douglas, Letter to Brigham Young, April 9, 1851, Brigham Young Office Files.

⁹⁰Joseph W. Collidge, Letter to Brigham Young, June 24, 1851, Brigham Young Office Files.

⁹¹Brigham Young Office Journal, December 12, 1852.

at Kanesville also noticed his wandering eye.⁹²

The Mormons apparently did their best to overlook Brocchus's raffish reputation. At Kaneville he was warmly toasted: "Justice, Peace, and Truth," said one Mormon, raising his glass, "may they walk hand in hand with the [Utah] people, the Judge and his associates, whilst they sojourn in Utah's fair Vales." Brocchus's response reportedly was as generous. His repartee was "a charming combination of that soul-stirring eloquence that charms and enchains the senses; wit that enlivens, and humor that moves the passions, and is the pith of enjoyment to a company," said an effusive local newspaper.⁹³

The trip to Utah was less happy. Not many miles into the overland trail, Brocchus's party was raided by Pawnees, who took \$1,000 and everything else they could get their hands on, including his clothes down to his underwear. The Indians had to be argued out of taking these. "As the Indians would say, [they] swapped shirts with them, neglecting to present their blankets in return," said one account.⁹⁴ One of the Mormons traveling with Brocchus continued the irony. The raid had "lightened the load of the teams," he said.⁹⁵

The Mormons in the party did not get along with Brocchus. "I have never seen so lazy & shiftless & no account an individual in all my travels," wrote future LDS apostle Albert Carrington in his diary.⁹⁶ The judge expected the men to wait upon him: "Bring me my gloves, the mosquitoes are biting my hands." He ordered the men to fire the government's howitzer as an Independence Day salute, despite the party's limited supply of gunpowder. And Brocchus talked endlessly—about his sexual conquests, about his availability to serve as Utah's delegate to Congress, about his opportunities in Iowa, and about his power to "crush" the Mormons politically if the occasion arose. "If

⁹²Young, "Beating against the Air," 16–17.

⁹³Journal History, June 25, 1851, quoting *Frontier Guardian* [Kanesville, Iowa], July 11, 1851, 1.

⁹⁴Untitled, *Deseret News*, August 19, 1851, 308/3 [page/column].

⁹⁵Orson Hyde, Letter, *Frontier Guardian*, August 22, 1851, 2; Elias Smith, Journal, July 29, 1851, and John Brown Emigrating Company Journal, July 29, 1851, both in LDS Church History Library.

⁹⁶Albert Carrington, Diary, July 19, 1851, Carrington Papers, Marriott Library, University of Utah. See other Carrington comments July 20–23, 1851.

Utah ever sends such a poor, corrupt, venomous curse as a delegate,” Carrington wrote in another passage in his diary, “I shall be exceedingly surprised, & I pray God the Eternal Father in the name of Jesus to avert such a calamity, even so, Amen.”⁹⁷

Reports of Brocchus’s character quickly reached Young’s office. His Office Journal, a daily posting of events, noted that Brocchus was experiencing poor health. But the wisecracking secretaries thought that his illness was more than physical: The judge had heard “that the Election for Delegate was over” and in despair had taken to his bed.⁹⁸ Bernhisel, about two weeks after the Pioneer Day celebration, had already been elected with lockstep unanimity, receiving every one of the 1,259 votes cast.⁹⁹ Members of Utah’s new territorial assembly were elected with similar unanimity. The outsiders had a new glimpse of Utah’s unusual ways.

The lopsided votes masked a growing opposition, small in numbers, but nevertheless with the power to influence events in the East. This opposition included many of the city’s Gentile merchants, who bristled at Young’s complaints of their high prices, money-making, and high living. It also included the outside officers, who found Utah to be strange, a world apart. Babbitt, one of the few Mormons with whom the Gentiles felt comfortable, was probably a part of the coalition, too. Young privately viewed him as a catalyst. “A certain lawyer,” he would later say, “that is the biggest stink in the Territory” had stirred the opposition.¹⁰⁰

The officials’ complaints included such things as the tone of Wells’s speech, the lack of a new census, and subsequent elections. But underlying all of these things was pioneer Mormonism itself—its theocracy, its plural marriage, its opposition to petty lawyering, and its social and political unity. Young aroused feelings, too, because of his outspoken language, his power, and his gubernatorial failure to

⁹⁷Ibid., July 23, 1851; see also entry for July 20, 1851.

⁹⁸Brigham Young Office Journal, August 17, 1851. Hyde no doubt immediately reported Brocchus’s conduct to Young. Hyde’s report must have been confirmed the following day when Young visited with Carrington. Carrington, Diary, August 18, 1851.

⁹⁹“Brigham Young History,” September 22, 1851, LDS Church History Library.

¹⁰⁰The quotation is from the later Brigham Young, Remarks, February 28, 1855, General Church Minutes.

consult and communicate with the officers. As the outsiders huddled together at their boardinghouse, removed by their own choice from Utah's people and speaking mainly to themselves, their suspicions grew like a hothouse plant. Every unfavorable rumor they heard in the city about the Mormons became grist for discussion, belief, and then embellishment. One of these claimed that, during the Pioneer Day celebration, Young had mocked the memory of Zachary Taylor. He is "dead, and in Hell, and I am glad of it," Young supposedly had said. This rumor said Young had raised his hands toward heaven and prophesied "that any president of the United States who lifts his finger against this people shall die an untimely death, and go to hell."¹⁰¹ Bernhisel, who was present during the celebration, denied that Young ever made these remarks. Young called the charge a "palpable falsehood."¹⁰² More likely, the remarks, or something like them, came from Wells.¹⁰³

There was another, more serious rumor. After Babbitt surrendered the money for the construction of the territorial capitol building, officers learned that specie for the first time in months was circulating in the city and that money was going east, apparently to meet Church debts. They assumed the worst—that Young had embezzled the federal funds.

There was another explanation more in keeping with Young's honesty in his business dealing, but open to confusion and criticism. Sometime during the summer, Young, acting in his dual roles as governor and Church president, apparently used the government money to buy from the Church its Council House with the promise that the transaction would be reversed once the new building was ready to be built, probably in the coming spring.¹⁰⁴

For several years, Utah had enjoyed a healthy supply of money. California emigrants, traveling through the territory, had paid good prices for local food and services. But these funds were drying up as

¹⁰¹"Report of Messrs. Brandebury, Brocchus, and Harris," 87.

¹⁰²"The Mormons in Utah," *New York Daily Tribune*, January 13, 1852, 6; Young, "Beating against the Air," 10.

¹⁰³Daniel H. Wells, Pioneer Day Oration, General Church Minutes, July 24, 1851.

¹⁰⁴Brigham Young, Letter to James Guthrie, July 31, 1854, Young Papers.

fewer forty-niners came to Utah. The result was a money crunch, local stagnation, and unpaid bills. Young explained the situation in his official history: "The exportation of cash having been far greater than the importation, the past year, it is to be feared that many articles will remain unsold."¹⁰⁵ In short, Utah had what modern economists call a "colonial" economy—more money was going out of the territory to buy manufactured goods than coming in, and the local markets were collapsing. Young's move actually had three factors to recommend it. For the short term, the government had, rent free, the only large building in the territory capable of housing the legislature and the new territorial library. The Council House had two large rooms and four offices. Washington's interests were secured by owning a building worth twice its purchase price; the Mormon building had cost more than \$45,000 to construct.¹⁰⁶ Meanwhile, the funds could help the flow of local commerce and pay Church notes in the East.

The Mormons acted in good faith. They drew up plans for the new building and were anxious to get it started. On the day Bernhisel left for Washington in late September, "a commencement was made" to put the building on Salt Lake City's Union Square, now the site of West High School. (Later the legislature moved the site to Fillmore City in the center of the territory.)¹⁰⁷ They also sought more federal funds for the project and said they were willing to pay for some of the cost of construction by using their own money, if necessary.¹⁰⁸ Unfortunately, however, Young never explained these steps to the outsiders or to his governmental superior U.S. Secretary of State Daniel Webster, which left federal authorities deeply suspicious. Nor could they have been pleased with the rumors they were hearing about how he had mingled his Church and political offices in other situations.

By the end of August, there were signs that relations were breaking down. Secretary Harris, custodian of another badly needed

¹⁰⁵"Brigham Young History," September 22, 1851.

¹⁰⁶Brigham Young, Letter to John Bernhisel, February 28, 1852, Brigham Young Office Files.

¹⁰⁷"Sixth General Epistle of the Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," *Millennial Star* 14, no. 2 (January 15, 1852): 18.

¹⁰⁸Daniel H. Wells, Letter to John M. Bernhisel, August 29, 1851, Brigham Young Office Files.

\$20,000 in hard currency, refused to pay out a single dime.¹⁰⁹ This money had been earmarked by Congress to pay the territory's expenses. He was apparently warned off by the things he was hearing about Young's use of the other federal money. In turn, Young warily asked for a formal document to be written and placed in Church files about Brocchus's behavior while coming west, to be used in case there was an open break. What was lacking, on both sides, was the ability to look past differences to find enough common ground to build a relationship. Yet when Willard Richards, Young's first counselor, wrote to Thomas Kane at the end of August, at a time when local news might be shared, he said nothing about the growing tension.¹¹⁰ The Mormons apparently hoped that matters could still be worked out.

On August 29, Brocchus dropped by Young's office and left his card.¹¹¹ A day or two later, on Sunday, he sent a note. "Judge Brocchus tenders his compliments to Gov. Young and begs leave to say that he would be glad to accompany his Excellency to Church this morning," it said. Brocchus explained that he remained in poor health and "could not with propriety venture to walk."¹¹² The distance was only a few city blocks. The note arrived as Young was stepping from his door to walk to the service, and he saw no reason to change his routine. But he did send a carriage. Young was surprised when he arrived to see Brocchus already sitting on the speakers' stand, along with the other outsiders, one of the few times that they had shown an interest in mixing with the Mormons. During the service, Brocchus used a fan to brush flies from his shirt ruffles, a display that the local leaders suspected, was a "disguised opportunity of getting a fair view of every beautiful lady that passed within the scope of his penetrating vi-

¹⁰⁹According to some sources, the amount of the Congressional appropriation may have actually been \$24,000. See, for instance, "Joint Resolution Pertaining to the Secretary of Utah Territory," September 24, 1851, in *Report from the Secretary of State*, appendix to the *Congressional Globe*, House of Representatives, 32nd Congress, 1st Sess., p. 90.

¹¹⁰Willard Richards, Letter to Thomas L. Kane, August 31, 1851, Kane Collection, Yale University; Journal History, August 31, 1851.

¹¹¹Brigham Young Office Journal, August 29, 1851.

¹¹²Perry E. Brocchus, Letter to Brigham Young, August 31, 1851, Brigham Young Office Files; also Young, "Beating against the Air, 13.

sion.”¹¹³ When the meeting concluded, he stood for another hour talking with his friends on the street. He seemed in good health. Young gave one of his forceful appraisals. Commenting upon the judge’s immaculate dress, Brocchus, he thought, was a “band box Dickey just arrived from city stores.”¹¹⁴ (The reference was to the detachable shirt fronts that eastern dandies wore.)

The officers’ trip to the Church meeting apparently had been a reconnoiter to get the lay of the land for a possible public confrontation they were planning. Brocchus’s later account probably can be taken at face value. “I suggested to a number of my official associates the propriety of making an effort to correct the prevailing errors of opinion which were assuming a fearful reign over the minds of the people—exciting them to feelings of enmity toward the General Government, and of intolerance towards us as its official representatives. This suggestion met the cordial concurrence of all the officers of the Territory then present who were not Mormons.”¹¹⁵ The officers had come to believe that the Mormon leaders were guilty of “willful[,] deliberate[,] malicious sedition” and that Young and his associates wanted “to alienate the affections of the people from the Government of the United States”—shepherds leading the flock astray, although they also had serious questions about the sheep themselves. One goal was to test “the character of the people.”¹¹⁶ The idea was for Brocchus to give a speech at one of the Saints’ public meetings, taking an adversarial position to Young. Brocchus would later insist that his remarks, “in all its parts, was the result of deliberation and care—not proceeding from a heated imagination or a maddened impulse. . . . I intended to say what I did say.”¹¹⁷ He underlined most of these words to emphasize his point.

¹¹³Gene A. Sessions, *Mormon Thunder: A Documentary History of Jedediah Mormon Grant* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982), 89.

¹¹⁴Young, “Beating against the Air,” 13.

¹¹⁵Perry E. Brocchus, *Letter of Judge Brocchus, of Alabama, to the Public, upon the Difficulties in the Territory of Utah* (Washington, D.C.: Henry Polkinhorn, 1859), 21.

¹¹⁶*Ibid.*, 21–22; Perry Brandebury to Millard Fillmore, “From the Report of the Judges of Utah Territory to the President of the United States,” *New York Herald*, January 10, 1852, 6.

¹¹⁷Perry E. Brocchus, Letter to Brigham Young, September 19, 1851,

The officers were aware that Young had called a special general conference, in part to deal with the economic situation. But how could Brocchus get permission to speak? During the first week of September, he met with Young and explained that the Board of Managers of the Washington Monument had authorized him to raise funds. He asked permission to make an appeal at the conference.¹¹⁸ It was a project the Saints fully supported. Yet Young cautiously asked for an outline of what Brocchus planned to say, although when none came, he personally introduced him to the congregation of more than three thousand. Young had "full confidence that . . . [Brocchus] was too much of a gentleman to introduce anything inappropriate to the eccentric religious occasion."¹¹⁹

Brocchus's two-hour speech, delivered on September 8, became one of the most sensational in Utah's early history. No stenographic account of it exists, although a clerk provided a short report. Fortunately, Wilford Woodruff also gave a summary, as did Brocchus, Young, and several others. There can be little doubt as to the thrust of what was said, although the sequence and details of his remarks are more difficult to establish.

He began by currying favor. The local people "have lavished their kindness on me," he said, praising the ladies who had nursed him in his recent illness. "A Sainted woman came to my bedside and swept the flies away from my burning side. . . . She wept over a stranger. Can I forget such kindness?" He quoted from the Book of Mormon and praised the way the Saints settled their disputes instead of relying upon the "long, flowery, opinions of law." He took a withered sprig from his pocket. He explained that he had sent for it from the burial grounds at Winter Quarters, where so many Mormons had died while attempting to come to Utah. He carried it as a reminder of the Saints' past difficulties.¹²⁰

Turning to his fellow federal officers seated behind him, he an-

Brigham Young Office Files.

¹¹⁸Church Historian's Office Journal, quoted in "Brigham Young History," September 7-9, 1851.

¹¹⁹Young, "Beating against the Air," 26.

¹²⁰Scott G. Kenney, ed., *Wilford Woodruff's Journal, 1833-1898*, typescript, 9 vols. (Midvale, Utah: Signature Books, 1983-85), September 8, 1851, 4:62.

nounced that he would miss them: He had decided to return east, probably for good. His decision, which came after being in Utah for only three weeks, during which time he had not heard a single case, had nothing to do, he insisted, with the lost Congressional seat, although he hinted at some private anguish. Had he been elected, he might have been “able to do some good,” he said.

He used the Washington Monument as a text for proper patriotism, which was the bulk of his remarks. During his long address, he praised George Washington and Zachary Taylor as two great “men of the sword,” inaccurately putting Washington at the Battle of Bunker Hill.¹²¹ He claimed that the Mormons who had enrolled in their famed Mormon Battalion during the Mexican War may have been hoping to pick up some California gold, even though battalion veterans had actually helped to find the gold that started the gold rush.¹²² And he openly challenged Wells, whose Pioneer Day oration had claimed that Polk’s request for the battalion had been an unsympathetic test of Mormon loyalty. “I disapprove of the sentiment and charge,” Brocchus countered, “but admire the language of the orator.”¹²³

“The government of the United States has not wronged you,” he went on, claiming that most Americans had been indignant over how the Saints had been treated for so many years. The blame lay with Missouri and Illinois, and for redress they should turn to the judges and legislators of these states. This last comment, so out of touch with the anti-Mormon feeling existing in Missouri and Illinois, ended the patience of the congregation. Men and women began to hiss and groan. They had endured Brocchus’s lavish attempt to ingratiate himself. They had fidgeted uneasily through his lecture about their own history. His comments about President Zachary Taylor and the Mormon Battalion, they understood, were aimed at their leaders. But his smooth assurances of the good feeling of the people of the United States and the possibility to getting Missouri and Illinois to recognize the wrongs done to the Saints were too much. The cries from the congregation grew louder.

Off balance and red-faced, Brocchus probably said some things

¹²¹Brigham Young, Letter to Perry E. Brocchus, September 30, 1851, Brigham Young Office Files.

¹²²Ibid.

¹²³Brocchus, Remarks, General Church Minutes, September 8, 1851.

that he had not planned. While coming west, he heard the Mormons say that "the U.S. was going to hell as fast as it could," he complained. Upon reaching Utah, he heard street talk that the federal government was "a stink in the nostrils."¹²⁴ Such remarks "deeply pained" him. And if his later memories were accurate, somewhere in his speech he made clear his allusion to President Zachary Taylor. I "alluded boldly and feelingly to the sacrilegious remarks of Governor Young towards the memory of the lamented Taylor," he said. "I defended, as well as my feeble powers would allow, the name and character of the departed hero from the unjust aspersions cast upon him, and remarked that, in the latter part of the assailant's bitter exclamation that he 'was glad that General Taylor was in hell,' he did not exhibit a Christian spirit, and that if the author did not early repent of the cruel declaration, that he would perform that task with keen remorse upon his dying pillow."¹²⁵ Finally, he had a word to say about the ladies in the audience, whose voices could be heard in the outcry. An acceptable gift to the Washington Monument committee required the people to become virtuous, he said, and for the women to "teach your daughters to become virtuous, or your offering had better remain in the bosom of your native mountains."¹²⁶ Brocchus, of course, was referring to polygamy.

By now the women were ready to strip him into "ribbons and shoe strings," Young later said, and the people were standing and calling on Young to reply.¹²⁷ He needed no encouragement. He shared his people's anger, but he must have been embarrassed, too, by his failure to foresee and control events. Brocchus had deceived him by

¹²⁴Ibid.

¹²⁵Perry Brocchus, quoted in Sessions, *Mormon Thunder*, 371.

¹²⁶Jedediah M. Grant, Letter to John M. Bernhisel, *Deseret News Weekly*, May 15, 1852, 52/1-4. (This volume is paginated consecutively.) Brocchus's version about the Washington Monument said nothing about the virtue of the Mormon women but was almost as incendiary: "I then told the audience if they could not offer a block of marble in a feeling of full fellowship with the people of the United States, as brethren and fellow-citizens, they had better not offer it at all, but leave it unquarried in the bosom of its native mountain." "Extract of a Letter from a Judicial Officer of the Government," Salt Lake City, September 20, 1851, in *Message from the President of the United States*, House of Representatives, 32d Congress, 1st Session, Ex. Document 25, p. 6.

¹²⁷Brigham Young, Remarks, July 7, 1861, Church General Minutes.

being allowed to speak before a Church audience of thousands. "Judge Brocchus is either profoundly ignorant or corruptly wicked, one of the two," he began and said that there were men ready to testify about the latter. As Young talked, he paced back and forth. "By this time the passions of the people were lashed into a fury like his own," Brocchus remembered. "To every sentence he uttered, there was a prompt and determined response, showing beyond a doubt that all the hostile and seditious sentiments we had previously heard, were the sentiments of this people."¹²⁸

If Brocchus saw and heard sedition, the fragmentary reports of Young's speech failed to record it, though Young scored the "damned rascals" who held too many government posts.¹²⁹ He touched on his usual themes: his patriotism, his affection for the U.S. Constitution, and a denial of a desire for political independence. For one thing, trade tariffs might be a disaster. For Brocchus there was scorn. Young did not want national political parties introduced into peaceful Utah, as Brocchus had proposed, because of their bickerings. Moreover, Young argued, it was an outrage to believe the national government had been sympathetic during the Saints' ordeals. Washington's silence during these episodes was refutation enough, and the highest levels had sometimes had been outspokenly antagonistic. By the minute growing more furious, Young said the damning words about Zachary Taylor that Brocchus had already put into his mouth: "I know Zachary Taylor," Young said. "He is dead and damned, and I cannot help it." The Church leader was irate that a man like Brocchus had come to Utah to lecture on morality and virtue. "I could buy a thousand of such men and put them into a bandbox. Ladies and gentlemen here we learn principle and good manners. It is an insult to this congregation to throw out such insinuations. I say it is an insult, and I will say no more."¹³⁰

Several days later, the conference ended on a high note. Young, lifting his hands above his head, blessed the people by the power of his priesthood. "We had a glorious revival," remembered one Mormon. Young had spoken with "more power and decision than I ever before

¹²⁸"Report of Messrs. Brandebury, Brocchus, and Harris," 88.

¹²⁹"Brigham Young History," September 7-9, 1851.

¹³⁰Brigham Young, September 8, 1851, General Church Minutes. .

witnessed.”¹³¹ During its sessions, the cash-strapped Church asked its members to pay a special tithing of one-tenth of their total worth instead of the usual one-tenth of their annual increase.¹³² It also voted to take more seriously the laxly observed Word of Wisdom. Its requirement to abstain from—or at least cut back on importations of tea, coffee, tobacco, and alcohol—would thus improve Zion’s balance of trade.¹³³

But the outsiders spoke only of Young’s rebuttal. Soon they announced they all, not just Brocchus, were planning to leave the territory. Young understood that their departure threatened the territory’s relations with Washington and convened an emergency session of the Council of Fifty to consider what steps should be taken. The council came down on the side of making peace.¹³⁴ Young and other Church leaders left the council meeting and walked to the boarding-house where they were staying. Sarah Harris remembered the interview as “long and exhaustive,” with Young offering the officers wealth, women, and political position if they would remain. “Brigham humbled himself in the dust at their feet,” Sarah said, “and offered to black their boots. Incredible as this may seem, it was literally true.”¹³⁵

Sarah had a gift for overstating things, but there can be no doubt Young wanted to patch things up. More likely, he had offered the officers full status in the community. The next morning, preaching to the Saints, Young was anxious. He was “a law abiding man” and willing to answer for his acts, he told his congregation. He was ready “to suffer my right arm and then my left” to be lost before dishonoring the Constitution. But he also believed that he had a right to speak his mind about Zachary Taylor. “If that is treason, I am a traitor.”¹³⁶

On the next day, the Mormons wrote to Kane, warning of possible difficult times to come. Their dispute with the outsiders, they believed, was about truth and falsehood, another battle in their cosmic war. A full explanation would require “some able historian” in the fu-

¹³¹Richard Ballantyne, Letter to John Taylor, September 23, 1851, *Journal History*.

¹³²*Ibid.*

¹³³*Journal History*, September 7, 1851.

¹³⁴Historian’s Office Journal, September 13, 1851.

¹³⁵Harris, *Unwritten Chapter of Salt Lake, 1851–1901*, 55–56.

¹³⁶Brigham Young, September 14, 1851, General Church Minutes.

ture. It was as though, the Mormons, overtaken by events, did not know how to explain them to themselves.¹³⁷

Nine days after Brocchus's speech, Young called a special session of the legislature. Reading the organic law and broadly interpreting the doctrine of popular sovereignty, he believed the legislators had the right to force Harris to surrender his \$20,000 before leaving the territory, along with his official papers and the territorial seal. Was not the voice of the legislature supreme?

The Mormons and Harris gave conflicting accounts of what happened next. The local people claimed that Harris grudgingly stamped Young's proclamation calling the legislature into session with the official seal, although he misdated his signature in the hope of delaying implementation. The exasperated Mormons put the proper date on the proclamation and sent express riders throughout the territory. They hoped that the legislature could meet and take action before Harris and the other officers left the territory.¹³⁸ Harris, in a different version, claimed that the proclamation was cloaked in secrecy and that he found out about it two days after it had been issued.¹³⁹

As the legislators were gathering, Young once more tried to make peace. Writing to Brocchus, he said that he was "ever wishing to promote the peace, love & harmon[e] of the people, and to cultivate the spirit of charity & benevolence to all, and especially toward strangers." Young suggested that each man apologize for their language at a special public meeting and then let the matter be forgotten. "I shall esteem it a duty and a pleasure to make every apology & satisfaction for my observations which you as a gentleman can claim or desire at my hands," Young wrote. In return, Young wanted Brocchus to explain his words about the lack of virtue of the Mormon women—everything else that Brocchus had said on September 8 could be forgiven except that provocation. Young promised Brocchus freedom of the Bowery—no Mormon would offer a rebut-

¹³⁷[Brigham Young], [Heber Kimball], and Willard Richards, Letter to Thomas L. Kane, September 15, 1851, Brigham Young Office Files.

¹³⁸Brigham Young Office Journal, September 17–19, 1851; Young to Fillmore, September 29, 1851.

¹³⁹"Report of Messrs. Brandebury, Brocchus, and Harris," 88–89.

tal to anything the judge might say.¹⁴⁰

Brochus replied with a formal letter of his own. While saying that he had never wished to cause any “painful or unpleasant emotion in the hearts of the ladies who honored me with their presence and their respectful attention on that occasion,” he saw no need to reconcile with Young. He reminded Young of some of the President’s most unpleasant words—about the peril of the angry congregation pulling Brochus’s hair or cutting his throat. His address, he said, had been prepared to vindicate the United States “from those feelings of prejudice, and that spirit of defection [disaffection] which seemed to pervade the public sentiment.”¹⁴¹

Brochus’s answer spurred the Church president to write two scathing letters over the next two days and a third before the end of the month. Young refuted Brochus’s speech point by point, making it a valuable source for knowing what had been said on September 8. On the question of whether Brochus had insulted the ladies in the congregation—a question that some historians have doubted—Young was apoplectic. “You expressed a hope that the ladies you were addressing, ‘would become virtuous,’” went one passage. “Sir, your hope was of the damning die, and your very expression, tended to convey the assertion that those ladies you . . . addressed were prostitutes. . . . Could you have committed a greater indignity and outrage on the feelings of the most virtuous and sensible assembly of ladies that your eyes ever beheld?”¹⁴²

Both men were writing not so much to each other but for a public relations campaign that was likely to begin once the officers left Utah and returned to their homes. These letters might then be released to the public and printed. Brochus, in fact, was working on a public letter indicting Young and Utah. “I am sick and tired of this place,” it said.¹⁴³

The meeting of the legislature on the morning of September 22 was an achievement. Within less than a week, the citizen-legislators

¹⁴⁰Young to Brochus, September 19, 1857.

¹⁴¹Perry E. Brochus to Brigham Young, September 19, 1851, Brigham Young Office Files.

¹⁴²Brigham Young, Letters to Perry E. Brochus, September 20, 23, 30, 1851, Brigham Young Office Files.

¹⁴³“Extract of a Letter from a Judicial Officer of the Government,” 5.

had been summoned and came, at harvest time, some from more than a hundred miles and traveling over poor roads. Every man was in his place, except the legislators from distant Iron County in southern Utah. Young opened this new round of conflict by asking Chief Justice Brandebury to issue a judicial opinion whether the legislature could restrain Harris and his money. Brandebury refused to comment. Harris obstructed, too, by declining to enroll the legislature, one of his nominal duties, on the grounds that the body had been improperly elected and convened because Young's election proclamation had lacked his seal. Nor would he pay the legislators' travel expenses, per diem expenses, or even the small costs of operating expenses, like printing laws. For the Mormons, these acts continued the obstruction begun from the time the officers arrived in the territory, "hedging and hatching and laying traps, playing sly-attorney's tricks, giving advice and getting crooked law papers out of honest, straightforward citizens."¹⁴⁴

Two days after being called into session, the legislature performed its reason for meeting by demanding Harris turn over the \$20,000 and threatened to send the territorial marshal to arrest him if he disobeyed. The supreme court, awakening from its slumber, responded by issuing a restraining order "not to touch Harris, [the] money, or [Harris's] documents."¹⁴⁵ The court's opinion was foregone: It had the majority votes of Brandebury and Brocchus, while Judge Snow either dissented or absented himself from the decision. After three months of jostling, "the affair of the runaways" had reached a final turn, which was about fundamental constitutional questions. Could the local legislature, supposedly the supreme voice of people and supported by the governor—an officer nominated by the president and confirmed by the Senate—control the acts of another territorial officer? Or did final power rest with the territory's supreme court, also appointed by Washington? Did the final say belong to local citizens or with two federally appointed judges?

¹⁴⁴Jedediah M. Grant, "Letter from the Mayor of Salt Lake City," *New York Herald*, March 9, 1852, 6/3–6.

¹⁴⁵Brigham Young Office Journal, September 24, 1851; Brigham Young, Letter to Millard Fillmore, September 29, 1851; Brigham Young Journal, September 26, 1851, LDS Church History Library. See also Jedediah M. Grant, "Defence of the Mormons," *New York Herald*, March 9, 1852, 6/3–6.

As Young and legislators considered these questions, Almon Babbitt left town. Was he trying to smuggle out the \$20,000? Traveling with Babbitt was a kinsman, perhaps a son or nephew, who had left a debt in Salt Lake City, and a constable was dispatched to make the collection. Babbitt, however, believed he was being harassed and drew a pistol and told the lawman to withdraw. The act deepened Mormon suspicions about Babbitt having the territorial funds. Within hours a posse of thirty men was on the road; and when it caught up with Babbitt forty miles from the city, his carriages and tents were ransacked. Although the posse failed to find the territorial money, Babbitt was arrested for resisting an officer and brought back to the city.¹⁴⁶ The event may have been more than about just the congressional appropriation. Emotions in the community were high, and some citizens believed Babbitt had some responsibility for everything that had taken place. The search and arrest may have had an element of payback.

Brandebury released Babbitt on a writ of *habeas corpus*, and Babbitt and his family resumed their travel east. He appeared at peace when he arrived at Kaneshville. He told the local Saints that he was going to Washington to "plead the cause of his people in such a manner that they [the Saints] would confide in him again."¹⁴⁷ Perhaps Babbitt, in whose blood politics ran deep, knew that he could have no future in Utah unless he patched things up. When Young gave his account of the case, he claimed that the order to arrest Babbitt had not come from him but from a local court justice. He blamed the incident on frontier emotions, which sometimes led to direct and rugged action.¹⁴⁸ The officers saw it differently. The "outrage," they said, had been "perpetrated by the command of the governor."¹⁴⁹

"These were exciting times for the young bride," Sarah Harris said. Isolated at their boarding house, the outsiders saw dark shadows everywhere, especially after what had happened to Babbitt. In these anxious days, Broughton Harris decided to remove the government

¹⁴⁶"Report of Messrs. Brandebury, Brocchus, and Harris," 18-19.

¹⁴⁷Willard Snow, "Account of Trip across the Plains," November 3, 1851, *Journal History*.

¹⁴⁸Young, "Beating against the Air," 63-67.

¹⁴⁹"Report of Messrs. Brandebury, Brocchus, and Harris," 19.

specie from the safe at James Livingston's store.¹⁵⁰ During "one dark night," Harris and Livingston got the chest containing the money to the boardinghouse, staggering and "perfectly exhausted" under its weight. It was another step in the officers' planned departure from Utah.¹⁵¹

By the end of September, it was a time for making decisions. Babbitt had made his by clinging to the hope that his political future lay in Utah. Zerubabel Snow remained in Utah despite the pleas of the departing officers and his wife for him to join them in their return to the East. The Mormons had a major decision to make, too. Should the territorial funds be taken by force? For several days, Young and Church leaders may have weighed this possibility, but finally Harris was allowed to take his gold and silver coins and leave the territory.¹⁵² After reaching this decision, the First Presidency made it clear that it had no interest in seeking political independence: a Churchwide circular had a clause supporting territorial government.¹⁵³ Utah concluded that its best interests lay in the East and had acted to preserve that future.

What had been the decisive factors in the "affair of the 'run-aways'"? Young's interview with Babbitt, Wells's oration, Brocchus's speech, and the officers' rejection of the Mormon olive branch—as well as other minor events—had built upon each other. The abrasive personalities of Babbitt, Brocchus, and Young also had a role. Much of the difficulty, however, came from the men sent by Washington, who showed their limited judgment and their inexperience. Instead of trying to work with Utah's unusual ways, they had shown how easily they could be provoked and how shallow their roots were in their new home. Brocchus's excesses weighed heavily in the failure.

As the officers prepared to leave at the end of the month, Young visited Brocchus and found him cordial. The judge said that he was

¹⁵⁰Harris had brought a safe with him from Washington, which he may have loaned to Livingston. Almon W. Babbitt, Letter to Brigham Young, October 17, 1853, Brigham Young Office Files.

¹⁵¹Harris, *Unwritten Chapter of Salt Lake, 1851–1901*, 52–52.

¹⁵²Brigham Young Office Journal, September 24, 1851.

¹⁵³"General Epistle of the First Presidency," September 22, 1851, Journal History.

willing to “bury the hatchet, shake hands, forget the past, and be friends” and asked Young to apologize to the ladies in his behalf.¹⁵⁴ As Young was conveying these regards during the next morning’s worship service, Brocchus was making a dash for Utah’s eastern frontier. Apparently the judge was hoping that Young, if he had any thoughts about taking action against him, would let down his guard. Almost two dozen Gentile citizens, mainly the city’s merchants, traders, and their employees, rode with Brocchus to prevent another incident like the one that had befallen Babbitt. By now most of the non-LDS community were on the side of the departing officers.¹⁵⁵ There was one last-minute alarm, however. The Harris’s carriage broke down while still in Salt Lake City—the weight of their cargo apparently had been too much. In addition to the government’s money, the carriage carried Livingston’s recent profits—another \$16,000 in hard specie. Only Livingston and Brandebury stayed behind to help the panic-stricken Harrises, who felt betrayed by the flight of the others. However, once repairs were undertaken, the Harrises rode to Fort Bridger to begin a “long toilsome journey back across the plains.”¹⁵⁶ So much had happened in so little time. Most of the officers had been in Utah less than three months.

“May the devil take them,” Young said when he learned that they had left.¹⁵⁷

[Part 2 will follow in the winter 2014 issue.]

¹⁵⁴Young to Brocchus, September 30, 1851.

¹⁵⁵Ballantyne to Taylor, September 23, 1851, *Journal History*.

¹⁵⁶Harris, *Unwritten Chapter of Salt Lake, 1851–1901*, 59–61.

¹⁵⁷Brigham Young Office Journal, September 28, 1851.



New York journalist Isaac Russell, ca. 1914. Courtesy Samuel Russell Collection, Special Collections, Marriott Library, University of Utah.

ISAAC RUSSELL: MORMON MUCKRAKER AND SECRET DEFENDER OF THE CHURCH

Kenneth L. Cannon II

We believe that public opinion will change in regard to the Mormon Church and the Mormon people and that the slanders and falsehoods that have been told concerning us will yet be the means of bringing to light our true character, which, we are pleased and thankful to say, will always be found ready and prepared to stand the light of scrutiny.—Joseph F. Smith to Isaac Russell, June 1911¹

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¹Joseph F. Smith, Letter to Isaac Russell, June 13, 1911, Joseph F. Smith Letterpress Copybooks, in Richard E. Turley, ed., *Selected Collections of the Archives of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 2 vols., DVD (Provo, Utah: BYU Press, 2002), 1:30; hereafter *Selected Collections*.

It is hard to reduce this matter to words but I have a strong sub-consciousness that in all this anti-Mormon agitation here there is a Guiding Hand and that its purpose is to open the minds of the people to receive what will in a little while from now be an overwhelming message. —Isaac Russell to Joseph F. Smith, 1913²

ISAAC RUSSELL WAS AN UNUSUALLY GIFTED New York City newspaper reporter and editor, muckraking journalist,³ public relations maven, intellectual, and historian who just happened to be a Mormon born and raised in Utah. Russell straddled the two worlds of big-city journalism and Mormondom, succeeding in a national market at the same time defending the church and culture of his youth. For a period of time, during most of the 1910s and again briefly in the 1920s, he was secretly assigned by the Church's president to protect and improve the Church's public image by responding to media attacks and publishing positive stories about the Church, its

²Isaac Russell, Letter to Joseph F. Smith, February 11, 1913, Scott G. Kenney Collection, Special Collections, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City; hereafter Kenney Collection. Russell pictured himself as the person who would lead the response to the "anti-Mormon agitation" and thereby open the minds of the populace at large to the LDS Church.

³"Muckraker" is an ill-defined term primarily used to describe certain reform-minded investigative journalists who wrote for Progressive magazines in the first fifteen years of the twentieth century. The 15¢ magazines, made possible by newly inexpensive paper, enjoyed unusual popularity, particularly among middle-class Americans. The term was applied to a certain kind of writer by Theodore Roosevelt, who referred to John Bunyan's "man . . . with the Muckrake in his hand" who refused to look up from his dirty task to find better things. Theodore Roosevelt, "The Man with the Muckrake," www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/teddyrooseveltmuckrake.htm (accessed September 2012); John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Oxford World's Classics edition (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1998), 164. There was a broad range of muckraking, from "accurate and penetrating reportage," that appeared in the quintessential muckraking magazine, *McClure's*, to the "irresponsible sensationalism" of the *Cosmopolitan*. Louis Filler, *Appointment at Armageddon: Muckraking and Progressivism in the American Tradition* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1976), 248.

leaders, and its members. He fulfilled his assignment brilliantly.

Isaac Russell was born in 1879, a grandson of Parley P. Pratt on his mother's side and of prominent early Mormon missionary (and eventual dissident) Isaac Russell on his father's side.⁴ From an early age, he was known as "Ike," a nickname he retained throughout his life. One account noted that, while a student, he was also called "Fossil Ike" "on account of his studious habits and somewhat eccentric ideas." Russell volunteered and served with distinction as part of the Utah Light Artillery under Richard W. Young in the Spanish-American War in the Philippines. In hand-to-hand combat while freeing a fellow American soldier from native belligerents, Russell killed two "roaming Filipinos" and "received an ugly wound over the head" which required hospitalization. However, he suffered no long-term physical effects from his injury. In the Philippines, he also started and edited an army newspaper called the *American Soldier* and worked as a "staff correspondent of the *New York Journal*."⁵ After the war, he stayed in Manila for two years as a civilian employee, serving as General John Pershing's personal stenographer.⁶ Charles Mabey, later governor of Utah, who served with Russell in the war, believed that,

⁴Family Group Records of Parley P. Pratt and Hannahette Snively, Isaac Russell and Mary Walton, Samuel Russell and Henrietta Pratt, www.familysearch.org (accessed August 2011).

⁵"Utah Newspaper Men in the Philippines," *Deseret News*, June 3, 1890, Sect. 2, 1, 11. The article includes a nice illustration of Ike in his army uniform. Russell was not particularly impressed by Richard W. Young, a well-known graduate of West Point and Columbia Law School, and a "bosom friend" of Heber J. Grant, either in battle in the Philippines or in Utah. Andrew Jenson, ed., *Latter-day Saints 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 Jensen History, 1901–36), 1:671; Heber J. Grant, Letter to Isaac K. Russell, July 14, 1922, Isaac Russell Papers, Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, California (hereafter Russell Papers). Isaac Russell, Letter to B. H. Roberts, June 12, 1920, B. H. Roberts Collection, Special Collections, Marriott Library (hereafter Roberts Collection).

⁶"Isaac Russell Funeral Sunday," *Deseret News*, September 10, 1927, Sect. 2, 1; John J. Pershing, Letter to Isaac Russell, July 6, 1900 (hereafter Russell Papers). Pershing noted how pleased he was with Ike's work in his of-

during Ike's newspaper work in the Philippines, "he developed a genius for newsgathering that was almost uncanny."⁷ On his way home, Russell stopped in the Bay Area and scheduled an interview with David Starr Jordan, president of Leland Stanford Jr. University in Palo Alto. Ike told President Jordan that he desperately wanted to attend Stanford but worried that courses he had taken at the University of Utah prior to his military service were insufficient to prepare him for the rigors of the West Coast university. Jordan was sufficiently impressed by Ike's initiative and the results of a test he had him take that he offered admission to Stanford.⁸

Russell performed exceptionally well at Stanford, becoming "the most popular man on campus," a legendary two-year editor of the *Chaparral*, the school's humor magazine, a favored protégé of David Starr Jordan, and a well-loved perpetrator of practical jokes and "battles" in connection with those who worked for the school's literary magazines and in defense of his fraternity, Kappa Sigma.⁹ Salt Lake newspapers often described what Ike was doing, whether it was in the Philippines, California, Utah, or New York, either because he had close friends who were reporters or because of his unusual talents (or both).

fice and offered to recommend him "most heartily" in any matter.

⁷"High Tribute Paid to Isaac K. Russell at Funeral Rites," *Deseret News*, September 12, 1927, 2.

⁸Guide to Isaac Russell Papers, 1898–1927, www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/tf6f59n8h4, Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries (accessed January 2012).

⁹Irene Wright, "Salt Lake Seniors at Leland Stanford University," *Deseret News*, January 9, 1904, 12; "Russell Again Chosen as Editor," *Salt Lake Herald*, January 11, 1903, i; "Trouble at Stanford: War between Editor Russell and the Juniors Has Broken Out Afresh," *Salt Lake Herald*, October 23, 1903, 3. An amusing sidelight to Russell's service as editor of the *Chaparral* is that he engaged in a good-natured (and probably not-so-good-natured) competition with Rube Goldberg, the editor of the *Pelican*, the University of California's humor magazine. The two developed a "fierce" rivalry. Fifteen years later, Russell and the future Pulitzer Prize-winning political cartoonist known universally as the creator of overly complicated contraptions became close friends as colleagues on the staff of the *New York Evening Mail*. Elsie Greene, "Utahns in New York," *Salt Lake Telegram*, April 3, 1921, 7.

After graduating with highest honors from Stanford in 1904, Isaac spent five extremely unhappy years as a reporter, first for the *Salt Lake Tribune* and the *Salt Lake Herald*, but mostly for the *Deseret News*, where he felt he was overworked, underappreciated, and underpaid, though he “filled every assignment with signal ability.”¹⁰ During these years, he published a number of short articles in *Collier’s Weekly*, one of the most popular national weeklies, and impressed its legendary editors, Norman Hapgood and Mark Sullivan.¹¹ He began a serious study of Utah history and published a number of articles on the history of Utah and the West in local newspapers and in *Goodwin’s Weekly*. In June 1907, he married Althea (“Allie”) Farr, a lovely and talented young woman from Ogden. The first of their three children,

¹⁰[Ben L.] Rich, Letter to Ben E. Rich, December 2, 1908, copy in Russell Papers; Isaac Russell, Letter to B. H. Roberts, November 8, 1909, Kenney Collection; Isaac Russell, Letter to B. H. Roberts, February 2, 1910, Kenney Collection; “Isaac Russell,” *Deseret News*, September 8, 1927, 4. Ben L. Rich’s letter to his father, then serving as Eastern States Mission president for the LDS Church in New York City, provides important insights into Ike’s personality. Rich hoped his father would watch out for Ike in the big city.

¹¹[Ben L.] Rich, Letter to Ben E. Rich, December 2, 1908; Mark Sullivan, Letter to Isaac Russell, May 20, 1907, Russell Papers; Mark Sullivan, Letter to Isaac Russell, July 9, 1907, Russell Papers; Mark Sullivan to Isaac Russell, November 9, 1908, Russell Papers; Norman Hapgood, Letter to Isaac Russell, March 16, 1909, Russell Papers; “Sea-Gull Story Arouses Interest,” *Deseret News*, April 1, 1908, 6. It did not hurt that David Starr Jordan and Arthur Ruhl had sent the *Collier’s* editors letters of recommendation about Russell. Isaac Russell, Letter to Norman Hapgood, November 28, 1923, Russell Papers. Norman Hapgood and Mark Sullivan were extremely influential editors and crusaders for Progressive reforms. Hapgood served as the editor-in-chief of *Collier’s Weekly* from 1902 to 1912 and later as the editor of *Harper’s Weekly*, Mark Sullivan served as the editor-in-chief of *Collier’s* from 1914 to 1917. A graduate of Harvard Law School, Hapgood was described as a “remarkable combination of scholar, journalist, and connoisseur of the arts,” though he was “singularly humorless.” Sullivan, who also held a law degree from Harvard, was stationed in Washington, D.C., and led most of the journalistic crusades of the magazine. Frank Luther Mott, *A History of American Magazines, 1885–1905*, Vol. 4 of *A History of American Magazines* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1957), 453–65.

Althea, was born in October 1908.¹² Fed up with the conservative limitations of the *Deseret News* and the low pay, and ambitious to make his mark in the writing world, Ike moved to New York City in early 1909 to pursue a writing career.¹³ President Jordan wrote supportively, “Of course, I know and you know that Salt Lake City could not be a permanent place for you.”¹⁴ Though Russell felt isolated and worried about finding employment in New York, within thirty days he had landed a full-time job as a reporter with the *New York Evening Sun* and sent for Allie and their baby daughter.¹⁵

Ike did freelance work for various Progressive magazines in addition to full-time employment with the *Sun*. He published three articles in as many months in *Pearson’s Magazine*, a popular national mag-

¹²“Married in Temple, ‘Ike’ Russell of the Deseret News Staff Joins the Benedicts,” *Deseret News*, June 26, 1907, 2; “Society,” *Intermountain Republican*, July 12, 1907, 5; “City Briefs,” *Intermountain Republican*, October 3, 1908, 2.

¹³“Ike Russell Goes East,” *Utah Chronicle*, March 1, 1904, 4; [Ben L.] Rich, Letter to Ben E. Rich, December 2, 1908, Russell Papers; “Isaac Russell,” *The Progressive*, November 1, 1913, 1; “‘Ike’ Russell, Writer, Dead,” *Ogden Standard Examiner*, September 8, 1927, 6.

¹⁴David Starr Jordan, Letter to Isaac Russell, March 19, 1909, Russell Papers. Russell and Jordan remained close over the ensuing years. In 1914, Russell wrote an admiring biographical piece on Jordan, noting how he had made Leland Stanford Jr. University “one of the great institutions of learning of the world, practiced a democratic ideal with both students and faculty in which everyone was inspired and those with the greatest abilities were rewarded irrespective of background, and pursued a course promoting world peace.” Isaac Russell, “David Starr Jordan,” *The World’s Work* 27 (April 1914): 649–55. Jordan, an eminent scientist as well as an international peace advocate, later wrote the introduction to Isaac’s *The Romance of the Holes in Bread: A Plea for Recognition of the Scientific Laboratory as the Testing Place for Truth* (Easton, Pa.: Chemical Publishing, 1924), iii–v, on the science of nutrition. Russell wrote a second book, with Howard R. Driggs, *Hidden Heroes of the Rockies* (Yonkers-on-Hudson, N.Y.: World Book, 1923).

¹⁵Isaac Russell, Letter to B. H. Roberts, April 1, 1909, Kenney Collection. Almost immediately upon arriving in New York, Isaac began placing freelance articles with the *New York World*. *Ibid.* Allie left Ogden with their six-month-old daughter, Althea, on April 25, 1909, to join Ike in the big city. “Society,” *Ogden Weekly Standard*, April 25, 1909, 2.

azine published in New York City.¹⁶ The articles were on subjects to which Russell devoted substantial efforts over the ensuing years: labor, Mormons and the West, and politics. One, a substantial piece addressing the relationship between E. H. Harriman, who controlled the Union Pacific and Southern Pacific Railroads, and the West, annoyed many in Utah because it contained relatively volatile allegations about the relationship between President Joseph F. Smith and Harriman, and by extension, between the Church and “big business.” The teaser title on the magazine cover proclaimed: “What Harriman and the Mormon Church Are Doing to the West.”¹⁷

Russell struggled with how negatively he should portray the Church in the article, fighting his inclination to try to reform aspects

¹⁶Isaac Russell, “The First Professional Strike Maker,” *Pearson’s Magazine* 22 (August 1909): 269–75; Ike Russell, “The West Vs. Harriman,” *Pearson’s Magazine* 22 (September 1909): 335–44; Ike Russell, “What Women Have Done with the Vote,” *Pearson’s Magazine* 22 (October 1909): 537–46. Russell wrote that these “articles I consider the best things I have ever had a chance at.” Isaac Russell, Letter to B. H. Roberts, July 15, 1909, Kenney Collection. During this period, Russell vacillated between using “Ike” or “Isaac” professionally. He subsequently wrote muckraking articles on subjects as varied as counterfeit goods from expensive gin, to cigars, to clothing labels; dentists and dental hygiene; falsifying documents in the war effort by William Randolph Hearst’s publications; charities more interested in donations than in the victims they sought to help; use of German Zeppelins in the early stages of World War I; the Roman Catholic Church; and Theodore Roosevelt. See Isaac Russell, “Common Imitations,” *Pearson’s Magazine* 26 (December 1911): 659–66; “Our Teeth and Our Dentists,” *Pearson’s Magazine* 28 (July 1912): 113–22; “Hearst-Made War News,” *Harper’s Weekly* 59 (July 25, 1914): 76–78; “The Charlatans of Charity,” *Harper’s Weekly* 59 (August 15, 1914): 159–60; “Wilhelm’s Nighthawks,” *Harper’s Weekly* 59 (October 3, 1914): 320–21; “The Anti-Catholic Flareback,” *Harper’s Weekly* 60 (January 30, 1915): 106–7, 119; “A Card from the River of Doubt,” *Harper’s Weekly* 60 (May 15, 1915): 471. By the time Russell started placing articles with *Harper’s*, Norman Hapgood had become the editor (and part-owner) of that publication. John A. Widtsoe, Letter to Isaac Russell, August 11, 1913, Russell Papers.

¹⁷Ike Russell, “The West Vs. Harriman,” *Pearson’s Magazine* 22 (September 1909): 335–44. A negative reaction appeared in “Isaac Russell and His Talent,” *Intermountain Republican*, August 25, 1909, 4.

of the institution he found distasteful but concerned about what friends and family back home might think. Eventually, his impulse to improve the Church won out. As he wrote to long-time friend and mentor, B. H. Roberts:

But as to Pearson's.—It was a hard, hard question as to decide how hard to hit there. I may have done entirely wrong. But I wanted to hit hard enough to make the present Church policy one in which they go ahead from now on knowing how their acts appear to the other side. They can't plead ignorance of the sly games played in their name from now on. I hope they can't pound upon you in their hearts with such vigor,—that they will see that other voices are raised from a horizon they would like to think serene.

... I don't even know if you will approve all of the article, but it was a hard thing to tell just where to lay on and take off.¹⁸

Russell grew up believing that the LDS Church “had struck an ideal working basis between cooperation and individual initiative.” He had believed that this “Mormon philosophy was going to edge its way in with compelling force,” but the “close partnership between the Mormon leaders and the exploitive program being carried out there in the salt, sugar, coal, and smelting” industries caused him to “cease to go within a church.”¹⁹ Ike even confessed to B. H. Roberts that “except as Mormonism is a big new cause in the world permeating its philosophy with new light I have no interest in it.”²⁰ To Episcopal Bishop Franklin Spalding, Russell described his lack of faith more explicitly: “My whole attitude towards religion—I am outside of all churches, except for a very nominal membership in the Mormon church due to birth therein,—is that since it affords a certain spiritual consolation to some folks who need such a thing, it is a good force.”²¹

By late 1909, Ike's work at the *Sun* on labor issues and politics had drawn the attention of the *New York Times*, and he soon accepted a

¹⁸Isaac Russell, Letter to B. H. Roberts, August 26, 1909, Kenney Collection.

¹⁹Isaac Russell, Letter to Bishop Franklin S. Spalding, June 28, 1910, Episcopal Diocese of Utah Collection, Special Collections, Marriott Library (hereafter Utah Episcopal Collection).

²⁰Isaac Russell, Letter to B. H. Roberts, August 10, 1909, Kenney Collection.

²¹Isaac Russell, Letter to Bishop Franklin S. Spalding, December 3, 1912, Utah Episcopal Collection. Evidence of Russell's subsequent church

job as a reporter there, sitting at a desk near fellow Salt Laker, “Gene” Young.²² Ike Russell’s talent was quickly recognized at the *Times*, and he was soon the aviation editor, covering the new industry’s developments, including the competition between the Wright brothers and Glenn Curtiss. He also covered labor strikes, military affairs, national political campaigns, and other assignments.²³ In a letter to Salt Lake Episcopal Bishop Franklin Spalding, Russell described a typical evening’s reporting assignments: “Just a word from the office between

attendance, participation in Mormon activities, and the baptism of his children, suggests that his faith likely waxed and waned over time.

²²Russell noted to B. H. Roberts that he would have preferred to have shifted to the *New York Morning Sun*, which he believed handled stories “with the finest literary polish, but, because of politics between the affiliated *Evening Sun* [where he was working] and *Morning Sun*, that was not possible,” so he took the offered job at the *Times*. Isaac Russell, Letter to B. H. Roberts, February 23, 1910, Kenney Collection; “Janet” [Jeanette Young Easton], “Salt Lakers in Gotham,” *Deseret News*, August 6, 1910, 19. I am indebted to Ardis Parshall for providing information regarding Easton’s columns in the *Deseret News*, because they provide a rare personal view of Ike and Allie Russell’s social and personal lives. Gene Young was the son of Brigham Young’s oldest son, Joseph Angell Young, and Clara Stenhouse Young, the daughter of T.B.H. and Fanny Stenhouse. Gene Young had moved to New York years earlier to pursue a career as a writer and sometimes participated in matters important to Utahns, as when he spoke passionately against the seating of B. H. Roberts in Congress at a rally where he and famous Evangelical leader Josiah Strong were the principal speakers. Individual Record of Eugene Jared Young, Family Group Records of Joseph Angell Young and Clara Federata Stenhouse, www.familysearch.org (accessed April 2012); “Women Fight Mormonism, Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church Meets. Bitterly Opposes Roberts. Eugene Young, Grandson of Brigham Young, Makes an Address against the Representative-Elect from Utah,” *New York Times*, December 21, 1898, 12.

²³Alexander Graham Bell, Letter to Isaac Russell, Aviation Editor, March 19, 1914, Russell Papers; [Isaac Russell], “Curtiss Flies, Albany to New York, at the Speed of 54 Miles an Hour,” *New York Times*, May 30, 1910; Orville Wright, Note to Isaac Russell, n.d., Russell Papers; “Janet” [Jeanette Young Easton], “Salt Lakers in Gotham,” in the following *Deseret News* columns, cited by section and page: July 10, 1909, 17; August 21, 1909, 17; June

reporting a dinner to Ambassador Bryce and starting out on a wholesale gang shooting on the East Side.”²⁴

Yet despite his talents, hard work, and periodic successes, a life pattern began manifesting itself. Ike did not always get along with those in authority, and his superiors sometimes chafed at his periodic insubordination. As his friend Ben L. Rich noted, “[Ike] has the old fight with jealousy, and stupidity for proper recognition which every capable fellow without financial backing has to encounter.”²⁵ He lost his position as aviation editor of the *Times* three times because he refused to “cook” stories for editors.²⁶ In 1912, he was almost excluded from the *Times*’s coverage of the *Titanic* disaster because his editors were annoyed with him, though by pluck, talent, and good fortune, he ended up playing a crucial role in the paper’s coverage and ghost-writing the most famous eyewitness account of the sinking of the great ship based on his remarkable interview with Harold Bride, sole sur-

11, 1910, 24; July 25, 1910, 16; April 27, 1912, Sect. 2, p. 6; January 4, 1913, Sect. 2, p. 5; August 30, 1913, Sect. 2, p. 5; July 4, 1914, Sect. 2, p. 7; July 10, 1915, Sect. 2, p. 4; September 18, 1915, Sect. 2, p. 3; March 11, 1916, Sect. 2, p. 6; July 29, 1916, Sect. 2, p. 4.

²⁴Isaac Russell, Letter to Bishop Franklin S. Spalding, December 13, 1912, Utah Episcopal Collection. Isaac was also frequently required to travel out of town on assignment.

²⁵[Ben L.] Rich, Letter to Ben E. Rich, December 2, 1908, Russell Papers. Ben Rich also described Ike as “sincere” and noted that he “has the courage to express his convictions, because of which he has been denounced as a radical writer. . . . If he is radical sometimes, it is because he is courageous. If he has been undiplomatic in some of his utterances, it is because he hates sycophancy, cowardice, duplicity, and stupidity. . . . He is a good, clean, capable, and honest man and a true friend.” Consistent with the view of pulling himself up by the bootlaces, the *Utah Chronicle* referred to Russell as “Ike Hardscrabble,” and described how he had come to the University of Utah in his teenage years as a “green lad, with a fixed habit of arguing every question that appeared. With a strong determination, at all times protuberant, he has risen from an uncertain place near the foot of his classes to a position too large for Utah.” “Ike Russell Goes East,” *Utah Chronicle*, March 1, 1909, 4.

²⁶Isaac Russell, Letter to Norman Hapgood, June 21, 1914, Russell Papers.



McClure's articles were the most careful and the *Cosmopolitan's* "Viper on the Hearth" articles the most outrageous in the "magazine crusade" against Mormonism.

living Marconi wireless operator of the *Titanic*.²⁷ In spite of occasional insubordination, Ike's unusual talents and hard work generally brought him back into the good graces of those in authority over him. After his *Titanic* reporting, his star once again rose with management and senior editors and remained ascendant with other work he did until he was fired over a report he wrote of a speech given by Amos Pinchot in mid-1915.²⁸

In late 1910, about a year after moving to New York, Russell's role in defending the LDS Church began. The September 1910 issue of *Pearson's Magazine* included an article "The Political Menace of the Mormon Church" by Richard Barry. Over the next eleven months, articles critical of the Church appeared in no fewer than four popular national Progressive magazines in what B. H. Roberts later referred to as the "magazine crusade" against the LDS Church.²⁹

Though Russell himself sometimes wrote critically of the

²⁷[Isaac Russell], "Thrilling Story by Titanic's Surviving Wireless Man, Bride Tells How He and Phillips Worked and How He Finished a Stoker Who Tried to Steal Phillips's Life Belt—Ship Sank to the Tune of 'Autumn,'" *New York Times*, April 19, 1912, 1; [Isaac Russell], "Marconi Pays Visit to the Rescue Ship, Inventor of the Wireless Deeply Touched by Scenes He Witnessed on Cunard Pier, Rules Suspended for Him, Allowed on Board without Formality of a Pass after Guards Learn His Identity," *New York Times*, April 19, 1912, 7; Susan E. Tifft and Alex S. Jones, *The Trust: The Private and Powerful Family behind the New York Times* (Boston: Little Brown & Co., 1999), 88–89, 804–5. For the full story of Isaac Russell's reporting on the *Titanic*, see Kenneth L. Cannon II, "Isaac Russell's Remarkable Interview with Harold Bride, Sole Surviving Wireless Operator of the *Titanic*," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 81 (forthcoming Fall 2013).

²⁸Arthur Greaves (*New York Times* city editor), Letter to Isaac Russell, April 23, 1912, Russell Papers; Carr Van Anda (*New York Times* managing editor), Letter to Isaac Russell, June 1, 1915, Russell Papers; Carr Van Anda, Letter to Isaac Russell, July 26, 1915, Adolph S. Ochs papers, New York Times Archives, as quoted in Tifft and Jones, *The Trust*, 805; Adolph S. Ochs (*New York Times* publisher), Letter to Isaac Russell, February 13, 1917, Russell Papers.

²⁹Richard Barry, "The Political Menace of the Mormon Church," *Pearson's Magazine* 24 (September 1910): 319–30; see Kenneth L. Cannon II, "And Now It Is the Mormons': The Magazine Crusade against the Mormon Church, 1910–1911," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 46

Church in muckraking magazines, he was outraged at the venom directed at the Church. Russell closely followed Barry's subsequent articles in *Pearson's*, as well as "Under the Prophet in Utah: The National Menace of a Political Priestcraft," a series of articles written by Frank J. Cannon and Harvey J. O'Higgins for *Everybody's Magazine*, Burton J. Hendrick's *McClure's Magazine* articles, and finally, Alfred Henry Lewis's outrageous "Viper on the Hearth" articles published in the *Cosmopolitan Magazine*.³⁰

Isaac Russell knew most of the editors of these magazines and began writing letters to them, complaining that the articles were neither accurate nor fair.³¹ Though none of his many letters to editors was published, some may have given pause to the editors, who knew

(Spring 2013): 1-63; B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of the Church*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1930), 6:413-17.

³⁰See Cannon, "And Now It Is the Mormons," 25-26; Richard Barry, "The Mormon Evasion of the Anti-Polygamy Laws," *Pearson's Magazine* 24 (October 1910): 443-51; and "The Mormon Method in Business," 24 (November 1910): 571-78; Frank J. Cannon and Harvey J. O'Higgins, "Under the Prophet in Utah: The Political Menace of a National Priestcraft," *Everybody's Magazine* 23 (December 1910): 722-37, 99-104 (advertising section); 24 (January 1911): 29-35; 24 (February 1911): 189-205; 24 (March 1911): 383-99; 24 (April 1911): 513-28; 24 (May 1911): 652-64; 24 (June 1911): 825-35; "The New Polygamy," 25 (July 1911): 94-107; "The Prophet and Big Business," 25 (August 1911): 209-22; and the following articles in *McClure's Magazine*: Burton J. Hendrick, "The Mormon Revival of Polygamy," 36 (January 1911): 245-61; 36 (February 1911): 449-64; and *Cosmopolitan Magazine's* publication of Alfred Henry Lewis's trio: "The Viper on the Hearth," 50 (March 1911): 439-45; his "Trail of the Viper," 50 (April 1911): 693-703; and his "The Viper's Trail of Gold," 50 (May 1911): 823-33.

³¹Russell noted in correspondence that he had written dozens of letters to the editors of *Everybody's*, *Pearson's*, and *McClure's*. Isaac Russell, Letter to B. H. Roberts, January 16, 1911, Kenney Collection; Isaac Russell, Letter to B. H. Roberts, February 8, 1911, Russell Papers. Though none appears to have been published, copies of several letters are in Russell's papers. Isaac Russell, Letters to John O'Hara Cosgrave, Editor, *Everybody's Magazine*, February 21, 1911, April 22, 1911, Russell Papers. The letters identified alleged "lies" in the articles. From his experience writing for *Pearson's*, Isaac Russell knew the magazine's editors Arthur W. Little and

the care and tenacity Ike employed in his research. Burton J. Hendrick, who wrote the carefully researched and crafted series of articles in *McClure's*, pushed back against Ike's letters, however. S. S. McClure, publisher and editor of *McClure's*, passed Russell's letters on to Hendrick, who told the young LDS defender: "I am perfectly willing to take up any special charges you may care to make, but you must make them specific. You have not yet called attention to a single error of fact in the two articles."³² Russell did just that, though unfortunately, his letters to Hendrick do not appear to survive. Isaac reported seeing Thomas Kearns at the offices of *McClure's Magazine* a

John Thompson well. He was annoyed by the articles in the magazine and wrote the editors that he believed the articles contained numerous errors. Unfortunately, Russell's letter to the editor of *Pearson's* is apparently not extant but references to its contents are in correspondence between Russell and B. H. Roberts. After Russell described the letter to Roberts, Roberts responded that he "was perfectly delighted with what you had to say on the Barry article and would be more than pleased if it were possible to have a copy of your letter to the Editor of *Pearson's*, as it might be helpful to me to see your analysis of it and it might be helpful in my hands since it would enable me to drop a word in your favor should criticism of you appear in quarters with which I am sometimes in contact." B. H. Roberts, Letter to Isaac Russell, September 9, 1910, Russell Papers. The criticism was no doubt left over from Russell's time at the *Deseret News* and his article in *Pearson's* about Harriman and the LDS Church.

