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FRONT COVER: Peder C. Christensen, Latter-day Saint missionary, Aalborg, Denmark, November 2, 1891. Heinrich Tönnies, photographer. From the Heinrich Tönnies Collection, Lokalhistorisk Arkiv for Aalborg Kommune, Norresundby, Denmark.

BACK COVER: Art Missionaries John Hafen and John Fairbanks (center, rear) with their classmates on the steps of the Ecole des Beaux Artes, 1890. Personal collection of Vern Swanson.

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The Journal of Mormon History, annual publication of the Mormon History Association, reflects the purposes of the association, "to foster scholarly research and publication in the field of Mormon history."

Manuscripts dealing with all aspects of Mormon history are invited. First consideration will be given to those which make a strong contribution to knowledge through new interpretations or new information. A panel of readers will also consider general interest of the paper, extent and accuracy of research, and literary quality.

For matters of style, consult A Manual of Style (University of Chicago Press, 1969) and a recent issue of the Journal. Specific guidelines are available upon request from the editor.

Manuscripts should be submitted in duplicate with a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Articles should be typed, double-spaced, with footnotes, also double-spaced, in a separate section at the end. Preferred length is fifteen to twenty-five pages, including footnotes. All manuscripts are deposited in the MHA Archives after review unless accompanied by self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Submit manuscripts to Leonard J. Arrington, 2236 South 2200 East, Salt Lake City, Utah 84109.
One of the most striking features of early Latter-day Saint proselyting is the extent to which it was consciously patterned after a New Testament model. Much of the basis for this was provided in a September 1832 revelation on priesthood, presently known as Section 84 in the Latter-day Saint Doctrine and Covenants, which echoed the biblical instructions. In the revelation, Jesus Christ directed missionaries to become even as my friends in days when I was with them, traveling to preach the gospel in my power;
For I suffered them not to have purse or scrip, neither two coats.
Behold, I send you out to prove the world, and the laborer is worthy of his hire . . .
Therefore, take ye no thought for the morrow, for what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, or wherewithal ye shall be clothed.
For, consider the lilies of the field, how they grow, they toil not, neither do they spin; and the kingdoms of the world, in all their glory, are not arrayed like one of these.
For your Father, who is in heaven, knoweth that you have need of all these things . . .
Therefore, let no man among you, for this commandment is unto all the faithful who are called of God in the church unto the ministry, from this hour take purse or scrip, that goeth forth to proclaim this gospel of the kingdom . . .
Whoso receiveth you receiveth me; and the same will feed you, and clothe you, and give you money . . .
And he that doeth not these things is not my disciple; by this you may know my disciples.1

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This concept of the procedure for proselyting was well established before missionaries were sent to Europe in 1837. But the classic example of the concept in practice became the mission of members of the Quorum of the Twelve to England in 1839-40. Sick and penniless, leaving their families in wretched conditions in the vicinity of Nauvoo, they had little more than faith as the basis for their undertaking. Literally without purse or scrip, they counted as miraculous their reaching New York and their acquisition of funds for the transatlantic passage. Brigham Young later recounted that without any cash on hand he borrowed all the funds to begin publishing the *Millennial Star*, 3,000 hymnals, 5,000 copies of the Book of Mormon, and about 60,000 tracts. He claimed that he was later able to pay off all this indebtedness with publication profits, to pay for board and room, to buy most of his clothing, and to leave on hand a stock of publications worth about $2,500. He made it clear that he expected subsequent missionaries to follow that example.

This mode of operation was a test for both the missionary and the people he contacted. It encouraged faith on the part of the missionary and sacrifice for both. George Halliday, a native resident of England, began proselyting full-time in September 1845 but worked occasionally to help support himself. It was fortunate that he had some work, for he did not receive his first donation, one shilling, until four months later. In January 1846 a female member of the Church washed his socks, which he had been wearing for three weeks and which had caused his feet to blister. Later that year, while traveling late at night, he arrived at the home of some fellow Latter-day Saints at 1:00 A.M. and joined the man and his wife to sleep three in one bed. In 1847 he was released from his mission for six months in order to earn money for his own support, and he was married during that time. In 1850 he persisted in walking on blistered feet rather than ask for money to travel to a meeting with Orson Pratt, for, he said, "the saints was so poor that I had not the heart to ask them for money," but soon a woman offered to lend him a horse and another put twenty-five shillings in his hand. He emigrated to Utah in 1853 and, like many others, returned in less than a decade to again perform missionary work.

Special challenges were involved in the initial thrust of proselyting in a new area. C. C. A. Christensen and his fellow missionary in Christiania (now Oslo), Norway, not wanting to ask too much of the few initial converts in the city, chewed ginger to quiet their hungry stomachs. Once congregations were established, local church funds, sometimes accumulated in collection plates, were available on an emergency basis, often as a loan. But individual generosity given directly was usually the key to support of missionaries. While individual

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4 George Halliday Journal, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, entries for August 9, 1845; January 1 and 17 and August 8, 1846; June and November 20, 1847; undated entries (1850-53), pp. 92-93.

donations were made spontaneously to the early missionaries, more systematic fund-raising was undertaken in behalf of elders returning to Zion as well as for the costs of entertaining leading brethren who visited the missions. Missionaries who helped raise funds for the emigration of their compatriots generally expected similar aid when their time came to leave Europe. Local converts who spent their full time in the ministry were not always so fortunate in the early decades, but they were usually able at least to borrow the means to emigrate. The system was fairly successful, although there were some abuses and some inadequacies.

Thomas Kirby, a fisherman born in Suffolk, England, was called as a missionary in 1854 at the age of twenty-two. He proselyted without purse or scrip until late 1858, with the exception of a brief period of employment between mission assignments in 1854-55. During this time, he gave his topcoat to an older Mormon emigrant who had none. After he took up a collection to pay for the return of two missionaries to Zion, Kirby found the local Saints unable to provide much for his own travel or clothing, but at a meeting at Stratford-upon-Avon they took up a collection to buy him “a new suit of clothes and a good supply of underwear.” One local Church member sewed the suit, and some of the women made him shirts and stockings. However, Kirby’s immediate supervisor, a missionary from Zion, soon required him to give his suit to someone else, and he received his supervisor’s old, too-large clothing in return. By late 1858 Kirby received an offer to have his emigration paid, but rather than accept such a donation, he asked for a release from his missionary labors so he could earn his passage. That took time, and in the meantime he began courting his intended bride. She emigrated in 1862. Shortly after that, Church leaders again approached him and asked him to serve another mission, but he was able to persuade them that he should emigrate. Finally, nine years after his initial mission call and now over thirty-one years of age, he emigrated in 1863 and was married in Salt Lake City.

Franklin D. Richards introduced the law of tithing among the Latter-day Saints in Europe in 1856. Until then, tithing in Europe was usually paid only at the time of emigration by those who had additional funds left over after paying for their passage. Many of the contributions up to that time were spontaneous contributions to missionaries. Now the regular payment of tithing was a major step in systematizing donations, and tithing became predominant. The natural tendency was to utilize tithing funds for local needs, including the cash expenses of missionaries. Conference houses, which for many years had served as lodging and headquarters for supervisors over large mission districts, were now rented with local tithing funds. Some missionaries, particularly those from Zion, had most of their needs provided through regular allowances from tithing; others continued to rely largely on individual charity. Those who were

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6 Many missionaries supervised local church affairs and had proselyting responsibilities as well. Conference presidents and those branch presidents whose time was devoted entirely to the ministry are considered in this paper as full-time missionaries.

7 Thomas Wright Kirby Journal, Library-Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, hereafter cited as LDS Archives.

8 Millennial Star, July 12, 1856, p. 440.
frugal or whose tithing support was augmented by additional donations were sometimes able to send money and goods home to their families. Many were conscientious to avoid unduly burdening local Saints; some were not.

Thomas Bullock received from tithing funds in 1857 an allowance of sixteen to eighteen shillings per week, from which he paid three shillings for lodging and thirteen pence for meals. He was also required to pay postage for the letters he received from home, so he counseled his wife to write on thin ruled paper and thus save him a shilling a month. When mission leaders visited, he had to pay for their food. Yet he was able to save enough to buy two blankets, a “flock bed,” and a trunk. “I have pinched my belly of many a meal,” he wrote home, “and lived on bread and cheese and water, in order to buy something for my children, and I do know positively that I have lived poorer than any other Elder that has been here from the valley.” 9 He could not afford postage for the few dresses and other items he bought for his family, so presumably he waited until he could take them home with him. He described with disdain the excesses he sometimes saw in the practice of special donations for a “Valley” elder’s return home, saying he would rather return with nothing than to hear the Saints tell afterwards, “I pawned all my best clothes, or sold them, to get him a twenty two guinea gold watch,” or “a sixty dollar tea service,” or “a seventy dollar dinner service.” I would not have the harsh expressions on my head, that some American Elders have, thro their greedy, grasping, avaricious selfishness, for all I am worth — I would rather sell the West City lot to pay my expences, than to hear people talk “I am kept here in Babylon, my means had to go toward filling two sugar hogsheads with rich dresses and crockery for elder (so and so) several families have left the Church thro’ such conduct.” 10

Indeed, Bullock directed his wife to sell some of their property to cover the family’s expenses while he was gone.

During the “Mormon Reformation” increased emphasis was placed on tithing in Europe, and payment was sometimes a criterion for Church fellowship. In addition, missionaries were strongly encouraged to purchase large quantities of publications on credit, often more than they were able to sell. The resulting indebtedness was sometimes relieved by special donation, but otherwise hung as a heavy burden over individual missionaries who were responsible. Local converts who served as full-time missionaries were usually single men, but in the fervor of the reformation more men with families were encouraged to exercise faith by leaving their families in the hands of the Lord and devoting their full time to the ministry. 11 Because of the additional expenses involved, pressure on local Saints for tithing and other Church contributions became intense. During this “reign of terror,” as a later European mission president dubbed it, a considerable number left the Church, either by excommunication or by their own choice. Some later returned. 12

9 Thomas Bullock to Henrietta Bullock, August 24, 1857, Thomas Bullock Correspondence, LDS Archives.
10 Ibid.
12 Brigham Young, Jr., Diary, December 15, 1862, LDS Archives.
Learning that excessive burdens had been placed on the European Saints, Brigham Young instructed European mission president Asa Calkin in 1860 to ease the pressure for payment of tithing and purchases of publications. As a result, tithing donations dropped off drastically. After Amasa Lyman and Charles C. Rich assumed the presidency of the European Mission that August, President Young was dismayed to learn the extent to which tithing funds had been systematically expended for missionaries. They found that during the previous two years more than 11,000 pounds of tithing funds — about $50,000 — had been expended in the British Mission alone for food, lodging, clothing, and traveling expenses of elders and on furniture for their rented quarters. Many of them had families to support. Moreover, they had been led to expect that their emigration expenses would also be paid from tithing funds. As a result of these reports, President Young insisted that the use of all tithing funds be subject to direction from Church headquarters. Any excessive drain on the resources of the European Saints would lead to undue postponement of their emigration to Zion, he warned. He also disagreed in principle with systematic arrangements for providing the expenses of the ministry. "The Elders are invariably instructed to travel and preach without purse and scrip, as did the Elders anciently," he directed. Those in the ministry, whether they traveled or had local responsibilities, were to "sustain themselves altogether independent of the tithing." President Young further held that donations for missionaries ought to be on the basis of their faith and contact with the people, on their own merit and influence. If the donations were not adequate to supply the needs of any individual in the ministry, he should be released or at least given the opportunity to labor to earn part of his support. Missionaries were expected to live economically and to avoid taking home to Zion goods that were obtained through donations. Young wrote: "We desire, and intend so far as in our power, to see our Missionaries return bringing the souls of men, instead of silks, satins, velvets, forebelows, carriages, wives, or even silver and gold." In an effort to eliminate the burden of missionary travel expenses to and from Europe, a burden that was previously placed on the Saints in Europe and those living along the route to the port of departure, President Young established a missionary fund in Utah that was also to provide, if needed, for the support of missionaries' families during their absence. He also arranged to buy wagons and animals from the missionaries when they reached the western terminus of the rail system.

13 Brigham Young to Asa Calkin, January 31, 1860, Brigham Young Letterpress Copybooks, LDS Archives (hereafter cited as Young Copybooks).

14 Amasa Lyman and Charles C. Rich to Brigham Young, August 3, 1860, LDS Archives.

15 Brigham Young to Amasa Lyman and Charles C. Rich, September 13, 1860, Young Copybooks. See also Amasa Lyman and Charles C. Rich, "Instructions to the Saints Throughout the European Mission," Millennial Star, November 24, 1860, pp. 744-45. The published instructions modified President Young's requirement somewhat; the elders were to "sustain themselves so far as possible. . . ."

16 Ibid.

17 Brigham Young to Jacob Gates, October 11, 1860, Young Copybooks.

18 Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and Daniel H. Wells to George Q. Cannon, with additional instructions to Amasa Lyman and Charles C. Rich, September 25, 1860; and Brig-
As a rule, the elders were dutiful in accepting the new directions. William Kelsey, a local British elder who labored full-time in the ministry with a family to support, recorded in his diary that Amasa Lyman spoke to the priesthood, "changing arrangements throwing the traveling priesthood among the saints for support and trusting to their liberality for means to sustain their families — we all feel well over the change." 19

Jens Weibye, a conference president in Denmark, listed all his expenditures from tithing between February 1857 and November 1860, all donors of voluntary gifts and expenditures from those gifts between January 1856 and November 1860, and all his own savings that he had expended. Tithing constituted one-third of his resources for that five-year period, other donations just over one-fifth, and his own savings the balance. He paid little or nothing for lodging, with headquarters in his own home and lodging being provided free of charge on his travels. After contributing substantially to the local fund for the poor, the Perpetual Emigrating Fund, tithing, and temple fund, making other donations, and paying for his own clothing, food, travel, and other expenses, he was apparently left with nothing on hand. 20

In the months after the change in financing, Weibye fared better than many local European missionaries. George Q. Cannon reported that in Britain most of the missionaries had families, "and they have become so accustomed to their weekly stipend that it is like a man being turned out of a regular employment and having to trust to chance for a subsistence, it calls for all their faith to sustain them." 21 Because they had helped raise money earlier for the emigration of others, they had expected to benefit from similar help, "and it is quite a letting down." Cannon eventually made arrangements to provide mission funds for the emigration of many of these people, who had labored faithfully for many years. He felt that as a rule, they could not adjust effectively enough to the new circumstances and should thus be released to emigrate. This signaled a decline in full-time church service by British members, a trend that was not substantially reversed until recent times. By the mid-1860s a similar trend was evident in Scandinavia. In both instances, fewer local people were available to serve as membership declined. However, church membership in Scandinavia was always at least sixty percent as high as its peak year of 1862, while British membership declined more abruptly with the emigration of the 1860s and later fell to at least eight percent of its 1851 peak. 22

Some local Latter-day Saints were confused about the new arrangements, seeing the obvious need for the full-time ministry to receive some kind of sup-

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19 William Henry Kelsey Diary, November 25, 1860, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.

20 Jens Christian Andersen Weibye Diary, November 23, 1860, LDS Archives.

21 George Q. Cannon to Brigham Young, February 1, 1861, LDS Archives.

22 British membership (excluding children under eight years old) was 32,894 at the end of 1851, and fell to a low of 2,726 at the end of 1896. Scandinavian membership was 5,800 as of December 31, 1862, and its low point was 3,668 on December 31, 1894. *Millennial Star*, January 1, 1852, p. 16; February 11, 1897, p. 87. Andrew Jenson, *History of the Scandinavian Mission* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1927), p. 532.
port. Soon they gave such priority to donations for missionary expenses and maintaining local meeting places that little or no tithing was paid in many localities. Mission leaders pointed out that this defeated the purpose of President Young's instructions; they encouraged the payment of tithing and greater frugality in local and missionary expenses.23

An uneasy readjustment followed. Local resources were limited, particularly in Britain, where the economic effects of the Civil War in America were widespread. Local "mission funds" were established by contribution to provide local branch expenses and some of the missionaries' personal expenses, including clothing and sometimes lodging. Missionaries still asked local Church members for meals, but were not always fed. Joshua Whitney and an Elder Felt tried to obtain dinner at six homes of Saints in Hull, England, one night in March 1865. One woman burst out crying because she had nothing to give them. Felt finally gave up and went home without dinner; Whitney persisted and eventually was fed.24 Felt had brought some money from home, which he spent occasionally as necessary. The same apparently held true for Abram Hatch, who wrote in September 1866 that he had "walked in the rain for several days with the idea that someone observing the elder [Hatch] going out in the wet would give him an umbrella but after getting wet ten times I have abandoned the notion and concluded to buy one for myself."25

When Albert Carrington arrived in Britain as president of the European Mission in 1868, he learned that some elders had found a rather devious but effective way to gain contributions for their expenses. When Church members came in to pay tithing, the elder in charge would ask how much of the amount was to be applied to tithing and how much to the mission fund. Contributors with cash in hand could hardly resist this subtle appeal to commit some of their funds to fill obvious needs. This approach remedied the problem that tithing was traditionally contributed on a regular basis and the mission fund only sporadically. But Carrington argued that those who came intending to pay tithing should not be deprived of full credit for tithing by such manipulation. Ideally, he pointed out, first priority should be given to the payment of tithing; in addition, the mission fund in each locality should be sufficient for local and missionary expenses. Recognizing the apparent impossibility of fully funding both, he gave temporary permission for tithing funds to be used for necessary missionary expenses that could not be met by mission fund and other resources.26 There was precedent for this in Brigham Young's 1860 instructions, which allowed for use of tithing for expenses of members of the Twelve and for limited emergency assistance to missionaries.27

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23 Millennial Star, January 26, 1861, pp. 56–57.
24 Joshua Kimball Whitney Diary, March 13, 1865, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.
25 Abram Hatch Diary, September 6, 1866, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.
26 Albert Carrington to Brigham Young, December 9, 1868, Young Copybooks. Millennial Star, February 13, 1869, pp. 114–16, and February 27, 1869, pp. 147–48.
27 Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and Daniel H. Wells to George Q. Cannon, with additional instructions for Amasa Lyman and Charles C. Rich, September 25, 1860, Young Copybooks.
Carrington noted a growing tendency for elders to bring their own money from home. One missionary was paying all his own expenses, and “many are now paying their own way to a considerable extent.” Yet there was no immediate sign of disapproval of this growing departure from Mormon tradition and scriptural injunction. Why not?

In 1867, John Taylor sounded the first major call for retreat from the traditional position, citing Jesus’ own reversal of the mandate to preach without purse or scrip (Luke 22:35–36):

He said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing.

Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one.

Elder Taylor discussed the matter in practical terms of needs and resources. When the Saints had preached without purse or scrip, he said, we were the poorest people in the world, but now we are better off than the generality of mankind, and we are able to help one another, and there is no necessity for our missionaries to go under the circumstances they have done heretofore; and since it is the counsel that they shall not, why let us do what we can to help them.

The statement that it was “counsel” not to leave home without resources implied general agreement among church leaders. Yet the trumpet did not continue to sound retreat. Mixed signals were sent for many years. Clearly, going out without purse or scrip had been a dramatic manifestation of faith, and few who spoke or wrote wished to acknowledge its gradual demise or to speak positively of alternative approaches. Brigham Young seemed to be calling for a return to the old ways in 1870:

I think if our Elders were to go without purse or scrip and had nothing to fall back upon, and could not write here for means, but were obliged to take their valise in their hands and preach the Gospel as we used to do, they would be much more successful than they are and would find many more who would be willing to listen to their testimonies.

In 1873 Taylor himself stated that “it has never been considered a hard thing by the Elders of this Church” to go without purse or scrip. In 1883 he called preaching without purse or scrip throughout the earth “a duty placed upon us by the Almighty.”

Mission presidents in Europe, wishing to revitalize proselyting, found that money from home opened new possibilities. With such financial resources, missionaries could spend more time with potential converts than with church members, could move out into areas not already proselyted, and could under-

take systematic tracting and stay in one district for an extended period of time, rather than traveling in a large circuit.\(^{33}\)

The Panic of 1873 was followed by difficult years for church members in Europe. Hospitality could not extend as far as it had earlier, and vagrancy laws long on the books sprouted teeth as complaints about Mormon proselyting reached local authorities. A few cases of imprisonment, even banishment, discouraged most attempts to labor among strangers without purse or scrip.\(^{34}\) It became a novelty, certainly a way to demonstrate faith and courage, but a way few cared to explore. Those who tried it had letters published in mission periodicals; some were successful and others were not.\(^{35}\)

In 1876 European Mission president Albert Carrington reported to Brigham Young that with the continued depression in Britain, tithing and donations had shown a decrease throughout the mission, and that some conferences found it necessary to use all their tithing funds for rental of meeting halls and for support of missionaries.\(^{36}\) Occasionally, the old mission fund was revitalized to provide an alternative to tithing to meet cash needs of missionaries. The Saints continued to provide food where possible, and sometimes lodging, but they could not fill all the missionaries’ needs. John Henry Smith reported to President John Taylor in 1882 that elders could seldom find food or lodging at the homes of their converts, and even more rarely from strangers, and that vagrancy laws imposed penalties on “those found asking assistance in any form.” He commended their faithful efforts but concluded: “Their [There] is one thing certain they will have to open new fields, get means from home, or starve, for the saints can not feed them.”\(^{37}\)

Meanwhile, responses of the Saints in Utah to the appeal for donations varied as time passed. In the early 1860s applications for aid from the missionary fund brought repeated appeals at general conference for further donations. A few individual wards subsequently carried on the effort, which George Q. Cannon tried to revive on a more widespread basis in 1867.\(^{38}\) After Brig-


\(^{34}\) John Henry Smith to John Taylor, December 7, 1882, European Mission Letterpress Copybooks, LDS Archives. Ferdinand Jacobsen Autobiography, LDS Archives. Jacobsen contrasted his first missionary labors in Denmark, 1854–58, without purse or scrip (“I only slept on a haystack once”) with the limitations evident on his second mission to Denmark, 1887–89.


\(^{36}\) Albert Carrington to Brigham Young, November 23, 1876, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Archives.


ham Young's death, President John Taylor encouraged local wards to help provide for the families of missionaries unable to sustain themselves. In 1884 he instructed Presiding Bishop William B. Preston to see that a plot of ground near every Latter-day Saint settlement be set aside for the benefit of missionaries' families, beginning with Rexburg, Idaho. Further study is needed to assess the extent to which these efforts benefited families.

The tradition that local wards would coordinate donations for a missionary's departure was slowly developed. The donations were to help pay the missionary's travel expenses and sometimes to help clothe him for the mission. As cash from home was increasingly required for mission expenses, the missionary generally had to rely upon family funds. Despite Brigham Young's promise in 1860, however, missionary donations from Zion seldom helped significantly with travel expenses home, though many missionaries and mission presidents felt that one who had faithfully fulfilled his mission ought not to be required to pay his own way home. Many borrowed from mission funds, and apparently a large proportion of these had no definite understanding on whether repayment would be required. Finally, in 1878 John Taylor and the Quorum of Twelve cancelled all such indebtedness, which by then amounted to some $50,000. At that time Church officials arranged with shipowners and railroads for return fares of missionaries to be either free or at a reduced rate paid from profits from Latter-day Saint emigrant fares. As emigration declined, general church funds were presumably used for that purpose. Local full-time missionaries serving in Europe also received free passage "home" to Zion if they wished to emigrate.

While financing of missionary work for individuals often seemed uncertain, and while going on a mission remained an act of faith and sacrifice, the system approached its commonly accepted ideal for only about two decades in Europe. Systematic collection of tithing and the growing poverty of the Saints resulted in a decrease of random individual contributions. Missionaries could no longer rely as heavily on hospitality from non-members as they had in the past.

By 1890 Mormon missionaries almost universally in Britain, and presumably throughout Europe, used their own resources to support themselves. Mission president Brigham Young, Jr., reported: "We are informed that every Elder in the Mission, wholly or in part, draws his support from home, as also the money to purchase the tracts which he distributes."


See, for example, George Teasdale to J. W. F. Volker, January 27, 1888, European Mission Letterpress Copybooks, LDS Archives.

Millennial Star, October 6, 1890, p. 632.
Yet so powerful was the original missionary tradition that eight months later the Millennial Star reprinted in full a lengthy Juvenile Instructor editorial adamantly calling for proselyting without purse or scrip. Referring to the 1832 revelation, the editorial contended: “There is no qualification about these words of the Lord, and though the revelation in which they are contained was given in 1832, we know of no command that has changed their force since they were given.”

There were good reasons to maintain allegiance to the old way. To travel without purse or scrip was representative of Latter-day Saint values and stood for a certain combination of faith, courage, and resourcefulness. Everyone could understand the drama involved when a missionary faced a hostile world without tangible resources, appealed for assistance as a messenger from God, and proceeded with a divinely appointed mission. This was the essence of early Mormonism, purposely vulnerable and succeeding through faith by everyday miracles. This was stuff fit not only for history but also for mythology. Indeed, proselyting without purse or scrip took on the qualities of a myth, not necessarily untrue, but sometimes not tethered firmly to the ground. In the last three decades of the nineteenth century the myth began to drift toward its place in the sun, while Latter-day Saints continued to point to it with pride. The old scriptural approach tried the missionary while it tried the world. That heroic image would live on. But as the world changed, living out the myth became nearly impossible. In time, a new model of faith and sacrifice emerged, not that of a missionary risking starvation or exposure to the elements, but of sacrificing individual means in behalf of a cause bigger than any economic endeavor left behind.

Later there would be further application of the traditional method, notably in the American South and in some Polynesian areas. In the Northwestern States Mission and other missions in America and Canada young elders would occasionally move out into the countryside in the summer to try their faith and fortune without purse or scrip. Even in Europe, there would be new, largely symbolic attempts, including one widespread effort in Denmark in 1972. But the realities of a cash-based economy and the decline of hospitality for itinerant preachers usually made the old way impractical in the long run.