³²Burton J. Hendrick, Letter to Isaac Russell, February 1, 1911, Russell Papers. Hendrick continued to respond at length to Russell, stating at one point that a letter from Joseph F. Smith that Isaac had shown him "only confirms again my impressions that the heads of the Mormon Church are absolutely crooked, and can think of no way of doing things unless that way is crooked." Burton J. Hendrick, Letter to Isaac Russell, June 14, 1911, Russell Papers; see Burton J. Hendrick, Letter to Isaac Russell, May 23, 1911, Russell Papers. Willa Cather was managing editor of *McClure's* at the time. Ike Russell and Burton Hendrick subsequently developed a cordial relationship and occasionally discussed Mormon leaders Hendrick got to know while researching his articles. Isaac Russell, unpublished review of "Polygamy" (a Broadway play co-written and produced by Harvey O'Higgins in 1914–15), which was written for *Harper's Weekly* but apparently never published, 9, Russell Papers; Isaac Russell, Letter to Burton J. Hendrick, November 24, 1922, Russell Papers. Burton J. Hendrick, Letter to Isaac Russell, November 29, 1922, Russell Papers, noted that he hadn't "the slightest

few months before Hendrick's articles on the Mormons began appearing and clearly assumed that Kearns had urged the magazine to publish the articles. John Thompson, a senior editor at *Pearson's*, told him that Barry's "data was furnished in large part by Col. [William] Nelson," long-time managing editor at the *Salt Lake Tribune*, who was "the most envenomed enemy the Mormon Church has known in recent years."³³

And then, in January 1911, Russell developed a brilliant strategy for combating the magazine crusade. He later recalled that a "Guiding Hand" had led to the "anti-Mormon agitation" present in the magazine articles and "that its purpose is to open the minds of the people to receive what will in a little while from now be an overwhelming message." He also felt that he had been inspired by the same "Guiding Hand" to seek Theodore Roosevelt's help.³⁴ Presumably, people would become interested in the LDS Church through reading the anti-Mormon articles and Ike would then steer them to a more accurate understanding.

Russell had met and interviewed Roosevelt after the former president returned from a year-long hunting safari in Africa and knew

idea of ever taking up the question of Mormonism again. One dip into that subject was quite enough for a life-time."

³³Russell kept watch for Salt Lakers who might be instigating or supporting the magazines' attacks, reporting to Church leaders such as Eastern States Mission president Ben E. Rich and B. H. Roberts. Isaac Russell, Letter to B. H. Roberts, January 16, 1911, Kenney Collection; Isaac Russell, Letter to Theodore Roosevelt, February 2, 1911, Kenney Collection. An interesting sidelight to Russell's relationship with the authors of the "magazine crusade" articles is that the lead article of the December 1911 issue of *Pearson's*, published the same month that the book version of *Under the Prophet in Utah* hit bookshelves, was Isaac Russell's piece on counterfeit goods. That same issue carried Richard Barry's article on the Vanderbilts' rise to prominence, and an installment of Alfred Henry Lewis's famous "The Apaches of New York" series. Isaac Russell, "Common Imitations," *Pearson's Magazine* 26 (December 1911): 659-66; Richard Barry, "The Four Hundred," *Pearson's Magazine* 26 (December 1911): 703-16; Alfred Henry Lewis, "The Apaches of New York," *Pearson's Magazine* 26 (December 1911): 717-26.

³⁴Isaac Russell, Letter to Joseph F. Smith, February 11, 1913, Kenney Collection.

that Roosevelt liked Senator Reed Smoot and had on occasion said positive things about the Mormons.³⁵ Russell wrote Roosevelt, describing inaccurate statements in the articles and noting that most of the information in the magazine articles had emanated from the anti-Mormon *Salt Lake Tribune*. He played to Roosevelt's personal sympathies by reminding the former president of the rumors started by Frank Cannon at the *Salt Lake Tribune* of a "corrupt bargain" between Roosevelt and the Mormons, and told Roosevelt that the first *Pearson's* article and a recent letter to the editor of the *Times* from the president of Westminster College had made the same allegation, asserting that then-President Roosevelt had agreed with the LDS Church to actively support Smoot's retention in the Senate and to permit Church leaders to dictate who would be appointed to federal office in the Mountain West in exchange for the Mormon vote.³⁶ Russell asked Roosevelt if he would "be so good as to assist me in an effort I am making to have the record made more straight as to Mormon events, by characterizing for me the particular phase of the general

³⁵Russell was credited with writing a "remarkable" news report of Roosevelt's "famous African trip." "Isaac Russell Dies in Chicago," *Salt Lake Telegram*, September 8, 1927, 2; "'Ike' Russell, Writer, Dead," *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, September 8, 1927, 6.

³⁶There are several versions of Russell's letter to Roosevelt, suggesting that both contemplated eventual publication of some of the correspondence. Isaac Russell, Letter to Theodore Roosevelt, February 2, 1911, Kenney Collection; Isaac Russell, Letter to Theodore Roosevelt, February 8, 1911, Russell Papers. The allegation of Roosevelt's unholy alliance with the Mormons is made in Barry, "Political Menace of the Mormon Church," *Pearson's Magazine* 24 (September 1910): 327; and R. M. Stevenson, "Mormonism To-Day: A Political Power That Is Spreading Over Many States," *New York Times*, December 29, 1912, 10. Stevenson was the president of Westminster College in Salt Lake City, a Presbyterian institution. Cannon and O'Higgins subsequently made the same allegation about Roosevelt. Cannon and O'Higgins, "Under the Prophet in Utah," *Everybody's Magazine* 24 (June 1911): 827-30. They added that Mormons circulated among themselves a story that Roosevelt, after discussions with Ben E. Rich, whom Roosevelt found delightful, was fascinated by Mormon theology; in it, he saw "a possible continuation throughout eternity of the tremendous energies of his being! He was to continue to rule not merely a nation but a world, a system of worlds, a universe of worlds." *Ibid.*, 830.

situation in which bitter enemies of the Church have constantly used your name.”³⁷

Roosevelt quickly took Russell’s bait and was outraged to understand that some of the same people who had attacked him were employing similar stratagems against the Mormons. He summoned Ike to his offices at *Outlook Magazine* on Fourth (now Park) Avenue for a short meeting. The brief meeting turned into a three-hour discussion, resulting in a letter by Roosevelt attacking *Pearson’s* and its editors, and R. M. Stevenson, president of Westminster College.³⁸ Roosevelt sent Russell several drafts of a letter defending himself and the Mormon Church. Isaac sent one of these drafts to Ben E. Rich, Eastern States Mission president, who then forwarded it to the First Presidency, asking for instructions on how to direct Russell.³⁹ Although Ike had earlier alerted Rich and B. H. Roberts about his plan, they did not believe that he would be successful in ac-

³⁷Isaac Russell, Letter to Theodore Roosevelt, February 2, 1911, Kenney Collection; Isaac Russell, Letter to Theodore Roosevelt, February 8, 1911, Russell Papers.

³⁸Theodore Roosevelt, Letter to Isaac Russell, February 4, 1911, Kenney Collection. The original February 4 letter has a number of handwritten interlineations by Roosevelt but is otherwise identical in many respects to the letter dated February 17, 1911, that was published two months later in *Collier’s Weekly Magazine*. There were, however, several important changes: Roosevelt originally referred specifically to magazine articles and to a letter to the editor written by R. M. Stevenson but removed these references in the printed version. More important, Roosevelt initially wrote Russell that he believed it would be a mistake to respond publicly to the magazine articles; Roosevelt believed that it would only draw more attention to the anti-Mormon articles. Roosevelt also hand-wrote the following note at the top of the February 4 letter: “Private: not for publication.” Russell wrote Roosevelt several letters after Roosevelt’s initial letter to him in an effort to convince Roosevelt that he should authorize publication of his letter. Isaac Russell, Letters to Theodore Roosevelt, February 8 and 14, 1911, Russell Papers.

³⁹Theodore Roosevelt, Letter to Isaac Russell, February 13, 1911, Russell Papers. This letter is identical to the February 4 letter, except that the hand-written corrections on the earlier version had been made and this version had a slightly different hand-written instruction at the top: “not to be referred to in print.” Ben E. Rich, Letter to First Presidency, February 20,

Ike Russell induced Theodore Roosevelt to write a letter responsive to the “magazine crusade” articles against the Mormons, which was published in Collier’s Weekly in April 1911.



tually convincing Roosevelt to write a letter.⁴⁰

To Russell, matters continued to play out as his inspiration had anticipated. As he later wrote Joseph F. Smith “an inspiration came to me to write the letters when the magazine onslaught [against the Church] occurred [sic] and to go to Col Roosevelt as the one man who could help out most. I felt the way would be opened and when he sent for me, on receipt of my letter, and showed me his long manuscript in

1911, Kenney Collection. By this cover letter, Rich transmitted the original of Roosevelt’s February 13 letter, making clear that no one was authorized to publish the letter but that Russell hoped to receive a letter from Roosevelt that could be made public.

⁴⁰Isaac Russell, Letter to B. H. Roberts, February 8, 1911, Kenney Collection. Roberts believed that Roosevelt had been involved in a deal with the Mormons and responded to Ike that “I am anxious to learn the outcome of your letter to Roosevelt. My forecast is that he will not answer. He was deeper in that I think than he would dare to have known. He has also been thrown overboard here by the Smoot stand-pat division of the Republican party, and by Smoot himself, as I understand.” B. H. Roberts, Letter to Isaac Russell, February 13, 1911, Russell Papers.

reply, it was as if a clear previous vision had been fulfilled.”⁴¹

In Salt Lake City, LDS Church President Joseph F. Smith was delighted. Though Reed Smoot worried about a warning Roosevelt had included in his letter that, if the Mormons were continuing to perform polygamous marriages, he and the rest of America would withdraw any support for them, the prophet soon quieted the apostle/senator and excitedly instructed Rich to encourage Russell to publish the letter. In the meantime, Russell had convinced Roosevelt to authorize publication of a final version.⁴²

President Smith had had doubts about Isaac Russell before the reporter convinced Roosevelt to write in favor of the Mormons, but he quickly changed his mind about the journalist when he read Roosevelt’s letter.⁴³ Again feeling that he had been guided to do so, Isaac convinced his friend and sometime mentor, editor Norman Hap-

⁴¹Isaac Russell, Letter to Joseph F. Smith, February 11, 1913, Kenney Collection.

⁴²Theodore Roosevelt, Letter to Isaac Russell, February 17, 1911, Russell Papers. This final version removed references to specific magazines and individuals, removed his discussion of why the letter should not be published, included a warning to the Mormons that they absolutely needed to follow the law, but did not include an instruction that the letter could not be published. The February 13 letter that Smith and Smoot read contained only a mild warning to the Mormons. The final version had a more serious warning that must have worried Smoot more. Smoot knew that new marriages had been sanctioned by senior Church leaders until at least 1904, and he feared that Roosevelt would turn on the Church if he learned this. For his part, Russell believed that, if the Mormons were continuing to authorize new polygamous marriages, Roosevelt and the rest of the country *should* turn on them. Isaac Russell, Letter to B. H. Roberts, May 6, 1911, Kenney Collection. Smoot had been trying unsuccessfully for months to persuade a national magazine to print a response to the magazine crusade articles and was also probably slightly jealous that Russell had found an effective way to respond. Smith did not share Smoot’s concerns. Smith and Smoot were also planning a public response to the magazine crusade at April general conference, and Smith believed that publishing a letter from Roosevelt at about the same time would be extremely helpful in battling back. Cannon, “‘And Now It Is the Mormons,’” 29–35.

⁴³Russell had been critical of Joseph F. Smith in his *Pearson’s* article on E. H. Harriman. Russell, “The West Vs. Harriman,” 335–44, which no

McClure's Magazine published this portrait of Joseph F. Smith, LDS Church president, in its January 1911 issue.



good, to publish the letter in *Collier's Weekly* because it was “good copy.”⁴⁴ Joseph F. Smith was even more pleased when the Roosevelt letter and Russell's accompanying “explanatory note” appeared to-

doubt annoyed the Church president. President Smith had also not responded to Russell's numerous letters to him in which the reporter had written on a variety of matters, some not very kindly. Isaac Russell, Letter to B. H. Roberts, February 2, 1910, Kenney Collection. This lack of response led Russell to believe, correctly no doubt, that Smith had less than warm feelings for him. Nevertheless, information Russell had shared with Smith in some letters had made its way into the *Salt Lake Herald-Republican*, frustrating Russell because he had not authorized publication of the information. Isaac Russell, Letter to B. H. Roberts, February 2, 1910, Kenney Collection.

⁴⁴Isaac Russell, Letter to Norman Hapgood, March 2, 1911, Russell Papers. Hapgood had earlier told Isaac that he was “quite curious to know how the Roosevelt Mormon matter came out.” Norman Hapgood, Letter to Isaac Russell, March 1, 1911, Russell Papers. Hapgood felt “that we ought not to go into the Mormon game while all the other magazines are specializing on it, unless we contribute something of decided importance.” Norman

gether in the April 15, 1911, issue of *Collier's Weekly*. Russell was told to obtain at least 6,000 copies that could be mailed to dignitaries in the United States and Great Britain.⁴⁵

Other Church leaders were equally happy. At a jubilant meeting of the First Presidency, a number of apostles, and Ben E. Rich, Heber J. Grant may have expressed everyone's feelings best when he said "he thought the effect of the Roosevelt article was as though one of the ancient Roman Emperors had written an epistle defending the early Christians, on the ground that Roosevelt is the most powerful figure in the whole world."⁴⁶ Though Isaac Russell had ably defended the Church, he later worried that his actions had significantly harmed his future career as a magazine writer or editor.⁴⁷

After the Roosevelt/Russell piece appeared in *Collier's Weekly's*, Harvey J. O'Higgins, co-author of "Under the Prophet in Utah," visited the *Collier's* offices and was so apoplectic with rage that "he couldn't talk, he could only stutter."⁴⁸ O'Higgins's anger was based on his recognition that Russell had successfully gotten Theodore Roosevelt to respond to one allegation contained in two of the anti-

Hapgood, Letter to Isaac Russell, March 3, 1911, Russell Papers. Ike later recalled in a letter to Joseph F. Smith that "it was the same when I followed a similar premonition to proceed to Collier's and ask them to print it. Their immediate acceptance seemed exactly in keeping too." Isaac Russell, Letter to Joseph F. Smith, February 11, 1913, Kenney Collection.

⁴⁵Isaac Russell, "Mr. Roosevelt to the Mormons: A Letter with an Explanatory Note," *Collier's Weekly*, 57 (April 15, 1911): 28, 36; Joseph F. Smith, Letter to Isaac Russell, April 25, 1911, Russell Papers; B. H. Roberts, Letter to Isaac Russell, April 20, 1911, Russell Papers. Roberts hoped that the copies would be sent to members of British Parliament, because the anti-Mormon crusade was picking up in Great Britain. B. H. Roberts, Letter to Isaac Russell, April 20, 1911, Russell Papers.

⁴⁶Charles S. Burton, Letter to Isaac Russell, April 29, 1911, Russell Papers. The letter was marked "strictly confidential." Russell had lived with Burton as a teenager, and Burton had acted essentially as a second father to Ike. The candid correspondence between the two men provides important insights into Russell.

⁴⁷Isaac Russell, Letter to B. H. Roberts, June 12, 1920, Roberts Collection; Isaac Russell, Letter to Joseph F. Smith, May 17, 1913, Russell Papers.

⁴⁸Russell, "Theodore Roosevelt—Staunch Friend of Utah," *Deseret*

Mormon articles, that the former President and the LDS Church had entered into a corrupt bargain, while appearing to criticize the allegations in all the articles about the Mormons.⁴⁹ The editors of *Everybody's* and *McClure's* pressured *Collier's* editor Norman Hapgood to retract the Roosevelt/Russell article; but Russell, after working "night and day for a month on the Smoot reports," showed Hapgood all the data he had found supporting his defenses against allegations in the other magazines; Hapgood "became my real and true friend" and refused to retract either Roosevelt's letter or Russell's accompanying article, agreeing to publish only a letter from O'Higgins.⁵⁰

O'Higgins carefully avoided criticizing the hugely popular Roosevelt but asserted that Joseph F. Smith was, in fact, fully aware of new polygamous marriages and that Roosevelt's letter did not add to the dialogue about "new Mormon polygamy."⁵¹ In point of fact, O'Higgins was correct that Roosevelt's defense of the Mormons was limited and

News, December 20, 1919, Christmas News section, 12. Russell gave his own, after-the-fact rendition of the story in the *Deseret News* of how Roosevelt came to write in support of the Mormons. He included details not found in contemporary documents.

⁴⁹Years later, O'Higgins was still angry about the Roosevelt letter and Russell's article about it in *Collier's*. In 1918, Russell obtained a job as a labor mediator for the war labor board of the federal government. O'Higgins, who had become the associate chairman of the U.S. Government's Committee on Public Information and as such was the chief propagandist for the United States, writing the "daily German lie" during the latter stages of World War I, opposed Ike's being hired. O'Higgins wrote that he believed that Russell arranged for the Roosevelt letter "either as a Mormon agent or out of pure love of duplicity. In either case, you were crooked. . . . I do not feel you are a safe man for such a position as you occupy in the government service. I considered it my duty to say so, and I said it. If the matter comes up again, I shall say so again. . . . I told [Upton] Sinclair that I could not see how you could act as you had acted in honor and defense of the Mormon Church and still be a friend of industrial democracy that you say you are. I do not see it now." Harvey J. O'Higgins, Letter to Isaac Russell, October 9, 1918, Russell Papers.

⁵⁰Isaac Russell, Letter to Joseph F. Smith, May 17, 1913, Russell Papers.

⁵¹Harvey J. O'Higgins, "A Reply to Colonel Roosevelt," *Collier's Weekly* 47 (June 10, 1911): 35–37. In later correspondence, O'Higgins also

also that President Smith was aware of the new polygamy, but it did not matter. Roosevelt had written a letter supportive of the Mormons in the anti-Mormon “magazine crusade,” and the Church, with Isaac Russell’s help, capitalized on that fact. Russell even convinced Joseph F. Smith to prepare a reply to O’Higgins that he arranged to be published in the August 12, 1911, issue of *Collier’s*. This personal letter in a national magazine by a sitting Church president is almost unprecedented.⁵²

Although Russell’s letter to Joseph F. Smith is not extant, Smith’s response to Russell makes it clear that Isaac was troubled about several issues involving polygamy after the Manifesto and asked Smith to address them. From Smith’s answers, it is evident that Russell had asked about Anthony W. Ivins’s role in performing new sealings in Mexico, about the *Salt Lake Tribune’s* lists of “new polygamists,” and about the discipline of John W. Taylor and Matthias F. Cowley. In a letter reminiscent of his less-than-frank testimony before the U.S. Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections in 1904, Smith wrote that the Church had taken no action against Ivins because the reports of his performing plural marriages had come from an “entirely unreliable source.” Because no reliable source had “substantiated” the reports, Ivins should not be required to “prove a negative.” According to President Smith, the lists published in the *Tribune* contained only “echoes of gossip and scandal unworthy of serious consideration. Some of the persons named therein never were married at all, others are known to be monogamists in the strictest sense of the word. A large number of them have long since been dead, and the greatest portion of the lists refers to alleged unions occurring be-

accused Russell of having manipulated matters so that Roosevelt’s letter, which was principally a reply to certain of Richard Barry’s allegations in *Pearson’s*, was used “trickily” as if it were a reply to the articles in *Everybody’s*. Harvey J. O’Higgins, Letter to Isaac Russell, October 9, 1918, Russell Papers.

⁵²Joseph F. Smith, “The Mormons To-Day,” *Collier’s Weekly*, August 12, 1911, 26–27, 29; Joseph F. Smith, Letter to Isaac Russell, June 15, 1911, *Selected Collections*. Smith’s draft reply to O’Higgins’s *Collier’s* letter (which was subsequently published in *Collier’s*) was attached to his letter to Russell dated June 15. Ironically, given that Russell later ghost-wrote many letters, articles, and speeches for LDS Church leaders, this letter appears to have been written by the Church president.

fore Utah became a State in the Union.”⁵³

As for Taylor and Cowley, they had resigned their positions in the Quorum of the Twelve in 1906 because they “were out of harmony with their brethren in regard to the scope and extent of the manifesto of President Woodruff, and the established and accepted meaning thereof.” One (Taylor) had recently been excommunicated, the other (Cowley) “deprived of all authority in the Priesthood,” with the different treatment attributable to Elder Cowley’s “frank and full acknowledgements and explanations and pleas for forgiveness.”⁵⁴ Smith further noted “the difficulty of obtaining proof of these clandestine ceremonies is explained, with some exaggeration, by the writer in *Collier’s* [O’Higgins], but he fails to note that similar hindrances are in the way of Church investigations.” He claimed sweepingly that there had been

no plural marriages since the manifesto by the authority, consent or connivance of the Church. Those that have been entered into have been hidden from Church as well as State. The Church has no racks, or thumbscrews, or even moral or religious modes of coercion to force confessions but concedes the rights of defendants to challenge proof

⁵³Joseph F. Smith, Letter to Isaac Russell, June 15, 1911, *Selected Collections*. In fact, Joseph F. Smith knew that most of those listed in the *Tribune* had entered into polygamous marriages after 1896. The *Tribune* should have been accurate, given what it reportedly paid to obtain the data. Frank J. Cannon later told Chautauqua audiences that the newspaper paid \$60,000 to collect information on new polygamous marriages. Address given by Frank J. Cannon at the Baptist Church in Independence, Missouri, February 25, 1915, typescript, 19, LDS Church History Library, Salt Lake City. Carmon Hardy has shown that the lists were largely correct. B. Carmon Hardy, *Solemn Covenant: The Mormon Polygamous Passage* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 389–92.

⁵⁴Joseph F. Smith, Letter to Isaac Russell, June 15, 1911. Taylor and Cowley tendered their resignations in late 1905, but they were not announced until the following spring. Kathleen Flake, *The Politics of American Religious Identity: The Seating of Senator Reed Smoot, Mormon Apostle* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 105–7, 139–44. For an excellent collection of primary documents from the Church trials of John W. Taylor and Matthias F. Cowley, see Drew Briney, *Apostles on Trial: Examining the Membership Trials of Apostles Taylor and Cowley* (Spanish Fork, Utah: Hindsight Publications, 2012).

and make defense. If there were any proofs of these unlawful marriages to be obtained by newspaper accusers, they would be forthcoming at once and prosecutions would follow.⁵⁵

Only by divorcing the Church entirely from its earthly leaders could the president of the LDS Church make this extraordinary statement. Members of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve had taken an active role in post-Manifesto polygamy, but Smith was claiming that such involvement did not constitute “the authority, consent or connivance of the Church.” As for Anthony Ivins’s involvement in performing post-Manifesto plural marriages, the Church president had only to ask Elder Ivins, who had received numerous “recommends” from First Presidency counselor George Q. Cannon authorizing such marriages. He likely also received some “recommends” from Joseph F. Smith after President Cannon’s death.⁵⁶ B. H. Roberts knew that Joseph F. Smith was stretching the truth and worried that, if O’Higgins replied to President Smith’s “personal explanation,” “I fear he will have the advantage of the President in two or three things.”⁵⁷

After the success that accompanied the publication of Roosevelt’s letter, Isaac Russell approached his friend Charles Burton (who had a close relationship with several senior Church leaders), asking that he be authorized to establish a “press bureau” in New York on behalf of the Church to keep a “line on who’s who in the [anti-Mormon] crusading game, and where they are at work and who helps them.” Burton soon responded that Russell’s plan had “been approved.” He would be paid up to \$2,000 a year, not to “stir up the fight, but to decently, honorably and vigorously swat the liars and tell the facts and the truth through mediums that the intelligent, thoughtful people of America will respect.” How Isaac would accomplish this goal was left entirely to his “judgment and discretion.” Although a handwritten note in the margin stated “Ike this is strictly confidential and between

⁵⁵Joseph F. Smith, Letter to Isaac Russell, June 15, 1911, *Selected Collections*.

⁵⁶D. Michael Quinn, “LDS Church Authority and New Plural Marriages, 1890–1904,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 18 (Spring 1985): 85, 93, 96.

⁵⁷B. H. Roberts, Letter to Isaac Russell, August 19, 1911, Russell Papers.

you & me only," subsequent events soon made it clear that it was far from a private arrangement. Burton was acting as the agent (and would continue to do so as the person sending money to Russell) for none other than Church President Joseph F. Smith.⁵⁸

President Smith, a staunch, "stand-pat" Republican, might have been less inclined to employ Isaac Russell had he known about Ike's political and cultural leanings. Russell was a member of the infamous Liberal Club in Greenwich Village and often covered characters and events in the Village.⁵⁹ He was periodically a member of the American Labor Party and often wrote and lectured on the social and industrial problems in society.⁶⁰ Over the years, he became well acquainted with such muckrakers, free thinkers, socialists, anarchists, reformers,

⁵⁸Charles S. Burton, Letter to Isaac Russell, September 18, 1911, Russell Papers. Russell's letter to Burton is not extant, but Burton quotes from it in his letter of response. Russell later indicated that this offer was a salary of \$300 a month, an office, and a stenographer. Isaac Russell, Letter to B. H. Roberts, September 1, 1921, Roberts Collection; Isaac Russell, Letter to Heber J. Grant, January 22, 1922, Roberts Collection. Russell decided not to rent an office, deciding instead to move into a larger house (where he would also pay more rent), not have a stenographer hired for him, and receive only \$100 per month, which covered the expenses of a clipping service, buying anti-Mormon books as they were published, and subscribing to magazines that carried anti-Mormon articles. In January 1912, Burton wrote that he had given "the President, confidentially, a little hint of some of the things that you mention in your letter, and it pleased him very much; but at the same time, I impressed him with the confidential nature of the information." Charles S. Burton, Letter to Isaac Russell, January 23, 1912, Russell Papers. Periodically, Burton would refer to being authorized by "Arthur" or "Arthur Winter" to make payments to Russell. Charles S. Burton, Letter to Isaac Russell, July 23, 1918, Russell Papers. Arthur Winter served for thirty-three years as the First Presidency's chief clerk, which included overseeing its finances. Ida Freeman Winter, "The Life of Arthur Winter," www.timeforitnow.com/genealogy/histories/arthur-winter (accessed April 2012).

⁵⁹Isaac Russell, Letter to Bishop Franklin Spalding, June 28, 1910, Utah Episcopal Collection (on Liberal Club stationery); Liberal Club, Letter to Isaac Russell, July 23, 1915, Russell Papers.

⁶⁰American Labor Party, Letter to Isaac Russell, n.d., Russell Papers; American Labor Party of Greater New York, Letter to Isaac Russell, August

and birth control advocates as Upton Sinclair, Leonard Abbott, Franklin Spalding, Becky Edelsohn, Frank Tannenbaum, Margaret Sanger, Max Eastman, Floyd Dell, Emma Goldman, Henrietta Rodman, Bouck White, Alexander Berkman, and Ida Tarbell, among others.⁶¹

Ike began immediately to monitor and respond to articles and lectures and meetings in which the LDS Church was attacked or criticized. He also planted positive articles about Utah and the Mormons—for example, a letter to the *New York Times* that he ghost-wrote for his uncle-in-law, Ben E. Rich. This was the first of many letters and

13, 1919, Russell Papers; Handbill, “Hear Mr. Isaac Russell of the New York Sun in the Congregational Church on ‘The Social Crisis,’ Sunday Eve. Jan. 16, 1910,” Russell Papers; Handbill, January 28, 1917—Free Synagogue, Carnegie Hall, “The second speaker, Isaac Russell, Esq., whose work as special writer and reporter has brought him into close contact with New York’s industrial and social problems for the past ten years,” Russell Papers.

⁶¹Russell’s unpublished autobiographical manuscript, “Greenwich Village,” written in the 1920s as a first-person reminiscence by Ike’s alter ego, “Jeremiah McArdle, Late Social Reformer and Swatter of the Rich” (preface, 3); for his experiences with the “Villagers,” see chaps. 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 23, 24, 25, Russell Papers. See also Leonard Abbott, Note to Isaac Russell, n.d., Russell Papers (Abbott was inviting Ike and Allie to a Fourth of July party at his Wild Hedge Cottage to which all of the “Free Speech League” members were invited, including Upton Sinclair, Alexander Berkman, the “Tarrytown prisoners,” and friends from the Ferrer School); Margaret Sanger, Letter to “Comrades and Friends,” October 28, 1914, Russell Papers; Upton Sinclair, Letters to Isaac Russell, May 18, 1914, July 27, 1914, May 10, 1915, February 13, 1919; Upton Sinclair to Ike Russell, n.d., Russell Papers; Ida Tarbell, Letter to Isaac Russell, January 17, 1911 [sic; the date should almost certainly be 1912], Russell Papers; K. R. Chamberlain (an art editor of *The Masses*), Letter to Isaac Russell, n.d., Russell papers (complimenting Russell for a “very good article”). Sinclair discussed Isaac Russell as one of the intelligent journalists who presented matters in an open, honest manner but who had to fight with editors “strangling the news.” Sinclair, *The Brass Check: A Study of American Journalism* (Pasadena, Calif.: Author, 1919), 149, 190, 192, 330, 415–17. Russell occasionally wrote for *The Masses*, the quintessential Greenwich Village publication of the period which was edited by Max Eastman. I[saac] R[ussell], “Query for a Philanthropist,” *Masses* 6 (January 1915): 6; copy in Russell Papers.

Ben E. Rich, Isaac Russell's uncle-in-law, was president of the Eastern States Mission in New York City when Ike began his writing career there. Rich was a big fan of Russell; and even though Rich was a gifted writer himself, he had Russell ghost-write articles for him. Courtesy LDS Church History Library.



articles Isaac wrote for presidents of the Eastern States Mission. In the letter over Rich's signature, Russell recalled how the *Times* had defended the Mormons when the Utah Expedition approached the territory in 1857. This support represented "the first ray of light cast on a very dark background."⁶² Charles Burton soon sent Russell a letter indicating that "our friends . . . stated everything was entirely satisfac-

⁶²Ben E. Rich [Isaac Russell], "The Mormons. Recalls the Times's Protest When Johnston's Army Entered Utah," *New York Times*, September 25, 1911, 8. Drafts of many of the letters Russell wrote for the mission presidents are in the Russell Papers at Stanford; in addition, Ben E. Rich's successor, Walter P. Monson, thanked Russell in a number of letters for pieces that Russell had written for him. For example, Monson wrote: "Accept my heartiest thanks for the copy of your article bearing my signature, sent to 'Life', in which you quote verbatim ex-President Taft's letter." W. P. Monson, Letter to Isaac Russell, April 15, 1919, Russell Papers. Monson would occasionally make small corrections to errors that Russell would include in drafts of letters he wrote for the mission president. See Walter P. Monson, Letter to Isaac Russell, May 9, 1914, Russell Papers: "Your article prepared for Harper's Weekly came to me this evening. . . . Great credit will be due you if you are successful in getting it published. I revised two or three portions, which I think put it more on the order of being individually written by

tory,” and based on reports to them by “Uncle Ben” Rich, those friends were “well pleased.”⁶³ A letter sent a month earlier by Joseph F. Smith to President Rich made this approbation clear: “I want you to give my congratulations and an expression of high appreciation to Isaac Russell for the interest he is taking in our affairs in New York and for the masterly way he appears to be managing the business.”⁶⁴

Many opportunities for Isaac Russell to defend and protect the Church followed. In 1911 two men, Gisbert Bossard and Max Florence, attempted to sell to the *New York Times* photographs that Bossard had secretly taken of the interior of the Salt Lake Temple. Russell made sure he was assigned to the story. Bossard and Florence had no idea that Russell was a Utah Mormon who persuaded the *Times* to neither purchase nor publish the photographs. Bossard and Florence rented a hall to show the photos and lecture on the Mormons, but Russell and Rich made sure its run was very short and the photographs never were published in New York.⁶⁵

Over the next seven years, Isaac Russell wrote hundreds of letters to newspapers and magazines around the country in his secret as-

tions, which I think put it more on the order of being individually written by myself.” See also W. P. Monson, Letter to Isaac Russell, February 19, 1919, Russell Papers. Examples of letters written by Isaac Russell but published under the name of Ben E. Rich or Walter P. Monson include Ben E. Rich, “The Mormon Voters, Not Influenced by the Political Views of President Smith,” *New York Times*, October 1, 1912, 12; Walter P. Monson, “No Mormon ‘Invasion.’ Church Contemplates Only a Little Meeting House in New York,” *New York Times*, December 20, 1914, C2; Walter P. Monson, “The Unkilled Roots of Polygamy,” *New York Times*, July 17, 1915, 6; Walter P. Monson, “Concerning Mormon Clergymen,” *New York Times*, November 15, 1915, 12. The journalistic ethics of Isaac Russell, a full-time *Times* reporter when many of these letters were published, in ghost-writing manuscripts to be published in the *Times* under others’ names, may be questionable, but the letters’ effect was substantial.

⁶³Charles S. Burton, Letter to Isaac Russell, November 11, 1911, Russell Papers.

⁶⁴Joseph F. Smith, Letter to Ben E. Rich, October 20, 1911, Joseph F. Smith Letterpress Copybooks, *Selected Collections*.

⁶⁵Kent L. Walgren, “Inside the Salt Lake Temple: Gisbert Bossard’s 1911 Photographs,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 29 (Fall 1996): 6–11. On Bossard and Florence’s plot either to blackmail the LDS Church

signment for the Church. In one instance, Russell utilized his extensive contacts in an effort to try to convince national motion picture censors to ban anti-Mormon films.⁶⁶ He issued favorable press reports about Utah and the Mormons, touting such developments as Utah's election in 1916 of Jewish entrepreneur Simon Bamberger as governor.⁶⁷ He suggested that an annual pilgrimage program for Latter-day Saints to Palmyra, New York, be sponsored by the Church, a proposal James E. Talmage opposed.⁶⁸

As Ike Russell provided extraordinary services as a secret defender of the LDS Church, his professional writing career ebbed and flowed. As noted earlier, in 1912, he played an unanticipated though crucial role in the *New York Times's* coverage of the *Titanic* disaster. Russell doggedly covered many of the important stories surrounding Bohemian Greenwich Village and its denizens from 1910 through 1915 and, in the process of doing so, developed friendships with

into paying for the photographs or to publicize and otherwise profit from the photographs, see also Gary James Bergera, "I'm Here for the Cash': Max Florence and the Great Mormon Temple," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 47 (Winter 1979): 54–63; Nelson B. Wadsworth, *Set in Stone, Fixed in Glass* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1992), 355–78. The controversy over Bossard's photographs led the Church to commission James E. Talmage to write *The House of the Lord*, complete with high-quality photographs of the temple's interior. Talmage, *The House of the Lord: A Study of Holy Sanctuaries Ancient and Modern* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1912).

⁶⁶Brian Q. Cannon and Jacob W. Olmstead, "Scandalous Film': The Campaign to Suppress Anti-Mormon Motion Pictures, 1911–1912," *Journal of Mormon History* 29 (Fall 2003): 42–76.

⁶⁷James E. Talmage, Letter to Isaac Russell, December 13, 1916, Russell Papers. Talmage congratulated Russell "on your splendid article relating to the election of a Jew to the governorship of Utah. Your article cannot fail to do much good, and I am very glad it has been copied so widely." Ike had ghost-written the letter for Walter P. Monson; it was published in the *Jewish Morning Journal*, November 18, 1916, copy in Russell Papers.

⁶⁸Talmage, Letter to Isaac Russell, December 13, 1916, Russell Papers. Talmage suggested instead that Russell write a "graphic story" about Mormons visiting the Hill Cumorah.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1912.

MUSEUM WALLS PROCLAIM FRAUD OF MORMON PROPHECY

Sacred Books Claimed to Have Been Given Divinely to the First Prophet Are Shown to be Taken from Old Egyptian Originals, Their Translation Being a Work of the Imagination—What a Comparison with Metropolitan Museum Treasures Shows.



The Mormon Temple, Salt Lake City.

THE first of the "Mormon books" that have been shown to be taken from the Egyptian originals in the Metropolitan Museum of Art is the "Book of Abraham," one of the most important of the "Mormon scriptures." The "Book of Abraham" is a collection of thirteen chapters, which, according to the "Mormon" belief, were given to Joseph Smith, the first prophet of the "Mormon" religion, by the angel Moroni, in 1827. The "Book of Abraham" is a collection of thirteen chapters, which, according to the "Mormon" belief, were given to Joseph Smith, the first prophet of the "Mormon" religion, by the angel Moroni, in 1827.

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PLATE NO. 2.—FROM THE "PEARL OF GREAT PRICE."

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EGYPTIAN BUSTS FROM SEVENTEEN YEARS BEFORE THE "PEARL OF GREAT PRICE" WAS WRITTEN.

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Isaac Russell wrote this long feature article on the Book of Abraham for the New York Times in December 1912, though he did not write the somewhat inflammatory headlines.

many of these influential people.⁶⁹ In spite of the high regard in which Ike was held by *New York Times* publisher Adolph Ochs, legendary managing editor Carr Van Anda, and long-time city editor Arthur Greaves, Russell was fired in June 1915 over his coverage of a speech given by Amos Pinchot, the less famous of the prominent Pinchot brothers. Russell had reported (apparently accurately) that Amos Pinchot had indicated that he and his brother Gifford (who had served as Theodore Roosevelt's secretary of interior) would not continue to support Roosevelt unless he changed certain of his political positions. Carr Van Anda told Ike that he had reported "a conclusion, not a fact," a sufficient reason for firing Russell in light of the Pinchots' extraordinary power and influence.⁷⁰ Characteristically, Ike bristled at being treated unjustly and railed against Ochs and Van

⁶⁹A few of the articles written by Ike Russell on activities in Greenwich Village and those who lived there are [Isaac Russell], "Just One Policeman Stops 2,000 Anarchs," *New York Times*, January 30, 1911, 1; "In Aid of Free Speech," *New York Times*, April 9, 1911, 9; "Police Won't Check Union Square Talks, No Limit Will be Put on Free Speech, but Any Disorder Will Be Put Down Sharply," *New York Times*, April 11, 1914, 5; "Rockefeller Balks Sinclair Mourners, Crepe-Adorned Pickets Neither See Him Enter Nor Leave His Broadway Office, Five of Them Arrested, Sinclair Writes a Song in Jail and All Are Paroled—Calls It 'Free Silence Movement,'" *New York Times*, April 30, 1914, 5; "Sinclair Mourners Split by Discord, Socialists and Anarchists Have Separate Rockefeller Programmes for To-Day," *New York Times*, May 3, 1914, 3; "I.W.W. Bomb Meant for Rockefeller Kills Four of Its Makers, Wrecks Tenement and Injures Many Others," *New York Times*, July 5, 1914, 1; "Raise a Fund for Sanger, Free Speech Argument for Man Arrested by Comstock," *New York Times*, February 6, 1915, 12. As noted above, Russell later wrote a fascinating manuscript about those he knew and had reported on in "Greenwich Village," Russell Papers.

⁷⁰Carr Van Anda (*New York Times* managing editor), Letter to Isaac Russell, June 1, 1915, Russell Papers; Carr Van Anda, Letter to Isaac Russell, July 26, 1915, Adolph S. Ochs Papers, New York Times Archives, as cited in Tiffitt and Jones, *The Trust*, 805. Upton Sinclair noted that Isaac had reported that Amos Pinchot was going to stop supporting Roosevelt, "whereupon the 'Times' fired Russell. But very soon afterwards Amos Pinchot broke with Theodore Roosevelt!" Sinclair also wrote that he believed that *Times* management was unhappy about Russell's article on "Hearst-made War News" published by *Harper's Weekly* in July 1914 "and took the first opportunity thereof

Anda.⁷¹ Isaac later remembered the episode as the “most disastrous of my life.”⁷² Ironically but appropriately, Theodore Roosevelt, whose patience with the Pinchot brothers was exhausted, learned that Isaac had been “summarily fired” for writing the article and “never paused until he had hunted me up and got me a new job. And then for two hours he told me all of his dealing with the Pinchots.” Ike’s new job was with the *New York Evening Mail*, which was published and edited by Roosevelt devotee Edward A. Rumely. Russell was soon city editor and food editor.⁷³

There were a few challenges in Russell’s relationship with Church leaders along his way to becoming the principal defender of the Church in New York. Isaac’s personal intellectual and religious odyssey with Mormon theology and practice continued during this period. He developed an even deeper interest in Mormon and Western history than he had had earlier and became a collector of rare books and documents dealing with Mormonism.⁷⁴ For several years, he corresponded with Utah Episcopal Bishop Franklin S. Spalding, who had a special interest in the Egyptian facsimiles from

ter to get rid of him.” Sinclair, *The Brass Check*, 416.

⁷¹Isaac Russell, Letter to the Editor, *New York Times*, n.d., Russell Papers; Isaac Russell, Letter to Carr Van Anda, June 7, 1915, Russell Papers; Isaac Russell, Letter to Adolph S. Ochs, June 29, 1915, Russell Papers; Isaac Russell, Letters to Adolph S. Ochs, February 12, 14, 1917, Russell Papers; see also Isaac Russell, Letter to Arthur Greaves, June 15, 1915, Russell Papers.

⁷²Isaac Russell, Letter to David Starr Jordan, April 3, 1923, Russell Papers.

⁷³Isaac Russell, Letter to Mr. Vail, November 1, 1921, Russell Papers

⁷⁴Russell wrote to Utah’s Episcopal Bishop Franklin Spalding, December 3, 1912, Utah Episcopal Collection: “Unfortunately for my own philosophy in such matters I came up with David Starr Jordan some years ago and so was alienated from any belief in the existence of a supernatural power such as might permit a so-called Divine translation of any book. It was not a shock to me to learn that the Mormon leaders had been self-deceived in their so-called translation. And at the same time I must say from wide experience among the descendants of these people that it is an honest concession to them to use the term ‘self-deception.’ I cannot possibly feel that in aim or purpose they were consciously tricky or dealt crookedly with their followers. I have resented attacks upon them based upon this premise.

which Joseph Smith drew the Book of Abraham in the Pearl of Great Price. On assignment from the *Times*, Russell had Egyptologists from the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York review and analyze the portions of the facsimiles that were extant and the illustrations taken from the facsimiles. Russell then wrote a two-page article on the subject for a Sunday features section of the *Times* indicating that the Book of Abraham could not possibly be a translation of the facsimiles.⁷⁵

Not surprisingly, this article annoyed Joseph F. Smith and even B. H. Roberts; but correspondence with the Church president and an article Russell published soon afterward in the *Improvement Era* describing the Semitic figures in the Egyptian facsimiles (and thereby providing some support for the Hebrew origins of the facsimiles) seem to have reconciled the Mormon leaders to their young charge.⁷⁶ Joseph F. Smith also probably disliked many of Russell's columns in

My whole attitude towards religion—I am outside of all churches, except for a very nominal membership in the Mormon church due to birth therein,—is that since it affords a certain spiritual consolation to some folks who need such a thing, it is a good force.” See also John A. Widtsoe, Letter to Isaac Russell, November 25, 1919, Russell Papers. From Russell's correspondence, it appears that his faith waxed and waned over the years. It is also evident that he would sometimes say different things to different audiences.

⁷⁵Isaac Russell, Letters to Bishop Franklin Spalding, December 3, 13, and 20, 1912, Utah Episcopal Collection; [Isaac Russell], “Museum Walls Proclaim Fraud of Mormon Prophet, Sacred Books Claimed to Have Been Given Divinely to the First Prophet Are Shown to Be Taken from Old Egyptian Originals, Their Translation Being a Work of the Imagination—What a Comparison with Metropolitan Museum Treasures Shows,” *New York Times*, December 29, 1912, magazine sect. 5, 1, 3. To Joseph F. Smith, February 11, 1913, Kenney Collection, Russell explained that, while he had written the text of the *Times* article, he had then been called away to cover “Gov. Wilson” (who had just been elected president) and had not written the somewhat inflammatory introduction or headlines for the article.

⁷⁶Joseph F. Smith, Letter to Isaac Russell, February 2, 1913, Russell Papers; Isaac Russell, Letter to Joseph F. Smith, February 11, 1913, Kenney Collection; Joseph F. Smith, Letter to Isaac Russell, April 9, 1913, Russell Papers; B. H. Roberts, Letters to Isaac Russell, December 27, 1912, January 20, 1913, Russell Papers; Isaac Russell, Letter to Joseph F. Smith, June 29, 1914, Russell Papers; Isaac Russell, Letter to the editor of the *Deseret News*, October 19, 1913,

Salt Lake City's Progressive newspaper, some of which were quite critical of stand-pat Republicans such as Reed Smoot and George Sutherland.⁷⁷ These columns do not belie Ike's more radical political activities in which he was involved in New York at the time.

Despite such obstacles, the personal relationship between Ike Russell and Joseph F. Smith warmed. Smith's salutations to Russell changed from "Elder Russell" to "My Dear Brother Isaac."⁷⁸ Shortly after Ben E. Rich's unexpected death in September 1913, Smith wrote a letter thanking Russell "for the many favors I have received from you," noting that more of Russell's writings would be published in the *Deseret News* and instructing Russell "to become acquainted with Brother Walter Monson, now in charge of the Eastern States Mission."⁷⁹

Like Joseph F. Smith, Isaac Russell did not like Frank Cannon,

Russell Papers; Isaac Russell, "Joseph Smith, Jr. as a Translator; A Further Discussion of Bishop F. S. Spalding's Pamphlet," *Improvement Era* 16 (September 1913): 1092-99. In his February 11, 1913, letter to President Smith, Russell acknowledged that his article had had "some nasty flings in it" that he "could have avoided, but it has opened up a good field." It also probably helped that Russell sent Church leaders a copy of a letter he had written to Bishop Spalding about what he had learned at the Metropolitan Museum in preparation for his article in the *Times*. Isaac Russell, Letter to Bishop Franklin Spalding, December 24, 1912, Roberts Collection.

⁷⁷Isaac Russell was listed as a "contributing editor" of the Bull Moose Party's local Utah publication, which lasted from 1912 into 1916, and submitted many columns on political issues of the day. "Isaac Russell," *The Progressive*, November 1, 1913, 1. A few of Russell's many contributions to *The Progressive* included: "Concerning Venal Newspapers," February 15, 1913, 8; "The Federal Bunch and President Wilson," April 5, 1913, 5-6; "To Parson Simpkin—A Few Kind Words," April 19, 1913, 5-6; "Senator Sutherland—Doctor of Laws," October 11, 1913, 9, 19; "A Smoot Hero and Bull Moose Standard," October 18, 1913, 3, 6; "Seven Keys to Baldpate and One to Senator Smoot," April 11, 1914, 4-5; "On Fighting Smoot with Moyle," August 15, 1914, 6-7.

⁷⁸Joseph F. Smith, Letter to Isaac Russell, April 25, 1911, Russell Papers; Joseph F. Smith, Letter to Isaac Russell, November 22, 1913, Russell Papers.

⁷⁹Joseph F. Smith, Letter to Isaac Russell, November 22, 1913, Russell Papers. Ben E. Rich died on September 13, 1913. Jenson, "Benjamin

and he waged war against the former senator's anti-Mormon campaign, ensuring that missionaries and other members of the Church shadowed Cannon in an effort to counteract his activities. In April 1914, in an important attack on anti-Mormon efforts, Ike sent Mormon agitators to Carnegie Hall, where Cannon was leading the kick-off of the National Reform Association's campaign to eradicate Mormon polygamy. The mission president, Walter P. Monson, showed up with 100 Mormons, including missionaries and LDS students at Columbia College, to talk to reporters after Cannon, prominent Social Gospeler Josiah Strong, and National Reform Association executive director James Martin each had "made a fierce arraignment of the church and its teachings." The Mormons received more attention than their attackers.⁸⁰ Strong, a principal leader in the Social Gospel movement, had written critically of the Mormons since at least 1885.⁸¹ At the National Reform Association meeting, Strong presented and elicited adoption of resolutions calling for the passage of a constitutional amendment prohibiting polygamy and urging New York City's mayor, John Purroy Mitchel, to ban street meetings by Mormon elders in the city. Another resolution petitioned Woodrow Wilson to prevent practicing Mormons from holding federal office. Frank J. Cannon had then given a rousing version of his speech against the "Modern Mormon Kingdom."⁸²

Mormons in attendance waited quietly as Cannon and Strong spoke. They then "called [Cannon] 'liar,' 'ingrate,' and many other epithets, and called upon him for proof of his sweeping statements."

Erastus Rich," *LDS Biographical Encyclopedia*, 3:206.

⁸⁰Kenneth L. Cannon II, "'The Modern Mormon Kingdom': Frank J. Cannon's National Campaign against Mormonism, 1910-18," *Journal of Mormon History* 44 (Fall 2011): 94-95; "Mormons Break Up Enemies' Meeting," *New York Times*, April 24, 1914, 14.

⁸¹Josiah Strong, *Our Country, Its Possible Future and Its Present Crisis* (New York: American Home Missionary Society, 1885), 59-68.

⁸²"Mormons Break Up Enemies' Meeting." Joseph F. Smith had by this point sufficiently warmed to Russell that he confided: "We are forcibly [sic] reminded by clippings from the newspapers and quotations from the discourses of the infamous liar, adulterer, hoar-master [sic] and vilest of traitors, Furious Judas C[annon] that he is still plying his poisonous tongue in the vilest of slander against Utah and her people." Joseph F. Smith, Letter to Isaac Russell, November 22, 1913, Russell Papers.

A young man, identified as Ashby Snow Thatcher, son of Moses Thatcher and a student at Columbia, challenged Cannon to substantiate his assertions that Moses Thatcher had turned on the Church. Ashby then shouted that his father “went to his grave sticking to his beliefs, and that is more than you [Frank] ever did.”⁸³ In another response to Frank Cannon’s accusation that the Mormons were planning to build a large tabernacle in New York, Russell published a sedate letter over Monson’s signature explaining that the Mormons had rented space for years and should be entitled to build their own small meetinghouse in the city.⁸⁴ Russell had quietly neutralized the opening rally of the National Reform Association’s anti-Mormon crusade.

Russell maintained his busy career as a newspaper journalist, often traveling on extended assignments, and had to fulfill his obligations as defender of the Church by devoting “Saturdays and Sundays to the anti-Mormon propaganda study. Getting at the charges, one by one, I had to dig like sixty into Church history for answers. So I accumulated a fine library and gradually our early history came alive to

⁸³“Mormons Break Up Enemies’ Meeting.” According to one account, a number of “respectful questioners” surrounded young Thatcher and asked him about the Church. Following the meeting, Mayor Mitchel declined to restrict Mormon street meetings. *Ibid.*; “Cannon’s Tirade in Carnegie Hall,” *Deseret News*, April 28, 1914, 3. “The Mohammedan Mormon Kingdom,” *Christian Statesman* 48 (June 1914): 281, reported: “Suffice it to say that Senator Cannon and [NRA leaders] Drs. Martin and Coyle . . . were more than a match for the Mormons.”

⁸⁴Walter P. Monson [Isaac Russell], “No Mormon ‘Invasion,’” C2. Interestingly, the interior of the LDS Church that was subsequently built in 1917 on the corner of Gates and Franklin avenues in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood of Brooklyn had coved ceilings reminiscent of the Salt Lake Tabernacle. Scott Tiffany, *City Saints: Mormons in the New York Metropolis* (New York: New York Stake History Group, 2004), 39-40. This lovely Prairie School-style church, reputedly the first new LDS chapel in the East after the Saints’ removal to Utah, was dedicated by Reed Smoot in February 1919; it and the historic Eastern States Mission home next door are still standing. The church building is now the Evening Star Baptist Church. “Building of the Day—269 Gates Avenue,” www.brownstoner.com/blog/2010/11/building-of-the-175 (accessed April 2013).

me in perfectly astounding ways.”⁸⁵ He also busied himself with making his world better by actively supporting political causes such as labor and prison reform and was credited with helping in the creation of Palisades Park.⁸⁶ His magazine writing suffered, however, and the number of muckraking articles Ike published in national magazines trailed off as he used much of his free time defending the Mormons and dispatching positive articles about the Church, its leaders, and its members. As Russell later summed up his work on behalf of the President of the Church:

My heart was in my work in New York and I was very proud of the way it beat down anti-Mormon activities before they even got started. I had made my way into clubs where the leaders worked and got on committees with them, and thus drained off from them advance knowledge of what they were attempting. . . . Some of the editors started a friendly correspondence with me and I always kept it up, responding to each inquiry with material that was asked for. Of course, I had to study our history intensively to be able to answer on all points brought up.⁸⁷

Ike paid a price for his work on behalf of the Mormons. Editors knew he was a Mormon from his attacks on the magazine crusade articles and his article that appeared with Theodore Roosevelt’s letter. Though most of his public relations work on behalf of the Church was conducted in secret, some of it was done openly. Many expected him to become the editor or a marquee writer for one of the major magazines in spite of his affiliation with the Mormon Church, but some worried about whether that would hinder his rise in the maga-

⁸⁵Isaac Russell, Letter to B. H. Roberts, September 1, 1921, Roberts Collection.

⁸⁶Edward A. Rumely, Letter to Mrs. Russell, September 12, 1927, Russell Papers. Rumely, the publisher and editor-in-chief of the *New York Evening Mail* during most of the time Ike was a reporter and editor there, mused to Allie shortly after Ike’s death: “Whenever I pass through Palisades Park and see the thousands of children and young people and adults playing there, enjoying the sunshine of the open; whenever I see the beaches, I remember Ike’s great campaign to give to New York its playground.”

⁸⁷Isaac Russell, Letter to Heber J. Grant, November 26, 1923, Russell Papers.

zine world.⁸⁸ Russell later lamented that, by attacking Frank Cannon and others, he had “sacrificed” an extremely promising magazine career and made himself a “constant target for anti-Mormon manoeuvres [sic].”⁸⁹ He also believed that his magazine writing career had been stunted because magazines such as *Collier’s* would not employ him full time “for fear of the fight women’s organizations would make upon them for hiring a Mormon” as part of their anti-polygamy policy.⁹⁰

Eventually, James E. Talmage, who had become an apostle in late 1911, began working closely with Isaac Russell in defending the Church and often acted as his liaison with the First Presidency, responding to Ike’s suggestions about articles that would portray Utah and the Church in a positive light. He was generous in his praise for Russell’s articles written in his own name and ghost-written for others. The apostle passed on kind words from President Smith and the First Presidency, who continued to appreciate Ike’s successful exploits. Talmage also reported on his own activities and the favorable publicity he received from those activities.⁹¹ Ike viewed Elder Talmage as a co-worker in the work of promoting the public image of the Church.

⁸⁸Upton Sinclair, Letters to Isaac Russell, May 11, 1915, February 27, 1919, Russell Papers; John Thompson (editor of *Pearson’s*), Letter to Isaac Russell, May 21, 1909, Russell Papers; John A. Widtsoe, Letters to Isaac Russell, March 20, 1913, August 11, 1913, Russell Papers; Isaac Russell, Letter to Joseph F. Smith, May 17, 1913, Russell Papers. Widtsoe consistently expected to learn that Ike had been named to a high-profile editorship and he was sometimes considered for such positions. Russell’s association with Mormonism likely made such a rise more challenging, but his sometimes iconoclastic actions probably also hampered him in obtaining more important (and remunerative) editorial jobs.

⁸⁹Isaac Russell, Letter to B. H. Roberts, June 12, 1920, Roberts Collection.

⁹⁰Isaac Russell, Letter to Joseph F. Smith, May 17, 1913, Russell Papers; Joan Smith Iversen, *The Anti-Polygamy Controversy in U.S. Women’s Movements, 1880–1925: A Debate of the American Home* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1997), 239–56.

⁹¹James E. Talmage, Letter to Isaac Russell, June, 22, 1916, Russell Papers; James E. Talmage, Letter to Isaac Russell, December 13, 1916, Russell Papers; James E. Talmage, Letter to Isaac Russell, January 29, 1918, Russell

Russell believed that James E. Talmage was jealous of him and actively worked with Heber J. Grant to end Russell's New York press bureau assignment. Courtesy Utah State Historical Society.



Because of Russell's secrecy, it is hard to gauge the full extent of his impact on the Church's public image during this critical period when opposition came from the national press and the lecture circuit. His influence was, however, large, and Joseph F. Smith clearly came to rely on the young reporter in New York to defend the Church and its leaders, and to spread favorable reports about Mormons and Utah.

During most of 1918, President Smith suffered from various illnesses and died in the influenza epidemic on November 19 of that year.⁹² By then, Russell had not been paid for his services or reimbursed for expenses for nearly half a year, and this stung. He complained to a correspondent: "Well they even cut off the period of Pres.

Papers; James E. Talmage, Letter to March 1, 1918, Russell Papers. In this last letter, Talmage informed Isaac that the First Presidency was very satisfied with his article "published under President Monson's signature." Later, Russell came to believe that Talmage was sometimes jealous of Ike's success in defending the Church and used his ghost-writing of articles for Church leaders as an excuse to undermine Ike's "press bureau" with Heber J. Grant, who succeeded Joseph F. Smith.

⁹²D. Michael Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy: Extensions of Power* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1997), 694–97.

Smith's final illness, leaving me high and dry with a lot of expenses on my hands, refusing even to answer any letters asking where I stood. I finally wriggled out and am just getting my teeth into new efforts till I can care for my family rightfully again."⁹³ More important, however, although Walter Monson continued to use Russell's substantial talents after Joseph F. Smith's death, leaders in Salt Lake did not. Monson was replaced in April 1919 by George W. McCune,⁹⁴ who informed Isaac that Church leaders had instructed him not to deal with Isaac.⁹⁵ Russell wrote bitterly to Talmage: "Well then came the dark days when you swooped down on me with that charge of 'improper authority to sign a mission president's name,' and the mis-focusing of the whole issue of my work upon that foolish item, so that my authority was taken away from me and the mission president so warned against me that I wouldn't even get a handshake, for fear he was getting in wrong with you."⁹⁶

As Heber J. Grant later told Russell, Joseph F. Smith had not informed his successor of Isaac's assignment. Russell sarcastically com-

⁹³Charles S. Burton, a Salt Lake banker and intimate Russell friend, continued to be the financial go-between in Isaac's assignment from the Church. The fact that Burton did not pay Russell because Joseph F. Smith had not authorized it (he was too ill or distracted to do so) clearly illustrates that Russell was acting in an official capacity under the president's direct supervision. Burton would not pay Isaac for the six months unless and until authorized by Arthur Winter, chief clerk to the First Presidency. Charles S. Burton, Letter to Isaac Russell, July 23, 1918, Russell Papers. Isaac Russell to B. H. Roberts, November 21, 1921, Roberts Collection. When Heber J. Grant authorized Burton to release funds to Russell (though not until 1921), Burton thought it important enough that he telegraphed word to Russell, November 22, 1921, Russell Papers. Burton followed with a letter the next day, explaining that he had "quite a long talk with the President in which he expressed a very kindly feeling toward you. The records indicate there was about five months before President Smith died during which time no remittance had been made, but President Grant concluded to make it just even two quarters." Charles S. Burton, Letter to Isaac Russell, November 23, 1921, Russell Papers.

⁹⁴Jenson, "George W. McCune," *LDS Biographical Encyclopedia*, 4:331.

⁹⁵Isaac Russell, Letter to James E. Talmage, February 15, 1924, Russell Papers.

⁹⁶*Ibid.*

plained to B. H. Roberts: “The grand charge” that Talmage had made against Russell to Heber J. Grant “was I had signed the names of mission presidents—a heinous thing. A most awful offense. I had got the mission president, each one in his turn, onto the front pages and editorial pages of papers all through the east. By shaping articles and letters for him to sign that struck affairs at psychological moments. And landed in the midst of passing events. A little experience with each one had resulted in his telling me to ‘fire ahead and sign his name’ and I did it when the president was away, as often happened, when the moment to strike occurred [sic]. And when waiting would have let it pass unused.”⁹⁷

Russell also believed that Talmage was jealous of his activities, success, and even his close relationship with Joseph F. Smith, and that the apostle actively worked to ensure that Ike would have no continuing relationship with the new Church president, Heber J. Grant.⁹⁸ As Russell later angrily wrote Grant:

Nothing could be more funny than the way doors that had always been open wide closed the minute it was known that President Smith, who had always countenanced and loved me, was fatally ill. Until then, Bro. Talmage had always held out the broad hand of fellowship and love and I regarded him as one of my best friends. And went to see him in Utah only to have him leap on me in all the coercive power of one who could not assert himself freely, and who seemed to want no competition with himself in literary work and in work dealing with charges against the church.⁹⁹

Although Grant and others encouraged Russell to continue to write about the history of the Church and to submit articles to the

⁹⁷Isaac Russell, Letter to B. H. Roberts, September 1, 1921, Roberts Papers.

⁹⁸Russell maintained his correspondence with such prominent Church members as long-time friend, mentor, and confidant B. H. Roberts and John A. Widtsoe, both of whom clearly viewed Russell as bright, creative, and talented. John A. Widtsoe, Letter to Isaac Russell, November 22, 1919, Russell Papers; B. H. Roberts, Letter to Isaac Russell, January 3, 1920, Russell Papers.

⁹⁹Isaac Russell, Letter to Heber J. Grant, July 18, 1922, Russell Papers.

Deseret News, the special press bureau relationship dissolved.¹⁰⁰ Devastated, Russell blamed Talmage and wrote biting letters, accusing him of petty jealousy and of hindering Russell's activities. Talmage had convinced Grant that journalists, even those as gifted as Russell, should not be ghost-writing letters and articles and speeches for Church leaders and therefore should not be engaged by the Church.

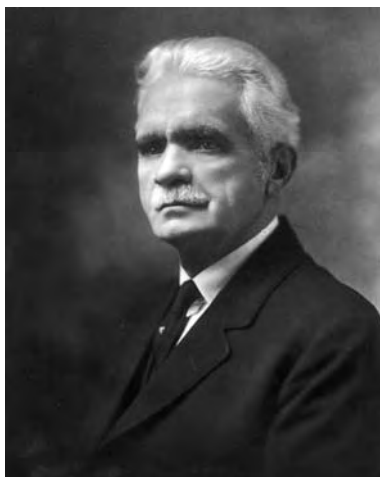
Restless and resentful, Ike moved to Chicago. As he later wrote Talmage:

I boxed up my books and crated my files on all these issues and fled New York to get away from the haunting taunts of a million things that needed doing and the knowledge that to take a hand any more was trespass and butting into forbidden ground—all that you might have the joy of traducing a work you might have comprehended if your mind had not been poisoned jealous against it. And you had the advantage of a new president who was a stranger to it . . . as your field for fertile sowing of misinformation.¹⁰¹

Russell also accused Heber J. Grant of being part of what he

¹⁰⁰Russell “had organized a big work in shooting at the anti-Mormon propaganda,” but when it was cut off, few thanked him. Isaac Russell, Letter to B. H. Roberts, September 1, 1921, Roberts Collection. Russell noted that he had written “constantly” to President Grant to learn whether he would continue in his assignment but “got no answer whatever.” Isaac Russell, Letter to John A. Widtsoe, May 8, 1923, Russell Papers. In fact, Grant had written Russell January 12, 1922, Russell Papers, stating that, given Russell's move to Chicago, Grant did not think it would be “wise and profitable to continue the arrangement that President Smith had with you.” Russell moved to Chicago at the beginning of 1922, more than three years after Joseph F. Smith's death.