Self-sufficiency soon became the ideal of missionaries. For example, when the Bloomington (Idaho) Brass Band gave Roy Welker the proceeds of a going-away party for his mission to Germany, he accepted the contribution with good grace but with difficulty. When he arrived in Berlin in June 1901 and his mission president, Arnold Schulthess, paid for his dinner at a fine restaurant, he confided, “I thought I couldn’t afford to pay for someone else’s supper and I didn’t wish them to pay for mine.” Later that month, when a fellow missionary told a stranger that they were spending their own money for the cause and the stranger gave them each a German mark, Welker wrote, “It seems to me a strange inconsistancy when you tell people you get nothing

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44 Millennial Star, June 1, 1891, pp. 348-51.
and ask nothing for what you do and act pretty near tickled to death when someone presents you with a coin.46

As missionaries from America came to rely on money from home to support themselves, local missionaries were increasingly seen as auxiliary, part-time helpers. Few aspired to be full-time missionaries; for most that would have been financially impossible. But with official encouragement, a strong tradition of distributing tracts developed among the Saints — both men and women — in many localities.47

Also related to the new approach was the possibility of full-time missionary service for single women and the wives of male missionaries. Approximately ten unmarried women, and a few widows and married women accompanying husbands, were called to Europe as early as 1900–1901, with modest increases in that number thereafter.48

Latter-day Saint proselyting in Europe in the nineteenth century was able to benefit from both the idealism of the original 1832 charter and the adaptability of its practitioners. As the century closed, it had finally entered the modern world.

46 Roy A. Welker diary, May–June 1901, LDS Archives.

47 See, for example, Millennial Star, August 23, 1875, p. 536; September 26, 1881, pp. 616–17; March 19, 1883, pp. 185–87; June 29, 1891, pp. 408–10.

48 Records of Missionaries Set Apart, 1900–1901, LDS Historical Department.
Change Engulfs a Frontier Settlement:
Ogden and Its Residents Respond to the Railroad

By Brian Q. Cannon

Railroads played an integral role in the settlement and development of the American West. The iron horse transformed frontier hamlets into bustling towns and created settlements where none had previously existed. Transporting new settlers, wealth, and novel ways of life, the railroad dissolved the frontier’s isolation from the world at large. Nowhere in Utah was this accomplished more pervasively and permanently than in Ogden. Between 1860 and 1870 Ogden experienced sweeping demographic, economic, and social changes. The arrival of the transcontinental railroad in 1869 produced some of these developments and accentuated others. These changes engulfed Ogden’s residents, altering their community and their lives.

At least four demographic developments between 1860 and 1870 contributed to this altering process. Although it is impossible to establish an exclusive link between these developments and the railroad, the correlation between them is high. Most striking among these developments was the 114 percent increase in the community’s population between 1860, when its population was 1,463, and 1870, when its population was 3,127. In comparison, Provo, the Utah town that had most closely approximated Ogden in size and population growth between 1850 and 1860, inched upward a mere 17 percent, from 2,030 in 1860 to 2,384 in 1870. A city directory published in 1867 estimated the populations of both Ogden and Provo to be 3,000. Judging from the 1870 census, the estimates were high. Nevertheless, the estimator’s failure to identify a difference between the size of the two communities suggests that the vigorous

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escalation in Ogden's population that would push it far ahead of Provo by 1870 had not yet commenced. By 1869 Ogden's phenomenal surge in population was apparent. Newspaper reports attributed part of that growth to the railroad. Late in 1869, for instance, the *Deseret News* observed that the railroad was "attracting a large influx of would-be settlers" to Ogden.¹

Related to the rapid rise in Ogden's population was a second development: a disproportionate increase in Ogden's adult male population. The sex ratio among adults rose from .89 to 1.19 males per female between 1860 and 1870. Railroad-related economic opportunities drew many of these new male residents to Ogden. Of those who worked for the railroad in 1870, sixty-one persons, or 65 percent of the railroad workers, were either unmarried or living apart from their families. This new sector of male residents who lacked marital responsibilities and kinship ties to the community complicated Ogden's social structure.²

Heads of households as well as unattached men worked for the railroad. Unlike farming, which productively utilized the labor of the entire family, railroad jobs paying a fixed income to a single wage earner could render children an economic liability, particularly for those families without farms for their children to tend. Sixty-five percent of the city's nondependent population fell within this nonlandholding category in 1870, up from 13 percent in 1860. Perhaps partly because of this, a third demographic development emerged: Ogden's refined birth ratio, the number of children under ten per one hundred women of childbearing age, plummeted from 210 in 1860 to 150 in 1870. Nationwide, the ratio fell only from 184 to 167.³

A fourth demographic development was a larger, more diverse ethnic population. In 1870, 54 percent of Ogden's nondependent population was foreign-born, up from 42 percent in 1860. Natives of Great Britain, Scandinavia, Italy, and Canada constituted the entire immigrant population in 1860. By 1870, a handful of settlers from France, Russia, Germany, Holland, South America, South Africa, and the Orient had arrived (see table 1). In two ways the railroad contributed to Ogden's increased ethnicity: first, it brought Mormon immigrant parties from Europe directly to Ogden; some disbanded in Ogden upon their arrival and settled in the area rather than going on to Salt Lake City.⁴ Second, the railroad employed a potpourri of immigrants, includ-

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² U.S. Manuscript Census Population Schedules, Ogden, 1860 and 1870.


⁴ Mormon emigration from Europe to Utah between 1860 and 1868 was twice as high as it was from 1869 to 1877. Hence, the railroad was likely not the sole cause of Ogden's heightened ethnicity between 1860 and 1870. Prior to the railroad's arrival, however, emigrants would have had less contact with Ogden, making their settlement there less likely. Richard L. Jensen, "Steaming Through: Arrangements for Mormon Emigration from Europe, 1869–1887," *Journal of Mormon History* 9 (1982): 20.
TABLE 1
ETHNIC POPULATIONS, OGDEN, UTAH, 1860–1870

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>Nondependent Populationa</th>
<th>1860</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>1870</th>
<th>No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>British</td>
<td></td>
<td>35.7%</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>43.0%</td>
<td>418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scandinavian</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td></td>
<td>.7%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td></td>
<td>.7%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td></td>
<td>.7%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South American</td>
<td></td>
<td>.1%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td></td>
<td>.3%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South African</td>
<td></td>
<td>.1%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTALS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>42.4%</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>54.2%</td>
<td>530</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census Manuscript, Ogden, Utah, 1860 and 1870.

a The nondependent population includes all heads of households, all gainfully employed persons, and all males age 20 and over.

By 1870, then, Ogden's 1860 population more than doubled; a new sector of men who lacked kinship ties within the community made Ogden's adult population predominantly male; women in the community were bearing fewer children; one out of every two adults was an immigrant; and new ethnic groups invigorated the population. Old-timers must have found these rapid demographic changes amazing.

Equally significant were several economic changes promoted in part by the railroad.6 One striking change was heightened business activity. On March 9, 1869, one day following the arrival of Union Pacific locomotives in Ogden, the Deseret News reported new commercial activity there. Later in the month, one resident wrote that "Ogden is a changed place. Hotels, restaurants, chop
houses, boarding houses and meals at all hours are literally jammed and crammed."  

Heightened commercial opportunities attracted new businesses. Among Ogden's new businesses was its first newspaper, the Salt Lake Daily Telegraph, which moved to the community in April 1869. The newspaper's editor, T. B. H. Stenhouse, believed the railroad would render Ogden "the future commercial centre of this and the surrounding Territories and States." As such, it would be an ideal location for a newspaper that could disseminate the Mormon viewpoint to the American public.  

City directories published in 1867 and 1869 allow us to quantify portions of the increase in Ogden businesses. According to these directories, Ogden had forty-eight businesses in 1867 and seventy-three in 1870, an increase of 52 percent. However, because the directories list different types of businesses, determining the exact percentage of increase in Ogden's entire business community is impossible. An accurate but limited estimate of the increase emerges upon examination of a type of business that both directories report: general merchandise and dry goods stores. The number of these stores in Ogden increased 86 percent between 1867, when there were seven stores, and 1869, when there were thirteen stores.  

Predictably the influx of population and brisk business activities encouraged construction of buildings. Some were mere shanties housing squatter merchants. "Signboard strewn about on the ground with significant words printed in large letters, such as 'Billiards' and the like" attempted to draw customers into these makeshift quarters. More impressive structures constructed in 1869 and 1870 included a theater, a telegraph office, a railroad passenger office, a freight depot, and a hotel. A shortage of inexpensive lumber prevented even more extensive building.  

Like its landscape, Ogden's occupational structure became more urban. In 1860, 59 percent of all workers labored in agriculture. By 1870, only 24 percent worked on farms, far below the territorial average of 49 percent. Newcomers accounted for only part of this decline; of Ogden's 1860 farmers who remained there in 1870, 33 percent had entered the urban work force by that date.  

By employing workers, the railroad contributed to these changes in occupational structure. The lure of wages paid in hard cash (although payments were often delayed) and of diversion from farm labor drew many from their farms. The Salt Lake Daily Telegraph reported on March 19, 1869, that numerous fields remained unplowed because farmers were working on railroad construction crews. So widespread was the absence of farmers that a shortage

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7 Deseret News, March 9 and March 24, 1869.
8 Deseret News, April 26, 1869.
10 Deseret News, September 7 and December 16, 1869; and Salt Lake Daily Telegraph, July 18, 1869.
11 Poll, Utah's History, p. 714; Manuscript Census, Ogden.
of local grain stores developed by June 1869. Following the driving of the golden spike, the railroad continued to employ Ogden residents; in June 1870, it employed 11.4 percent of the town’s work force. The railroad also spurred nonrailroad, urban jobs by inducing population growth and trade.19

Railroad-induced business activity, construction, and employment brought new wealth to Ogden. In fact, the railroad became Ogden’s first important source of revenue. Evidence that the railroad generated an unprecedented — although not overwhelming — supply of cash is seen in Ogden’s tithing-house records. They indicate that payment of tithes in cash more than doubled from $405 in 1867 to $1,107 in 1868 and $1,476 in 1869. Partly because of the railroad, the community’s combined real and personal wealth skyrocketed from $221,884 in 1860 to $632,584 in 1870. However, population growth outstripped the rising wealth: average wealth in 1870 was smaller than it had been in 1860. In fact, over half of the nondependent population possessed less than $100 in nonland wealth in 1870, an amount the census bureau regarded as unworthy of notice. The Gini Index, a measure of inequity in wealth distribution with 0 indicating perfect equity and 1 indicating maximum inequity was .5 in 1860. A decade later, the Gini Index was .75 for personal wealth and .79 for real wealth. Ogden’s inequitably distributed wealth was not atypical for Utah: a study of household wealth in Utah Territory by Kearl, Pope, and Wimmer places the 1870 Gini coefficient at .74 for real wealth and .70 for total wealth. What was atypical was the rapid escalation of inequity. Between 1850 and 1870, the Gini Index for Utah’s real wealth rose only marginally from .69 to .74. In just half that time, Ogden’s real wealth index jumped from .52 to .79 (see table 2). Thus, in terms of wealth distribution, Ogden was changing much more rapidly than Utah in general, requiring greater adjustment on the part of the city’s residents.13

Contributing to the inequitable distribution of wealth was an influx of unemployed, impoverished men and women. Hoping to find work along the railroad, they traveled to Ogden, only to discover that not enough jobs were available. Destitute, they wandered through the city, entirely dependent upon charity for their sustenance.14

Although the ranks of the poor increased, many who had resided in the community since 1860 improved their economic status in terms of personal wealth. As table 3 indicates, 43 percent of the 1860 residents at risk, or thirty-five people, rose to a wealthier quintile in relation to other wealth holders in the nondependent population. Meanwhile, 38 percent of those at risk, or twenty-seven people, fell to a lower echelon. Among those who had possessed the least

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19 Salt Lake Daily Telegraph, March 19 and June 10, 1869; Manuscript Census, Ogden. The census specifies 94 out of 904 workers as railroad employees. The occupations of others suggest that they too may have worked for the railroad; however, the census does not indicate if they did so.


14 Salt Lake Daily Telegraph, January 18, 1869.
TABLE 2  
DISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH, OGDEN, UTAH, 1860–1870

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1860</th>
<th>1870</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total personal wealth$</td>
<td>$86,624</td>
<td>$263,434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total real wealth</td>
<td>$135,260</td>
<td>$369,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total combined wealth</td>
<td>$221,884</td>
<td>$632,584</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average personal wealth$</td>
<td>$303</td>
<td>$271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average real wealth</td>
<td>$469</td>
<td>$380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average combined wealth</td>
<td>$772</td>
<td>$651</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of total personal wealth of wealthiest 10% of owners</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of total real wealth of wealthiest 10% of owners</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gini index for personal wealth$</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gini index for real wealth</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOURCE:** U.S. Census Manuscript, Ogden, Utah, 1860 and 1870.

$ Wealth valued at less than $100 was not recorded in 1870.

$ Total wealth divided by nondependent population.

$ 0 = perfect equity; 1 = perfect inequity.

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TABLE 3  
PERSONAL WEALTH MOBILITY AMONG THE PERSISTENT, 1860–1870

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quintile rank among personal property owners, 1860</th>
<th>WEALTH RANK WITHIN RANK</th>
<th>MOBILITY, 1860–1870</th>
<th>No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 (wealthiest)</td>
<td>$490–5966</td>
<td>$800–25,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>$289–460</td>
<td>$500–800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$200–280</td>
<td>$400–500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$150–200</td>
<td>$300–400</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$100–150</td>
<td>$100–300</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 (no property)$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>No.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOURCE:** U.S. Census Manuscript, Ogden, Utah, 1860 and 1870.

**NOTE:** Quintile ranks for both 1860 and 1870 were determined by total nondependent population data.

$ Inasmuch as total personal property valued at less than $100 was not recorded in 1870, valuations totaling less than $100 in the 1860 census have been placed within the “0” (no property) category to maintain consistency within this table.

$ Since only 82 cases began below the top rank, 43% (35/82) of those at risk moved upward.

$ Since only 72 cases began above the bottom rank, 38% (27/72) of those at risk moved downward.
income, upward mobility was most common, particularly among young, single men. In the top two quintiles of the 1860 hierarchy, however, far more moved downward than remained stable or moved upward.\footnote{Manuscript Census, Ogden.}

Did upwardly mobile old-timers or newcomers, then, constitute Ogden's personal-wealth elite by 1870? In 1860, forty-six individuals had comprised the wealthiest quintile. Fifteen of them remained in Ogden in 1870, although nine, or 60 percent, had regressed economically by that date (see table 3). Nine other 1860 residents had joined the wealthiest sector by 1870, however.\footnote{A similar tradeoff in economic status among Utahns in general between 1860 and 1870 is documented in J. R. Kearl and Clayne Pope, "Wealth Mobility: The Missing Element," working paper no. 692 (Cambridge, Mass.: National Bureau of Economic Research, 1981), pp. 23, 37.} Thus, the number of old-timers within the quintile had not changed. But the quintile had grown from forty-six to seventy-seven people over the decade. Newcomers absorbed this entire increase, outnumbering old-timers in the quintile by four to one.\footnote{Manuscript Census, Ogden.}

To summarize, economic as well as demographic change rocked Ogden, largely as a result of the railroad. New business activity, a construction boom, a more urban work force, employment for wages, and wider unemployment complicated the economy. Most significantly, the rise of a new economic elite toppled Ogden's pre-railroad economic hierarchy.

The railroad also altered Ogden's traditional social fabric. For example, because of the railroad's presence, Ogden became a linchpin in the Mormon immigration effort as a welcoming center and point of disembarkation. Under the direction of Weber Stake President Lorin Farr and Bishop Chauncey West, Ogden's Mormon residents provided comforts and supplies to newly arrived emigrants. Charles F. Middleton recorded on September 17, 1869, that he was "required to furnish some provisions" during the sojourn of four hundred emigrants in Ogden. Ogden's Mormons provided not only supplies, but also emotional, spiritual, and legal support. "Another company of saints arrived on the cars — they met with an accident yesterday which resulted in the death of three of the company and three more badly wounded," wrote Middleton on October 28, 1869. "I spent the day in assisting Br. Parry in taking care of the company burying the dead." Mormon leaders in the community assumed a new role in the colonization effort. Although some emigrants traveled to Salt Lake City to receive their assignments to settlements, others received them from the Weber Stake presidency, under the First Presidency's direction.\footnote{Salt Lake Daily Telegraph, June 20, 1869; Charles F. Middleton, "The Journal of Charles F. Middleton with Selected Entries and Letters," September 17 and October 28, 1869, typescript in Brigham Young University Special Collections, Provo, Utah; T. Earl Pardoe, Lorin Farr: Pioneer (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1953), p. 199; Leonard J. Arrington, Great Basin Kingdom: An Economic History of the Latter-day Saints, 1830–1900 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1958), p. 274.}

Because a large number of train travelers passed through Ogden, the community became a focal point for gentile contact with and judgment of the Mormons, second only to Salt Lake City. Ogden residents were aware that the
eyes of the nation were upon them. The Ogden Junction observed, “While our town has become the Junction for the Railroads, it is no less a junction for public sentiment. From east, west and every part of the compass come those who are ready to pass judgment upon the peculiar people.” The omnipresence of these travelers in Ogden caused its residents to place a premium upon appearance. Residents were admonished to beautify their community, and they succeeded in making it attractive to many visitors. George F. Parsons, a visitor in 1869, praised Ogden’s “fragrant and lovely” gardens and her “wide streets.” Willard Glazier, a visitor in 1876, compared Ogden to “one of the peaceful little cities of Old Massachusetts, nestled among the Berkshire Hills, wide of streets, stately of architecture, redolent of comfort and refinement.” Others, such as a correspondent for the Denver News, found the community too simple and staid for their liking.19

The railroad also facilitated more onerous social developments, including rising crime. As the iron horse approached in 1868, Ogden’s police recorder reported for the first time the following crimes: prostitution, assault and battery, and threatening life. Prior to 1868, the recorder had listed no more than three arrests per year, but in the final quarter of that year alone he reported fourteen. Although the police recorder did not attribute rising crime to the railroad in his record book, local newspapers did. The Deseret News charged on April 26, 1869, that rowdyism, murders, robberies, and other “foul crimes” had increased because of the railroad’s approach. Several months later, the Ogden Junction reasoned that stringent liquor legislation broadening police powers was “absolutely necessary in view of the influx of strangers consequent upon the junction of railroads in our city.” 20

Although Ogden’s crime rate rose, it paled in comparison to the crime rates of other western boom towns. George F. Parsons of San Francisco observed in 1869, “Ogden is exceedingly orderly.” He noted, “The police have little to do and the station-house is seldom tenanted.” Ogden’s own newspaper in 1870 labeled the community “the best governed and most orderly town along the whole line of the railroad.” 21

But comparisons with other railroad towns could not conceal the fact that Ogden’s crime rate was rising, threatening lives and property. Symbolic of this, on the same day the Junction asserted Ogden’s orderliness, it reported that the town’s physician had been shot as he returned from a housecall. 22

The railroad further threatened community social stability by introducing new moral elements. Aboard the locomotives that steamed into Ogden were strangers whose moral standards were abhorrent to many old-timers. The Salt


20 Charles F. Middleton, “Police Record of Ogden City, 1839–1869,” January 9 and May 17, 1863, January 13 and May 1865, July 2 and December 19, 1868, and January 9, 1869, Utah State Agricultural College Microfilm Series A; Deseret News, April 26, 1869; Ogden Junction, January 13, 1869.

21 Deseret News, May 26, 1869; Ogden Junction, March 26, 1870.

22 Ogden Junction, March 26, 1870.
Lake Daily Telegraph labeled them "rowdies, loafers, gamblers, [and] dead-brokes." James Bonwide, a visitor from England, referred to some of these strangers as "roughs waiting for the train to move on, who beguiled the time drinking, spitting, gambling, swearing, and tall talking." Ogden resident James Smith Abbot wrote that "plenty of loafing blackguards" also congregated in Ogden. With this influx of strangers, liquor, violence, fistfights, profanity, gambling, prostitution, and suicide descended upon Ogden with unprecedented vigor.23

Not all non-Mormon newcomers espoused licentiousness, however. Enough practicing Methodists and Episcopalians had moved to Ogden by 1869 to begin regular worship services there. Railroad officials encouraged these denominations; they carried without charge construction materials for Ogden's Episcopal church and opened their depot to several denominations for services.24

Caught up in this array of rapid demographic, economic, and social transformation, Ogden's old-time residents alternately blessed and cursed the iron horse and its effects on their community. Some, who regarded Mormon beliefs as archaic and evil, applauded the iron horse as an agent of progressive reform. Railroad-induced contact with civilization would shatter Mormon beliefs, they expected. Much to the dismay of their elders, some Mormon youths adopted the license exemplified by the newcomers, including such mild sins as profanity, smoking, and drinking. Other disaffected Mormons joined the town's new religions. Edwin Ward Smout, for instance, turned to the Episcopal church for ecclesiastical services, including the marriages of his daughters.25

The majority, however, remained loyal to Mormonism. They viewed the railroad ambivalently as both "the great highway" foretold by biblical prophets whereby the righteous would gather to Zion, and a menacing source of corruption and vice. Typical was Bishop Chauncey West's fear that because of the railroad, "the time was not far distant when the police would have plenty to do." 26

The railroad's commercial benefits could at times eclipse both moral and religious concerns. Chauncey West and Lorin Farr contracted with the Central Pacific for construction of the road eastward from Humboldt Wells, Nevada, employment 2,000 men. Other Mormons contracted with the Union Pacific for construction in the canyons east of Ogden. Less affluent Ogdenites left their farms to labor for wages in the construction effort. Responding to a


24 Hansen, "A Historical Study," p. 73; Corinne (Utah) Daily Reporter, August 2, 1869; Ogden Junction, June 25, 1870.


minister's inquiry concerning the prospects for work in Ogden, the Salt Lake Daily Telegraph quipped, "There are a heap of us much more concerned just now about flour, wood, coal, good farms, railroad city lots, and few nick nacks than about hell fire and brimstone, Abraham's bosom and all that kind of thing. There may have been a time in the world's history when it was popular to say blessed are the poor, but the thing looks kind of changed. We know some people who are a heap more blessed now than they used to be, and we know a few others who would like to keep them company." 27

Although the railroad put cash in their pockets, in the long run the Mormon elite could not ignore their relative decline in economic status. Nor could Mormons disregard rising crime rates, the newcomers' lax morals, which some of their own children adopted, and the political threat posed by the gentile newcomers. The old-timers tried to protect themselves from these influences.

To combat crime, the city council buttressed police power with hard-line liquor legislation. As an additional precaution, the Junction recommended that homeowners "have a loaded, double-barrelled shot gun" on hand to ward off criminals. It further warned, "Ladies, young or old, should not be permitted to walk even the quiet streets of Ogden unprotected after nightfall." 28

As an attempt to hold their youth in line, Mormon officials emphasized the importance of attendance at Sunday School. From the pulpit they continued to preach abstinence from liquor and tobacco.29

To reaffirm their political hegemony, faithful Mormons united against gentile bids for power in local politics. Such bids began in 1870 when Godbeites and gentiles banded together under the aegis of the Liberal party. By 1877, the gentile political threat was sufficient to mobilize Ogden's Mormons. George A. Lowe related the events of a caucus called in February 1877: "T.W. Stayner made a flaming speech claiming a Gentile representation on the city council on the basis of the amount of property owned by them in our city. [Three residents] attempted to pack the caucus of the outside element." Mormon residents, having heard of the plot, turned out en masse and thwarted the non-Mormons.30

The Mormons also resisted gentile incursions in the town's economy. A branch of Zion's Cooperative Mercantile Institution opened in Ogden in 1869 as part of an effort to promote self-sufficiency and home industry among Latter-day Saints. Although the cooperative effort in Utah antedated the railroad, it was intensified by the railroad's arrival. Mormon officials hoped thereby to keep local revenue within the territory. Alarmed at the cooperative movement's apparent success in "freezing out . . . [the] oldest and strongest houses


28 Ogden Junction, January 13, April 23, and December 3, 1870.

29 Deseret News, May 25, 1869; and Salt Lake City Daily Telegraph, June 13, 1869.

in Salt Lake City,” a reporter from the Denver News warned Ogden merchants of a similar fate. “Nothing can redeem [Ogden] from Mormonism,” he judged. Thus, the gentile merchants were told to “come out from among them, for [you] are not of them.”

Only in their response to the new denominations did the Mormons accommodate a potential threat. The Ogden Junction, edited by apostle Franklin D. Richards, regularly announced Episcopal and Methodist services and printed non-Mormon sermons. Additionally, Church leaders permitted numerous gentile preachers to speak in the Ogden tabernacle in 1869 and 1870. Perhaps the Mormons were reflecting their need for gentile allies and their relative autonomy in religious matters — they could determine who spoke in their tabernacle and whose sermons they printed — but also their vulnerability in economic and political spheres.

Struggling to adjust to the weight of demographic, economic, and social change induced by the railroad, the town’s older citizens could not avoid an occasional outburst of bitterness or defiance. A rumor in 1870 that the railroad might relocate its terminal north of Ogden provoked this response from the Junction: “There are a few people here whose absence would purify our moral atmosphere, and they are the kind who will gather to the new point. Ogden will be drained of something we shall be glad to get rid of.” Nostalgically but inaccurately, the Junction reminisced, “There was a time when the name of Deity was held in proper esteem by all who walked our streets.” Similarly an early settler named Mr. Johnson recalled, “We have been severely tried since the railroad came among us. [Before the railroad] we were a happy, peaceful people. Not a saloon in town; no drinking or gambling places to be found. Go down Fifth Street [today]; look in those drinking hells. The proprietors are not Mormons.” Johnson’s reminiscences were not accurate; the Ogden police record documents that crime and drunkenness occurred prior to the arrival of the railroad. Equally inaccurate was his simplistic distinction between Mormons and gentiles. Chauncey West, a Mormon bishop, sold liquor long before the coming of the iron horse.

Yet it mattered little if vice had existed in early Ogden. Whether their community had ever been free of crime and vice, Ogdenites believed that it had been. They feared that the railroad had brought moral retrogression and a loss of innocence. To those who had sacrificed worldly comforts, homelands, or families and gathered to “Zion” in hopes of escaping the ways of the world, no amount of economic development could compensate for this loss of innocence. They had sought to escape the world and had failed in their effort. It was little wonder that 72 percent of Ogden’s 1860 population had moved from the community by 1870.

31 Edward W. Tullidge, Tullidge’s Histories (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor Press, 1889), p. 404; Salt Lake Daily Telegraph, April 21, 1869.

32 Ogden Junction, October 22, 1870.

33 Ogden Junction, August 6 and December 7, 1870; Middleton, “Police Record,” January 9, 1863; Warren B. Johnson, Across the Continent from the Pacific to the Atlantic (Webster, Mass.: John Cart, 1887), pp. 183–86; Owens, Salt Lake City Directory, p. 128.

34 Manuscript Census, Ogden. Ogden’s persistence rate (those not moving over the decade) of 28 percent was lower than average persistence rates nationwide, which “hovered
Not all who moved were responding to the railroad, of course. But some, like the Samuel Sinfields, did move to escape the railroad's influence. Writing of Sinfield's move, his granddaughter indicated, "Samuel Sinfield, realizing that the building of a railway would bring into the city all kinds of questionable characters, he wanted to take his family away from this element, so he traded his property in Ogden for property in Cache Valley." Given the escapist thrust of the Mormon gathering to Zion, it is likely that others moved from Ogden for similar reasons. A survey of Ogden males twenty and older in 1860 substantiates this possibility. It reveals that relatively prosperous individuals possessing between $500 and $4999 in personal wealth were as likely to move from the community as were those reporting no wealth (see table 4). This was not the case in Utah at large between 1860 and 1870. Kearl, Pope, and Wimmer found that for the territory as a whole, those who migrated during the decade were generally "those who [were] relatively worse off." Movement from Ogden among those possessing an economic advantage suggests that noneconomic factors, including perhaps a desire to escape the railroad's influence, impelled people to leave the city.35

As this study demonstrates, the construction and arrival of the transcontinental railroad had a pervasive impact upon Ogden. Into this isolated Mor-

### TABLE 4

**PERSONAL WEALTH AND PERSISTENCE, OGDEN, UTAH, 1860–1870**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Property</th>
<th>MALES 20 AND OVER</th>
<th>PERSISTENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1860</td>
<td>1870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5000 or more</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1000–4999</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$500–999</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1–499</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$0</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>53%a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>277</strong></td>
<td><strong>804</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOURCE:** U.S. Census Manuscript, Ogden, Utah, 1860, 1870.

a Personal wealth valued at less than $100 was reported as no wealth in the 1870 census.

Cannon: Change in Ogden

mon community swept the iron horse, a potent integrating force and the apex of contemporary transportation technology. The railroad compelled Ogdenites to confront demographic, economic, and social change. For those residents who stubbornly clung to the dream of a Mormon haven in the mountains, the arrival of the railroad was a death knell to their dream. For others, who reveled in change or believed that modern technology was a panacea, the arrival of the iron horse must have been exhilarating. Yet neither the relative isolation of pre-railroad days nor the modernization of the railroad era rendered Ogden a perfect community. Despite his antipathy toward all things Mormon, perhaps O.J.H., a correspondent for the Denver News, captured the community’s imperfect status best of all. Wryly he labeled the town “a mud hole, . . . and a ‘saintly’ mud hole at that.”

The railroads continued to influence Ogden long after their arrival. Richard Roberts and Richard Sadler attribute the city’s rapid population growth from 1869 to the early twentieth century to the railroad “more than any other single factor.” Bringing a “huge influx of non-Mormons,” the railroads helped to transform Ogden from a bastion of Mormon political power to gentile power by 1889. The railroad’s presence also introduced social phenomena ranging from labor unrest and Utah’s first chautauqua to Ogden’s notorious 25th Street. Economically the railroad enriched Ogden during times of prosperity, giving rise to the establishment of granaries, stockyards, canneries, railroad services, and jobs. But heavy dependence upon the rails bred financial insecurity during hard times. The Great Depression tightly gripped Ogden because of its railroad-related ties to national markets. Furthermore, the post-1945 demise of the railway industry resulted in closure of railroad operations in the city, including roundhouses, laundry plants, and freight office buildings. Recognizing the economic void created in part by the railroads’ reduction in operations, local chambers of commerce and civic groups banded together in 1969 to attract new industries to the area, hoping to generate the “rebirth of Ogden’s economic growth.” Modification of cross-country track routes in 1972 dealt Ogden another blow, allowing trains to bypass the Junction City.

Although the railroad’s active influence in Ogden has diminished since 1945, a more subtle form of influence — the legacy of the railroad — endures. One element of that legacy is Ogden’s religious and ethnic heterogeneity. Sectors of the ethnically diverse population, including Chinese, blacks, Greeks, and Italians who were originally drawn to the Junction City by the railroad, remain there. Military installations in the area, including Defense Depot Ogden and Hill Air Force Base, also owe their presence in part to the railroad’s proximity. And Ogden’s identity — the way residents identify with and describe their community and its distinctive character — is bound up in the concepts of railroading and the city as a junction, concepts forged by the railroad.

36 Salt Lake Daily Telegraph, April 21, 1869.
Residents of Ogden in 1869 did not foresee the legacy of the railroad in its entirety, but they did perceive that the railroad had set the city upon a course toward modernization and contact with the outside world from which there could be no retreat. By helping to mold Ogden’s character, the iron horse would become a part of the city’s enduring legacy.

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Let me begin with a few prefatory remarks. First, it is a distinct and signal honor for me to be invited to address this association. This is the first time I have been among you, and it is exciting. In another sense, however, I am coming home. My mother spent her childhood from four to about fourteen years among Mormons, in Salt Lake City. Her father, a kindly, liberal-spirited clergyman, was the pastor of the Congregational church in Salt Lake City during the decade from 1892 to about 1902, at which point the family moved to San Diego. Thus I grew up two decades later surrounded by my grandfather’s stories and my mother’s memories of her girlhood in the very center of your world.

Secondly, I know that I do not need to remind you that I represent a slightly different tradition from your own. Any theologian, but also any reflective thinker, who addresses an important theme does so with what has been called a pre-understanding, a set of assumptions and norms that guide his or her thought. Thus, when I speak to you on the crucial theme of the relation of religion to culture, of church to its surrounding world, I do so with, I hope, a generous common ground between us, but also on the basis of the deep convictions, standards, and the hopes that come to me from my own Christian tradition. You will, I am sure, notice this. I trust that, despite this, my remarks will seem relevant and helpful to your own deliberations.

Finally, in what follows I am making a number of additions to the address as given. That address omitted all references to either the RLDS or the

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LDS church in its analysis of the relation of religious communities to their wider cultural environment. Rather, I referred explicitly only to Christian communities, to the Southern Baptists, the Roman Catholics, and so on. It did not seem appropriate for me, as a guest of the Mormon History Association and as an outsider, to comment upon issues in your common life and certainly not to lecture you on your obligations to your Lord. As any attentive listener will have guessed, however, as I wrote I did have in mind issues within the Mormon community; otherwise I would hardly have chosen the topic or developed it as I did. Now I have been urged by those in charge of publication to make explicit those implicit references and to add them to the text. At first I hesitated for the reason stated to do even this. But my desire to fulfill the terms of the initial invitation to me has prevailed, and so, with no little trepidation, I add these references to my original text.

** * * * * *

It is, perhaps, a bit brazen of me to speak to the Mormon History Association on the theme of religion and culture. Church historians thrive on this relation; as historians, what they do is to help us understand religious groups in relation to their historical context, that is, as deeply related to their culture. Traditionally, theologians have tended to ignore this relation. Theology is, they say, eternal; culture is historical. Theological truth is, so to speak, lowered down from on high into a historical context, but it is not of that context. Hence, the relation is not instructive for theology, only for the external life of the churches.

I do not agree with this view. Theologies, along with the community's ethical rules and standards, are as much related to that community's cultural setting as are the designs of the churches, the size of their bricks, and their modes of keeping their financial accounts. What is more, theological analysis, in union with historical analysis, can help us to understand this relation, to see what its constitutive elements are, and thus to deal creatively with the important issues involved in the relation of church to culture. As a consequence, I wish to share with you a theological analysis of the relation of religious community to world. Whether such an analysis is relevant to your concerns, I leave to you; I believe it is relevant to mine and to the Christian churches with which I am associated.

In stressing the intimate relation of religion to its cultural setting, it is important at the outset that I maintain the differences or distinctions between them. Many academic students of religion do not recognize these distinctions, seeing religion as a human projection, even if a valuable and interesting one. Thus, they view religion in general as merely a function of culture, and usually a dependent, uncreative — in fact, a frequently destructive — epiphenomenon. Again I do not agree. Religion is a response, not a projection; it is a response to the ultimate and the sacred in reality, that is, to God. Thus, as each religion understands itself, each religious community is established on revelation, on the manifestation of sacred reality to or through a person and to a community, and it is maintained by the witness and obedience of that community to that manifestation. A believing theologian (and I consider myself to be one) can hardly
say less than this, for the task of the theologian is to reflect on that manifesta-
tion to his or her community and to seek to understand all of existence in its
light. I shall use the word religion, then, or religious community; to refer to a
community of believing, worshipping, and obedient (at least in intention)
people who have responded to the manifestation to them of God's nature and
God's will, and who undertake to live out the implications of that manifesta-
tion. Our question, then, is this: "What is the relation of such a community —
a church, as we call it in Christian language — to its surrounding culture?"

Two different sorts of relation have characterized most of religion's history.
On the one hand, there has been domination: in union with the power of the
state and also with economic power, the church or its equivalent has shared in
political rule, has supervised the spiritual, moral, and aesthetic life of the com-

munity, and in most cases (though not all) has prevented rival religious and
ethical systems from appearing and flourishing. This was true in archaic cul-
tures such as Egypt, China, and Japan, in Christendom until the Enlighten-
ment, and in most Islamic countries. It has also been true of selected groups
within our American history, such as the Puritan establishment in the Massa-
chusetts Bay colony and later in Connecticut, and Anglicanism in the colony of
Virginia. It was also, I gather, characteristic of the early rule of the church of
the Latter-day Saints in the territory of Utah.

In such a relation there can be little freedom either of religion or of intel-
lectual, moral, or social expression. The wider social community represents
a solid, monolithic, and often repressive spiritual substance dominated, super-
vised, and controlled by one church. My own Baptist ancestors in Rhode
Island and in Maine objected to this, as did the Quakers in Pennsylvania; in
effective union with the Enlightenment critics of established religion in Vir-
ginia, as well as the practical proponents of pluralism in New York and New
Jersey, they managed to separate church and state in the constitutional found-
ing of our country. Religion in this role, said the Baptists and the Quakers,
destructs itself: the spirit cannot be forced from the outside and live, and a
church that takes up the sword and uses the state to enlarge itself and its own
rule dies by the sword it wields. It may gain the world but it loses its own soul,
and it endangers the souls of those who inhabit its territory. I hope those
Baptists who now call for a "Christian America," a country run by Christians
and for Christians, will hearken to these words of their Baptist forefathers. For
as the history of Christian empires, Christian nations, and Christian parties
shows so clearly, by that route lies the death of the spirit and the slow extinc-
tion of true religion.

The other traditional answer to the problem of culture has been separation.
Sensing deeply that society as a whole is shot through with evil ways as well as
with religious indifference and even blasphemy, serious religious communities
have withdrawn in whole or in part. Some have followed monastic rules of
chastity and poverty; others have refused property, use of the sword, social
privileges and rank, the jurisdiction of courts, and so on; still others, such as
the Amish, have abjured the tools and automobiles as well as the social customs
of modern consumer culture. To these, participation in government, in the
judiciary or law enforcement, in the military, and certainly in banking or busi-
This has been — and is — an impressive response, characteristic of some of my own Baptist tradition and some of your own, if I understand it correctly. However, we should be clear that insofar as members of such a community participate in the day-to-day life of the wider world, they have ceased to be in separation from the world. They then are “called out of the world” only in name and in nostalgia, no longer in reality. If their jobs are in the world’s businesses, banks, and institutions, if their paychecks and rewards come thereby, if their universities are part of the common academic life and intercollegiate athletic life, if their houses are in the world’s streets and their leaders in the world’s government, not to mention their leisure time in the world’s country clubs, they are no longer “in separation” at all; rather they are as much a part of the world as is a Catholic businessman in a European Catholic country. The Baptists often forget this fact, although they largely rule Texas. Nevertheless, it is true: such social, political, and economic power prevents their being in any meaningful sense a withdrawn community. The problem of culture and of its relation to their religion is an issue for their common religious life just as it is for their personal life. Once the members of a religious community are in the world, the religious community itself is in it, and thus its best move is to recognize and deal with that social fact.

I need hardly add that all of this now applies to both of the communities of the Mormon tradition, the RLDS in Missouri and the LDS in Utah. The membership of each is present in power in the business, governmental, agricultural, and military life of the country, as well as its academic life, and this presence is increasingly evident to the entire society. In fact, not unlike the Southern Baptists, the LDS church in Utah and in surrounding states dominates the economic, political, and social life of that region. Despite, therefore, its early history of confrontation with and withdrawal from American society, the Mormon community now represents an active, influential, and effective portion of that society. In the past century it has become deeply intertwined with American cultural life, and it now faces all the issues that arise when a withdrawn community becomes associated with and consequently shaped by its wider social environment.

Actually, once their members join a cultural world and participate fully in its life, some of these “withdrawn” groups — and the Baptists are a good example — tend to yearn to take that world over, to dominate it, and to shape it into their own image. Having ruled their separated community in its isolation, now they seek to rule the world they have joined. Thus, like the medieval Catholic church before them, they are in danger of losing their own soul in the process. Sects, beginning as rebels against dominant churches, themselves dream of becoming “church types,” of becoming the spiritual rulers of the wider community from which they once withdrew. The Moonies are another example of this strange reversal.

Most of us, and thus most of our religious communities, are thoroughly in the world, in corporations, colleges, universities, hospitals, and government. The problem of the relation of our religious communities to culture is a prob-
Santayana once remarked, "Those who are ignorant of history are condemned to repeat it." We might paraphrase this to read: "Those religious communities who do not seek to understand sociologically and historically their role in society and the dangers and possibilities of that role in the light of their theological and ethical traditions are condemned to repeat the worst errors of church history and so to endanger their religious task within the world." To be sure, sophistication at the intellectual level — in historical study, in the sociology of religion, in scriptural scholarship, in ethical and theological reflection — will not save the church. But without some real awareness of its role, its tradition, and its possibilities, the church can hardly direct itself intelligibly or creatively. Life for members of the very sophisticated, talented, and powerful LDS and RLDS churches, as an effective part of a complex society, is itself exceedingly complex. Only if that complexity is itself understood in part in its relation to its tradition and its requirements can the community be true to itself. As in anything in a technical and complex society, that takes education and professional expertise: in history, sociology of religion, scriptural studies, ethics, and theology, esoteric as all of these may at first glance seem to be. Let us, therefore, begin — and begin with the positive side, the close alliance or union of a religious community with its surrounding culture.

In what ways do religious communities and their culture interpenetrate when the members of a religious community are in the world? First of all, as Paul Tillich pointed out, a surrounding culture provides the forms for any religious community within it: forms of speech and of dress, of course; forms of social relations in and out of church; manners and customs; notions of good and bad. But on a deeper level, it provides ways of thinking and believing, even ways of worshipping; goals and standards; what is expected of us; many of the rules by which we judge one another and ourselves. A religion expresses its culture, its world, religiously; American Catholics and the Southern Baptists express their churches in an American way, as any foreign visitor will note at once. Thus all of our American religious groups think, believe, and judge in American ways — though they may not be at all aware of that fact. This is natural: our wider society provides us with our "plausibility structure," as Berger puts it, all that we take for granted; and so quite naturally the way we function religiously, in our religious communities, reflects and is patterned on that whole set of assumptions, standards, and goals that we call our culture and that shapes us.

This seems harmless enough, and in many cases it is. There are, however, two sorts of rather baffling and serious problems that arise out of this situation. First of all, this interweaving of a religious tradition with its cultural setting has bizarre results when that religious community embarks upon the missionary enterprise in cultures outside of the original or shaping culture. Partly consciously and partly unconsciously, Christian missions, both Catholic and Protestant, took with them Western technology, social structures and beliefs, moral standards and customs, even Western dress and manners, wherever they sought also to take the gospel. To many of them, the adoption of Western clothes and
daily habits appeared to be as significant morally and even spiritually as was conversion to the Christian faith. Only recently, as the antipathy of other cultures to the dominance of Western culture has reached conscious articulation, have mission groups become painfully conscious of this and, chagrined at being ambassadors of the “Middlewestern way of life,” sought to reinterpret their missionary calling. How, they have asked themselves, can we speak to others of our faith without urging on them every other aspect of our cultural life that we take for granted? As a powerful missionary faith, one that is now expressed in and through American ways and so reflects American civilization, Mormonism presently faces this same problem. Again, naïveté can here, as it did for nineteenth-century missionaries, only lead to an uncomprehending American imperialism; at this time of day this is hardly innocent. Only deep sociological, historical, ethical, and theological study and reflection can preserve us from exporting more of ourselves than the Lord might wish!

The second problem is that religious communities reflect and copy the errors and the sins of their cultural milieu as well as its virtues. And in reflecting these baleful habits of the wider community, the religious community blessing them, gives them the sanctity of religion, and so solidifies and perpetuates them. We can see this very plainly in other cultures. For example, Hinduism in India is a caste-dominated religion, and the religious consequently sanctifies caste; most of the churches in Germany of the ’30s were Nazi churches, supporting the imperial aggression and the anti-Semitic bent of Nazi Germany; and the present churches in South Africa, with some notable exceptions, practice apartheid and attempt to justify it. Our own churches were segregated in a segregated culture, and they remain predominantly materialistic in a material, consumer culture. Unless the church works at it, the sins of its world quickly contaminate the church; if it is in the world, a heedless church is ruled by the world it is in. If the churches fail to deal with these moral issues of public policy and public practice, they will sink because of them and will rightly be blamed for them.

The church, then, reflects in its life and its goals the social world around it. Even more, culture instigates, encourages, and “breeds” religion and the religious, though it probably has no intention of doing so. When a culture is growing, expanding, and clearly resolving its problems, as America has done and felt it has done in the last century and a half, the forms of its cultural life tend themselves to become sacred: to be revered, to rise beyond critique, to embody an aura of supreme value and even of holiness. Think of what “the American Way of Life” has come to mean, and of how our developments in science, technology, and industrial organization, not to mention democracy and capitalism, have been and still are identified for all of us with “civilization,” with almost the final end or goal of human history’s progress! A successful culture produces a religious myth about itself; in turn, that myth joins with the religious communities of its society and becomes central to, if not the center of, their religious message. Thus have churches all through history, as well as traditional religions, been intensely nationalistic, representing the city-state, the empire, and the nation as central to what they are. They have also represented the class and the race to which their powerful members belong and are loyal.
A strong culture takes over and directs the religious communities that live within it.

Quite frankly, I am not familiar enough with the preaching, teaching, and general ethos of the Mormon community to comment with any assurance on this point. How much the messages of the RLDS and the LDS and the goals and promises of their faith include or incarnate American goals and promises, how much the triumph of the Saints incorporates within itself the triumph of America — these things I simply do not know. Any sensitive Mormon will know about these matters. However, the ways the churches function politically, through their representatives in Congress, in government, and in public life generally, leads an observer to guess that this may well be a problem — that, in other words, the sense of the identity of Mormon life with American cultural values is a good deal stronger than is a sense of a prophetic calling within that community to criticize these values and, insofar as it may be morally necessary, to separate itself from them. Such distance from its surrounding culture was the early tradition of the Saints; whether it is at present, only one of them might say.

But not every time is a time of growth for a society's life; not every culture's story ends up a success story. Cultures and society have "times of trouble," as Arnold Toynbee put it; Rome did, medieval culture did, Europe's empires did, and many feel, if they do not yet know, that this now may be true of Western culture as a whole. At such times of trouble, problems seem to multiply faster than do resolutions. The creative sources of the culture's life now seem to become oppressive and destructive, as the feudal structure ultimately did. And as a consequence, the sense of certainty, of confidence, of "at homeness in the universe" vanishes. Right now the three bases of Western and American confidence — science, technology, and expanding industrialism — appear to be doing this, that is, creating our most serious dilemmas rather than resolving our most feared problems. One thinks of the development of destructive weapons, the dehumanization of much of life in a technological age, the impending crisis of the environment caused by expanding industrialism, to see how the very bases of our civilization have become or can become the causes of our new vulnerability and the harbingers of our mortality. In such times, anxiety mounts, uncertainty grows, and values seem weakened — and no wonder, for the cultural grounds for well-being and confidence, the foundations for hope in the future, are now shaken. In such times, religion grows: new religious cults, including Christianity, poured into the weakened Hellenistic Roman world, and religious fears and fanaticism spread through the crumbling society of the late Middle Ages. In our own time, conservative forms of traditional religion, both Protestant and Catholic, have grown in all parts of the country, and now new religious cults proliferate in our cities.

Most significant of all, such times of upheaval and anxiety produce pseudo-religions, secular forms of the religious: social ideologies that take on the forms and characteristics of religion. These are familiar to us in the twentieth century, though the Enlightenment and the nineteenth century would never have believed them possible in modern life. The prime examples are, of course, Nazism, fascism, and communism, both Stalinist and Maoist. In these cases,
social theories that are embodied at the center of a community's life become almost religions, with all the traits of traditional established religions. Some of these team up with traditional religions in the ordinary sense of that word, as Japanese nationalism and militarism did with indigenous Japanese Shinto, as Iranian nationalism has done with the Shi’ite religion, and as American nationalism might at some future date do with Protestant fundamentalism.

The “religious” role of these ideologies has been instigated by the anxieties and the emptiness of culture in trouble, and such ideologies represent clearly the interweaving of national, possibly racist, and certainly cultural elements with religious impulses, beliefs, and fanaticism. In this sense, religion in its broadest sense has been the troublemaker as well as the creative healer in our twentieth-century experience!

One new element has appeared in these last remarks, an unexpected element. This is the religious dimension of culture itself, a dimension that complicates exceedingly the relations of special religious communities to their wider cultural matrix. This is unexpected (though it should not have been) because since the Enlightenment, and certainly in America, it has been assumed that religion exists only in churches, and that as a consequence, culture is secular, run according to natural laws (for example, those of the free market), and governed by natural goals: the goals of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. We have known, of course, that in traditional, premodern cultures this separation of religion and the wider culture was not the case. Religion and culture were there united; religious authority governed all of cultural life. In turn, each aspect of culture, each profession and vocation, the family, and all other important social institutions and relations, had religious foundations. Thus, all of culture had a religious dimension, a “religious substance,” as Tillich called it. Since the Enlightenment, reflective thought about society and religion has generally assumed that this age-old union of culture and religion was now quite over with, and that modern cultures could and would become genuinely secular.

This is the point, I think, that twentieth-century experience has radically questioned. The religious substance characteristic of traditional cultures, such as those of Egypt, China, India, and Japan, has not vanished with the appearance of secular societies. Not only have orthodox forms of traditional religions and cults been on the rise; what is really interesting is to see what one can only call “the religious,” the religious dimension of society itself, appearing in a new form in the public sphere. This is the new role that ideologies have performed in modern social experience.

Interestingly, the concept and the word ideology appeared just after the French Revolution, when organized religion had at last been officially banished from its role as spiritually dominant. In this original usage, ideologies were systems of ideas about the social world that claimed to be science and that sought to direct society. This dual claim still remains, as in Marxism and in the social theories of democracy-capitalism. Nevertheless, when embodied socially, as the system of symbols that structure, guide, and direct a living social community, each of these tends to become something else. They take on the aura, the authority, the immense creativity, and the danger of a religion.
In Marxism this transformation from a social science to an analogue with religion is particularly clear. The set of symbols constituting the ideology now interprets all of experience; like classical religions, they give that experience moral and religious meaning by describing the development of good and evil in history, by thus explaining our sufferings, and by promising a radical consummation at the end. They tell us what is real, how we and all around us fit in, and where we are going and why. Thus they tell us what we should do, what is creative, and what is destructive, and thus how the community must be governed, how its institutions should be formed and should function, and what its priorities of education are. Like religions, they provide the foundations for relevant social institutions, for common law, for personal habits, and for school curricula. Also—and most surprising—the distinction between orthodoxy and heresy begins to appear; unconditional assent is required of all who participate in the community, and theologians, important and learned interpreters of doctrines and of laws, become important to the ruling authorities (cf. Suslov). The dominant role of Marxist theoreticians and the importance of new sacramental rites, as at weddings, at vocational beginnings, and at death, characterize life in Moscow as they do Catholic existence in Rome.

While they have been more evident in Marxist countries and in fascist Germany, these characteristics appear in milder form among us in America. The American Way of Life, with its amalgam of democratic, capitalistic, and scientific/technological elements, has much this same role with us, and to many it has the same ultimate claim on our assent and obedience as does a religion, as the demand “Love America or leave it” or “My country right or wrong” clearly show. Secular societies, like traditional religious societies, are held together by commitment to a common religious substance (as Augustine put it, a common or shared love): that is, by a sacred set of social and historical symbols (the American Story and the American Dream), by an elusive but significant set of rites and practices, by an unspoken “law” of belief and obedience that everyone tacitly knows and that all real believers must follow. The religious did not disappear when the churches were separated from the state; it is apt to reappear, not only in the forms of the private associations of religion, but also as before, at the very center of public life. The ultimate convictions that bind a community together provide the foundation, the structure, and the norms of that community’s common life, and these convictions represent an ultimate, religious concern for its people.

This religious dimension of cultural life, its “civil religion,” complicates gravely the relation of special religious communities to their culture. Its presence means that each religious community, in uniting itself to its culture, not only takes on the secular characteristics of that culture’s life, such as automobiles and bathrooms, social customs and ideas, vocations, habits of business life, modes of speech, and fashions of entertainment, but it also unites with the society’s religious substance, with a set of ultimate and volatile convictions, standards, and goals—and that may well lead to trouble.

These unions may be infinitely destructive whenever the culture’s religious dimension is ultranationalist, racist, and imperialist, as in Shinto Japan and fascist Germany, or utopian and nationalistic imperialist as in Soviet Marxism,
or segregated and nationalist as in South Africa. In each case, the religious communities of the society were faced and are faced with a brutal alternative: worship either the alien deity of the wider community or your own true god. You cannot, as the Barman Declaration in pre-war Germany declared, worship both. And we note, incidentally, that the protest against fascist, communist, or segregated tyrannies has come more from those religious communities than from others in the community, even from professors and academics.