¹⁰¹Isaac Russell, Letter to James E. Talmage, February 18, 1924, Russell Papers. Russell probably also worried about financial security as his children were growing up and he faced increasing expenses. The loss of the First Presidency compensation increased those worries. He had also witnessed the end of the golden era of the muckrakers and felt less unwilling to leave New York as a result. Russell wrote Heber J. Grant, November 26, 1923, Russell Papers: “Now as to Bro. Talmage I love him for many fine qualities and he is of enormous service to the Church. And in speaking of the one phase of his work that blots others out, I don't want to have you



General Authorities B. H. Roberts and John A. Widtsoe both believed that Isaac Russell was one of the most gifted young Mormons and expected great things from him. Courtesy Utah State Historical Society.

called the Church's "Young-Cannon financial oligarchy." As such, Russell believed that Grant was not supportive of Mormon intellectuals, writers, historians, and artists.¹⁰² Russell sometimes sent John A. Widtsoe copies of letters he had written to President Grant. Widtsoe

think I deprecate his character as a whole. I will love, respect and honor him in every way that concerns his major services, while feeling I have been of real service to him in pointing out the folly of harsh belittlement of another whose works he has not comprehended."

¹⁰²Isaac Russell, Letter to Heber J. Grant, January 22, 1922, Roberts Collection; see also Isaac Russell, Letter to B. H. Roberts, June 12, 1920, Roberts Collection; Isaac Russell, Letter to B. H. Roberts, September 2, 1920, Roberts Collection; Isaac sent both John Widtsoe and B. H. Roberts a copy of his January 22 letter to Grant. Widtsoe was alarmed and outraged and asserted that no one had been more supportive of or generous to Mormon writers and artists than Heber J. Grant. Grant also responded vociferously, arguing every point raised by Russell. John A. Widtsoe, Letter to Isaac Russell, February 6, 1922, Russell Papers; John A. Widtsoe, Letter to Isaac Russell, March 6, 1922, Russell Papers; Heber J. Grant, Letter to Isaac Russell, February 15, 1922, Russell Papers; Heber J. Grant, Letter to Isaac Russell, February 17, 1922, Russell Papers; Heber J. Grant, Letter to Isaac

was taken aback by the tone of the letters and counseled Russell to dial down his rhetoric with the prophet.¹⁰³

B. H. Roberts was upset and sad that Ike had been cut loose with so little thought and sorrowfully wrote Russell:

I am sorry more than I shall be able to tell you at the loss of you from your important station at New York. I had come to look upon things as reasonably secure with you there on the outlook, and I shall miss that feeling of security with you away. But I suppose the change under the circumstance of non-appreciation was inevitable. Yet one would think that with your achievements—the Roosevelt interview and the knocking out of I. Woodbridge Riley, to mention no others, would have pleaded hard for your retention in a generous fashion. . . . I can only say that I deeply regret the closing up, at least for the present, of your work. Yet even as I write, I seem to feel that it will not be the last of it, that there will be a come back to it.¹⁰⁴

Russell had always had an interest in science and nutrition, and he soon found what he referred to as an “industrial” job in Chicago. Employed by the American Institute of Baking, he conducted public relations, organized conferences, and edited a new magazine, *Baking Technology*, for the institute.¹⁰⁵ He told friends that this job was more

Russell, February 23, 1922, Russell Papers; Heber J. Grant, Letter to Isaac Russell, July 14, 1922, Russell Papers. Roberts, on the other hand, had an entirely different reaction. He thought the letter was “temperate under all the circumstances.” B. H. Roberts, Letter to Isaac Russell, January 30, 1922, Russell Papers.

¹⁰³John A. Widtsoe, Letters to Isaac Russell, February 6 and March 6, 1922, Russell Papers.

¹⁰⁴B. H. Roberts, Letter to Isaac Russell, January 30, 1922, Russell Papers. Woodbridge Riley had written a psychological biography of Joseph Smith and probably wrote about Mormonism in his periodic musings on “historical contributions” in a journal he edited, *Psychological Bulletin*. I. Woodbridge Riley, *The Founder of Mormonism: A Psychological Study of Joseph Smith, Jr.* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1902). I have not yet discovered when or how Isaac Russell “knocked out” Riley.

¹⁰⁵American Institute of Baking, Letter to Isaac Russell, November 28, 1921, Russell Papers; B. H. Roberts, Letter to Isaac Russell, January 30, 1922, Russell Papers.

remunerative than his newspaper jobs.¹⁰⁶ By now, daughter Althea (born in 1908) had been joined by sons Robert (1911) and Don (1913).¹⁰⁷ Allie regretted leaving New York, where she was beloved and sang often, not only in her Mormon congregation in Brooklyn, but also in churches of other denominations.¹⁰⁸ They left many of their possessions, including her piano, in New York City until they acquired a domicile large enough to house them; and this was also hard for Allie.¹⁰⁹ Ike developed new relationships, by all accounts did a superb job as editor of the magazine, defended the bakers of America against Robert M. La Follette's allegations of trying to increase the price of bread, and wrote a fascinating book, *The Romance of the Holes in Bread*, about the science of nutrition. But he also sensed a fundamental change from the services he had rendered in New York and felt that he had been displaced from what he viewed as his life's most important work.¹¹⁰ He began going professionally by Isaac K. Russell, or even I. K. Russell, rather than as Isaac Russell, presumably to distinguish between the old and new stages of his life, even though I have

¹⁰⁶Russell noted that he had had many opportunities for higher-paying jobs, but had not taken them because he was too busy defending the Church. Isaac Russell to B. H. Roberts, January 22, 1922, Roberts Collection. Living expenses, especially for housing, were more expensive in Chicago, however, and the Russell family's lifestyle probably decreased slightly. Isaac Russell, Letter to Carl Beck and Frances Beck, January 2, 1923, Russell Papers; Isaac Russell, Letter to Richard W. Burton, March 9, 1924, Russell Papers.

¹⁰⁷Family Group Records of Isaac Russell and Eleanor Althea Farr, www.familysearch.org (accessed November 2011).

¹⁰⁸Janet" [Jeanette Young Easton], "Salt Lakers in Gotham," *Deseret News*, May 28, 1910, 20; Elsie Greene, "Utahns in New York," *Salt Lake Telegram*, April 3, 1921, 7.

¹⁰⁹Isaac Russell, Letter to Carl Beck and Frances Beck, January 2, 1923, Russell Papers; Isaac Russell, Letter to Richard W. Burton, March 9, 1924, Russell Papers.

¹¹⁰Among other actions he took in defense of the American baking industry were articles and letters to the editor of major newspapers responding to allegations that the industry was attempting to increase the price of bread through a monopolistic structure. "Bread to Stay at 10 Cents, Bakers Say, Despite Increase in Wheat Prices," *New York Times*, September 23, 1924, 1; "Dr. Walker Says Investigation of Bread Industry Will



By the 1920s when this photograph of Ike Russell was taken, he was living in Chicago doing public relations and publishing a magazine for the American Institute of Baking. By this time, he had begun to use "I. K. Russell" or "Isaac K. Russell," presumably to indicate a separation from his earlier life in New York City.

found no evidence that Russell actually had a middle name.¹¹¹

Although Russell's letters to Heber J. Grant were often quite acerbic, the Church president remembered Russell's role in enlisting Theodore Roosevelt as an advocate for the Mormons, and was slow to take offense at Russell's tirades. Many of the criticisms Russell voiced involved James E. Talmage. Grant, perhaps tellingly, assigned John A. Widtsoe to interface with Ike and eventually made sure that Talmage had no part in advising him about what to do with Russell.¹¹² Russell's blunt letters had the unexpected effect of warming Grant's feelings toward Russell. After one particularly bit-

Be Fair," *New York Times*, September 26, 1924, 44. Russell also published widely in other periodicals on issues important to bakers. I. K. Russell, "That Loaf of Bread, 1924 Model," *Nation's Business* 12 (December 1924): 13-16; I. K. Russell, "Why the World Celebrates Pasteur's Birthday," *The Independent* 107 (December 23, 1922): 375-76; Russell, *The Romance of the Holes in Bread*.

¹¹¹I believe that Isaac Russell adopted the middle initial "K" because "I.K." sounds like "Ike."

¹¹²Grant found it difficult to respond to Russell's letters when they were angry (though he almost always did). "I have decided to stop writing you letters and to turn over all your communications to Brother Widtsoe who is your friend and therefore, I don't believe that you can accuse him of misinterpreting your language or your motives." Heber J. Grant, Letter to Isaac K. Russell, February 23, 1922, Russell Papers. Russell wrote his old

ing missive, Grant responded that he needed to meet with Russell so he could “look you in the eye.” After they spent two days together, their relationship improved considerably. Thereafter, President Grant instructed Charles Burton to pay Russell the funds he was owed before Joseph F. Smith died.¹¹³

Between leaving the time-intensive world of big-city journalism and no longer spending his spare time finding ways to defend the Church, Russell had more leisure time to research and write more academic historical works. During this period, he maintained a good relationship with Widtsoe, who would be appointed an apostle in 1921 and who found Russell one of the brightest and most creative people he had ever known. When Widtsoe was president of the University of Utah, he wrote to Russell:

Now do not rise up in fury when I say that it is a great pity for a mind and temperament like yours to have been dedicated all these years to the newspaper profession, desirable and delectable as the work in that field may be. You should have been a delver into forgotten records, a restorer of the past, a teacher of young people the lessons of yesterday for the glory of today, and the writer of books popular and scientific for the guidance of generations to come.

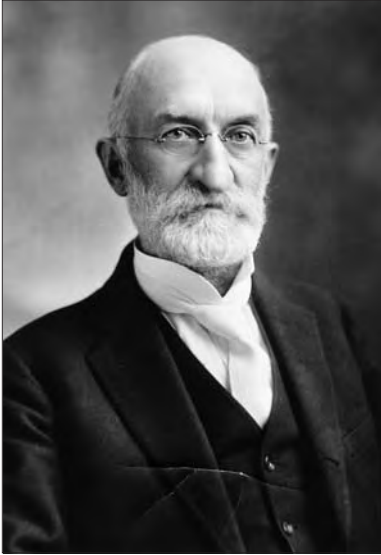
Your letter is one of the most remarkable that I have had for some time. Each of the half-dozen suggestions that you make could well be developed into a volume of living interest for those of us of this age who like to feel the continuity of thought and purpose throughout the increasing ages.¹¹⁴

Russell also continued to correspond with B. H. Roberts and

friend, Walter P. Monson, June 17, 1922, Russell Papers: “I got after Bro. Talmage in three or four letters assailing him directly for his conduct. He was foolish enough to take them to President Grant thinking thereby to get me chastised and perhaps cut off for effrontery. But Bro. Grant let Tony Ivins read them and Tony Ivins is not being fooled by any of these ‘wise guys’ on any of this business. He told Bro. Grant I had written the truth, I think. At any rate I got a warm and friendly letter from him and one also from two other apostles and all blamed ‘bad advice’ for some of the things Pres. Grant has done.”

¹¹³Isaac Russell, Letter to B. H. Roberts, November 7, 1921, Roberts Collection; Charles S. Burton, Letter to Isaac Russell, November 23, 1921, Russell Papers.

¹¹⁴John A. Widtsoe, letter to Isaac Russell, November 25, 1919, Rus-



Heber J. Grant initially found Isaac Russell's letters worrisome but eventually was drawn to the journalist and reengaged him as a defender of the Church. Courtesy Utah State Historical Society.

others, always seeking new opportunities to write about the Mormons and their literature and history. He also sought to cajole Heber J. Grant into reopening his press bureau.¹¹⁵ Eventually, in July 1924, Grant decided that Russell should be reengaged to defend the Church. Amusingly, Grant's agreement was that Russell would

sell Papers. Widtsoe thanked Russell for helping to develop the collection of Western books for Utah State Agricultural College when Widtsoe was its president and to express the hope that he would do the same for the University of Utah's collection. Russell eventually published a book on the West, in collaboration with Howard R. Driggs, a University of Utah professor: *Hidden Heroes of the Rockies* (Yonkers-on-Hudson, N.Y.: World Book, 1923). He also published serially a book-length manuscript: "Joseph Smith—And the Great West," *Improvement Era* 28 (August 1925): 932–40; 28 (September 1925): 1037–45; 28 (October 1925): 1155–63; 29 (November 1925): 61–66; 29 (December 1925): 158–65; 29 (February 1926): 324–30; 29 (March 1926): 476–83; 29 (April 1926): 560–66; 29 (May 1926): 653–60; 29 (September 1926): 1011–19; 29 (October 1926): 1137–43; 30 (December 1926): 108–16; 30 (January 1927): 220–29; 30 (March 1927): 419–26; 30 (May 1927): 627–35; 30 (July 1927): 769–79. An unfulfilled plan was writing more important books on the West. Isaac Russell, Letter to John A. Widtsoe, May 8, 1923, Russell Papers.

¹¹⁵John A. Widtsoe, Letters to Isaac Russell, November 25, 1919, and

be compensated \$100 per quarter in cash and \$200 per quarter in “tithing credit.”¹¹⁶ As they warmed to each other, President Grant sent Russell copies of books of poetry and periodically gave Isaac personal advice, for example, suggesting that he use “Isaac Russell” or “Isaac K. Russell” because the initials “I. K.” might leave the impression that he was a woman named Ida.¹¹⁷ Grant also increased payments to Russell, recognizing his unusual worth in defending the Church and advancing its mission. For example, in 1925, President Grant had Charles Burton send a \$2,000 draft for unidentified services. It fulfilled Widtsoe’s advice to Isaac that if he did his press bureau work “loyally and well,” he would find “that President Grant is one of the most generous and appreciative of men, and will support you fully in the work that may be established.” Widtsoe concluded: “President Grant asked me also to convey to you his hearty good wishes. I am happy to know that your desires are to be gratified in this way and that the Church is to have the help of your abilities.”¹¹⁸ Ike and Allie bought a relatively expensive (\$12,000) house in the Rodgers Park neighborhood in northern Chicago, which Grant felt was “a very reckless thing.”¹¹⁹ Ike needed space to lay out his research and writing and a cramped apartment with Allie and their

January 27, 1920, Russell Papers: “As I read your letters, it seems to me that you are combining well a deep respect for truth with a clear and vivid imagination, together with the power of saying what you mean—all of which should make your serious historical endeavors when you tackle them of great and permanent value.” See also John A. Widtsoe, Letter to Isaac Russell, December 30, 1921, Russell Papers.

¹¹⁶Russell had heard more than two years earlier that President Grant intended to renew the “old relationship, . . . but never got around to it.” Isaac Russell, Letter to Charles S. Burton, May 19, 1923, Russell Papers.

¹¹⁷Heber J. Grant, Letters to Isaac Russell, February 18, 1920, and February 8, 1922, Russell Papers.

¹¹⁸John A. Widtsoe, Letter to Isaac Russell, July 18, 1924, Russell Papers. The \$2,000 draft was sent at about the same time Isaac was changing jobs from the Baking Institute of America to Westinghouse; as a result of the address change, the payment did not immediately reach Russell. Grant sent a worried telegram, June 9, 1925, Russell Papers, confirming the payment. See also Heber J. Grant, Letter to Isaac Russell, March 27, 1925, Russell Papers.

¹¹⁹Nevertheless, Heber J. Grant, on May 10, 1925, Russell Papers, ex-

three children made it difficult.¹²⁰ The new house eased the difficulty considerably.

In mid-1925, Ike left the Baking Institute, mostly because he had predictably found it somewhat difficult to get along with his employers. He took a higher-paying job overseeing public relations for Westinghouse Electric and publishing a magazine for that company called *Public Relations: A Journal for the Executives of Big Business*.¹²¹ He had an interest in the development of the electric industry and the industry's treatment of consumers. Westinghouse was willing to have him edit a magazine that addressed issues in the young electric industry and that also included articles that executives would find interesting. A good friend from New York City wrote, supporting Isaac's idea (related to the friend) to broaden the focus of the magazine and change its name to "American Relations" to wipe "out all the atmosphere of corporation interest or flavor."¹²² Ike took up his new position with characteristic enthusiasm and was soon shuttling around the country discussing electricity and how utilities could help people understand and wisely utilize electricity. At about the same time, Russell received a letter from a New York publisher indicating serious interest in Ike's idea for a new book on the history of America and the West.¹²³

But as 1927 progressed, Ike's health went into serious decline.

pressed satisfaction that reengaging Russell as a secret press bureau for the Church would help him "cover your monthly purchase price of the new home."

¹²⁰Isaac Russell, Letter to Richard W. Burton, March 9, 1924, Russell Papers. Ike complained that an expensive, four-bedroom apartment was not large enough to permit him to have a work room, "and getting ahead at writing needs that." Allie was also unhappy to be "pianoless" because they had had to leave their possessions in storage in New York until they could find a larger residence. Isaac Russell, Letter to Carl Beck and Frances Beck, January 2, 1923, Russell Papers.

¹²¹Isaac Russell, Letter to Lewis Bolser, April 25, 1925, Russell Papers; Heber J. Grant, Letter to Isaac Russell, May 10, 1925, Russell Papers. The description of the magazine comes from Ike's business card, which lists "I.K. Russell" as the editor of *Public Relations*, Russell Papers.

¹²²Robert E. Livingston, Letter to Isaac Russell, June 29, 1927, Russell Papers.

¹²³E. H. Balch, Letter to I.K. Russell, March 21, 1927, Russell Papers.

On September 7, 1927, he suffered a fatal heart attack and died at home at 10:10 A.M. He was forty-seven; Allie was left as a widow at age forty with three teenaged children.¹²⁴ About five years earlier on December 22, 1922, Isaac had expressed a premonition of his early death to his friend and mentor, B. H. Roberts: "I have always had one supreme wish—that if something untoward should take me off before your days are fulfilled that you should say my funeral sermon."¹²⁵ Roberts had been called as Eastern States Mission president in New York City shortly after the Russells moved to Chicago, but he had been released in April 1927. For some reason, however, he was still in New York when he learned of Ike's serious illness and wrote urgently to bestow a priesthood blessing by letter just a few days before Isaac died.¹²⁶ Allie took Isaac's body back to Salt Lake City for the funeral and burial.¹²⁷

B. H. Roberts was not able to return to Salt Lake City for the fu-

Sadly, there is nothing in Ike's papers to suggest that he had gotten very far on this project before his death.

¹²⁴"I. K. Russell Found Dead, Editor of Magazine Public Relations—Was Native of Utah," *New York Times*, September 8, 1927, 8; "Death Closes Writer's Work. Isaac Russell, Newspaper Man, Soldier, Passes in the East," *Salt Lake Tribune*, September 8, 1927, 20; Obituary, *Chicago Post*, September 8, 1927.

¹²⁵Isaac Russell, Letter to B. H. Roberts, December 22, 1922, Russell Papers.

¹²⁶B. H. Roberts, Letter to Isaac Russell, August 30, 1927, Russell Papers. Roberts's letter was mailed from 620 West 115th Street in New York City.

¹²⁷Allie's life after Ike's death was not easy, but she managed. Though she had many close relatives and friends in Utah (and had often spent summers in Ogden during the 1910s), she and the children remained in Chicago, then eventually moved back to New York. Janet" [Jeanette Young Easton], "Salt Lakers in Gotham," column in *Deseret News*: June 25, 1910, 16; February 25, 1911, 17; July 8, 1911, 21; November 9, 1912, Sect. 2, p. 5; August 30, 1913, Sect. 2, p. 5; June 13, 1914, Sect. 2, p. 5; November 21, 1914, Sect. 2, p. 5; January 2, 1915, Sect. 2, p. 3; June 19, 1915, Sect. 2, p. 3; September 18, 1915, Sect. 2, p. 3; October 16, 1915, Sect. 2, p. 5; April 22, 1916, Sect. 2, p. 5; December 30, 1916, Sect. 2, p. 7. She died on March 4, 1945, at age fifty-seven at the home of their older son, Robert, in Greenwich, Connecticut, where she had resided for about two years. "Eleanor A. F. Russell," *Salt Lake Telegram*, March 9, 1945, 21; Family Group Records of Isaac Rus-

neral, and thus Ike's "supreme wish" was denied. Heber J. Grant, John A. Widtsoe, former Governor Charles Mabey, and Church leader and history professor Levi Edgar Young were the speakers at his funeral. All of them praised Russell's writings and his character but, not surprisingly, none made reference to his secret public relations work for the Church over the previous fifteen years.¹²⁸ Edward A. Rumely, his former publisher and editor at the *New York Evening Mail*, wrote this tribute: "I know what a struggle he has lived through, with his warm-hearted enthusiasms, his faith that a better world could be built. . . . As long as I live, I shall remember Ike. The fact that such a man existed, made the world richer."¹²⁹ Though Russell had had an unusually abundant life full of experiences and service and had had a pro-

sell and Eleanor Althea Farr, www.familysearch.org (accessed November 2011). It is telling that Allie had been away from Utah long enough that the newspaper did not know that she never used her first name, Eleanor. Two years later, her ashes were spread over Ike's burial plot in Salt Lake. Utah State History Burials Database, www.history.utah.gov/burials (accessed November 2011). Ike and Allie Russell currently have a daughter-in-law in her nineties, four grandchildren, and more great-grandchildren, and the family remembers them very fondly. See Steven Goff, "Getting to Know D.C. United's Robbie Russell," *Washington Post*, January 26, 2012, www.washingtonpost.com/blots/soccer-insider/post/getting-to-know-dc-uniteds-robbie-russell/2012/01/26/glQAKSvfTQ_blog.html (accessed July 2012). Professional MLS soccer player Robbie Russell is a great-grandson of Ike and Allie.

¹²⁸"High Tribute Paid to Isaac K. Russell at Funeral Rites," *Deseret News*, September 12, 1927, 2. Heber J. Grant was quoted as praising Ike's writings on Joseph Smith and the West, which had been serialized in the *Improvement Era* for the prior two years.

¹²⁹Edward A. Rumely, Letter to Mrs. Russell, September 12, 1927, Russell Papers. Rumely noted in this letter of condolence to Allie that he knew how devotedly she had worked beside her husband in the "struggle" to make the world a better place. Uncharacteristically, the *Salt Lake Tribune* included an unusually complimentary editorial after Ike's death, noting that he gained a "reputation as a brilliant and forceful writer," and that he then "contributed articles to the foremost magazines and gained additional fame." The editorial concluded by stating: "Now that he has been summoned by the Angel of Death and his wonderful mind has ceased to function, Isaac Russell will be mourned by friends all over the

found influence in certain realms, one can only imagine what he might have accomplished had he lived longer.

United States. To the sorrowing wife, children, brothers and sisters The Tribune tenders its heartfelt sympathy." "Isaac Russell," *Salt Lake Tribune*, September 9, 1927, 6.

EVIL IN THE FAMILY: MORMONS AND CATHOLICS STRUGGLING WITH THE DARK SIDE OF THEIR HISTORIES

Father Daniel P. Dwyer, O.F.M.

A NUMBER OF YEARS AGO, WHILE ATTENDING the Mormon History Association's annual conference, I began to notice how often the Mountain Meadows Massacre was a topic for discussion. Traveling to the site after the 2007 Salt Lake City conference, I noted the intense feeling that this topic produced among Latter-day Saints. While respecting the importance—and, indeed, the horror—of that bloody event, I found that the passion aroused by the topic seemed a bit disproportionate. Without meaning to sound insensitive, I puzzled over the fact that the massacre occurred in the 1850s, long before any of us were alive. Why did it still have such a hold on my Mormon friends? Why, after millions have died in countless wars, the Shoah, and the Rwandan and Cambodian genocides, were my LDS friends so focused on the death of about 120 people in a relatively remote part of southern Utah, in the nineteenth century?

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In some ways the answer is easy. After all it was *Mormon* history we had come to study; and the massacre was really not that long ago. For some of the people to whom I was listening, there was a genealogical connection to the perpetrators. Perhaps they were a bit like the young German man who told me how he tried to deal with his grandfather's enthusiastic membership in the SS.

But there is, I think, another factor involved. The people who committed this crime were, at least ostensibly, devout and believing members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The fact that this crime was committed by co-religionists makes it unusually painful. The fact that some even detected, or were afraid they might detect, the hand of Church leaders in the event or in its cover-up made this particular atrocity a threat to deeply held beliefs.

As I pondered these matters for several years, it occurred to me that I, too, belong to a church whose members have been implicated in horrendous deeds over the course of centuries. Like the LDS Church, the Catholic Church is structured hierarchically and values legitimate authority; it sees itself as *the* church established by Jesus Christ; but its leaders and members have not only committed murderous deeds, some have boasted of them. So why did I not wrestle with the Inquisition the way my friends were struggling with Mountain Meadows? Why was I able to sleep soundly, though my own ancestors may have been perpetrators and/or victims in some of history's bloodiest crimes? Was there something in me that had become hardened to history's dark side? Was there something in my church that had made me callous? Or, did our two churches have something to learn from each other about dealing with institutional and communal evil?

At the outset, let me state a few obvious facts. The Catholic Church is over two thousand years old. Some of the evil that has been perpetrated by Church members and Church leaders happened so long ago that there is not the same effect on the present generation. For example, it is regrettable that some of my ancestors were probably converted by force, or converted others by force, but it has no visceral or conscious effect on me today. In many cases the details are unknown; and it is hard to even picture those long-ago people, whether perpetrators or victims, who were Franks, Vikings, Celts, or Saxons.

Second, the Catholic Church has such a large and widespread membership that even believing members of the Church do not always think of our worst sinners as co-religionists. For example, who thinks of Napoleon, Mussolini, or Hitler as *Catholic* dictators? Yet they

were certainly all baptized Catholics. To some extent, Catholic history blends with human history in a way that makes it difficult to separate them. Had Hitler been a Latter-day Saint, I am sure he would be labeled as a notorious “Mormon dictator.”

And, of course, one of the very reasons some of us like to study Mormon history is that we can get our arms around it in terms of place and time; but this ease of access undoubtedly makes the misdeeds of members more glaringly “Mormon” in the eyes of members and outsiders alike.

Perhaps a significant difference for American Catholics of this generation is the result of the presidential election in November of 1960. Prior to the election of John Kennedy, I remember reading texts in my Catholic elementary school that were rather defensive.¹ These books would, for example, boast of the percentage of Catholics who fought in World War I; if Protestants had largely founded the country, remember they would not have been here had it not been for the Catholic Columbus. We were in the Southwest before the Pilgrims ever set foot on Plymouth Rock; and if Castro must be considered Catholic—well, he wasn’t, not really. Evil deeds committed by Catholics only counted if they were “practicing Catholics” at the time of their transgressions. Until 1960, this was a nation in which Catholics, like Mormons, had to prove their patriotism and have explanations for all of the dark corners of their past. In those days, American Cath-

¹An example of such a text, which was even then quite dated, had a section entitled “Discoveries and Inventions of Catholics.” After listing a variety of things such as the thermometer invented by Galileo and the discovery of the solar system by Copernicus, it went on: “When we add to all this the abolition of slavery in Europe, the civilization of the barbarians, the softening of manners, the elevation of woman, the Magna Charta, trial by jury, the habeas corpus, the Common Law, and the sanctity of home—all the direct results of the teachings of the Catholic Church during the Middle Ages—it will be seen that not only has the Church been no obstacle to progress, but her children were the pioneers of every branch of science. Yes, every branch of modern science owes, not only its origin, but the main part of its growth, to Catholic scientists, so that it can be said with sincerest truth that the scepter of Science belongs to the Church.” Right Rev. Richard Gilmour, D.D., *Bible History Containing the Most Remarkable Events of the Old and New Testaments, to Which Is Added a Compendium of Church History for the Use of Catholic Schools in the United States* (New York: Benzinger Brothers, 1923), 290.

olics probably were more defensive about things like the Inquisition than I am today. The election of a Catholic president changed things, for better and/or for worse. We are now part of the mainstream—at least much of the time. Indeed, within Catholic ranks today, there is sometimes defensiveness about the extent to which we have been “Americanized,” or even “Protestantized.” Perhaps the near-election of Mitt Romney, or the future election of a Mormon to the White House, will cause members of the LDS Church to enter a similar era. Oddly enough, pride in a Mormon president might allow for a more dispassionate attitude toward something like Mountain Meadows.

Still, the more I pondered these matters, the more I felt that a comparison of our two traditions might be instructive about how people of faith cope with the dark side of reality.

THE DEPTHS OF EVIL

It may not be entirely necessary to state the obvious, but the level of evil that I am concerned with is not trivial. None of us is overly concerned with human foibles, lapses in etiquette, or simple misunderstandings. We are concerned with egregious errors and murderous or despicable acts. This, for example, is a description of Catholic Crusaders in Mainz who decided, in 1096, that they should murder their Jewish neighbors before they left home to kill Muslims:

Emico and the rest of his band held a council and, after sunrise, attacked the Jews in the hall with arrows and lances. Breaking the bolts and the doors, they killed the Jews, about seven hundred in number, who in vain resisted the force and attack of so many thousands. They killed the women, also, and with their swords pierced tender children of whatever age and sex. The Jews seeing that their Christian enemies were attacking them and their children, and they were sparing no age, likewise fell upon one another, brothers, children, wives, and sisters, and thus they perished at each other's hands. Horrible to say, mothers cut the throats of nursing children with knives and stabbed others, preferring them to perish thus by their own hands rather than to be killed by the weapons of the uncircumcised.²

Sadly, this was not an isolated event in our history; and though

²Albert of Aix, quoted in *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eyewitnesses and Participants* (Princeton, N.J., 1921), 54–56, www.Fordham.edu/halsall/source/1096jews.html (accessed May 29, 2009).

the circumstances are very different, there is an eerie resonance with some of the descriptions of Mountain Meadows. In 1859 Brevet Major J. H. Carleton of the U.S. Army, was commanded to take a burial party to the Utah Territory. His report of May 25 stated: "General Clarke, commanding the Department of California, directed me to bury the bones of the victims of that terrible massacre which took place on this ground in September, 1857."³ His description, like that of the events in Mainz, is chilling:

I saw several bones of what must have been very small children. Dr. Brewer says from what he saw he thinks some of the infants were butchered. The mothers doubtless had these in their arms, and the same shot or blow may have deprived both of life.

The scene of the massacre, even at this late day, was horrible to look upon. Women's hair, in detached locks and masses, hung to [sic] the sage bushes and was strewn over the ground in many places. Parts of little children's dresses and of female costume dangled from the shrubbery or lay scattered about; and among these, here and there, on every hand, for at least a mile in the direction of the road, by two miles east and west, there gleamed, bleached white by the weather, the skulls and other bones of those who had suffered. A glance into the wagon when all these had been collected revealed a sight which can never be forgotten.⁴

HISTORY AND THEOLOGY

To understand further our respective attitudes to such evil, I will address issues of theology and doctrine; but I do so with the understanding of Richard P. McBrien who writes, in his two-volume work *Catholicism*, that "the relationship between the Church and history is a theological one. It has to do with the presence of grace in the world, with the direction and destiny of the world toward the Kingdom of God, and with the role of the Church in proclaiming, celebrating, exemplifying, and serving that grace, as personified in Jesus Christ, by which the world is alive and in movement toward perfection."⁵ I trust that this statement is one with which Latter-day Saints might be com-

³Brevet Major J. H. Carleton, U.S.A, "Special Report on the Mountain Meadows Massacre," May 25, 1859, <http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/mountainmeadows/carletonreport.html> (accessed April 11, 2013).

⁴Ibid.

⁵Richard P. McBrien, *Catholicism*, 2 vols. (Oak Grove, Minn.: Winston Press, 1980), 2:605.

fortable even if we disagree on the meaning of some of the terms.

So how do we who are believers come to grips with the evil in our histories? How do we square our reality with our theology? How do we continue to have confidence in the divinely sanctioned roles of our leaders? When, if ever, do we say no to our leaders? What does serious wrongdoing say about ourselves and the testimonies that we bear? In dealing with all this there are, essentially, three options: we can try to rationalize the evil and explain it away; we can abandon our respective faiths and deal with, or ignore evil, from the perspective of outsiders; or we can try to admit and understand the evil and look for ways our traditions can help us cope with the aftermath and prevent recurrences.

In both of the cases that I have cited above, Catholics and Mormons can, and have, looked for extenuating circumstances that help explain or even explain away these evils. This is a very human and, indeed, an appropriate response, and Catholics are as good at this as anyone. In the case of the 1096 massacre quoted above, for example, a bishop, a highly placed Church authority, had placed the Jews in that hall to attempt to save them. A few centuries later, even though Joan of Arc was condemned and burned by the leaders of the Church, she was posthumously rehabilitated and declared a saint by higher authorities. Adolf Hitler may have been baptized Catholic but, after all, he was not really a churchgoer and probably planned to destroy the churches once he was done with the Jews.

Likewise there were Latter-day Saints who were appalled by what happened at Mountain Meadows and had a need to explain it. One can imagine—and there have actually been—a variety of responses: Perhaps the victims had really pushed the Saints to the limit; maybe victims had taken part in, or approved, the killing of Joseph and Hyrum Smith. Perhaps, being from Arkansas, they had been complicit in the murder of Parley P. Pratt. Certainly Brigham Young must have been saddened and outraged by the killings, etc.

But while nuance and understanding *are* very important, our minds and consciences are not that easily assuaged. Whether Catholics or Mormons, whatever the rationalizations or caveats, we have not always felt at ease with the actions, or inactions, of our forebears and leaders in the faith.

I will try then, to look at several areas in our respective churches beliefs and structures that may relate to the question of evil and our communal and historical participation in it. I will start by looking at the statements and actions of our authorities; I will then look at our

anthropologies—what we each claim to believe about the human person; I will touch on the role of family as it colors our respective faiths; and I will briefly look at ways in which our churches have recently tried to confront our painful pasts.

THE STATEMENTS AND TEACHINGS OF OUR LEADERS

Even when Church authorities cannot be held accountable for atrocities, we all know of cases where their inaction or their words have caused us embarrassment. I present two, roughly contemporary, examples.

In the nineteenth century, American Catholics, who at the time, like Mormons, were undesirable outsiders, were no doubt chagrined by the words of Pope Pius IX in his *Syllabus of Errors*. In it the pope condemned the following beliefs. He said it was *wrong* to believe or teach that:

Good hope at least is to be entertained of the eternal salvation of all those who are not at all in the true Church of Christ.

Protestantism is nothing more than another form of the same true Christian religion.

The Church is not a true and perfect society.

The Roman pontiffs have, by their too arbitrary conduct, contributed to the division of the Church into Eastern and Western.

Catholics may approve of the system of educating youths unconnected with the Catholic faith and the power of the Church.

The Church ought to be separated from the State, and the State from the Church.

In the present day it is no longer expedient that the Catholic religion should be held as the only religion of the state.

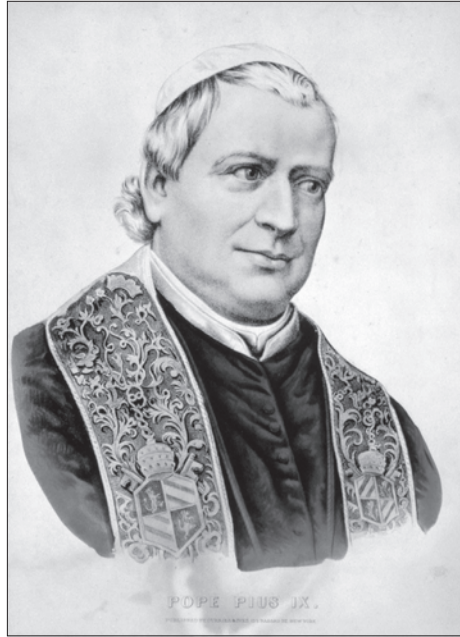
The Roman Pontiff can, and ought to, reconcile himself, and come to terms with progress, liberalism and modern civilization.⁶

Note that these are all statements of “errors.” One can imagine the effect of such condemnations on Catholics who were trying to assert their loyalty to democracy and the American republic. With such help from Rome, who needed enemies? These same teachings necessarily became an embarrassment to subsequent generations and, even as Pius IX inches closer to sainthood, to Catholics today.

The *Syllabus of Errors* was issued in 1864. On February 8, 1857, in

⁶“The Syllabus of Errors Condemned by Pius IX,” www.papalencyclicals.net/Pius09/p9syll.htm (accessed June 9, 2009).

*Pope Pius IX (1846–78),
authored the Syllabus of Er-
rors (1864), condemning
liberalism and modernism.
Currier & Ives lithograph,
LC-USZC2- 2924, Library of
Congress Prints and Photo-
graphs Division
Washington, D.C.*



the Tabernacle at Salt Lake City, Brigham Young shared some reflections that would later prove embarrassing to many Latter-day Saints:

I have known a great many men who have left this church for whom there is no chance whatever for exaltation, but if their blood had been spilled, it would have been better for them. The wickedness and ignorance of the nations forbid this principle's being in full force, but the time will come when the law of God will be in full force.

This is loving your neighbor as ourselves; if he needs help, help him; and if he wants salvation and it is necessary to spill his blood on the earth in order that he may be saved, spill it. Any of you who understand the principles of eternity, if you have sinned a sin requiring the shedding of blood, except the sin unto death, would not be satisfied nor rest until your blood should be spilled, that you might gain that salvation you desire. That is the way to love mankind.⁷

Of course, in both cases, the context is lacking. The leadership of both churches faced serious challenges from hostile powers. Perhaps we are misreading these two men. Furthermore, doctrine is dy-

⁷Brigham Young, February 8, 1857, *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (London and Liverpool: LDS Booksellers Depot, 1854–86), 4:220.



Brigham Young, Joseph Smith's successor (as president of the Quorum of the Twelve, 1844–47) and as LDS Church president (1847–77). In September 1857 Mormon settlers and militia in southern Utah committed the Mountain Meadows Massacre. Portrait from title page of Brigham Young Family Association (www.brighamyoungfamily.org).

namic; it does have a tendency to become more nuanced over time. Still, the faithful cannot help but wonder. Their faith cannot help but be challenged, when things that seem so totally at odds with our experience or our concept of an all-loving God are there on the pages of history in black and white.

UNDERSTANDING POPES AND PROPHETS

Perhaps we who believe can understand the parsing of words by theological experts; perhaps we can appreciate the necessary distinctions that are drawn by hierarchs; and maybe we can understand things said or written in haste. After all, as divinely ordained as our churches may be, they are made up of fallible human beings—and “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23, KJV). Yet I imagine we still get uneasy when the talk turns to controversies over Brigham Young and Mountain Meadows, or Pius XII and the Holocaust.

In looking at leadership, it is possible that many have misunderstood or misinterpreted the doctrinal status of prophets and popes in the LDS and Catholic Churches. For example, as I watched people of good will struggle with Mountain Meadows in 2007, I felt the underlying presence of Brigham Young. I sensed that some feared, and others hoped, that President Young would be found to have been complicit in the massacre or in its cover-up. It is one thing to admit that leaders make mistakes—but what if the massacre was, in any way, the doing of Brigham Young? What if it *was* a prophet of God who was complicit in

these murders? How could a prophet, seer, and revelator be involved in something so vile? How could the Church still be true?

There is a similar situation for Catholics. Is not the Pope infallible? Is he not the Vicar of Christ on earth and the successor of Peter, the rock upon whom the Church is built? If that is so, how do I explain away the words of Pius IX? More importantly, what about warrior popes like Julius II? Or the notorious renaissance popes like Alexander Borgia? Why didn't Pius XII speak out more forcefully against Hitler?

As a Catholic, I sometimes smile when people bring up scandals involving popes. It's not that some of the stories are not horrific, even blood-curdling. It's just that, thanks to my theological and historical education, I have probably learned more about the evil done by popes than they have. A particularly good example of papal depravity was John XII who reigned from 955 to 964. The 1910 edition of the *Catholic Encyclopedia* refers to him as "a coarse, immoral man." He was elected pope at the age of eighteen, his Lateran palace was described as a brothel, he loved war and hunting more than his spiritual responsibilities, he betrayed his allies, and a Church synod of bishops accused him of simony, perjury, murder, adultery, and incest. He ordered the amputations of hands, noses, and ears of his enemies, he had at least one bishop scourged, and he allegedly died several days after suffering paralysis in the very act of adultery. So evil was his reputation that, according to one medieval chronicler, he died because the devil came and dealt him a blow to the head.⁸

A problem for Catholics is that even some of our own people misunderstand the doctrine of papal infallibility. It does not mean that a pope is always correct—even when he teaches doctrine. His teaching is infallible only under severely limited conditions. In a sense the infallibility is not his but the Church's and ultimately the Holy Spirit's. So if Pope Francis told me the sky was green, it would still be blue; if he told me to wage war against Mormons or Muslims or Hindus, I would feel perfectly free to defy him. And just as papal teaching has been wrong, so some popes have been among the most immoral of persons. Infallibility says nothing about the morals or leadership of a John XII; to the contrary, it assures us that the Church will survive and transcend someone like him.

A better understanding of the papacy liberates the member of

⁸J. P. Kirsch, "John XII," *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, 15 vols. (New York: Robert Appleton, 1910), 8:426–27.

the Church from unnecessary guilt over papal wrongdoing. My faith is not destroyed by the likes of John XII. Popes are people; people sin; and with their great power over the centuries, popes have been in a position to do both good and evil on a grand and dramatic scale. Remember, as far as Catholics are concerned, the first pope, Peter, denied Christ.

Among Mormons I sense a similar difficulty. What happens to the faith if a prophet is wrong? How *can* a prophet, seer, and revelator be wrong? If a prophet can err, how can the Church be true? The LDS situation may be somewhat akin to that of the early Christians who seem to have been genuinely puzzled by the possibility of post-baptismal sin. As shown in 1 John 2, it soon became clear that even baptized believers might fall: “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” In a more recent work, Douglas J. Davies noted that evil within the fold may have been, and perhaps still is, inconceivable for Latter-day Saints: “In a Mormon context . . . the very phrase ‘the problem of evil’ is incongruous. This is partly due to the fact that, for early Mormonism, the problem of evil was the problem of identifying the true church from all the false ones. Once that decision is removed from consideration, as it is for those who are already in the Church, a major source of evil has been overcome.”⁹

So a Mountain Meadows Massacre is similar to the first time that the earliest Christians noticed truly sinful behavior in a baptized member. Both cases were shocking and incongruous.

What does this say about the leadership? In terms of doctrine, I think of the controversy over the Adam-God doctrine. According to the *Journal of Discourses*, Brigham Young stated that Adam “is Michael, the Archangel, the Ancient of Days! About whom holy men have written and spoken—He is our father and our God, and the only God with whom we have to do.”¹⁰ Is this LDS doctrine? If not, was Brigham Young wrong? If he was wrong, how could he have been a prophet, seer, and revelator? Or, as in Catholicism, is the exercise of the prophetic ministry something that happens only in very defined situations? While doctrinal controversies are not in the same category as murder and other foul deeds, the question is still relevant, for how Latter-day Saints deal with errors gives a clue as to how they might

⁹Douglas J. Davies, *The Mormon Culture of Salvation* (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate Publishing, 2000), 61.

¹⁰Brigham Young, April 9, 1852, *Journal of Discourses*, 1:50.

deal with wrongdoing on the part of a prophet. Perhaps a better example here might be the previously mentioned concept of “blood atonement.” Could a prophet, even theoretically, commit a great sin? If so, how is a member of the Church to deal with it? Of course, the president of the Church is just one of the General Authorities; but how one would deal with evil at the highest level will help to determine how one deals with it further down the hierarchical chain.

Interestingly, in a recent online article by Jeffrey Dean Lindsay, author of a blog entitled *Mormanity*, one finds that the Mormon position may indeed be almost identical to the Catholic. Lindsay quotes God’s chastisement of Joseph Smith in Doctrine and Covenants 3; he makes reference to the Adam-God doctrine; and he explains how Joseph Fielding Smith claimed that men would never go to the moon. He shows how, beginning with Joseph Smith himself, Church presidents admitted their human limitations and the fact that they were sometimes wrong. His conclusions could apply to either church: “I . . . realize that the Church is permeated with fallible human beings, yet I recognize that such a thoroughly human organization can be divine (in fact, I know that it IS divine)—not because of who we humans are, but because of Who Christ is, the Leader of all humans who will come unto Him and the ultimate Leader of the Church. He gives man free agency, and even when we come unto Him and seek His spirit, He does not turn us into mindless robots.”¹¹

Understanding that I would be referring to a different “true church,” I could have written that same statement.

OUR RESPECTIVE ANTHROPOLOGIES

Another factor that influences our reaction to evil in the Church is anthropology—our foundational doctrine of what constitutes a human being. I would contend that both Mormons and Catholics differ, in this regard, from traditional Protestantism—especially in its Calvinist formulation.

Jean Calvin, basing his ideas on St. Augustine, believed that some people, possibly very few in number, based on no merit of their own, are chosen for salvation; all others are a “mass of damnation” and

¹¹Jeffrey Dean Lindsay, “On the Fallibility of Inspired Human Leaders in the True Church of Jesus Christ,” March 20, 2004, <http://www.jefflindsay.com/fallible.shtml> (accessed June 8, 2009).

are destined for hell from the beginning.¹² If this is the case, the evils of the past make a lot of sense. We should not be at all surprised by crusades, inquisitions, massacres, and holocausts. After all, what can one expect from those who are bound for hell? In contrast, both Catholics and Mormons have a more positive anthropology; we see people, even in their natural state, as capable of great good. Richard McBrien, a Catholic theologian, wrote of a world moving toward perfection:

God is active in our behalf: first in creation, then in redemption, and finally in the consummation of all things in Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit. That active love is an *incarnate* love. God becomes present to us, again not only as individuals but in our total humanity, in our world, in our history. God is the active, incarnate power of love by which we, our brothers and sisters, our world, and our history are healed, renewed, and brought to the fullness of perfection. And this is precisely what the Kingdom of God is all about.¹³

And, please pay close attention to the phrase of Pius IX cited earlier wherein he calls the Church “a true and perfect society.” I suspect that this is not too far from the LDS view of the Church and of the human person. Latter-day Saints speak about “eternal progression”; and both of our churches even have good things to say about the fall of Adam. Latter-day Saints are quite familiar with Lehi’s explanation in the Book of Mormon: “Adam fell that man might be; and man is that he might have joy” (2 Ne. 2:25). For their part, Catholics are used to hearing the *Exultet* sung every year at the Easter Vigil. *The Exultet* is a hymn from about the sixth century, in which we find the words: “O happy fault, O necessary sin of Adam, which gained for us so great a redeemer.”¹⁴

Unlike those who see humankind as a “mass of damnation,” we

¹²Thus Jean Calvin can state: “We say, then, that Scripture clearly proves this much, that God by his eternal and immutable counsel determined once for all those whom it was his pleasure one day to admit to salvation, and those whom, on the other hand, it was his pleasure to doom to destruction.” Jean Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, translated by Henry Beveridge, Book 3, Chap. 21, Sect. 7, <http://www.reformed.org/calvinism/> (accessed April 11, 2013).

¹³McBrien, *Catholicism*, 2:1102.

¹⁴Marcellino D’Ambrosio, “Exultet-The Easter Proclamation,” www.crossroadsinitiative.com/library_article/42/Exultet_The_Easter_

who are LDS and Catholic have a different sort of challenge: to reconcile our more positive view of the human person with the actions of baptized brothers or sisters who commit unspeakable acts.

ORIGINAL SIN

For Catholics however, even if Adam's sin is "necessary," I suspect that something like Mountain Meadows would evoke the doctrine of original sin. McBrien defines original sin as "the state in which all human beings are now born. It is a situation or condition in which the possibility of sin becomes instead a probability because grace is not at our disposal in the manner and to the degree that God intended."¹⁵

While an average Catholic may not have theological expertise, he or she may look at something like Mountain Meadows without undue astonishment. In a certain way, evil is expected—even from our very best.

A Catholic, while believing that all men and women are created in the image and likeness of God—and thus always capable of great good—would still take original sin very seriously. In this sense, Catholics might not be as optimistic as Latter-day Saints, though we would tend to see this view as realism rather than pessimism. *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* distinguishes between original sin and that sin which a person commits individually and consciously:

Although it is proper to each individual, original sin does not have the character of a personal fault in any of Adam's descendants. It is a deprivation of original holiness and justice, but human nature has not been totally corrupted: it is wounded in the dominion of death; and inclined to sin—an inclination to evil that is called "concupiscence." Baptism, by imparting the life of Christ's grace, erases original sin and turns a man back toward God, but the consequences for nature, weakened and inclined to evil, persist in man and summon him to spiritual battle.¹⁶

Interestingly, for Latter-day Saints, the doctrine of original sin is not as dissimilar as one might expect; at least not according to the *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, which notes that "the transgression of Adam

Proclamation.html (accessed June 2, 2009).

¹⁵McBrien, *Catholicism*, 2:xl.

¹⁶*The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2d ed. (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1997), 102.

and Eve brought death into the world and made all mortals subject to temptation, suffering and weakness. . . . All are subject to physical death, and all will sin in some measure.”¹⁷

What might be difficult for Latter-day Saints to accept is that “some measure” of sin would include something as terrible as Mountain Meadows. While Catholics might look to “concupiscence” to explain the inexplicable, I am not as sure that members of the LDS Church would turn to this particular belief. And, of course, there is the danger that we, Catholics or Mormons, could use original sin as an excuse, or allow the doctrine to make us complacent in the face of evil. Nevertheless, I have personally found that it helps me to account for horrific evil while still recognizing it for what it is.

THE FAMILY

As noted earlier, it may be that members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are sensitive to the Mountain Meadows Massacre, because many members today can find a direct, and not so distant, ancestor among the perpetrators (and sometimes among the victims as well). Connected with this is the well-known place of the family in LDS doctrine.

Sophia L. Stone, a disaffected Mormon, was able to appreciate the connection between family and history in the Latter-day Saint tradition:

Mormons draw on history to affirm our faith. They feel the angst of young Joseph Smith Jr. as he kneels in the grove of trees, the worry of his wife Emma when her husband is imprisoned, the hope and fear of men and women as they cross the plains in search of religious freedom.

These things are in our past, but many of us feel them in the present. The pain and anguish of our ancestors become our own pain and anguish, cementing us together not only as a people who believe in a similar theology, but as a people grounded in a common past.¹⁸

Catholics and Mormons have strong similarities and some significant differences in this regard; for while both churches see the

¹⁷Byron R. Merrill, “Original Sin,” *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 4 vols. (New York: Macmillan Publishing, 1991), 3:1052–53.

¹⁸Sophia L. Stone, *Mormon Diaries* (Salt Lake City: Pioneer Press, 2012), 136, Kindle Edition.

family as the bedrock of society, the LDS Church places family at the very heart and center of its teaching in a way that no other church does. How are the churches similar? Both Catholics and Mormons laud the institution of marriage; the leaders of both churches condemn abortion; both oppose the legalization of same-sex marriage; both are uncomfortable with divorce; and both have what are thought by many to be conservative, even outdated, ideas about sexuality in general. One can sometimes read statements by Church authorities and be unable to distinguish which of the two churches issued them. Catholics express devotion and admiration for the “Holy Family” and hold up the family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph as an example for our own families. Each year in January, Catholics celebrate the Feast of the Holy Family. In 1995 the LDS First Presidency and Council of the Twelve Apostles issued *The Family: A Proclamation to the World* which begins: “We, the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, solemnly proclaim that marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God and that the family is central to the Creator’s plan for the eternal destiny of his children.”¹⁹

In 1981 Pope John Paul II issued an apostolic exhortation entitled *Familiaris Consortio*. He made statements similar to those that would later be issued by the LDS Church. Among the statements in the Catholic document is this one: “The family finds in the plan of God the creator and redeemer not only its identity, what it is, but also its mission, what it can and should do. The role that God calls the family to perform in history derives from what the family is; its role represents the dynamic and existential development of what it is. Each family finds within itself a summons that cannot be ignored and that specifies both its dignity and its responsibility.”²⁰

And yet, there are major differences. If one continues to read the Catholic document, the Pope goes on to speak of those called to virginity or celibacy; while for members of the LDS Church, marriage and family are eternal and an essential part of achieving exaltation in

¹⁹*The Family: A Proclamation to the World* (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, September 23, 1995) <http://www.lds.org/library/display/0,4945,161-1-11-1,00.html> (accessed June 19, 2009).

²⁰John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio: Apostolic Exhortation of His Holiness Pope John Paul II on The Family*, <http://www.familylifecenter.net/consortio.asp> (accessed June 19, 2009).

the celestial kingdom. It would be strange for members of the LDS Church to take vows of celibacy, or to choose—deliberately, and without necessity—a single life. Even stranger to them would be the opinion of some Protestant and Catholic thinkers that the family itself might become an idol.²¹ After all, did not Jesus say: “I am come to set a man at variance with his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. . . . He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me” (Matt. 10:36–37).

The point is not that our churches disagree on marriage and the family; but that the centrality of family in the LDS plan of salvation might lead to greater cognitive dissonance for a Mormon whose great-grandfather committed murder than it would for a Catholic. I am sorry if my ancestors did evil things; but after a while it is more interesting than embarrassing—and it is not particularly connected, in my mind, with my own salvation. Though I hope I will be reunited with those I love in eternity, I do not really expect a re-creation of the earthly family exactly as I have known it here. Though I believe in the Communion of the Saints, my connection comes more from the Eucharist than from genealogy—as fun and as interesting as the latter is.

I have tentatively come to think that our respective views on the family might have more to do with how Catholics and Mormons look at past evil differently than any doctrines about original sin or authority. Or, could it be that history itself plays a different role in Mormon consciousness? Whatever the differences, how do we move forward?

APOLOGIES

At the institutional level, one obvious step in overcoming past evil is at least to recognize and apologize for past actions. Something like this has been tried by both churches, but not without difficulty. In 1992, the Catholic Church apologized for its condemnation and treatment of Galileo who died back in 1642.²² In 1999, Pope John Paul II issued a document entitled “Memory and Reconciliation: The

²¹See, for example, Matthew Kelly, *Idolatry a Thing of the Past?*, http://www.catholicdestination.com/article_info.php?articles_id=25 (accessed June 19, 2009).

²²Michael N. Marcus, “1992: Catholic Church Apologizes to Galileo, Who Died in 1642,” in *For the First Time (or the Last Time, When Things*

Church and the Faults of the Past,” in which he apologized, among other things, for the misdeeds of those who had acted against the Jews and for sins against “separated brethren” within the Christian world.²³ It is also, unfortunately, not uncommon to see headlines like “L.A. Catholic Church Apologizes for ‘Terrible Sin and Crime’; Pays Record Amount to Victims.”²⁴ For Latter-day Saints there are headlines like “LDS Church Issues Apology over Mountain Meadows.”²⁵

But these apologies do not solve the problem entirely, and they sometimes raise deeper issues. Some note that these “apologies” are very carefully, perhaps too carefully, worded; others feel they do not deal with contemporary issues such as the treatment of gay and lesbian members; the role of women; or, in the case of the LDS Church, the exclusion until recently of worthy black men from priesthood ordination. Apologizing for past mistakes only seems, for better and/or worse, to highlight current controversies.

In part, this issue has been with us since the early Church. It is again the ancient problem of post-baptismal sin. David Morrison, a professor of English with roots in both the Catholic and Orthodox Churches, in an online article titled “Sin, Pardon and the Kingdom of a Merciful God,” points to what is, at least for Catholics, a decisive turning point:

In A.D. 217, the deacon Callistus became Pope and Bishop of Rome. To the horror and shock of many “puritans” of the day, Callistus proclaimed that the church had power on earth to forgive any and all

Changed in Society and Technology, September 10, 2007, <http://the.firsttime.blogspot.com/2007/09/1992-catholic-church-apologizes-to.html> (accessed May 29, 2009).

²³John Paul II, *Memory and Reconciliation: The Church and the Faults of the Past*, December 1999, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti_documents/rc_con_cfaith (accessed November 30, 2012).

²⁴Daniel Blake, “L.A. Catholic Church Apologizes for ‘Terrible Sin and Crime’; Pays Record Amount to Victims,” *CP Politics: The Christian Post*, July 16, 2007, <http://www.christianpost.com/news/1-a-catholic-church-apologizes-for-terrible-sin-and-crime-pays-record-amount-to-victims-28467> (accessed November 20, 2012).

²⁵Carrie A. Moore, “LDS Church Issues Apology over Mountain Meadows,” *Deseret News*, September 12, 2007, <http://www.deseretnews.com/article/695209359/LDS-Church-issues-apology-over-Mountain-Meadows.html?pg=all> (accessed November 20, 2012).

sins, even the worst ones of apostasy, murder, and sexual sin. . . . If the church was to continue to grow and thrive, it had to be realistic. People sin and the church could no longer be seen as a club for perfected saints but rather as a school for sinners being saved. Of course sinners had to do penance, make confession to God and His Church, and receive absolution . . . but the doors of mercy had been thrown open and, in the Catholic Church at least, would never again be shut.²⁶

Latter-day Saints and Catholics understand that people err. Our churches stress, in LDS terms, “moral agency” and, in Catholic terminology, “free will.” But the claim that the Church *itself* is without blame is often unconvincing to our contemporaries.

Here I again sense that the problem for the LDS Church may be similar to that faced by the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church teaches that, as the Body of Christ, the Church, *as Church*, is never sinful. A Catholic doctrine known as indefectibility teaches that the church can never be wrong in essentials. A very nice wording of this dogma is that “members of the church hold an abiding confidence, based on the remembered words of the church’s founder, that it is incapable of complete failure in its primary mission of spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ.”²⁷ This is why John Paul II drew a certain amount of criticism for his apologies. He apologized for the acts of “sons and daughters of the church”—but not for the church *per se*. In the case of the LDS apology for Mountain Meadows, critics have noted that the Church issued “an expression of regret” which they see as something different from an apology. And the LDS Church has never, to my knowledge, apologized for the exclusion of black men from the priesthood.

Whether it should do so is a matter I will leave to Mormons; but it illustrates the inherent obstacles once authorities go down the path of apology.

CONCLUSIONS

Where does all of this leave us? Both churches, it seems to me,

²⁶David Morrison, “Sin, Pardon and the Kingdom of a Merciful God,” *Ancient and Future Catholics*, www.ancient-future.net/sin.htm (accessed June 2, 2009).

²⁷Burke Ronald, “The History and Future of Papal Infallibility,” *Center for the Study of Religion and Society* 8, no. 1 (Fall 1996), <http://moses.creighton.edu/CSRS/news/F96.html> (accessed November 30, 2012).

have important tasks ahead of them. In terms of authority, we must continue to define, as carefully as possible, the prerogatives and limits of our leaders—for surely there must be limits for them if they are human beings like the rest of us. It would be very helpful if Church authorities could dispel some of the exaggerated notions and expectations of faithful and critics alike—particularly in regard to the ministry of popes and LDS presidents. Are they limited? If so, how and when?

When *exactly* are the leaders' utterances to be treated as inspired? How do we discern, at any given moment, what truly correct behavior is? And correct teaching? Such precise clarifications may not always be possible; not every eventuality can be foreseen, but it would be very helpful in avoiding a situation where our leaders, and not Christ, are the center of the universe. It would help Church members to avoid what sometimes borders on idolatry in regard to our all-too-human leaders; and it might even remove an intolerable and unnecessary burden from the leaders themselves.

Catholics and Mormons should rejoice in our positive anthropologies, in Mormonism's call to "build Zion," and Catholicism's openness to the kingdom of God; but we should also maintain a realistic attitude toward human frailty and sin. And we should be prepared to leave our ancestors to the mercy of God—whatever their transgressions.

While apologies and statements of regret can be insincere or overdone, we should continue to issue them whenever necessary. We cannot completely control the ways in which our apologies are or are not received, but this is the price we bear for the sinfulness of our brothers and sisters. In the end, we are left with the ancient, and inexplicable, mystery of sin and suffering. In the end, we will always find ourselves alone with our own individual consciences. Most of us, in whatever faith, take pride in our heroes. Catholics celebrate the heroic deaths of the early Roman martyrs; Mormons refer to the "martyrdom" of the Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother, the Patriarch Hyrum. Catholics tell the story of St. Isaac Jogues and the North American martyrs who suffered excruciating tortures in the wilderness of New France and New York; Mormons have never forgotten Haun's Mill, or the mobs that drove their people from Nauvoo.

But if we enjoy our solidarity with those who have preceded us in faith, perhaps it is good and necessary to also hold before our eyes the brothers and sisters who were the persecutors. The result might be a new humility and a salutary reminder that, as correct as our religion

might be, we do not cease to be members of the human race when we are baptized—and neither do any of our leaders. And we who fancy ourselves historians have an added obligation to truth—truth that is not always and immediately “faith enhancing.”

Several years ago, at our MHA conference in Kirtland, Community of Christ President W. Grant McMurray noted that: “Apologists have been guilty of the same shortcomings as the critics, using history, not as a marvelous mosaic of exploration and searching, but as an absolute pathway to eternal truth. In other words, our history becomes our theology, and therein lies great peril.”²⁸

Finally, we must find ways to ritualize our repentance and our hopes for forgiveness. In Catholicism this might take the form of a creative use of the Sacrament of Reconciliation combined with something like John Paul II’s “Memory and Reconciliation.” For the Latter-day Saints, a first step might be something similar to the gathering at which Apostle Henry B. Eyring, speaking for the First Presidency, issued a statement of “profound regret” for what happened at Mountain Meadows, as well as for the ways in which the Paiute Indians “have unjustly borne for too long the principal blame.”²⁹ Such rituals are not enough and are never really complete; but if they are done publicly, in a true spirit of repentance, they may, over time, provide a sense of peace and a testimony for future generations.

Perhaps an honest confrontation of our dark side, made with the help of honest historians, can make us more careful in the way we treat all of God’s children in the centuries to come. We may find, as governments did at Nuremburg that, even in the Church there is a time to say no. That, it seems to me would be a marvelous use of our history.

²⁸W. Grant McMurray, “A ‘Goodly Heritage’ in a Time of Transformation: History and Identity in the Community of Christ,” *Journal of Mormon History* 30, no. 1 (Spring 2004): 65.

²⁹“LDS Church Expresses ‘Regret’ for Mountain Meadows Massacre,” *Sunstone*, Issue 147 (October 2007): 74–75, <https://www.sunstonemagazine.com/wp-content/uploads/sbi/articles/147-74-79.pdf> (accessed November 30, 2012). Elder Eyring was then second counselor in Gordon B. Hinckley’s First Presidency.



Mary Ann Burnham Freeze in 1884. The photographs in this article were supplied by Robin Russell from internet sources.

“IT WAS AWFUL IN ITS MAJESTY”: MARY ANN BURNHAM FREEZE’S 1892 MISSION TO SAN JUAN

Robin Russell

INTRODUCTION

MARY ANN BURNHAM WAS BORN October 12, 1845, in Nauvoo, Illinois, to her very recently widowed mother, Mary Ann Huntly. Just four days previously, Mary’s father, James Lewis Burnham, had died from complications of his work quarrying stone for the Nauvoo Temple. Four months later, on February 6, 1846, her mother became the fourth wife of Joseph Young, an older brother of Brigham Young although he does not figure directly in Mary’s diaries. After five years in Nauvoo, Winter Quarters, Iowa, and eastern Nebraska, Mary arrived in the Salt Lake Valley with her mother and siblings in October 1852. She lived in Bountiful until she was sixteen, then moved to Richmond in Cache County in 1861.¹

Her childhood has been characterized as filled with “poverty and sorrow and suffering.” In her usual self-effacing manner, she said

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¹Mary E. Connelly, “Mary A. Freeze,” *Young Woman’s Journal* 22 (March 1912): 124.

that her “childhood days were not as happy as might have been on account of our exceeding poverty.”² Because her mother needed her help, Mary could often attend school only part-time. Yet even with that hindrance, she received a “good common school education” and “thoroughly enjoyed her school work.”³ She was advanced enough in her learning to become a school teacher in Richmond while still a teenager. Her love of learning and of intellectual matters in general appears throughout her diaries.

The school principal in Richmond was a recent emigrant from Pennsylvania, James Perry Freeze, and they were married March 8, 1863, when Mary was seventeen. They soon moved to Salt Lake City’s Eleventh Ward where James operated a store. He characterized himself in the 1880 census as a “merchant.” Other than two years and three months spent in Logan while her husband was on a mission (and even then with frequent trips back and forth), Mary lived in Salt Lake City’s Eleventh Ward for the rest of her life.⁴

Mary kept her diaries primarily in small account ledgers she got from her husband’s store. The extant diaries cover 1875–78, 1882–84, and 1886–1899, though some of these years are partial because of absent journals.⁵

She bore four sons and four daughters, three of whom died while young—two of them before the first extant diary. Mary became a participant in plural marriage in June 1871 when James married Jane Granter as his second wife. She said: “It tried my spirit to its utmost endurance.”⁶ Yet she is a strong defender of plural marriage throughout her diaries, and her ability to perform her extensive Church, polit-

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Mary Ann Burnham Freeze, Diaries, MSS 993, Box 1, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

⁶Quoted in Augusta Joyce Crocheron, *Representative Women of Deseret: A Book of Biographical Sketches to Accompany the Picture Bearing the Same Title. Comp. and Written by Augusta Joyce Crocheron, and Dedicated to the Originals of This Picture and Book, Their Co-Laborers in the Church and Every True Heart That Will Receive Their Testimonies* (Salt Lake City: Printed by J. C. Graham & Co., 1884), 54.

ical, and social duties, especially the travel, was due, in no small part to this plural marriage family structure. By the time the diaries begin in 1875, she was the first of four wives.

As a somewhat prominent member of the Church and one of its auxiliaries, Mary regularly associated with members of the Church hierarchy. Maureen Ursenbach Beecher uses Augusta Joyce Crocheron's 1884 *Representative Women of Deseret* to correctly place Mary in the second tier of the nineteenth-century Mormon "female hierarchy," primarily because of the position of the Young Ladies organizations in the hierarchical rankings.⁷ However, Mary associates constantly, both ecclesiastically and socially, with the highest tier of the hierarchy, and she often records detailed lists of "many of our leading sisters" and brethren at the meetings and events she attends. Perhaps the strata of the female hierarchy were more fluid than those of the current more-rigid male hierarchy, on which our views of nineteenth-century power and social structure are no doubt based.

The *Young Woman's Journal* praised her: "She took an active interest in . . . the Suffrage Movement and in everything looking to the betterment of her sex."⁸ During the period covered by her diaries, she was president of her ward's Retrenchment Society and the first president of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association of the Salt Lake Stake. She also was an aid to the association's general board. These positions required her to travel extensively, and she seems to have been something of a traveling missionary for the general board. Her diaries recount many of her travels throughout the Salt Lake Valley, along the Wasatch Front, as far south as the San Juan Stake in southeastern Utah and New Mexico, as recounted here,⁹ the Sevier Stake in central Utah, the Uintah Stake in eastern Utah, and north into Cache Valley and southeastern Idaho, among others. Much of

⁷Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, "The 'Leading Sisters': A Female Hierarchy in Nineteenth-Century Mormon Society," in *The New Mormon History: Revisionist Essays on the Past*, edited by D. Michael Quinn (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1992), 153–68, and Crocheron, *Representative Women of Deseret*.

⁸Mary E. Connelly, "Mary A. Freeze," *Young Woman's Journal* 22 (March 1912): 126.

⁹Mary A. Freeze, "Our Visit to San Juan County," *Young Woman's Journal* 11 (August 1892): 515–21. Although the title uses "County," throughout her diary entries, Mary refers to the San Juan "Stake" and her "mission." Ex-

her best and most beautiful writing recounts these “missionary” journeys.

Mary’s primary method of keeping her diaries seems to have been to make notes in small “note books”, one of which survives, and then, to copy the notes in expanded form in the journals. Periodically, she has entered a date and left a space for the entry that remains unrecorded. On Monday, December 28, 1888, she noted: “Have been copying into my diary all day.” In March 23, 1891, she “wrote a letter East & did some copying.” However, when she travels, she seems to write directly into the journals themselves, at least some of the time, thus providing a quite contemporary account. On Friday, April 15, 1892, while she was traveling to San Juan, “I have been picking gum while sister Howard picked flowers. Now ready to start.” On Sunday, May 8, also while traveling in San Juan, she notes:

We came over here to Bp Halls where I am now writing, stayed all night. . . .

Sunday, May 15, 1892. . . . We are 9,000 feet above sea level, . . . had a nice supper & shall retire early, folks now making beds.

In the diary below, the entries include standardized dates and spacing between words. Each day’s entry begins a new paragraph and ends with a period (Mary almost consistently uses periods where we would use commas and vice versa). On-the-line dashes are moved into conventional position when she means them for hyphens, and the few words she has added interlinearly have been moved into the text. Between Wednesday, April 20, and Friday, April 22, she mistakenly gave the day of the week incorrectly but made the correction herself, which is how the entries now appear. Her spelling, other punctuation, and capitalization are unchanged. Even with this editing, my hope is that Mary’s voice will speak unobstructed and as clearly as possible.

Preparation

Wednesday, October 14, 1891. Sister E. B. Wells called to ask me if I could go to the San Juan Stake as a missionary, I told her yes. altho it

cept for more formal language, as befitting an official “report,” the published account follows the diary structure (dates and episodes on those dates). It omits only two entries that appear in the diary, and they are short, personal, and of very little importance to the visit itself. However, as discussed below, there are two exceptions to this correspondence between her private entries and the published account.

was a great trial, to leave baby. I had been talking of & longing to go, yet when it came I shrank from it.

Mary's brothers, Luther and George Burnham, had helped settle northwestern New Mexico beginning in 1881. This was the southeastern corner of the area covered by the San Juan Stake. They and their families lived there at the time of Mary's mission. The town was even called Burnham, New Mexico, and Luther was the bishop at the time of Mary's visit.¹⁰

Thursday, October 15, 1891. Began making preparations to Go that night, but bro, Hammond¹¹ who is to travail with me did not come.

Friday, October 16, 1891. Continued packing altho Bro H. had not come, Went over to see Sister Engberg who is very sick, found her some better, Bro. Wm J. Smith was there, He gave me one of the grandest blessings I ever heard especially for my mission, It will be a comfort to me all the way on my mission.

Mary continued with her usual activities for several more days. Then, nearly a week after their planned departure date, she called on President Hammond to find out when they would finally start:

¹⁰Andrew Jenson, *Encyclopedic History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1941), 100–101. For additional information on the Burnhams in New Mexico, see Frank McNitt, *The Indian Traders* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963).

¹¹It would be difficult to overstate the importance of Francis Asbury Hammond in the history of the colonization of the San Juan. From 1880 to 1886, the Hole-in-the-Rock settlement struggled because the San Juan River's devastating floods made agriculture nearly impossible. In 1886, Hammond visited the community and assured the settlers that they would still be faithful to the mission if they moved up on to White Mesa. Thus, the town of Monticello was first laid out in 1887, and Blanding was founded in 1905. See Robert S. McPherson, *A History of San Juan County: In the Palm of Time* (Salt Lake City: Utah State Historical Society/San Juan County Commission, 1995), 104–7, 226–27, 301, and Andrew Jensen, *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* (Salt Lake City: Andrew Jenson Memorial Association, 1936), 1:135. Hammond's holograph journals describing this mission are housed as MSS 18, Box 6, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

Wednesday, October 21, 1891. Trunk all packed to go to the San Juan Stake as a missionary, Ran up to see Pres, Hammond about the time of starting, He having been detained here so long concluded that it would be the wiser plan to defer the visit of the sisters until next spring. He, with his wife & sister-in-law came & took supper with us and spent the eve We were all much interested in listening to his recitals of his early experiences in the church, He is a fine man, Jane, Lillie & Mary M. Morris also took supper with us.

THE MISSION TO SAN JUAN

Thursday, April 7, 1892. Maggie [Mary's oldest daughter] & I have been shopping and tiresome work it is too, Stopped at Alice's [Mary's second daughter] on the way home, Am preparing for a missionary trip to N. Mexico, but as much as I long to go and see my kindred there it is a terrible cross to go and leave my dear little Bruce [age two and a half] for so long, say nothing of the rest of the family.

Saturday, April 9, 1892. Sister E[lmina]. S[hephard]. Taylor [the YLMIA general president] came up and told me I was to start for N. M. Mon eve. Marion Grier called to see us, did a little sewing to help me off.

Monday, April 11, 1892. Was busy all day preparing to start for San Juan Stake at eve. Ran up to see Alice, over to see Jane & Lillie George went with me to the Depot, & at 10 oclock we, Sister Howard, Pres. Hammond & I started, took a sleeper and went to bed, but we slept very little I put up the blind and the moon shone in on us sweetly all the night, giving light to enable us to see many of the grand sights through the kanyon, arrived at Thomsons Springs about 6.30, Tues, morn.

Tuesday, April 12, 1892. There was no team had come for us, but freight team of Mons Peterson's with Ben Farnsworth as driver. So Pres H, monopolized that, left the freight and took us with bro Jones from Bluff. also bro Thales Haskill, Young B. F. was a good driver and we made our 35 miles in good time, On nearing the Grand [Colorado] River. I was fearful in hearing them consider the probability of fording the River, We had a rough ride down the Grand Kanyon¹² but

¹²This is the "jumping off place" which today is the descent to the entrance of Arches National Park. In the 1850s, it was a twenty-five-foot drop-off that required dismantling and lowering wagons. By 1892, it had been improved but was still very steep. Fawn McConkie Tanner, *The Far*

the sight was grand indeed, We saw all sorts of images & figures¹³ When we reached the river found the ferry boat on our side ready it having been brought over by a party of Mexicans, whom we met, and left, while the owners were out of sight, We drove on and went safely across. The river about as wide as one of our blocks, Were warmly welcomed by bro Mons Peterson. Bp, Stewart came up to see us. Moab is a beautiful little valley.

Wednesday, April 13, 1892. We slept soundly last night, rose early. We held two meetings, had a good turn out & enjoyed freedom in speaking, Were blessed by the brethren & sisters too, . . .

Thursday, April 14, 1892. Were up early getting ready to start to Monticello, Started at 8 o'clock reached camp about 1. p. m. enjoyed our lunch well, picked up specimens of pottery and flints We then drove until 8 p m, and camped for night 30 miles from civilization, It seemed quite lonely for awhile. but we soon had a great campfire blazing up which gave us all the light we wanted and made things all cheerful, We slept in the wagon. Sister Howard & I while bro & sister Hollioak & Pres Hammond & bro Haskell¹⁴ all slept on the ground.

Friday, April 15, 1892. We were stirring at day break after sleeping soundly, got our breakfast had prayers and started out, travelled 15 miles and camped for dinner. It has been quite cold & windy, the good fire was enjoyable also the good lunch, I have been picking gum while sister Howard picked flowers. Now ready to start. arrived at Monticello at 5 p, m, met a warm welcome at Bp. Jones. Today we have passed through some of the most wonderful scenery I ever beheld, One mountain of stone that is called the Church Rock, looks like a great cathedral well & systematically built, even the foundation stone of red, are as distinct as those of any building formed by human hands. All afternoon nearly we were climbing a mountain through a

Country: A Regional History of Moab and LaSal, Utah, 2d ed. (Salt Lake City: Olympus Publishing, 1976), 45, 53.

¹³The Courthouse Wash pictograph panel, now vandalized.

¹⁴Henry Holyoak and Sara Ann Robinson Holyoak, and Thales Hastings Haskell. See Cornelia Adams Perkins, Marian Gardner Nielson, and Lenora Butt Jones, *Saga of San Juan*, 2d ed. (Monticello: San Juan County Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1968), 311. For additional information about the people Mary encounters in Monticello and Bluff, also see pp. 293–342, and Norma Perkins Young, *Anchored Lariats on the San Juan Frontier* (Provo, Utah: Community Press, 1985).

forest of juniper & cedar trees quite romantic. The only thing that troubled me was having to pass by great chunks of gum which looked tempting to me. On the highest point near here we could see hundreds of miles away, over into Col. N. Mexico & Utah. could see the Blue Mountains. the Lasalle, The Rico & Laplata Monticello is grandly situated there could be a fine city built here which will be the case some day, when the rail-road comes through here. We are three hundred and twenty miles from Salt Lake.

Saturday, April 16, 1892. We held R. S in afternoon & P[rimary]. A[ssociation]. in evening, All well attended and the good spirit poured out abundantly, We had great liberty in speaking, The Pres, commended our remarks to all most earnestly. Went to Sister Bailey's to dinner & Sister Foy's to supper. had to refuse several invitations, The sisters all seem to vie with each other as to who can do the most for us.

Sunday, April 17, 1892. Arose early, took a bath had breakfast, then called on the Waltons, then went to meeting at 10. a. m, Pres Hammond occupied most of the time & then we were surprised by being asked to speak a few moments, We went to Sister Adams to dinner, after which we started. on our journey, crossed streams called the North & South Montezuma, stoped at a Ranch called South¹⁵ a short time, Our road lay over some dangerous looking dugways four of them, down and into South Montezuma dugway then down and up Song Kanyon & Devils Kanyon in the latter is some of the loveliest scenery in the world I was filled with awe and wonder which robbed me of fear, Arrived at Camp Alkali about 6, p, m. The men all had a hand in getting supper which was delicious and we were all quite hungry retired early and slept well considering all things.

Monday, April 18, 1892. We arose at daylight took breakfast at 6, a m and were soon on our Journey. on our way we passed by some of

¹⁵The ranch was on the south fork of Montezuma Creek, thus the name "South." It was headquarters of the non-Mormon Carlisle brothers' cattle company called the "L.C." These cattlemen were in constant conflict with the Mormon settlers, adding some perspective on the accidental but fatal shooting of the Monticello Relief Society president, that has Mary anxious about cowboys. The Carlises would be forced out by Mormon cattlemen Al and Jim Scorup and Charles Redd. Donald D. Walker, "The Carlises: Cattle Barons of the Upper Basin," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 32, no. 3 (Summer 1964): 268-84, and Walker's, "Al Scorup: Cattleman of the Canyons," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 32, no. 3 (Summer 1964): 301-20.



Ruins of cliff-dwellers homes, similar to those Mary and her party would have observed.

the ruins of the ancient inhabitants of this land, also about a half a mile from some of the “Cliff Dwellers” old homes, On some of the highest points we could sweep the horizon with our eyes, for hundreds of miles, into Arizona N, M, & Col. Could see the Elk, Henry, Chinchilee¹⁶ & Chuckaluck [Lukachukai] Mountains were visible. but the most awfully sublime of all the sights was saw was the high bluffs on either side as we came down the Cow Kanyon near Bluff City, I was charmed until I forgot myself entirely and how very tired I was. We got to Pres, Hammonds before they were looking for us, but were made first [just?] as welcome for all that, by Sister Hammond and the two daughters, who are lovely girls, As usual the people gathered in to give us welcome, but they did not stay long, and we retired early and slept most excellently on a good spring bed.

¹⁶Mary, or the editor, calls these mountains the “Chilalee” in her published account. But there is no mountain range of that name. She must be referring to Chinle, Arizona.

Tuesday, April 19, 1892. We arose refreshed from our peaceful rest; One of the girls read a chap. from the Book Of Mormon, then prayers and breakfast, Went to Sister Adams to dinner, a most delicious one too. Then meeting which was one of the most heavenly I ever attended, It was difficult for me to restrain my tears, I was melted down by their lovely singing I never heard such hymns sung before. I knew they were a humble good people by the sweet spirit I felt. The Young ladies presided today, it will be the R, S- tomorrow.

Wednesday, April, 20, 1892. We went to Bp Neilson's¹⁷ to dinner which was very good. From there to the R. S. meeting, a good spirit prevailed. all seemed to enjoy themselves. The sisters expressed their great satisfaction in having us meet with them, The Lord blessed us in our efforts, They are a noble band of women in this Bluff ward. We went to Sister Wood's for supper after which we held a joint officer's meeting where many questions were asked and answered, Pres Hammond attends faithfully to all our meetings, he is truly a Father to his Stake. He and his wife go with us everywhere, and are good company.

Thursday, April 21, 1892. We went to Sister Jane Allen's to dinner. She is a most excellent cook and had a delicious dinner, Called on the old lady on our way, enjoyed a look in her Album, When we first started out we called & took a Sister Decker with us and wandered over the graveyard hill were saddened in contemplating the grave of young Barton¹⁸ who was killed by the Indians ten miles west of this place, also the graves of two of Sister Allen's children who died of Dyphtheria, From Sister Allens we went to the Meeting house and held a Woman's Suffrage¹⁹ Meeting and organized a Suffrage Association With Delia Lyman Pres, Martha Hammond first. Mary Jones 2nd

¹⁷Bishop Jens Nielsen. A member of the Hole-in-the-Rock expedition and bishop in Bluff for twenty-six years. McPherson, *A History of San Juan County*, 102, 300; Jensen, *Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia*, 2:203-4.

¹⁸In the published account, Mary adds, "Amasa Barton . . . was killed by the Indians in Rincon, a trading post ten miles west of Bluff. His wife has erected a fine monument at his grave."

¹⁹For an excellent overview of the suffrage movement in Utah during the period covered by Mary's diaries, see Carol Cornwall Madsen, *Battle for the Ballot: Essays on Woman Suffrage in Utah 1870-1896* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1997). See Beverly Beeton, "How the West Was Won for Woman Suffrage," in *One Woman, One Vote: Rediscovering the Woman Suf-*



Mary marveled that this grand arch was “awful in its majesty.”

Miss Am Cayles 3rd vice presidents Harriet Botts sec. C. Hammond Treas Pres. Hammond made a beautiful speech in favor of woman suffrage or equal rights regardless of sex. We went to Sister Mary Jones to supper and enjoyed a nice little visit, after we had been and washed & anointed²⁰ Mary Sorenson (Pres, Hammonds’ daughter) for her confinement.

Friday, April 22, 1892. We Sister Howard and I went and performed the ordinance of Washing and anointing for the Sisters Redd

frage Movement, edited by Marjorie Spruill Wheeler (Troutville, Ore.: Newsage Press, 1995), 99–116.

²⁰Throughout her diaries, Mary repeatedly recounts participating in this and other “sacred ordinances.” Washing, anointing, and blessing women who were approaching childbirth by the laying on of hands was an important part of this “mission” to the women in San Juan. See Linda King Newell, “A Gift Given, A Gift Taken: Washing, Anointing, and Blessing the Sick among Mormon Women,” in *The New Mormon History: Revisionist Essays on the Past*, edited by D. Michael Quinn (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1992), 101–20; her “Gifts of the Spirit: Women’s Share,” in *Sisters in*

who are about to become mothers. From there we went to Sister Celestia Stevens to dinner, we then called on Sister Christensen, a poor lone woman living in a little log hut without a floor, It distress me greatly to see her poor desolate condition—From there we went to the meeting house and held another Suffrage meeting²¹—which was well attended and all seemed pleased, several of the local sisters spoke well, also the bp, and bro, Hammond, From meeting we went to Sister Perkins to an excellent supper, I never saw such kind hearted people before, We have invitations ahead all the time, We spent a pleasant evening. bro, Edwards the Choir-leader was there and sung for us, he is a beautiful singer, reminds me of Evan Stephens, whom he is very anxious to meet, Came home and retired early and slept well.

Saturday, April 23, 1892. We went and washed and annointed Sister Decker, then went to Sister D, Lyman's to dinner and from there to Primary meeting, which we enjoyed very much. After which we attended to three others of our sisters Mary & May Jones & Ida Neilson We then went to Sister Barton's to supper and spent a very pleasant evening hearing singing & playing, The children sang surprisingly, Came home and took a bath and retired.

Sunday, April 24, 1892. Attended S. S. and enjoyed it, Went to Sister Anne Decker's to dinner, then back to meeting, We were asked to speak, After meeting we went to Sister Calista Hammonds to supper, spent the evening there, I shall never forget the kind-hearted saints of Bluff City, nor the grand scenery surrounding them.

Monday. April 25, 1892. We started in company with bro Joseph Barton for Burnham, Our road lay close by the river under high bluffs in some places 250 feet high in which the ancient cliff dwellers had

Spirit: Mormon Women in Historical and Cultural Perspective, edited by Maureen Ursenbach Beecher and Lavina Fielding Anderson (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1987), 111–50; Newell's "The Historical Relationship of Mormon Women and Priesthood," in *Women and Authority: Re-emerging Mormon Feminism*, edited by Maxine Hanks (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1992), 23–48, and Martha Sonntag Bradley, "'Seizing Sacred Space': Women's Engagement in Early Mormonism," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 27, no. 2 (Summer 1994): 70.

²¹In her published account, Mary adds that this meeting was "By request."

built homes that are still standing,²² With the aid of bro. Barton (a large, powerful man) I climbed up into one of them, a difficult task We passed over a long lot of dugways. the most dangerous one was on Corderoy Hill, We camped at McElmo wash, noon at Montezuma Wash a fine camping ground, under large cottonwood trees. Started out at 2. p. m and camped at Cat Peak City, so named from a mountain peak near by, We had supper & prayers and retired early, I did not sleep well thinking of the large number of Indians we passed a few miles back at a trading Post.

Tuesday, April 26, 1892. Arose very early and wrote up my diary. Started out at 6, a m, travelled through beautiful landscapes. passed Marble Was Hill Camped at 10 oclock, took lunch at 11. We breakfasted in Utah and dinner in Colorado on the South side of the snow-capped Ute mountain, then on to the Mancos river, where we fed and rested the horses & cooked supper for ourselves, Started out again at 6, p. m. & travelled til dark camped in a nice little nook with one of these wonderful rock bluffs on either side of us and altho' it was so cold it froze ice & we slept out in the open air we slept soundly til day light, We passed some of the most wonderful scenery it was ever my lot to view, The chimney rock was particularly strange, Also passed a family of Indians with a large flock of Goats & sheep. The Navajo waded the Mancos river and came over to us. a young looking fellow about 20 years old we judged, yet he said he had four wives, and would give a horse for one of us white women.

Wednesday, April 27, 1892. Arose at daylight and started as there was no water for the animals. rode about 10 miles and stopped for breakfast. On our way we got a grand vision of the Cathedral Rock which stands out above the exact image of a magnificent cathedral about 8 or 10 hundred feet high from the surrounding level, Arrived at Burnham at 2. p. m.

²²In the published account, Mary adds, "It is the marvel of all travelers how they were built in such high, unapproachable places, or how the people got in or out of them. The Indians say, 'Maybe they had wings.' With the aid of Brother Joseph Barton (a tall, powerful man) I climbed up into one that was near the ground, though it was a difficult task. Further on we passed a trading post, which was surrounded by Indians, making us rather nervous, although assured that they were entirely peaceable."

Thursday, April 28, 1892. We all went up to bro. George's spent the day and held meeting there at 2. p, m and another in the evening at the School house.

Friday, April 29, 1892. We were invited up to Sister Stevens to dinner, stayed and held meeting in the evening. Found Abba Young there.

Saturday, April 30, 1892. Went up to bro, Georges again took supper there and went to meeting again in the School house, Had many outsiders at each of our meetings there, and enjoyed ourselves very much tho' it was quite a trial for us sisters to speak to the gen-tiles.

Sunday, May 1, 1892. Attended the Fast meeting required of all the saints The branch at Laplata came down, or at least many of them did & joined with the Olio ward. We held meeting nearly four hours, all in the house with one exception spoke A good time was enjoyed, Went to George's to dinner, Sisters Roberts went with us, In the evening, there was another general gathering of saints and sinners, to whom we had to speak I felt free in addressing them, as did Pres. Hammond, Sister Howard & Bishop Burnham my brother, Stayed all night at Georges & most of next day.

Monday, May 2, 1892. Bro & Sister H, came & took dinner with us there. We then went down to Luther's & Geo & Betsy came to supper & spent the evening. Geo. sang, Lu & Ric played, so we had quite a concert, A Mr, Webster was there also.

Tuesday, May 3, 1892. Bro. Hammond started in the morning & we, after dinner with bro. Luther for Laplata, a distance of 14 miles, enjoyed the visit on the way, Drove to niece Amanda Taylor's rested, had supper, then went to meeting at bro Rogers', Pres Hammond and bp. Burnham addressed the meeting.

Wednesday, May 4, 1892. We attended the funeral services over son of bro & Sist Swan a boy 15 years who died the day we arrived, The speaking was excellent. by bro Archie Young, bp, Burnham & Pres, Hammond. It was a sad case they only having one remaining child. At four oclock, we met with the Primary children and the older ones all attended, Was highly interested in hearing the children, We also felt well in speaking to them, After meeting we washed & anointed a young Mrs Taylor, sister-in-law to my niece, From there we went home with bro. Joseph Smith, took supper with them, washed & anointed his wife, who lost her baby last Feb & has been sick ever since. We felt

assured that she would receive a blessing, came home at ten o'clock quite weary, but slept well.

Thursday, May 5, 1892. Attended Fast meeting in the morning which was very good, went to Sister Roberts to dinner, then back to R, S meeting. where another good time was enjoyed There was a Y. L. A. [Young Ladies Mutual Improvement Association] organized at this meeting. with Sister Agnes. E Smith Pres. Nettie Burnham 1st Cou Rose Smith 2nd May Roberts Sec Went to Sister May Rogers to supper, then to wash & anointed Sist Emma Ford.

Friday, May 6, 1892. We rose early and got ready and started for Mancos, breakfast about 20 miles and stopped at Camp Howard, fed the teams and ourselves and started, Arrived in camp about six o'clock, enjoyed our supper & picked pine gum, On our journey today we passed many ruins of the ancient inhabitants either the Nephites or Jaredites,²³ have had many serious reflections concerning them and wondering what their history was. In imagination I could see children playing around the houses & mothers going in and out,²⁴ if I lived down here, would want my house built on the site of one of these ruins. The young man whose wife died at Monticello under such distressing circumstances is camping with us.

Saturday, May 7, 1892. Did not sleep very well altho we had good singing by my bro. Geo, before retiring Arose at daylight, got ready and travelled five miles before breakfast, camped under a lone pine tree about a hundred and twenty feet high. The sighing of the wind through its branches was musical indeed, We were in a grand Kanyon on Cherry Creek, came down a dugway a half mile long which made me feel quite nervous in places. I saw some of the most picture esque [sic] scenery in the world before we left the kanyon we saw the train half way up the mountains going east from Mancos. Another long dugway to go up and down and a few miles on the plain and we arrived at Sister Sarah's in Mancos. I sent the boys to the P. O. and my

²³The party is now on the southern flank of Mesa Verde, so these are Anasazi ruins. By 1892, the Wetherill brothers had been excavating Mesa Verde for over a decade and were preparing an exhibit of artifacts for the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago. Frank McNitt, *Richard Wetherill: Anasazi* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1957). Mary uses terms from the Book of Mormon for ancient American inhabitants.

²⁴In the published account, she adds "in the cheerful performance of their labors of love."

heart was made to rejoice in receiving newsy letters from home, my baby was all right & Callie [Clara, Mary's youngest daughter].

Sunday, May 8, 1892. Did not attend S. S. [Sunday School] as my clothing had been taken further on. Sent my nephew Geo, B. after it. Went to meeting in the afternoon & heard bro. Luther & Pres. Hammond speak. both spoke well There was a noted government official present who seemed greatly impressed with the meeting. After meeting we came over here to Bp Halls where I am now writing, stayed all night.

Monday, May 9, 1892. Attended P[rimary]. A. in the morning & R. S in the afternoon both excellent meetings, felt well in speaking each time. Were invited to dinner at Bro Wm Hyole's. They keep a Restaurant & had a delicious dinner, Sister H. seemed much pleased to see us. She is very homesick at times. having been reared in Salt Lake I felt sorry for her. Went to bro. Soren Jensen's to supper. He came after us & then took us back to Bp. Halls, He came to Zion in a Hand-cart company, lived a month on bread & water when help reached them. Spent the eve at the bishop's, his bro Wm Halls came over as did Hyrum & Clara Taylor, We had an interesting time.

Tuesday, May 10, 1892. Went up to Hyrum's to breakfast, from there to School house where we had a most excellent Y. L. meeting. My nephew Geo. B. said every body in the world ought to have been there, We enjoyed a good degree of liberty in speaking. They have a live association in this Mancos ward, We all, Pres. H. & wife, the Hall's & some others went to bro George's to dinner, after which six of us sisters rode over to see Louie White who is lying very low. I anointed her body & sister Howard blessed her. She has great faith, & is determined to live, While in town we saw the Sherif of Durango with four cowboys²⁵ that he had arrested for shooting in that place the night before, On our way over here coming down a hill. a rope broke that held up one of the single trees. letting it down and the wagon run down against the horse, which is natrually [sic] rather skittish. but he only

²⁵In the April 16 entry of the published account, Mary explains upon arriving in Monticello that it "is the place where the former Relief Society Stake President was shot and killed last July while attending a party, in a row precipitated by some drunken cowboys. It was one of the saddest things I ever heard. . . . There have been other terrible tragedies enacted here, causing much apprehension by the settlers, who are few in number, some twenty families in all."

stood and termbled [sic] while we got out which we did in short order. feeling very grateful that we had been spared what might have been a dreadful accident. Our angels were surely around to quiet the horse and preserve us. We went to John Hammond's to supper & spent the evening He has a beautiful wife & two lovely babies.

Wednesday, May 11, 1892. We went to bro Wm Halls visiting. spent a very jolly day, most of the time listening to sister Howard read in the funniest book I ever saw "Samantha Among The Brethren., 1892."²⁶ Went home with Clara Taylor & stayed all night, felt a little homesick for my baby.

Thursday, May 12, 1892. Went over to sister Sarah Burnhams. stayed til eve, then bros. Geo. nephew Geo, Ric B. & Annie Halls also Amanda & Clara Taylor came back to the bishop's with me & we had quite a little concert, stayed til eleven oclock. I had to do my part & sing Sist H, played the organ.

Friday, May 13, 1892. Bro & sist Hammond Sister Howard. M & H. Halls Sarah B. & Norah Halls & myself. went about 9 miles up the mountain to pay a visit to the R, S. pres, Sister Dunton & dau, Dora Barker, They had an excellent dinner prepared, Several of us led by Dora went out & picked some of the most delicious gum I ever tasted. We started home about four & called to see Louie White, found her much better, On our way from there our double-tree broke, but the horses were gentle & some man came along & tinkered it up, so got home without accident feeling very tired but thankful found a letter from home sweet home.

Saturday, May 14, 1892. Stayed at home all day til towards eve, then went up to Hyrum Taylors & took supper.

Sunday, May 15, 1892. Went to S. S. but there being no one to take charge it was moved by bro, Jensen & carried that bro, Luther preside at & hold a little meeting They got a book to carry the bread on & we enjoyed the Sacrament, Sist Howard & I & bro Luther each occupied a few moments, Bro Jensen dismissed in a feeling manner. After meeting we joined Pres. Hammond & the Halls brothers & started for Monticello, called to see Louie White who is worse again, We enjoyed our ride, which was through a picturesque country, We saw the Montezume valley and the town of Cortez in the distance. farther on we saw the town of Dolores situated on the grand Delores

²⁶See <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/9450/9450-h/9450-h.htm#contents> (accessed October 2010).

river, quite romantic but we passed too near it for peace some times. Travelled til about 9 oclock, went to bed very tired.

Monday, May 16, 1892. Arose bright and early & took breakfast & started out again. Grand scenery today & bro Wm Halls kept us laughing with his comical sayings, This morn we saw our "Cathedral Rock" for the last time they say, We could also see the Ute mount in Colo, the Chuckaluck in Az. & the Blue Mountain in Utah, We camped for dinner in a nice shady spot on the hillside and had a lively discussion on politics,²⁷ We are 9,000 feet above sea level, it takes three quarters of an hour for potatoes to cook. Eve, we have had a windy ride glad to get to camp. had a nice supper & shall retire early, folks now making beds.

Tuesday, May 17, 1892. Rested well last night the coyotes seranaded us last night & this morning Our camp is on Dove Creek, This morn our road led through a romantic belt of timber. We stopped to water the horses at a lovely spring near a deserted cabin, in a little rise near by is an unknown grave with a large flat stone for the head, unlettered. We saw a Coyote in the hills close to the road, Arrived in Monticello at five oclock very tired, laid down & rested awhile took supper & then we actually got ready and went to a party gotton up in honor of the retiring school teacher. a bro. Thomas, there was dancing a picnic. a very enjoyable affair, I danced several times and really enjoyed it, The manner of dancing was as much like we used to dance that I was gratified in matching them. There were several cow-boys present and they behaved like gentlemen.

Wednesday, May 18, 1892. We had a real good meeting, the talk was mostly on the Suffrage question, The brethren spoke excellently, Went to sister Foy's to dinner & bro, Rogerson got a team & took us up to the foot of the Blue Mountains where we had the most beautiful and extensive view to be obtained in all Utah, Went to bro, Ed. Hyde's to supper came back to bro, Walton's and bro, Edwards having arrived from Bluff, we had a little Musicale and retired.

Thursday, May 19, 1892. We started for Moab in company of Bro Walton & daughter a [sic] Katie Perkins, Bp. Jones & bro Thomas on his way home enjoyed the romantic ride through the trees of about three miles, Had an interesting dinner hour & just as we got through

²⁷In the published account, Mary adds, "Brother William Halls interested us by showing what arguments could be adduced in defense of both the Republican and Democratic principles."

the Bluff company came up composed of Bp Neilson. Platt Lyman & wives & bro Edwards with sister Adams & Butts from South Montezuma, Camped for the night close by the Looking Glass Rock a curiosity indeed, We had a jolly time, there were 26 souls of us. Bro Edwards plays the violin excellently we were enchanted listening to him. then we had singing in which I had to take part. Then a hymn and prayers and retired, slept well under a pine tree.

Friday, May 20, 1892. Pres Hammond awoke us early by calling "O, ye camp of Israel, After breakfast we, Sister Hammond, Butts & I started up the Rock, running to go up to where the looking glass was found by a great opening in the solid rock, we climbed about a hundred feet, nearly to the opening and it seemed so steep, that we were afraid of slipping, so turned back. but there was a grand arch, that we sat under and rested, It was awful in its majesty. Some of the horses got away during the night and we had to start out leaving Eugene Walton & some others out hunting their horses. When we passed the awful horse shoe bend, or devil's twist, We got out & walked, cutting off quite a distance picked some beautiful flowers, decorated ourselves with the Suffragists color,²⁸ passed some wonderful scenery on our way, We got into Moab about six o'clock "travel stained & weary" indeed, enjoyed a real good bed at Sister Holyoak's, were warmly welcomed by the whole-souled family, for kindness & hospitality I never knew their superiors.

Saturday, May 21, 1892. The general stake conference began. There was a heavenly influence prevailing from the first. The reports from the several wards were encouraging. In the afternoon Dr Talmage from S. L. charmed every one with his heavenly eloquence. I have never heard anything better from any speaker. Bro Savage was very good also Many strong men wept like little children.

Sunday, May 22, 1892. Conference continued, Dr Talmage occupied all the forenoon beautiful again. Bro. Savage & Cou Halls occupied the afternoon, good again, At 7.30, the Y. L. conference commenced, we went with fearing & trembling. but the Lord blessed us & we had a grand meeting, A partial programme after Sister Howard &

²⁸The color of the woman suffrage movement was gold, or yellow, usually with white but also with a variety of additional colors such as purple. http://www.nwhm.org/online-exhibits/votesforwomen/tour_02-021.html (accessed April 21, 2011). See also National Museum of Women's History, <http://www.museumspot.com/know/suffrage.htm> (accessed April 2011).

I had spoken Dr Talmage Cou. P. Lyman, & C. R. Savage spoke in a very interesting manner, Went to Sist Sarah Stewarts to stay all night, rested well.

Monday, May 23, 1892. Attended R S. conference at 10, a. m, brethren & sisters all felt well & I believe good was accomplished, Dr Talmage & bro Savage waxed sublime on the theme of woman's work & mission, At home on that subject as in all others, At 2, p. m, met with the P. I A [sic] conference, Programme was excellent. Sister Howard gave valuable instruction to the little ones, so did the brethren, held a short officer's meeting for each association, Administered to an old lady Mary Gibbson, In the evening there was a dance gotton up in honor of the missionaries & visitors to conference, I attended & had a most enjoyable time. danced with Pres Hammond. Cou Halls, Bp Halls, brothers Warner, Bailey, Lutz, & Edwards, Took supper at bro Warnes & came back & stayed the remainder of the night.

Wednesday, May 25, 1892. We arose at four oclock at breakfast & started for Thompson's Springs. young Warner driving the team, Rode to Castle Rock and took lunch We were highly amused occasionally by Dr. Talmage & the company of men trying to catch lizards. succeeded in getting some fine specimens, Arrived at Thompson's at 3. p m. & took train for S. L. at 3,35. Had an interesting ride through the Price Kanyon, Castle gate is a grand sight. Bro Savage & Dr Talmage took us all out to supper at a railroad town named Helper and a good meal we had, which we greatly enjoyed, being exceedingly hungry. We arrived home at midnight, seeing no one there to meet us. They hired a hack and brought Sister Howard & I home, She having to come with me, as the cars did not stop at Franklin, Found the folks all up waiting for us. & very glad we were to meet again, after an absence of six weeks and two days, My heart was filled with gratitude, that we had all been preserved to meet again, I had travelled over nine hundred miles and viewed many wonderful sights, came home feeling that I had been greatly privileged & trusting that we had been the means of doing some good, The saints of that San Juan Stake expressed themselves as loth to part with us and hoped we might visit them again, which sentiment was reciprocated by us. They surely have a warm place in our hearts Such kindness as we received at their hands. can never be forgotton.

Thursday, May 26, 1892. My baby did not know me this morning. and he loved Grandma best. It was delightful to meet with all the folks again.

Friday, May 27, 1892. I went down & spent part of the day with sister Myra Mother & Tacy came also.²⁹

Saturday, May 28, 1892. Went to writing up my visit,³⁰ Some friends called.

Sunday, May 29, 1892. Attended meeting in afternoon & eve, heard bro E. J. Woods at the former & Dr Talmage in the latter which I shall never forget.

Monday, May 30, 1892. The folks nearly all gone to Cottonwood & Calders, so I have been writing again, Della Ahlen & L, L, Felt called to see me. Dr [Royal A.] Barney came & took me up to the Cemetery took Bruce with me, he enjoyed it very much.

Tuesday, May 31, 1892. Spent in writing, at 7,30 Geo, & I took supper with the Will See family, after which we attend the last meeting before adjournment of the Y. L. of the 22nd ward The slimmest meeting I have ever seen there, but Nellie C. Taylor M. Y, Dougall & Lillie Freeze each spoke excently [sic].

Wednesday, June 1, 1892. I went & reported myself to Sister Taylor [YLMIA general president], spent two hours pleasantly and I trust profitably, then called at the Store, On my way home took dinner with Alice.

BRIEF CONCLUDING IMPRESSIONS

Though Mary's mission occurred during the last decade of the nineteenth century, life in general, and especially travel in this area of the American West, was difficult and challenging. Cowboys were, like the land they roamed, still wild and dangerous, even lethal, "Indians" still killed "white people," and endless varieties of death were everywhere. Such a journey, of over 900 miles, accomplished primarily in open wagons over daunting wilderness, was, without exaggeration, not just an emotional and physical sacrifice, but a death-defying experience.

²⁹Almira Young Russell, Mary Ann Huntly Burnham Young, and Tacy Conrad.

³⁰This version appeared three months later as "Our Visit to San Juan County," *Young Woman's Journal* 11 (August 1892): 515-21.

As her diary entries show, Mary accomplishes this mission always “looking to the betterment”³¹ of the women she encountered through her Church calling, her activities in the suffrage movement, the blessing and healing rituals, and other activities on their behalf.

In addition to the entries included here, throughout her diaries, Mary recorded many accounts of abundant spiritual gifts, blessings, visions, prophecies, and repeated participation in what she refers to as the “administration” of “sacred ordinances.”³² She was encouraged and enabled in all these activities, as she was on this mission, by the Church’s male hierarchy. From my perspective, this primary account of the position of Mormon women in the 1890s, as in previous decades of the Church’s existence,³³ stands in striking contrast to the position of contemporary Mormon women in relation to Church authority and the current male hierarchy.³⁴

This journey to southeastern Utah and New Mexico, and the many others Mary made, exacerbated by the travels and hardships of her early life, seem to have taken a toll on Mary. Though she lived twenty more years, her diaries recount increasing physical problems to the extent that she asked to be released as president of the Salt Lake Stake Young Ladies’ Association in October 1898. By that time, her diaries had become increasingly fragmented, and they end in 1899.

³¹Connelly, “Mary A. Freeze,” 126.

³²See Mary’s entry for Thursday March 2, 1876, as one good example of many.

³³See Bradley, “Seizing Sacred Space,” and D. Michael Quinn, “Mormon Women Have Had the Priesthood Since 1843,” in *Women and Authority: Re-emerging Mormon Feminism*, edited by Maxine Hanks (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1992), 365–409.

³⁴See, for example, Lavina Fielding Anderson, “The Grammar of Inequity,” in *Women and Authority*, 215–30, Erin R. Silva, “Matricidal Patriarchy: Some Thoughts toward Understanding the Devaluation of Women in the Church,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 27, no. 2 (Summer 1994): 139–55, Grethe Ballif Peterson, “Priesthood and Latter-day Saint Women: Eight Contemporary Definitions,” in *Sisters in Spirit: Mormon Women in Historical and Cultural Perspective*, edited by Maureen Ursenbach Beecher and Lavina Fielding Anderson (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1987), 249–68, and Peggy Fletcher Stack, “Mormon Church Treats Men and Women as Equals? Really?” *Salt Lake Tribune*, April 27, 2011, <http://www.sltrib.com> (accessed April 27, 2011).

Mary died in Salt Lake City on January 21, 1912, at age sixty-seven. President Joseph F. Smith, an orator she often enjoyed and with whom she associated socially, was the main speaker at her funeral.³⁵ Martha Horne Tingey, who also appears frequently in the diaries as Mary's close companion, Mattie Horne, said at Mary's funeral: "I feel to congratulate Sister Freeze that she has at last been permitted to go peacefully to rest. For some months past, she has been feeble. She never complained of being in pain, or suffering, but she was tired; and it was not unusual for her to come into the Young Ladies' office after she had been over to the Temple, and lie down on the couch and rest. She was tired."³⁶

Mary's diaries, and her published account describing this journey, are not just a deeply rich source of information about Mormon women's society in the late nineteenth century. They are a *woman's* history in every sense, and as such, they are *women's* history. Gerda Lerner has written: "Women's history is the primary tool for women's emancipation."³⁷ Mary would love to know that what she had written, and what she had done, especially on this journey to San Juan, contributed to that end.

³⁵Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine: Selections from the Sermons and Writings of Joseph F. Smith, Sixth President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* in Classics of Mormon Literature Series (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1986), 457–63.

³⁶"Address of President Martha H. Tingey. Delivered at the Funeral Services of Sister Mary A. Freeze," *Young Woman's Journal* 22 (March 1912): 133–34.

³⁷Gerda Lerner, http://womenshistory.about.com/cs/quotes/a/gerda_lerner.htm (accessed August 2010).

THE EARLIEST WRITTEN ACCOUNT OF THE MOUNTAIN MEADOWS MASSACRE?

Connell O'Donovan

THE THEODORE SCHROEDER COLLECTION on Mormonism at the Wisconsin Historical Society contains an undated draft of a letter, which may be the earliest written account of the massacre at Mountain Meadows in September 1857. Charlotte Ives Cobb drafted this letter¹ to her married sister in Boston, Mary Elizabeth Cobb Kellogg. Charlotte and Mary Elizabeth were the daughters of Henry Cobb and Augusta Adams Cobb of Boston and Lynn, Massachusetts. Augusta alone of her family was Mormon—baptized and confirmed in Boston in 1832 by Orson Hyde and Samuel H. Smith, Jo-

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¹This complete letter, along with well over a hundred of Augusta Adams Cobb's letters (most written to her second husband, Brigham Young) will be published in (working title) *The Lioness of the Lord: The Life and Letters of Augusta Adams Cobb, Polygamous Wife of Brigham Young* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, forthcoming in 2014). The letter is clearly a draft. It is undated, unsigned, and unfinished; and Charlotte practiced writing the capital letter "N" many times at the top of the sheet of paper.



Charlotte Ives Cobb Godbe Kirby, early 1860s. Courtesy Utah State Historical Society, copyright 2004.

seph Smith's younger brother. In September 1843, Augusta separated from her husband, and left six of her eight children (plus one foster daughter), to accompany Brigham Young when he left his mission in Boston to return to Nauvoo. Immediately upon their arrival at Church headquarters, Augusta was sealed for time and eternity to Young with Joseph Smith officiating, despite not being civilly divorced from husband Henry Cobb. Augusta's infant son died en route to Nauvoo, while her surviving daughter, Charlotte Ives Cobb, born in 1836, was then raised as Young's stepdaughter and migrated with her mother to Utah Territory in 1848, in Brigham Young's second pioneer company.²

Charlotte, considered one of the "reigning belles" of Salt Lake in the 1850s, was somewhat gifted musically and, on at least one occasion, played the piano for dignitaries visiting Young at the Lion and Beehive House compound.³ Charlotte resided upstairs in the Lion House in her own room toward the southwest end of the house, while mother Augusta had two small rooms on the west side of the middle story.

Although the letter draft in question is undated, from the contextual evidence it can be certainly dated between September 15 and 20, 1857, and I believe it was written either on the 19th or 20th. Charlotte reported to her sister, "Capt Vanfleet attended our meeting last Sunday," and then referred to speeches given by John Taylor and

²Charlotte Ives Cobb herself led quite a fascinating life. Her first marriage was as a plural wife of William S. Godbe, and she reportedly was a spiritualist medium for the Godbeite movement. She was also a radical feminist. She politicked relentlessly for years in favor of women's equal rights but was too radical for the more centrist Emmeline B. Wells and was therefore virtually banned from the pages of Wells's *Woman's Exponent*. Still, LDS President John Taylor appointed Charlotte Cobb Godbe to present Utah's petition for women's franchise to the U.S. Congress, the first of its kind. After divorcing the excommunicated Godbe, she married John Adams Kirby, her first cousin once removed, who was a wealthy mine owner and twenty years her junior. Although she never bore children, she and her second husband adopted a male relative to raise. She died in her home in the Avenues of Salt Lake City in 1908. See, for example, Beverly Beeton, "'I Am an American Woman': Charlotte Ives Godbe Kirby," *Journal of the West* 27, no. 2 (April 1988): 13–19.

³"Complimentary Dinner," *Deseret News*, September 9, 1851, 5.

Brigham Young on the same occasion. Captain Stewart Van Vliet, an old friend to the Mormons, had arrived in Salt Lake City on September 8, 1857, bearing a letter from General William S. Harney, ordering the Mormons to supply, by purchase, the Army troops and their animals who were on their way to the territory.⁴ On the 10th, Van Vliet asked Young if he could visit the “domestic workings of the ‘Peculiar Institution’” of polygamy, so Young took him to the Lion and Beehive houses, and introduced the captain to “his numerous family of wives and children.”⁵ It is likely that both Augusta and Charlotte were there to meet the captain. Then on Sunday, September 13, Van Vliet was courteously asked to speak to the gathered Saints at the Bowery during their worship services. John Taylor and Brigham Young also spoke immediately thereafter. Given that Charlotte noted these three men spoke “last Sunday,” the latest she could have written this draft was therefore the following Sunday, September 20.

Below is a partial transcription. Angled brackets contain writing above the line. The most pertinent section is in bold:

* * *

Do not be any way<s> ~~frightened~~ <alarmed> about us dear Sister for we are in the hands of the Lord and He hath said, ~~he will fight the battles of his~~ if his people are faithful **He** will fight their battles. There is no spirit of fear in man woman or child. Gen Harney sent one of his officers ~~on here by the~~ “Capt Vanfleet was his name” on here to see the state of things ~~xxxxxxx~~ [Word is illegible.] in Utah and how the Mormons felt about receiving a <new> Govornor inforced upon them by the point of the baronet [sic]. Capt Vanfleet attended our meeting last Sunday. Br John Taylor addressed the congregat<ion> I will enclose his sermon, not being able to do it justice in report<ing>. Our Gov [Brigham Young] then arose and said “Brethren we have been ~~xxxxx~~ <mobed> and driven time and time again and those that feel as I do would rather lay waste our beautiful City burn our houses destroy every vestage of vegetation take their Wives and children and flee to the Mountai<ns> Then [sic] again be brought to succumb to laws that will persicu<te> us in worshipping God by the dictates of our own consciences [p. 2] our lovely Constitution freely guarenteed that to every

⁴David L. Bigler and Will Bagley, *The Mormon Rebellion: America's First Civil War, 1857-1858* (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 2010), 144-45.

⁵“Captain Stewart Van Vliet,” *Deseret News*, September 16, 1857, 5.

individu<al> and we will never deviate from the Constitution, but we will from those that are continually doing it so, There was then a vote taken to see who would uphold our Gov it was unanam<ous> they would all follow his example. he then beged if there were any who might feel to leave us, that they would now withdraw and if any wished so to do and need picunearny assistance he would help them⁶ as the time was drawing near when **it would be very unsafe for imegration either to or from <this place> on account of the red men of the forest who are very much exasperated and swear vengance on all white men⁷ but Morm<ons> whom they as firmly swear to protect so you see we have str<ong> allies as these Mountains are filled with Warriors—Our Gov has held them in subjection a long time or there would have been far greater number of depredations on the white the emegrants. But when the Lord takes the reins it is time for man to cease control. There was a small company of Gold diggers come through here this summer it seems that for spite or fun they shot at every Indian they saw. the Indians very much incensed collected a large band of warriors to get itse[~~l~~]f ready for the next company which proved to be men women and children, attacked them ~~put the~~**

⁶According to another contemporary account, Young said that Sunday morning: “If it were any use, I would ask whether there is ONE person in this congregation who wants to go to the United States; but I know I should not find any. But I will pledge myself that if there is a man, woman, or child that wants to go back to the States, if they will pay their debts, and not steal anything, they can go; and if they are poor and honest, we will help them to go. That has been my well-known position all the time.” Brigham Young, September 13, 1857, *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (London and Liverpool: LDS Booksellers Depot, 1854–86), 5:230. While Charlotte reported that Young generously said he would financially assist those wishing to leave the territory, this report indicates Young would allow only those to leave who had paid their debts first.

⁷This seems to be a paraphrase of what Young told Van Vliet and other Mormon leaders on the night of September 13 at the home of William H. Hooper: The U.S. government “must stop all emigration across this Continant for Thay Cannot travel in safety the Indians will Kill all that attempt it.” Wilford Woodruff, Journal, September 13, 1857, holograph, MS 1352, Box 3, fd. 1, LDS Church History Library. See also Scott G. Kenney, ed., *Wilford Woodruff's Journal, 1833–1898*, typescript, 9 vols. (Midvale, Utah: Signature Books, 1983–85), September 13, 1857, 5:97.

after perssing [sic; pressing? posing?] the usual question "You Mormon" finding they were not put them all to death. thus it is the inosent has to suffer for the guilty and with <them>. But the band nearest us called the Utahs are very much improved a number of them have adopted our religion⁸ and do not kill the inocent for the guilty near as much though the feelings of revenge are so strong that the Indian nature will sometimes predominate.

* * *

Important points in Charlotte's letter are, first, that two companies traveled through Salt Lake City that summer—the first being a group of "Gold diggers" who shot at every Indian they encountered. The second company was asked if they were Mormons and because they were not, the Indians attacked and put to death all the "men women and children." Brigham Young had, in fact, referred directly to the first group in his September 13 speech at the Bowery, which the *Deseret News* reported that same day. Young said: "I have been told that the first company of packers that went through here this season, on their way from California to the States, shot at every Indian they saw between Carson Valley and Box elder, and what has been the result? Probably scores of persons have been killed, animals have been taken from nearly all the emigrants that have passed on that road . . ."⁹

Young had also written a letter the day before to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, James W. Denver, giving a few more details about this first company:

I learn by report that many of the lives of the emigrants and considerable quantities of property has been taken. This is principally owing to a company of some three or four hundred returning Californians who travelled those roads last spring to the Eastern States, shooting at every indian they could see, a practisce utterly abhorrent to all good people, yet I regret to say one which has been indulged in to a great extent by travellers to and from the Eastern States and California, hence the Indians regard all white men alike their enimies and kill and plunder wherever they can do so with impunity and often the innocent suf-

⁸For example, 120 Utes were baptized LDS on July 27, 1854, in Manti, Utah. See Lillian H. Armstrong Fox, "Sanpete's First Public Institution: The Manti Council House, 1851–1911," *Saga of the Sanpitch* 27 (1995): 34.

⁹"Remarks by Pres. Brigham Young, Bowery, Sunday Afternoon, Sep. 13, 1857," J. V. Long, reporter, *Deseret News*, September 23, 1857, 228–29.

fer for the deeds of the guilty.¹⁰

Thus, Charlotte apparently quoted her stepfather's words verbatim from the *Deseret News* regarding the actions of this large, east-bound company, while also incorporating a paraphrase from Young's letter to Denver about the suffering of the innocent. As Brazilian reconstructive surgeon and scholar of Mormonism Marcello Jun de Oliveira has pointed out, her repetition of "soundbites" from Young indicates that the Mormon discursive response to the massacres was immediately solidifying into cultural memes, which, repeated to Gentiles back east, might begin to dissuade Americans from invading Utah territory.¹¹

Additionally, historian Will Bagley pointed out that Charlotte Cobb was again creating memes of two additional teachings by her stepfather: that the Mormons were divinely destined to be easily victorious, and that there was no need to fear, for God was on their side.¹² This pattern is apparent in Charlotte's assurance to her sister around September 19 ("if his people are faithful He will fight their battles") and Young's comment at the Bowery on September 13 ("if the brethren will have faith, the Lord will fight our battles").¹³ With such divine aid, Charlotte reassured her sister that she need not "be any way <s> frightened <alarmed> about us. . . . There is no spirit of fear in man woman or child" in Utah Territory. Again, this sentence summarizes a quotation from the same Bowery speech by Brigham Young: "[God] will protect his anointed . . . and all we have to do is to do his will; and every man, woman, and child ought to seek to learn the will of God and do it. When that is the case, we need not fear all earth and hell." Thus for the truly faithful Latter-day Saints, fear of their non-Mormon "enemies" (whether in wagon trains or military expeditions) was not an option in that situation, as it clearly represented doubt, disloyalty, and disbelief.

Regarding the second company mentioned in Charlotte's re-

¹⁰Brigham Young, Letter to James W. Denver, September 12, 1857, Second District Court, Criminal Case Files, Series 24291, Box 2, Utah State Archives. I am grateful for Michael Landon's pointing out this letter to me.

¹¹See de Oliveira's comment #16 for O'Donovan, "Mountain Meadows Massacre?" *Juvenile Instructor blog* (accessed December 2, 2012).

¹²Will Bagley, comment #17, *ibid.*

¹³Brigham Young, September 13, 1857, *Journal of Discourses* 5:233.

port, who were annihilated by vengeful Indians, two important questions must be answered. First, could Charlotte Cobb, in Salt Lake City, have known about the September 11 massacre of the Baker-Fancher party in southern Utah by Sunday, September 20? And second, could she have been referring to another company of “emigrants” who were all killed, men, women, and children? The answer to the first is “yes,” while the second is more complicated and demands a “possibly.”

Wilford Woodruff is responsible for the general assumption that Brigham Young and others in Salt Lake City did not find out about the Baker-Fancher tragedy until John D. Lee arrived on September 29 to report their murders by “Indians.” First, Woodruff recorded in his journal that day, “Elder John D. Lee also arived from Harmony with an express and an awful tale of Blood.” Lee had reported: “The Indians . . . killed all Their men about 60 in Number[.] They then rushed into their Carrall & Cut the throats of their women & Children except a some 8 or 10 Children which they brought & sold to the whites.”¹⁴ Nearly forty years later, Woodruff explicitly stated that Lee’s report was indeed the first that Brigham Young had heard of the news of the massacre. In his April 1894 general conference address, Woodruff fully revoked the “law of adoption,” which completely halted the practice of adoptive sealings in LDS temples. He implied that one reason for this momentous change in doctrine and practice was because men like John D. Lee had “electioneer[ed] and labor[ed] with all their power to get men adopted to them,” and Lee in particular had asked “every man he could” to “be adopted to me, and I shall stand at the head of the kingdom, and you will be there with me.” Woodruff then reminded his audience that Lee “was a participator in that horrible scene—the Mountain Meadow massacre.” “Men have tried,” Woodruff continued, “to lay that to President Young. I was with President Young when the massacre was first reported to him. President Young was perfectly horrified at the recital of it, and wept over it.” Young also asked if any white people were involved, and Lee told him that none were.¹⁵ However none of these details are found in Woodruff’s contemporaneous journal account and are highly specious. Young may have wept over Lee’s gruesome

¹⁴Wilford Woodruff, Journal, September 29, 1857, also in Kenney, *Woodruff’s Journal*, 5:103–4.

¹⁵Wilford Woodruff, April 8, 1894, “Law of Adoption” (Arthur Win-

recital, but it was certainly not the “first report” of it he had received.

While Charlotte was correct in noting that the U.S. postal contracts with the Utah Territory had been canceled, the Mormons themselves were now maintaining an extensive express postal system connecting the settlements along the Wasatch Front in the north to the far-flung settlements in central and southern Utah, and on to California, as Charlotte indicated in her letter. The John Hunt family had the contract to run the mail from Cedar City to Salt Lake City, and they likely would have made at least one run to the territorial capital sometime between September 11 and September 29, and thus could have easily carried news of the tragedy. Unfortunately, I have found no diarist in Salt Lake City who noted their arrival during that time period, as they were all either suffering from a persistent illness (like Wilford Woodruff and Judge Elias Smith) or were preoccupied with recording the details of the Mormon militia units who were out near the Sweetwater tracking the movements of and preparing for the arrival of Johnston’s army.¹⁶

Fortunately Indian scout and interpreter Dimick B. Huntington, who worked in the Brigham Young family compound at South Temple and State Street, noted in his journal that news of the massacre reached him in Salt Lake City on Sunday, September 20, from Ute Indian chief Arapeen. (This is also the last possible date on which Charlotte could have penned the draft letter to her sister.) Arapeen was known as a close relative of Chief Walkara of the Timpanogots [sic] band of Utes and succeeded him as chief upon Walkara’s death in 1855; like Walkara, he had also been baptized LDS.¹⁷ Even before Walkara’s death, Arapeen was a frequent correspondent and visitor with Brigham Young in Young’s role as the territorial Superintendent of Indian Affairs. Young had a house built in Manti for Arapeen and his family and came to depend upon both Arapeen’s stabilizing lead-

ter, reporter), *Deseret Evening News*, April 14, 1894, 9.

¹⁶Elias Smith noted in his journal that John Hunt delivered the southern mail on September 1 and then again on September 30. Based on the general frequency of the mail runs from the south, there would have been at least one more (probably several more) postal runs during that busy and important month; Elias Smith journals, 1836–88, September 1 and 30, 1857, MS 1319, reel 1, 101 and 105, LDS Church History Library.

¹⁷James Linforth, ed., *Route from Liverpool to Great Salt Lake Valley, Illustrated, etc.* (Liverpool & London: Franklin D. Richards, 1855), 105.

ership among the Native Americans as his reports to Young about the actions of the various tribes throughout the territory.¹⁸ Charlotte's mention in her letter that the Utes near Salt Lake had "greatly improved" and had been converted could have come to mind as a result of Arapeen's visit that same day. From Huntington, we learn that Arapeen visited Brigham Young and received permission to attack any non-Mormon groups to steal their goods and livestock, although Arapeen apparently was primarily interested in getting a wife. According to Huntington's journal:

Arapene came to see Brigham Brigham told him now was the time to helpt himself to what he wanted [from non-Mormon emigrant trains]¹⁹ but he sayed he was [wants?] a squaw he sayed the Ameri-

¹⁸Although Arapeen could speak some English, he was illiterate. He thus corresponded with Brigham Young through various interpreters. See, for example: Isaac Morley (for Arapeen), Letter to Brigham Young, September 1, 1851; Brigham Young, Letter to Isaac Morley, September 10, 1851; Nelson Higgins (for Arapeen), Letter to Brigham Young, January 21, 1855; Brigham Young, Letter to Arrowpine, March 1, 1856; Brigham Young, Letter to Arrowpine, March 7, 1856; John Eagar (for Arapeen), Letter to Brigham Young, January 5, 1856 [sic; 1857]; and Arropeen (via J. B. Fairbanks), Letter to Brigham Young, November 25, 1857, Brigham Young correspondence, CR 1234/1, Box 17, fds. 21 and 22; Box 22, fds. 9 and 16; Box 24, fd. 3; Box 25, fds. 10 and 15; and Box 26, fd. 22, LDS Church History Library. I am indebted to Will Bagley for his knowledge of Arapeen and his transcriptions of these letters.

¹⁹With the approaching troops, Young had decided to change policy with the local Indian tribes and allow them to maraud any trains passing through on the northern and southern routes to California. For example, Dimick Huntington recorded that Young gave permission to some 1,000 worried natives who had gathered in the Weber Valley to take "all the beef cattle & horses that was on the road to Calafornia, the North rout" on August 31, 1857. The following day, back in Salt Lake City, Huntington and Brigham Young met with several Indian leaders, including Kanosh and Ammon (another brother of Chief Walkara), and they too were given "all the cattle that had gone to Cal. the south rout." When the confused Indians protested that the Mormons "told us not to steal," Huntington and Young told the native leaders that stealing was now justified because the U. S. Army had "come to fight us & you, for when they kill us then they will kill you." The

cans²⁰ had not hurt him & he Did not want to hurt them but if they would only hurt one of his men then he would wake up he told me that the Piedes had Killed the whole of a Emigrant Company & took all of their stock & it was right that was before the news had reached the City.²¹

So after meeting with Young and getting permission to steal goods from non-Mormon wagon trains, Arapeen then told Huntington that the Piedes—the Cedar City band of Paiutes—had killed an entire wagon train and stolen their stock “& it was right” or apparently somehow justified. (John D. Lee deflected culpability onto the Paiutes as well, claiming, for example, that the Baker-Fancher party had poisoned springs that the Paiutes used.) Given Chief Arapeen’s long-standing relationship with Brigham Young and his role as a vital informant, it defies logic that Arapeen told only Huntington and did not give the same news of this massacre to Brigham Young, although Huntington did not record it. Dimick Huntington, however, observed above that this news reached him before it was generally known in the

group still refused to fight the U.S. Army; they would continue to “raise grain” and let the Mormons fight their own battles; Dimick B. Huntington journal, 1857 August–1859 May, August 31, 1857, MS 1419 1, LDS Church History Library.

²⁰At that time, the Mormon people taught the local Native Americans that there were basically three kinds of people on American soil: Lamanites or Indians, (amicable) Saints or “Mormonees,” and (inimical) Gentiles or Americans/“Mericats.” For example, on August 18, 1857, representatives from the Goshutes of Tooele, Utah, visited Young and Huntington, fearful of the coming troops because they were so low on ammunition. Huntington recorded in his diary that he told them “if the troops killed us they would then kill them all, that they & the Mormons was one, but the Lord had throwed the Gentiles away.” Huntington Journal, August 17, 1857. See also Chief Walkara’s reported 1854 statement about “Mericat soldiers” (i.e., U.S. military) and the equation of “Mericat” with “white man” in J. M. Sjodahl, *Introduction to the Study of the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1927), 476–77, as well as John D. Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled: or the Life and Confessions of the Late Mormon Bishop, John D. Lee, etc.* (St. Louis: Bryan, Brand & Company, 1877), 280; and James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Books, 1976), 272.