These are, of course, extreme cases. But they dominate the landscape of our century, and no one who heeds the cultural atmosphere of our land can fail to see incipient signs of this among us. Whenever anxiety about the community's welfare and its future, about the meaning and possibilities of individual life, and about the social structures that give life security and worth — whenever anxiety about these things becomes deep and sharp enough, then the community is ripe for this sort of reaction. And under these conditions, no peoples are completely immune to fanaticism.

Thus, the relation of a religious community to its culture, once it thoroughly joins the culture, is a complex and deep one. A religious community takes on the forms of its culture's life. Its religious content and fervor are instigated and fueled by both the success and the vulnerabilities of the culture's life; and often, to its satisfaction but frequently to its disquiet, it finds itself making union with or having to resist the culture's own inherent and constitutive religious substance. To most people in a religious community in a wider culture — for example, to most American Methodists, Baptists, Catholics, and, in all probability, Mormons as well — the union of their religious faith with the ultimate convictions and loyalties of American cultural life is as natural as are air, water, and sky themselves. Of course, Christianity and Americanism go together; who could question that?

Yet history shows how questionable such an assumption can occasionally become; not infrequently such union with a culture's "gods" has represented a betrayal of fidelity to one's own. The identity of Christianity with the Roman Empire, with the assumptions and customs of medieval life, with the class structure and empires of modern Europe, and with the slave society of early America was immeasurably dubious and compromising to Christianity. More recently the identity with Nazi Germany and segregated South Africa has been a disaster for church and society alike. The natural relation of a religious community to its culture may well be creative, but it can also be infinitely destructive, an example of idolatry and of blasphemy.

Our question is, therefore, what kind of guidance can there be for thinking out more responsibly rather than reacting merely viscerally to the question of the proper relation of a religious community to its cultural matrix? It would be wrong to imply that, however risky union with a culture always is, it is against the biblical or the Christian perspective. We cannot say that separation from all cultures is the command of the scriptures. This perspective, as I see it, says both yes and no to culture; it adopts both a priestly and a prophetic role toward culture.

The Old Testament is, I believe, clear in its affirmation of the value and legitimacy of culture. God established a society there, the people of Israel, and
gave to it its forms and social structures: its forms of government, its laws, its
daily customs, and its modes of relation. This is, moreover, on a biblical per-
spective very intelligible: God created men and women as co-creators with
himself, as intelligent, purposive, and free, and thus as able to fashion culture
and refashion their world into innumerable new forms. Culture is basically the
creative result of the image of God in man and woman. It is also the basis for
the worldly well-being of human life; we live in and from society, and our
values are largely those springing from and preserved by a creative society.
Thus is the social symbol of the Kingdom the apex and goal of the biblical
promises: a community governed by God’s will and therefore creative of human
worth. The values of the world’s life — peace, order, justice, equality, fair-
ness — are also the values of God’s kingdom. In the biblical perspective, a
fulfilled world and a realized religious community, a realized church, ultimately
come together. Each of us experiences this union in fragmentary form when-
ever we ponder public policy and weigh our own decisions as Christian citizens.
We find that as loyal members of our religious communities, we must needs
support the values of our democratic and humanitarian tradition.

With regard to the Mormon community, especially in Utah, this may mean
a slight shift of perspective. To an outsider, it seems clear that that original
community identified their own “natural” society and its values with the reli-
gious beliefs, rules, and customs of the growing community of Saints as they
moved West. This identification, which is characteristic of “withdrawn” or
“separated” communities, continued in Utah through many decades into the
cend of the nineteenth century. But then, with the granting of statehood to
Utah and the resulting official union of that community with the wider culture
of America, an important shift occurred; the community environment became
American society as a whole. By now, the cultural environment for almost all
Mormons is unquestionably America, their common ways “the American Way
of Life,” and their common social values the values of that way of life. Hence
arise both the opportunity and the problem. Mormons are now characterized
as never before with not only a new set of customs but also of beliefs and
standards, and even more of values. The religious substance of American cul-
ture has made union with that of the community of the Saints — and this is
something new for both. It is absolutely vital that, as a consequence, the Saints
be aware of this change and consider carefully what sort of rethinking it may
require in their theological, ethical, and social judgments, if their convictions
are to keep in touch with their own new reality.

These democratic and humanitarian values have their ultimate roots in
biblical tradition, to be sure, as also in the Greek. In modern life, especially
in the eighteenth century, they were borne more by the intellectual and the
bourgeois classes, the secular and anticlerical revolutionary forces, than by the
churches. Thus, in supporting these values, as I feel a Christian should, we in
the churches are making union with the religious substance of our democratic
tradition. We are “priests,” conservers, defenders, and teachers of a national
and cultural tradition allied to our religious tradition but by no means identical
with it. When our society deviates from this natural or secular founding cove-
nant, when it betrays justice, freedom, equality, or peace, then as faithful priests
we must call it back to itself, and we must seek to lure it into finer embodiments of those things that it, and we, value and profess.

In the scriptures the priestly is balanced by the prophetic, and this is also true of the relation of the religious community to the wider culture. As our faith teaches, the world is fallen away from God as well as created and redeemed by God. Thus does it regularly betray its covenant: it shows indifference rather than responsibility for the ills of others; it manifests pride in making its own life and that of its group central to and dominant over the life of others; and it is suffused with concupiscence or greed for more than it can consume or even discard. These are the marks of sin; and in the end, sin results in suffering for those who are weak, and in destruction, even self-destruction, for those who oppress the weak. Today this is by no means pious rhetoric. Our very virtues and capacities, scientific intelligence, and technical know-how have given us immense power, and our industrial genius can cover and reshape the earth. Yet used in bad faith, heedlessly, selfishly, and obsessively, these creative powers can destroy us. This danger stems from sin and not ignorance. It is not lack of knowledge or lack of technology that threatens us; it is lack of wisdom, self-understanding, and self-control, the absence of the humility, serenity, and grace that come out of deep religious faith.

Clearly, as full members of the American community, the Mormon community has gained — as have other communities — from the wealth and power given to all of us. Correspondingly, however, we all share in the responsibility that they be used wisely and with self-control, not with heedless and selfish national or class self-interest. This requires, as it always has done, a sense of prophetic criticism as well as of priestly support, criticism of both the culture that supports and nourishes us and our "church" that is so supported and nourished. Again, it is incumbent on the LDS and RLDS churches to ponder carefully how to shoulder and effectively embody this new responsibility.

The ills of culture, like its ultimate faiths, represent a religious dimension and call for a prophetic word of judgment, of reconciliation, and of renewal. The church must here distance itself from its cultural home in order to redeem that home and to redeem itself as inhabiting that home. It must criticize its culture in order to bring it back to itself, to bring to it, as the Lutherans say, both the law that judges and the gospel that heals.

Thus we return to our starting point. The religious community, if true to itself, is not identical with its cultural environment, however deeply entwined with America it may feel and be. It arises from beyond history, even from beyond our American history, in response to the revelation of God. And it represents in its many relations with culture a point of transcendence, a point where the judgment and the love of God transcend the successes and the failures of the wider society, as they transcend all our personal efforts and failings. It represents this transcendent point to the world, for without that point, there is no victory over the sin and the death that conquer us all.

Finally, as the highest level of spiritual discernment, the religious community knows that this transcendent judgment stands over the church itself as well as over the church's world. For as at Calvary, the church, like the world, betrays its Lord; and it needs continual judgment, forgiveness, and renewed
grace if it is to do its task in the world. A church that knows not its own waywardness can, as has been shown so often in church history, unite with the world's power to dominate the world rather than to serve it. Only if it knows itself forgiven can the church be a servant to the world; and as our Lord himself showed, only a servant can help to redeem. Thus does the church, like its Lord, move from priest to prophet to servant; and thus can it be the hope of the world.

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If there be any "word" that these remarks contains for the two communities, the LDS and the RLDS, it is that they both — perhaps in slightly varying ways — now embody a new relation to their cultural matrix, a much closer and more essential relation than heretofore in their history. They are now fully "of" and not just "in" the American world. This raises all sorts of new problems as well as manifests opportunities for their common life.

For example, they are deeply involved in both scientific and secular academic disciplines. How are these disciplines, with their rules, requirements, and standards, related to the beliefs and traditions of the Mormons? These questions represent the beginning, and only the beginning, of inescapable theological problems for the community. This raises both religious and ethical questions — questions of the religious stance of this community amidst the "gods" of American life, and questions of the obedient and faithful action of the religious community with regard to public policies. These are questions of vast import to our social world and to our own souls: questions of peace and war, selfishness and generosity, intolerance of others and charity and caring for them. There is no avoiding these issues while we live between the oceans. Not to avoid them is to have to deal with them. If we are to serve God, we must face them responsibly, intelligibly, and with caring, else we do not serve God at all.

Such responsible response requires wisdom and understanding as well as virtue. Correspondingly, it necessitates knowledge of our tradition, coherent consciousness of our common beliefs, and clear articulation of our common standards — the study of history, theology, and theological ethics. Otherwise, reacting with our viscera instead of our minds, we are condemned to repeat all the errors every community is prone to. Somewhere within the vast energy, wealth, and intellectual power of the LDS and RLDS communities must be lodged, in special groups whose responsibility is for these very matters, professional and scholarly study and discussion of historical, theological, and ethical issues. The community must take responsibility for the graduate and professional education of its interested members in these important advanced subject matters. No such study replaces "grace," let us be sure. But knowledge and understanding do help us to do our best to be true to our own traditions and to the needs of our common world.
Maureen Ursenbach Beecher
President of the Mormon History Association
1984

Photograph By Myron L. Sorenson
I have spent the past few months "where angels fear to tread," researching through documents and interviews the history of the Mormon History Association. That a student of comparative literature should deign to write history is foolish enough, but that she should choose to write a history of a group of historians, using as sources their own descriptions of their activities, and then deliver her findings to those same historians as audience — that is the ultimate idiocy. The only justification I can claim is the meaning that the exercise has had for me; on some very basic levels it has been a venture into a past I shared, a past I acknowledge as intensely mine. So now I offer, in acknowledgment of this, its twentieth year, an intimate history of the Mormon History Association.

For the purposes of this work, I have set aside my conviction that the historical past begins where my memory stops and have replaced the search for any sense of historical absolute with the more literary value of tenuous subjectivity. The usual sources for historical research, the dusty documents neatly filed in gray fibrcdex boxes, were in this case those already collected at the archives of the Utah State Historical Society and some few still in the hands of their originators. They tell as much of the MHA story as is revealed in newsletters, convention programs, and correspondence files. But there is missing in those sources an essential element — the je ne sais qua that makes this organization different from all other organizations. So in search for that essence,
and with the incomparable assistance of Gordon Irving, I have interviewed, in
greater or lesser length, as many of the past presidents of the association as pos-
sible, considering my time and that of secretaries and staff. The documents thus
created, and others yet to be added, will in the long run prove the most sig-
nificant contribution of this presentation.

The group I have chosen to focus on, the past presidents, is simply a handy
collection of those MHA members who represent the geographical spread. The
nominating committees of MHA have consciously chosen presidents from a
variety of places and institutions; people who have come from various special-
ties — western history, European history, economics, religious studies, philoso-
phy, even law; and people who have represented in some way the various “con-
stituencies” of which we are so aware. More than that, they have demon-
strated, at least at some point in their careers, commitment to the Mormon
History Association. The past presidents are simply a handy group; another
eighteen people similarly selected would have served almost as well.

Those informal chats, which had they been conducted by a more qualified
practitioner would be termed oral histories, have in themselves been an educa-
tion in historical humility. Lawrence Durrell, English novelist, demonstrated
in fiction a principle I have found deeply imbedded in these accounts of events
viewed simultaneously by different observers. His *Alexandria Quartet* (1957–
60) related a series of happenings through the accounts of four of the partici-
pants in the events, each telling creating its own novel. The varied tellings,
independently convincing but mutually contradictory, finally wove together in
the final resolving novel to suggest not only that truth is a matter of point of
view, but also that that is truth which most contradicts itself. So it is with
these accounts of shared real-life events and explanations of their causes and
effects. The difference is that where the literary genius can weave his own
story, make his own determinations, the historian must re-create the reality
from external evidences, not all of which are available. Just as well, I suppose.
No one can legitimately alter a novelist’s “truth”; a historian’s truths are
always subject to revision.

In my re-creation here, then, of some of the events of our shared history, I
will surely present events not exactly as they are remembered, even by those
individuals whose accounts I have as sources. Be humble, historians, and re-
member that we all commit the same offense upon our sources, alive or dead,
and that “the truth” is not singular and simple, but multifaceted and complex.
The lesson of literature is to glory in that rich texture as we identify its various
patterns.

Leonard Arrington told the basic story of the beginning of the Mormon
History Association in his account published in our 1983 *Journal of Mormon
History*. His account is of the Mormon History Association as an organiza-
tion. My interest here is in the MHA in the lives of its members, in those interrela-
tionships it has fostered that in turn have enhanced the MHA and had impact
on the field of Mormon historical scholarship. If these observations partake

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1 Leonard J. Arrington, “Reflections on the Founding and Purpose of the Mormon His-
of the nature of celebration, so be it. "Ourselves we sing" is a mode made comfortable by writers contemporary with our Mormon beginnings.

"The old boys' club" is a sometimes pejorative term for what I see more positively as the network on which MHA is built. The linking of scholar to scholar is the lively force behind its generation and development, and the most satisfying aspect of its being. There is no surprise to the revelation that the building of that network is Leonard Arrington's work, but how deliberately and with what energy and persistence he built is not so well known. Almost without exception every president has been brought to the organization by some connection with Leonard. His files would provide a "how-to" for the academic entrepreneur: letters congratulating a scholar on a publication; letters inviting a colleague to present a paper; letters noting a professor's anticipated presence in Logan, accompanied by an invitation to dinner and an evening's talk (in this light, let us herewith pay tribute to Grace's culinary skill and southern hospitality, and acknowledge her co-parenthood, with Leonard, of MHA, a role now assumed by Harriet). Such letters preceded by several years the auspicious one inviting his correspondents to attend a 1965 meeting to begin the organization itself.

The Logan connection, then, was Leonard. All the signs were propitious. As he observed in his own account, there was flourishing a rebirth, since the war, of scholarship on Mormon history. Serious historians were meeting during summers in the Historian's Office of the Salt Lake church — and, presumably, also in Independence at the RLDS archives — where, overcoming official tightfistedness with documents, they were sharing both materials and strategems for obtaining materials. Dissertations were coming at the rate of two or three a year (in 1952 there were five). Mormon history was no longer polemic; it was academic. Not that everyone recognized this: an LDS educator challenged Jim Allen's use of Great Basin Kingdom in a syllabus, accounting the work to be anti-Mormon. Wendell Rich, in Jim's account, "just jumped in dramatically. I've never seen Wendell quite so excited about defending somebody." Several scholars had anticipated the need for publication outlets, and BYU Studies had begun publication in 1959. Even as MHA was aborning, it was being twinned by Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought, in what was to prove a most beneficial symbiosis.

In Logan the field was white, ready for harvest. There George Ellsworth was becoming the resident expert on historical scholarship. The young Turk of his Utah State University department, he was seldom privileged to teach in the area of his first love, the history of Greece and Rome, and so had created seminars on historical method. And, as Jan Shipps later discovered when she

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2 Paul Edwards notes the strangeness of the sharing of materials: "I was raised in graduate school to understand that you didn't say what you were doing, because somebody would steal it. And you certainly didn't share sources." The MHA people, he noted, "were passing information back and forth, Xeroxing their own work and sending it to you — unbelievable, just marvelous." Paul Edwards Oral History, interviewed by Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, 1983, typescript, p. 21.

3 Arrington, however, relates the near doom of that publication when one piece in the mode of the current scholarship caused offense and the journal was suspended for a year. Arrington, "Reflections," p. 92.
attended USU, the only materials out of which to learn proper research there were Mormon. George taught his seminars, and Leonard, already a faculty member in economics, sat at his feet.

The “underground church,” as Leonard calls it, flourishes wherever the organized church exists. Study groups, collections of like-minded Saints in need of a closer brotherhood based on special interests or attitudes, gather to share and compare. In that pattern, Leonard and Grace, George and Maria, together with Eugene Campbell and Wendell Rich and their wives, collected into a group for monthly meetings. Papers, mostly Leonard’s chapters from the coming Great Basin Kingdom, were read and critiqued. It was ambrosial, a foretaste that whetted appetites for more.

Some satisfaction was received at gatherings of historians at professional meetings — the AHA, OAH, WHA, and others — where for once the Mormon propensity towards cliquishness served the historians well. They would gather, what few of them had located each other, and talk Mormon history — and, as Leonard remembered, drink milk shakes. Add to the growing forces the increasing interest in and new directions of Western history, for the WHA had been organized just a few years earlier. In hindsight, the organization of the Mormon History Association seems inevitable, just as the invention of the printing press seems in hindsight inevitable. But it took a Gutenberg to connect the already existing die stamps pressing coins, the wooden blocks imprinting playing cards, and the flat beds of wine presses into the printing press. So it took an Arrington to connect the forces at hand into the MHA.

The history is simple — and predictable. At the first meeting at Logan, logistics of an organizational meeting were handled — Tom Alexander to find a venue; Dick Bushman and Jim Allen to come up with a program; and Stan Cazier to arrange transportation. The gathering on December 28, 1965, at San Francisco’s Sir Francis Drake attracted some fifty-two people, of a mailing list of eighty. George Ellsworth, observing from the back row, noted: “Leonard was in charge . . . all the way through. It’s his creation really.”

Indicative of his intimate role in the planning, Leonard introduced each guest by name and by research interests. The bonding was immediate. Colleagued by their joint insistence that the infant organization preserve its professional character, for example, Davis Bitton, LDS, and Bob Flanders, RLDS, spent the rest of the evening and much of the night in the bar of the hotel melding their shared opinions into a warm friendship. Bob, whose dissertation-cum-book on Nauvoo had been reviewed by Leonard, had earlier met him in Kansas City. Waiting as prearranged in the hotel lobby, Bob was “looking for a man about eight feet tall” when Leonard bounded forward, hand outstretched.

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5 Ibid., p. 2.
7 Telephone interview with Robert Flanders, April 28, 1985.
Through Bob came the RLDS connection and the mutual probing that brought historians from the two faiths closer. Paul Edwards, for example, was Bob's colleague on the Graceland faculty. Paul, who had been raised to believe that “you could smell Mormons before they got too close,” was edgy when, at one of the professional history conferences, Bob pulled him into a conversation with “a bunch of Mormons.” “These were fine scholars, people I'd heard [about] from some other source, who were openly talking about being Mormons, who knew that I wasn't and didn’t care. I mean, nobody attacked me, nobody made any attempt to convert me, nobody laughed at my church.”

The two groups of historians had much in common, beyond the obvious shared few years of history. The attitudes of their churches to their tasks of discovery, for example, gave them a common problem. Speaking of his first meeting with MHA colleagues, one remarked, “It was the first time most of us had ever been accepted as either professional people or historians.” There were matters of faith as well to be discussed, said some of the past presidents. The hotel-room talks, after hours at professional meetings at first, and later after MHA banquets, “almost always related to the question of faith and history,” reported Davis Bitton. Milt Backman differed: “I didn’t feel any tension,” he said, between historical evidence and personal testimony. The hotel-room sessions, he remembered, “would sometimes deal with sensitive subjects and controversial subjects, but basically they would just talk shop and discuss different issues and problems.” Other accounts of the hotel-room “smokers” (or better said, “nonsmokers”) suggest a more formal agenda. Leonard Arrington would, it seems, mother-hen the chicks about, and “go around the circle” having each participant in turn describe his, and later her, research in progress. Whatever the format, the consensus is that, as Davis Bitton suggested in a brief early history organization, “such informal brain-storming or ‘rap’ sessions have been the choicest experience of the conventions.”

The early meetings, including the annual business meetings, were held as adjuncts to professional historical conventions. A natural selection determined who participated in the hotel-room gatherings: only those with professional interest and administrative support could afford to be there. As others, local people, among them many nonprofessional historians, were invited to the paper-presenting sessions, the hotel-room chats afterwards took on an aura of eliteness. The natural expansiveness of the already initiated would include all newcomers, but the rooms were small, and not everyone could be accommodated. Time came when the location of the gathering was a whispered pass-

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9 Ibid., p. 20.
10 Bitton Oral History, p. 17.
12 MHA Newsletter, January 15, 1972. Utah State Historical Society Archives is the MHA-designated depository for the collected papers of Mormon History Association; their set of newsletters appears to be complete.
word breathed by organizers to the chosen few, and the original open sharing, as well as most of the original constituents, were gone.

There were compensations to the expansion of the organization, however. Once Milt Backman had demonstrated with his 1969 symposium at the Salt Lake Institute of Religion that a meeting held independent of the professional conventions could indeed succeed, the seed was planted. It would germinate in, of all places, Independence, whence, with fearful hearts, the organizers journeyed to try the distance. That was a turning point for the MHA. Accounts of that 1972 predecessor to this 1985 meeting are tender. Recollections of T. Edgar Lyon by the shore of the Missouri, of Alma Blair delivering an “elegiac discourse” in the misty rain at Haun’s Mill, of the intense spirituality of prayer, at his invitation, in the home of Lynn Smith are recorded with reverence. And humor, in accounts of Richard Howard, tricking the Utah Mormons into loudly proclaiming, “How long we have wandered as strangers in sin . . . .” 13 And of Leonard, solving for his Utah friends the problem of the offering during the following day’s opening of the RLDS general conference by flourishing a five-dollar bill into the collection plate with a stage-whispered “This will be for all of us!” Not yet to the point of academic papers, such as typified the adjunct meetings, and certainly not into concurrent sessions, MHA at Independence was establishing bonds of shared history among the historians of the two churches.

The increasing visibility of the organization and its members was positive in its results. Leonard having that year been appointed Richard Howard’s counterpart in the Utah church, the mutual trust of the historians generated, Earl Olsen affirmed, through MHA led to the exchange of several microfilmed documents between the archives in Independence and that in Salt Lake City. 14 Mormon history and historiography was becoming a subject of general interest among educated Latter-day Saints as Richard Bushman and Richard Poll, Robert Flanders, and Leonard Arrington addressed the topic in print.

Nauvoo tested the waters of ecumenical brotherhood, as visitors’ center guides of both Mormon faiths, accustomed to their ongoing cold warfare, gaped at historians of both stripes arm in arm in early morning forays: Mark McKiernan sharing with Davis Bitton one of David Hyrum Smith’s favorite

13 W. W. Phelps, adapter, “Redeemer of Israel,” in Hymns, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Salt Lake City, Utah: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1948), no. 195. Originally published in A Collection of Sacred Hymns . . . , edited by Emma Smith (Kirtland, Ohio: F. G. Williams & Co., 1835), p. 12. The story, as popularly told, is that Howard was directing the assembled group in the singing of some shared hymns and, in a spoof on the Utah Mormons, pokerfacedly asked them to sing the incriminating second verse after the Missouri Saints had sung the first. The Utah group, it is told, caught and enjoyed the joke almost immediately. A revision must here be made, however. After the presentation of this speech, both Richard Howard and his wife came to me independently and protested Richard’s innocence: the alternating of verses came about when in the initial singing of the hymn he had noticed some discrepancies in style, and he was simply trying to identify the points of departure in the two versions of the hymn. Whatever the reality of the event, the tellers of the story make plain a valued reality: LDS and RLDS members of MHA can appreciate their differences with shared good humor.

haunts, and Paul Edwards being introduced to Doug Alder by Jan Shipps, one of the neither-church stripe, three friends on the streets of Nauvoo.

Nauvoo taught us, however, a painful lesson in growing up organizationally. The trust that had been established, that familial protectiveness which let people speak their minds in truth and confidence, was tried to the breaking point in the underground distribution of a pirated transcript of the presidential address. “If the Tanners had done that,” commented one member, “I could see that, because that’s what they do.” But this was a friend; the faith had been broken. That night, some of the old faithfuls stayed away from the “smoker,” including the president himself, who spent the late hours in talk with one trusted friend. The experience cost MHA the association of that president, though professional repercussions were neither so immediate nor so harsh as popular accounts suggest. But the association did survive, and good will, if not full confidentiality, was restored.

Other gestures toward maturation were less devastating. One particular hotel-room discussion finally touched the untouchable: “For years we have been talking about things we agree upon,” recorded Jim Allen, “but as Paul Edwards has suggested, never about things we disagree on.” What followed dealt, not with RLDS distaste for polygamy nor LDS concerns about succession, but with the nature of Deity, the role of the Book of Mormon, and questions of priesthood, authority, and the Utah church’s position on blacks. “Through it all,” concluded Jim’s account, “there was no spirit of antagonism or stress within the group. This is always the great thing about . . . this Mormon history group.”

The next meeting, in Provo in 1975, took the growth one spurt further, as hundreds of new members and walk-in people filtered into the huge theater for what were then still plenary sessions. There, by numbers alone, the intimacy was endangered. Camaraderie that was possible among fifty-two people in San Francisco, or even two hundred in Independence, was shattered by five hundred in the deJong Concert Hall.

Splintered is perhaps the better word. For friendships continued, new and renewed. In the 1971 Provo meeting RLDS Bill Russell, unwilling initiate into MHA in the depths of Mormon Utah, had found himself one of a group of his co-religionists seated in a row in the big auditorium. Leonard Arrington, Bill recalled, had spotted them and, with characteristic good humor, insinuated himself in their midst. By 1975 Bill was comfortable in Utah, but one of his co-religionists attending the Sunday morning devotional felt excluded. Discussion of plural marriage, admissible in an academic paper where points

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could be argued, stances taken, was inappropriate in the context of devotion. This RLDS newcomer shifted about in obvious discomfort as the dramatic monologues quoted from witnesses to Joseph Smith’s involvement in polygamy. Speaking loudly his protest, he left the meeting, his wife close behind. Everyone watched, stunned. What they did not see was one more person slipping out, a Utah Mormon historian, who found the man “just absolutely shaking” on the walk in front of the church. “And he felt a friendship for me. We just stood out there on that step and held each other in each other’s arms.”

What Provo had lost in diffusion, St. George regained in part by isolation. In three buses members traveled together the six hours to St. George. The honest simplicity of the rock church in Parowan set the papers there in the context of raw reality, and the hike to Mountain Meadows acknowledged a people’s shame and demonstrated the role of historians in the redemptive process.