²¹Huntington, Journal, September 20, 1857.

city on September 29, when Lee arrived with his fabrication of the events. This chronology reveals that Huntington wrote his entry for September 20 about two weeks after the fact, but it remains a reliable and credible source, as the rest of Huntington's journal for that period is consistently accurate. While we do not know for certain that Arapeen's report of the massacre reached Charlotte on the same day, the fact that Dimick Huntington was employed in the Young compound, which included the Lion House where Charlotte was living, makes it quite possible.

To address the possibility that Charlotte Cobb was referring to some other wagon train's tragic fate, we must look carefully at the scant information she does provide. First is the timing. The unnamed murderous train of "Gold diggers" passed through Salt Lake in the summer of 1857, and the ill-fated train followed soon thereafter. We know that the Baker-Fancher parties left Salt Lake City, heading south toward St. George on August 9, which fits well in the given time frame.

Michael N. Landon, a brilliant historian employed at the LDS Church History Library whose knowledge of the overland companies is nearly exhaustive, generously provided me with a brief summation of that summer's trains which passed through Salt Lake (both east- and westbound, since Cobb does not specify their direction) and which were also victims of Indian predation. Except for the Baker-Fancher company, Landon believes that the only other company that fits most, if not all, of the criteria is the Holloway company, led by Smith Holloway of Rockport, Missouri. Their company however was very small, consisting of only nine men and women, plus one child, on the morning of the attack. They had passed through Salt Lake City in the early summer, thus far aligning with the Cobb report, and from there had taken the northern route across what is now Nevada. On the morning of August 14, 1857, they were ambushed by a band of about thirty "Snake" Indians on the banks of the Humboldt River, about thirty miles east of Winnemucca.²²

Six of the ten people were killed, including one woman and the Holloways' infant daughter. In addition, twenty-year-old Nancy Ann Bush Holloway, wife of Smith Holloway, was shot with numerous arrows and one bullet. The attackers prodded her to see if she was alive,

²²"Snake" Indians were the Bannocks and Shoshones who lived in the Snake River valley of southern Idaho and eastern Oregon.

but Mrs. Holloway pretended to be dead and did not move or even make a noise as they sliced her scalp from her head with an arrowhead. Her brother, Jerry Bush, was gravely wounded but survived, and two men escaped without harm. Nancy Holloway's scalp was found near her and was taken with her to California, where it was made into a wig. Although Nancy Ann seemed to recuperate from the trauma, she died in Napa in 1862 at age twenty-five, mentally deranged and "brooding" from her attack.²³

While Charlotte Cobb could have been referring to the Holloway company, their circumstances do not quite fit her description. She seems to imply a larger company than ten and reports that all were killed, when nearly half the Holloway party survived. Also Cobb claimed that those killed included "men women & children" but the Holloway fatalities were four men, one woman, and one child. Lastly, Charlotte claimed that the Indians asked if the migrants were Mormons and based their attack on receiving the negative answer. Landon believes that it would have been extremely unlikely that Bannock or Shoshone Indians near Winnemucca—in fact, that any Indians along the northern route—would have asked such a question. If Indians were, in fact, requiring religious identification of emigrant trains, they would surely have been asking those traveling along the southern route, through central and southern Utah, and then on to Las Vegas, which is the route that the Baker-Fancher party took. Charlotte's account that Indians "put them all [i.e., men, women, and children] to death" seems to echo much more accurately Arapeen's report of a band of Piedes killing "the whole of a Emigrant Company." (Of course Arapeen—and Charlotte?—were wrong, because the Baker-Fancher children aged seven and under were not killed.)

Charlotte Cobb's letter draft is a true treasure of early Utah territorial history. It propagates a concise representation of the charged

²³William Audley Maxwell, *Crossing the Plains: Days of '57* (San Francisco: Sunset Publishing House, 1915), 62–75; and William C. Killums, "Letter from California," September 27, 1857, *Springfield [Missouri] Mirror*, November 21, 1857. Killums was one of the Holloway survivors who escaped unharmed, although he had witnessed the death of his wife, shot through the neck. His first-hand account, written less than two months after it occurred, is a chilling and emotionally jarring narrative. I can find no evidence that the fate of the Holloway company was reported back in Salt Lake City.

atmosphere that pervaded Utah around the time of both the Mountain Meadows Massacre and the U.S. Army's advance toward Mormon communities, from the viewpoint of a young woman in Brigham Young's household—someone both centrally located yet peripherally “unimportant.” Cobb touches on the Mormon sense of isolation and persecution, coupled with fearlessness, faith, and assurance of divine favor. Her quotations and paraphrases of key elements from her stepfather's public and private words indicate how quickly such memes evolved into useful propaganda of innocence and persecution for Mormons to use among themselves as well as to spread to non-Mormons.

Given the scant but intriguing details of Charlotte Ives Cobb's letter to her sister, Mary Elizabeth Cobb Kellogg, in Boston, about a massacre of an emigrant train in the summer of 1857, I conclude that she was very likely referring to the Baker-Fancher massacre in southern Utah on September 7–11, 1857, perpetrated by zealous Mormon militia men and a few local Indians. Although the extremely compact timing is problematic, the evidence shows that Charlotte could have heard about the massacre, if not by the regular northbound mails, at least by Chief Arapeen's report of it to Dimick Huntington on Sunday, September 20—the last possible date which she could have penned the letter draft in question. If Cobb did refer to the Mountain Meadows Massacre, then it is certainly the earliest written account of it found to date, predating Huntington's retroactively dated journal entry by several days, and Wilford Woodruff's journal entry by nine days.

KEEPING A SECRET: FREEMASONRY, POLYGAMY, AND THE NAUVOO RELIEF SOCIETY, 1842–44

Cheryl L. Bruno

THE NAUVOO RELIEF SOCIETY HAD a secret to keep, though it came about quite innocently. When Sarah M. Kimball, her seamstress (Miss Cook), and some neighbors devised a plan to form a Ladies' Society in 1842, the first person they thought of to help with the organization was Eliza R. Snow. This talented writer could easily draft a constitution and bylaws for a society of women desiring to come together to combine means and labor to assist in building the temple and other good works. After she completed the document, Eliza read it to Joseph Smith, who praised her efforts but announced that he had a different order in mind for the women. The Prophet directed Eliza to invite the sisters to “meet me and a few of the brethren in the Masonic Hall over my store next Thursday afternoon, and I will organize the sisters under the priesthood after the pattern of the priesthood.”¹

So began the close connection of the sisters with Freemasonry in Nauvoo. A handbill, prepared under Joseph's signature, set forth

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¹Augusta Joyce Crocheron, “Sarah M. Kimball, Secretary of the LDS

the purpose of the proposed society in terms that already seemed Masonic in conception. "TO THE PUBLIC," it read. "A meeting will be held this Thursday March, 17 at the upper room of the Red Brick Store for the purpose of organizing a Society of benevolent women to aid and give relief in the caring of the poor, the destitute, the widowed and the orphan I am the public's humble serv't. JOSEPH SMITH." The Prophet had taken the sisters' impulse to help build the temple and had given them "something better," expanding it to include the concerns of Freemasonry.² Caring for widows and orphans was a distinctive Masonic concern since Freemasons are symbolically sons of a widow.³

The new women's society and the Nauvoo Masonic Lodge were organized almost simultaneously. On March 15, 1842, Grand Master Abraham Jonas paid an official visit to Nauvoo to preside over the installation of officers of Nauvoo Lodge.⁴ In the evening, the First Degree of Masonry was conferred upon Joseph Smith in his office in the Red Brick Store.⁵ The Second Degree was conferred the next morning, and the Third, or Master Mason's Degree that afternoon.⁶ The following morning, Thursday, March 17, twenty women and three

Women's Organizations," in Crocheron, *Representative Women of Deseret: A Book of Biographical Sketches to Accompany the Picture Bearing the Same Title* (Salt Lake City: J.C. Graham and Co., 1884), 27.

²Reproduction of flyer pictured at "The Minutes to the Very First Relief Society Meeting," LDS Women of God blog, <http://www.ldswomenofgod.com/?p=1013> (accessed August 21, 2012).

³Among other things, this is a subtle reference to Jesus's charge from the cross to his apostle John to care for his widowed mother, Mary.

⁴Several earlier meetings of the Nauvoo Lodge had been held, but these procedures were unauthorized before the bylaws were approved on March 17. Later the minute book was revised to show that the lodge had not received a petition until after that date. Robin L. Carr, *Freemasonry and Nauvoo, 1839-1846* (No city, Ill.: The Masonic Book Club and the Illinois Lodge of Research, 1989), 12-13.

⁵Everett R Turnbull, *The Rise and Progress of Freemasonry in Illinois, 1783-1952* (N.p.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery, 1952), 129.

⁶Joseph Smith et al., *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, edited by B. H. Roberts, 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1902-12), 4:550-51. Here, the Prophet is being "Made a Mason at Sight,"

men met in this same “Masonic Hall” where Joseph Smith had been raised to the Master Mason degree the previous day.⁷ Evidence of the proceedings of that Masonic meeting lay in plain sight—an open Bible with a scrap of paper upon which was penned a Masonic prayer. The Bible is part of the “furniture” of a Masonic Lodge.⁸ At each meeting, a copy of the Bible sits open on the altar. It is called the Great Light of Masonry, or the Volume of Sacred Law. No lodge in any regular Masonic jurisdiction may perform work unless the Bible is open and the square and compasses rest upon it.⁹ The prayer was deemed relevant to the aims of the proposed women’s society as well. It was therefore copied as a frontispiece in a blank book that Willard Richards presented to the ladies to use for the purpose of keeping minutes: “O, Lord! help our widows, and fatherless children! So mote it be. Amen. With the sword, and the word of truth, defend thou them. So mote it be. Amen.”¹⁰

No other organization at the time of Joseph Smith used the phrase “so mote it be.” It was a signal Masonic phrase, derived from

meaning that the traditional waiting period between degrees is foregone, so that the candidate may receive the three degrees in the presence of the Grand Master. Louis L. Williams, *Making a Mason at Sight* (Bloomington: Illinois Lodge of Research, 1983), 8–11.

⁷This upper room in Joseph’s Red Brick Store was used as a lodge room before the Masonic Temple (later “Cultural Hall”) was built.

⁸“Furniture” in this case means the equipment necessary for a lodge to open and work. Joshua Bradley, *Some of the Beauties of Freemasonry* (Rutland, Vt.: Fay & Davison, 1816), 56.

⁹Carl H. Claudy, *Introduction to Freemasonry: I Entered Apprentice* (Morristown, N.J.: The Temple Publishers, 1931), 29. “The Holy Bible, our Great Light in Masonry, is opened upon our altars. Upon it lie the other Great Lights—the Square and the Compasses. Without all three no Masonic lodge can exist, much less open or work. Together with the warrant from the Grand Lodge they are indispensable.”

¹⁰Nauvoo Relief Society Minute Book, 4, <http://josephsmithpapers.org/paperSummary/nauvoo-relief-society-minute-book> (accessed August 4, 2012), hereafter cited as Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes. An example of a contemporary Masonic prayer is found in the Closing Lecture of the Entered Apprentice Degree: “May the blessing of Heaven rest upon us, and all regular Masons, may brotherly love prevail, and every moral and social virtue cement us. So mote it be. Amen.” Jabez Richardson, *Richardson’s Moni-*

the Masonic constitutions.¹¹ Other terms in the prayer used in the lectures on Masonry were “the widows and the fatherless,” a specific responsibility of Freemasons.¹² The “sword” and the “word of truth” were also common in Masonic usage.

The Prophet experimented with other Masonic forms in establishing the women’s society. The March 17 meeting was an installation with three men in charge: Joseph Smith appointed John Taylor as chair and Willard Richards as secretary.¹³ This organizational form echoed the Masonic type, followed since the early lodge meetings in the 1700s, held under a presidency of three.¹⁴ This three-fold leadership was employed throughout Mormonism’s organizational structure and would be used in the Relief Society as well. Emma Smith was ordained president with Sarah M. Cleveland as first counselor, and

of Free-Masonry (New York: Lawrence Fitzgerald, 1860), 18.

¹¹“A Poem of Moral Duties,” or the Regius poem, was written for stonemasons in 1390 and is the oldest identifiable speculative Masonic document. The closing words were: “Amen! Amen! so mote it be! So say we all for charity.” *The Regius Poem: Freemasonry’s Oldest Document* (Silver Spring, Md.: Masonic Service Association, 1987), 27. In modern times, groups derived from Masonry (such as Wicca) have adopted the Masonic invocation: “so mote it be.”

¹²Don Bradley, “‘The Grand Fundamental Principles of Mormonism’: Joseph Smith’s Unfinished Reformation,” *Sunstone* 141 (April 2006): 41 note 31. “In the opening of the Lodge is mention of the widowed and the fatherless, that we may never forget a Mason’s duty to those whose natural protector is no more.” Bradley is citing *Short Talk Bulletin* 12, no. 6 (June 1934).

¹³Masonic adoptive rites require that men be present at any meeting. This was the case for the Relief Society at its organizational meeting through its first year. The men Joseph Smith brought with him did not become Freemasons until several weeks following the meeting, but both men were Melchizedek Priesthood holders. Willard Richards was Joseph’s personal secretary, and John Taylor’s wife, Leonora, was present at the society’s organization.

¹⁴James Burton Robertson, *Lectures on Some Subjects of Modern History and Biography* (Dublin, Ireland: William Bernard Kelly, 1864), 425, http://books.google.com/books?id=K5IBAAAQAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false (accessed April 8, 2013).

Elizabeth Ann Whitney as second counselor.¹⁵

After an opening song, the first order of business was a vote “to know if all are satisfied with each female present: and are willing to acknowledge them in full fellowship, and admit them to the privileges of the Institution about to be formed.”¹⁶ Throughout 1842 and 1843, LDS women were recommended for membership, then investigated to see if they were of good moral character.¹⁷ Next, a vote was taken to assure that all agreed that the proposed members were respectable, virtuous, and trustworthy. This was an additional way that the Relief Society was patterned after a Masonic model. Freemasons in the 1840s, including LDS men in the Nauvoo Masonic Lodge, underwent this same specific process to become members.¹⁸ This method of entering a lodge had been a “landmark of the craft” since 1717. Applicants would first submit a petition to the lodge, along with recommendations from lodge members in good standing. Next, a committee would investigate the proposed member’s character and present a report. Finally, lodge members would vote by secret ballot.¹⁹

Masonic tradition held that the fraternity was of ancient origin. For example, the 1723 Book of Constitutions asserted that Freemasonry was revealed in the Garden of Eden to our first parents and

¹⁵Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, March 17, 1842, 7–8. “[Joseph Smith] propos’d that the Sisters elect a presiding officer to preside over them, and let that presiding officer choose two Counsellors to assist in the duties of her Office—that he would ordain them to preside over the Society—and let them preside just as the Presidency preside over the church.”

¹⁶Ibid., 6.

¹⁷“The Female Relief Society: A Brief Sketch of Its Organization and Workings in the City of Nauvoo, Hancock, CO., Ill.,” *Woman’s Exponent* 1, no. 2 (June 15, 1872): 8. Malcolm C. Duncan, *Duncan’s Masonic Ritual and Monitor*, 3rd ed. (New York: David McKay Co., n.d.), 29.

¹⁸Albert G. Mackey, *A Lexicon of Freemasonry* (London: Richard Griffin and Company, 1860), 31, 87; Mervin B. Hogan, ed., *The Official Minutes of Nauvoo Lodge U.D.* (Des Moines, Iowa: Research Lodge No. 2, 1974), 13.

¹⁹J. Scott, *Pocket Companion and History of Free-Masons, Containing their Origin, Progress, and Present State: An Abstract of Their Laws, Constitutions, Customs, Charges, Orders and Regulations, for the Instruction and Conduct of the Brethren* (London: Printed for J. Scott at the Black-Swan in Duck Lane, 1754), 163.

passed on to their posterity.²⁰ Joseph Smith taught the women that the institution they were forming had “existed in the church anciently. . . . When the Priesthood was taken from the earth, this institution as well as every other appendage to the true order of the church of Jesus Christ on the earth, became extinct, and had never been restored until the time referred to above.”²¹

In the early meetings of the society, Joseph Smith taught the sisters how to build up their organization acceptably and observe its rules. Each candidate should be closely examined; rather than hastily adding members, the society should “grow up by degrees,”²² an echo of the language used to instruct a Fellowcraft that Masonry is a progressive system of morality taught by degrees.²³ Joseph also used Masonic language when he directed that the society should “move according to the ancient Priesthood” and explained that he was going to “make of this Society a kingdom of priests, as in Enoch’s day.”²⁴ In the 1830s, a Freemason would first encounter the concept of priesthood as a part of the Royal Arch Degree, which was considered the summit of authentic “ancient Craft Masonry.”²⁵ The Royal Arch Degree referred to the prophetic work of Enoch, as well as the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthoods.²⁶ In the United States, Royal Arch Masonry also embraced the Heroines of Jericho, a

²⁰James Anderson, *The Constitutions of the Free-Masons* (London: William Hunter, 1723), 1–2, 75.

²¹Eliza R. Snow, “Female Relief Society,” *Deseret News*, April 22, 1868, 81; <http://udn.lib.utah.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/deseretnews6/id/303945> (accessed August 20, 2012).

²²Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, March 30, 1842, 22.

²³See, for example, Daniel Sickels, *The General Ahiman Rezon and Freemason’s Guide* (New York: Masonic Publishing and Manufacturing Co., 1868), 116, www.charlottescottishrite.com/membership/university-of-free-masonry (accessed August 4, 2012).

²⁴Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, March 30, 1842, 22.

²⁵John Fellows, *An Exposition of the Mysteries; Or, Religious Dogmas and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians, Pythagoreans, and Druids. Also: An Inquiry into the Origin, History, and Purport of Freemasonry* (New York: Gould, Banks and Co., 1835), 339.

²⁶See, for example, Thomas Smith Webb, “Observations on the Order of High Priest” in *The Freemason’s Monitor: Or, Illustrations of Masonry*

women's group. Like their male counterparts, members of this concordant body participated in prayer circles, ritually experienced a "heavenly ascent" into the presence of a Grand Court or Council, and symbolically achieved exaltation.²⁷

Contrary to recent claims,²⁸ Joseph's organization of a women's society founded upon principles of priesthood and Freemasonry was not completely original. In the 1790s, Hannah Mather Crocker, daughter of the well-known ministerial Mather family of Massachusetts, formed "a regular lodge" which was claimed to be "founded on the original principles of true ancient Masonry, so far as was consistent for the female character." Developed from a nucleus of a number of women studying ancient languages, this women's lodge received encouragement from a few Masons in good standing, but "gave umbrage" to many others. Crocker's pamphlets on Freemasonry and women's intellectual capacity were published in the 1810s.²⁹ Shortly thereafter, "adoptive rites" of Masonry,³⁰ sponsored by regular

in Two Parts (New York: Cushing & Appleton, 1808), 284–89, 177–80.

²⁷*Book of the Scarlet Line: Heroines of Jericho* (Richmond, Va.: Macoy Publishing, 1948), 84 (exaltation of sister); 124–25 (prayer circle/ascent from earthly to heavenly court); Charles T. McClenachan, *The Book of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry* (New York: Masonic Publishing and Manufacturing, 1868), 86, 145–64; J.W.S. Mitchell, *History of Freemasonry and Masonic Digest*, Part 2 (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: American Publishing House, 1858), 397–98.

²⁸Samuel Morris Brown, *In Heaven as It Is on Earth: Joseph Smith and the Early Mormon Conquest of Death* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 188, incorrectly states that the inclusion of women was a "rank heresy for American Masons." Clyde R. Forsberg Jr., *Equal Rites: The Book of Mormon, Masonry, Gender, and American Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 96, wrongly asserts that Mormonism was the first adoptive ritual of its kind in the United States.

²⁹Steven C. Bullock, *Revolutionary Brotherhood: Freemasonry and the Transformation of the American Social Order, 1730–1840* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 160–61.

³⁰Robert Macoy, *Adoptive Rite Ritual*, rev. ed. (Richmond, Va.: Macoy Publishing and Masonic Supply, 1998) 10. An adoptive rite is one sponsored by a regular Masonic body. Women who are related by blood or mar-

Masonic bodies, became well established in the United States.³¹ By 1826, adoptive orders associated with the Royal Arch Degree were already known in Batavia, New York.³² There was an impulse to recognize and involve women in legitimate Masonic activities. Freemasons held dear the familial link, which they believed would last beyond death.³³

By the eleventh meeting of the Relief Society, three months after its founding, the Prophet was still instructing the women that no woman should be admitted to membership without “presenting regular petitions signed by two or three members in good standing.”³⁴ But the Nauvoo Masonic Lodge was initiating, passing and raising Masons at a prodigious rate,³⁵ and Joseph was no longer concerned about how fast the women’s society increased, “as long as they were virtuous” and were not using the society as a shelter for iniquity.³⁶ As the Nauvoo Lodge and the Relief Society grew, it became evident that

riage to Master Masons in good standing are entitled to Masonic relief, respect, and attention from the entire fraternity. Adoptive rites grew up around the need for such women to make themselves known. “The ladies were said to have been adopted into the Masonic communion, because the forms, ceremonies and lectures referred to enabled them to express their wishes and give satisfactory evidence of their claims, in a manner that no stranger to the Masonic family could.”

³¹Precursors to adoptive rites appeared in Great Britain as early as 1765. See “A Sister Mason,” *Women’s Masonry, or Masonry by Adoption: Explaining the Making of a Masoness, with the Form and Furniture of the Lodge* (London: D. Hookham, 1765), 1–18.

³²Henry Wilson Coil, *Coil’s Masonic Encyclopedia*, rev. ed. (Richmond, Va.: Macoy Publishing & Masonic Supply, 1995), 13b. See also <http://www.oocities.org/widowsonpha/HOJHistory-1.html> and <http://fatima.hoj420.tripod.com/history.htm> (accessed August 4, 2012). The first printed exposure of the Heroine of Jericho degree was Avery Allyn, *A Ritual of Freemasonry* (New York: William Gowans, 1831), 172–77.

³³Henry Andrew Francken, *The Francken Manuscript, [of] 1783*, typescript (Kila, Mont.: Kessinger Publishing, 1993), 141, 153.

³⁴Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, June 9, 1842, 61.

³⁵Mervin B. Hogan, *The Official Minutes of Nauvoo Lodge U.D.* (Des Moines, Iowa: Research Lodge No. 2), 1–111.

³⁶Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, June 9, 1842, 61.

there was one area where Joseph Smith was likely to deviate slightly from the Masonic method of admitting members—the balloting process. In Freemasonry in the United States, balloting had to be unanimous, and one vote against the petitioner would disqualify him for membership.³⁷ Balloting was strictly regulated so that every member had a chance to blackball, or object to, a candidate. Often a second tally was taken to validate the results. But after this step, the decision was firmly respected and members were not pressed to reconsider their ballot. In a report given before the Grand Lodge of Illinois while investigating irregularities at Nauvoo Lodge, Jonathan Nye called the Masonic system of balloting “one of the inalienable rights of our time-honored institution. Should a member,” he said, “reject a worthy applicant out of private pique or malice, the wrong is his own, and to his God alone is he accountable. And better far is it in the estimation of your committee that worthy applicants should be rejected time and again, than that the sacredness of the ballot-box should be invaded.”³⁸

The Grand Lodge of Illinois censured the Nauvoo Lodge for balloting on more than one applicant at a time. Additionally, the lodge received an individual of doubtful character on a promise of reformation and restitution, “with the view of holding his future conduct in check and making him a worthier and better man.”³⁹

The Relief Society resembled Freemasonry in several key points. When it differed, it was in the same way that the Nauvoo Lodge differed from the other Masonic lodges in the state. Neither the Relief Society nor the Nauvoo Lodge strictly respected the balloting procedure at all times, but some Relief Society divergences occurred because of Joseph’s intervention, in appealing to the sisters to be merciful in allowing certain sisters to join. For example, when it blackballed Mahala Overton for unspecified objections, Joseph addressed the sisters on June 9, 1842. “Respecting the reception of Sis. Overton,” the minutes state, “Prest. Smith [said] It grieves me that there is no fuller fellowship—if one member suffer all feel it—by union

³⁷Henry Wilson Coil, *Coil’s Masonic Encyclopedia*, rev. ed. (Richmond, Va.: Macoy Publishing & Masonic Supply, 1995), 87a.

³⁸Jonathan Nye, “Report of the Committee of Investigation,” *Reprint of the Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Illinois, 1840–1850 Inclusive* (Freeport, Ill: Journal Print, 1892), 1842: 70–71.

³⁹*Ibid.*, 1842:71.

of feeling we obtain pow'r with God. Christ said he came to call sinners to repentance and save them."⁴⁰

Despite Joseph Smith's enthusiasm for establishing a Masonically inspired female lodge via the Relief Society, as a general rule Americans frowned on involving women in Masonry. Many felt that secret societies would lead to women's corruption.⁴¹ Especially feared was the possibility that Masons might covertly accept women into their nighttime meetings.⁴² Spurious Masonic lodges were rumored to exist which inducted women into Masonic degrees based on sexual favors they were expected to provide. For example, Cagliostro's Egyptian rite was said to include female Masonic consorts known as "doves."⁴³ John C. Bennett in his later exposés claimed that Nauvoo

⁴⁰Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, June 9, 1842, 61–62.

⁴¹Oliver H. Olney, *The Absurdities of Mormonism Portrayed: A Brief Sketch* (Hancock Co., Ill.: n.pub., March 3, 1843), 11, <http://www.olivercowdery.com/smithhome/1840s/1843Olny.htm> (accessed April 8, 2013). Olney said that a number of moves were made to establish polygamy, but nothing prevailed "until they got a wise master Free Mason [Jonathan Nye] to come and establish a lodge amongst them. That he accordingly did, in the beginning of 1842. That a general gathering to them ensued—that they for months, took in three a day, and are a taking in yet. Also establishing lodges in the branches of the Church out. This master Mason instructed them in many good things, such as there was some few degrees of Masonry for the fair sex of the land. That such encouraged the Mormon sisters. They soon came together and formed a lodge . . . received many instructions, in their daily moves, by the authorities of the Church, got their society organized. . . . They continued their meetings from time to time, until it was made known to them, that had been regular members, that there was certain degrees of Masonry for them to receive."

⁴²Steven C. Bullock, *Revolutionary Brotherhood: Freemasonry and the Transformation of the American Social Order, 1730–1840* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 181. "‘Were women to be admitted to our Lodges,’ the Reverend brother Ezra Ripley of Concord, Massachusetts, pointed out in 1802, ‘though they should be pure, as angels are, they could not avoid infamous charges from the envious and uncharitable world abroad.’"

⁴³Lance S. Owens, "Joseph Smith and Kabbalah: The Occult Connection," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 27, no. 3 (Fall 1994): 172.

women were involved in these kinds of ritual orders.⁴⁴ Such claims were greatly exaggerated, capitalizing on fears that secret societies concealed immoral practices.

Emma Smith did all she could to combat this perception. One of the Relief Society's stated goals was "correcting the morals and strengthening the virtues of the female community,"⁴⁵ though Emma's and Joseph's views were different on how this was to be done. For instance, tensions surrounding the investigation and balloting process in the Relief Society can best be seen in light of their disagreement concerning the Prophet's practice of plural marriage. Each seemed determined to use the Relief Society to promulgate their views. From the beginning, Emma Smith apparently considered the society an opportunity to oppose her husband's teachings about plu-

Owens cites Timothy O'Neill, "The Grand Copt," *Gnosis: A Journal of the Western Inner Traditions* 24 (Summer 1992): 28; and Massimo Introvigne, "Arcana Arcanorum: Cagliostro's Legacy in Contemporary Magical Movements," *Szyrgy: Journal of Alternative Religion and Culture* 1 (Spring/Summer 1992): 117–35. Others describe Cagliostro's Egyptian rite as a spurious androgynous society where initiates assumed a "new name" in connection with the Order. Males were called by the names of Old Testament prophets, and women by the names of the sybils. In the master's degree, a young girl in a state of innocence, was called a "dove" and was given the power to communicate with spiritual beings. See Henry R. Evans, *Cagliostro and His Egyptian Rite of Freemasonry* (Lafayette, La.: Cornerstone Book, 2003), 33, http://books.google.com/books?id=Tq-tPM6Y6D4C&pg=PA33&clpg=PA33&dq=cagliostro+doves&source=bl&ots=6F8vk7S9tE&sig=-IUF9nathrZEBPq1XK5RiGn5_qk&hl=en&sa=X&ei=i55kUZD4HYKtiQKYooGwAw&ved=0CEcQ6AEwDjgK#v=onepage&q=cagliostro%20doves&f=false (accessed April 10, 2013).

⁴⁴John Cook Bennett, *The History of the Saints: Or, An Exposé of Joe Smith and Mormonism* (Boston: Leland and Whiting, 1842), 220, http://books.google.com/books?id=WGUoAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA220&clpg=PA220&dq=bennett+relief+society+cyprian+saints&source=bl&ots=Q9nEp61k4l&sig=VA__AchZFDMLG-NZAdS4WD5ThEg&hl=en&sa=X&ei=gJloUemHL8qXiALiNg&ved=0CE0Q6AEwBA#v=onepage&q=bennett%20relief%20society%20cyprian%20saints&f=false (accessed April 12, 2013).

⁴⁵Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, March 17, 1842, 7.

ral marriage.⁴⁶ But in the two years between June 1842 and July 1844, the group's key officers and founding members were taught and began to practice "celestial marriage," many becoming Joseph's plural wives. He most likely informed them about his quite different aims for the Relief Society; and whatever their inner conflicts, they kept the secret from Emma. Meanwhile, reports in local newspapers accused the Mormon Prophet of "introducing a new order or degree of Masonry." According to John C. Bennett, in Joseph's "Order Lodge," he revised a Masonic oath of chastity to these words: "I furthermore promise and swear, that I will never touch a daughter of Adam *unless she is given me of the Lord.*"⁴⁷

One of the many plural wives and members of the Relief Society who "was given to [Joseph] by the Lord" was Agnes Coolbrith Smith, the widow of his late brother, Don Carlos. The marriage took place some months before the founding of the Relief Society. Brigham Young wrote about this event in his journal in Masonic code. Deciphered, it read: "I was taken in to the lodge J Smith *was* Agness." The abbreviation "*was*," according to Todd Compton, means "wedded and sealed."⁴⁸ Though Emma might have known about Joseph's predilections, she probably did not realize how far this new order of marriage had extended. One of Emma's first actions as president of the Relief Society was to initiate an investigation into "scandalous falsehoods" being spread by a young woman named Clarissa Marvel about Joseph Smith's purported indiscretions with Agnes Coolbrith. Though Agnes herself testified that "Clarissa Marvel had liv'd with

⁴⁶Minutes of General [Women's] Meeting, July 17, 1880, in "R.S. Reports," *Woman's Exponent* 9, no. 7 (September 1, 1880): 53-54; and Valeen Tippetts Avery, "Emma, Joseph, and the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo: Unsuspected Arena for a Power Struggle," Paper presented at Mormon History Association annual meeting, Rexburg, Idaho, May 2, 1981, 1-12; type-script copy of her address, Collections, Merrill-Cazier Library, Utah State University, USU 316 Box 34, fd 8.

⁴⁷"The Difficulties at Nauvoo—the Other Side of the Story—John C. Bennett—"Spiritual Wives,' &c. &c.," *Quincy Whig*, July 16, 1842, <http://www.sidneyrigdon.com/dbroadhu/IL/whig1842.htm> (accessed August 4, 2012).

⁴⁸Brigham Young, Diary, January 6, 1842, quoted in Todd Compton, *In Sacred Loneliness: The Plural Wives of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2001), 153-54.

her nearly a year [and that] she had seen nothing amiss of her," Emma begged the society to "adopt some plan to bring her to repentance."⁴⁹ Emma could not have been aware that Joseph's plural wife Louisa Beaman, as well as Heber C. Kimball's wife Vilate and plural wife Sarah Peake Noon were all privy to the law of celestial marriage. Their sealings had been performed in the very room where the women were meeting.⁵⁰

The next meeting of the Relief Society on March 30, 1842, began with "the house full to overflowing," as sisters gathered to observe the power struggle between the Prophet and his wife. Joseph commended the sisters for their zeal but cautioned that "sometimes their zeal was not according to knowledge." He also warned that though one of the stated purposes for the society was to purge out iniquity, "they must be extremely careful in all their examinations or the consequences would be serious."⁵¹

After Joseph finished his remarks and left the meeting, Emma ignored his cautions and continued full steam ahead with the Clarissa Marvel investigation. Numerous ladies spoke up to defend her, and so it was decided to send some rather reluctant sisters out to question Clarissa's accusers.⁵² Three days later, Clarissa signed the following statement: "This is to certify that I never have at any time or place, seen or heard anything improper or unvirtuous in the conduct or conversation of either President Smith or Mrs. Agnes Smith. . . . I never have reported any thing derogatory to the characters of either of them."⁵³ Emma had won the day, but thereafter she noticed that the "disagreeable business of searching out those that were iniquitous" had now fallen solely on her.⁵⁴

As the power struggle between Emma and Joseph intensified, the Prophet called upon the principles of Masonry to exhort the sisters. Masonic writer Joshua Bradley proclaimed, "Whoever would be

⁴⁹Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, March 24, 1842, 17.

⁵⁰Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, March 17, 1842, 17–18; Linda King Newell and Valeen Tippetts Avery, *Mormon Enigma: Emma Hale Smith*, 2d ed. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 108–9.

⁵¹Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, March 30, 1842, 22.

⁵²*Ibid.*, 23.

⁵³*Ibid.*, quoting letter by Clarissa Marvel dated April 2, 1842, 89.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, April 14, 1842, 26.

a Mason, should know how to practice all the private virtues. . . . [T]he virtue indispensably requisite in a Mason, is *secrecy*. This is the guard of their confidence, and the security of their trust.”⁵⁵ Joseph Smith understood and taught that “the secret of Masonry is to keep a secret.”⁵⁶ Brigham Young likewise averred that “the main part of Masonry is to keep a secret.”⁵⁷

Joseph continued his efforts of “institutionalizing secrecy”⁵⁸ in an epistle signed by himself as president of the Church, Brigham Young as president of the Twelve, and four other men. Emma was asked to read this statement aloud to the sisters. The letter ostensibly warned the sisters to beware of “unprincipled men” who were teaching precepts “contrary to the old established morals and virtues” without the Prophet’s sanction. The letter does not name these “iniquitous characters” because “there may be some among you who are not sufficiently skill’d in Masonry as to keep a secret.”⁵⁹ This phrase reveals Joseph’s design of using the Relief Society to instruct the sisters in his version of Masonry, maintain a semi-autonomous female lodge, and retain a loyal following that would support his teachings. Not mentioning the names of the accused allowed Joseph to protect Church leaders who were teaching a sanctioned form of plural marriage, while appeasing Emma’s concerns by apparently condemning John C. Bennett’s spiritual wifery. “Let this Epistle be had as a private matter in your Society,” Joseph concluded, “and we shall learn

⁵⁵Joshua Bradley, *Some of the Beauties of Freemasonry* (Rutland, Vt.: Fay & Davison, 1816), 149, 151; also available online at <http://books.google.com/books?id=TysiAAAAMAAJ&pg=PA151&dq=#v=onepage&q&f=false> (accessed April 10, 2013).

⁵⁶Joseph Fielding Smith, comp. and ed., *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (1938; rpt., Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976), 329.

⁵⁷Brigham Young quoted in Scott G. Kenney, ed., *Wilford Woodruff’s Journal, 1833–1898*, typescript, 9 vols. (Midvale, Utah: Signature Books, 1983–85), January 22, 1860, 5:418.

⁵⁸Kent L. Walgren, “James Adams: Early Springfield Mormon and Freemason,” *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 75, no. 2 (Summer 1982): 131.

⁵⁹Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, March 30, 1842, 87. Joseph Smith wrote this letter to the sisters on March 30, 1842, but it was inserted into the minute book following the minutes of September 28, 1842.

whether you are good Masons.”⁶⁰

With this epistle, Joseph began to employ a method of communicating that allowed him to denounce adultery and other moral transgressions and simultaneously promote plural marriage among those who were part of the inner circle. He did this by using phrases such as “the commandments of God in all things,” “every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord,” and “the responsibilities that we conferred upon you.” Later he would employ such code words as “true and divine order,” “new and everlasting covenant,” or even simply “blessings” which initiates would understand to mean plural marriage.⁶¹

An awareness of the secret practice of polygamy, which underlay many of Joseph’s discourses to the Relief Society, and the Masonic structure used to protect this secret illuminates the Prophet’s teachings. For example, on April 28, 1842, he spoke of delivering “keys” both to the society and to the elders. According to the minutes, “the keys of the kingdom are about to be given to them, that they may be able to detect every thing false.”⁶² A few days later, on May 1, 1842, he preached in a Sunday sermon in the temple grove that there were “certain signs and words by which false spirits and personages may be detected from true, which cannot be revealed to the Elders till the Temple is completed. . . . There are signs . . . Elders must know . . . to be endowed with power, to finish their work, and prevent imposi-

⁶⁰Ibid., March 30, 1842, 88.

⁶¹“An 1886 article in the *Deseret News* detailed specific code words and the rationale for their use. ‘When assailed by their enemies and accused of practicing things which were really not countenanced in the Church, they were justified in denying these imputations and at the same time avoiding the avowal of such doctrine as were not yet intended for the world. . . . Polygamy, in the ordinary and Asiatic sense of the term never was and is not now a tenet of the Latter-day Saints. That which Joseph and Hyrum denounced . . . was altogether different to the order of *celestial marriage*, including a *plurality of wives*. . . . Joseph and Hyrum were consistent in their action against the *false doctrines of polygamy* and *spiritual wifeism*, instigated by the devil and advocated by men who did not comprehend sound doctrine nor the purity of the *celestial marriage* which God revealed for the holiest of purposes.’” Quoted in Newell and Avery, *Mormon Enigma*, 113; emphasis in original.

⁶²Nauvoo Relief Society Minute Book, April 28, 1842, 37–38.

tion.”⁶³ In Freemasonry, the term “keys” was a code word alluding to Masonry’s secrets. Keys of detection were hand-grips by which one could “tell another in the dark as well as in the light.”⁶⁴ Further instruction from the Prophet expanded on this Masonic practice: “If an Angel or spirit appears offer him your hand; if he is a spirit from God he will stand still and not offer you his hand. If from the Devil he will either shrink back from you or offer his hand, which if he does you will feel nothing, but be deceived.”⁶⁵

“I now turn the key to you in the name of God,” Joseph told the sisters on April 28, “and this Society shall rejoice and knowledge and intelligence shall flow down from this time.”⁶⁶ According to a revelation on September 22, 1832, Joseph Smith had described “keys” as being connected with the mysteries of the kingdom, the knowledge of God, and the ordinances of the priesthood.⁶⁷ The keys to the spiritual blessings of the Church, he wrote in a revelation recorded about April 1835, gave the bearers “the privilege of receiving the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, to have the heavens opened unto them, to commune with the general assembly and church of the Firstborn, and to enjoy the communion and presence of God” (D&C 107:19). Masonic secrets which were hidden in the heart both concealed and revealed; they were keys of power that could bring a candidate into God’s presence. “Turning the key” to the Relief Society was equivalent to giving the women independent, symbolic power to open the heavens and associate with Deity.

From indications in Joseph’s history, Emma became aware of

⁶³Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, eds., *Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of Joseph* (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1981), 20 note 21.

⁶⁴Richardson, *Richardson’s Monitor of Free-Masonry*, 13.

⁶⁵Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 44.

⁶⁶Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, April 28, 1842, 40.

⁶⁷D&C 84:19–22: “And this greater priesthood administereth the gospel and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God. Therefore, in the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is manifest. And without the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh; For without this no man can see the face of God, even the Father, and live.”

the extent of her husband's involvement in plural marriage on April 29, 1842.⁶⁸ One of Emma's biographers has speculated that this knowledge may be why no Relief Society meeting was held the following week, and why Emma was absent at the second.⁶⁹ But the wrestle for control continued as Joseph kept cautioning the sisters against intolerance and Emma kept denouncing plural marriage. "There is another error which opens a door for the adversary to enter," Joseph chided on May 26. "As females possess refin'd feelings and sensitivenes[s], they are also subject to an overmuch zeal which must ever prove dangerous, and cause them to be rigid in a religious capacity—[they] should be arm'd with mercy notwithstanding the iniquity among us." Then, he gave "one request to the Prest. and Society, that you search yourselves—the tongue is an unruly member—hold your tongues about things of no moment,—a little tale will set the world on fire."⁷⁰ The fact that he included Emma directly amounted to an order for her to hold her tongue.

In Masonic tradition, keys of silence are associated with the tongue. They are kept "in a box of coral which opens and shuts only with ivory keys." The tongue is to be obedient to reason and to speak well of others in their absence as well as in their presence.⁷¹ Joseph was, in the Masonic sense, telling Emma to be circumspect about things that she might genuinely know. "At this time the truth on the guilty should not be told openly—Strange as this may seem, yet this is policy." Emma responded by observing that "sin must not be covered," the guilty "must reform," and that "she wanted none in this So-

⁶⁸"The History of Joseph Smith" records that on Friday, April 29, 1842, "a conspiracy against the peace of my family was made manifest, and it gave me some trouble to counteract the design of certain base individuals, and restore peace. The Lord makes manifest to me many things, which it is not wisdom for me to make public." *Millennial Star* 19, no. 25 (June 20, 1857): 390, <http://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/MStar/id/2993/rec/19> (accessed April 12, 2013).

⁶⁹Avery, "Emma, Joseph, and the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo," 5.

⁷⁰Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, May 26, 1842, 52.

⁷¹Albert Gallatin Mackey and William James Hughan, *An Encyclopedia of Freemasonry and Its Kindred Sciences* (New York: Masonic History Company, 1913), 1:394b.

ciety who had violated the laws of virtue.”⁷²

Through public exchanges such as this, and private observations made by Joseph and others, it is apparent that Emma continued to struggle with the doctrine of celestial plural marriage. So much wrangling was occurring over the “immoral character” of some of the sisters who were being considered for membership that the Relief Society began to flounder. The Prophet attempted to buoy the women’s spirits by prophesying the blessings of the endowment. When they saw this work rolling on, he said, “and the kingdom increasing and spreading from sea to sea; we will rejoice that we were not overcome by these foolish things.”⁷³

Since May, he had been giving washings, anointings, endowments, and keys of the priesthood to a select group of the Masonic brethren. According to Heber C. Kimball, Joseph explained that “masonry [sic] was taken from presthood [sic] but has become degenerated.”⁷⁴ The Masonic experience of the brethren had prepared them for this greater blessing, and the endowment was a millennial restoration of an “authentic” Masonry. Joseph’s prophecy to the sisters indicates that he initially intended for them to also receive the endowment. That is, he intended for the Relief Society to be the vehicle through which they would receive this ordinance. According to Reynolds Cahoon, who addressed the women in mid-August, there was no doubt “but this Society is raisd [sic] by the Lord to prepare us for the great blessings which are for us in the House of the Lord in the Temple.”⁷⁵

The Relief Society minutes on September 28, 1842, record that the meeting was adjourned “sine die,” or for an indefinite period of time. The society would not meet again for nine months.⁷⁶ Meetings resumed on June 16, 1843, but Emma did not attend any meetings held that year, though she remained presidentess in name. Emma was

⁷²Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, May 26, 1842, 51–53.

⁷³Ibid., August 31, 1842, 82.

⁷⁴Heber C. Kimball, quoted in Devery S. Anderson and Gary James Bergera, eds., *Joseph Smith’s Quorum of the Anointed, 1842–1845: A Documentary History* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2005), xxii; see also xxii note 23.

⁷⁵Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, August 13, 1843, 110.

⁷⁶Ibid., September 28, 1842, 85, 90.

grappling with a difficult issue. Joseph had finally confronted her with the fact that polygamy was an essential part of the social order of the kingdom of God. Despite severe misgivings, she relented long enough to be sealed to Joseph in the Holy Order and, in turn, selected four young women to be sealed to Joseph in her presence.⁷⁷ Meanwhile, the Relief Society went from a vibrant, growing organization to one which quickly diminished in membership. At the end of July 1843, Elizabeth Ann Whitney commented that she “regretted that so few were met” and “hoped the meetings might not be discontinued.”⁷⁸ The fourteenth meeting, held that year on October 14, 1843, included the proposal to meet the following Thursday, but the meetings were indeed suspended. Two weeks earlier on September 28, 1843, the first LDS woman had received her own endowments and been admitted into the Quorum of the Anointed. That woman was Emma Smith.⁷⁹

Though Emma never attended Relief Society in 1843, she actively administered the washing, anointing, and sealing ordinances to her sisters through the rest of 1843 and the beginning of 1844. It appears that Joseph had transferred his hopes for an androgynous ritual to the Quorum of the Anointed. Nevertheless, Susa Young Gates, a daughter of Brigham Young, later wrote: “The privileges and powers outlined by the Prophet in those first meetings [of the Relief Society] have never been granted to women in full even yet.”⁸⁰

On two successive Saturdays in March of 1843, Emma staged a dramatic repossession of the Relief Society. John C. Bennett had been accused of teaching a “spiritual wife system,” and Hyrum Smith had been slandered by a Mr. Bostwick,⁸¹ exciting the indignation of the majority of the Saints, who were unaware that polygamy was being practiced and promoted by the Prophet. In response, W. W. Phelps composed a 1200-word statement titled “The Voice of Innocence,” which

⁷⁷These young wives were Emily and Eliza Partridge (who had already been secretly married to Joseph) and Maria and Catherine Lawrence. See Anderson and Bergera, *Joseph Smith’s Quorum of the Anointed*, xxvii note 42.

⁷⁸Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, July 28, 1843, 100.

⁷⁹Anderson and Bergera, *Joseph Smith’s Quorum of the Anointed*, xxviii.

⁸⁰Susa Young Gates, “The Open Door for Woman,” *Young Woman’s Journal* 16, no. 2 (March 1905): 117.

⁸¹Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, March 16, 1844, 125, 124.

was read and approved on March 7 at a general meeting of priesthood leaders and “about eight thousand” members of the Church.⁸² Emma appropriated this statement and called for the female Relief Society to “resume its meetings.”⁸³ On the morning and afternoon of March 9, and on the morning and afternoon of March 16, Emma read the document and called for a vote of those “willing to receive the principles of virtue, keep the commandments of God, and uphold the Presidentess in putting [down] iniquity.” The vote was unanimous.⁸⁴

Though Emma was making a strong public stand against polygamy, she did it in a way that she must have thought was supportive of her husband. Emma “exhorted [the sisters] to follow the teachings of Presidet J Smith [sic]” as he spoke them “*from the Stand*,” and “when he Preaches against vice to take heed to it; he meant what he said.” She called for “a reformation in boath [sic] men & women.” At the final Saturday session, Emma announced her intention to examine the conduct of the leaders of the Relief Society and to present officers when a place could be found that was large enough for all the sisters to gather together; for, she said, “if their [sic] ever was any authourity [sic] on the Earth she had it—and had [it] yet.”⁸⁵ The Relief Society never met again in Nauvoo. John Taylor later explained, “The reason why the Relief Society did not continue . . . was that Emma Smith . . . taught the Sisters that the principles of Celestial Marriage as taught and practiced was not of God.”⁸⁶

The secret of the Relief Society—polygamy—was becoming more

⁸²“Virtue Will Triumph,” *Nauvoo Neighbor*, March 20, 1844, 187.

⁸³Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, March 9, 1844, 123.

⁸⁴“Virtue Will Triumph,” 187.

⁸⁵Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, March 16, 1844, 126; emphasis mine.

⁸⁶John Taylor, Statement, June 29, 1881, quoted in Avery, “Emma, Joseph, and the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo,” 12. At another meeting he elaborated: “I think that some of those circumstances should be known. Sister Emma got severely tried in her mind about the doctrine of Plural Marriage and she made use of the position she held to try to pervert the minds of the sisters in relation to that doctrine. She tried to influence my first wife and to make her believe the revelation was not correct.” John Taylor, Statement at General Women’s Meeting held in Fourteenth Ward Assembly Hall, July 17, 1880, *Woman’s Exponent* 9, no. 7 (September 1, 1880): 55–56,

widely known in the larger community. Less than four months later, Joseph and Hyrum Smith were killed at Carthage, Illinois. Even following the martyrdom, small groups of women continued to meet in homes, where they encouraged and blessed each other, often exercising spiritual gifts such as speaking in tongues. An excerpt from Zina Diantha Huntington Jacobs's journal less than three months after the final Relief Society meeting provides an intriguing glimpse into a possible direction taken by the sisterly impulse for communion: "June 1844 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. Went with Henres [sic] uncles family uppon [sic] the hill. From this day I understand the Kinsmans degree of freemasonry. My husband, being a Master Mason, attended meeting. Hiram Smith spoke exceeding well also re[a]d a revelation."⁸⁷ (Henry Jacobs, her husband, had received degrees on August 8, 9, and 10, 1842.⁸⁸) On June 18, she penned: "I went to the Masonic hall with the sisters."

She does not describe the activities they engaged in, but the Heroines of Jericho was a Masonic women's rite associated with the Royal Arch Degree in three degrees: the Master Mason's Daughter, the True Kinsman's Degree, and The Heroine of Jericho Degree.⁸⁹ The statement that "from this day I understand the Kinsmans degree" suggests that Zina had received this Masonic degree offered to the close female relatives of Royal Arch Masons. In addition to Henry Jacob's status as a Master Mason, Zina had been sealed to Joseph Smith, another Master Mason. Her father, William Huntington, and brothers William and Dimick had been raised to the degree of Master Mason in the Nauvoo Lodge in April and May of 1842, while a third brother, Oliver, attained the same degree two years later, on June 3, 1844.⁹⁰ Years later in 1878, Zina declared her personal connection with Masonry in protesting federal anti-polygamy campaigns at a

<http://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/cdm/compoundobjectcollection/WomansExp/id/7688/rec/199> (accessed April 25, 2013).

⁸⁷Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, ed., "All Things Move in Order in the City: The Nauvoo Diary of Zina Diantha Huntington Jacobs," *BYU Studies* 19, no. 3 (Spring 1979): 5.

⁸⁸Hogan, *The Official Minutes of Nauvoo Lodge U.D.*, 49.

⁸⁹*Book of the Scarlet Line*, v; Coil, *Coil's Masonic Encyclopedia*, 13b; see also <http://www.oocities.org/widowsonpha/HOJHistory-1.html> and <http://fatimahoj420.tripod.com/history.htm> (accessed April 15, 2013).

⁹⁰Hogan, *The Official Minutes of Nauvoo Lodge U.D.*, 48, 64; Oliver B.

mass meeting: "I am the daughter of a Master Mason! I am the widow of a Master Mason, who, when leaping from the windows of Carthage jail, pierced with bullets, made the Masonic sign of distress. . . . I wish my voice could be heard by the whole brotherhood of Masons throughout our proud land. That institution I honor. If its principles were practiced and strictly adhered to, would there be a trespass upon virtue? No indeed. Would the honorable wife or daughter be intruded on with impunity? Nay verily."⁹¹

When Zina proudly announced that she was the daughter of a Master Mason, could she have been hinting at her participation in the first degree of adoptive Masonry: "The Master Mason's Daughter?" As such, she would have been entitled to respect and relief from "the whole brotherhood of Masons throughout [the] land."

Another possible member of an adoptive rite in Nauvoo was Sarah DeArmon Pea Rich, the wife of future apostle Charles C. Rich. A cryptic handwritten note by an unknown author dated April 24, 1906, states: "The Masonic Temple in the City of Nauvoo was Dedicated April 6th 1844. CC Rich was a member of the Lodge. [H]is wife took Degree allowed to Women."⁹² Finally, in 1892, Bathsheba W. Smith, widow of George A. Smith, provided sworn testimony that she had received one or two Masonic side degrees in the Nauvoo Lodge after Joseph Smith's death.⁹³

As the Saints moved west, connections with Freemasonry became strained. Typically, the brothers remained loyal to their fraternal ties but felt betrayed because Illinois Freemasons had been among the assassins who killed Joseph and Hyrum. Church leaders

Huntington, Diary, 1842-1900, typescript, 48, LDS Church History Library.

⁹¹Zina D. H. Young, "Woman's Mass Meeting, Salt Lake Theater, November 16, 1878," *Woman's Exponent* 7 (December 1, 1878): 98. Although Zina did not say so in this speech, her third husband, Brigham Young, was also a Master Mason, one of the first group to be raised in the Nauvoo Lodge on April 9, 1842. See Hogan, *The Official Minutes of Nauvoo Lodge U.D.*, 52.

⁹²The Masonic Lodge in Nauvoo was actually dedicated on April 5, 1844. Charles Coulson Rich, untitled statement, MS 889, Box 3, fd. 22, LDS Church History Library. The date of April 24, 1906, is written on the bottom right-hand corner.

⁹³*The Temple Lot Case* (Independence, Mo.: Price Publishing Company, 2003), 360.

disagreed about whether Mormon Masons should establish a lodge in Utah. Likewise, women felt conflicted about their Relief Society connections. They met in groups to organize and carry out charitable projects, but the organization did not receive official sanction until 1866. On November 13, 1868, the last explicit link between Freemasonry and the Relief Society occurred with an almost mystical echo of times past. Sarah M. Granger Kimball, who in Nauvoo had, with her seamstress, first conceived the idea of organizing the Mormon ladies' association and was later president for decades of the Relief Society in Salt Lake City's Fifteenth Ward, dedicated "the first Relief Society building erected in this dispensation" in Salt Lake City. "A silver trowel and mallet were furnished me," she recalled, and the public services included the assistance of "a Master Mason" while "I had the honor of laying the corner stone."⁹⁴ The trowel and mallet were significant emblems of the Freemasons. The trowel symbolically spread the cement of charity⁹⁵ or brotherly love and affection among Masons, while the mallet corrected vices and irregularities and created uniformity within their society.⁹⁶

Although the Relief Society minutes have become widely avail-

⁹⁴Crocheron, "Sarah M. Kimball," 27. Mary Walker Morris remembers the occasion as follows: "I remember when the [Fifteenth Ward] Relief Society built their new hall how proud I felt to give a bonnet of my own making as my donation. It was of rice straw and trimmed with blue, if I remember rightly, but I know it was sold and the money applied as I had intended. I saw our beloved President, Sister Sarah M. [Melissa Granger] Kimball lay the South-east stone of the edifice, with a silver trowel. Ours, the Fifteenth Ward Relief Society Hall, was the first to be built in this dispensation, and Sister Sarah M. Kimball the first, or one of the first, to speak of erecting a Women's Building." Melissa Lambert Milewski, ed., *Before the Manifesto: The Life Writings of Mary Lois Walker Morris* (Logan: USU Press Publications, 2007), Book 38, http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/usupress_pubs/38 (accessed August 20, 2012).

⁹⁵"The Trowel . . . [is used for] spreading the cement . . . of Charity. . . Without the uniting power of charity or brotherly love, the social fabric cannot hold together. And therefore the highest place is assigned to this grace in the scheme of religion as that to which all the other graces lead. . . Charity never faileth." Chalmers Izett Paton, *Freemasonry, Its Symbolism, Religious Nature, and Law of Perfection* (London: Reeves and Turner, 1873), 100, 101.

⁹⁶Augustus Row, *Masonic Biography and Dictionary* (Philadelphia: J. B.

able on the internet through the Joseph Smith Papers project, there seems to be an impulse to maintain the secrets that were created in Nauvoo. In the still-Victorian society which existed in the 1840s, the time was not right for Joseph Smith to publicly announce the practice of plural marriage. In an effort to avoid conflict, it was a sacred secret which had to be kept until the LDS kingdom of God was established more firmly in faraway Utah. It is not surprising that the Prophet used the institution of Freemasonry to craft a society where women could associate with others to whom the secret principle of celestial marriage had been revealed. Joseph had been exposed to the Masonic institution since childhood. Not only was his family immersed in its legend and traditions, but the culture of Masonry thoroughly suffused the greater society in which the Prophet was raised. Freemasonry placed a high value on discretion, and was well structured to keep esoteric secrets; Joseph Smith made good use of this model in Nauvoo.

Much can be learned about early Mormonism and its Prophet by studying the Nauvoo Relief Society and his instructions to those women selected to participate. But without knowing about the society's connection with the twin components of plural marriage and Freemasonry, one cannot entirely appreciate the purposes for which the Relief Society was initially conceived and constructed. In fact, without this particular key, it is impossible to understand why the organization was discontinued in early 1844, or to unlock why there are significant differences in the post-1868 Relief Society reorganization.

“SAVIORS ON MOUNT ZION”: MORMON SACRAMENTALISM, MORTALITY, AND THE BAPTISM FOR THE DEAD

Ryan G. Tobler

WHEN SEYMOUR BRUNSON DIED, they gave him a soldier’s funeral. Thousands of Mormons in the Illinois town of Nauvoo, growing fast on the Mississippi River, turned out on August 10, 1840, trailing Brunson’s corpse in a procession that stretched out a mile long. They came to mourn a patriot and protector: Brunson had fought as a boy of fourteen in the War of 1812. Later, he joined the Mormon Church and served as a captain in the Mormons’ own militia, guarding against the depredations of Missouri mobs. When the Saints relocated to Illinois, Brunson acted as a bodyguard to the Mormon Prophet Joseph Smith and as a member of the city’s ecclesiastical high council.

Ironically, however, it was illness that caused Brunson’s death. After purchasing and surveying the area in 1839, the Mormons in Nauvoo were still just settling in. “Commerce,” as the city had previously been called, provided a “resting place” for the Saints after the Missouri conflicts, a sense of rest that was captured in its new Hebrew name, “Nauvoo.”¹ But it was also a sickly place. The marshy riverfront constantly bred malaria and other diseases, and scores of inhabitants

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¹Glen M. Leonard, *Nauvoo: A Place of Peace, A People of Promise* (Salt



Frederick Piercy, "View from the River" (steel engraving) from James Linforth, ed., Route from Liverpool to Great Salt Lake Valley, Illustrated with Steel Engravings and Wood Cuts from Sketches Made by Frederick Piercy . . . (Liverpool: Franklin D. Richards, 1855), PH 324 Item 14, LDS Church History Library. Frederick Piercy passed through Nauvoo in 1853 en route to Salt Lake. He made several sketches of Nauvoo that were later rendered as steel engravings and woodcuts and published in 1855. The Mississippi River at Nauvoo was the original site for baptisms for the dead.

fell ill.² The summer of 1840 had been especially deadly; Mormon families throughout the city had suffered casualties, and news from the town often came as a catalogue of loss. "There has been rizing of fifty Deaths," wrote one alarmed mother, hoping that a new influx of settlers would "help build up the place," and make it less morbid.³ Journals and diaries reflect the ordeals of fevers, sweats, and chills, attributed to everything from "swamp fever" and cholera to

Lake City: Deseret Book/Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 2002), 57–59.

²Robert Bruce Flanders, *Nauvoo: Kingdom on the Mississippi* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1965), 50–54.

³Vilate Kimball, Letter to Heber C. Kimball, September 6, 1840, MS 3276, LDS Church History Library.

“the ague.” Citizens looked on helplessly as family members were confined to their sickbeds, sometimes vomiting, sometimes shaking violently. As part of an era of mortality, Mormons asked that God would shield them and their loved ones from the indiscriminate threat of illness. “Look upon us O Lord in this time of need,” prayed one, “and help us . . . for thou alone art able to deliver from the grasp of death.”⁴

Although still robust at age forty, Seymour Brunson went out one evening to drive away some stray cattle and caught cold, which led to something more serious, and then to his untimely death. When Brunson finally succumbed, lying in a sickbed in Joseph Smith’s home, he was put to rest with full military honors. Indeed, at the moment of his passing, some said that the spirits of his comrades, fallen Mormon soldiers, came to “waft him home.”⁵ To the Saints, the death of a hardy soul like Brunson was unsettling; it was one of those occasions, as the Mormon Prophet Joseph Smith later put it, through which “we have again the warning voice sounded in our midst which shows the uncertainty of human life.”⁶

Considering the experiences of early Latter-day Saints, like those in Nauvoo, scholars have long debated the appeal and potency of Mormonism, wondering why it resonated so deeply with many early Americans, and why the concepts at its core have been (and are) so attractive and enduring. Many explanations have been proffered for Mormonism’s essential power in the nineteenth century, including the solutions it provided for contemporary “sectarian divisions, republican contradictions, nascent capitalism, social dislocation, and a quest for authority.”⁷ Most recently, scholarship has added critical insights about how Mormonism’s central principles offered early adherents powerful spiritual and cultural resources to confront the

⁴John Smith, Journal, September 16, 1840, MS 1326, LDS Church History Library.

⁵Heber C. Kimball, Letter to John Taylor, November 9, 1840, LDS Church History Library. See also Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, eds., *The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1980; rpt., Orem, Utah: Grandin Book, 1991), 49.

⁶Ehat and Cook, *The Words of Joseph Smith*, 106.

⁷Richard Lyman Bushman, “Joseph Smith and the Creation of the Sacred,” in *Joseph Smith Jr.: Reappraisals after Two Centuries*, edited by Reid L. Neilson and Terryl L. Givens (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 94.

menace of human death. Indeed, apprehension and fear of mortality represent one of the most relentless problems of human life, a problem that early Mormons often found close at hand. As scholars have recently shown, however, rather than being terrorized by mortality, Mormons in the mid-nineteenth century fought back, mounting an aggressive “conquest of death” that challenged the oppressive power of mortality. The religious doctrines and rituals they came to embrace ensured that neither salvation nor relationships were endangered when death came.⁸

Studying the unique performance of saving rituals or “sacraments” among early Mormons highlights yet another dimension of Mormonism’s appeal. As the faith matured in the late 1830s and early 1840s, saving ordinances came to assume an increasing and unusual importance. These rituals offered Mormons a way of living their faith different from that common in American Protestantism; confronted with premature and unexpected death, for instance, Mormon “baptism for the dead” gave adherents not only solace and hope, but ability and saving power. Through this new religious sacrament, ordinary people were deputized as agents of salvation, empowered by their physical bodies to help mitigate death’s effects upon their fellow beings. Indeed, the rich theological innovations of the Nauvoo period taught Mormons that they were not only akin to God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ, but also joint laborers with him. In partnership with the divine Savior, Mormon people were not only embryonic gods, but also vital aides, or “saviors,” in the work of human redemption.

BAPTISM FOR THE DEAD

Joseph Smith spent much of his time in early Nauvoo visiting and laying hands on those, like Brunson, who were ill and ailing. His house, at times, overflowed with the sick.⁹ Disease in 1839 was so prevalent that he had to reassure the Saints that it was not a sign of

⁸The fullest expression of this line of thought about the significance of human death to the development of early Mormonism is Samuel Morris Brown, *On Heaven As It Is on Earth: Joseph Smith and the Early Mormon Conquest of Death* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

⁹“It was a very sickly time and Joseph had given up his home in Commerce to the sick, and had a tent pitched in his dooryard and was living in that himself. The large number of Saints who had been driven out of Mis-

God's displeasure but came upon all people naturally "by reason of the weakness of the flesh."¹⁰ His journal charted the outbreak and recession of sickness in the community, and he was often called on to speak at the funerals of those who passed on.¹¹ And indeed, funerals in Nauvoo became the occasion for many of the Prophet's most radical and profound teachings. With their dead before them, Mormons were subdued and thoughtful, receptive to whatever consolation their prophet could offer. And appropriately, in Nauvoo Smith became an orator, adopting the habit of speaking frequently to large assemblies of people, often in the open air. The precepts about God, human life, and saving sacraments that Smith gave at these liminal moments first rattled the windows, then blew off the door of Christian orthodoxy.

Initially, the eulogy that Smith gave for Seymour Brunson in 1840 seemed like a standard Christian homily. Turning to a common text, Smith took up Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians and preached the transcendence of the Christian resurrection.¹² He affirmed Paul's testimony that the redemptive power of Jesus Christ would ultimately conquer the great and last enemy of death. But then he went further. Observing the widow Jane Neyman among his listeners,

souri, were flocking into Commerce; but had not homes to go into, and were living in wagons, in tents, and on the ground." Wilford Woodruff, *Leaves from My Journal* (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor Office, 1882), 62.

¹⁰Dean C. Jessee, Mark Ashurst-McGee, and Richard L. Jensen, eds., *Journals, Vol. 1: 1832-1839*, Vol. 1 of the Journals series of THE JOSEPH SMITH PAPERS, general editors Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman (Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2008), 352-53.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 348-53.

¹²No direct account of Joseph Smith's discourse after Brunson's death exists; the contours of the event are reconstructed from recollections and correspondence. Jane Neyman left an account recorded in the Church Historian's office in Salt Lake City in 1854 in company with Vienna Jacques. It is catalogued with the Joseph Smith History Documents, ca. 1839-60, CR 100 396, LDS Church History Library. Simon Baker, who likewise attended the sermon, also gave a later account that was incorporated into the Journal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (a chronological scrapbook of typed entries and newspaper clippings, 1830-present), August 15, 1840, CR 100 137, LDS Church History Library. See also Lewis Brunson, "Short Sketch of Seymour Brunson, Sr.," *Nauvoo Journal* 4 (1992): 3-4.

Smith changed course, weaving her tragic story into the discourse. He told the audience about her son—who had also died, but had sadly not been baptized—and drew their attention to a fearful dilemma. If Christian baptism and discipleship were necessary for salvation, as they believed, then what about those who had not received them? Seymour Brunson seemed safely confirmed in the faith. But what about this young boy, who had died even more prematurely? And what of his bereft mother? The redemption of Christ was indeed great and consoling, but how could it assuage the grief of this good woman? Were there no “glad tidings” in the Christian gospel for her?

With a radically innovative reading of scripture, Smith assured the audience that indeed, the solace of Christianity extended even to this apparently dire circumstance. In fact, evidence of this could be found, he taught, in the very same Pauline epistle. Pointing them to the fifteenth chapter and its cryptic twenty-ninth verse, he read: “Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?”

It was an obscure and puzzling passage, one with which America’s most learned pastors and ministers routinely tussled. As they struggled to square the verse with their own senses of orthodoxy, Christian exegetes gave a wide spectrum of interpretations.¹³ Despite the literalism of the period, most concurred that a direct reading—one that somehow sanctioned some sort of ritual for the deceased—was inadmissibly bizarre. Indeed, some commentators sternly condemned this explanation, insisting that had such a thing ever existed

¹³Christian newspapers and exegetical journals in Bible-breathing America published a steady stream of analyses of this verse and the idea of “baptism for the dead” throughout the nineteenth century. See, for instance, “Baptism for the Dead,” *Gospel Herald* (New York), January 28, 1823; “Baptism for the Dead,” *Christian Intelligencer and Eastern Chronicle* (Portland, Maine), June 26, 1829, 102; “Baptism for the Dead,” *Episcopal Watchman* (Hartford, Conn.), January 9, 1830; “Baptism for the Dead,” *Christian Observer* (Louisville, Ky.), December 12, 1845, 197; S[amuel] W. Whitney, “Baptism for the Dead,” *Christian Review* (Boston, Mass.) 68 (April 1852): 296–302; Arthur Wilde Little, “Baptism for the Dead—Its Bearing upon the Resurrection,” *American Church Review* (New York) 44, no. 155 (October 1884): 162–75.

“it was a superstition . . . wholly unauthorized by the word of God.”¹⁴ Others assured their readers that such speculation could be easily put to rest: one could, in other words, “very properly [set] aside . . . all attempts to explain the passage by inventing customs which did not then exist.” Most agreed that the right approach was to “examine the passage with the most critical minuteness”—an approach that led to many nuanced discussions of audience, context, and metaphor.¹⁵ Still, some of the most eminent interpreters conceded that the passage was unyielding and that not even the most vigorous or ingenious readings seemed to satisfy.¹⁶

By contrast, the explanation that Joseph Smith gave was far less ambivalent. Rather than endeavoring to contextualize Paul’s statement or turning to metaphors, Smith exhibited early Mormonism’s “marvelous literalism,” heralding the idea of baptizing for the dead as an authentic Christian doctrine.¹⁷ Paul’s glancing comment, according to Smith, was an allusion to an ancient rite of posthumous baptism—baptism of a living person in behalf of a dead one—that was once known and practiced among primitive Christians.¹⁸ God was now revealing this doctrine, long lost and forgotten, once again, and “people could now act for their friends who had departed this

¹⁴“Baptism for the Dead,” *Christian Observer*, December 12, 1845.

¹⁵“Baptism for the Dead,” *New York Evangelist*, December 8, 1864.

¹⁶In his popular biblical commentary, the English theologian Adam Clarke described 1 Corinthians 15:29 as “certainly the most difficult [passage] in the New Testament; for, notwithstanding the greatest and wisest men have laboured to explain it, there are to this day nearly as many different interpretations of it as there are interpreters.” Clarke, *The New Testament of Our Lord and Saviour . . . With a Commentary and Critical Notes* (New York, 1826), 6:272. Samuel Thomas Bloomfield’s influential commentary *Greek Testament with English Notes* (Philadelphia, 1837), 2:166, agreed that “if we were to judge of the difficulty of the passage from the variety of interpretations . . . we should say that this is the most obscure and least understood verse in the N.T.”

¹⁷“Marvelous literalism” and “creative literalism” have been used to describe early Mormons’ unique biblical exegesis, which often involved the discovery of profuse meaning in seemingly obscure passages. Baptism for the dead represents a prime example. Brown, *In Heaven As It Is on Earth*, 11 note 11.

¹⁸For scholarship on the religious practices of ancient Christians re-

life.” The practice showed God’s forethought and his provisions for the unredeemed dead. This was, according to Joseph, an “independent” revelation he had received himself, but it was visible in the Bible as well.¹⁹

The mourners were startled, yet exhilarated. It was, one observer concluded, a “very beautiful discourse.”²⁰ Another found it “astonishing to him to think he had read the Bible all his life and he had never looked at it in that light before.”²¹ It meant that, in the face of death, there was hope not only for those, like Brunson, who fought a good fight as Christian soldiers, but also for those many who had never known or entered into the Mormon fold. By means of this new principle, Widow Neyman could experience the joy of Christian redemption, and her son could be saved.

lated to the dead, including posthumous baptism, see Jeffrey A. Trumbower, *Rescue for the Dead: The Posthumous Salvation of Non-Christians in Early Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001). For extensive analysis of salvation for the dead theology in historical Christianity and Mormonism, from a Mormon perspective, see Hugh W. Nibley, “Baptism for the Dead in Ancient Times” in *Mormonism and Early Christianity*, Vol. 4 of *The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book/Provo, Utah: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1987), 100–167. See also the following series of articles in *The Journal of the Book of Mormon and Other Restoration Scripture*: Roger D. Cook, David L. Paulsen, and Kendel J. Christensen, “The Harrowing of Hell: Salvation for the Dead in Early Christianity,” 19, no. 1 (2010): 56–77; David L. Paulsen and Brock M. Mason, “Baptism for the Dead in Early Christianity,” 19, no. 2 (2011): 22–49; David L. Paulsen, Kendel J. Christensen, and Martin Pulido, “Redeeming the Dead: Tender Mercies, Turning of Hearts, and Restoration of Authority,” 20, no. 1 (2011): 28–51; David L. Paulsen, Kendel J. Christensen, Martin Pulido, and Judson Burton, “Redemption of the Dead: Continuing Revelation after Joseph Smith,” 20, no. 2 (2011): 52–69.

¹⁹On “independent” revelation, see Joseph Smith to the Council of the Twelve, December 15, 1840, ID 588, *The Joseph Smith Papers*, <http://josephsmithpapers.org> (accessed March 15, 2013); and Vilate Kimball, Letter to Heber C. Kimball, October 11, 1840, MS 18732, LDS Church History Library.

²⁰Journal History, August 15, 1840.

²¹William M. Allred, “Recollections of the Prophet Joseph Smith,” *Juvenile Instructor* 27, no. 15 (August 1, 1892): 472.

Vilate Kimball had written to her missionary husband, Heber, about the sobriety of the Brunson oration—another dark day in a season of fatality. “And yet,” she said, “the day was joyful because of the light and glory that Joseph set forth. I can truly say my soul was lifted up.”²² For many, “baptism for the dead” was, as Joseph Smith later characterized it, a “glorious truth . . . well calculated to enlarge the understanding, and to sustain the soul under troubles, difficulties, and distresses.”²³

It was also a teaching and a rite whose implications, implementation, and development would thoroughly transform the Mormon faith. Born near the outset of a surging Mormon sacramentalism, baptism for the dead became one of an accruing number of mandatory rites and “ordinances” in the faith. As a new variation on familiar theme, proxy baptism catalyzed the development of proxy ordinances and the idea of vicarious salvation in Mormonism, opening the way for further theological development. In conjunction with other ascendant doctrines, it altered the trajectory of Mormonism throughout the nineteenth century. Ultimately the impulse to save and redeem the dead would become a central impulse in modern Mormon belief and practice.

PRECEDENTS

Although Joseph Smith first publicly taught the doctrine of baptism for the dead in 1840, precedents for the idea had long been percolating in his mind. Like many of Mormonism’s signal doctrines, the concept was the gradual product of Smith’s unfolding insights and cumulative experience. He was only seventeen when his brother Alvin, seven and a half years his senior, suddenly sickened and died in the fall of 1823. Alvin was a pillar in the Smith family, a favorite of his mother, and a model of family devotion.²⁴ Tall and sober, he was virtuous by all accounts; but like others in his family, he had avoided churches and a formal religious affiliation. When he died unbaptized, a Presbyterian minister made the consequences of this status all

²²Vilate Kimball, Letter to Heber C. Kimball, September 6, 1840, MS 2737.

²³Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 77–78.

²⁴On Alvin Smith, see Richard Lyman Bushman, *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005), 42.

too clear: because Alvin had not been a Christian, he probably could not be saved. Instead, as one of the Smiths remembered, the minister “intimated very strongly that he had gone to hell.”²⁵ It was an insinuation that the Smith family found both offensive and terrifying.

The crisis of Alvin’s death drove home the urgency of questions about salvation and introduced Joseph to the gravity of human loss.²⁶ What actually did happen to friends and family upon death? What assurances could there be of salvation, of going to heaven, for those who had no “proper” faith? It was a personal form of the question that had unsettled Christian thinkers for centuries. How would God deal with those who were, for one reason or another, unenlightened and unconverted to Christianity? Surely it was unreasonable and unfair of God to punish ignorance. The dogma of previous centuries would have said that even asking such questions of a sovereign God was irreverent, but sentiments were changing. More and more in America, man was sovereign, God answered to reason, and even Providence must be just.²⁷ The dilemma of the ignorant and unredeemed dead was a problem that was becoming more critical, drawing God’s basic beneficence into question.

Questions about the fairness of God and the exclusivity of salvation had been a longstanding source of angst in the Smith family. Like an increasing number of Americans, both Joseph’s father, Joseph Smith Sr., and his grandfather, Asael Smith, became deeply uncomfortable with the severity of Reformed theology, with its dogmas of total depravity and limited atonement. Finding these teachings unbearably and unreasonably harsh, they sympathized with Universalism, a popular humanistic sentiment that prevailed in parts of America dur-

²⁵Dan Vogel, *Early Mormon Documents*, 5 vols. (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1996–2003), 1:512–13.

²⁶Joseph Smith’s bereavement experience has been interpreted as highly significant for the development of Mormonism. Douglas J. Davies argues that Alvin’s death “was of crucial significance as a motivating force in the thinking of the Prophet” and “has been seriously underestimated in accounts of Mormonism.” Davies, *The Mormon Culture of Salvation: Force, Grace, and Glory* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2000), 86–90.

²⁷One account of this ideological transformation, which had social, political, and religious ramifications, is Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1989).

ing the late eighteenth century.²⁸ In the Universalist message, these progenitors found a mercy of extensive scope. God had created his people for salvation, said the Universalists, not to be damned. Ultimately there would be a “universal restoration” of all people to God’s presence, wherein sinners—and all humankind were sinners—would be saved. Universalist arguments brought relief, but criticism as well; more conservative Christians said it encouraged licentiousness and destroyed God’s law. This contest between schemes of salvation was a conflict Joseph Smith would inherit as he came of age in the early nineteenth century.²⁹ Part of his prophetic career, beyond being a visionary, a purveyor of scripture, and a religious organizer, would be to deliver an alternative scheme—a divine “plan of salvation” that sustained God’s justice, delivered God’s mercy, and made provisions for everyone.

For nearly a decade, from 1830 to 1839, as Smith experienced a steady outpouring of divine revelations, he accumulated insight into death, the dead, and God’s mechanisms of salvation. Most of these revelations seemed to take Mormonism further away from orthodox Christian thinking and toward something like Universalism. One of the most dramatic breakthroughs occurred in 1832, when Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon experienced a splendorous encounter with heaven that Mormons reverently came to call “The Vision.” Contrary to their expectations, the eternity that Smith and Rigdon experienced was not the stark binary of heaven and hell evoked in contemporary sermons, the Bible, and even in the Book of Mormon.³⁰ It was instead a place where few were truly damned and mercy seemed plentiful, even for the sinner.

By visionary observation, Smith and Rigdon came to understand that the hereafter was a stratified existence where virtue and obedience to God’s laws in life were rewarded by a corresponding “de-

²⁸On American Universalism, see Ann Lee Bressler, *The Universalist Movement in America, 1770–1880* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

²⁹Richard L. Bushman, *Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984), 26–29. See also Casey Paul Griffiths, “Universalism and the Revelations of Joseph Smith,” in *The Doctrine and Covenants: Revelations in Context*, edited by Andrew H. Hedges, J. Spencer Fluhman, and Alonzo L. Gaskill (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 2008), 168–87.

³⁰Bushman, *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling*, 200.

gree of glory,” a conception that completely redefined the Christian afterlife. When written down and circulated among the Saints, “The Vision” proved to be controversial: some Mormons welcomed the insight; others found it too permissive. “My traditions were such,” Brigham Young remembered, “that when the Vision came first to me, it was so directly contrary and opposed to my former education, I said, wait a little; I did not reject it, but I could not understand it.” His brother Joseph also conceded, “I could not believe it at first. Why the Lord was going to save everybody.”³¹ The vision and the startling implications that flowed from it left Mormons grappling with a dramatically different view of salvation.

Smith and Rigdon’s experience gave insight not just to God’s mercies upon the sinner, but also to his forbearance toward “those who died without law” and who “received not the testimony of Jesus in the flesh, but afterward received it.” These people, the “honorable men of the earth” would, echoing language in 1 Peter, have the gospel preached to them after death. According to the vision, they would inhabit the secondary “terrestrial world” in the afterlife.³² Four years later, in 1836, Joseph Smith described another theophany which seemed even more generous. With God in the heavens, Smith was amazed to see not only Adam and Abraham—but Alvin Smith. Confused, Joseph said he wondered how this could be. Alvin had died “before the Lord [had] set his hand to gather Israel . . . and had not been baptized for the remission of sins”—a condition considered necessary for full salvation. But Joseph

³¹Brigham Young, August 29, 1852, *Journal of Discourses* (London: Latter-day Saints’ Book Depot, 1854–86), 6:281. Joseph Young, “Discourse,” *Deseret Weekly News*, March 18, 1857, 11. On “The Vision,” see Matthew McBride, “The Vision,” *Revelations in Context*, LDS Church History Website, <http://history.lds.org/article/doctrine-and-covenants-revelations-in-context-the-vision?lang=eng> (accessed March 28, 2013). I am indebted to this source for the citations above.

³²Robin Scott Jensen, Robert J. Woodford, and Steven C. Harper, eds., *Manuscript Revelation Books, Facsimile Edition*, Vol. 1 in the Revelations and Translations series of THE JOSEPH SMITH PAPERS, general editors Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman (Salt Lake City: Church Historian’s Press, October 2009), 415–33 (D&C 76:71–80; all D&C citations are from the LDS 1981 edition). On early understandings of preaching to the dead, see Gregory A. Prince, *Power from On High: The Development of Mormon Priesthood* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1995), 143.

then said he heard the voice of God, clarifying: “All who have died with[out] a knowledge of this gospel, who would have received it, if they had been permitted to tarry, shall be heirs of the *celestial* kingdom of God—also all that shall die henceforth without a knowledge of it, who would have received it, with all their hearts, shall be heirs of that kingdom; For I, the Lord, will judge all men according to their works[,] according to the desire of their hearts.”³³

Seemingly mindful of how messy life on earth could be, the revelation confirmed sentiments previously held by Joseph Smith, that God would expect no more than humankind could give. He had written to his uncle in 1833 that “men will be held accountable for the things which they have and not for the things they have not,” and this revelation seemed to bear that doctrine out.³⁴ Here was a God who looked on the heart and acknowledged extenuating circumstances.³⁵ A full, celestial salvation was available to everyone with a good heart and righteous desires. God would hold nothing back from those who died unenlightened.

The issue, however, was still not settled. It was comforting to know that God was empathetic, even accommodating, but Mormonism still faced the ineluctable questions that confronted Universalists and others. What were God’s criteria for salvation? Were they different for the living and the dead? Was God ultimately a god of laws or a god of mercy? Joseph Smith’s revelations seemed increasingly to suggest that God could somehow save those who had not had access to the means of salvation. And yet Mormons’ commitment to the essentiality of baptism and the growing importance of rituals complicated the picture. How did God’s salvation of the dead square with the biblical injunction, often repeated, that “except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God”? (John 3:5)

By the summer of 1838, Smith was nearing a solution.³⁶ In an editorial Q&A in the *Elders’ Journal*, a Church-owned newspaper, he re-

³³Jessee, Ashurst-McGee, and Jensen, *Journals*, 1:167 (D&C 137:7-8); emphasis mine.

³⁴Lavina Fielding Anderson, ed., *Lucy’s Book: A Critical Edition of Lucy Mack Smith’s Family Memoir* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2001), 588.

³⁵On evolving perceptions of salvation for the dead and proxy baptism, see Prince, *Power from On High*, 142–46.

³⁶It is not clear precisely when, between July 1838 and August 1840,

sponded to a question about the fate of those who had died without embracing Mormonism. "If Mormonism be true," asked the inquiry, "what of all those who died without baptism?" The editorial offered a new and suggestive response. "All those who have not had an opportunity of hearing the Gospel, and being administered unto by an inspired man in the flesh," it said, "must have it hereafter, before they can be finally judged."³⁷ It was a reply that opened another dimension of possibilities, since it appeared to extend the scope of human action beyond the grave. If not only gospel instruction, but the "administration" of saving ordinances were somehow available in the afterlife, the shape of God's designs for saving the dead changed substantially.³⁸

NAUVOO THEOLOGY

Baptism for the dead appeared in Nauvoo amid a surge of profound developments in Mormon theology, all of which affected and catalyzed each other. Indeed, the short period between settlement in 1839 and Joseph Smith's death in 1844 is perhaps the most theologically dynamic period of Mormon history, bringing rich reformulations and expansions that thoroughly transgressed the boundaries of American Christianity. In Nauvoo, Smith revealed and taught a cascade of innovative and arresting doctrines. "It is my meditation all the day," he said in 1843, "to know how I shall make the Saints of God comprehend the visions that roll like an overflowing surge before my mind."³⁹ His extraordinary teachings broke like waves over his followers, at once elating and bewildering. As early as 1840, one Mormon

Joseph Smith settled on the practice of proxy baptism for the dead as a solution for the problem of redeeming the dead. Mormon convert William Appleby wrote that Joseph Smith told him he had received revelation on the subject "nine years or nearly after the Church was organized," possibly dating the doctrine to sometime during 1839. William I. Appleby, *Autobiography and Journal*, 75, MS 1401, LDS Church History Library.

³⁷Joseph Smith, "In Obedience to Our Promise. . .," *Elders' Journal* 1 (July 1838): 43.

³⁸Alexander L. Baugh, "'For This Ordinance Belongeth to My House': The Practice of Baptism for the Dead outside the Nauvoo Temple," *Mormon Historical Studies* 3, no. 1 (Spring 2002): 47.

³⁹Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 196; punctuation standardized.

woman related: "President Smith has been bringing many strange doctrines this season." They were, as she said, no child's milk, but "strong meat."⁴⁰ Yet Smith wanted to move still faster; he bemoaned the fact that his people were not prepared to receive all that he could and wished to tell them.

Priestly Power and Rituals

One great axis of Joseph Smith's revelations previous to Nauvoo had been religious authority—what he called "priesthood." From the organization of the Church in 1830, Smith came to define authority in a way that differed significantly from contemporary Protestantism. According to Smith, "priesthood" was divine authority that came not by a calling of the Spirit, not through the enlightening medium of scripture—only by direct ordination. He maintained that he himself had received this authority by ordination under the hands of angelic beings. Over the ensuing years, Smith's revelations gradually extended and clarified the functions of priesthood, organizing it into branches and spheres of action that governed the Church and addressed the needs, both spiritual and temporal, of its people. In keeping with the biblical model of authority, Smith established in Ohio a Quorum of Twelve Apostles and other priesthood offices that were intended to reflect the authoritative order of the apostolic Church.⁴¹

But Mormon priesthood authority was not only about the Church's leadership and welfare; it was also "priestly" in the sense that it authorized essential religious rituals, such as baptism. Smith taught that holders of priesthood (and they alone) were empowered by God to perform saving rites effectively. Unlike Catholicism, ordination to this priesthood was not the prerequisite of a religious order. All men of the Church were eligible to hold priesthood authority, so

⁴⁰Phoebe Woodruff, Letter to Wilford Woodruff, October 6, 1840, MS 19509, LDS Church History Library.

⁴¹On the historical development of Mormon priesthood authority, see Prince, *Power from On High* and D. Michael Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy: Origins of Power* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1994). On the nature of priesthood authority in Mormonism, see Robert L. Millett, "Joseph Smith, the Book of Mormon, and the Legal Administrator," and Steven C. Harper "Angels in the Age of Railways," in Robert L. Millett, ed., *By What Authority?: The Vital Questions of Religious Authority in Christianity* (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 2010), 108–23 and 124–43 respectively.

long as their conduct was worthy. In many ways, this practice suited the leveling spirit of contemporary American Protestantism. Nowhere had there been such a “priesthood of all believers,” as in the antebellum United States, where unlikely but impassioned believers seized the reins of religious leadership.⁴² But ordained Mormon men were not only exhorters, itinerant preachers, and empowered healers; they were also ordained “priests,” authorized to officiate in God’s sacred ordinances and rites.

The presence of this priestly authority made possible an unusual sacramentalism that began emerging in Mormonism in the late 1830s. Running counter to the general thrust of surrounding Protestantism, which still generally frowned on ritual, ceremony, and other elaborate forms of liturgy, Mormonism had through its first decade developed a surprisingly robust ritualistic impulse. Mormons had gone well beyond the few rituals common to many Protestants (baptism, the Lord’s Supper), and had embraced many others (washing, healing, ordination, anointing). In Nauvoo, however, the emphasis on ritual accelerated, and Mormons developed a distinct, higher order of religious sacraments unlike anything in the Protestant milieu.⁴³ These formal sacraments came to be closely associated with Mormons’ building of temples; Joseph Smith’s revelations indicated that sacred acts needed to be performed in sacred spaces, and he built temples for this purpose. By the end of the Nauvoo period, Mormon sacramentalism encompassed a remarkably ornate suite of temple rituals with rich dramaturgical and symbolic elements. Proxy baptism for the dead anticipated and catalyzed this emerging “sacramental” impulse.

At the same time that they introduced new forms and kinds of religious ritual, Joseph Smith’s revelations also created a deeper logic for religious ritual itself. Drawing on biblical and Book of Mormon

⁴²Hatch, *Democratization of American Christianity*, 44–46, 170–78.

⁴³For treatment of the many important rituals encompassed by early Mormonism, see Brown, *In Heaven As It Is on Earth*, 157–61; and Jonathan A. Stapley and Kristine L. Wright, “The Forms and the Power: The Development of Mormon Ritual Healing to 1847,” *Journal of Mormon History* 35, no. 2 (Summer 2009): 42–87. My argument is that Nauvoo largely introduced and centralized an emphasis on “sacraments” and “sacramentalism,” terms which delineate ritual action understood to be formally and strictly necessary for salvation.

language, as well as on Protestant rhetoric of the “binding” and “sealing” capacities of God’s power, Smith taught that rituals and acts performed by virtue of the divine priesthood were indispensable for salvation.⁴⁴ When performed properly, these acts had eternal significance. Hence, when exercised in harmony with the will of God, priesthood authority underwrote saving rituals both in heaven and on earth and actualized a condition needed for salvation. “It may seem to some,” Smith acknowledged, a “very bold doctrine we speak of—a power that . . . binds on earth and binds in heaven.” But this definitive “sealing” power, he insisted, had “always been given” to authorized prophets throughout human history.⁴⁵ It was this power that drove the saving rituals, both for the living and the dead. “There is a way to release the spirit of the dead,” Smith taught in 1841, “that is, by the power and authority of the Priesthood—by binding and loosing on earth.”⁴⁶

Collective Salvation

Baptism for the dead also emerged in concert with evolving Mormon ideas about religious community and collective salvation.⁴⁷ From 1830 to 1838, Joseph Smith’s revelations and teachings had abounded with references to the scriptural concept of “Zion,” the holy, archetypal community of the faithful that Mormons had attempted to create in Missouri, and which remained paradigmatic for

⁴⁴Brown, *In Heaven As It Is on Earth*, 146–51. Brown traces the Protestant precedents for “seals” and covenants.

⁴⁵Robin Scott Jensen, Richard E. Turley Jr., and Riley M. Lorimer, eds., *Revelations and Translations, Vol. 2: Published Revelations*, Vol. 2 in the Revelations and Translations series of THE JOSEPH SMITH PAPERS, general editors Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman (Salt Lake City: Church Historian’s Press, 2011), 683–84 (D&C 128:9).

⁴⁶Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 76–79.

⁴⁷Samuel M. Brown, “Early Mormon Adoption Theology and the Mechanics of Salvation,” *Journal of Mormon History* 37, no. 3 (Summer 2011): 3–52, offers the fullest explanations of Smith’s complex initiative to create an integrated, eternal human family through sealing rituals. The article also provides valuable insight to early Mormon soteriology, suggesting that Joseph Smith offered a “sacramental guarantee of salvation that was in its very essence communal” (5–6).

the Nauvoo period that followed.⁴⁸ In Nauvoo, however, the mechanisms for social unity and collective salvation shifted. Emphasis on the broad bonds of community and society merged with new emphasis on kinship and family; solidarity increasingly rested on the concrete ties of marriage and blood. Rather than attempting to bind his people together through consecration of property and communal covenants, as he had endeavored to do in Missouri, Nauvoo saw Joseph Smith use the power of priesthood authority to unite them.⁴⁹

Like many theological developments in early Mormonism, these new insights about priesthood and human relationships unfolded through the motif of a biblical prophecy. Rehearsed at the outset of Smith's prophetic career when he was only seventeen years old, and repeated thereafter, the ancient prophecy of Malachi foretold a time when Elijah the prophet would be sent to "turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I [God] come and smite the earth with a curse" (Mal. 4:6). The prophecy was little understood until 1838, when Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery testified that Elijah appeared to them in the Kirtland Temple, reiterated the prophecy and transferred important elements of authority to accomplish it.⁵⁰ These were the priesthood "keys," evidently, through which the prophecy, could be fulfilled.

In Nauvoo, the sealing authority bestowed by Elijah in Kirtland found its object, and Malachi's prophecy took on additional meaning. At the same time as he contemplated the necessity of baptism and salvation for the virtuous dead, Joseph Smith reflected on this newly granted power of priesthood authority, and the two considerations evidently merged. Smith realized that the sealing power would somehow have to be applied, to be executed "upon some subject or other." In order to be effective, in other words, priesthood power would need a medium in which it could work. "And what is that subject?" Smith asked rhetorically. His conclusion was: "It is the baptism for the

⁴⁸"The religious worldview behind the attempt to establish a Zion place and a Zion society . . . offers the most useful window for understanding the Nauvoo period." Leonard, *Nauvoo*, 5.

⁴⁹Brown, *In Heaven as It Is on Earth*, 203–8, and Bushman, *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling*, 421–23, 440–46.

⁵⁰Jessee, Ashurst-McGee, and Jensen, *Journals, Vol. 1: 1832–1839*, 1:219–22 (D&C 110:13–16).

dead.”⁵¹ The rite of proxy baptism could both provide the means of salvation to the unevangelized dead and invoke the sealing power, binding the Saints to their progenitors and together into the Kingdom of God.⁵²

Embodiment and Surrogacy

In its development, baptism for the dead partook of Mormons’ increasingly exceptional beliefs about the human body.⁵³ For centuries, many Christians had lauded the spirit but loathed the flesh, which they saw as carnal and corruptive. For Mormons, however, that perception began to wane as new revelations emerged that seemed to give the human body new purpose and dignity. The fundamental unit of human identity, Joseph Smith revealed in 1832, was actually not the human spirit alone, but that spirit in conjunction with a corporeal

⁵¹Ibid., 1:148 (D&C 128:18). Prior to this time, Latter-day Saints had different understandings of “sealing” which were more clearly Protestant: to be “sealed up” to God was to be assured a condition of salvation in the afterlife; one could also be “sealed” unto damnation. This conception of sealing was associated with the priesthood authority from the Church’s organization in 1830, and in subsequent years “Mormon elders sealed congregations to eternal life.” Early LDS patriarchs also “sealed” up those they blessed to salvation. Brown, *In Heaven As It Is on Earth*, 148–49.

⁵²For Joseph’s thinking about the priesthood keys and sealing the human family together, ca. 1839, see Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 8–11. The widespread Christian doctrine of adoption into the kingdom of God, which many Latter-day Saints identified with baptism, may have enabled Joseph Smith to understand baptism for the dead as a way to seal people together. Brown, “Early Mormon Adoption Theology,” 15–19. Over time, as Joseph Smith came to teach that all of the emerging temple rituals, not just baptism for the dead, would be necessary to finalize the sealing together of the human family, he seems to have used the term “the baptism for the dead” to refer the concept of proxy ordinances as a whole. Hence, in Smith’s later sermons “the baptism for the dead,” may have been synecdochic for all ordinances performed for the dead.

⁵³On embodiment, see Davies, *Mormon Culture of Salvation*, 122–23; Benjamin E. Park, “Salvation through a Tabernacle: Joseph Smith, Parley Pratt, and Early Mormon Theologies of Embodiment,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 43, no. 2 (Summer 2010): 1–44; and Bushman, *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling*: 420–21.

body.⁵⁴ Flesh was, Mormons learned, a vital and permanent element of the self. Smith also taught, as early as 1841, that God and Jesus Christ had glorified bodies of flesh and bones.⁵⁵ Human bodies were, therefore, actually a divine inheritance, a consequence of having been created in God's image. "The great principle of happiness," Smith pronounced, "consists in having a body."⁵⁶

Revelations about the body also affected Mormons' understanding of religious ritual. If the body was an essential vehicle for the human spirit, then it became significant that religious rituals were performed in the flesh as bodily sacraments. "Deeds done in the body," particularly the saving rituals of the faith, were of great consequence; the body was an essential part of the ordinances that enabled salvation.⁵⁷ However, the significance of the body also created challenges. Persons who had died without the saving rites could not, of course, hope to receive them without their fleshly bodies; hence those in this circumstance faced a seemingly insurmountable barrier to redemption. "What kind of beings," Joseph Smith asked rhetorically, "can be saved although their bodies are mouldering in the dust?"⁵⁸ The disembodied dead clearly could not attend to rituals that required a fleshly tabernacle.

The Prophet's radical solution for this problem was a principle of ritual surrogacy.⁵⁹ In order to ensure fairness to all human beings, he taught, God's divine economy allowed for living, embodied human

⁵⁴Jensen, Woodford, and Harper, *Manuscript Revelation Books, Facsimile Edition*, 479–505 (D&C 88:15).

⁵⁵Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 60. A revelation on this subject was received in 1843 but not canonized until 1981 (D&C 130:22).

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, 60.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, 78. See 2 Cor. 5:10.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, 360.

⁵⁹John L. Brooke, *The Refiner's Fire: The Making of Mormon Cosmology, 1644–1844* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 28, 44, 242–43, posits that the concept of baptism for the dead may have come to Mormonism through a radical German pietist group in Ephrata, Pennsylvania. He notes that a form of baptism by proxy in behalf of the dead was introduced in a cloister there sometime in the mid-eighteenth century and suggests that it had some level of diffusion among local German immigrants. Despite Brooke's assertion, however, scholars have not found evi-

beings to act in behalf of deceased persons in saving rituals. Thus those on the earth with bodies and access to priesthood power could participate in Mormonism's rituals, including baptism, "for and in behalf of" their dead kin. The dead may not have the capacity to be baptized, Smith acknowledged, but "why not deputize a friend on earth to do it for them"?⁶⁰ By "actively engaging in rites of salvation substitutionally," he said, Latter-day Saints "became instrumental in bringing multitudes of their kin into the kingdom of God." He was careful to clarify that the Saints themselves did not themselves hold saving power—that it "was the truth, not men that saved them."⁶¹ But by acting in this way, Mormons would ensure that their deceased ancestors could satisfy the ritual requirements on earth and gain salvation.

Dynamic understandings of priesthood, sealing, and surrogacy converged in Nauvoo and met in the ritual of baptism for the dead, which in turn served as a catalyst for their further development. Baptism was, by far, the most familiar of religious rites, and as Joseph Smith and the Latter-day Saints began to appreciate the importance of sacraments, and their applications for the dead, it was the ubiquitous rite of baptism that served as a primary model. Other saving rituals would not be confirmed as such until later. It had been the principle of baptism that had prompted Mormon leaders' initial inquiries about the nature of religious authority. Now it was through the lens of baptism that Joseph Smith first sensed God's larger designs for the future of the human race.

A MORMON "REVIVAL"

By the end of the Church's semiannual conference in October of 1840, just two months after it had been first articulated, the new doctrine of baptism for the dead had enthralled the Latter-day Saints. During the conference, which drew several thousand Mormons into Nauvoo, Joseph Smith and others had preached at length on the new doctrine, expounding the idea and its meanings to the assemblies. And

dence suggesting a connection between Ephrata and Mormonism. See Davies, *Culture of Salvation*, 90; and Terryl L. Givens, *By the Hand of Mormon: The American Scripture that Launched a New World Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 170.

⁶⁰Phoebe Woodruff, Letter to Wilford Woodruff, October 6, 1840.

⁶¹Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 77.

the Saints had embraced the principle with enthusiasm: in the adjournments between meetings, many went to the riverbank and immediately began to perform the ritual. Reporting on the October conference to her missionary husband, Heber, Vilate Kimball said that “Brother Joseph has opened a new and glorious subject of late, which has caused quite a revival in the Church . . . that is, the baptism for the dead.”⁶²

During the months following its introduction, performances of proxy baptism became a form of communal worship in Nauvoo. Hundreds of ordinances were performed as Latter-day Saints congregated together at the broad Mississippi. On Sabbath days especially, they assembled on the riverbank, waded out into the current, and submerged one another in behalf of dead parents, grandparents, children, siblings, spouses, and other relations. Wading again to shore, they knelt, placing their hands upon one another’s heads, ritually confirming each other in behalf of their dead relations as members of the Church, precisely as was done for the living.

The collective energy that the Saints brought to baptism for the dead could be spectacular. Vilate Kimball wrote to Heber: “Since this order has been preached here, the waters have been continually troubled.”⁶³ Phoebe Woodruff likewise wrote to her husband that “this doctrine is cordially received by the Church and they are going forward in multitudes.” One Nauvoo friend, she said, was “clear carried away with it.” Many returned again and again: “Some are going to be baptized as many as 16 times.”⁶⁴ Years later Wilford Woodruff recollected: “How did we feel when we first heard the living could be baptised for the dead? We all went to work at it as fast as we had an opportunity, and were baptised for every body we could think of.” He recalled wading into the river with Joseph Smith and other Church leaders on a summer Sunday evening. “[Joseph] baptized a hundred. I baptized a hundred. The next man, a few rods from me, baptized another hundred. We were strung up and down the Mississippi, baptizing for our dead.”⁶⁵

Converts and visitors to Nauvoo found the scale of the activity

⁶²Vilate Kimball, Letter to Heber C. Kimball, October 11, 1840.

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴Phoebe Woodruff, Letter to Wilford Woodruff, October 6, 1840.

⁶⁵Wilford Woodruff, “Remarks,” *Deseret News*, May 27, 1857, 4; “Discourse Delivered by President Wilford Woodruff . . . April 6, 1891,” *Deseret*

startling. “It is surprising,” one new Mormon recorded, “to see both men and women, on the Sabbath in particular, after worship retire to the River for Baptism. Four hundred and fifty (I was informed) had been baptised of an afternoon. Hundreds are Baptising for their dead, people are coming hundreds of miles to see the Prophet, and attending to this ordinance, in behalf of their departed relatives.”⁶⁶ Outsiders who visited Nauvoo told tales of how assiduously Mormons went about the task. “They baptize here,” related a visiting minister, Reverend M. Badger, incredulously, “not only for the living, but for the *dead*. . . . I saw one old man who had been baptized 13 times for his deceased children, because they were not Mormon.”⁶⁷ As records began to be kept following the ritual’s introduction, these efforts added up. During 1841, for instance, the Saints performed at least 6,500 proxy ordinances. This and other remarkable figures have led to the conclusion that “baptism for the dead was a major religious activity” in Mormon Nauvoo.⁶⁸

Mormons’ collective eagerness to embrace baptism for the dead was presumably, like the energy of other contemporary American religious revivals, the product of deep anxiety and existential concern. During the period introspective Methodists, Baptists, and others despaired at the depth of their own sin, yearned for rebirth, and gloried in the grace of God—feelings that galvanized their camps and assemblies. Confronted with sickness, death, and the sorrow of human separation, Mormons in Nauvoo turned together to priesthood baptism as an opportunity to avail themselves and their loved ones of God’s mercy. Together the rite and the river indeed brought Mormons a

Weekly, April 25, 1891, 554.

⁶⁶Appleby, *Autobiography and Journal*, 80.

⁶⁷M. Badger, “Joe Smith at Home,” *New York Observer and Chronicle*, August 6, 1842, 128; emphasis in original.

⁶⁸M. Guy Bishop, “What Has Become of Our Fathers?: Baptism for the Dead at Nauvoo,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 23 (Summer 1990): 88. Bishop offers helpful quantitative analysis. The original records of baptism for the dead in Nauvoo are located in MS CR 342, 10, LDS Church History Library. A published and annotated, but incomplete reproduction is Susan E. Black and Harvey B. Black, eds., *Annotated Records of Baptisms for the Dead, 1840–1845: Nauvoo, Hancock County, Illinois*, 7 vols. (Provo, Utah: BYU Center for Family History and Genealogy, 2002).

sense of “dramatic empowerment.”⁶⁹

Inevitably, proxy baptisms drew outside attention. The Mormons had expected the practice to be ridiculed; and when Eastern visitors and newspapers learned that the Mormons were performing baptisms in behalf of national celebrities like George Washington, the satire began.⁷⁰ Reverend Badger chuckled that he had heard of eighty-year-old Mormon Stephen Jones, a Revolutionary War veteran, who was baptized “for George Washington and La-Fayette; then for Thomas Jefferson; and then applied in behalf of Andrew Jackson! but they told him the General was not dead yet, and so he waits awhile.”⁷¹ Another correspondent feigned relief that “after these fifty years [George Washington] is out of purgatory and on his way to the ‘celestial’ heaven!”⁷² Other voices, less amused, denounced the ritual as alarming and blasphemous. “There is a danger,” one critic insisted, “of pressing the importance of outward rites, which are of easy com-

⁶⁹Michael Pasquier, ed., *Gods of the Mississippi* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), x.

⁷⁰“Surely the Gentiles will mock, but we will rejoice in it.” Vilate Kimball, Letter to Heber C. Kimball, October 11, 1840.

⁷¹Badger, “Joe Smith at Home.” Stephen Jones’s proxy baptisms for George Washington, the Marquis de Lafayette, and Thomas Jefferson evidently took place on July 4, 1841, in conjunction with the holiday. A week later, in a dispatch that was widely reprinted, the antagonistic *Warsaw Signal* issued a sardonic report of the proceedings: “The doctrine of the Mormons appears to be, that those who are living must be baptized by one having authority from Joe Smith, or else go to hell; but those who are already dead may be brought out of torment by a friend or relation receiving the baptismal rites in their behalf. The nation may rejoice, therefore, that the illustrious patriots above named, are now taken from the possession of the Prince of Darkness, and admitted into the fellowship of the Saints!!!” “Baptism for the Dead,” *Warsaw Signal*, July 14, 1841. For reprintings and reactions to the *Signal’s* report, see Untitled, *Manufacturers & Farmers Journal, and Providence and Pawtucket [Rhode Island] Advertiser*, August 9, 1841, 1; “Baptism for the Dead,” [*Hartford*] *Connecticut Courant*, August 15, 1841, 3; “Baptism for the Dead,” *Weekly Messenger* (Chambersburg, Pa.), September 29, 1841, 1. On Jones as proxy, see Black and Black, *Annotated Records of Baptisms for the Dead*, 2015–16.

⁷²Charlotte Haven, “A Girl’s Letters from Nauvoo,” *Overland Monthly* 16, no. 96 (December 1890): 629–30.

pliance to the neglect of those spiritual views which make religion a work of the heart." This lesson was, in what was ostensibly an allusion to Catholic ritualism, "the testimony furnished by the history of the Church in every age."⁷³

Indeed, the emergence of Mormon ritualism, including in the form of baptism for the dead, increasingly led many to associate Mormonism with Catholicism. Proxy baptism was so eccentric that suspicious Protestants classed it with the *mélange* of exotic rituals that Catholics were rumored to practice. Releasing the dead from spiritual prison, too, sounded suspiciously like an escape from purgatory. "[Mormons'] ceremonies," said one report, "are said to be . . . eclectic, being patchwork from the mummeries of old superstitions pieced together by new inventions of their own."⁷⁴ These liturgical resemblances augmented the common charge of ecclesiastical despotism, leveled at both Mormons and Catholics.⁷⁵ Because of widespread anti-Catholic prejudice, this linkage between Mormons and Catholics suited critical commentators, who pitted Mormons and Catholic priests in fiendish competition. "This plan of competition [baptism for the dead] by the Mormons must be very dangerous to the Romish priests," gibed one article in the *Christian Secretary*, "for it operates quicker and cheaper than masses, and *just as good exactly*."⁷⁶ Another observer, after hearing Joseph Smith lecture and witnessing baptisms for the dead in 1843, opined that, in many ways, Mormons seemed to be "good orthodox Baptists." However, "in

⁷³"Baptism for the Dead," *Weekly Messenger*, September 29, 1841, 1. See also "Journal of a Mormon," *Christian Observer*, September 10, 1841, 146.

⁷⁴Untitled, *Manufacturers & Farmers Journal, and Providence and Pawtucket [Rhode Island] Advertiser*, August 9, 1841, 1.

⁷⁵On the relationship between mainstream perceptions of Mormons and Catholics in the nineteenth century, as well their conceptions of each other, see Matthew J. Grow, "The Whore of Babylon and the Abomination of Abominations: Nineteenth-Century Catholic and Mormon Mutual Perceptions and Religious Identity," *Church History* 73, no. 1 (March 2004): 139–67; and David Brion Davis, "Some Themes in Counter-Subversion: An Analysis of Anti-Masonic, Anti-Catholic, and Anti-Mormon Literature," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 47 (September 1960): 205–24.

⁷⁶"Purgatory," *Christian Secretary* (Hartford, Conn.), September 3, 1841, 3.

some of their forms they run close into Catholicism.”⁷⁷

“THE POWER OF GODLINESS IS MANIFEST”

Antebellum America was a hive of theological disputation, and water baptism was among the subjects of active debate. Most Christians in America regarded baptism as a holy act, grounded in the teachings of the Bible. And yet, like much of Christian theology in the period, the precise purposes and the proper execution of baptism were widely contested. At what stage of life should baptism be administered? Some traditional Christians still insisted, as the Puritans had, that baptism helped redeem even newborns from sin. Others, especially Baptists, asserted that only adult believers should participate in the ritual. Christians also disagreed about how baptism ought to be performed. Was there a particular method? Should initiates be sprinkled or immersed? Who ought to officiate? Contemporary ministers scoured scripture for insight and made their cases from biblical proof-texts.

Despite the intensity of debate on the subject, few American Protestants at the time believed that baptism was absolutely required for salvation. Baptism was a propitious act that Americans took seriously; it was the marker of a covenant life and an undertaking to be commended. It was not, however, a prerequisite or saving rite, as it was understood to be in Catholicism. To insist that it was essential would be to ascribe saving power to human works, something Protestants vehemently refused to do. Charles Buck’s ubiquitous *Theological Dictionary* noted that “[baptism] is an ordinance binding on all those who have been given up to God in it. . . . It is not however, essential to salvation.” Indeed, baptism could not be a prerequisite to salvation, since “mere participation in the sacraments cannot qualify men for heaven.” The act of baptism was important, but only as a marker of invisible spiritual transformation. It was this spiritual phenomenon—emphatically not the sacrament itself—that brought redemption. “To suppose [baptism was] essential,” Buck noted, “was to put it in the place of that which it signifies.”⁷⁸

In contrast with most contemporary Protestants, Mormons *did*

⁷⁷“Nauvoo—We Spent a Sabbath with the Mormons,” *New York Spectator*, August 23, 1843, 4.

⁷⁸Charles Buck, *A Theological Dictionary* (Philadelphia: William Woodward, 1830), *s.v.* “Baptism for the Dead”; emphasis removed. The dic-

come to adopt the theological position that water baptism was obligatory for salvation. For Latter-day Saints, baptism was a necessary sacrament, the first of what would later become several ritual ordinances needed for ultimate redemption. While working on the Book of Mormon, Joseph Smith sought further inspiration about the rite of baptism and learned that it was indeed a central pillar of the Christian gospel. The Book of Mormon itself strongly condemned the baptism of infants (Moroni 8:10-21) and underscored baptism's necessity (3 Ne. 11:33-34). Invested with new priesthood authority, Smith not only reinforced the significance of water baptism; he also emphasized the necessity of its being performed under proper authority: baptism without authority was of no consequence.

A revelation received shortly after the organization of the new "Church of Christ" in 1830 made clear that authorized baptism was an inexorable commandment and would be required for Church membership. Baptism was indeed a "dead work," it said—unless it was performed by virtue of the newly granted priesthood. When undergirded by this authority, baptism became an essential sacrament, part of "a new and an everlasting covenant" that God required of everyone. "Wherefore," the revelation directed, chiding skeptics, "enter ye in at the gate, as I have commanded, & seek not to counsel your God."⁷⁹ Doing so would open the way to salvation. To seekers like Joseph Smith, this was a tremendous realization. When his downtrodden father was baptized into the Church about the same time, a gratified Smith exulted: "Oh! my God I have lived to see my own father baptized into the true church of Jesus Christ." He "covered his face in his father's bosom and wept aloud for joy."⁸⁰

At odds with other Christians on this point, Mormons found themselves forced to persuade others of the absolute necessity of bap-

tionary was first printed in London in 1802 and became a definitive theological resource in England and America over the next half-century.

⁷⁹Jensen, Turley, and Lorimer, *Revelations and Translations Books, Facsimile Edition*, 1:35, spelling modernized (D&C 22). The revelation, received on April 16, 1830, was given in response to inquirers who sought membership in the new Church without being baptized or rebaptized by a Church officer. The scope of the "new and everlasting covenant" that it referred to would expand over time to incorporate all of the faith's emerging sacraments, including "celestial marriage."

⁸⁰Anderson, *Lucy's Book*, 477. See also Bushman, *Joseph Smith: Rough*

tism—of the need for sacraments. Mormon missionaries reasoned with interlocutors and pointed doggedly to biblical passages that seemed to demand disciples to be baptized (e.g., John 3:5).⁸¹ The strong current of revivalism, however, with its emphasis on a conversion experience with the Holy Spirit, tended to undercut this logic. One layman who later converted to Mormonism felt that baptism, part of the original order of Christian discipleship, had been lost by evangelical Christianity. “I cannot see any religion of the Bible in it,” he wrote. “The ancient Apostles said, ‘Repent and be baptized for the remission of your sins’ . . . But these preachers say, ‘Come to the anxious seat and we will pray for you, and you will get religion. No matter about baptism[;] that is nonessential.’” “I have read the scriptures too much,” he concluded, “to be deceived with such stuff.”⁸² Joseph Smith spoke to the issue directly in 1842, teaching that “[baptism] is a sign, and commandment which God has set for man to enter into his Kingdom. Those who seek to enter in any other way will seek in vain; and God will not receive them, neither will the angels acknowledge their works as accepted; for they have not obeyed the ordinances, nor attended to the signs which God ordained for the salvation of

Stone Rolling, 111.

⁸¹For efforts to persuade others about the necessity of baptism, see “Can I Not Be Saved without Baptism?,” *Millennial Star* 1, no. 5 (September 1841): 120–23; “Baptism,” *Times and Seasons* 3, no. 21 (September 1842): 903–5; and Lorenzo Snow, *The Only Way to Be Saved* (London: D. Chalmers, 1841). Although the doctrine of proxy baptism was reserved to Nauvoo, Mormon missionaries like George J. Adams occasionally taught and wrote about it. See, for instance, “Review of the Mormon Lectures,” rpt. from the *Boston Bee* in *Times and Seasons* 4, no. 8 (March 1, 1843): 126; and George J. Adams, *A Lecture on the Doctrine of Baptism for the Dead; and Preaching to Spirits in Prison* (New York: C. A. Calhoun, 1844).

⁸²Warren Foote, Journal, May 24, 1841, 53, MS 1123, LDS Church History Library. For the initial discovery of this source and as a finding aid generally I am indebted to the Book of Abraham Project, <http://www.boap.org>. The “anxious seat” or “anxious bench” was a means of evangelization pioneered by revivalist Charles Grandison Finney, in which the unconverted were conspicuously called before the assembly (to sit on the “anxious bench”) to become the object of special suasion and collective scrutiny.

man.”⁸³ The necessity of authorized baptism became a familiar Mormon refrain.

As early as 1832, it had become clear that for Mormons baptism was more than a mere formality, a test of compliance, or a tradition initiating new members into the Church. In September of that year, Joseph Smith received a revelation regarding priesthood authority, and it taught a deeper purpose for rituals and ordinances. In such sacred acts, the revelation taught, “the power of Godliness is manifest.” Without the priesthood and its ordinances, on the other hand, “the power of Godliness is not manifest unto man in the flesh.”⁸⁴ Thus unlike Protestants, who treated sacraments as formulae only, Mormons could expect the rituals to precipitate the power of God in their lives. In rituals like baptism and baptism for the dead, the Saints could expect God’s healing, hope, and sanctification.

Indeed, as baptism for the dead was introduced into pestilential Nauvoo, many claimed to experience the “power of godliness.” Joseph and Martha Hovey, for instance, arrived in Nauvoo on a cold, rainy night in November of 1840. Formerly a carriage wright, but now poor in means and in health, Joseph Hovey had initially been eager to move his family to Nauvoo. However, the couple spent a good part of the ensuing winter in a tent on an unimproved lot loaned to them by the Church. It was, Hovey recalled candidly, “cold and disagreeable.”

Like other contemporary families, the Hoveys had lost children to disease: first a daughter, Martha, and then Grafton, a son. Grafton, his father recalled, “was taken in the bloom of childhood when our hearts were set upon him as our first sun [son]. Our fond hopes were intertwined about him and our future happiness and prosperity we should enjoy in future days.” Now, Hovey grieved, “He is gon. We cannot imbrace him more in this probation.” Yet even as the family contended with weather, indigence, and loss, the Hoveys found staying power in the emerging principles of Mormonism. “We were taught by the Prophet Joseph those things that cheerd our souls,” Hovey recorded, “especially that about our dead.” When Martha became ill and miscarried in 1841, “she was heald,” by being baptized for her own health and in behalf of her deceased relatives. Joseph Hovey was

⁸³Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 107–8.

⁸⁴Jensen, Woodford, and Harper, *Manuscript Revelation Books, Facsimile Edition*, 1:457 (D&C 84:19-22).

likewise baptized for his grandfather and grandmother.⁸⁵

Several years later, in 1842, Hovey learned that his mother, not a Mormon, had died. The news came on the same day that yet another son, Thomas Josiah, died in infancy. The climate of Nauvoo was gradually improving, but the child was “taken varry sick with his teeth.” “Truly I did feal to morn,” Hovey conceded. By his account, however, Hovey and his wife tried not to complain about their son’s death. Hovey felt confident that “we will meate him a gain in the reserection if we [are] faithfull and hold out until the end.” And although Hovey’s mother had not embraced the Mormon gospel (“for she did not have it presented to her[,] onley as I wrote to her”), he was hopeful that he would eventually be reunited with her as well. This could happen “through the provisions that God has made for those that had not the oppertunity to imbrace the Gospel of Christ.” Hence even under the “exsisting sircomstances,” Hovey wrote, “I have a most . . . glorious hope of meeting my Dead friendes, to clap handes in eternal felisety.”⁸⁶

Like the Hoveys, Sally Randall and her family endured death and bereavement in Nauvoo. Randall came to the city as a convert from Warsaw, New York in September of 1843, bringing two young sons to join James, her husband. Like many other Saints, she left behind a family of unbelievers, and her letters home reflect both contentment in her new life and sorrow at separation from her parents and siblings. Shortly after Sally arrived, she wrote to her family about the prospects of her new home: generally she was impressed with what she saw but noted that “it is verry sickly here at presant with fevers . . . and ague and measles, and a great many children die with them.”⁸⁷ Less than a month later, her ten-year-old son, Eli, was feverishly ill and fourteen-year-old George had already passed away. She wrote home again, “with a trembling hand, and a heart full of grief and sorrow,” relating the child’s dying spasms, the family’s grief, and her own distress. “It seemed as though my heart would break,” she lamented, “but the Lord hath given and he hath taken his own to him-

⁸⁵Joseph G. Hovey, Journal, October 6, 1839, MS 1576, LDS Church History Library.

⁸⁶Ibid., December 17, 1842.

⁸⁷Sally Randall, Letter to family, October 6, 1843, typescript, MS 3821, LDS Church History Library.

self.”⁸⁸ This was pious wisdom, but disconsolate.

Although Eli recovered, Sally Randall was still mourning over George’s death the next April. Rather than surrendering to her grief, though, she was starting to find reasons for hope and solace. Since George’s death, she told her family, “his father has been baptized for him.” “What a glorious thing it is, that we believe and receive the fulness of the gospel as it is preached now and can be baptized for all our dead friends.” Feeling this consolation, Randall asked her family for the names of all their deceased relatives and invited their help.⁸⁹ If they would join the Church and come to Nauvoo, she offered, they could help her in the work of redemption. “I intend to do what I can to save my friends,” she said, “and I should be verry glad if some of you would come and help me for it is a great work to do alone.” In particular, Sally wanted to know from her mother whether a deceased sister had reached the age of eight—the age of accountability when children came to need baptism. If they did their part, she promised, both she and her mother could have their children “just as we laid them down in thare graves.” She acknowledged, “I expect you will think this strange doctrine, but you will find it is true.”⁹⁰

As a new convert, William Appleby came to Nauvoo in May of 1841, where he earned about vicarious baptism in a personal conversation with Joseph Smith. Visiting the Prophet in his home, Appleby inspected the written revelations for himself, along with the Joseph’s curious Egyptian artifacts. After reading the revelation, hearing Smith explain proxy baptism, and “seeing the glorious principle of the Gospel, and what a plan has been devised for the salvation of

⁸⁸Sally Randall, Letter to family, November 12, 1843, LDS Church History Library.

⁸⁹Correspondence from Nauvoo requesting genealogical information for baptisms became common. Leonard, *Nauvoo*, 255 note 89. See also Ellen Wadsworth Parker, Letter to family, February 1, 1843, MS 5539 8, LDS Church History Library.

⁹⁰Sally Randall, Letter to family, April 21, 1844. A short biography and Randall’s letters have been published in Kenneth W. Godfrey, Audrey W. Godfrey, and Jill Mulvay Derr, eds., *Women’s Voices: An Untold Story of the Latter-day Saints, 1930–1900* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1982), 134–46. See also Jordan Watkins and Steven C. Harper, “‘It Seems That All Nature Mourns’: Sally Randall’s Response to the Murder of Joseph and Hyrum Smith,” *BYU Studies* 46, no. 1 (2007): 95–100.

man,” Appleby went straight to the Mississippi River with William Marks, president of the Nauvoo Stake. There he was “buried six times in the ‘likeness of my Saviour’ beneath the liquid wave” in behalf of his grandparents, his father, a brother, and two sisters. He was confirmed for each of them.

As Appleby experienced it, this was not just as the accomplishment of a necessary rite, but a deeply gratifying personal experience. “Oh! What a glorious time it was for me, to think I could become an instrument . . . in the hands of God, in setting captive spirits free.” He exulted, “Glory and honour be ascribed to God, for this privilege, the Glorious principles of the Gospel,—and for all I enjoy.” A few days later, Appleby had a dream in which his dead father appeared to him. He often dreamed of his father, he wrote, but typically the settings were “situations, or attitudes that I would sometimes awake out of my slumber, and was glad to find it was but a dream.” This time he dreamed that his father embraced him and comforted him with loving words. When Appleby kissed his father’s cheek, he “manifested pleasure, and joy, and disappeared!” This seemed to Appleby a manifestation that his proxy efforts had been effective. “Since the Baptism,” he noted meaningfully, “I have dreamed but little concerning him.”⁹¹

The doctrine of baptism for the dead also inspired Church leaders. When they learned of the new teaching, Apostles Wilford Woodruff and Brigham Young felt a similar sense of empowerment. Young said that he believed the doctrine even “before anything was done about it in this Church. . . . It made me glad,” he said, “that I could go forth, and officiate for my fathers, for my mothers, and for my ancestors . . . who have not had the privilege of helping themselves.”⁹² Woodruff, who became perhaps the greatest champion of rituals for the dead, said that, upon learning the concept, his mind turned instantly to his mother, who had died while he was an infant. If he could help save her, he thought, “this alone would pay me for all the labors of my life.” “Well might the Prophet say,” he reflected, that “God has fulfilled His promise that in the last days He would raise up saviors upon Mount Zion.” By the end of his life, Woodruff would perform or

⁹¹Appleby, *Autobiography and Journal*, 1, 74–79.

⁹²Brigham Young, “Speech Delivered By President B. Young . . . April 6, 1845,” *Times and Seasons* 6, no. 12 (July 1, 1845): 953–55.

arrange proxy rituals for more than four thousand dead relatives.⁹³

A “GLORIOUS” DOCTRINE

For William Appleby and other theologically-minded Mormons, the marvelous spiritual experience of baptism for their dead only served to heighten its logical appeal. If the initial strangeness of the idea could be set aside, Appleby thought, its deep rationality would be seen. “No doubt but this Idea will meet with ridicule from many,” he mused in his journal, “but let us first examine, and see if it is not rationable, and reasonable, and according to the Scriptures.”⁹⁴ In nineteenth-century America, the prevalent standards of truth were common sense and congruence with scripture, and baptism for the dead was subject to both of these tests.

From the first, Joseph Smith had treated proxy baptism as if it were self-evident from the Bible. Although other scriptural analysts disagreed, he was unapologetic. To some in Nauvoo who evidently found it difficult to accept the doctrine based on its appearance in a singular verse, Smith recordedly answered: “If their is one word of the Lord that supports the doctrin, it is enough to make it a true doctrin.” As a result of its presence in the Bible, vicarious baptism was, he insisted, “the burden of the scriptures.”⁹⁵ When skepticism persisted, he retorted in frustration: “The doctrin of Baptism for the dead is

⁹³Wilford Woodruff, “Talks to the Sisters,” *Deseret Weekly*, February 24, 1894, 288; “Discourse,” *Deseret Weekly*, April 25, 1891, 554. Because of Woodruff’s great enthusiasm for proxy baptism, Brigham Young commissioned him to dedicate the baptistery of the St. George Temple when completed in 1877. Later, while Woodruff presided over that temple and then over the Church generally, he placed great emphasis on the significance of proxy rituals and mindfulness of the dead. His influence helped rekindle Mormons’ interest in the redemption of the dead and in temples generally. Richard E. Bennett, “Wilford Woodruff and the Rise of Temple Consciousness among the Latter-day Saints, 1877–84,” in *Banner of the Gospel: Wilford Woodruff*, edited by Alexander L. Baugh and Susan Easton Black (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 2010): 233–50. On the decline of baptism for the dead in the Reorganized Latter Day Saint tradition, see Roger D. Launius, “An Ambivalent Rejection: Baptism for the Dead and the Reorganized Church Experience,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 23 (Summer 1990): 61–84.

⁹⁴Appleby, *Autobiography and Journal*, 76.

⁹⁵*Ibid.*, 78.

clearly shown in the new testament & if the doctrin is not good then throw away the new testament. [B]ut if it is the word of God, then let the doctrin be acknowledged.”⁹⁶

Mormons quickly found additional scriptural evidence to corroborate the teaching. By the 1840 October general conference, instruction about the doctrine was adducing elements of 1 Peter for additional support. Alluded to in “The Vision” in 1832, the epistle made unclear references to “preaching” to dead spirits, which were “in prison.” This preaching, supposedly performed by Jesus Christ, enabled these spirits to be “judged according to the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit” (1 Pet. 3:18–20, 4:6). Now, however, in light of baptism for the dead, these passages about evangelizing the dead took on new and more appreciable meaning: Mormons could see that they outlined the theological function of proxy baptism precisely. Spirits of the dead imprisoned in the afterlife did indeed receive instruction there in the restored, Mormon gospel. The efforts of living kindred proxies, meanwhile, supplied the ritual mechanism by which they could meet the formal criteria for salvation. In this way the dead were fully “judged according to the flesh,” and yet could live “according to God in the spirit.”⁹⁷ For the Latter-day Saints that contemplated the subject, there was no shortage of scripture that could be applied in favor the new doctrine.⁹⁸ Baptism for the dead soon became enmeshed in a web of scriptural support.

Mormons also found baptism for the dead in the prophetic poetry of the Old Testament, intertwined with the language of Zion. According to the scripture, ancient Obadiah had envisioned that in future day of redemption, “saviours shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the Lord’s”

⁹⁶Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 109, 78, 213.