Then there was Kirtland, and the Kirtland temple, and, in the mode of Chas Peterson’s self-sharing address of the previous year, Paul Edwards’s “Secular Smiths” paper. Intimacy and trust were tried again but were becoming increasingly difficult to maintain. The group being privileged to hold Sunday service in the temple, one participant determined to awaken in himself a deeper awareness of the significance of that building to his faith. “I may not see a vision,” he told himself, “but I’m going to feel the spirit of it.” Fasting, he joined the others, the quiet broken only by the unaccompanied violin of Jan Shipps’s son Stephen. A brass band played hymns of the restoration; and in shared reverence, one Latter-day Saint of the Utah church and one Latter Day Saint of the Missouri church read antiphonally the Doctrine and Covenants account called “The Vision.” “The Spirit of God Like a Fire” closed the service. “It was a testimony for me.” Outside, in a spirit of sharing, he approached a co-religionist, new to MHA. “That’s the first time I’ve ever been to any kind of devotional meeting where they haven’t had an opening prayer,” the man complained. “I’m going to write the General Authorities.”

The “constituencies” of which MHA is made up are much more complex than any attempt at categorizing would suggest. More than simply professional historian, LDS, and professional historian, RLDS, church educator, or interested layman, the concept recognizes spectra in several directions. The potential for offense is great. But so is the potential for richness, for strength. Jan Shipps gave me the image: Buckminster Fuller’s geodesic dome. My children call the one on their schoolground “the bubble,” as they crawl through, climb over, slither under its many arms fixed in connecting triangles. Its strength bears whatever burden they place upon it. Each arm pulls and pushes against the others with just enough tension to hold the structure firm. I think my point is obvious. The various constituencies in MHA, pressing as they do against each other, at the same time stabilize each other. Remove one, or weaken its contribution, and the whole is distorted. Maintain the tension, and the structure remains firm.


MHA has followed patterns of organizational development similar to those of other movements. Akin to religions in their inception and continuation, it has had a charismatic season, a time of intimacy, of innovation and flexibility, of experimentation and risk-taking. But in the manner of group growth, that enthusiastic individualism has become too chaotic, too cumbersome, and is step by step giving way to rules, policies, printed programs detailing concurrent sessions. The eighty charter members known by its first president are now eight hundred, of whom I know about eighty. The balance between differentiation, the valued individualism of the members of the organization, and integration, the collaboration of those members in unity of effort, is shifting relentlessly toward integration.22

There are losses, and some of us feel them deeply. But there are gains as well. If concurrent sessions pull us apart, they at the same time let more of us speak. The volume of scholarly research, if not always of highest quality, suggests that young scholars, the second generation, as it were, are learning their craft. Davis Bitton's 1972 list of papers presented under MHA auspices from 1965 to 1971 had forty-four items; there are fifty-two on this year's program alone, and that after some proposals had been declined. For years Leonard's Great Basin Kingdom stood basically alone as a book-length scholarly study of Mormon history; this year's autograph parties will honor eleven new books, one year's output by MHA members. The daring that took the meeting off the Wasatch Front to Independence in 1972 will take us off the continent to Britain in 1987 and focus our attention on as yet unexplored foreign influences on our own beginnings and the wider scope of our international expansions. Collegiality on an international scale will force adjustments, but the rewards will be commensurate.

And the essence has not changed. The hotel-room "smoker" ("non-smoker") is becoming "smokers" as friendships expand; enthusiasm rises anew with each new discovery; there is still risk in the interplay of faith and history. If some of the old guard feel they've "been there before" in their resolutions, there is a younger generation of scholars raising the old questions anew, and new questions around old issues — and solving them with demanding professionalism, and sharing their solutions.

The ultimate values of the association are still individual, humane, and moral. Let Leonard Arrington, the first president, and Richard Bushman, the twentieth, provide our benediction. First, from Leonard: "If we are to succeed as Mormon historians, we must have deep within us a faith, counted to us as righteousness, I trust, that a person may be a converted Latter-day Saint and a competent and honest historian." 23 Then, from Richard: "The trouble with wishing to write history as a Mormon [or Methodist, or Quaker] is that you cannot improve as a historian without improving as a man [read person]. The enlargement of moral insight, spiritual commitment, and critical intelligence


are all bound together." 24 May the fostering of such virtue in its members as we write and read our histories be continually the aim and the accomplishment of the Mormon History Association.

John E. Page: An Apostle of Uncertainty

By John Quist

John E. Page has been a neglected figure in Mormon history. This is unfortunate, since his positions as apostle under Joseph Smith and James Strang and as leader in at least two other Mormon factions, along with the large quantity of his extant writings, provide us with an insightful perspective of the uncertainty that many Mormons experienced after the death of Joseph Smith. Although one may address many facets of Page’s career, this study will focus primarily upon Page’s changing perceptions of the necessity and utility of a prophet. He genuinely believed that Joseph Smith and James Strang were divinely appointed as prophets of the Most High, and especially while associated with Strang, Page asserted that their callings as direct communicants of God were the central pillars of Mormon theology. After parting ways with Strang, Page repudiated these ideas, concluding that Joseph Smith was a fallen prophet and that true religion was found in the Book of Mormon and in the heart of the believer, rather than within a church.

Since the career of John Edward Page has not been discussed in detail by other writers, it will be necessary to integrate details of his life into the body of this essay. He was born in Trenton Township, Oneida County, New York, on February 25, 1799, the eldest child of Ebenezer and Rachel Page. Emer Harris baptized Page into the Mormon church on August 18, 1833, in Brownhelm, Ohio, and John’s brother, Ebenezer Page, ordained him an elder a month later in Florence, Ohio.1 On August 24, 1835, Page and the male members of his

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1 Millennial Star 27 (February 18, 1865): 103; Autumn Leaves 3 (April 1890): 198.
wife, Lorain Stevens’ immediate family were called by the Kirtland high council to “locate their families and then go forth and preach the gospel.” Page evidently left Kirtland after settling his family there that fall. He was nominated on January 13, 1836, to fill a position on the high council, but since he was absent, his name was dropped. In May he embarked on an extended mission to Ontario. Thirteen months later a local church conference boasted that Page had baptized 305 people in Canada. This successful mission caught the attention of his brethren in Kirtland. In January 1838, “John E. Page of 2nd Quorum of Seventy . . . was chosen to fill the place of Luke Johnson, one of the Twelve . . . by the nomination of the High Council and vote of the Church.” This call was confirmed in July when Joseph Smith received a revelation that assigned Page, John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, and Willard Richards to the apostleship.

Page left Canada with a company of Mormons on May 14, 1838, and headed for Missouri to join the principal gathering of the Church. They arrived in the fall, but were soon forced to leave the state because of Governor Lilburn Boggs’s “Extermination Order” of October 27. Page lost his wife and two children at this time, and blamed their deaths on a “furious mob.” Seething with indignation, he asserted to his brother Ebenezer, before the latter’s incarceration at Far West, Missouri, “We two share alike, we have each buried a wife in this place, and if we follow them, our trials will be over; if you are shot I will avenge your blood.” Fortunately, John was never required to fulfill this oath since his brother was later released. Although Page must have been overwhelmed by this adversity, his bleakness began to disperse in December when he proposed marriage to Mary Judd, a woman nineteen years his junior. They were soon married and relocated near Warsaw, Illinois.

Despite these trials in Missouri, Page was required to return to Far West in April 1839 to participate in an apostolic vigil held before the Twelve departed on missions to England. It is not clear why Page never went to England. He did, however, leave with Orson Hyde on a mission to Jerusalem on April 15, 1840. The two traveled to Dayton, Ohio, where they separated. They later

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2 Journal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Brigham Young University Library (microfilm), August 24, 1835.


4 Journal History, January 19 and 23, 1838; February 6, 1838; Doctrine and Covenants of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Salt Lake City: Published by the Church, 1981), section 118. Luke Johnson was also expelled by the Church at Far West, Missouri, on April 7, 1838, History of the Church 3:14.

5 Millennial Star 27 (February 18, 1865) : 103–4; Zion’s Reveille 2 (April 15, 1847) : 55; John E. Page to Dear Sister in the Lord, December 8, 1838, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.

6 Elden J. Watson, ed., Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 1801–1844 (Salt Lake City, 1968), pp. 34–38; John E. Page to Joseph Smith, September 1, 1841, Joseph Smith Papers, Brigham Young University (microfilm); Marvin Hill, “An Historical Study of the Life of Orson Hyde, Early Mormon Missionary and Apostle from 1805–1852” (M.A. thesis,
met in Cincinnati. From there Hyde continued on, while Page remained until the end of October to strengthen the church. Having a large quantity of pamphlets to sell, and believing that Hyde had “supplyed the market” east of Cincinnati, Page returned to Dayton, hoping to find the people there receptive to his pamphlet. While he was in Dayton, winter came early and “the river closed by the frost,” complicating any attempts to find transportation out of the area. Believing that Hyde had no intentions of leaving for Jerusalem until they had raised one thousand dollars each to cover their round trip, and supposing that this might take another year or two, Page apparently made no effort to reach the East Coast to meet his companion.7 Joseph Smith, however, had intended that the duo make swifter progress, and on January 15, 1841, he placed the following notice in the Times and Seasons: “Elders Orson Hyde and John E. Page are informed, that the Lord is not well pleased with them in consequence of delaying their mission (Elder John E. Page in particular,) and they are requested by the First Presidency to hasten their journey towards their destination.”8 This reproval caught both elders by surprise. Hyde, who had not received word from Page and had thus considered leaving without him, departed for England on February 13, 1841.9

Frustrated because he was left behind, Page wrote to Joseph Smith and explained this misunderstanding from his point of view: “[B]efore navigation opened in the spring for me to Cinti and thus proceed to NY — Elder Hyde left in Feb. for Europe taking all [the money] with him for he had visited every church in his way and raised in all the branches a very very liberal donations in the name of us both.” As a result of this, Page lost confidence in Hyde. “[A]nyman that would treat me with the neglect that Elder Hyde has me he would betray me in a more criticule hour if by so doing he could save his own life,” he wrote.10 Page visited several branches on the East Coast, attempting to procure funds that would enable him to sail for Europe. He was received generously in Philadelphia, where church members had him postpone a July 25 departure so that more funds could be raised for his mission. But before he could leave, Joseph Smith asked that he return to Nauvoo, Illinois. After spending the winter of 1841–42 in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia, Page reported to Nauvoo for the April 1842 conference, where the nonperformance of his mission to Palestine was to be discussed. Recognizing that his separation from Hyde may have lost him the confidence of others, he was prepared for the worst: “If I have erred, I still have the truth which is this church and is doctrines. Where I have erred, I hope to find mercy, where I have done right I hope to be justi-

7 Page to Smith, September 1, 1841, Joseph Smith Papers; History of the Church 4: 583–85. Spelling and grammar in this and all other quotes in this essay follow the original sources.
8 Times and Seasons 2 (January 15, 1841): 287.
10 Page to Smith, September 1, 1841, Joseph Smith Papers. This spite expressed by Page in 1841 surfaced again in 1850, when he reportedly spread rumors that Orson Hyde did not complete his mission to Jerusalem. Frontier Guardian, May 1, 1850.
fied.” Having mellowed in his resentments toward Hyde, he “accused himself of not using better economy in proceeding on his journey.” It had been reported at Nauvoo that Page had apostatized, as a result of which objections had been raised toward his being sustained as an apostle at the church conference held the previous April. Joseph Smith concluded that “Elder Page showed a little grannyism,” and that he “should have stuck by Orson Hyde. . . . [However] there is nothing very bad in it, but by the experience, let us profit.” Page maintained full fellowship in the church and returned to Pittsburgh by way of Hannibal, Missouri, and Alton, Illinois.11

Page resided in Pittsburgh until June 8, 1843. While there, he published a newspaper, the Gospel Light, and two pamphlets, Slander Refuted and The Spaulding Story. Upon leaving Pittsburgh, he spent time in Cincinnati, New York, and Boston before being called by Joseph Smith and Brigham Young to go to Washington, D.C. He remained in Washington until the following April, when he returned to Pittsburgh to be with his sick wife.12

Although Page had differences with others in the Church hierarchy,13 his writings from this period reveal that he was a zealous advocate of Mormonism and that he highly respected his prophet as well as the two chief apostles. In subsequent years, Page would condemn his Nauvoo-era brethren for perverting the gospel. But in the early 1840s they were involved in a common cause, and Page solicited their assistance: “[It becomes you [Joseph Smith] and brothers [Brigham] young and [Heber C.] kimball to show yourselves men of the God of Israel this once to put down the slanders of [John C.] Bennett and Martha Brotherton.”14 The possibility that Smith could be a fallen prophet did not occur to Page in 1843: “I know that you [Joseph Smith] and the Church Authorities will do right and require nothing unreasonable or not right and in all cases are competent to give righteous Council in all matters that concern the temporal and spiritual intrest of the kingdom of God.” Others regarded Page as “unusually zealous in advocating the divine mission of Brother Joseph Smith.”15

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11 Journal History, November 29, 1841, and January 30, 1842; David J. Whittaker, “Early Mormon Pamphleteering” (Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, 1982), pp. 162–64; History of the Church 4:341, 583–85; Joseph Smith to John E. Page, April 9, 1842; Brigham Young University (microfilm), original at New York Public Library. Although Page believed he had insufficient funds to take him overseas, George A. Smith and Benjamin Winchester disagreed. History of the Church 4:372; Benjamin Winchester to Joseph Smith, September 18, 1841, Joseph Smith Papers.

12 The Gospel Light 1 (February 1844): 8; History of the Church 5:392 and 6:81–82, 369; Journal History, August 17 and October 30, 1843; Willard Richards to Mary Page, November 25, 1843, Historical Library — Archives, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, hereafter referred to as LDS Library — Archives.


14 John E. Page to Joseph Smith, August 8, 1842, Joseph Smith Papers. When James Strang later accepted John C. Bennett into his church, Page expressed serious misgivings and questioned Bennett’s penitence. John E. Page to James J. Strang, July 6, 1846, James J. Strang Manuscripts, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut (microfilm).

15 John E. Page to Joseph Smith, March or May 2, 1843, Joseph Smith Papers; George T. Wallace to Joseph Smith, October 30, 1843, cited in Journal History under this date.
Following the murder of Joseph Smith on June 27, 1844, Page was directed to return to Nauvoo after "spend[ing] a little time in publishing the news in the eastern cities, and getting as many in the Church as possible." Meanwhile, Brigham Young, as president of the Twelve Apostles, secured the helm of Mormon leadership at church conferences held in Nauvoo in August and October. Soon after his return to Nauvoo in December, Page gave an account of his mission at the dedication of the Seventies' Hall. He affirmed his allegiance by "assuring the Saints that he was one with them, and gave his testimony of the present organization of the church in the most solemn manner." In the early part of 1845, he met frequently with the Twelve and was initiated into the Council of Fifty. He was also given secular responsibilities, chief of which was president of the Nauvoo Water Power Company, which had been organized to build a dam to harness the Mississippi River at Nauvoo. For the latter part of 1845, Page is conspicuously absent in the existing church records. Despite this increased nonparticipation in church councils, on December 10 Page and his wife were among the first to receive their endowments in the Nauvoo Temple; the following morning he offered the vocal prayer at an eight o'clock prayer assembly in the temple.

Shortly after this, Page began to doubt openly the legitimacy of his quorum's governing powers and commenced entertaining the possibility that James J. Strang was the true successor of Joseph Smith. Strang, who asserted claims of a divine calling that Young did not exhibit, rose rapidly from obscurity to become a threat to the leadership of the Twelve. His pretensions to the prophetic mantle were based on a "letter of appointment" allegedly authored by Joseph Smith, angelic ordination, and the discovery and translation of ancient scripture. On January 13, 1846, Strang issued a summons to the Twelve Apostles in Nauvoo and demanded that they come before him at his newly founded gathering place, Voree, Wisconsin. Here they were to "make satisfaction" for evils that he charged them with, foremost of which were usurpation of power, immorality, and the teaching of false doctrine. Page was the first of two apostles who responded to Strang's demands. Although he

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16 History of the Church 7:148.
19 Milo Quaife, The Kingdom of St. James (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1930), pp. 11–19; Joseph Smith to James J. Strang, June 18, 1844, Strang Manuscripts. Dale Morgan in his "Summary Description of the Strang Manuscripts," also located in the Strang Manuscripts at Yale, discusses the authenticity of this "letter of appointment" and concludes that it was not written or signed by Joseph Smith.
20 Soon after this, Joseph Smith's brother William temporarily submitted to Strang's leadership. See Voree Herald, April 1846.
was initially reserved regarding Strang’s calling, he acknowledged his personal belief that the Twelve had no right to officiate in lieu of a First Presidency and that only Joseph Smith had the authority to designate his successor. He declared:

That such an appointment is necessary has been settled with me for more than three months past, consequently I have taken little or no interest in the councils of the Church. In the absence of the first presidency, I have looked upon the church as being like a clock without weights, or a watch without a mainspring, all stops till they are restored. . . . These reflections. . . . have thrown my mind into a state that is almost indescribable. Suffice it to say, that my bosom has heaved with pain and anxiety day and night, my mind more or less enveloped in a gloom to which I was an entire stranger while President Smith lived.21

Evidently these recent changes in church administration left Page cold. For many Mormons, the centrality of their religion had been the charismatic prophet-figure, Joseph Smith.22 Brigham Young was not Joseph Smith, nor did he attempt to imitate him. Instead, he portrayed himself as Joseph’s disciple who was charged to carry out his prophet’s designs.23 Consistent with this, Young admitted to the church, “You are now without a prophet present with you in the flesh to guide you,” and told them not to “presume for a moment that his place will be filled by another.”24 Mormons who experienced conflict with the policies, teachings, or personality of Brigham Young, or who felt a genuine longing for a prophet with credentials similar to those of Joseph Smith, believed that James Strang offered the old gospel under a familiar label.

Before long, Page’s growing disinterest in church councils was perceived as apostasy by others of his quorum. On February 9, 1846, a statement issued by the Twelve Apostles informed “the Saints of God” that Page no longer enjoyed their fellowship,

in consequence of his murmuring disposition, and choosing to absent himself from our Councils, and then saying that he is made a servant and slave of by his quorum, and has had no privileges in the Temple, when the plain truth is, he has chosen to stand aside from us, and because we would let him do it, he has murmured about it. He has been in the background and in the shade ever since he failed to fulfill his mission to Jerusalem in company with Elder Hyde.25

By March, Page had publicly repudiated the Twelve and was preaching in favor of Strang in Nauvoo. On March 12, he wrote Strang and informed

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21 Ibid.
24 History of the Church 7:250. These statements were later used by John E. Page and other dissenters to prove that the “Brighamites” lacked a prophet; for an example, see Gospel Herald 3 (August 17, 1848): 92–93.
25 Elden Jay Watson, Manuscript History of Brigham Young 1846–1847 (Salt Lake City, 1971), p. 31. Page was excommunicated from the Church on June 27, 1846; see Journal History under this date. Ezra T. Benson was chosen to fill his vacancy in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.
him of his conversion: "I therefore say in true sincerity of heart . . . that I am fully persuaded by the word of the Lord, and the spirit of truth, that you are the man to fill the place of Joseph Smith, as prophet -Revelator -Seer -and Translator to the Church, and discharge all, and several the duties that involved on Pres-Smith." Three days later, believing "that my life is sought for," 26 he left Nauvoo with Reuben Miller, another defector to Strangism. On April 6, Page reported to Strang's conference in Voree, Wisconsin. According to the conference minutes, Page acknowledged Strang's summons and "[gave] up all claim in favor of all the [Brighamite] Twelve as first Presidency of the Church, placed himself under the direction of the [Strangite] Presidency, ex-honerated himself . . . of the [Brighamite] Twelve in their usurpation . . . and the President [Strang] . . . decided to receive and sustain him in his place as one of the [Strangite] Twelve." 27

While in Voree, Page was a witness at a hearing where the charges of the unrepentant apostles were discussed. On this occasion, he expressed some of his complaints, which reveal additional reasons why he separated from the Twelve:

H. C. Kimball built a large pine house and paid the working men out of the tithing office and a large amount of indebtiness stands against him on the books. The keys of the priesthood in the endowment begin in the baptismal font and then the endowment should begin and go on upwards to the attic. They took the opposite course and began where they should end. . . . The covenant was to obey to give up all to the last farthing. The covenant with uplifted hand was required to obey counsel whatever it should be. 28

These objections were also voiced on other occasions. Page was said to have preached from the steps of the Nauvoo Temple that the endowment was corrupt and that speedy destruction was certain to be sent to a people willing to tolerate such wickedness. His wife, Mary, was also disgusted with the temple endowment, and referred to the anointing as "greasings." 29 In his first letter to Strang, Page complained of not receiving a proportionate share of compensation for his church labors:

The last day of May next will be ten years since I first left my family, and my little all, to preach the everlasting gospel. From that time until about one year since, I have been incessantly employed in the vineyard, and have baptized more than one thousand souls. I began my work in extreme poverty and have suffered every privation imaginable. My family have gone through untold sufferings in my absence, and I am yet as poor and destitute as when I first entered this ministry. I have served this people in all diligence . . . thinking most implicitly, that whenever I should return to any of the stakes of Zion to

26 Ibid., pp. 62–63; John E. Page to James J. Strang, March 12, 1846, Library-Archives of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Independence, Missouri; Justin E. Page to Wilford Poulson, July 1, 1935, Poulson Papers; Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, March 16, 1846, LDS Library — Archives.

27 "Chronicles of Voree," Brigham Young University (microfilm), p. 64.

28 "Testimony Concerning Charges against the 12" (undated, probably Spring 1846), Strang Manuscripts.

settle, my labors would be appreciated by the Church and its authorities, & I be sustained in my capacity equal with my brethren of the same calling. . . . [M]y brethren of the same quorum appear to enjoy a resonable plenty to sustain them in their capacity. I do not say they have too much, but I do say, that I do not have enough. 29

After he was accepted into Strang's fold, Page journeyed with Strang and Reuben Miller to a local church conference at Norway, LaSalle County, Illinois. There he unequivocally expressed his conviction of the necessity of a prophet and argued in favor of Strang's divine calling. Using a dialectic that he was to employ frequently thereafter, he began his argument with the premise that Joseph Smith was a true prophet. He then demonstrated how revelations received by Smith had provided for a successor to provide spiritual leadership to the church in the case of Smith's death or apostasy. Strang, as Page noted, was the only contender for Smith's mantle who “hath presented a claim . . . according to the Doctrine and Covenants, and hath presented the proper works of a Seer, Revelator, and Translator.” With this knowledge, it was the responsibility of the saints to “sustain and uphold him as a duly appointed successor of our beloved prophet, Joseph Smith.” 31 According to Page, his newfound prophet presented “an indisputable ‘appointment’ and ‘ordination’ in the form that fills the letter of the word of God . . . to a minuitia.” Strang’s calling was a pillar of Mormonism, he said, for without “the appointment of Joseph’s successor, Mormonism is dead and damned long ago.” Page also felt that Strang extolled the finest of virtues: “There is not his equal on this earth for patience, faith, prudence, wisdom, aptness to teach and indefatigable perserverance.” 32

Judging from his writings in Zion’s Reveille, published in Voree, Page understood the rhetorical strength of Strang’s position perhaps better than any others of Strang’s disciples. The vigor and zeal of the numerous polemics he wrote stressed how Strang’s prophetic call was quintessential to Mormonism.

To his disappointment, Page was unable to gather his family to Voree immediately due to poor health and lack of finances. Instead, he located them in Elgin, Illinois, for a year, and while there he took little part in the church.

30 Voree Herald, April 1846; Richard P. Howard, ed., The Memoirs of President Joseph Smith III (Independence, Missouri: Herald Publishing House, 1979), p. 30. These complaints were not without foundation, since some of the Twelve were among the wealthiest in Nauvoo, while Page's wealth was below the average wealth of non-Church officials. However, the circumstances of William Smith, Lyman Wight, George A. Smith, and Willard Richards were similar to those of Page. D. Michael Quinn, “The Mormon Hierarchy 1832-1932: An American Elite” (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1976), pp. 90-91.

Polygamy may also have influenced Page's decision to leave the Twelve. He testified that “the rest of the Twelve then had good houses plenty of means nutrishment & maid servants.” “Testimony Concerning Charges against the 12,” Strang Manuscripts. Later he was decidedly opposed to polygamy (Zion's Reveille 2 [August 5, 1847]: 46-47; 2 [August 12, 1847]: 51; Gospel Herald 3 [September 7, 1848]: 115), as was his wife (Saints' Herald 35 [October 13, 1888]: 655; Mary Page Eaton to Joseph F. Smith, May 1903, Library-Archives, Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Independence, Missouri). However, a year after she wrote to Smith, Mary purportedly told Joseph Fielding Smith, Jr., that she “gave” John E. Page other wives. Joseph F. Smith, Jr., Blood Atonement and the Origin of Plural Marriage (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1905), p. 59. See also Justin E. Page to P. A. Watts, March 16, 1936; Justin E. Page to Wilford Poulson, March 20 and June 11, 1936, Poulson Papers.

31 “Chronicles of Voree,” pp. 76-77.

In November 1846, the Strangite paper noted that Page had been sick but was recovering, adding that a “little assistance would bring him again into a rich field of usefulness, where his talents eminently qualify him for success.” By the spring of 1847, Page moved to Voree and quickly attained prominence in the church. In June he assumed editorship of Zion’s Reveille, and his name became increasingly conspicuous in the paper as the author of bulletins and doctrinal treatises. Since he was president of the Twelve Apostles in Strang’s church, Page often found his name attached to Strang’s on important notices published in the church paper. He was also esteemed by the rank and file membership; on a number of occasions, members wrote letters requesting that he visit them. One devoted member, anxious to come to Voree, offered to build houses for Strang and Page.

Despite such offers, Page remained in dire financial straits and claimed that he was unable to leave Voree to preach the gospel: “In point of strength we are about 33 1/3 per cent, when compared with most men who engage in common labor for a living. . . . When, by this scanty income, I can supply my wife and children with daily bread and can lay up in store enough for them to subsist upon a few weeks . . . we shall then go out and tell the church and the world to repent.” Consistent with his earlier complaints of economic neglect, he believed that it was each member’s responsibility to support the ministers of God’s flock: “If there were no ministers in temporal things, the ministers of spiritual things would not be sustained.” On another occasion, he wrote: “Ministers cannot suck the wind and chew their breath and live more than others can.”

Page’s financial condition eventually improved, for he was able to serve several missions for Strang. These missions, however, were local affairs, and seem to have never taken him beyond parts of Illinois and Wisconsin. Although it is not known how much financial assistance he obtained from church members, he was given at least enough to take him to Cincinnati, but by this time he had grown disenchanted with Strang and never made it that far.

When he returned to Voree, Page began to express publicly doubts concerning Strang’s leadership. At a civil court trial in late June, he served as a witness for a defector from Strang’s communitarian Order of Enoch. Soon

33 Zion’s Reveille, November 1846; 2 (April 22, 1847): 60.
34 Zion’s Reveille 2 (June 1, 1847): 63; 2 (July 8, 1847): 66; 2 (October 7, 1847): 119.
35 Gospel Herald 2 (December 2, 1847): 167. Later when Page was a Brewhsterite, notices of his financial difficulties continued to find their way into print. Olive Branch, or Messenger of Good Tidings to the Meek 2 (January 1850): 104; 2 (June 1850): 186; 3 (April 1851): 133; 3 (June 1851): 175; 4 (September 1851): 31; 4 (October 1851): 40.
36 Zion’s Reveille 2 (July 15, 1847): 71; Gospel Herald 3 (August 10, 1848): 83.
At his church membership trial, Page was charged with having “refused, when means had frequently been given him to defray his expenses on different missions to which he had been appointed.” Gospel Herald 4 (August 2, 1849): 99.
after this trial, notice was published in the *Gospel Herald* of Page's "suspension of all jurisdiction and authority of his priesthood" until the next conference convened. At the conference, held at Beaver Island, Michigan, on July 6 to 8, 1849, Ebenezer Page, also an apostle, was one of the witnesses at his brother's trial. After talking things over with John, Ebenezer said that he felt that he could obtain "no assurance from him that he at this time had any confidence in the authority of James J. Strang's administration." After much discussion, this conference voted to eliminate Page from its ranks and to "deliver him over to the buffetings of Satan until he repents." 39 A month and a half later, Page wrote several of his objections to Strang's rule and offered to debate these issues publicly:

1st Strang says, he, "as a prophet is not accountable to any tribunal of the Church for what he may say or do."

2d Strang has introduced a covenant confirmed by the most solemn secret oath confined to the members of the church excluding all other persons who are not members of the church.

3d Strang has organized a common stock community confined entirely to the church, which he calls "the Order of Enoch" according to the Book of D. C.

4th Strang says in the "Gospel Herald" "that there is no merit in a faith that believes with a reason only in that it believes with a mandate." 40

After rejecting Strangism, Page became a central figure among Strangite opposition, which increased when many suspected that Strang's personal secretary, Elvira Field (alias Charles J. Douglass), was a disguised plural wife. Gilbert Watson wrote to Strang: "I am informed that J. E. had a letter from Philadelphia stating that your clerk was in the habit of wearing petticoats until very recently, and also that he had another from Baltimore confirming the same thing." 41 Page's brother Ebenezer was "down hearted" at the course that John was pursuing. Although he still wanted John to return to the fold, he told Strang that he believed his brother was "trying to destroy me as well as you." 42

In assessing Page's reasons for leaving Strang, one notices the similarity to complaints that he voiced three years earlier when he separated from the westward-bound Twelve. His grievances of authoritarianism, secret ordinances, and restrictive comunitarianism imply that there was continuity in his belief, and that he simply encountered similar circumstances that elicited a similar re-


40 "Objections to points of doctrine taught by J. J. Strang," signed by John E. Page, dated August 26, 1849, Strang Manuscripts. The following appears on this document in different handwriting: "Despite Page's 3d objection, in Voree Herald of June 29, 1848, he has a long letter of praise for the Order of Enoch and its perpetuity."

41 Gilbert Watson to James J. Strang, February 11, 1850, Strang Manuscripts; Quaife, *Kingdom of St. James*, pp. 96–115. Strang secretly married Elvira Field on July 13, 1849, and she accompanied her husband to the East the following winter disguised as a male secretary. There is no evidence to suggest that Page left Strang because of polygamy, since Page apostatized before Strang's polygamous marriage.

42 Ebenezer Page to James J. Strang, March 7, 1850, Strang Manuscripts.
But perhaps more important, his emphasis on Strang’s calling as the pivot of the true faith placed Page in a corner. As he had stressed, Strang’s claims were based on precedent and scripture, and no other contender for Mormon souls presented himself in such a confident and assertive manner. In light of the facts, Page believed Strang had to be a prophet; if Strang was not what he claimed, then the religion of Joseph Smith was somehow imperfect. Possibly Page was captivated more by Strang’s rhetoric than by Strang the man, and perhaps Page’s arguments were an attempt to convince himself that he was in the true path of salvation.

After he renounced Strang’s gospel, Page did not search for another charismatic claiming the mantle of Joseph Smith. Instead, he began to question seriously the centrality of a prophet in Mormon theology. However, this doubt did not cause him to renounce Mormonism altogether. In a letter dated October 19, 1849, he encouraged “all my Friends and Acquaintances” to “lay aside all prejudices” and read the *Olive Branch*, a newspaper of James C. Brewster’s faction of Mormonism. Brewster, who was born in 1826, claimed communication with the Angel Moroni when he was only ten years old. In 1842 he published *The Words of Righteousness to All Men*, which he asserted was ancient scripture written by the prophet Esdras, and claimed that God had chosen him to present it to the world. Brewster was denounced in the *Times and Season* by Apostle John Taylor, who said he felt that Brewster was unauthorized to speak for God. Brewster is not known to have belonged to any faction of Mormonism until 1848, when he began publishing the *Olive Branch*, which contained the writings of Esdras and other material. One of his appeals to the discontents of Mormonism was his rejection of such Nauvoo doctrinal innovations as “secret orders” and the “temporal kingdom.” His main emphasis was on the Book of Mormon, “the standard by which the saints are to prove all doctrines, and determine whether they are right or wrong.” He also pointed out that the revelations of Joseph Smith as originally published in the Book of Commandments (1833) had been substantially revised, and he felt them to be superior to those printed in the Doctrine and Covenants (1835). Unlike many

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43 Page did not entirely reject communitarianism; he later explained that the members of the church in Joseph Smith’s time had fallen into transgression by their selfishness and their lust after worldly pursuits, and because their economic affairs had “neither system, order, or regulation about it, but all was left to do as they listed, right or wrong.” Ideally, he felt that Mormons should be “fully willing in heart (not by constraint) to be equal with their brethren in temporal things.” *Olive Branch* 3 (June 1851): 169–71; 4 (October 1851): 39–40; *Saints’ Herald* 3 (July 1862): 20–21; *Truth Teller* 1 (November 1864): 80.

44 *The Olive Branch* 2 (November 1849): 79.


46 *The Olive Branch* 2 (December 1849): 89–93; 2 (April 1850): 151. Brewster was not the first Mormon to see Smith as a “fallen prophet.” There were some who held to variations of this view in Kirtland in the 1830s and in Nauvoo in the 1840s with the publication of the *Nauvoo Expositor*. The most renowned work expressing this outlook is David Whitmer, *An Address to All Believers in Christ* (Richmond, Missouri, 1887). In connection with the Kirtland episode, see Marvin S. Hill, “Cultural Crisis in the Mormon Kingdom: A Reconsideration of the Causes of Kirtland Dissent,” *Church History* 49 (September 1980): 286–97. The Kirtland apostasies did not significantly affect Page, since he was away on a mission when they occurred.
other contenders for Mormon souls, Brewster never claimed to have been specially designated by Smith to lead. He wrote:

It is a matter of no importance to us who Joseph Smith appointed to be his successor. . . . We never ask those who offer themselves as candidates for admission into our organization, what they believe about Joseph's successor. . . . If they believe the Book of Mormon . . . it is evident to them that none of those professed leaders are now right, although they may believe one of them was once actually appointed to lead the church. . . . Since Mr. J. E. Page united with us, the Gospel Herald has said much about his former belief. . . . We were well aware that Mr. Page was formerly a strong advocate of Mr. Strang's claims; but when he became convinced that the writings of Esdras were true, and that the Book of Mormon contains the fullness of the Gospel, he united with us as a private member. He did not inform us — neither did we inquire — whether he had changed his opinion respecting Mr. Strang's appointment or not.47

Brewster provided an alternative for Mormons who had grown tired of contending claims of authority. Although acknowledged as a prophet, Brewster, unlike Strang, presented a very loose organization that did not demand strict doctrinal orthodoxy as a criterion for membership. Neither were leadership positions emphasized. Brewster was too busy dabbling with the spiritual realm to burden himself with administrative concerns, and he left the tasks of presidency and the editorship of the Olive Branch to Hazen Aldrich. Instead, Brewster's faction emphasized the Book of Mormon and the writings of Esdras and tried to appeal to factional discontents. In 1850 John Gaylord, a former Strangite, wrote to Brewster: "It would do your soul good to see old Pseudos and new Pseudos [Strangite apostates], McLellinites and Strangites all transformed into a Church of Christ; worshipping one God; believing in one standard." 48

Brewster's teachings concerning the Book of Mormon appealed to Page. Instead of emphasizing the necessity of a prophet within Mormonism, Page now stressed the Book of Mormon and advocated that since it contained "the fullness of the gospel of our salvation, there is no more to be revealed, as far as our spiritual salvation is concerned." He also believed that the Book of Mormon provided spiritual security against the encroachments of false worship, since any "ordinance, command or duty . . . that is not known in the Book of Mormon . . . we are to shun it as we would a deadly poison," regardless of who was to impose it, "be [he] a prophet, priest or king." He declared that the reason why he had been mired in false doctrine was that he had not relied upon the Book of Mormon: "I have been heretofore so extremely humbugged in doctrines and principles that I verily thought was the truth, that I now know to be false, (compared with the standard [i.e., the Book of Mormon],) . . . I now see the folly and danger of believing the doctrine, that a prophet, because he is a prophet, is always right and cannot be wrong." In addition to denouncing Strang, Page claimed that Joseph Smith had led Mormons away from the true gospel. Despite his previous assertions that Mormonism would falter if Joseph had failed to appoint a successor, Page now concluded that since there was no precedent in the Bible or Book of Mormon

47 The Olive Branch 2 (April 1850): 151.
48 The Olive Branch 2 (April 1850): 155.
that "one law-giver should appoint another," the citation in the Doctrine and Covenants that authorized Joseph Smith to appoint another in his stead was "false, vain, foolish, and uncalled for." Although he probably believed in baptism for the dead at an earlier time, since it was a tenet and practice of both Smith and Strang, he now regarded it as unscriptural since it was not cited in the Book of Mormon, and he accused Smith of presenting the doctrine by means of a "pretended revelation." He also claimed that the "Book of D.C." should be "rejected altogether except those parts which are collateral to or borrowed from the Book of Mormon." 49

As Page's belief diverged from the authoritarian prophet-based church that he had frequently emphasized as a Strangite, he placed additional stress on individual religious experience. In the last number of the Olive Branch, his article titled "I believe in Mormonism, but where is it?" pointed out that the search for the right organization is not the best way to find true Mormonism. "If the principles of Mormonism do not exist in your own heart," he wrote, "and if you do not know them to exist, then it is not probable you can see them in any other individual or organization on the earth. . . . As Mormonism is the pure gospel of Christ, it becomes each one to believe it, to enquire of his own heart, if it exists there." Thus the answer to his question "Where is Mormonism fled to?" was simple: "Reader, if it is not in your heart, it is nowhere, as far as you are concerned." 50

Because Brewster's paper ceased publication in January 1852, little is known of the distintegration of Brewster's church, which occurred shortly thereafter. Presumably everything fell apart after Brewster led about one hundred of his followers to California, with his disciples apostatizing in the east and the west. 51 How this affected Page is unknown; he probably continued preaching to Mormons in the vicinity of his home in De Kalb, Illinois, as much as his health would permit. His youngest son, Justin, recalled: "I only knew my father as a sick man, or at best broken in health, and have heard him preach to an audience but little, but he was always at it, generally in village stores and shops, where groups would gather to hear him, some times in discussion with other Ministers and much in private conversation." 52

Page apparently did not affiliate with any Mormon faction for some time after this. In 1855, William Marks wrote that he, along with Page, had concluded "to reject all organizations, and teach the first principles of the gospel, and baptism for the remission of sins, and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Spirit." 53 W. W. Blair similarly remembered the mid-1850s as a

49 The Olive Branch 2 (February 1850): 113-14; 3 (February 1851): 96; 3 (November 1850): 60; 3 (May 1851): 155. As a Strangite, Page believed that Joseph Smith was killed because he had fallen into error. However, instead of emphasizing Smith's errors (Page did not disclose what they were), Page declared that Smith fulfilled his stewardship by appointing Strang as his successor. Gospel Herald 3 (August 17, 1848): 92.


52 Justin E. Page to Wilford Poulson, September 3, 1834, Poulson Papers.

53 William Marks to James M. Adams, June 11, 1855, cited in Journal of History (Lamoni, Iowa) 1 (January 1908): 26. Marks had likewise become disillusioned with the
period when “my meditations and convictions were of such a range and force as to finally lead me to resolve that, whatever others might do, it was my duty to seek to live in harmony with the light I had received of him.” At this time, Blair met with Page, Marks, John Gaylord, and others for religious services. Blair recalled that their “efforts in this direction did not meet with desired success, for it seemed the needed favor of God through the Holy Spirit was sadly lacking.”

This informal gathering was short-lived, since by 1859 both Marks and Blair had united with the New Organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, the nucleus of the Reorganized Church. Page did not drift in that direction; the New Organization had petitioned him in its early years for advice, but he had refused to give it. Instead, he began meeting with a small association of branches that had declined to affiliate with any of the existing organizations. This group, presided over by Granville Hedrick, attempted to maintain the principles of faith as found in “the Bible, Book of Mormon and the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants, which were given for the foundation and standard of faith and doctrine to the Church of Christ.” Later Hedrick’s church listed the following specific doctrines as being false and forming “no part of the church of Jesus Christ in her primitive order”: “baptism for the dead . . . ; the plurality of Gods, and that God himself was once a man . . . ; also that men become to be Gods by a system of exhaltation; the doctrine of tithing as a tenth . . . ; the Book of Abraham; the doctrine of lineal right to office in the high Priesthood; . . . and the doctrine of polygamy.”

Like Brewster’s faction, the Hedrickites also deemphasized the position of church president: “It was not required at the commencement of the rise of the Church of Christ, of those who applied for membership that they


54 Frederick B. Blair, ed., The Memoirs of President W. W. Blair (Lamoni, Iowa: Herald Publishing House, 1908), pp. 6–7. Page may also have been associated with the Zadock Brooks movement in the late 1850s; see Howard, The Memoirs of President Joseph Smith III, pp. 152, 191; Justin E. Page to Wilford Poulson, January 6, 1935, Poulson Papers.

55 Justin E. Page to Wilford Poulson, December 1, 1934. In 1864, Page remembered that he had been asked to be “president . . . of a certain organization . . . ‘UNTIL THE LINEAL HEIR SHOULD COME FORWARD AND CLAIM THAT POSITION!’ . . . [I]t caused a flush of disgust to cover me. . . . [S]hall we submit to a principle . . . that will bind us . . . to an eternal despotism liable to be more cruel than any of the monarchs of Europe?” Truth Teller 1 (November 1846): 80. For other instances of Page’s disbelief of “lineal priesthood,” see Saints’ Herald 1 (April 1860): 81–85, and Gospel Herald 3 (August 31, 1848): 106.

should believe any particular person should be the President of the Church, they were only required to confess Christ.” Rather, they believed that the proper mode of baptism and being “born again” were the most important criteria of salvation.

Page along with W. W. Blair, attended his first meeting with the Hedrickites in June 1857. Unwilling to commit himself too quickly, he waited until November 1862 before uniting with this group. The following May he spoke at a church conference on “the importance of having the primitive order of Apostles and Elders as necessary offices in the church.” Due to Page’s ordination as an apostle in 1838, he was respected as the church member holding the highest priesthood office. He therefore ordained four others “to the office of Apostles,” one of whom was Granville Hedrick. At a conference the following July, Page nominated Hedrick to “preside over the High Priesthood” and, after conference approval, ordained him to that position.

Although Page accepted Hedrick as a spiritual leader, he did not offer him the same obeisance that he had previously offered to Joseph Smith and James Strang. He believed that Hedrick also could fall from grace “if he becomes as corrupt as his predecessor [Joseph Smith] did the latter part of his life, but we hope and pray for better things.” However, Page believed that Hedrick was in tune with deity, for he publicly endorsed one of Hedrick’s revelations as divine. Equally or perhaps more important, Page was convinced by the historical and theological framework of Hedrick’s teachings concerning the changes that had occurred in Mormonism since Joseph Smith had, as he believed, fallen from grace. He wrote in *Truth Teller*:

As far as Bro. Hedrick’s arguments are concerned, in reference to the revelations of Joseph Smith (the FALLEN prophet), they are irrefutable and conclusive. However grievous it is to bear, the church had too much confidence in their prophet, in believing that he could not fail, not noticing his “WALK,” whether or not he “WALKED IN ALL HOLINESS BEFORE THE LORD.”

In another issue of the publication Page explained further why he felt that Joseph Smith lost the inspiration of heaven:

[H]e fell into corruption and was distracted with revenge on the Missourians, and became eagerly thirsty for civil and military power to execute that revenge; that he tolerated and humored men in anything and everything that was wicked and corrupt that would assist him to gain that power.

These passages illustrate the animosity that Page held for Smith in the latter years of Page’s life. Although he still considered the Book of Mormon and the

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58 “Crow Creek Record,” pp. 2, 6, 7. Mary Page remembers that her husband was in Bloomington, Illinois, for four months in 1863 while he was helping to organize the Hedrickite church. Joseph Smith III and Heman G. Smith, *History of the Church* 2:782.


60 According to Mary Page, her husband became dissatisfied with the Hedrickite church shortly before his death on October 14, 1867, and asked John Landers, a convert from his mission to Canada in the 1830s and a member of the New Organization, to preach his funeral sermon. Whether Page was actually unhappy with the Hedrickites may be questioned, since Mary never was in full accord with that body and leaned toward the New Organization.
fruits of Smith's early career to be fundamental to his perception of religious truth, Page nonetheless maintained that the prophet he had once revered was the culprit responsible for spoiling much of what was good in Mormonism. Indignant that he had been led astray, Page felt compelled to publicize the errors of a fallen prophet.

The most noticeable aspect of the Mormon career of John E. Page is his various allegiances. At different times, he expressed emphatic commitment to Joseph Smith, the Twelve Apostles led by Brigham Young, and James Strang, but he was reticent in supporting James C. Brewster and Granville Hedrick as mouthpieces of God. What is the basis for this diversity? If we accept the statement issued by the majority of the apostles in Nauvoo, then it is evident that Page was a difficult man to get along with and that he enjoyed feeling sorry for himself. On the other hand, if we believe Page, we find a man who felt neglected and spiritually lost following the death of his prophet. After Joseph Smith was killed, Page spent the rest of his life trying to understand his commitment to Mormonism. Was Mormonism a prophetic, authoritarian movement, or a faith that was individual-based and pietistic? When he became disillusioned with Strang, Page moved toward the latter position. He was forced into this position, since he had previously supposed that Mormonism without Strang as its prophet was nothing.

It has been argued that many who refused to accept the leadership of Brigham Young did so not because they doubted his authority; rather, they rejected it because of "personal discouragement, disagreement with the specific actions of individuals or concerns over direction," the difficulty and uncertainty of the westward trek, and serious misgivings concerning the doctrinal and temporal developments initiated by Joseph in Nauvoo.61 While this analysis may assist us in partially understanding the plight of John E. Page and others, it does not sufficiently account for the quandary that some Mormons experienced as their prophet-centered religion seemed uncomfortably different. For some such as Page, James J. Strang temporarily resolved these perplexities. However, when Page repudiated Strang after supporting him so strongly, he became skeptical of any man claiming to speak for God. Undoubtedly influenced by James C. Brewster, Page endorsed a simpler gospel that stressed adherence to the Book of Mormon as the central pillar of his faith.

The Earliest Reference Guides to the Book of Mormon:  
Windows into the Past

By Grant Underwood

For over a century and a half, students of Mormonism, be they scholar or scribbler, defender or detractor, have shared a simple assumption: the Book of Mormon can be used as evidence of early Mormon belief. While this is true in many respects, it fails to properly account for that crucial mediating link between the written text and the actual life and teaching of the Church — interpretation. Just as the way in which the Declaration of Independence was understood in the eighteenth century is, as Garry Wills has so effectively shown, distinct from the Declaration of Independence as modern Americans have used it, so we cannot merely assume that what a modern reader understands by a given passage in the Book of Mormon is what a Saint in the 1830s would have understood by that same passage. Nor can we assume that what is noticed and commented upon in the book as important today is necessarily what Mormons would have found noteworthy in the formative years. To comprehend such interpretive differences, one has only to look at the contrasting uses made of the same Book of Mormon by the RLDS and the LDS churches. Thus, the nearly universal procedure, among those intent on reconstructing the world of early Mormon thought, of using the unmediated text of the Book of Mormon to build their case provides only a plausible reconstruction at best.

Perhaps it is a lingering belief, carried over from the early nineteenth century, in the perspicuity or plainness of scripture that leads modern students to

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assume an identity of understanding between themselves and their subjects. Perhaps they operate on implicit faith that the early Saints literally lived by every word that proceeded from the mouth of God. Or perhaps they simply have been unaware of the numerous primary source "interpretations" from that period that do exist, ranging from passing comment to lengthy exegesis. Whatever their motivation, the need to more securely ground characterizations of early Mormon thought to sources that disclose this early perspective has prompted a comprehensive search for such glimpses. In the end, for the years studied — 1830–1846 — over a thousand Book of Mormon citations have been discovered. Those drawn from pamphlet and periodical literature have been analyzed and discussed elsewhere. The remaining 75 percent come from three small documents that we shall call "reference guides" and that serve as the basis for this article.

Little is certain about the origin of References to the Book of Mormon, referred to hereafter as simply References, but bibliographers conclude that the four-page item of unknown authorship was probably printed in Kirtland in 1835. In 1841, as part of the first European edition of the Book of Mormon, Brigham Young and Willard Richards included a six-page "index" they had prepared. The following year in Philadelphia, Robert P. Crawford, about whom virtually nothing is known, published a document entitled An Index, or Reference, to the Second and Third Editions of the Book of Mormon. Despite their varying titles, each of these publications has the same objective and essentially the same format. They amount to extended tables of contents, proceeding sequentially from 1 Nephi to Moroni and directing readers to those portions of the Book of Mormon considered noteworthy. Each entry consists of a brief phrase, such as "Nephi slayeth Laban" or "Charity recommended," followed by a page number from the referenced edition. Together the three

This nineteenth-century assumption is discussed in George M. Marsden, "Everyone One's Own Interpreter?: The Bible, Science, and Authority in Mid-Nineteenth-Century America," in Nathan O. Hatch and Mark A. Noll, eds., The Bible in America: Essays in Cultural History (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. 79–100.


Hugh G. Stocks, "The Book of Mormon, 1830–1879: A Publishing History" (M.A. thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 1979), pp. 69–72. Stocks points out that "all subsequent LDS editions before 1920 include it virtually unchanged, but they correctly label it as a table of contents and place it in the front of the book" (p. 69).

Crawford, An Index, or Reference to the Second and Third Editions of the Book of Mormon, Alphabetically Arranged (Philadelphia: Brown & Guilbert, 1842). David J. Whitaker confirms in his "Early Mormon Pamphleteering" (Ph.D. dissertation, Brigham Young University, 1982) that nothing is known about Crawford other than that he authored this document.

Crawford arranged his index alphabetically rather than sequentially.

Early-edition pagination of the Book of Mormon has been converted to the chapter/verse divisions found in the 1981 Utah LDS edition.
guides provide 1244 references, of which 615, or just under 50 percent, are not repeats.9

Preparing a reference guide, then or now, is an obvious act of interpretation. Both by what these early Saints chose to include or exclude, as well as the very manner in which they worded their entries, we are provided with a marvelous window into early Mormon minds. To give purpose and direction to our “window viewing” on this occasion, we shall look particularly for two kinds of references: those that reveal something about how the Saints viewed the theological and cultural landscape around them and those that shed light on matters uniquely Mormon. Even with this attempt at focus, the hundreds of references involved force us to be highly selective in what we examine at close range. For this reason, it behooves us to first step back and try to gain some sense of discernible contours and characteristics of the references as a whole.

It is possible to group reference guide entries into two broad categories—historical and conceptual. The first type, consisting of over half the references, seems to reflect little more than the authors’ commitment to track Book of Mormon history. A typical example of such entries is this sequence from Young/Richards: “City of Antiparah taken; City of Cumeni taken; 200 of the 2060 fainted; Prisoners rebel, slain; Manti taken by stratagem” (Alma 57, 58).10 That half of their references fall cleanly into this category, though, is not surprising in work aspiring to a degree of comprehensiveness, since the majority of the Book of Mormon text itself is essentially narrative. Of course, these early Saints could have chosen to overlook the historical parts and concentrated solely on the theological. That they did not, that they gave them their due, lends support to Richard Bushman’s recent assertion that “the core of Mormon belief was a conviction about actual events” about what the Saints believed had actually happened to, among others, the Book of Mormon characters.11 The large number of narrative events cited in these guides, as well as the very tone and style of those references, strongly suggest that they did take

9 Thirty-eight percent of the entries in the Young/Richards index are either identically worded or obvious parallels to those found in the 1835 References. Whether Young and Richards had access to or utilized the earlier and smaller References is not known. It does seem clear, however, that Crawford possessed and used the Young/Richards index. Though Crawford switched from a sequential to an alphabetical format, the fact that he included with little variation 440 of 476, or 94 percent, of the Young/Richards entries, including mistakes, and added only 76 of his own, seems strong evidence for his heavy reliance on the apostles’ work. Despite his apparent plagiarism, his effort to conceal it with different phraseology along with some of his own original entries still affords an additional and profitable perspective on early understandings of the Book of Mormon.