⁹⁷In 1918, LDS Church President Joseph F. Smith described a vision that offered further clarification of “preaching to the dead.” His account of the vision “the Lord [Jesus Christ] went not in person among the wicked and the disobedient who had rejected the truth, to teach them; But behold, from among the righteous, he organized his forces and appointed messengers, clothed with power and authority, and commissioned them to go forth and carry the light of the gospel to them that were in darkness, even to all the spirits of men; and thus was the gospel preached to the dead” (D&C 138:29–30).

⁹⁸Appleby, *Autobiography and Journal*, 76–78.

(Obad. 1:21). As the modern children of Zion, Mormons could evidently claim this ennobling title of “saviours.” And indeed that was part of the grand vision that Smith articulated, a vision that incorporated the Spirit of Elijah, the gathering of the Saints, and the building up of Zion. As part of this, Joseph Smith said, the Saints must “come up as Saviors on mount Zion.” As Samuel Brown has explained, “For the early Latter-day Saints, a savior on Mount Zion was an individual responsible for ensuring a place for his adoptive kindred in the society of the blessed at the time of final judgment. The Saints were human extensions of Christ.”⁹⁹ “But how are they to become Saviors on Mount Zion?” Joseph Smith asked rhetorically in 1844. By giving themselves fully to the work of salvation for their dead. “By building their temples[,] erecting their Baptismal fonts & going forth & receiving all the ordinances, Baptisms, Confirmations, washings[,] anointings ordinations[,] & sealing powers upon our heads in behalf of all our Progenitors who are dead.”¹⁰⁰ Baptizing for the dead and then seeing the work to its finish was the only way, he said, that the Saints could become worthy of the title.¹⁰¹

To be credible, baptism for the dead not only needed scriptural sanction, it had to make sense. Joseph was confident that it did when he wrote to his apostles in late 1840. “I presume the doctrine of ‘baptism for the dead’ has ere this reached your ears, and may have raised some inquiries in your mind respecting the same,” he wrote. He explained that he was unable to expound at length in writing but assumed that even “without enlarging on the subject you will un-

⁹⁹Brown, “Early Mormon Adoption Theology,” 47.

¹⁰⁰Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 318. In the months before his assassination, Joseph Smith taught that all of the saving sacraments he had introduced while in Nauvoo would need to be performed for the dead as well as baptism. *Ibid.*, 318, 363, 368, 379. Its implementation, however, did not occur in Nauvoo while Church members were preoccupied with completing the temple and performing their own ordinances. The performance of the rest of the temple ordinances for the dead, including the endowment and sealing rituals that Smith introduced in Nauvoo, began after the Saints’ migration to Utah and the dedication of the St. George Temple in 1877. Richard E. Bennett, “‘Line upon Line, Precept upon Precept’: Reflections on the 1877 Commencement of the Performance of Endowments and Sealings for the Dead,” *BYU Studies* 44, no. 3 (2005): 39–77.

¹⁰¹*Ibid.*, 77.

doubtedly see its consistency, and reasonableness.” The new revelation on baptism for the dead, he explained, merely “presents the gospel of Christ in probably a more enlarged scale than some have received it.”¹⁰² Having listened to him present the doctrine in person, Phoebe Woodruff attested that “Brother Joseph makes this doctrine look verry plain and consisten[t].”¹⁰³

Not all were sure they saw the consistency. Baptizing for the dead ran against intuition in too many ways. Were the dead, whose mortal time of proving was over, really able to benefit from this act? “It is no more incredible that God should *save* the dead, than that he should *raise* the dead,” Smith answered. “There is never a time when the spirit is too old to approach God.”¹⁰⁴ Or, as another apologist for the doctrine reasoned: “Inasmuch then as the gospel is preached to the dead, they have a capacity and agency, to believe and in some way obey it, or the contrary.”¹⁰⁵ Others balked at Smith’s precept of surrogacy—the principle that one person could legitimately represent another in religious ceremonies. But Smith countered with more deductive logic about human agency. “If we can *baptize* a man in the name of the Father of the Son & of the Holy Ghost for the remission of sins,” he pointed out, “it is just as much our privilege to act as an agent & *be baptized* for the remission of sins for & in behalf of our dead kindred who have not herd the gospel or fulness of it.”¹⁰⁶ In other words, if one could represent God in administering the ordinance, one could certainly represent another person in receiving it. Smith had complete confidence in the doctrine’s coherence. “I have the truth,” he once said, speaking of his insight into baptism, “& I am at the defiance of the world to contradict.”¹⁰⁷

Many of the Latter-day Saints could see that the idea of vicarious salvation and baptism for the dead supplied crucial pieces of a long-

¹⁰²Joseph Smith, Letter to the Council of the Twelve, December 15, 1840, ID 588, *The Joseph Smith Papers*, <http://josephsmithpapers.org> (accessed January 15, 2013).

¹⁰³Phoebe Woodruff, Letter to Wilford Woodruff, October 6, 1840.

¹⁰⁴Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 77; emphasis in original.

¹⁰⁵G[ustavus] H[ills], “Baptism for the Dead,” *Times and Seasons* 3, no. 13 (May 1, 1841): 397.

¹⁰⁶Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 109–10; emphasis added.

¹⁰⁷*Ibid.*, 354.

standing theological puzzle. For one thing, it addressed the inevitable injustice that had long been a problem in Christian schemes of salvation. In 1841, Joseph Smith illustrated the dilemma by offering a metaphor about “two men, brothers, equally intelligent, learned, virtuous and lovely, walking in uprightness and in all good conscience.” One, he postulated, died unenlightened and unaware of “the gospel of reconciliation,” while the other embraced it and became “the heir of eternal life. Shall the one become a partaker of glory,” he asked, “and the other be consigned to hopeless perdition?” Contemporary religion would say so. But in fact such an idea was “worse than atheism,” Joseph declared, because it betrayed God’s affections for the “honest in heart.”¹⁰⁸

This dilemma of the unbaptized dead was also captured by *Times and Seasons* associate editor Gustavus Hills, in one of several editorials published to expound and defend baptism for the dead in the 1840s. Hills, a former Methodist preacher, urged his readers simply to compare baptism for the dead with “the horrible views of the partial bigot,” who could take pleasure in the thought of eternal felicity while other innocent people suffered. He agreed with English convert Joseph Fielding, who said that he found “a wide contrast” between the vision of vicarious salvation in Mormonism and the “narrow, contracted views” of other Christians.¹⁰⁹ But Hill also observed that proxy baptism exposed the heresy of Universalists, those “impartial liberalist[s]” who rejected the reality of damnation and presumed to crowd “the pious and the profane” into heaven together.¹¹⁰ For both exclusive sectarians and inclusive liberals, Mormons thought, baptism for the dead was the key to understanding Christian justice.

Although Mormons in Nauvoo were scarcely familiar with world religions, they sensed that the news of vicarious salvation had global significance. A long and remarkably broad-minded editorial published in 1842 acknowledged the deep religious conflict that divided

¹⁰⁸Ibid., 78.

¹⁰⁹Joseph Fielding, Letter to Ebenezer Robinson, *Times and Seasons* 3, no. 5 (January 1, 1842): 649.

¹¹⁰H[ills], “Baptism for the Dead,” 398. Hills also addressed the question of whether the salvation that baptisms for the dead brought about would be compulsory. “It may be asked, will this baptism by proxy necessarily save the dead? we answer no: neither will the same necessarily save the living. But this, with the other requisites will save both the living [and] the dead, and God will raise them up to glorify him together.”

the world. The “Mussulman [Muslim],” “the Heathen,” “the Jew,” and “the Christian” all held mutually exclusive systems of belief, it noted, which they guarded jealously. God, however, was not bound by “any of these contracted feelings that influence the children of men.” “He knows the situation of both the living, and the dead, and has made ample provision for their redemption, according to their several circumstances, and the laws of the kingdom of God.” Mormons were confident that a review of the Bible and insight into the doctrines of vicarious salvation would show that God would deal with all nations fairly. The people of the earth would be judged in their own terms, whether they lived in “England, America, Spain, Turkey, [or] India,” a promise that seemed to overcome Christian exclusivism.¹¹¹ This great, even global, equity lay at the heart of the doctrine’s appeal. “Is not this a glorious doctrine?” Vilate Kimball asked her husband. “You see there is a chance for all.”¹¹²

Because it made clear precisely how God provided a chance for all, baptism for the dead also absolved God’s character, enabling Mormons to throw off the last residual fears of a stern, capricious Puritan deity. Wilford Woodruff said he experienced baptism for the dead “like a shaft of light from the throne of God to our hearts. It opened a field wide as eternity to our minds. It enlightened my mind and gave me great joy. It appeared to me that the God who revealed that principle unto man was wise, just and true, possessed both the best of attributes and good sense and knowledge. I felt he was consistent with both love, mercy, justice and judgment, and I felt to love the Lord more than ever before in my life.”¹¹³

Likewise, in his editorial on the same topic, Gustavus Hills expressed his feeling that baptism for the dead was “perfectly consistent with reason, honorable to the divine character, and in accordance with the desires and wishes of every truly pious and benevolent mind.”¹¹⁴ Joseph Fielding reflected that “every step I take in surveying the plan of heaven and the wisdom and goodness of God, my heart feels glad. But when I have listened to the teachings of the ser-

¹¹¹“Baptism for the Dead,” *Times and Seasons* 3, no. 12 (April 15, 1842): 759.

¹¹²Vilate Kimball, Letter to Heber C. Kimball, October 11, 1840.

¹¹³Wilford Woodruff, “Remarks,” *Deseret News*, May 27, 1857, 91.

¹¹⁴H[ills], “Baptism for the Dead,” 399.

vants of God under the new covenant and the principle of Baptism for the Dead[,] the feelings of my soul were such as I cannot describe.”¹¹⁵ These feelings, the perception that baptism for the dead ennobled God and revealed his essential benevolence, aligned with Joseph Smith’s own experience. Having passed through his own crucibles and bereavements, Joseph agreed that “this doctrine appears glorious, inasmuch as it exhibits the greatness of divine compassion and benevolence in the extent of the plan of human salvation.”¹¹⁶

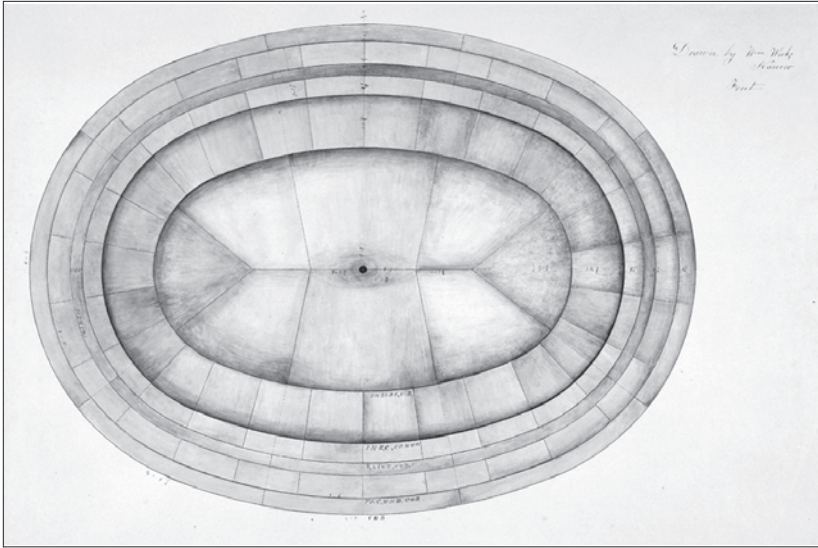
“THIS ORDINANCE BELONGETH TO MY HOUSE”

The commandment from God to build a temple in Nauvoo came in an omnibus revelation in January 1841, confirming plans that were underway already. As the revelation to Joseph Smith, given in the voice of God, explained, a temple was needed in Nauvoo for the same reasons that the Church had needed one in Kirtland—to facilitate the restoration of additional knowledge, power, and ordinances, “even the fulness of the priesthood.” But a temple in Nauvoo was also needed for an additional reason, without precedent. The revelation specified that it must also be built because “a baptismal font there is not upon the earth; that they, my saints, may be baptized for those who are dead.” Because of their poverty, the revelation said, Mormons in Nauvoo had been permitted to baptize for their dead in the river, but that was changing. After a “sufficient” period of time, river baptisms for the dead would no longer be recognized because, as the revelation explained, “this ordinance belongeth to my house.” After that, only baptisms performed in a temple could be legitimate. If the Saints did not comply with the requirements, they would be “rejected as a Church with your dead.”

The revelation made clear that the new ritual of proxy baptism, like other rituals that had previously been practiced in Ohio, was designed for sacred space. Indeed, as the revelation indicated, *all* that was sacred in Mormonism emanated from the temple. All of the revelations and teachings—everything necessary to establish Zion—was rooted there. And the temple was especially a house of rituals and ordinances. Washings, anointings, baptisms for the dead, and other rituals still to be revealed were all centered there—“ordained by the ordi-

¹¹⁵Fielding to Robinson, January 1, 1842, 649.

¹¹⁶Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 77–78.



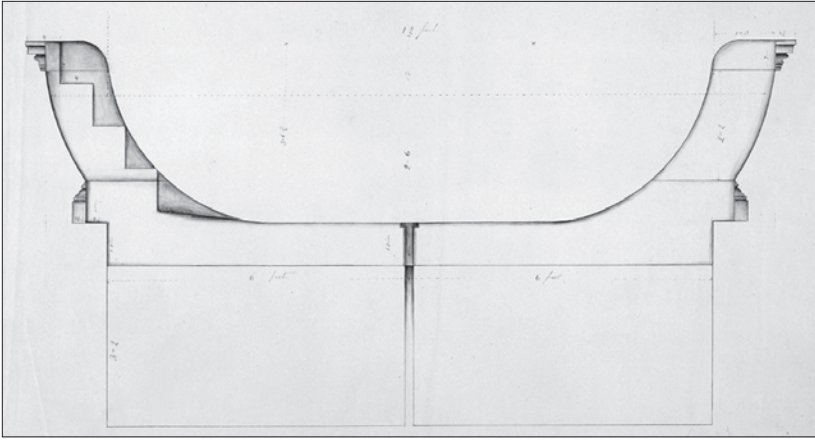
William Weeks, Nauvoo Temple "Font," overhead view showing dimensions, drain, and successive rings of moulding, Architect's Office (1842–93), Nauvoo Temple drawings, circa 1841–46, MS 679 10, Item 6, LDS Church History Library. It is likely but uncertain that these drawings refer to the original wooden font, which was ready for use in November 1841. Courtesy of LDS Church History Library.

nance of my holy house, which my people are always commanded to build unto my holy name."¹¹⁷ It was only natural that baptism for the dead should become a function of the temple, since the temple was the seat of all of Mormonism's sacred enterprises.¹¹⁸

Temple construction began immediately, and once the excavation and foundational work were complete, and the cornerstones had been laid with great ceremony, a baptismal font was the first priority.

¹¹⁷Jensen, Turley, and Lorimer, *Revelations and Translations, Vol. 2: Published Revelations*, 654–73 (D&C 124).

¹¹⁸Despite the shift of two forms of baptism—baptism for the dead and baptism for health—to the temple, convert baptism and rebaptism were not absorbed into temple worship. On rebaptism in the Nauvoo era, see D. Michael Quinn, "The Practice of Rebaptism at Nauvoo," *BYU Studies* 18, no. 2 (1978): 226–32.



William Weeks, Nauvoo Temple Baptismal Font side-view sketch indicating dimensions of the basin and mouldings and the steps providing access. Architect's Office (1842–93), Nauvoo Temple drawings, circa 1841–46, MS 679 10, Item 5, LDS Church History Library. Courtesy of LDS Church History Library.

A peculiar undertaking, it was situated mostly below ground level, near the east end of the temple's cellar. The design for the structure, approved by Joseph Smith, was drawn by the young architect William Weeks, whose superb sketches had also been selected for the temple itself. The font was to be made of hand-carved wood; and over the course of the next two months, Weeks, woodworkers Elijah Fordham and John Carling, and others worked to execute the design. Weeks helped with the initial proportioning, then turned the effort over to Fordham and others for detail work. Construction of the structure lasted about two months, and then the woodcarvers continued to work on the baptistery's ornamentation.¹¹⁹

As the font took shape in the fall of 1841, the grace period that had been granted to the Saints in the temple revelation suddenly

¹¹⁹Joseph Smith's clerks, including William Clayton, kept a thorough record of the temple's construction in "History of the Nauvoo Temple," MS 3365, LDS Church History Library. For modern histories, see Leonard, *Nauvoo*, 233–65; Don F. Colvin, *Nauvoo Temple: A Story of Faith* (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 2002); and Matthew S. McBride, *A House for the Most High: The Story of the Original Nauvoo Temple* (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2002). J. Earl Arrington, "William Weeks: Architect of the

ended. During the October conference, after a sermon full of instruction on baptism for the dead and affirmations of its importance, Joseph Smith unexpectedly announced that baptisms for the dead would be suspended until the temple was complete, saying emphatically that it was the will of the Lord.¹²⁰ Some Saints were initially disappointed at what seemed to be a major delay. Helen Soby wrote to her father that she had intended to be baptized for his mother, “but the word of the Lord is unto us this day that we cannot be Baptized any more in the Mississippi River for our Dead.” As she understood it, the temple wouldn’t be done in less than a year; but when it was, “then we will be baptized in that.”¹²¹ Fortunately for the Saints, however, it soon became clear that baptisms for the dead could go forward before the rest of the temple was completed. Although the font simply sat in the unfinished temple’s cellar, and the temple walls stood only a few feet tall, the arrangement evidently satisfied the commandment for the ritual to become part of the Lord’s house.

The new font was dedicated November 8. Workmen dug a well in the opposite end of the temple cellar from which they drew water for the font; and Joseph Smith invited Reuben McBride, a young Latter-day Saint visiting Nauvoo, to act as the first proxy before he returned home to Ohio. During the evening ceremony, Joseph conducted the dedication and Brigham Young entered the font and performed the baptisms.¹²² Also present at the event was Samuel Rolfe, president of the quorum of priests in Nauvoo. Rolfe had a badly infected finger, and a doctor had advised him to have an operation. At the dedication, however, Joseph Smith directed Rolfe to

Nauvoo Temple,” *BYU Studies* 19, no. 3 (Spring 1979): 337–60.

¹²⁰“There shall be no more baptisms for the dead, until the ordinance can be attended to in the font of the Lord’s House; and the church shall not hold another general conference, until they can meet in said house. *For thus saith the Lord!*” Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 79; emphasis in original.

¹²¹Helen S. Soby, Letter to her father, October 3, 1841, MS 9159, LDS Church History Library.

¹²²Alexander L. Baugh, “Blessed Is the First Man Baptised in This Font’: Reuben McBride, First Proxy to Be Baptized for the Dead in the Nauvoo Temple,” *Mormon Historical Studies* 3, no. 2 (Fall 2002): 253–61.

step forward instead and wash himself in the font, promising him it would be healed. Rolfe did so, dipping in his hands, and, William Clayton recorded, “In one week afterwards his hand was perfectly healed. After this time,” Clayton continued, “baptisms was continued in the font, and many realized great blessings, both spiritually and physically.”¹²³

With the font in operation, the experience of proxy baptism changed significantly. The new arrangements intensified focus on the rising temple. Rather than stepping into the silt of the Mississippi, proxies gathered to what was simultaneously a sacred edifice and a construction site. They descended into the cellar, a place “underneath where the living are wont to assemble” and symbolic of death.¹²⁴ Then they climbed the stairs, grasping a wooden handrail, and lowered themselves into the consecrated vessel. Sabbath-day crowds still gathered to watch and to participate, particularly while the baptistery level was still exposed; but communal baptisms, with many ordinances going on concurrently, fell off.¹²⁵

The font itself heightened the experience. William Weeks’s de-

¹²³Clayton, *History of the Nauvoo Temple*, 21. See also Clayton’s entry in Joseph Smith’s personal record: Jessee, Ashurst-McGee, and Jensen, *Journals, Vol. 1: 1832–1839*, 1:73. Baptism and the temple font were widely associated with healing until well into the twentieth century. Jonathan A. Stapley and Kristine L. Wright, “‘They Shall Be Made Whole’: A History of Baptism for Health,” *Journal of Mormon History* 34, no. 4 (Fall 2008): 69–112.

¹²⁴Andrew H. Hedges, Alex D. Smith, and Richard Lloyd Anderson, eds., *Journals, Vol. 2, December 1841–April 1843*, Vol. 2 of the Journal series of THE JOSEPH SMITH PAPERS, general editors Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman (Salt Lake City: Church Historian’s Press, 2011), 147 (D&C 128:13).

¹²⁵Although the font became established as the designated site, baptisms for the dead in the Mississippi River continued until at least 1843, and likely for as long as the Saints were in Nauvoo. Records indicate that the river was used when font was closed for maintenance and in other cases. See “Minutes of Elders’ Conference in Nauvoo,” *Times and Seasons* 4, no. 10 (April 1, 1843): 158; Scott G. Kenney, ed., *Wilford Woodruff’s Journal, 1833–1898*, 9 vols. (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1983–85), 2:455; Charlotte Haven, “A Girl’s Letters from Nauvoo,” *Overland Monthly* 16, no. 96 (December 1890): 629–30; “Nauvoo—We Spent a Sabbath with the Mor-

sign was redolent with the symbolism of ancient Israel and well suited to Joseph Smith's vision of a modern Zion. Taking a page straight from 1 Kings, the font featured twelve broad-shouldered oxen, standing two and four abreast in the cardinal directions. They bore on their backs a deep, oval basin like the scripture's "molten sea."¹²⁶ The twelve oxen, "copied after the most beautiful five year old steer that could be found in the country," represented each of the tribes of Israel; their orientation reflected the all-encompassing scope of the redemptive work.¹²⁷ For a place and people unused to such ornamentation, the whole structure, seven feet high, stood as if transported from Solomon's temple. If Joseph Smith wanted to dignify the ritual and reinforce to the Saints their identity as the modern Israel, the new font suited his purpose.

The peculiar font quickly became a visitors' attraction. After visiting Nauvoo in 1844, one correspondent acknowledged that the font intrigued him, suggesting that once the oxen and laver were gilded, as was intended, "this unique apparatus of the Church . . . will be one of the most striking artificial curiosities in this country." The craftsmanship of the twelve oxen in particular revealed "a degree of ingenuity, skill, and perseverance that would redound to the reputation of an artist in any community." The baptistery as a whole was evocative, summoning images of Mormon priests in long robes, leading "a solemn procession of worshippers through the somber avenues of the basement story, chanting as they go."¹²⁸ Another visitor praised the temple's unfinished exterior and siting but criticized the design of the baptistery as tawdry and bizarre. It was one of the most "absurd and out-of-place contrivances, that human folly could have devised for man or mockery," he insisted. "Neither tasteful in design, nor in keeping," it was adorned with flimsy and ostentatious woodwork finish-

mons," *New York Spectator*, August 23, 1843, 4.

¹²⁶The basin, sixteen feet long by twelve feet wide, was, as one visitor explained, "large enough for two priests to officiate at the rite of baptism, for which it is intended, at once." By 1843, a water pump had been devised to fill it. "The Prairies, Nauvoo, Joe Smith, the Temple, the Mormons, &c," *New York Weekly Express*, September 29, 1843, 5.

¹²⁷Historian's Office, *History of the Church*, 1839-[ca.1882], Addenda to Book C-1, 44, CR 100 102, LDS Church History Library.

¹²⁸"The Mormon City," *New York Spectator*, November 9, 1844, 2.

ings—in all “a most perfect piece of ginger-bread workmanship and wasteful gimcrack.”¹²⁹

As the font and the temple attracted attention, the idea of baptism for the dead continued to settle in Mormons’ minds. The Latter-day Saints were building not only a temple, but a vision of its meaning, and some of them attempted to do so through poetry. The hymnist Joel H. Johnson’s piece “Baptism for the Dead,” was printed in the *Times and Seasons* in October 1841. Its terse lines urged the Saints to recognize how their rite of proxy baptism gave them common cause with Jesus Christ:

Now, O! ye saints, rejoice to day
The Lord has to his saints revealed,
That you can saviors be,
As anciently he did.
For all your dead, who will obey
The gospel and be free.¹³⁰

In 1842, Eliza R. Snow, the eloquent poetess, helped to copy revelations on baptism for the dead; and a month or two later, she wrote “Apostrophe to Death,” a confrontation of death itself. “What art thou, Death?” the poem demanded, rehearsing the universal terrors of mortality. The speaker claimed, however, to find a new change in Death’s fearsome countenance:

But thou art chang’d—the terror of thy looks—
the darkness that encompass’d thee, is gone;
There is no frightfulness about thee now. [. . .]
Seen as thou art, by inspiration’s light,
Thou has no look the righteous need to fear,
With all thy ghastliness—amid the grief
Thy presence brings. [. . .]
Art thou a tyrant, holding the black reins
Of destiny that binds the course
Of man’s existence? No: thou art, O Death!

¹²⁹“Nauvoo and Joe Smith,” *Hampshire Gazette* (Northampton, Mass.), August 22, 1843, 1.

¹³⁰J[oe] H. Johnson, “Baptism for the Dead,” *Times and Seasons* 2, no. 23 (October 1, 1841): 564. Johnson is best known for his later hymn, “High on a Mountain Top,” composed in 1853.

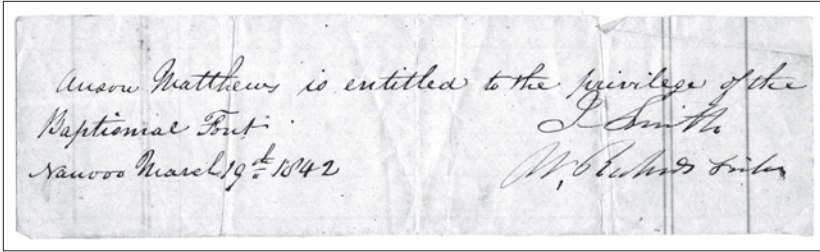
A haggard porter charg'd to wait before
The Grave, life's portal to the worlds on high.¹³¹

The new revelations and the doctrine of baptism for the dead diminished Death, leaving it merely a shadow of its former self.

The relocation of proxy baptism to the temple also brought changes to the dynamics surrounding the practice. The ritual came more fully under Church control and became part of the larger temple project. Joseph Smith had explained that, in building the temple, the Saints would be expected to tithe toward the project, giving materials and also laboring one day in ten. Not all contributed equally, however, and the apostles, with newly expanded authority in Nauvoo, broached the problem to the Saints in a circular to the Church in December 1841. Acknowledging that baptism for the dead was “one of privileges which is particularly attracting the notice of the Saints at the present moment,” the letter raised the question of the “propriety of baptizing those who have not been obedient, and assisted to build the place for baptism.” The apostles went on to express their conclusion that it would be “unreasonable” to administer the ordinance to those who had not contributed to the temple. If the Saints failed to build the temple and the Church was rejected “with her dead,” the letter insisted, then all baptisms would be pointless anyway.¹³² Those who wished to have the privilege of proxy baptism and to redeem their dead kindred,

¹³¹Jill Mulvay Derr and Karen Lynn Davidson, eds., *Eliza R. Snow: The Complete Poetry* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press/Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2009), 223. For more Nauvoo poetry related to baptism for the dead, see also W. W. Phelps, “The Temple of God at Nauvoo,” *Times and Seasons* 3, no. 16 (June 15, 1842): 830; and Wilson Law, *Times and Seasons* 5, no. 2 (January 15, 1844): 412–13. A poem attributed to Joseph Smith, a versified rendition of “The Vision” of 1832, also touched on the subject. “The Vision,” *Times and Seasons* 4, no. 6 (February 1, 1843): 84. Though attributed to Smith, scholars consider W. W. Phelps as the probable author. Michael Hicks, “Joseph Smith, W. W. Phelps, and the Poetic Paraphrase of ‘The Vision,’” *Journal of Mormon History* 20, no. 2 (Fall 1994): 70.

¹³²Brigham Young et al., “Baptism for the Dead,” *Times and Seasons* 3, no. 4 (December 15, 1841): 625–27. In 1844, John Taylor preached that “a man who has not paid his tithing is unfit to be baptized for his dead.” “Minutes of October Conference,” *Times and Seasons* 5, no. 19 (October 15,



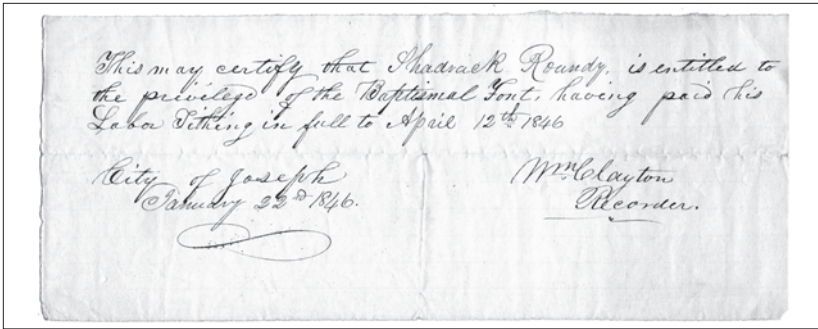
This recommend certifies: “Anson Matthews is entitled to the privilege of the Baptismal Font, signed “J. Smith and W. Richards” on March 19, 1842. Sturdevant and Mathews Family Collection, 1807–53, MS 10304 1. Courtesy LDS Church History Library.

in other words, would have to contribute their fair share.

As a way of tracking contributions and regulating privileges, Church authorities eventually began issuing certificates granting access to the font. This was a new variation of the practice of issuing documentation, as Church leaders routinely did, to Church members who were baptized, ordained, called to preach or deed property, or in other circumstances. The font certificates, small handwritten slips of paper, endorsed with a signature, indicated that bearer was “entitled to the privilege of the Baptismal Font, having paid his labor & property tithing in full.”¹³³ Hence, the font and its promised blessings became an incentive for the Saints to heed the revelations and the in-

1844): 685. Critic Reverend Daniel P. Kidder responded to the circular, accusing Church leaders of using the baptismal font coercively. Kidder, *Mormonism and the Mormons: A Historical View of the Rise and Progress of the Sect Self-Styled Latter-Day Saints* (New York: Lane & Sanford, 1842), 249–51.

¹³³Font Certificate (Benjamin Brown, 1845), Benjamin Brown Family Collection, 1819–2002, MS 17647, LDS Church History Library. One could say that the Nauvoo font certificates constitute the origins of the modern LDS temple recommend. A number of such certificates survive in archival holdings, dating from as early as March 1842. Initially these credentials were issued by scribes under Joseph Smith’s imprimatur. See, for example, Font Certificate (Anson Mathews, 1842), Sturdevant and Mathews Family Collection, 1807–53, MS 10304, LDS Church History Library. Later, the certificates bore only the signature of the temple recorder. See Font Certificate (Shadrach Roundy, 1846), Shadrach Roundy Papers, 1840–57, MS 16912, LDS Church History Library. For additional examples, see Leonard,



This more formally written recommend reads: "This may certify that Shadrack Roundy is entitled to the privilege of the Baptismal Font, having paid his Labor Tithing in full to April 12th 1846." It is dated February 22nd 1846, in the "City of Joseph," and signed Wm. Clayton, Recorder. Shadrach Roundy Papers, 1840–57, MS 16912 2. Courtesy LDS Church History Library.

struction of Church leaders, gathering in Nauvoo. They were told to bring their materials and a commitment to build the temple with them.

A "VERY PARTICULAR" ORDER

The transformation of baptism for the dead into a temple ordinance was only the most prominent of many adjustments to the ritual during the 1840s. When Jane Neyman became Joseph Smith's illustration in teaching the doctrine and then one of the first to undertake the ordinance in September 1840, the practice had few protocols and little oversight. In a deposition made to the Church Historian's Office many years later, Neyman recounted merely finding an ordained elder, Harvey Olmstead, to go with her to the river and perform the ordinance. Hearing of it later, Joseph Smith asked how the ritual had been conducted, then simply affirmed that "father Olmstead had it right." Vienna Jacques, who also contributed to the deposition, remembered that when Jane was baptized, she (Vienna) rode her horse into the river, and listened "to hear what the ceremony would be."¹³⁴

In the ensuing years, the administration of proxy baptisms tightened up dramatically. What began as a ritual available as de-

Nauvoo, 256 note 93. I have not found any font certificates issued to women.

¹³⁴Jane Neyman and Vienna Jacques, Statement, November 29, 1854,

sired to individual families quickly became a religious imperative carefully regulated by the Church. Within a few months of first being taught, even, the ordinance was already becoming regimented as Church leaders sought to manage the saving work that the Saints were eager to do. Joseph Smith's instructions on the practice in the October 1840 conference included a set of parameters intended to guide the Latter-day Saints in their practice of the ritual. Conference attendees came away understanding that baptism for the dead was associated with "a particular order" that should be observed.¹³⁵

Part of this initial order was the directive that the Saints were only to baptize for their dead relatives. So long as the proxy had "been personally acquainted" with the person for whom they wished to be baptized, the work could extend back to four generations—as far as grandparents and great-grandparents. Doing proxy baptisms for family was a privilege that rested with the heads of households and first-born children, but they could delegate if they chose. In line with the revelation that salvation was still available to those who had died without hearing and accepting the restored gospel but "who would have received it, if they had been permitted to tarry," the Saints were also taught that they should perform baptism for their kindred only if they believed that the person would have the disposition to accept the ordinance.¹³⁶ And although they could be baptized for family members, the Saints were generally not to be baptized for acquaintances. If an acquaintance wished for his or her baptism to be performed, he or she would send a messenger from the world of spirits to make it known. In any case, baptism should not be performed for murderers, for, as one Mormon paraphrased Joseph's teaching, "the Lord had other ways of dealing with murderers."¹³⁷ The Saints were also cautioned to be careful that confirmation was performed for each of the baptismal ordinances. So that this order could be ensured, the Saints

Historian's Office.

¹³⁵Vilate Kimball, Letter to Heber C. Kimball, October 11, 1840; Phoebe Woodruff, Letter to Wilford Woodruff, October 6, 1840.

¹³⁶Jessee, Ashurst-McGee, and Jensen, *Journals, Vol. 1: 1832–1839*, 1:168.

¹³⁷Footo, Journal, October 3, 1841, 57.

should not perform the ordinance away from Nauvoo.¹³⁸

As the Saints caught the full vision of vicarious salvation over the next several years, however, some of these original stipulations broke down. The regulation limiting the Saints to four generations of their family gave way to a much more expansive view, in which the work reached “clear back to the apostles day,” and even to the beginning of time.¹³⁹ In addition, the general prohibition on baptizing for non-kindred loved ones loosened up considerably. As early as 1841, hundreds of Latter-day Saints were baptized for nonrelatives they identified as “friends,” and celebrity baptisms of the kind that piqued popular interest were not uncommon. By 1844, Joseph Smith was teaching that “any man that has a friend in eternity can save him,” and that “we may be baptized for those we have much friendship for,” though he still cautioned the Saints to wait on special authorization to officiate for non-kindred, “lest we should run too far.”¹⁴⁰ Although the practice had been confined to Nauvoo, it quickly spread to surrounding settlements, to Kirtland, and possibly further.¹⁴¹

While restrictions changed on who was eligible to receive proxy baptism, there was always a great deal of latitude in who could provide it. In Kirtland and later in Nauvoo, Joseph Smith introduced “higher” temple-related rituals selectively among Church members, but baptism for the dead was always a democratic ordinance, accessible to all. It made no distinctions based on class or standing; hence, the impoverished Joseph and Martha Hovey had as much right to participate in the ordinance as anyone. Some of the most active proxies during the Nauvoo period, such as a man named Nehemiah Brush, were Latter-day Saints who are otherwise obscure.¹⁴² Access to the ritual extended equally to men and women. And, like ordination to the priesthood during the period, baptism for the dead also extended to black Church members. Elijah Abel and Joseph T. Ball, African American converts, both were baptized for the dead in 1840 and

¹³⁸Ibid., Phoebe Woodruff to Wilford Woodruff, October 6, 1840.

¹³⁹Sally Randall, Letter to family, April 21, 1844.

¹⁴⁰Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 346, 368. The term “friend” could also refer to family members in nineteenth-century parlance.

¹⁴¹Baugh, “This Ordinance Belongeth to My House,” 47–58.

¹⁴²Bishop, “What Has Become of Our Fathers?,” 90.

1841.¹⁴³ Anyone with a human body had something to offer those who did not.

Apart from being incorporated into the temple, the most profound changes to proxy baptism came following new insights from Joseph Smith in September 1842. Trying to avoid extradition to Missouri, the Prophet had spent much of the summer in hiding, where he was lonely and had ample time for reflection. Anxious and melancholy because of the attempts to arrest and imprison him once again, his mind turned gratefully to the kindnesses of his friends and family, many of whom, like his father, had died. He found solace in having their names and deeds inscribed in his journal, "The Book of the Law of the Lord." "There are many souls, whom I have loved stronger than death," he wrote. Among them was his brother Alvin, whose virtues he recounted. "Shall his name not be recorded in this Book? Yes, Alvin; let it be had here, and be handed down upon these sacred pages forever and ever."¹⁴⁴ Writing the names and kindnesses of the righteous seemed to keep their worthy deeds from fading away.

Such thoughts evidently turned Joseph's mind again to baptism for the dead. In exile it was that subject, he said, that "seems to occupy my mind, and press itself upon my feelings the strongest." His reflections brought new insights to the practice, and in two letters written from his places of concealment in early September, he related these new insights, "certifying" them as God's revelations to the Saints.¹⁴⁵ In effect, Smith's letters extended and formalized the work he had been doing in his journal, bestowing deep new theological significance upon records and record-keeping. Although Mormons had

¹⁴³On Elijah Abel as proxy see Black and Black, *Annotated Records of Baptisms for the Dead*, 9–10. For Joseph T. Ball, see *ibid.*, 214–15.

¹⁴⁴Hedges, Smith, and Anderson, *Journals, Vol. 2, December 1841–April 1843*, 117.

¹⁴⁵Smith's letters regarding the baptism for the dead, written in September 1842, were subsequently copied into his personal journal by Eliza R. Snow, who was then living in the Smith household and acting as a scribe. Jessee, Ashurst-McGee, and Jensen, *Journals, Vol. 1: 1832–1839*, 1:131–33, 143–50 (D&C 127, 128). Several months later, Snow penned the poem "Apostrophe to Death," which was evidently prompted by the experience (see above). The letters were subsequently published in the *Times and Seasons* in October 1842, then canonized in the 1844 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

been self-conscious chroniclers from the beginning, and had endeavored to record their work in behalf of the dead, the revelations from Joseph made it clear that their efforts were inadequate. Records they had kept of the baptismal work were incomplete and irregular, and when it came to the ordinances of salvation, casual documentation was not enough. “These are principles in relation to the dead and the living that cannot be lightly passed over,” Joseph wrote. Rather, they demanded painstaking precision.

To fix the problem, the revelation-letters laid out an elaborate method for how records of proxy baptism were to be produced and maintained—a system that would involve an extensive network of witnesses, notaries, and clerks. Joseph called for the appointment of a Church general recorder, someone who would be formally responsible to keep track of the Saints’ baptismal work. But to help deal with the logistical challenges such an assignment would present to a single individual, he also suggested that other recorders could be enlisted to help in the process. These should be attentive and meticulous clerks, in each of Nauvoo’s wards, who would be present at the event and “very particular and precise in making his Record and taking the whole proceeding, certifying in his Record that he saw with his eyes, and heard with his ears; giving the date, and names &c. and the history of the whole transaction.” The recorder should also specify several witnesses who could, if needed, attest to what they had seen.¹⁴⁶ When collected by the general recorder, these accounts—witnessed, certified, and notarized—could be incorporated into the Church’s institutional records. They would constitute a true and faithful record. Such a record would be worthy to be “put in the archives of my holy Temple, to be held in remembrance from generation to generation.”

Smith recognized that the extensiveness of the system might be puzzling. “You may think this order of things to be very particular,” he wrote, “but let me tell you that it is only to answer the will of God.” The careful management and documentation of the ritual process only “conform[ed] to the ordinance and preparation that the Lord ordained . . . before the foundation of the world.” It was this plan, with all of its particularities, which God had developed to redeem those who would die without access to His gospel. The great care embedded

¹⁴⁶Joseph Smith also gave instructions about the need for a recorder in a Relief Society meeting on August 31, 1842, the day before writing the first letter to the Saints. Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 131.

in the system was a reflection of God's love and divine design.¹⁴⁷

As they stressed the need for documentation, the revelations also showed that records did far more than keep order or even to help ensure that the ordinances were not forgotten. The act of recording, they taught, was an essential part of the ritual itself. Indeed, to "bind" or "seal," wrote Joseph, also meant to "record." Sealing and recording, in other words, were actually synonymous, one and the same. To perform baptism authoritatively was one dimension of the ordinance; to inscribe and record that act was another. The ordinance could not truly be accomplished without a proper account. Hence the Saints' dilemma: without a record of their rituals, to anchor them in reality, they did not exist.

Smith's revelations also taught that the records the Saints kept would do still more than embody the saving rituals—ultimately they would become instruments of judgment. Joseph Smith reminded readers of the Book of Life discussed in St. John's Revelation. In the day of final judgment this book, containing all the deeds of humankind, would be opened, and the dead would be "judg'd out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."¹⁴⁸ What was needed, Smith wrote, was such a book, a ledger that chronicled the deeds of humankind and could serve as a second testament, when the time came, that each person had received baptism, whether in the flesh or vicariously. Multiple records, one kept by the Saints on the earth and one kept by angels in heaven, would triangulate the truth and corroborate God's judgment. This was, in one sense, what it meant for the priesthood to bind on earth and in heaven.¹⁴⁹

Although Jane Nyman heard Joseph Smith say in 1840 that "I have laid the subject of baptism for the dead before you. You may re-

¹⁴⁷After the second letter (September 7, 1842) was copied into Joseph Smith's journal, William Clayton added a note stating: "The important instructions contained in the foregoing letter made a deep and solemn impression on the minds of the saints, and they manifested their intentions to obey the instruction to the letter." Church members indeed responded to the letters by creating a system of record-keeping that captured crucial dates, names, and other information. Hedges, Smith, and Anderson, *Journals*, Vol. 2, *December 1841–April 1843*, 150–51 note 507.

¹⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 146. See also Rev. 21:12.

¹⁴⁹On the meanings of records, see also Leonard, *Nauvoo*, 238–39. Changes to the administrative order of proxy baptism continued in Nauvoo

ceive or reject it as you choose,” over time it became clear that the offering was not optional.¹⁵⁰ It was a privilege to save the dead, but it was also a necessity and a commandment. The 1842 revelation letters showed it to be an imperative; they adopted the teaching of Paul, asserting that the dead, righteous predecessors of the past could not “be made perfect” without the faithful Saints of the present. But Smith also added the clause “neither can *we without our dead* be made perfect.”¹⁵¹ This injunction suggested that the generations—the fathers and the children—were mutually dependent on each other to attain salvation. In 1844 Smith underscored the point with a superlative, teaching the Saints that “the greatest responsibility in this world is to seek after our dead.”¹⁵²

Responsibility stemmed from the fact that through the ordi-

after Joseph Smith’s death. Baptisms for the dead were suspended from his murder until August 24, 1844. Historian’s Office, History of the Church, 1839-[ca.1882], August 9, 1844–June 30, 1845, 18–19, CR 100 102, LDS Church History Library. During the winter of 1844–45, at Brigham Young’s direction, cross-gender baptisms were discontinued. Young saw the baptism of women for men as incongruous, since proxies for male persons were now being ordained vicariously to the priesthood. He was concerned that cross-gender baptisms might lead women to seek ordination as well. “Speech Delivered by President B. Young . . . April 6, 1845,” *Times and Seasons*, 956. (Young’s history is interrupted by in its serialized form by Wilford Woodruff’s, before returning to Young’s.) Moreover, cross-gender baptisms that been performed previously were required to be done over again. “Speech Delivered by President Wilford Woodruff . . . April 6, 1891,” *Deseret Weekly*, April 25, 1891, 554. Young also oversaw the removal of the wooden font from the temple and the construction of a more sanitary stone replacement, also designed by William Weeks. To those inquiring about the change, Young explained: “We will have a fount that will not stink and keep us all the while cleansing it out: and we will have a pool wherein to baptise the sick, that they may recover. And when we get into the fount we will show you the priesthood and the power of it.” “Speech Delivered by President B. Young . . . April 6, 1845,” July 1, 1845, *Times and Seasons*, 986.

¹⁵⁰Neyman and Jacques, Statement, November 29, 1854.

¹⁵¹Hedges, Smith, and Anderson, *Journals, Vol. 2, December 1841–April 1843*, 148 (D&C 128:15); emphasis mine. See also Heb. 11:40; Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 329, 333, 346.

¹⁵²Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 360; also 353, 346.

nance of baptism for the dead, “welding links” had to be forged between the generations, each one connecting to the one past. Together these links would form a perpetual chain stretching back through all of human history. Once it was completed, it would lift the entire human race to salvation. This was the phenomenon foretold by Malachi, the way that the affections and interests of the children and the fathers would be “turned” to each other. To fail would be to suffer Malachi’s curse—the damnation of all the earth’s people. It was, increasingly, a vast enterprise that would involve the entire community of believers. Each baptism would forge a link, one by one. Joseph Smith thought it would take “at least a thousand years.”¹⁵³

CONCLUSION

By the spring of 1844, nearly four years after the funeral of Seymour Brunson, Nauvoo had become a thriving city. Swollen by a steady stream of converts, it rivaled Chicago as the largest city in Illinois. The temple was still not finished, but Nauvoo had many fine homes and public buildings, as well as a flourishing civic culture.¹⁵⁴ Mormonism itself also looked much different than it had previously. The women’s Relief Society, the arrival of international converts, polygamy, and other developments had given Mormonism a markedly different character. Simultaneously, baptism for the dead, initiatory rituals, the new endowment, and marital sealings had transformed Mormonism into a fully sacramental faith. In the Mormons’ final years in Nauvoo, they were beginning to look to these ritual ordinances as the rubric of their lives.

Improvements had made the city more salubrious, too. The rate

¹⁵³Apostle George A. Smith recounted that, in Nauvoo, “it soon became apparent that some had long records of their dead, for whom they wished to administer. This was seen to be but the beginning of an immense work, and that to administer all the ordinances of Gospel to the hosts of the dead was no light task. The Twelve asked Joseph if there could not be a shorter method of administering for so many. Joseph in effect replied—“The laws of the Lord are immutable, we must act in perfect compliance with what is revealed to us. We need not expect to do this vast work in a short time. I expect it will take at least a thousand years.” Quoted in James G. Bleak, “Christmas Assembly in St. George,” *Deseret News*, January 13, 1875, 799.

¹⁵⁴On Nauvoo’s civic culture, see Leonard, *Nauvoo*, 173–99.

of death that characterized the place earlier had slowed, and sickness—though still prevalent—was much abated. Still, Joseph Smith continued to speak at funerals, and funerals still found him at his most profound. On April 7, 1844, he spoke to ten thousand Latter-day Saints shortly after the death of King Follett, a Church member killed while digging a well. Smith's sermon, widely known as the "King Follett Discourse" and given less than three months before Smith's assassination, is often seen as the apex of Joseph Smith's prophetic teaching and the culmination of his rich Nauvoo theology. In it the Prophet publicly taught his divine anthropology, the "plurality of Gods," and the coeternity of humanity with God.¹⁵⁵

While these themes emerged, however, death—the condition of the dead, the resurrection of the dead, the baptism for the dead, and triumph over death—continued at the core of Joseph Smith's orations. It was chiefly for the consolation of mourners that he taught these new ideas, he explained.¹⁵⁶ In the final years before his assassination, he returned to the subject of baptism for the dead frequently, reiterating again and again how proxy ordinances removed the pain of mortality. The bonds of sealing they created were so strong that they rendered death as inconsequential as the passing of a single night. Human death was only, Smith said, like affectionate friends who, absorbed in the warmth of their conversation, did not separate in the evening, but lay down together to sleep, "locked in each others embrace." When they awakened, they could immediately "renew their conversation of love," and "readily salute each other," uninhibited even by the separation of walls or space. Death would come and go, but sacred relations would endure unaffected. Parties to these relationships would continue in them, "never suffering loneliness," a fact immensely comforting to Joseph Smith himself.¹⁵⁷

Ultimately, it was this prospect of eternal family unity and perpetual friendship that appealed most deeply to contemporary Mor-

¹⁵⁵For the King Follett Discourse, see Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 340–62; or Stan Larson, "The King Follett Discourse: A Newly Amalgamated Text," *BYU Studies* 18, no. 2 (1978): 193–208.

¹⁵⁶Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 344; see also 357, 458.

¹⁵⁷*Ibid.*, 198. Smith acknowledged that he would rather experience a "cessation of being" than perpetual separation from friends and family. *Ibid.*, 240. See also Bushman, *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling*, 473.

mons, more than the soaring theology about the nature of God. Because their lives were difficult and death was fearsome, Latter-day Saints hailed proxy baptism and Nauvoo's doctrines for the dead as a form of deliverance, both for their families and themselves. Mormons flourished under the knowledge that they were not helpless. As agents for the race, they could take an active part in achieving God's grand designs.

For Mormons in Nauvoo it was as one old and ailing Mormon had said, scratching out his thoughts at the close of October 1840, the month when baptisms of the dead began: "We have had much sickness this month. It has been a scene of sorrow that I do not wish to pass through again. Such scenes of poverty & distress, I hope not to pass often. Human life and misery go hand in hand through life's uneven path. But there is a hope [that] inspires the breath with joy & lights the dreary path & render[s] life pleasant as we pass to worlds unknown. . . . Thank the Lord for the Great things Revealed to the children of men, even glory honor immortality and eternal life [—]the hope of which cheers our Spirits in midst of the greatest trials. And thus we pass along."¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁸John Smith, Journal, October 30, 1840, MS 1326, LDS Church History Library; terminal punctuation and initial capitals added.

THORVALDSEN'S WHITE-MARBLED *CHRISTUS* RECONSIDERED

Noel A. Carmack

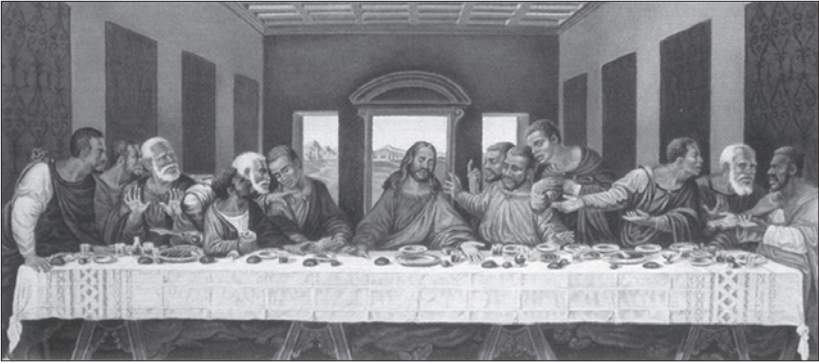
Edward J. Blum and Paul Harvey. *The Color of Christ: The Son of God and the Saga of Race in America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. 340 pp. Photographs, illustrations, bibliography, index. Cloth: \$32.50; ISBN 0-8078-3572-2

MY FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH A BLACK visual representation of Christ was in the mid-1980s while I was serving an LDS mission in Kansas City, Missouri. I was assigned to an area that encompassed neighborhoods in the south-central part of the city, including predominantly black neighborhoods in the historic 18th and Vine and Washington-Wheatley suburbs to 31st Street. My companion and I were tracting in the Santa Fe neighborhood when an elderly black woman answered our knock on her front door. She invited us in; and after walking through the entry, I immediately took notice of a large wall hanging, a reproduction of Leonardo's *Last Supper*, in the living room. The positions of figures and architectural elements were all the same, except that Jesus and His apostles were black.

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Aldo Rebichi's copy of Thorvaldsen's Christus Consolator displayed as the focal point of the Mormon Pavilion at the New York World's Fair, 1964–65. Photo Courtesy of Bill Cotter, www.worldsfairphotos.com.



*This detail of Wolfgang Otto's *Black Last Supper* (1990), though it may not be identical to the one that captured my attention as a missionary, would be very close to what I saw. © Bernard Picture Company.*

For a naive young missionary, this was a startling yet memorable experience. I suddenly realized that not only did someone commercially produce this image, but also that a black consumer had chosen to purchase it and place it in her home. I thought, “Where did she get this unusual version of the *Last Supper*? And what motivated her to hang it in her home?”

Nearly thirteen years later, I approached my own study of LDS images of Christ with questions about biblical literalism, masculinity, devotion, and belief. Mormon Christ-centered images, I discovered, reflect beliefs that Christ was fair-skinned and that He was both an exemplar and the model of physical and moral perfection.¹

A recently published book by two professors of history, Edward J. Blum (San Diego State University) and Paul Harvey (University of Colorado, Colorado Springs), attempts to confront the questions of race, religion, and political power in regard to visual representations of Jesus in America. *The Color of Christ* is a well-written, timely examination of how American religions have racially visualized Jesus and is the latest book in the realm of “whiteness” studies. As the authors indicate, *The Color of Christ* “uses white Jesus imagery to explore the varying contours of whiteness, to show how fluid it has been, to reveal how its potency enveloped the sacred, and to delineate how his holy

¹Noel A. Carmack, “Images of Christ in Latter-day Saint Visual Culture, 1900–1999,” *BYU Studies* 39, no. 3 (2000): 19–76.

whiteness has been used to sanctify racial hierarchies” (8).

The subject of Christ’s attributes and figural representation in the American religious experience is not a new one. Jaroslav Pelikan, professor of history at Yale, early addressed the image and place of Jesus in Western culture in his 1985 *Jesus through the Centuries*, while more recent cultural examinations of Jesus by religious historians Stephen Prothero and Richard W. Fox have dealt with His ubiquity, iconic standing, and significance among Americans.² David Morgan, historian of visual culture and professor of religion at Duke University, has sought to understand the role of religious images in America and the devotional practices and ritual surrounding the popular visual renderings of Jesus; however, his study only touched upon the subjects of race, politics, and power associated with them.³ Blum and Harvey seek to fill this void by giving us a broader, more complete story of how visual renderings of Christ have been created, changed, appropriated, and disseminated by American religious groups.

The Color of Christ is an epic, sweeping saga of interpreting and reinterpreting the face and bodily incarnation of Jesus. The authors have done a remarkable job of illustrating the seemingly endless vicissitudes of the figure of Christ in American visual culture. They begin with an account of the racially motivated bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1963 and the replacement of a white Jesus in one of the broken stained-glass windows with John Petts’s black Messiah in one of the others (1–4). In the first chapter, the authors recount the inculcation of the white Jesus in America, beginning with the first contacts between untouched natives, Spanish Franciscans, and French Jesuits in the seventeenth century. Subsequent chapters cover the arrival of the iconoclastic Puritans, the Moravian preoccupation with a suffering, bloodied red Christ during the Great Awakening, the playful but poignant search for Jesus in antebellum slave cabins, responses to Nat Turner’s revolt

²Jaroslav Pelikan, *Jesus through the Centuries: His Place in the History of Culture* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1985), 146–48, 224–27; Stephen Prothero, *American Jesus: How the Son of God Became a National Obsession* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2003), 200–228; and Richard Whitman Fox, *Jesus in America: Personal Savior, Cultural Hero, National Icon* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2004), esp. 206–24, 391–93.

³David Morgan, *Visual Piety: A History and Theory of Popular Religious Images* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), esp. 35–39.

and John Brown's 1859 raid on Harper's Ferry, and perceptions of a militant Jesus as the inspirational leader of both Northern and Southern forces (chaps. 2–5).

The authors next address the influence of Socialism, economic depravity, and oppression on twentieth-century likenesses of Christ and interpret the dark-skinned conceptions of Jesus as a backlash to late-nineteenth-century Nordic versions popularized in America (chap. 6). A hegemonic proliferation of Jesus images, such as Warner Sallman's *Head of Christ*, characterized the civil rights era (chap. 7). Colorful and diverse representations of Christ erupted from liberation theologies. Their conclusion deals with representations of Jesus in cinema, through various digital media, and in contemporary TV humor like *South Park* (chaps. 8–Epilogue).

And, according to Blum and Harvey, Latter-day Saints were major players in this saga as well. As one of several new religious traditions in America, Mormons based their perceptions of race on Joseph Smith's Church-founding vision of Christ as a white, blue-eyed man, born of an "exceedingly fair and white" mother (77, 85).⁴ The authors claim that "the Mormon Christ's blue eyes designated him as whiter and more American than other descriptions in the young nation—perhaps to bolster Mormonism's own whiteness as the church moved beyond the Protestant canopy" (85). Moreover, the Book of Mormon narrative taught that dark skin was a curse caused by iniquity and immorality. As a result, Mormonism, made whiteness "a marker of sacred inclusion and damned blackness as a marker of sacred exclusion" (84–85).

In public blogs and forums, Blum and Harvey support their assertion about Mormon racial discriminatory practices with the near-iconic white marble *Christus*, centerpiece of world fair exhibits and visitors centers. They see its prevalence as emblematic of the Church's white-centrism. However, their only mention of the statue in the book is found in a single paragraph, beginning with their statement: "Mormons resurrected an old Danish statue to affirm their

⁴The authors refer a little-known account by German convert Alexander Neibaur who wrote that Joseph Smith described Christ as having a "light complexion" and "blue eyes." They also mention Anson Call's vision of Christ who appeared to him having "light and beautiful skin with large blue eyes." For these and other sources, see Carmack, "Images of Christ," 26 and note 28.

commitment to Jesus, whiteness, and power.” They continue:

Christus was created in 1821 by Danish sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen. In 1966, a white marble replica of it was placed at Temple Square in Salt Lake City, and since then it has become a staple of Mormon iconography. The first one that Mormons placed in Salt Lake City was gigantic and muscular—over eleven feet tall with an exposed chest that showed a powerful physique. Replicas of *Christus* were then placed primarily in centers to welcome visitors throughout the nation. Blacks were technically welcome, but they first had to pass by the powerful white *Christus* (254).

This brief paragraph, while technically accurate, lacks both the Mormon context and, more importantly, the larger historical context in which the *Christus* figure played a role that transcended one denomination and the color of the stone. The nearly twelve-foot replica of the *Christus* was, indeed, made of white Carrara marble, the material most desired by neoclassicist sculptors of the early nineteenth century. Thorvaldsen’s *Christus*, or the *Christus Consolator*, as it was originally called, was an “ideal image” depicting a classically draped, bare-chested figure of the resurrected Christ with arms open at his sides. His countenance and idealized pose was thought to have been based on the Greek god of healing, Asclepius, or even a young Zeus.⁵ The “Consolator” type was, in fact, one of several image types employed by artists to exemplify various physiognomic appearances of Christ. The “Ecce Homo” or “Man of Sorrows” type was another widely rendered image of Christ, but the “Consolator” form was widespread. For example, Dutch artist Ary Scheffer (1794–1858) had painted his own versions of *Christus Consolator* (1836) and its companion piece, the *Christus Remunerator* (1836–37). This latter piece was described in 1851 as “a figure of the most transcendent majesty blended with love, and which it seems to us has not

⁵Lorentz Dietrichson, *Christusbilledet: Studier over den Typisk Christus-fremstillinger Oprindelse, Udvikling og Opløsning* (Kjbenhavn: Gyldendalske Boghandels Forlag [F. Hegel & Søn], 1880), 431–32. For more on Thorvaldsen’s work, see Dyveke Helsted, “Thorvaldsen’s Technique,” *Apollo* 96, no. 127, New Series (July–September, 1972): 228–34; Dyveke Helsted, “Bertel Thorvaldsen’s Drawings,” *The Connoisseur* 149 (February 1962): 76–81; John Kenworthy-Browne, “Drawings and Models by Thorvaldsen,” *The Connoisseur* 184 (December 1973): 256–60; and Eugène Plon, *Thorvaldsen: His Life and Works*, 3rd ed. (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1892), esp. pp. 88–91, 219–27, and 242–43.

been equalled in modern art excepting by Thorvaldsen.”⁶ Scheffer’s work definitely popularized the image of the Consolator Christ. In 1826, pioneer American sculptor Horatio Greenough (1805–52), wrote that the *Christus* was “the finest work of art given to the world since the golden time of Pope Leo X.”⁷

It was this high esteem for Thorvaldsen’s *Christus* that brought the statue to America. The *Christus* was featured with other statuary as part of Denmark’s contribution to the New York’s Crystal Palace exhibition of 1853 and attracted “more admiration than almost any other portion of the Exhibition.”⁸ In 1895, after the Hall of Christ was built at the Chautauqua Institution on the shores of

⁶“The Christus Remunerator by Scheffer,” *Bulletin of the American Art-Union*, no. 3 (June 1, 1851): 48. See also “Christus Consolator,” *Liberator* 16 (August 14, 1846): 130; “Christ the Comforter,” *Christian Parlor Magazine*, May 1, 1849, 32; “Fine Arts. Ary Scheffer’s Christus Remunerator,” *The Literary World* 9 (August 2, 1859): 92; “Fine Arts: A New Picture by Ary Scheffer,” *The Albion* 13 (November 25, 1854): 561; and W. Francken, *Ary Scheffer’s Christus Remunerator als Type van de Verheerlijking des Christendoms door de Kunst* (Rotterdam: Van Gogh & Oldenzeel, 1855). On the artistic types of Christ with which Americans would have been most familiar, see William H. Ingersoll, “Portraits of Our Savior,” *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine* 72 (May 1886): 933–48; William H. Ingersoll, “National Types of Christ,” *The Cosmopolitan* 6 (December 1888): 101–15; Rush Rhees, “Christ in Art,” *The Biblical World* 6 (December 1895): 490–503; John Powell Lenox, “The Supreme Face of the Christian Centuries,” *The Biblical World* 12 (December 1898): 380–99; Kate P. Hampton, “The Face of Christ in Art: Is the Portraiture of Jesus Weak or Strong?” *Outlook* 6 (April 1, 1899): 734–48; Frederic W. Farrar, *The Life of Christ as Represented in Art* (New York: Macmillan, 1894).

⁷Horatio Greenough, Letter to Washington Allston, May 9, 1826, in Nathalia Wright, ed., *The Letters of Horatio Greenough, American Sculptor* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1972), 9; also cited in Dimmick, “Mythic Proportion: Bertel Thorvaldsen’s Influence in America,” in *Thorvaldsen: l’ambiente, l’influsso, il mito*, edited by Patrick Kragelund and Mogens Nykjaer (Rome: L’erma di Bretschneider, 1991): 169–92; quotation on p. 176.

⁸“The Thorvaldsen Group in the Crystal Palace,” *New York Daily Times*, August 6, 1853, 3. See also “The Crystal Palace,” *The Farmer’s Cabinet*, July 28, 1853, 2.

Chautauqua Lake in New York, the institution's founder and Chancellor Bishop John H. Vincent wrote: "It is hoped that before long a copy of Thorvaldsen's famous statue of Christ may be placed within the building."⁹ In 1896, patron William Wallace Spence donated a ten-and-a-half foot copy of the *Christus* to the Johns Hopkins Hospital for its befitting depiction of Christ as a "Divine Healer" or "Great Physician."¹⁰ When a new edition of Larkin Dunton's textbook series *The World and Its People* was published that same year, the statue was described for American children: "Christ is represented with open arms, saying to the world, 'Come unto me and I will give you rest.' It is considered the most perfect statue of Christ in the world."¹¹ In 1925, cemetery director and planner Dr. Hubert Eaton chose Thorvaldsen's *Christus* as the finest depiction of the resurrected Christ and placed it in God's Garden at Forest Lawn Memorial Park in Glendale, California.¹² Eaton placed a larger version, measuring over ten feet tall, in the Christus Garden at Forest Lawn in 1947.¹³

Despite the popular reception of the statue in America, the authors of *The Color of Christ* cite its adoption by Mormons as a visual

⁹John H. Vincent, "The Hall of the Christ at Chautauqua," *The Biblical World* 6 (December 1895): 530–33; quotation on p. 531. For Thorvaldsen's fame in America, see Dimmick, "Mythic Proportion."