10 Because the guides are only a few pages in length and because of their sequential or alphabetical arrangement, it seemed more helpful to the individual wishing to consult the original sources to simply cite parenthetically in the text the current (1981) book and chapter designations rather than use the traditional footnotes, which cite only page numbers. The page number seems to be of little value in locating the desired phrase in a table of contents or index in any case. Also, when quoting the Book of Mormon text itself in this article, unless the wording is significantly different from the original edition, the 1981 edition will be used.

Book of Mormon history seriously. There is perhaps no better corroboration of this than that delightful report from Joseph Smith to his wife Emma while on march with Zion's Camp. "The whole of our journey," he commented in his letter, has been one of "wandering over the plains of the Nephites, recounting occasionally the history of the Book of Mormon, roving over the mounds of that once beloved people of the Lord, picking up their skulls & their bones, as a proof of its divine authenticity." 12

We can even go a step further and notice what kinds of narrative items captured their attention. A certain fascination with war is clearly discernible. Battles are conscientiously referenced throughout the two longer guides and military strategy seems to be savored.13 Of course, in a country priding itself on its free-citizen militias and their regular, if raucous, musters, Mormon admiration for the martial was not unusual.14 Other interests seemed to be fired by Romanticism, which involved "a renewed interest in . . . the unique, colorful, primitive, exotic, and distant."15 Attention to the primitive and exotic is clearly manifest, for example, in these entries from the Young/Richards index: "Lamanites eat raw meat" (Enos); "Lamanites drink blood" (Jarom); "Abinadi is scourged with faggots" (Mosiah 17); Ammon "smote off arms" (Alma 17); Korihor is "trodden down" (Alma 30); "women and children sacrificed" (Mormon 4); "women fed on their husband's flesh" (Moroni 9); and "daughters murdered and eat[en]" (Moroni 9). They also referenced stabbings, hangings, killings, deaths, massacres, slaughters, and, of course, the destruction accompanying the three days of darkness.16 In short, little that was exotic or gruesome in the Book of Mormon escaped the notice of these early readers. All of this, however, was not out of character with the age, as we are reminded somewhat dramatically by literary historian Curtis Dahl:

From about 1810 to 1845, an influential though now half-forgotten group of American poets, novelists and painters had celebrated, though only artistically, terrific, blood-curdling destruction . . . preferably by cataclysmic supernatural forces, of whole cities, nations, races or indeed of the world itself. These connoisseurs of holocausts, dilettantes of disaster, form an American "School of Catastrophe" that bridges the gap between literature and

12 Joseph Smith to Emma Smith, June 4, 1834, in Dean C. Jessee, ed., The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1984), p. 324. As discussed in my earlier article (see note 3), a concern to discover "evidences" for the authenticity of the Book of Mormon was prominent among early Saints.

13 Entries for Mosiah 9; Alma 2, 3, 24, 28, 43, 51, 52, 56, 58; Helaman 1, 6, 11; 3 Nephi 4; Mormon 4, 6; Ether 7, 13, 14, 15.

14 Most social histories of militias have been done for the period surrounding the American Revolution, but such militias were still very much a part of the young republic. In 1830, the editor of the Vermont Journal inveighed against "the love of military glory" manifest at such musters as "a canker sore blighting the life of the nation." Quoted in Randal A. Roth, "Whence This Strange Fire? Religious and Reform Movements in the Connecticut River Valley of Vermont, 1791–1843" (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1981), p. 206.


16 Entries for 1 Nephi 4; Alma 1, 2, 24, 43, 47, 48, 51, 52, 57, 62; Helaman 1, 2, 6, 8; 3 Nephi 4, 7, 8; Mormon 6; Ether 7, 9, 14.
painting and offers an amusing yet valuable insight into the taste of early nineteenth-century America.\textsuperscript{17}

It is, however, the non-narrative references that principally concern us in this study. As we attempt to gain a general sense of their character, three prominent motifs merit special notice. First, the guides evidence a clear preoccupation with prophecy. Since this tendency, which was even more pronounced in the pamphlet and periodical literature, has already been analyzed at length in my earlier article, we will here mention only that the reference guides manifest a healthy respect for even seemingly insignificant utterance. All three, for example, are careful to note by the words “prophecy of a soldier” what some might consider merely the battlefield braggadocio of the warrior who scalped Zerahemnah and who then predicted that as Zerahemnah’s scalp fell to the ground, so would the Lamanites if they did not surrender their weapons of war (Alma 44).\textsuperscript{18} The guides also seem to have been impressed with both the specificity and the exact fulfillment of prophecy, as, for instance, when they reference Alma’s prophecy that the “Nephites would dwindle in unbelief 400 years after Christ should come” (Alma 45), or when they notice that “the three witnesses” would view the golden plates (2 Nephi 27). Such interest in the precision of prophecy was shared by thousands of antebellum Americans who flocked to the standard of adventist William Miller or who privately dabbled in prophetic numerology.\textsuperscript{19}

Another characteristic common to all three reference guides is their interest in the miraculous, in special manifestations of divine power. Dreams, visions, and angelic visitations are all carefully referenced, as is the use of miraculous devices, such as the Liahona and the Urim and Thummim.\textsuperscript{20} The powers of faith sufficient to move mountains, rend prison walls, heal the sick, and raise the dead are likewise duly noted.\textsuperscript{21} Crawford even included a special section at the end of his guide entitled “THE MIRACLES WROUGHT BY JESUS AND HIS DISCIPLES ON THIS LAND, &c., &c.”\textsuperscript{22}

They contrast strongly the miraculous power of the Gospel in the apostolic time with the present state of our nominal Christianity. They ask for signs of divine power, the faith, overcoming all things which opened the prison doors of the apostles, gave them power over the elements, which rebuked disease and death itself, and made visible to all the presence of the Lord.\textsuperscript{23}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{17} Curtis Dahl, “The American School of Catastrophe,” \textit{American Quarterly} 11 (1959): 380.
\item \textsuperscript{18} Later in the chapter the Book of Mormon text itself does recall the episode with the same characterization (Alma 44:18).
\item \textsuperscript{20} Entries for 1 Nephi 2, 3, 5, 8, 11, 16, 18; 2 Nephi 5; Mosiah 8, 27, 28; Alma 8, 37; Helaman 5, 16; 3 Nephi 7, 17; Ether 3.
\item \textsuperscript{21} Jacob 4; Alma 14, 15; 3 Nephi 7, 26; 4 Nephi; Ether 12.
\item \textsuperscript{22} Crawford, \textit{Index, or Reference}, p. 21.
\end{itemize}
of the Living God. They ask for any declaration in the Scriptures that this miraculous power of faith was to be confined to the first confessors of Christianity. They speak a language of hope and promise to weak, weary hearts, tossed and troubled, who have wandered from sect to sect, seeking in vain for the primal manifestations of the divine power.23

Early LDS writings are replete with such themes.24 That this should be reflected in what was considered reference-worthy in the Book of Mormon reinforces the charismatic character of early Mormonism. Calling attention to such items would have served several purposes. In the first place, in an era tinged with the skeptical repudiation of even biblical miracles from the likes of Tom Paine or Ethan Allen, references to divine intervention in the Book of Mormon would have provided important corroboration for similar biblical accounts, thus "proving to the world that the holy scriptures are true."25 They would also have confirmed that God really is "no respecter of persons" and that he does "remember one nation like unto another," thus dramatically reinforcing the early belief in the historical and geographical uniformity of the gospel.26 Finally, a cataloguing of charismata would have served to whet the appetite of modern worthies for what they might anxiously expect to receive from a God who was "the same yesterday, today, and forever." One readily senses such yearning in these references so careful to tally the triumphs of faith, and realizes that in early Mormonism many searching souls indeed must have found a legitimate outlet for pentecostal proclivities.

A third shared tendency among the non-narrative references in the guides is their sometimes explicit, sometimes subconscious link with the Bible. The power of parallels has long been regarded as central to religion, and Jan Shipps has provocatively illustrated this for Mormonism as well.27 What we have in the reference guides is fascinating firsthand evidence that their biblical background conditioned the very way in which early Saints interpreted Book of Mormon events. One of the clearest examples of this is found in Helaman 10. Here Nephi is visited by the voice of the Lord, praising him for his faithfulness and pronouncing upon him power, "that whatsoever ye shall seal on earth shall be sealed in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven" (Helaman 10:7). For this passage both Young/Richards and Crawford make the following entry: "Keys of the kingdom." What is intriguing, of course, is that in the text neither the word "keys" nor the word "kingdom" is

23 Quoted in Millennial Star 10:302-3.
25 The quotation is from D&C 20:11. Thomas Paine, The Age of Reason (1794); Ethan Allen, The Only Oracle of Man (1784).
26 As only one convenient place, Irving discusses the "uniformity" of the gospel in his article cited in note 24. Scriptural quotations are Acts 10:34 and 2 Nephi 29:8.
anywhere to be found. How, then, did they come up with such an interpretation? Crawford gives it away, noting in a parenthetical addition to his reference, "See Mat. xvi. 19." It is the Matthean account of Christ's words to Peter: "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." That the circumstances surrounding the two proclamations are quite different seems unimportant to these interpreters, and direct linguistic parallels overpower discriminating theological reflection.

At times the parallelism was more subtle. As we might expect, given their interest in the power of faith, all three guides cite this passage in Jacob: "Our faith becometh unshaken, insomuch that we truly can command in the name of Jesus and the very trees obey us, or the mountains, or the waves of the sea" (Jacob 4:6). Though the author of References words his entry "trees removed by faith," the text simply says they "obeyed" rather than that they were "removed." Theoretically, they might have been fruit-bearing trees, commanded to make accessible their upper-branch delights. Yet if the thought ever crossed his mind, it appears to have been secondary to the association with Christ's words to New Testament disciples that if they had faith as a grain of mustard seed, they "might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you" (Luke 17:6). Similarly, in his section "Miracles wrought by Jesus and His Disciples on this land," Crawford, with one exception, only included references from 3 Nephi or 4 Nephi, that is, from the period during or immediately after Christ's New World ministry. That single exception was this passage, which must have seemed so New Testament-like to merit inclusion in a list intent on drawing the transoceanic parallel. Awareness of biblical precedent, therefore, seemed to serve consciously or unconsciously both as a principle of selection in what these early Saints noticed in their readings of the Book of Mormon and as a conditioner of how they interpreted what they read.

Let us shift now from the general to the specific as we begin to examine those isolated but illuminating references which reflect an LDS perspective on the theological and cultural issues of the day. One of the most oft-quoted characterizations of the Book of Mormon is Alexander Campbell's charge that it "decides all the great controversies" of the day. To be precise, he felt that Joseph Smith had authored it specifically with that objective in mind. Our concern, however, is not with questions of authorship but with matters of perception. Whether early Mormon readers actually understood it to be deciding all the great theological controversies seems to be the more important question, since intent counts for little in the face of actual use. On the whole, neither in the reference guides nor in the early literature do we find that the Saints, 28 Additional parallels include Mosiah 13, "Abinadi's face shone like unto Moses"; Alma 45, "Alma's strange departure" and 3 Nephi 1, "Nephi's strange departure," also parallel to Moses; and Helaman 10, "Nephi taken away by the spirit," parallel to Jesus' and Philip's similar transportation.

Joseph Smith included, appear to have been concerned with using the Book of Mormon in this manner. Less than one in ten references can be so construed. With this important perspective in mind, we can proceed to examine some of the few but revealing exceptions that do comment on contemporary theology or culture.

A rare example of where both the true and the false are identified is a pair of references to "election." "Election," the belief in God's extension of saving grace only to a predestined few, had been a hallmark of Reformed or Calvinist thought for nearly three centuries when the Book of Mormon was published, and Calvinism had been the dominant theological orientation of Americans at least until the Revolution. At issue was the proper relationship between grace and nature, that is, between how much salvation depended on God and how much it depended on man, as well as whether Christ's atonement was limited or universal in scope. By the second quarter of the nineteenth century, the "new measures" revivalism of the Second Great Awakening had combined with the earlier Enlightenment-spurred celebration of human potential to decisively tip the scale to the side of man and an unlimited opportunity for saving grace. For many popular religionists, predestined election had come to symbolize in religious terms an issue that exercised the entire nation — the propriety of inherited versus achieved status. "Election" took on a pejorative connotation for all but orthodox diehards and became the catchword for an increasingly unpopular Calvinism.

Mormons shared this antipathy. Under the heading "The Zoramites preach election," References cites these words: "We believe that thou hast elected us to be thy holy children; and ... thou hast elected us that we shall be saved, whilst all around us are elected to be cast by thy wrath down to hell" (Alma 31:16–17). In the mind of the author of References, such a passage was a parallel to the detested doctrine of "double predestination." Interestingly enough, this is the only passage in the entire Book of Mormon where the word "elect" or its cognates are used, suggesting that Joseph Smith, too, saw the connection and felt that the sense of this ancient Zoramite affirmation could best be rendered in Calvinist vocabulary. Brigham Young and Willard Richards, on the other hand, seem to discover the "true" doctrine of election in the early part of Alma 13. That they are making an interpretive judgment of what "election" means is clear from the fact that their reference reads "election spoken of," despite absence of the term in the text. We can be reasonably sure of which passage they had in mind, however, since about the same time that they prepared their index, they also wrote an article entitled "Election and Reprobation" in which they quoted Alma 13:3–7. Examining a portion of that passage, therefore, provides a window into their understanding of election, which actually stands the old Calvinist notion on its head. The text says that those ordained to the High Priesthood were called "on account of their faith, 


while others would reject the spirit of God on account of the hardness of their hearts and blindness of their minds, while, if it had not been for this they might have had as great privilege as their brethren. Or, in fine, in the first place they were on the same standing with their brethren; thus this holy calling being prepared from the foundation of the world for such as would not harden their hearts."

If the door to calling or "election" was open to all, it was not insured for all. Mormons, as we shall see, were just as opposed to Universalism, with its belief in the ultimate salvation of all people, as they were to Calvinism. Universalism was a product of the "Age of Reason." What began in the seventeenth century as a challenge to notions of "eternal torment" ended up in the latter part of the eighteenth as a positive belief in the universal salvation of all God's moral creations. Deity acquired traits of benevolence rather than vengeance, and his mercy was emphasized more than his justice. Such liberal views toward God were not, of course, held by all. Originally, they appealed mostly to latitudinarian clergy and their genteel parishioners. Universalism, however, popularized such notions among the rural folk of northern New England in the final quarter of the eighteenth century, and by the early nineteenth the sect had spread across the Yankee belt to Ohio. 32

In one of the few instances where a reference guide explicitly links Book of Mormon individuals or ideas to the contemporary religious scene, the first two entries in References for the book of Alma are "Nehor the Universalian" and "Amlici the Universalist." One passage, in particular, must have made the connection crystal clear: Nehor "testified unto the people that all mankind should be saved at the last day, and that they need not fear nor tremble, but that they might lift up their heads and rejoice; for the Lord had created all men and had also redeemed all men; and, in the end, all men should have eternal life" (Alma 1:4). In this case, not only the narrative repudiation of Nehor's Universalism but also the epithetical characterization of him in References as "Universalian" leaves little doubt as to how Universalist doctrine was viewed by this early Mormon.

Though none of the reference guides makes the association explicit, Alma's son Corianton also seems to have had Universalist leanings, and it appears that much of that father's message to his son was understood to be a lengthy response to such inclinations. All three guides call the reader's attention to the latter part of Alma 40 and the whole of Alma 41 with the words "the restoration spoken of" or, as Crawford put it, "the restoration of all things." The term "restoration," of course, was also a favorite with Christian primitivists and denoted the recovery of New Testament principle and practice. But even

before that, the phrase had been popularized by Universalists as referring to final, universal salvation or, in the words of their Profession, the "restoration" to "holiness and happiness" of "the whole family of mankind." 33 The very scripture that Mormons would come to cherish for their own reasons — Acts 3:21, with its reference to the restitution or restoration "of all things" — gave hope to Universalists that biblical prophets had long foretold the future salvation of all mankind. No wonder Alma remarks that "some have wrested the scriptures, and have gone far astray because of this thing" (Alma 41:1). His subsequent explanation of the term, the gist of which is that judgment day will "bring back again evil for evil" and "good for that which is good" (Alma 41:13), was probably much appreciated in deciding that controversy. Particularly pointed, in light of the Universalist slogan about the restoration of all to "holiness and happiness," would have been Alma’s warning not to "suppose, because it has been spoken concerning restoration, that ye shall be restored from sin to happiness. Behold, I say unto you, wickedness never was happiness" (Alma 41:10).

Perhaps even more significant to the authors of the reference guides than straightening out the meaning of the term "restoration" was Alma’s response to the supposed "injustice" of consigning sinners "to a state of misery" (Alma 42). Young/Richards and Crawford each make two relevant entries for this chapter: "justice in punishment" and "mercy rob justice." The mere fact that they chose to highlight such notions illustrates that liberal religion, with its emphasis on God’s love and benevolence, had succeeded in calling such concepts into question. To denigrate eternal punishment, however, was to demean the atonement. "Repentance," explained Alma, "could not come unto men except there were a punishment, which also was eternal as the life of the soul should be, affixed opposite to the plan of happiness, which was as eternal also as the life of the soul" (Alma 42:16). As I have shown elsewhere, despite the portion of an 1830 revelation (D&C 19) redefining “eternal punishment” and “endless torment” along Universalist lines, before the late Nauvoo years, Latter-day Saints generally maintained a traditional commitment to the reality of hell, the validity of postmortal punishment, and the occasional need for eternal retribution. 34 As Oliver Cowdery remarked in answer to a Universalist preacher who visited Kirtland in 1835, "If no such principle exists as damnation, and that eternal . . . God has spoken nonsense and folly." 35 No matter how soothing the thought, mercy, in that striking phrase noticed in the guides, could never be allowed to "rob justice" (Alma 42:25).

Not even all Universalists could deny the many compelling arguments justifying the punishment of sinners. By the early nineteenth century, the Universalist church itself was riven by what came to be known as the "Restorationist Controversy." Essentially, the discord centered around the issue of postmortem punishment. Universalists, or Ultra-Universalists, as their oppo-
ments labeled them, denied the proposition that there would be any punishment after death, arguing that all such suffering by the wicked would occur during mortality and that at death all would be immediately restored to God. The Restorationists, however, felt that there was too much scriptural evidence to deny the future punishment of the wicked and contended that it would occur, if only for a limited duration, before their ultimate "restoration to holiness and happiness" in God's presence. Occupying a kind of middle ground, which actually had earlier roots, were the Annihilationists or Destructionists who, like the Universalists, argued that a merciful God would never torment his creations in eternity, but who admitted, with the Restorationists, that they deserved something more than just earthly suffering. Their solution was to argue that the souls of the unjust would not be damned at death, simply exterminated.36

In one of the most intriguing and, to twentieth-century readers unaware of this doctrinal milieu, mysterious entries in the guides, the author of References cites 1 Nephi 14 with these words "annihilation spoken against." The particular passage being referenced speaks of "hell — yea, that great pit which hath been digged for the destruction of men, . . . saith the Lamb of God; not the destruction of the soul, save it be the casting of it into that hell which hath no end" (1 Nephi 14:3). Again we notice the reaffirmation of traditional notions of hell and postmortem punishment, along with an important qualifier on the nature of "destruction," which References interprets as a direct repudiation of annihilationism.

Aside from Universalists, the only other religious group singled out by name in the reference guides is the Catholic church, and this occurs only once in a Crawford reference to Mormon 8 entitled "Catholics, &c., foretold." The passage involved tells of a day "when there shall be churches built up that shall say: Come unto me, and for your money you shall be forgiven of your sins" (Mormon 8:32). This textual description, reminding him perhaps of the Tetzelian jingle, "as money into the coffer rings, another soul from purgatory springs," accorded two closely with the popular perception of a medieval Catholicism epitomized by the sale of indulgences to escape certain identification. That such identification was not made explicit in references to Nephi's vision of the "great and abominable church" (1 Nephi 13) should not be exaggerated. In an age of widespread, often virulent, anti-Catholicism, the express connection would have been unnecessary. In the first issue of the Star, W. W. Phelps quoted an excerpt from 1 Nephi 13 with these words of introduction: "It will be seen by this that the most plain parts of the New Testament have been taken from it by the Mother of Harlots while it was confined in that Church,—say, from the year A.D. 460 to 1400." 37 The identity of the "great and abominable church" was so obvious that it needed no interpreta-

36 The most detailed study of the "Restorationist Controversy" is Kenneth M. Johnson, "The Doctrine of Universal Salvation and the Restorationist Controversy in Early Nineteenth Century New England" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Ottawa, 1978). Annihilationism has yet to be made the subject of scholarly study. Passing comments can be found in Marini, Radical Sects, and Miller, The Larger Hope, but I found most helpful Dolphus Skinner, A Discussion of the Doctrines of Endless Misery and Universal Salvation, in an Epistolary Correspondence Between Alexander Campbell and Dolphus Skinner (Utica, N.Y., 1840).

37 The Evening and the Morning Star 1 (June 1832) : [3].
tion. Significantly, all three reference guides also cite the angel’s words to Nephi that “there are save two churches only; the one is the church of the Lamb of God, and the other is the church of the devil; wherefore, whoso belongeth not to the church of the Lamb of God belongeth to that great church, which is the mother of abominations; and she is the whore of all the earth” (1 Nephi 14:10). This should not be taken to mean, however, that Mormons harbored any special love for the papists; rather it meant that they were happy to find scriptural justification for adding the Protestants to that corrupt collectivity known as the “church of the devil.” As John Taylor succinctly put it, “The old church is the mother [of harlots] and the protestants are the lewd daughters.”

Another much-debated issue within popular religion of early nineteenth-century America was the nature of the gospel itself. In what did it consist? The impulse toward primitivism with its celebration of the Bible as the sole source for theology had jettisoned centuries of Christian tradition on the faith that scripture was perspicuous even to the ploughboy and that neither creeds nor dogmatic expositions were necessary. What resulted, however, was the proliferation rather than the harmonization of doctrinal positions. To the early Saints’ satisfaction, a number of passages in the Book of Mormon were felt to “throw greater views upon [Christ’s] gospel” (D&C 10:45). In particular, the reference guides seem to take special notice of passages linking baptism and the Holy Ghost, thus moving beyond the Campbellite emphasis on faith, repentance, and baptism alone. Their intent seems to be to demonstrate, as Joseph Smith said, that the two “are necessarily and inseparably connected.”

The propriety of pedo- or infant baptism was an issue that had been discussed for centuries by the time the Book of Mormon was published in 1830. Contrary to popular perception, it was not the numerically insignificant Catholics who had been its chief protagonists in America. Rather it was orthodox Calvinists who, like Increase Mather, felt that “God hath seen meet to cast the line of Election . . . through the loyns of godly parents.” Beginning with the Great Awakening and through successive waves of revivals in which grace fell irrespective of genealogy, such perspectives were seriously undermined and groups like the Baptists who made the rejection of pedobaptism one of their

38 Times and Seasons 6 (February 1845): 811.
40 History of the Church 6:316. Book of Mormon passages cited along these lines include 2 Nephi 31; 3 Nephi 11, 19, 26; Moroni 6.

central tenets swelled in size. By the second quarter of the nineteenth century, a majority of Americans found the practice, with its implicit stress on inherited status, out of tune with the temper of the times and decided that it was indeed a “solemn mockery before God.” The Latter-day Saints agreed, and all three reference guides found in Moroni 8 confirmation of that decision. That they did not make multiple citations, highlighting particular ideas or phrases as they had for other chapters, suggests perhaps that the issue did not concern them as much as other matters. Thus, in this instance, they did not use the Book of Mormon as much to settle as to confirm the majority decision on an issue already settled.

But what of matters not strictly theological? How do reference-guide entries reflect acceptance or rejection of other facets of nineteenth-century culture? Historian Nathan Hatch finds “considerable evidence that a common cultural revolution” took place in the 1830s to “wage a joint battle against what was perceived as ‘King-craft, Priest-craft, Lawyer-craft, and Doctor-craft.’” 43 Did the Saints join in this “battle”? It seems so. Reference guides cite passages in which kings are forbidden (Mosiah 23), or the promise that there would be “no kings upon the land” (2 Nephi 10). They note the condemnation of priestcraft in 2 Nephi 26 and the interrogation of Amulek by harassing lawyers in Alma 10. And they cite the only passage in the Book of Mormon that mentions the “excellent qualities of the many plants and roots which God had prepared to remove the cause of diseases” (Alma 46:40). It seems that what was at issue was a common mistrust of mediating elites. As Samuel Thomson, the best-known proponent of herbalist opposition to “orthodox medicine” and in whose system both “doctors” Frederick G. Williams and Willard Richards were licentiates, remarked, “The people should in medicine as in religion and politics, act for themselves.” 44

Given this populist tendency, one might expect the early Saints to have been dedicated Antimasons and to have seen a direct parallel between Masonry and the “secret combinations” mentioned in the Book of Mormon. Yet, the connection is never made explicit. Nor is there much evidence for an indirect link. Though “secret combinations” are mentioned in dozens of places in the Book of Mormon, the guides cite only three rather minor passages. 45 They include a few more references to “Gadianton robbers,” but in nearly every instance, the intent seems to be to track the narrative rather than point up parallels. 46 Major “Antimasonic passages” such as those found in Alma 37, Helaman 6, and Ether 8 are entirely overlooked. Book of Mormon usage, therefore, would seem to support Bushman’s conclusion that in the early years “Masonry was scarcely mentioned among the Mormons” and that “people who knew anti-Masonry and the Book of Mormon in the 1830s made less of the connection than critics today.” 47

45 2 Nephi 26; 4 Nephi; Ether 13.
46 Helaman 2, 6, 7; 3 Nephi 2, 4; 4 Nephi.
47 Bushman, Joseph Smith, p. 131.
Yet, the door should not be closed too firmly. Young/Richards and Crawford, for example, may have been recalling the alleged judicial perfidy of Mason-dominated courts when they reference the only Book of Mormon passage where "Gadianton Robbers" are "setting in the Judgment seat" (see Helaman 7). They also notice the mention of "secret signs" in connection with the robber band's origination in Helaman 2. Could they have had Masonic ritual in mind? Finally, Crawford alone cites the prophecy in 2 Nephi that in the "last days" there would be "also secret combinations, even as in times of old" (2 Nephi 26:22). Since this passage expressly refers to the latter days, the link to his time must have been on Crawford's mind, but was it to the Masons or to some other group, such as the "Nicolaitane band" with all it "secret abominations" mentioned in an 1838 revelation (D&C 117:11)?