¹⁰See Nancy McCall, "The Statue of the Christus Consolator at the Johns Hopkins Hospital: Its Acquisition and Historical Origins," *Johns Hopkins Medical Journal* 151 (July 1982): 11–19.

¹¹Fannie E. Coe, *The World and Its People, Book V. Modern Europe*, edited by Larkin Dunton (New York: Silver, Burdett & Company, 1896), 126.

¹²Matthew O. Richardson, "Bertel Thorvaldsen's Christus: A Mormon Icon," *Journal of Mormon History* 29 (Spring 2003): 67–100, esp. 77 note 22; "Forest Lawn," *Park and Cemetery* 39 (September 1929): 207; Herbert Eaton, "Creation of Forest Lawn," *Park and Cemetery* 39 (September 1929): 209–11; F. A. Cushing Smith, "Forest Lawn at Glendale," *American Landscape Architect* 4 (June 1931): 30–32; Frances N. Ahl, "The Little Church of Flowers and the Wee Kirk o' the Heather," *Overland Monthly and Out West Magazine* 89 (October 1931): 16, 28. Ahl wrote (16) that the *Christus* was selected from among hundreds of statues "because it best expressed the Forest Lawn conception of the Master."

¹³"Statue of 'The Christus' Unveiled in Forest Lawn," *Los Angeles Times*, December 8, 1947, A1; and Adela Rogers St. Johns, *First Step Up to*

affirmation of their aversion to dark-skinned races. According to Blum and Harvey, Mormonism was one of many new religions in mid-nineteenth-century America that “focused on his holy whiteness” (10). This white-centrism, the authors write, was “most famously” practiced by Mormons and persists through the production and dissemination of visuals featuring a white Jesus (10). “No group performs the rhetoric-versus-image magic better than the Latter-day Saints,” they write (253). Images of a white Jesus, along with white, muscular Native Americans used to illustrate the Nephites in the Book of Mormon, serve to underscore a long history of racist doctrines. In the book, they suggest that the white-marbled *Christus* embodies and perpetuates the Church’s sanctification of whiteness (254).

Outside of their book, in op-eds and interviews, the authors are more explicit. “Today,” they explain, “[the Church’s] stores and Web sites still feature images and art work of a blue-eyed, blond, white Jesus, and most Mormons refuse to recognize any racial meaning or importance in images like the Christus.”¹⁴ Mormons adopted and continue to adopt images of a white Jesus at no greater extent than their Catholic and Protestant counterparts, and yet the authors of *The Color of Christ* point to them because of the Church’s history of denying blacks the priesthood and the curse of darkened skin color described in the Book of Mormon:

The white Jesus represented just one part of Mormonism’s approach to race. Although the new Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was willing to challenge some of the most profound Protestant traditions, including monogamous marriage and the place of the Bible as the only sacred text, in some ways it furthered the nation’s white supremacy (although Mormon leaders did denounce slavery). Its white Christ was coupled with antiblack and anti-Indian teachings, like those of Smith’s successor, Brigham Young, who once lectured: “If the white man who belongs to the chosen seed mixes his blood

ward Heaven: Hubert Eaton and Forest Lawn (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1959), 281–84.

¹⁴Ed Blum and Paul Harvey, “The Contested Color of Christ: How the Image of Jesus Has Been Made and Remade in American History,” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, September 21, 2012, B6–B9; online edition September 17, 2012, <http://chronicle.com/article/The-Contested-Color-of-Christ/134414/> (accessed November 6, 2012).

with the seed of Cain, the penalty, under the law of God, is death on the spot." Less sensational but more widespread, a priesthood ban on people of African descent that kept black men from full membership in the church was not lifted until 1978.¹⁵

From reading Blum and Harvey's explanation, this indictment of the Mormon use of a white Jesus in its imagery seems to be one which the Church cannot avoid. They would have you believe that the Mormon policy of withholding the priesthood from black men is a sin committed by LDS forefathers that will be visited upon present and future generations—despite lifting the ban in 1978, and despite the Church's progressive anti-slavery teachings in the mid-nineteenth century. The authors even felt that Mormonism's history of racial discrimination—as embodied by the white statue—should have been a point of question during Mitt Romney's 2012 bid for the presidency.¹⁶ In a *Newsweek Daily Beast* interview with Jamie Reno, Blum reportedly said: "The statue was and remains an icon of white supremacy."¹⁷ He also asserted that Mormons "used new art forms in the 1960s to display a 'very white Jesus' in their homes, temples, and welcome centers." By doing so, "they could uphold their connection to whiteness without having to speak it or legislate it."¹⁸

Although Blum and Harvey single out Mormons for their use of the statue of Christ, they have impressively shown that other American religious groups—including both Protestant and Catholic—have used art forms, devotional power, and influence to overawe Americans with the image of a white Jesus. Moreover, Blum and Harvey have attempted to show that, to enslaved and oppressed people of color, Jesus came to symbolize liberation and freedom, while to some

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Blum and Harvey wrote: "Even though the Christus was first placed in Salt Lake City just a few years before Romney entered Brigham Young University, there has been no public debate over the race of the candidate's Christ." Ibid.

¹⁷Jamie Reno, "Was Jesus Lily-White? Author Edward Blum Discusses Race and the Mormon Religion," *The Daily Beast*, July 27, 2012, 1, <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2012/07/27/was-jesus-lily-white-author-edward-blum-discusses-race-and-the-mormon-religion.html> (accessed November 6, 2012).

¹⁸Ibid., 2.

major Christian denominations the figure of a white Jesus symbolized racial superiority and religious dominance.

One blatant example, not cited by Blum and Harvey, occurred under the authority of George W. Doane, Episcopal bishop of the Diocese of New Jersey. When the *Book of Common Prayer* was published in Philadelphia in 1856, an engraving of Scheffer's *Christus Consolator*, one of the most popular of the "Consolator" types then in circulation, was placed as the book's frontispiece. The steel-engraved reproduction featured Scheffer's arrangement of figures, a semi-circle of blessed suppliants surrounding the beneficent Christ: the poor, the old, the sick, a grief-stricken mother with a dead child—in short, every form of human sorrow that belonged to the original design, except for a fettered slave, with his hands lifted to heaven in prayer. This chained black man had been conspicuously removed from the image, as though he was not worthy of the Savior's liberating grace.¹⁹

The reason, it was supposed, for the removal of the black man from the image was so that this edition of the *Book of Common Prayer* could find acceptance in the South, where it was widely distributed. After the American abolitionist Wendell Phillips learned of the expurgation, he called it "disgraceful," placing the responsibility squarely upon Bishop Doane.²⁰ Poet and abolitionist John Greenleaf Whittier wrote of the altered image:

¹⁹United States Protestant Episcopal Church, *The Book of Common Prayer, and Administration of the Sacraments: and Other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church, . . .* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1856), frontispiece. On the popularity of Scheffer's *Christus Consolator* and *Christus Remunerator*, see Robert Verhoogt, "The Most Framed Artist: Ary Scheffer (1795–1858) and Reproductions after His Work," chap. 5 in *Art in Reproduction: Nineteenth-Century Prints after Lawrence Alma-Tadema, Jozef Israëls, and Ary Scheffer* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2007), 283–358, and Patrick Noon, "New Discoveries: A Reduced Version of Ary Scheffer's *Christus Consolator*," *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide: A Journal of Nineteenth Century Visual Culture* 8 (Autumn 2009), e-journal: <http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/index.php/autumn09/new-discoveries-a-reduced-version-of-ary-scheffers-christ-consolator> (accessed March 15, 2013).

²⁰Henry Ward Beecher, *Wendell Phillips: A Commemorative Discourse* (New York: Fords, Howard, & Hulbert, 1884), 414. See also "The 'Christus Consolator' Expurgated," *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, January 2, 1858, 2;



Ary Scheffer, *Christus Consolator*, 1837, oil on canvas, 184 cm x 248 cm, Amsterdam Museum. Courtesy of Europeana. ©The Amsterdam Museum.

O Ary Scheffer! When the light that cometh
 from above,
 Grew the sweet picture of the dear
 Lord's love,
 No dream hadst thou that Christian
 Hands would tear
 Therefrom the token of his equal care,
 And make thy symbol of his truth a
 lie!
 The poor, dumb slave whose shackles
 fall away

C. K. W., "Episcopal Pro-Slavery," *The Liberator* 28 (January 8, 1858): 6; "A Slaveholder's Bible," *The British Friend* 17 (July 1, 1859): 180; Parker Pillsbury, *Acts of the Anti-Slavery Apostles* (Boston: Cupples, Upham, & Co., 1884), 437–39; W. P. Thirkield, "'Christus Consolator' with the Negro Left Out," *The Christian Advocate* 80 (January 19, 1905): 101–2.



Frontispiece (detail), engraving, "The Savior," by Illman & Sons after Ary Scheffer's painting Christus Consolator. Note that the fettered slave has been removed from Scheffer's design. Published in The Book of Common Prayer (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1856). From Noel Carmack Collection.

In his compassionate gaze, grubbed
Smoothly out²¹

Using an engraving of a well-known painting, the Episcopal Diocese of New Jersey had revealed its attitude toward slavery. By removing the black man from Scheffer's *Consolator* image, the Church had shown that it did not support abolition, nor did it believe that Jesus's salvation extended to people of color. The work of art was used as a

²¹“On a Prayer-Book, with Its Frontispiece, Ary Scheffer's 'Christus Consolator,' Americanized by the Omission of the Black Man,” in *The Poetical Works of John Greenleaf Whittier* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1892), 244–45; quotation on p. 244. For another example of poetry, see Maria Weston Chapman, “Sonnet,” in *The Liberty Bell*, compiled by Friends of Freedom (Boston: National Anti-Slavery Bazaar, 1858), 319.

means of affirming the sanctity of whiteness in the manner that Blum and Harvey believe the *Christus* did for Mormons as an “icon of white supremacy.”

In a guest post to the *Juvenile Instructor* blog, Blum explained his use of the term “icon of white supremacy,” writing: “When I referred to it as an icon of white supremacy, I meant that it builds off various religious traditions (including Mormonism) that have sanctified whiteness (on purpose sometimes, and by accident on other times). Warner Sallman did the same. The Ku Klux Klan did that as well.”²²

I contend that it is overtly provocative to use the term “icon of white supremacy” (a term largely used today by whiteness scholars²³) to describe the intended purpose of the *Christus* for Mormons. I am quite certain that Blum and Harvey would be hard-pressed to find any Latter-day Saints—living or dead—who perceive(d) the statue that way. But to suggest that Mormonism purposely or inadvertently “sanctified whiteness” with religious imagery to the degree that the Ku Klux Klan or other hate groups did is even more unjustifiably provocative.

If the *Christus* was or is interpreted as an “icon of white supremacy,” then readers would expect to find support for such assertions with statements from LDS Church members of color, but the authors do not provide it. Unfortunately, a younger, unquestioning generation of scholars will accept these assertions as progressive and thoughtful interpretations of Mormon visual culture. After all, as Blum and Harvey have alleged, Thorvaldsen’s *Christus* was adopted for Mormon visitors’ centers in 1966, during the height of the civil rights movement, by no mere coincidence. At the same time, LDS Church president Joseph Fielding Smith was referring to blacks as “darkies” and an “inferior race.”²⁴ And, at nearly the same time, Senator Stuart Udall and Michigan Governor George Romney were ad-

²²Guest Post: Ed Blum, blog comment from “On Mormon Racism: A Response to John Turner,” *Juvenile Instructor*, August 22, 2012, <http://www.juvenileinstructor.org/guest-post-edward-blum-historicizing-mormon-racism-a-response-to-john-turner> (accessed January 4, 2013).

²³On the use of this term among academicians, see Tim Davidson and Jeanette R. Davidson, “Bell Hooks, White Supremacy, and the Academy,” in *Critical Perspectives on Bell Hooks*, edited by Maria del Guadalupe Davidson and George Yancy (New York: Routledge, 2009), 68–81.

²⁴Jeff Nye, “Memo from a Mormon” [editor’s note], *Look*, October

vised by Church authorities to temper their support for civil rights.²⁵

What Blum and Harvey don't tell their readers is that the *Christus* was chosen to represent the Latter-day Saint perception of the merciful and entreating Savior at the 1964–65 New York World's Fair.²⁶ A replica by Italian sculptor Aldo Rebecchi was installed in the Mormon Pavilion

22, 1963, 79. Smith wrote that blacks had been made to feel their inferiority by being separated from the rest of mankind and that their black skin was “emblematical of eternal darkness.” See Joseph Fielding Smith, *The Way to Perfection: Short Discourses on Gospel Themes*, 3rd ed. (Independence: Zion's Printing and Publishing, 1940), 101–2.

²⁵See F. Ross Peterson, “‘Do Not Lecture the Brethren’: Stewart Udall's Pro-Civil Rights Stance, 1967,” *Journal of Mormon History* 25 (Spring 1999): 272–87; Wallace Turner, *The Mormon Establishment* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1966), 295–310; Charles E. Harmon, “A Matter of Civil Rights: Debate, Discord and Dissension in the Making of the President—1964,” *Michigan History* 80 (May 1996): 28–39; and Delbert L. Stapley, Letter to Governor George W. Romney, January 23, 1964, http://www.boston.com/news/daily/24/delbert_stapley.pdf (accessed February 15, 2013). At the height of the 2012 presidential campaign and only four months before the release of their book, Blum and Harvey criticized Mitt Romney's political views as divergent from his father's. According to Blum and Harvey, fears about Mormonism's conservative stances on race and social issues are still present. “Mitt Romney seems uninterested in assuaging the public's fears. He rarely attempts to humanize his faith, opposes same-sex marriage, and champions budget proposals that would worsen income inequality and take aim at programs directed towards poor and working-class Americans.” Edward J. Blum and Paul Harvey, “How (George) Romney Championed Civil Rights and Challenged His Church,” *Atlantic Monthly* (online edition), August 13, 2012, <http://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2012/08/how-george-romney-championed-civil-rights-and-challenged-his-church/261073/> (accessed February 7, 2013).

²⁶Richardson, “Bertel Thorvaldsen's Christus: A Mormon Icon,” and Matthew O. Richardson, “Bertel Thorvaldsen's *Christus*: A Latter-day Saint Icon of Christian Evidence,” in *Art and Spirituality: The Visual Culture of Christian Faith*, edited by Herman du Toit and Doris R. Dant (Provo, Utah: BYU Studies, 2008): 189–201. For additional treatments of the *Christus*, see Herbert von Einem, “Thorvaldsen's ‘Christus,’” in *Festschrift für Eduard Trier zum 60. Geburtstag*, edited by Justus Müller Hofstede and Werner Spies (Berlin: Mann, 1981), 177–83, and Anne-Mette Gravggaard and Eva Hen-



Domenic Zappia, The Last Supper, carved in basswood, on display in the Protestant and Orthodox Center, New York World's Fair, 1964-65. Photo Courtesy of Bill Cotter, www.worldsfairphotos.com.

as “the focal point of its exhibit hall.”²⁷ Ironically enough, Mormons weren’t the only religious group at this World’s Fair to feature a white Jesus in its exhibitions. A pale white basswood sculpture of Jesus and the *Last Supper*, based on Leonardo’s renowned painting, was also chosen

schen, *On the Statue of Christ by Thorvaldsen* (Copenhagen: The Thorvaldsen Museum and The Church of Our Lady, 1997).

²⁷See Luise Sheridan, “Bertel Thorvaldsen: Creator of Christus,” *Improvement Era* 67 (April 1964): 272–75, 307. For more on the Mormon Pavilion, see “Visitors Welcomed to Mormon Pavilion at N. Y. Fair,” *Church News*, April 25, 1964, 3; Brent L. Top, “The Legacy of the Mormon Pavilion,” *Ensign*, October 1989, 22–28; Nathaniel Smith Kogan, “The Mormon Pavilion: Mainstreaming the Saints at the New York World’s Fair, 1964–65,” *Journal of Mormon History* 35 (Fall 2009): 1–52, and Nathaniel Smith Kogan, “Mormons in the New York World’s Fair, 1964–65,” in *Mormons and Popular Culture: The Global Influence of an American Phenomenon*, edited by Michael Hunter, 2 vols. (Santa Barbara, Calif.: Praeger, 2012), 2:209–23.

for the Protestant and Orthodox Center of the World's Fair.²⁸

Moreover, the famed Renaissance sculptor Michelangelo's original white Carrara marble *Pieta* was chosen as one of several focal points for visitors to the fair's Vatican Pavilion.²⁹ A third-century white marble statue of Jesus as the Good Shepherd adorned the apse of the altar in the Pavilion's Chapel of the Good Shepherd.³⁰

Thorvaldsen's *Christus* had actually been admired by Mormons long before the civil rights movement. In 1904, George Reynolds, a member of the First Council of the Seventy, called the statue "a very dignified example of the conventional idea of the appearance of the Redeemer when He tabernacled in the flesh."³¹ During a talk given in December 1905, Church scholar and newspaper editor Janne M. Sjodahl called the "masterpieces" of Thorvaldsen "the works of inspiration."³² The sculpture was also admired by American LDS visitors to the Church of Our Lady in Copenhagen, including Apostle Richard R. Lyman who saw it in 1936 and Apostle Stephen L Richards who visited Denmark on assignment in 1950. It was Richards's "awe-inspiring experience" at the Church of Our Lady that led to the placement of a replica at the Temple Square Visitor's Center as an "evidence" of

²⁸Press release, "Wood Sculpture of Last Supper at Protestant and Orthodox Center of World's Fair," The Protestant Council of the City of New York, *News*, June 12, 1964, 1-4.

²⁹Gay Talese, "Fair Sees 'Pieta' as Top Feature," *New York Times*, April 11, 1962, 45; Irving Stone, "'Improbable' Story of 'The Pieta,'" *New York Times*, April 22, 1962, SM4; and Charles McCarry, "The Pietá: Masterpiece at the Fair," *Saturday Evening Post*, March 28, 1964, 24-29. Irving Stone, author of *The Agony and the Ecstasy*, was commissioned to write a short history of the making of the Pietá. Stone, *The Story of Michelangelo's Pietá*, first Vatican ed. (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1964).

³⁰"Vatican to Send Statues to the Fair," *New York Times*, April 17, 1963, 43, and Lawrence R. Samuel, *End of the Innocence: The 1964-65 New York World's Fair* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 2007), 144.

³¹George Reynolds, "The Personal Appearance of the Savior," *Juvenile Instructor* 39 (August 15, 1904): 497-500; quotation on p. 500.

³²Sjodahl, address, December 11, 1905, quoted in "Inspiration and Revelation," *Deseret Evening News*, December 26, 1905, 4. See also Sarah K. Bolton, "An Artist Hero," *Salt Lake Herald*, January 12, 1896, 2.

the Mormon Christian faith.³³

So was the Mormon's appropriation of the Christus *intended* to be an affirmation of whiteness? It's possible, but the authors of *The Color of Christ* make the accusation in their book only by suggestion. They do not provide any documentation, other than the fact that the sculpture was erected in the Salt Lake Visitors' Center in 1966, at the height of the civil rights movement. By declaring an *a posteriori* historical fact, without recounting the events leading up to the statue's adoption, the authors skew the reader's interpretation of the Christus. Was it or is it now *perceived* as an "icon of white supremacy" by non-white members of the church? Perhaps so, but the distinctive absence of contemporaneous statements objecting to the statue seriously call the authors' claim into question.³⁴

Those criticisms aside, *The Color of Christ* is an immensely readable and engaging book that dares to challenge longstanding, ignorant notions about race and religion. I am not satisfied, however, that the authors dispel the "myth" that racial and ethnic groups "necessarily create God or gods in their own image" (19). Powerful political, social, and legal issues may well influence these groups, but to say that their individual members are simply caught up in an overpowering course of faith and societal currents discounts the individual worship-

³³Richard R. Lyman, Diary, August 17, 1937, 1: 240, MSS 1079, fd. 11, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; Richardson, "Bertel Thorvaldsen's Christus: A Mormon Icon," 77; Philip L. Richards, "Christus," *Ensign*, January 1992, 79; and Philip L. Richards, "An Inspiration to So Many People," *LDS Church News*, June 13, 1992, 7.

³⁴In response to the same criticism by religion professor Laurie Maffly-Kipp, Blum and Harvey wrote: "It is not the case that we have 'no evidence,' as Maffly-Kipp charges. The Christus is the evidence. It is not necessary for Mormons at the time to consider it or to say it is racially-charged for it to be so. The fact that the statue was first designed by a European does not address what it meant in the 1960s." I maintain that, in order for us to know what the Christus *meant* in the 1960s, it is necessary that we have contemporaneous empirical evidence that helps us draw conclusions. Otherwise, the assertion that it was racially charged is simply an anachronistic theory. See Edward J. Blum and Paul Harvey, "Response to Panel Reviews," *Journal of Southern Religion* 14 (2012): <http://jsr.fsu.edu/issues/vol14/blum-and-harvey.html> (accessed March 12, 2013).



Christ as the Good Shepherd, *white Carrara marble, ca. third century, on display in the Vatican Pavilion at the New York World's Fair, 1964–65. Photo courtesy of Bill Cotter, www.worldsfairophotos.com.*



Michelangelo's Pietà, white Carrara marble, 1498–99 (original), on display in the Vatican Pavilion, New York World's Fair, 1964–65. Photo Courtesy of Bill Cotter, www.worldsfairphotos.com.

per's prerogative to accept or reject the widely accepted notion that Jesus's skin was white. As the authors concede, some nonwhite religious groups have historically worshipped a white Jesus, but they write that, even when enslaved African Americans saw Jesus as bright and white, they were turning the world of whiteness on its head, "bending whiteness in ways that dissociated it from privilege and the oppression of people of color" (99). Perhaps most mystifyingly, they explain that, when civil rights leader Martin Luther King upheld the notion that Jesus's "skin was white," he and his allies were taking back Jesus "from white supremacists" because they were "defying the ways Jesus had been tethered to white power in film, law, art, and politics" (205-6).

Blum and Harvey have presented a vast and complex tapestry of history, enumerating ways that Americans of color have been oppressed and subjugated by powerful images of a white Jesus. Yet for all its illuminating evidence, readers of *The Color of Christ* may come away seeing it as a hind-sighted denunciation of *all* Anglo-American religious groups that have chosen to use a white or fair-skinned Christ for their religious images. The authors have deftly shown that the white Christ has, at times, been used as a figure of power and racial privilege. But are we to believe that *all* visual renderings of Christ as a white, European man are conceived for the purpose of venerating or "sanctifying" whiteness? Should we regard *all* representations of a black Jesus as an act of resistance to the ubiquitous white Christ? I would like to think otherwise. I would like to think that the elderly black woman I met in Kansas City all those years ago chose to see God as the person in whose image she was created.

If believing Christians look forward to the coming of their Savior, I would hope that they anticipate the physical "marks" of a kind, all-loving, and inclusive man—and that the color of His skin is literally irrelevant in that encounter. Our conceptions of Him—whether figurative or physical—are based on the biblical delineations of His character. His physical attributes have not yet been made known to us, "but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2).

REVIEWS

John G. Turner. *Brigham Young, Pioneer Prophet*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2012. viii, 500 pp. Photographs, maps, notes, acknowledgments, index. Cloth: \$35; ISBN 978-0-674-04967-3

Reviewed by Henry Wolfinger

This excellent biography, winner of the Mormon History Association's Best Biography Award, combines extensive research in primary sources with astute analysis to produce a strikingly fresh and occasionally provocative portrayal of Brigham Young's thirty-year leadership of the Mormon Church. John Turner, a young scholar whose academic background is American religious history, notes at the outset that much historical scholarship on the Utah territorial period has been produced in the quarter century since publication of the last biographies of Brigham Young. His study seeks to incorporate these new findings, as well as rely on "the most contemporary, firsthand, and unedited sources" (viii).

Turner's use of primary sources enables him to probe beyond Young's sanitized public persona, revealing a complex and ambiguous leader with a dark side. As a public figure, Brigham Young's correspondence was prepared by clerks and his sermons edited before publication. Turner uses, where available, transcribed shorthand notes of Young's sermons in place of the versions published in the *Deseret News* and the *Journal of Discourses*. He also draws on contemporary office journals and minutes of Church leadership meetings. The result is what can be characterized as a portrait of Brigham Young that has not been carefully posed and tactfully touched up.

Turner's portrait of Young begins with his hardscrabble upbringing. Brigham's father moved the family from site to site but never became a successful farmer. Brigham's reflection on his severe upbringing at the hands of his father speaks volumes, "It used to be a word and a blow with him, but the blow came first'" (12). Young Brigham became independent at age sixteen and apprenticed himself to a furniture maker, the beginning of his struggle to suc-

ceed as a craftsman. Turner concludes, "As he approached his thirtieth birthday, Brigham Young lived on the economic margins of his society and occupied an unsettled position on the landscape of American religion" (20).

Brigham was not baptized into the Mormon Church until 1832, two years after his initial exposure to the new faith. In Turner's account, Mormonism gave him religious purpose, such spiritual powers as speaking in tongues, and the opportunity to develop leadership skills. His ascension within the Church hierarchy was swift. In late 1834 he was elevated to the Kirtland High Council. In 1835 Joseph Smith named him an apostle; and by late 1838, when the Mormons were driven from Missouri, he was head of the Council of Twelve. Although dissension periodically racked the Church up to and through the Nauvoo years, Young remained intensely loyal to Joseph Smith.

With Joseph's assassination, Brigham experienced his finest hour. He convinced a majority of the Saints to accept the authority of the Council of Twelve in directing Church affairs. He secured a temporary truce with those who sought to expel the Mormons from Nauvoo, enabling the Saints to complete the temple. This allowed him to further Joseph Smith's theology by performing temple ordinances, thereby solidifying the community and reinforcing his legitimacy as Joseph's rightful successor. At the same time, he organized the Mormon exodus that led to settlement in the Salt Lake Valley. With the organization of Utah Territory under the Compromise of 1850, he obtained appointment as territorial governor, enabling him to exercise political as well as spiritual authority. Looking at this series of related accomplishments, Turner, without overstatement, terms the outcome "utterly improbable" (206).

One of the biography's strengths is its portrayal of Brigham Young's transition and growth over time. In terms of character, for example, Turner argues that Joseph's assassination produced significant changes in Young's style of leadership. Whereas collegiality and congeniality with his fellow apostles marked Young's management of the British Mission in 1840–41, he adopted an imperious approach after succeeding Joseph Smith as prophet and Church president. Reflecting on the change, Turner states, "In the intervening five years, however, Young had witnessed dissent leading to the murder of his beloved Joseph, and he had spent eighteen months living in fear of arrest or assassination. Shaken and traumatized by these events, he left the crucible of Nauvoo with a steely determination to make sure that factionalism and disobedience would never lead to a second Carthage jail" (144–45).

Turner cites incidents in which Young as Church president was belligerent, occasionally profane, intolerant of criticism, and, as in the case of the tragedy of the Willie and Martin handcart companies, unwilling to accept responsibility for decisions that turned out badly. He demanded loyalty and, in the early years of Utah Territory, governed both Church and state with a measure of threat and fear, condoning violence toward suspected wrongdoers and dis-

senters. On occasion he would exercise his wrath on an ecclesiastical colleague before a gathering of the Saints, reinforcing criticism with public humiliation.

Despite these troubling aspects of Young's character, Turner never doubts that Young's primary motivation was to strengthen the Church and build up the kingdom of God on earth. Young's highest loyalty, Turner states, "was to his church and its kingdom" (5). Hardship and persecution, in Young's view, were forges that tempered and united the Saints: "For Brigham Young, individuals did not become Latter-day Saints in the waters of baptism but through trials, tribulations, and 'living their religion,' which meant great sacrifice and perfect obedience. 'I want hard times,' he once insisted, 'so that every person that does not wish to stay, for the sake of his religion, will leave'" (410).

Turner's Brigham Young proves a pragmatist who could modify policies on the basis of experience. The Utah War illustrates the point. The conflict arose from Mormon aspirations for complete political autonomy, and Turner deems Young's decision to defy the federal government and oppose the army's entry into the territory "a distinctly unwise and dangerous step" (283) that "carried incredible risks for the Church he led" (271). Fortunately, the weather cooperated with the Mormons in delaying the army outside the territory. With military operations halted for winter, Thomas L. Kane assisted Young in resolving the dispute via negotiations.

With Young's willingness, in Turner's words, to "retreat in the face of insurmountable opposition" (410), the outcome was a draw, with the federal government maintaining formal authority over the territory and Young exercising *de facto* control over most territorial affairs. But despite his continuing quest for political autonomy, Young never again openly challenged the government. The army departed from the territory soon after the outbreak of the Civil War, but a federal force returned a year later to protect the overland mail from Indian attacks. Turner notes that, unlike in 1857, Young organized no military response to the intruders. Likewise, when the territorial governor effectively disbanded the Nauvoo Legion in 1870 by naming a former federal military officer hostile to the Mormons as its commander, Young exercised discretion, avoiding comment on the matter.

The author's appraisal of Young is critical but objective. In evaluating the Mountain Meadows Massacre, arguably territorial Utah's most controversial event, Turner states, "Young had sown the wind, and American emigrants reaped the whirlwind" (275). On the one hand, regarding the disputed issue of Young's direct role in the massacre, Turner finds "no satisfactory evidence that Young ordered the massacre" (280). Nonetheless, Young bears "significant responsibility" for what occurred. The Church president knew from personal experience "how easily violent rhetoric and incautious decisions could have deadly consequences. Despite these lessons, during the early stages of

the Utah War Young fomented the hatred and anxiety that made it conceivable for Mormons in southern Utah to slaughter men, women, and children” (280).

Other strengths of the biography are the breadth of its coverage and the quality of the analysis. For example, Turner devotes attention to Brigham Young’s attitude towards race and his position on the contested issue of slavery. He places Young’s views within the context of mid-nineteenth-century American attitudes on such questions and assesses his role in establishing the priesthood ban on African Americans. Turner thoughtfully concludes, “It makes little sense to lay the entire blame for the Church’s discriminatory policies at the feet of Brigham Young. . . . Ecclesiastical discrimination was the norm among white American Protestants, and it is no surprise the Latter-day Saints followed suit. However, Young’s adamant contention that such discrimination rested upon ‘eternal principles’ fostered a policy of exclusion that his successors saw little choice but to perpetuate” (229).

The author also explores Brigham’s personal life, examining his practice of plural marriage. Turner counts some fifty-three wives, about fifteen of whom were married to other men when sealed to Young. Although much about the marriages remains unknown, Turner cites evidence that plural marriage proved a trial for a number of wives. Some wives were contented, he states, “but Young satisfied very few who sought companionship, consideration, or romance” (194). Moreover, changes in Brigham’s household arrangements over the years, centralizing plural families with children in the Beehive and Lion Houses and later dispersing such families to separate households, suggest to Turner that Young’s practice of plural marriage was an ongoing learning process.

Turner’s eye for telling quotations adds to the freshness of his account. He can even find humor, intended or otherwise, in his source material. Thus, in the midst of the standoff between the Mormons and the U.S. Army during the Utah War, Brigham Young sought to win the incoming governor, Alfred Cumming, to his side. Young ordered Salt Lake City’s Globe restaurant reopened for the portly governor and his associates. But given Cumming’s reputation for lechery, Brigham directed that the establishment be staffed “*exclusively with male help*” (294). Humor also emerges from Ann Eliza Young’s barbed comment on Brigham’s open affection for Amelia Folsom (whom he married at age sixty-one when she was twenty-four). Ann Eliza, a disaffected plural wife left in the shade, reportedly characterized Young: “Polygamist, as he professes to be, . . . he is, under the influence of Amelia, rapidly becoming a monogamist, in all except the name” (327).

Turner also provides much useful religious context in discussing the early development of the Mormon faith. He relates Mormonism to other antebellum radical evangelical movements (like the Reform Methodist Church to

which the Young family adhered prior to conversion), identifying similarities and differences in their religious appeals. He states, for instance, “Many prospective converts surely found Mormon concepts of adult baptism, priesthood, gathering, and ongoing revelation (especially the *Book of Mormon*) unusual, but the fact that radical evangelicals often shared the Mormon emphasis on spiritual gifts, visions, and apocalyptic millenarianism made the acceptance of new doctrines easier” (75).

In the Nauvoo period, however, Joseph Smith’s theological innovations made Mormonism a more distinctive religious faith and increased its distance from Protestant evangelicals. Turner explains, “As it evolved behind closed doors, however, Nauvoo Mormonism had much less in common with Young’s Methodist past. Secret, sacred rituals replaced very public camp meetings and revivals. For evangelicals, individual faith was paramount, as spiritual rebirth brought eternal salvation for all who got off the anxious seat and responded to the altar call. By contrast, Mormons sought the mysteries of heaven and secured their salvation and exaltation through the emerging sacred ordinances of their church” (86–87).

Turner’s fresh perspective extends to well-known historical events. Assessing the Mormon Church’s public announcement of its practice of plural marriage in 1852, he astutely weighs costs and benefits. On the one hand, the announcement “served the vital purpose of openly providing a clear theological rationale for a principle most Mormons found difficult to embrace and to practice” (205). Yet it also led to a loss of members in Britain and, more importantly, changed the dynamics of the Church’s relationship with the nation. As Turner explains, “The church had managed to carve out a measure of sympathy from other Americans because of its forced expulsion from Illinois, but the open practice of polygamy made the narrative of the ‘suffering Saints’ viable no longer” (205).

Unfortunately, the section of the book covering Brigham Young’s last decade as Church president is not as rich as earlier sections. This is due in part to limitations of source material. As Turner explains, primary sources relating to Young become sparser after 1863, when his clerks no longer kept an office journal for him. An equally important limitation, however, is that Turner hurries through this era, and the depth of his analysis suffers as a result. In discussing Young’s economic strategy after the transcontinental railroad penetrated the Mormon kingdom, Turner identifies Church-directed cooperative merchandizing as Young’s “crown jewel” (354). But rather than explaining its operation and assessing its effectiveness, he turns his attention to the internal dissension aroused by the initiative (namely, the Godbeite movement) and never returns to this critical aspect of the Church’s efforts to adapt to an increasingly capitalist economy.

As a result, Turner underrates the effectiveness of Brigham’s leadership in

coping with the arrival of the railroad, which opened the Mormon kingdom to mining, outside capital, and an influx of non-Mormon entrepreneurs hostile to the Church theocracy. Young responded to these developments with initiatives to mobilize the Saints and promote kingdom building. To ensure political unity among the Saints, the Church established its own political party in Utah. To sustain economic unity among the Saints, Young used the Church's command and control over the Mormon economy to build railroads, establish a territorial-wide network of cooperative institutions, and launch enterprises such as the Deseret Telegraph, the Bank of Deseret, and the Salt Lake City street railroad and gas company. None of these initiatives elicits sustained discussion from Turner.

As Turner notes, the Church was on the defensive during the 1870s and Young's position was "more tenuous than ever" (371). Yet by adapting to economic and social change, Young helped keep the Church's opponents, both local and national, at bay. He died in 1877; and by contrast, the Church's position a decade later was much different. In 1887 the Church was beleaguered and besieged, with enforcement of the Edmunds Act (1882) and the Edmunds-Tucker Act (1887) having scattered much of its leadership and federal authorities moving to seize and escheat a significant amount of its property. Brigham Young in this biography is willful but also shrewd in terms of dealing with adversity and learning from mistakes. If his immediate successors had been equally as skillful and pragmatic, the result might not have been so disastrous in terms of sustaining the kingdom of God on earth.

This thoughtful and well-argued study should appeal to both the general reader and specialist. The text is nicely illustrated with contemporary photographs of persons and places associated with Brigham Young and several maps documenting Mormon movement and settlement. The author's effective use of primary sources provides the basis for new perspectives on Young's leadership and policies. The biography is certainly not the last word on Young's life. But it opens the door to further analysis of his personality, decisions, and role in nineteenth-century Mormonism. Other historians may disagree with Turner's portrayal, but they will not be able to ignore his perspective and analysis.

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Michael G. Reed. *Banishing the Cross: The Emergence of a Mormon Taboo*. Independence: John Whitmer Books, 2012. 171 pp. Photographs, map,

appendix, notes, bibliography, index. Paperback: \$19.95; ISBN-13 978-1-934901-35-9

Reviewed by Fiona Givens

Michael Reed's book, *Banishing the Cross: The Emergence of a Mormon Taboo*, published by John Whitmer Books is a welcome and timely contribution to the burgeoning field of Mormon studies. Michael Reed is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Christian history at the Graduate Theological Union at Berkeley. In his book, Reed explicates a Mormon taboo that has offended members of the Catholic faith tradition and baffled members of the LDS faith tradition alike.

Although this volume is slim (148 pages), the text is richly fleshed out with carefully researched and expansive notes. One value of those notes is in providing the reader with a much fuller understanding of why the wearing of the cross, so popular among nineteenth-century Mormons, was discouraged by the middle of the twentieth century.

Reed's book spans the history of the cross's prominence from the magic/masonic traditions of the Smith family through the growth of the LDS Church in the nineteenth century and in its post-Manifesto attempts at assimilation into the wider American culture at the beginning of the twentieth century. In the last two chapters of the book, Reed takes a comparative look at how the Strangites and the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (now the Community of Christ) treated the cross. Reed's main focus, however, is on how and why opposition to the material (and visual) symbol of the cross developed and became institutionalized in the LDS Church (5).

One can find minor points of disagreement with Reed's narrative: Reed probably overstates the connection of the cross with folk magic and masonry, and polygamy was not a factor in the anti-Mormonism of the Ohio and Missouri periods. But these are minor quibbles; Reed is convincing when he states that Mormon Church leadership overreached in its attempt to reintegrate itself into the American body politic, adopting in the process not only the Protestant animus towards Catholicism, aroused by the wave of Catholic immigrants from Ireland in particular, but also a negative stance toward the cross itself as being the defining symbol of the Catholic Church by the mid-twentieth century.

Reed's discussion of the "Catholic invasion" of 1820 to 1850 (27-31) provides excellent background to the anti-Catholicism that later erupted. "Early Mormons," he writes, "had their own share of anti-Catholic sentiment . . . identifying the Catholic Church as 'Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and [the] Abominations of the Earth'" (28-29).

However, it is important to note—as Reed does—that the anti-Catholic sentiment was not universal among prominent nineteenth-century Mormons.

While Eliza R. Snow could “see no hope for millions of people under the training of the ‘Mother of Harlots’” (31), Brigham Young did not display the same intolerance. Like John Taylor and Joseph Smith before him, Young expressed admiration for the Catholic Church. He is reported to have said of a Catholic priest: “I am certain I did all a man could do to convert your priest to my religion, and without any success. But I am not so certain that he could not have converted me to the Catholic faith had he remained long enough and tried hard enough” (35 note 27).

Orson Pratt may have been the most virulent anti-Catholic among the Mormon leadership of the era but then, as Reed notes, Pratt expanded the notion of the Catholic Church as the “Mother of Harlots . . . to include all Protestants, the United States, and the European nations together” (32). What is significant, however, is that the Mormon leadership at the turn of the twentieth century and earlier did not associate the cross with Catholicism, unlike their Protestant neighbors.

Indeed, as Reed points out and reinforces with the liberal use of pictorial evidence, Mormons embraced the cross as evident in its prolific use in jewelry, particularly among prominent Mormon women. Photographs of Amelia Folsom Young, Talula Young, and Nabbie Howe Young wearing crosses as necklaces and earrings are surprising and probably shocking to a modern Mormon sensibility (80). The picture of Elmeda Stringham Harmon is especially interesting as the cross and chain she is holding look remarkably like a rosary (85). Displaying the cross as jewelry was not limited to women, however. Men also would decorate their watch-chains and tie-tacks with crosses as Reed’s illustrations confirm (82–83).

Mormon adherence to the cross as symbol of Christ continued into the early twentieth century. Reed makes a compelling case for the cross being used in Mormon Church architecture from its appearance in the cruciform design of the Salt Lake Assembly Hall, the construction of which started in 1877. (As others have noted, what is even more interesting is that, because the Assembly Hall was constructed in the style of the Victorian Gothic, the exterior markedly resembles a Gothic cathedral in miniature.) The Salt Lake Liberty Ward building, the construction of which began in 1908 is also cruciform in its design. One of its stained-glass windows contains not one but two crosses as well. The cruciform shape is maintained in the construction of the temples in Laie, Hawaii (1919), and Cardston, Alberta (1923). It is evident that Mormon leadership of that day still did not uniformly associate the cross with Catholicism.

When and how, then, the Mormon taboo began as regards the cross is the central theme of Reed’s book. The hostility toward the cross, according to Reed, began with B. H. Roberts’s magnanimous proposal given in a talk on July 24, 1915, to adorn Ensign Peak with a cross: “To the Catholic Church be-

longs the credit for being trail blazers. Seventy years before our pioneers came here there were priests on the shores of the Great Salt Lake with the emblem of Christianity, the cross of Christ, and to that church should be given the credit. The ensign which shall yet float from yonder peak is the ensign of humanity; the ensign of Christ in which every nation shall have a part” (87).

This address was followed in 1916 by a proposal of Presiding Bishop Charles W. Nibley, who petitioned the Salt Lake City Council to erect “on Ensign peak a suitable cross, the symbol of Christianity, as a memorial to the ‘Mormon’ pioneers who first established here that which the cross implies” (87). Karl A. Scheid, the Commissioner of Public Affairs and Finance, agreed, stating that the placement of the cross on Ensign Peak “could do more to remove prejudices and create harmony . . . than all the . . . preaching of sermons or the publishing of newspapers can ever do in this city and state” (88). Reed argues that, while Nibley’s proposal met with First Presidency approval, vehement opposition from other Church leaders emerged almost immediately.

According to Reed’s research, Mormon opposition to the placement of the cross on Ensign Peak won the day, anchoring virulent nineteenth-century anti-Catholicism to the cross. Emil S. Lund, a member of the lower house of the state legislature, protested that the cross would “mislead the public into thinking that Utah [was] a Catholic state” (88). Apostle Moses Thatcher, who had served as mission president in Mexico, typified the anti-Catholic sentiment expressed by some LDS Church leaders in a way that was more vitriolic than informed. He wrote of the Catholic observation of Ash Wednesday: “This morning we see men and women[,] mostly the latter[,] returning from the great cathedral and the fashionable churches with a huge black cross mark on their foreheads. . . . The priests have listened to the vile confessions and . . . have ‘absolved’ them of their iniquities[,] and as a seal of the fact have placed the ‘mark of the Beast on their foreheads” (103).

Reed perhaps overstates the grass-roots nature of this opposition. Apart from some anonymous letters written to Nibley, the only grass-roots animus he documents was the letter of objection written by the Salt Lake Twentieth Ward, the members of which “most emphatically” protested “against the erecting of a cross on Ensign Peak.” They recommended an obelisk over which “the emblem of our country [could float] forever and forever” (98). Crucially, Reed also notes that the Salt Lake Twentieth Ward spawned the next generation of Mormon Church leaders who continued the anti-Catholic virulence expressed by Lund and Thatcher, namely J. Rueben Clark, Mark E. Petersen, Bruce R. McConkie, and LDS Church President David O. McKay.

In the anti-Communist fever of the mid-twentieth century that raged across the United States, McKay adapted nineteenth-century nativist justifications for anti-Catholicism. He, like many Protestants of the era not noted by Reed, tied the Catholic Church to Soviet Communism, deemed a clear and present

danger by many Americans. President McKay publicly claimed: “There are two great anti-Christ’s in the world: Communism and that church [Catholicism],” (115) successfully alienating not only American Catholics but Catholics around the world.

The supreme irony of this whole story is that by mid-twentieth century, Protestants had ceased to associate Catholicism with the cross. By removing Christ’s body from the crucifix, they preserved the cross itself as a symbol of Christ the Risen Lord. Yet Mormon leaders, like President McKay, continued the nineteenth-century Protestant tradition that linked the body-divested cross with Catholicism. As he wrote: “I told Bishop Wirthlin that this [the cross] is purely Catholic and Latter-Day Saint girls should not purchase and wear them” (116). It seems evident, from Reed’s impeccable research, that anti-Catholicism, coupled with an anti-cross sentiment, was generated from the Church leadership rather than from the body of the Saints.

In recent years, Mormon Church leaders have made significant attempts to repair the rift with the Catholic Church engendered by the former anti-Catholic rhetoric of some of its leaders. *Banishing the Cross* provides an important and comprehensive study of what animated the prejudice against the cross in the first place and of its manifestation as a historical aberration rather than a constant in Mormon history. I highly recommend this outstanding book, not only for a greater understanding of the reasons behind the banishment of the cross, but also for its rich treatment of an animus so at odds with Joseph Smith’s own sentiments vis-à-vis the Roman Catholic Church. In his last recorded sermon, Joseph stated: “The Old Catholic church is worth more than all” the rest.¹

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Richard L. Saunders, ed. *Dale Morgan on the Mormons: Collected Works, Part 1, 1939–1951*. Vol. 14 of KINGDOM IN THE WEST: MORMONS AND THE AMERICAN FRONTIER. Edited by Will Bagley. Norman, Okla.: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 2012. 511 pp. Photographs, introduction, notes, bibliography, title index, subject index. Cloth: \$45. ISBN 978-0-87062-416-2

¹Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, eds., *The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Orem, Utah: Grandin Book, 1991), 381–82.

Reviewed by John P. Hatch

As an avowed Kindleite and lover of e-books, the first thing that struck me when I picked up *Dale Morgan on the Mormons: Collected Works, Part 1, 1939–1951*, was how stunning a book can be. The Arthur H. Clark imprint at University of Oklahoma has yet again crafted a beautiful work in what continues to be a marvelous, impressive series.

The tension between e-book fans and reading purists is in some ways the tension between old and new. That old versus the new exists in the pages of the book as well. One can easily discern series editor Will Bagley's exasperation at modern trends when he writes in the foreword: "Academic history seems focused (if not obsessed) with narrower and narrower debates about whether its monocular monographs should concentrate on gender or race or post-colonial history with little regard for the facts, which do not exist—let alone matter" (16).

This old versus new tension is a highlight of the introduction by volume editor Richard L. Saunders, and a key facet in understanding Morgan. Saunders dedicates most of the introductory pages to a discussion of Morgan as a positivist historian among a sea of emerging postmodernists. Saunders's command of Morgan's life and writing is immediately apparent. This expertise makes it easy to accept both his admiration and criticism of Morgan's approach to history, as well as his strong arguments for why Morgan remains relevant in the fluid world of Mormon historiography.

It's a telling way to introduce Dale Morgan, a historian who today may be better known for what he didn't write: his sweeping three-volume epic on Mormonism. This may seem unfair; Saunders helpfully elucidates that Morgan published twenty books and almost fifty articles (28), numbers that surprised me. And yet, Morgan himself believed his best works were those that never saw the light of day, at least not with his name on them. He saw himself first and foremost as a historian of Mormonism.

One strange choice relegates the barely-four page biography of Morgan to the end of the introductory material. By Saunders's own admission, Dale Morgan is a tricky historian to trace. He did not earn a history degree, certainly did not obtain graduate training, and therefore did not slowly build an academic career with increasingly prestigious publications while lodged at a university. Instead, Morgan's work was largely dictated by the necessity of earning a living and therefore "careened between opportunities" (21). Given this pattern, a more robust biographical introduction at the beginning could give readers better footing from which to leap into the tangled world of Morgan's writing. Still, Saunders's approach unquestionably leaves one with a strong impression of exactly what kind of historian Dale Morgan was, and his later introductions to Morgan's writing flesh out portions of his life.

And what of the history Morgan penned? However simple his uncomplicated take on history might seem now, let's never forget one thing: Dale Morgan could write. This KINGDOM IN THE WEST volume is worth picking up just so historians (aspiring and well-seasoned) can see what it's like to tell a story. It's not always brilliant; Morgan's *Utah: A Guide to the State* (published 1941) was more work for hire than labor of love and, while entirely readable, doesn't exude the passion of some of the other essays or excerpts. But others are examples of striking historical prose.

Saunders provides insightful, even lengthy introductions to each of Morgan's works included for the volume. These are no single-paragraph preambles that mention only bare facts. Rather, they are multi-paged analyses of the context, the history, and even the thinking behind Dale Morgan's work. We learn in the introduction to "The Danites in Mormon History: The Missouri Phase" (completed 1944) that Morgan had embarked on his Mormon history epic and wanted to garner attention by writing on narrow, catchy topics. It's here where Morgan really shines, beginning his unpublished essay, "The idea of bearded zealots banded together in a fellowship of murder, pursuing hapless apostates and quaking wayfarers along the Western trails in the name of the Lord God Jehovah, has a purple magnificence which a hundred years has not faded" (217–18).

Saunders is not content to step back and present the material uncritically. He faults Morgan, for example, for failing to consider larger themes or external factors beyond the immediate cause and effect directly in front of him. Saunders's willingness to engage Morgan creates a vivid picture of 1940s historical writing that might otherwise be absent had he chosen to benignly introduce the essays. It's a tremendous strength of the book.

Of Morgan's writing, other samples included are his introduction to *The State of Deseret* (1939), an untitled draft manuscript on the early history of Mormonism (1940), various book reviews, a history of the Deseret Alphabet (1941–42), and the Mormon bibliographies (1949–50) he began, among others.

As historians and researchers become increasingly accustomed to Googling online databases, and as institutions provide more and more of their material on the internet, the concept of a published bibliography will perhaps soon become a bit of quaint nostalgia from the past. What were once prized possessions (and usually very expensive purchases) are even now sometimes stacked on remainder tables, heavily discounted. But to understand Dale Morgan's obsession with Mormonism's publications and broadsides is to understand Morgan and his lasting impact on Mormon studies.

Saunders devotes no fewer than thirty-two pages to introduce Morgan's bibliographies, and this portion of the book accounts for 35 percent of the content dedicated to his writing. Saunders argues that "Morgan's legacy as a

bibliographer is perhaps his sole lasting contribution to the field of Latter Day Saint studies” (315). Morgan’s notes on these early publications remain fresh and accessible. For example, he calls *Mormonism Unveiled* “one of the most important and fiercely controversial of the books about the Mormons, its influence felt in all that has been written about the Saints since 1834” (364). While some of the bibliographic entries are brief, others are detailed and a great window into Morgan and early Mormon publications.

The fruits of Mormon studies, now published by the likes of Oxford, Harvard, Knopf, Yale, and many others, have their roots in the mid-twentieth century when Mormonism emerged as something to be taken seriously by historians like Fawn Brodie, Bernard DeVoto, Juanita Brooks, and the man who helped them all, Dale Morgan. Richard L. Saunders’s *Dale Morgan on the Mormons* is a welcome contribution to the growing body of work on Mormon historiography.

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Leland H. Gentry and Todd M. Compton. *Fire and Sword: A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri, 1836–1839*. Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2010. xxviii, 613 pp. Chronology, preface, introduction, notes, bibliography, index, maps. Hardbound: \$36.95. ISBN 978-1-58958-120-3

Reviewed by Alexander L. Baugh

Historians of the Mormon experience have long recognized the invaluable contribution of Leland H. Gentry’s path-breaking dissertation “A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri from 1836 to 1839” (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1965). So monumental was his study that, in 2000 (thirty-five years later) it was republished with only minor revisions and minimal editing by the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Latter-day Saint History and *BYU Studies* as part of the DISSERTATIONS IN LATTER-DAY SAINTS HISTORY series. Sensing a need for a more thorough and up-to-date version, which would include information from subsequent research and new and more available documentation, in 2002, Greg Kofford (publisher of Greg Kofford Books) invited Gentry to “revise and update this foundational work” (xv). He agreed; but during the next few years, his health steadily declined, delaying his efforts and progress. To move things along, Kofford suggested that perhaps a co-author could lend valuable assistance. Gentry consented, and an invitation was extended to

Todd M. Compton, a skilled and seasoned historian and author, who agreed to the arrangement. In the meantime, Gentry's condition worsened. Weakened from complications resulting from multiple sclerosis, he died on August 6, 2007, leaving Compton to complete the project essentially on his own.

I first read Gentry's dissertation while in graduate school at BYU in the late 1980s. In fact, it was his dissertation, along with three other academic works, that sparked my own interest in the Missouri period of early Mormon history—the others being Warren A. Jennings, "Zion Is Fled: The Expulsion of the Mormons from Jackson County, Missouri" (Ph.D. diss., University of Florida, 1962); Max H. Parkin, "A History of the Latter-day Saints in Clay County, Missouri, from 1833 to 1837" (Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, 1976), and Stephen C. LeSueur, *The 1838 Mormon War in Missouri* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1987). Needless to say, because much of my own research and writing effort over the past twenty-five years has focused on Missouri Mormonism, I was anxious to see what new material or information Compton's work might include.

The most recognizable difference is the new, slightly modified title: *Fire and Sword: A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri, 1836–39*. Considering the fact that Compton essentially did a full-length rewrite, in addition to making extensive changes and revisions, he felt that the work should be distinguished from the original dissertation, hence the title change and the inclusion of his name as co-author.

Another noticeable, albeit relatively minor, difference appears in the chapter titles and some of the subtitles. For the most part, Compton retained Gentry's original chapter designations as subtitles but added main titles to provide the reader with a more descriptive orientation. For example, the chapter initially titled "The Origin, Rise, and Expulsion of the Dissenters," is now "'Salt That Has Lost Its Savor': The Origin, Rise, and Expulsion of the Dissenters." The chapter originally titled "Period of Crisis" now appears as "'In the Name of Lazarus, God, and the Lamb, Fire!': The Daviess County Raid, Battle of Crooked River, and Boggs's Extermination Order," reflecting a more extensive name change. Compton also reordered the chapters—only slightly, but they no longer correspond with the Gentry's original dissertation. In the 2010 version, Compton placed Gentry's "Introduction" (Chapter 1) as part of the book's front matter, causing a shift in each of the subsequent chapters. (For example, Gentry's Chapter 2 is Gentry-Compton Chapter 1 in the revised edition. Gentry's Chapter 3, is Gentry-Compton Chapter 2, and so on.) For readers who find it necessary to compare Gentry's text with the revised version, it would have been helpful if Compton had retained the original chapter number designations.

Compton explains that his intent was to "shift the book from the require-

ments of a dissertation” to that which would be more readable to a “general audience” (xv–xvi). In so doing, he notes, “I have left the main body of each chapter as Gentry’s work, for all practical purposes, reflecting his viewpoints at the time he did his research” (xvi). However, many times Compton’s modifications demonstrate a more extensive revision than the reader might assume. For example, comparing a passage from Gentry’s original narrative with that of Compton’s revision indicates that the material he added went beyond Gentry’s original thinking. Note the following:

Gentry’s Dissertation

The most tragic and long-remembered event of the Mormon War was [the] “Haun’s Mill Massacre.” This tragedy, which terminated in the deaths of seventeen Latter-day Saints, occurred on October 30, 1838, just three days after the appearance of Boggs’ “Order of Extermination.” Only one brief eye-witness account of the event is available from the non-Mormon point of view. This is due, in part, to the fact that those who participated in the occurrence were careful to conceal their deeds beneath of cloak of secrecy. Two non-Mormon accounts, written in later years by non-participants, have also been located.

Several pro-Mormon accounts of the affair are available, each written by eye-witnesses. This chapter represents an attempt to sift all known accounts of the event and to bring them together so as to form as complete a picture of the occurrence as possible. A further objective of this section of the study is to determine, if possible, the role which the so-called “Order of Extermination” played in the massacre. An attempt will also be made to fix responsibility for the infamous deeds of October 30, 1838, as well as to determine the reasons for the attack.

Compton’s Revision

The most tragic event of the Mormon War was the Haun’s Mill Massacre, in which seventeen Latter-day Saints died. It occurred on Monday, October 30, 1838, just three days after Governor Lilburn H. [W.] Boggs issued his “Order of Extermination.” While several pro-Mormon eyewitness accounts of the affair are available, only one non-Mormon, Daniel Ashby, left a contemporary eye-witness account. I have also located two non-Mormon reminiscences, written in later years by non-participants. This paucity of non-Mormon documentation is doubtless due, in part, to the shock with which non-Mormons in Missouri greeted the report and the sympathy they felt for the victims. Furthermore, those who participated in the occurrence were not eager to have the event publicized. It seems reasonable that the Missourians closed ranks around fellow Missourians after the Mormon War, given the complex dynamics of hostility and mutual depersonalization. It is striking that the members of

the legislature first demanded an investigation, then voted against it. (See chap. 14. [in Compton]) No matter how strident the private justifications may have been that “the Mormons had it coming,” the facts of 200–250 armed Missourian men attacking thirty (often unarmed) men in the midst of women and children, launching the attack without warning just after a treaty had been agreed, and the lopsided death fatalities (seventeen Mormons, no Missourians) make it a massacre by any definition, not a battle (319).

* * *

Although Compton claimed that his “modified” text reflected Gentry’s “viewpoints at the time he did his research” (xvi), a reading of corresponding passages, like those given above, suggest that Compton’s rewrite included information and material not originally conveyed by Gentry.

Compton also deleted material from Gentry’s original work. For example, in Chapter 5 of Compton’s revision under the heading “Revelations and Doctrinal Developments,” he completely expunged Gentry’s original narrative relating to Joseph Smith’s receipt of LDS Doctrine and Covenants 113, 116, and 117 (three pages of text in the original dissertation), then supplied a short, one-paragraph summary of Section 117 but failed to give any explanation regarding the historical context for Sections 113 or 116 (131–34). Another unexplained excision is the “Summary and Conclusion” section in Chapters 5, 13, and 14 of the revised volume. Comparing this material with Gentry’s original (Chapters 6, 14, and 15) shows that the information under this section was omitted; in Chapter 8, seven of the ten paragraphs under the same heading were deleted.

In addition to modifications made to the main body of Gentry’s text, Compton includes an “Addendum” at the end of most of the chapters in which he provides his own historical assessment or commentary on the subject matter, information or quotations from additional primary sources, and bibliographic information. He also frequently includes the viewpoints of other historians who have published articles or books on topics related to the chapter. In nearly half of the chapters, the addendum material is not long (two pages or less), and the last two chapters have no addendum section. The remaining chapters contain three to six pages of additional content.

The one exception is the addendum material included for Chapter 8, “The ‘Big Fan’: The Role of the Danites,” which comprises twelve pages (243–54). In doing his revision, Compton appears to have become somewhat enamored with the controversy surrounding the Danite band, an extralegal Mormon military-styled organization which conducted operations and activities in Caldwell and Daviess counties during the summer and fall of 1838. It should be noted that Gentry was essentially the first LDS scholar to acknowledge many of the illegal activities of the Danites, which may be the reason for

Compton's more lengthy analysis. In his addendum, Compton examines the group's structure, role, function, and possible Masonic connections; the role played by its leader, Sampson Avard; Joseph Smith's involvement (or non-involvement); and the interpretations offered by a number of historians who have attempted to explain the group's activities, including D. Michael Quinn, Dean C. Jessee, David J. Whittaker, Stephen C. LeSueur, and me, among others. I was mildly disappointed that Compton failed to include what I consider to be an informative examination of Avard's role in the organization: Corwin L. Nimer, "Treachery and False Swearing in Missouri: The Rise and Fall of Sampson Avard," *Mormon Historical Studies* 5, no. 2 (Fall 2004): 37–60. Compton admirably assesses the various viewpoints; but in the end, many of the questions raised by historians about the Danites and their activities remain a matter of which interpretation one accepts over the other.

Compton also updated the quotations. In other words, if a better source text had become available since 1965, he replaced it. For example, rather than using a quotation from *History of the Church*, he used *Personal Writings of Joseph Smith* for the citation. He also revised and standardized Gentry's footnotes (they now appear as endnotes), and added additional endnote references and text, setting these additions off from the original by double slashes (//). The inclusion of a chronology of the Missouri period (seven pages), an updated bibliography (thirty pages), and nine maps (two are full color) by the excellent cartographer John Hamer, are nice additions to the volume.

The average person who enjoys reading history rarely checks out a doctoral dissertation from a university library. And while Gentry's study was republished in a more readable format by *BYU Studies*, it has probably had only limited circulation and readership. However, Compton's revision, which is more characteristic of a hardcover book in style and appearance, will likely appeal to a larger general audience, which, after all, is the group for whom Compton intended the work. That said, I'm not sure the 2010 version will ever replace Gentry's original, especially among historians researching or writing about the later Missouri period. After all, if Gentry is the original source for the information, it is his work that should be referred to. On the other hand, if Compton's revision adds additional or insightful information to the discussion, that work could also be cited. While I consider Gentry's work to be the more significant of the two, Compton's work makes a less vital but still important contribution.

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BOOK NOTICES

Karl Ricks Anderson. *The Savior in Kirtland*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2012. Xiii, 338 pp. Epilogue, Appendix, Index. Paper: \$19.99; ISBN-13: 978–1–69907–166–0

The Savior in Kirtland takes a spiritual approach in describing events during the Kirtland period in Mormon history. The author, Karl Ricks Anderson, explains: “Through the following pages of *The Savior in Kirtland*, my hope is that the reader will see the Savior and hear His voice with greater clarity by looking at the Restoration through the lens of Christ. In no other place during the early years of the Restoration was this lens so focused as in Kirtland, Ohio” (3).

Anderson describes events and teachings gained by the early Latter-day Saints during the Kirtland period in topical discussions with short chapters and subheadings. Sample topics are how the Savior protected the Saints, new witnesses, and knowledge about the Savior gained through

revelation that has now been canonized in the Doctrine and Covenants.

The book is user friendly, in an easy-to-read format for someone basically familiar with Church history.

Anderson concludes with the following declaration: “In response to the events of that day, Church members could rightfully and boldly declare, ‘We are the . . . people that God has made choice of to bring about the Latter Day glory’” (320).

This book also contributes a collection of first-hand accounts of events and teachings received at Kirtland. In keeping with his emphasis on Christ-centered events, Anderson underscores how the Lord’s hand can be seen in many aspects of the Kirtland period, from identifying individuals who would help the new church to the teaching of new doctrine. For example, in the chapter titled ‘Christ Teaches and Magnifies His Prophet,’ Anderson explains: “In the Kirtland area the Lord raised up Sidney Rigdon, a man well-versed in the Bible and a re-

nowned orator, who as directed by the Spirit and the Prophet would write and speak for Joseph” (51). He then proceeds to trace events in Rigdon’s life that led him to Kirtland so that he was present when he was needed there.

Other topics include: visions of Deity in the Kirtland Temple, the testimony of the Book of Mormon that Joseph Smith and the Three Witnesses bore in Kirtland, how Christ fulfilled the promised endowment, how Christ bestowed the keys for the fulness of salvation, and people who became witnesses of the Savior. Anderson shows through detailed references to first-hand accounts that read-

ers who are attuned to spiritual events can see how every event in the Kirtland period was orchestrated to testify of Christ’s divinity.

Anderson has long taught seminary and Institute of Religion classes in the Ohio area and has written extensively about the Kirtland period. His motivation to write this book was the suggestion of Elder Neal A. Maxwell who said to Anderson,

“Write it on the Christology of Kirtland—what we know that we otherwise would not know, the visions of the universe and what we gain from the revelations. . . . Combine your insights into Christ and your love of Kirtland with the history” (x).