That the Saints may not have been Antimasons is not as inconsistent as it may appear. The latest research on Antimasonry suggests that in western New York, at least, no clear socioeconomic perimeter can be drawn around the movement. It was not the uniformly lower-class, democratic movement it was once believed to be.48 Furthermore, as Randal Roth points out, Antimasonry was "not a monomaniacal chase after conspirators, but a multifaceted movement" that addressed a wide range of concerns.49 Much of its impetus was toward the building of a "Christian republic" along evangelical lines, and by the mid-1830s the vast majority of former Antimasons had joined the nascent Whig party, which expressed similar aspirations.50 Since the Mormons were so clearly antagonistic to the Benevolent Empire and its attempts to legislate Protestant morality, and since in Kirtland they were Jacksonian Democrats almost to a man, it would actually be surprising to have discovered much evidence of a Mormon–Antimason connection. For this reason, I take exception to Bushman's suggestion that "insofar as early Mormons had political preferences, they likely were anti-Masons." 51

The danger of using the Book of Mormon, or any other scripture for that matter, as ipso facto evidence of early Mormon views is also apparent when we consider the book's teachings on slavery. While the word "slavery" per se is used very little, "bondage" being the more common term, the practice is never sanctioned in the Book of Mormon. King Benjamin prides himself on not hav-


49 Roth, "Whence This Strange Fire," p. 255.


51 Bushman, Joseph Smith, p. 131. Even W. W. Phelps, who earlier had edited the Antimasonic Ontario Phoenix and who used the Book of Mormon more than any other early publicist, made no known written comment on the subject.
ing permitted his people to “make slaves one of another” (Mosiah 2:13), and when the Anti-Nephi-Lehies offer to become Nephite slaves, Ammon responds that, “It is against the law of our brethren, which was established by my father, that there should be any slaves among them” (Alma 27:9). The latter passage is singled out by both Young/Richards and Crawford with the words “slavery forbidden” and “prohibition of slavery” respectively.

Yet, in a lengthy discussion on the topic in 1836, Joseph Smith cited commonly invoked biblical sanctions for, rather than Book of Mormon proscriptions against, the “peculiar institution.” Even later in the 1840s, when his views shifted to an antislavery position, there is no evidence that Book of Mormon teaching was an influencing factor. Particularly ironic is that Brigham Young, a decade after calling attention in his 1840 index to the Nephite law prohibiting slavery, signed into effect a Deseret law that permitted it. How is this to be explained? Perhaps, in light of contrary biblical teachings, the Saints did not view the Book of Mormon prohibitions as universally normative. On the other hand, they may have viewed the Nephite practice as ideal, but, as loyal Jacksonians and avowed antiabolitionists, felt it impolitic to push the point. Most likely, they were not troubled at all by the matter. For centuries, individuals had distinguished between whites and blacks when it came to civil liberties and human rights. During the Revolution, for example, the Founding Fathers denounced in grandiloquent terms the specter of bondage to Britain, and yet at the same time they justified, even demanded, the perpetual involuntary servitude of black Americans. This distinction was widespread until the Civil War and helps us understand how Joseph Smith could, with cultural consistency, denounce abolition and uphold slavery after having received a revelation that “it is not right that any man should be in bondage one to another” (D&C 101:79). The simple insertion of the word “white” before “man” provides the key.

Sharing the common racial assumptions of antebellum America may also help account for why Crawford, who indexed the 1840 edition in which the prophecy about the Lamanites becoming “white and delightsome” was changed to “pure and delightsome” (2 Nephi 30:6), continued to reference it with the words “white and delightsome people.” Like many others, he probably

52 Joseph Smith, Jr., to Oliver Cowdery, Messenger and Advocate 2 (April 1836): 289-91.
56 It should be noted that Crawford’s guide indexes both the 1837 and the 1840 editions, and his retention of the older phrasing may simply reflect his being accustomed to the 1837 wording and his not having noticed the 1840 change.
just assumed a direct relationship between skin color and moral purity. W. W. Phelps expressed it thus:

Is it not apparent from reason and analogy as drawn from a careful reading of the Scriptures that God causes the saints, or people that fall away from his church to be cursed in time, with a black skin? Was not Cain, being marked, obliged to inherit the curse, he and his children, forever? . . . Are or are not the Indians a sample of marking with blackness for rebellion against God's holy word and holy order? And can we not observe in the countenances of almost all nations, except the Gentile, a dark and sallow hue, which tells the sons of God, without a line of history, that they have fallen or changed from the original beauty and grace of father Adam?

The reference guides confirm that the earliest Latter-day Saints also shared certain moral sensibilities with the Evangelical establishment. All three guides, for example, cite the episode in 1 Nephi where several members of Lehi's and Ishmael's families "were lifted up unto exceeding rudeness," singing, dancing, and making merry, though each guide references the incident as simply "dancing in the ship" (1 Nephi 18:9). In the 1830s and 1840s, before Joseph Smith promoted dancing in Nauvoo and when Saints might still be arraigned before a high council court for "attending a ball," the word itself conveyed sufficiently negative connotations that no other explanation was necessary for what went wrong on board.

Similarly, all three reference guides cite the prohibition of polygamy found in the early chapters of Jacob (Jacob 2, 3). This may seem ironic in light of subsequent history, but all three were written in the period before plural marriage was introduced. Not surprisingly, therefore, it is the condemnation of polygamy that is noticed, not the phrase later to become so popular as a loophole that if the Lord wished to "raise up seed" unto himself, he could command his people to practice plural marriage; "otherwise they shall hearken unto these things" (Jacob 2:30). The earliest Saints wanted to make clear that they stood squarely within traditional Christian morality when it came to domestic arrangements. "Inasmuch as this church of Christ has been reproached with the crime of fornication, and polygamy," noted the article on marriage appended to the first (1835) edition of the Doctrine and Covenants, "we declare that we believe that one man should have one wife; and one woman, but one husband." This commitment probably explains why reference to the prohibition of polygamy is found in each of the guides.

Not so clear is what can be learned about LDS attitudes toward the subculture of American folk magic. The Book of Mormon itself has very little to say about either magic or buried treasure, and even when it does, the reference

58 In 1837, nineteen Latter-day Saints were found guilty of "attending a ball" at a member's store. "Kirtland Council Minute Book," typescript, LDS Church Archives, pp. 256-57.
59 Young and Richards did not hear about plural marriage until after their return from England, and Crawford would not have known about it in Philadelphia in 1842.
60 "Marriage," Doctrine and Covenants (Kirtland: F. G. Williams & Co., 1835), section CI, p. 251.
guides do not always find it noteworthy. Brigham Young and Willard Richards, for example, make no reference to any such passage. The principal commentary on buried treasure comes in Helaman 13 as part of Samuel the Lamanite's prophecy on the last days of the Nephites, and References alone calls attention to the early portion of that discussion with the words "the hiding of riches in the earth." The passage noted warns that because of wickedness a "curse" will come upon the land such that "whoso shall hide up treasures in the earth shall find them again no more." The righteous were to be spared, of course, but "he that hideth not up his treasures unto me, cursed is he, and also the treasure, and none shall redeem it because of the curse of the land" (Helaman 13:16–20). Later in Mormon it is recorded that "the inhabitants thereof began to hide up their treasures in the earth; and they became slippery, because the Lord had cursed the land, that they could not hold them, nor retain them. And it came to pass that there were sorceries, and witchcrafts, and magics; and the power of the evil one was wrought upon all the face of the land, even unto the fulfilling of all the words of Abinadi, and also Samuel the Lamanite" (Mormon 1:18–19). Both References and Crawford cite this passage, or at least the first sentence, with the words "treasures become slippery." The important issue is why these scriptures were referenced in the first place. Was it because the principles and experiences involved were considered normative and reliveable in the American republic, or exotic and bound in time and space to ancient America? Unfortunately, the phrasing of the references alone allows no certain evaluation of motive. As for evidence of any tie-in with the magic lore reflected in the early W. W. Phelps and Joseph Smith letters, the Book of Mormon text makes no mention of "clever spirits" protecting treasure, nor of seerstones or hazel sticks locating it, nor indeed of any power other than God's as the cause of its becoming "slippery." The most likely explanation for the inclusion of these citations relates to the Saints' previously demonstrated preoccupation with manifestations of divine or supernatural power. Individuals impressed by trees and mountains being removed or by Nephi being transported from place to place by the Spirit would likewise find noteworthy that hidden treasures became "slippery."

In any case, it seems unnecessary to disengage magic from religion. Both espouse a belief in the supernatural and both propose a method of control. Similarities are more noticeable than the old Frazerian distinctions, long since discarded by most anthropologists, that the former is manipulative and the latter supplicative or that magic seeks to influence forces while religion deals with beings. Nor is either one inherently antithetical to rationalism. As one

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61 Relevant texts include Helaman 12:18; Helaman 13:17–23, 30–37; Mormon 1:18–19; Mormon 2:10.

62 Mormon 1:18 specifies that "they became slippery, because the Lord had cursed the land."

anthropologist remarked about even modern individuals, "People, be they Azande [African tribe] or Americans, can act under the influence of their magical beliefs in some contexts and in a rational-technical manner in others. When things go wrong in an uncontrollable and unforeseeable way, the Azande will attribute it to witchcraft, the American perhaps to bad luck." Therefore, we should be surprised if Latter-day Saints did not retain some participation in the folklore of the period. Despite the advance of mechanistic philosophy and technology, for many early nineteenth-century Americans, Mormons included, the world had not yet been fully stripped of the attributes of personality that make magic or religion untenable and unnecessary. Furthermore, it has been shown that in all ages and places a characteristic common to millenarian groups like the early Saints is their interest in thaumaturgy or wonder-working.

Reference-guide attention to the two wonder-working devices described in the Book of Mormon, the Liahona and the Urim and Thummim, brings us to a consideration of matters uniquely Mormon. Despite the fact that the round brass ball of "curious workmanship" given to guide Lehi and his party has commonly come to be referred to as the Liahona, and the two stones given to enable translation are usually called the "Urim and Thummim," such was not the case in the period under study. The guides typically refer to the ball as "director" or "directors," a usage also common in other early LDS writings; and as for the two stones, a lack of standardized terminology is apparent. Consider the differently worded entries for the same passage in Ether 3: References reads, "The Interpreters given to the brother of Jared"; Young/Richards has it simply "two stones given," which is closest to the text; and Crawford cites it as "Two stones given at Urim and Thummim." Interestingly, only the 1842 guide positively links the two stones and the Urim and Thummim. What this demonstrates in both cases is that terminology taken for granted today did not instantly become customary in the early years, especially since it involved nomenclature that was either infrequently employed or never used at all in the text. Of the sixteen times the ball is referred to in the Book of Mormon, only once is it called Liahona, "director" or "compass" being the more common designations, and the term Urim and Thummim is nowhere to be found.


67 On the Liahona, see 1 Nephi 16, 18; 2 Nephi 5; Mosiah 1; and Alma 37, both in the text itself and in reference guide citations. That "directors" was the common designation is apparent from D&C 17:1 and from David Whitmer's continued use of the term throughout
The reference guides also reflect "in-house" doctrinal concerns. John Whitmer recorded that "in the beginning of the church, while yet in her infancy, the disciples used to exclude unbelievers, which caused some to marvel, and converse about this matter because of the things written in the Book of Mormon." References both corroborates this concern as well as pinpoints the particular Book of Mormon passage in question by citing with the words "Open meetings set forth" the Savior’s comments in 3 Nephi 18 to "not forbid any man from coming unto you when ye shall meet together" (3 Nephi 18:22). That the smaller and earlier References chose to call attention to this passage while neither of the later and larger guides did so suggests that what may still have been noteworthy in the mid-1830s had subsided as an issue by the beginning of the next decade.

On the other hand, the later reference guides pick up other items that engaged the Saints’ interest. For example, the only reference to a particular passage within the chapters-long quotation from Isaiah found in 2 Nephi is the citation "a rod out of the stem of Jesse" (2 Nephi 21). Overlooked by References and seemingly minor, this phrase came to intrigue some Latter-day Saints. Shortly after his and Brigham Young’s arrival in Far West in March 1838, Joseph Smith responded to a series of questions put to him by local brethren. One of the queries was, "What is the rod spoken of in the first verse of the 11th chapter of Isaiah, that should come of the Stem of Jesse?" The answer was, "Behold, thus saith the Lord: It is a servant in the hands of Christ, who is partly a descendant of Jesse as well as of Ephraim, or of the house of Joseph, on whom there is laid much power" (D&C 113:3–4). Brigham Young was either present at this exchange or heard about it after the fact, and was sufficiently impressed to single it out three years later in his published index. Since the precise identity of this “servant” has eluded later commentators, it would have been interesting had Young/Richards given us a glimpse of early understandings by making the same kind of interpretive leap that References elsewhere did for the textually unidentified “servant” in 3 Nephi, whom it cites as “Joseph the seer” (3 Nephi 21:10–11).

As far as identity is concerned, one of the most valuable entries in any of the reference guides involves Ether 2:13: "And as they came to the sea they pitched their tents; and they called the name of the place Moriancumer; and they dwelt in tents." Crawford cites this passage with the words, "Name of the brother of Jared, (Moriancumer)." On what grounds does Crawford so confidently make this extratextual connection between Moriancumer and the brother of Jared? Perhaps he had heard the story surrounding the naming of Reynolds Cahoon’s infant son Mahonri Moriancumer. Joseph Smith was sup-

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posedly invited in by Cahoon to give the boy a name and a blessing. After naming him Mahonri Moriancumer, the Prophet explained that the Lord had just revealed to him that that was the name of the brother of Jared.\textsuperscript{70} Such a story would likely have been repeated each time someone commented on the peculiarity of the name, and yet, heretofore, we have had only one contemporary source confirming that the name of the brother of Jared was widely known in the pre-Utah years. Indeed, modern literature making the point almost universally cites a much later secondhand recollection by George Reynolds.\textsuperscript{71}

The reference guides also illustrate how even on strictly “in-house” matters, we cannot simply assume that the way today’s Latter-day Saints interpret the Book of Mormon is how it was understood in the early years. The account of the “three Nephites” in 3 Nephi 28 is a case in point. In that chapter Jesus touches each of the twelve with his finger “save it were the three who were to tarry, and then he departed. And behold, the heavens were opened, and they were caught up into heaven, and saw and heard unspeakable things” (3 Nephi 28:12–13). Who were the “they” that were “caught up into heaven”? Modern LDS commentaries answer that it was “the three.”\textsuperscript{72} Yet each of the reference guides felt that \textit{all twelve} were involved. This is obvious when one considers both the wording and the sequence of the entries. \textit{References} has only one citation to the whole chapter: “A peculiar blessing on the twelve.” Young/Richards provides, in order, the following references: “Three Nephites tarry,” “The twelve caught up,” “Change upon their bodies.” Crawford has the same sequence and then adds, “three disciples among the Jews and Gentiles and they shall not know them.” Though one might still argue that they employed the phrase “the twelve” to refer to office rather than quantity, this seems unlikely since they do make the distinction “three” in several places. The possibility for alternate understandings, of course, is a function of the construction of the text. A single pronoun with an unclear antecedent allowed those early interpreters, enlightened as of then neither by the subtleties of grammar nor a theology of “translation,” to take a view quite different from their later counterparts.

By now it should be apparent that these three reference guides provide valuable insight into the thought world of early Mormonism. At points they confirm and at points they correct the picture of early belief and teaching portrayed in reminiscent accounts from later in the century or in modern scholarly reconstructions. More specifically, they supply us with by far the most comprehensive set of clues as to how the Saints in Joseph Smith’s day might have understood the Book of Mormon.

\textsuperscript{70} George Reynolds, \textit{Juvenile Instructor} 27:282.

\textsuperscript{71} Sperry, \textit{Book of Mormon Compendium}, pp. 465–66; Bruce R. McConkie, \textit{Mormon Doctrine} (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966), p. 463. The early source is Oliver Cowdery to W. W. Phelps, “Letter VI,” \textit{Messenger and Advocate} 1 (April 1835): 112. These letters, forming one of the earliest published histories of the Church, were reprinted in later periodicals as well as published separately starting in 1844.

\textsuperscript{72} Sperry, \textit{Book of Mormon Compendium}, p. 431; \textit{Book of Mormon Student Manual Religion} 121–122 (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1979), p. 44.
In conclusion, let us step away from the window through which we have been peering and briefly review what we have seen. We have noticed, and not surprisingly, that these four Mormons — two apostles and two virtually anonymous disciples — reflected the culture around them in a number of ways. They seemed tinged with both a Rationalist concern for evidences and a Romantic relish for the exotic. They participated in the popular cultural revulsion against mediating elites, whether doctors or divines, and had little use for Catholics, Antimasons, or any other facet of "Gentile" Christendom, for that matter. Though they did not generally use the Book of Mormon to "decide all the great controversies," they did make a point of distinguishing themselves from Universalists and Annihilationists on eschatological matters, and from Calvinists on notions of nature and grace. They evinced enthusiastic preoccupation with prophecies and miracles and through it all wove the certain thread of biblicism. We have also witnessed the expected degree of fluidity in both terminology and theology during that formative period. And yet, though we have been able to analyze only a small portion of these valuable windows into the past, we hope that appetites have been whet to utilize more fully these heretofore untapped sources. For only by paying as close attention as possible to how the early Saints expressed *their* understandings of Mormon scripture can our modern reconstructions of the thought world of early Mormonism carry the ring of historical authenticity.
TANNER LECTURES ON MORMON HISTORY

The Mormon History Association is grateful to Obert C. and Grace A. Tanner for funding the Tanner Lectures on Mormon History. The seventh of these lectures, presented at the 1985 annual meeting of the Association, in Independence, Missouri was by Langdon B. Gilkey, University of Chicago Divinity School. It is printed in the present volume of the Journal of Mormon History. The 1986 Tanner Lecture, scheduled for presentation in Salt Lake City, will be by Anne Firor Scott, former president of the Organization of American Historians and professor of history at Duke University.
The year 1890 marked the end of one era and the beginning of another. Life had never been so complex or varied. The frontiers had been pushed back, cities were sprouting skyscrapers like new corn, and a new social consciousness was spreading across America. In France, the period was called “fin de siècle.” It was an era that was less a nostalgic look backward than a fresh and exciting jump at the future.

For the Mormons, 1890 was the end of an era as well. The Manifesto that ended the official practice of polygamy also served as a truce between the Church and government. The years immediately preceding the Manifesto had been fraught with political and financial difficulty; the property of the Church was in escheatment between 1887 and 1894, and only those funds specifically designed for religious purposes could be used.

During this unsettling period, Utah artists John Hafen, John B. Fairbanks, and Lorus Pratt began preparations for a unique mission for the Church. In June of that year they were called and set apart as “art missionaries.” They were bound for Paris, where they would soon be joined by a fourth Mormon missionary, Edwin Evans. In Paris they would begin their studies at the Académie Julian, which, like the more prestigious École de Beaux Arts, was a school of painting, sculpture, and design. These four men would bring a unique spirit and desire to their work in Paris. As seen through their eyes, particularly through the eyes of John Hafen, theirs was a mission consecrated by the spirit to learn their craft more completely, so that they might aptly portray truth through art.

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John Hafen’s family had immigrated to America from Switzerland in 1862, when the boy was six years old. The Hafens moved several times before finally settling in Salt Lake City in 1868. It was there that young John, who had always shown an aptitude for art, began serious study. His initial instruction was with George Ottinger and Dan Weggeeland, both accomplished artists who willingly shared their techniques and their ideas with the youth. Weggeeland and another Utah artist, J. T. Harwood, sensed John’s special talent and urged him to study in Paris, then the center of an explosion of creativity in the visual arts. But Hafen’s marriage to Thora Twede in 1879 and the birth of five children during the next ten years made study in Paris unlikely at best.

During this period Hafen became friends with John B. Fairbanks, who had already sold a few drawings of his own. Fairbanks would juggle his work schedule in the fields with playing baseball and stopping in at the older man’s studio to watch him paint. On one occasion it became apparent which was of primary importance. Fairbanks wrote:

He [Hafen] was at work on a painting and he had one on the wall; a thrill went through my body from head to the very ends of my fingers and toes. I was charmed. I don’t know what I said nor what I did but I know I shall never forget my feelings.1

After that, Fairbanks spent more time painting with Hafen and less time playing ball. He was secretive about his work and would carefully hide his drawings and paintings to avoid upsetting his disapproving father. His subterfuge was unsuccessful, however, and it wasn’t long before his sisters discovered him.

One Saturday when they were cleaning my room they smelt paint and concluded to investigate, and carefully behind a bin in the clawset they found my painting; when I came home that night they came out to the wagon with smiles on their faces. One of them covered her mouth with her hands.2

Fairbanks convinced the girls not to tell their parents until after the painting was done. When he showed it to his mother, he reported that she asked:

Where did you get that? I said I made it. No, was her response. My two sisters spoke up. Yes he did. My mother put her arms around me and kissed me and said, why John, You’re an artist.3

Fairbanks continued to paint in the evenings after work and on Saturdays until he was called on a church mission to the Southern States. At that time he concluded that his art career was over.4 It was not. After his return to Utah and his subsequent marriage to Lilly Huish, he took a job as a furniture painter and joined Hafen, who had moved to Ogden to engage in what he called an “art business,” marketing and making crayon enlargements of photos.

1 John B. Fairbanks, “The Art Career of John B. Fairbanks,” Brigham Young University, Harold B. Lee Library, Special Collections, p. 2. In this and succeeding quotations, minimal punctuation has been added for ease in reading.

2 Ibid., p. 2.

3 Ibid., p. 2.

4 Ibid., p. 3.
Hafen loved his friends unabashedly. In a letter to Thora he described the intensity of his feelings for Fairbanks:

I have heard a great deal about Brotherly love towards one another among the Saints of God; if it ever has or does exist I have tasted of this feeling with John. There is not a single barr or obstacle or unpleasantness between us, no misunderstanding. We see eye to eye. He is a man I can love as a dear brother.⁵

These feelings of camaraderie would remain the basis of their relationship during their stay in Paris.

Around 1890 John Hafen and another artist friend, Lorus Pratt, son of Orson Pratt, conceived the idea that the Church might subsidize study in Europe in exchange for work on church buildings after their return. Hafen and Pratt approached George Q. Cannon, first counselor in the First Presidency, in early March 1890. He asked the artists to make a more complete investigation into approximate costs and projected length of study, and to return to discuss the matter further. On March 25, 1890, John Hafen wrote to President Cannon and presented the information that he had gathered, namely, that his former teacher, J. T. Harwood, had studied in Paris for a year and had spent about one thousand dollars, which included roundtrip fare, board, lodging, and tuition. Hafen felt that Harwood’s figures were reliable, explaining, “He is economical and not adicted to any bad habits that I know off, that is, such as are expensive.” ⁶

Hafen provided support for his mother as well as his own family, and he estimated that their yearly expenses were $300. He had also accumulated some debts but thought that, with his current but short-lived prosperity, they could be cleared up before his departure. However, the most revealing portion of this letter is not the financial projection, but his argument for the importance of developing his talent for the “service of God and the beautifying of Zion.”

For many years past I have been prompted to write to you on the subject of Art, even commencing to write letters, but my timidity would overcome me. I since realize the necessity of cultivating any talent God has bestowed upon His children from the fact that He is the giver of all gifts and it remains for us to put them to good and ligitimate use.⁷

Though no doubt hoping to persuade church officials that the artists’ aims were primarily religious, Hafen’s argument nonetheless reflected his own deeply held feelings about art as a worthy expression of faith.

What are we going to do, brother Cannon, when one beautifull Temple in Salt Lake City is ready to receive inside decorations? Who is there amongst all our people capable to do anything near like justice to art work that should be executed therein? I must confess that it is impossible for me to see any other or more consistent course to pursue in this matter than to give two or three young men who possess talent in this direction a chance to develope in the same way Bro. Pratt sugested in our confersation with you.⁸

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⁵ Letter from John Hafen to Thora Twede Hafen, October 8, 1883. All letters quoted are in Hafen Correspondence file, Brigham Young University, Harold B. Lee Library, Special Collections.

⁶ Letter from John Hafen to George Q. Cannon, March 25, 1890.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.
Hafen also recommended that John Fairbanks be included in the mission, as he was "not so very well known as a deciple of the brush yet, having only followed the calling since he returned from his mission a few years ago," explaining, "The brotherly love are such, and our aims and desires are so closely connected that I would rather share one year with him and divide it between us, so that each could have a six month chance than to leave him behind." Quickly deferring to the judgment of the church leadership, he added, "However, I do not wish to dictate in this matter. I know that God will inspire you brethren to do that which will be for the best for all." 9

In April Hafen learned that Harwood had actually studied in Paris for two years rather than one, and he immediately went to President Cannon to correct his error. Cannon had apparently been thinking about him and anticipated his visit. He said that he had discussed the matter with Joseph F. Smith, second counselor in the First Presidency, and apostle Heber J. Grant, and they were both enthusiastic about the project. They did, however, want to know what was the least amount of money that the artists could take. Cannon advised Hafen and Pratt to "keep quiet and cool, exercise your faith."

After carefully reviewing their finances, Hafen, Pratt, and Fairbanks determined that in order to study in Paris, they would each initially need approximately $160, with a total of $1800 for the full year for all three of them. Both Pratt and Fairbanks would have the means to provide for their families at home, but Hafen requested an additional $360 for his family. The total for all three men would thus be $2160.

While they waited for the decision of the First Presidency, the three men went into the mountains to pray, asking that the hearts of the church leaders be touched and that they be wise in making their decision. They later acknowledged that the decision in their favor was a direct answer to their prayers. Hafen would later recall: "I made it a matter of prayer for many years that He would open a way whereby I could receive that training which would befit me to decorate His holy temples and the habitations of Zion." 10

John Hafen, Lorus Pratt, and John Fairbanks were set apart as official missionaries for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on June 3, 1890, by apostles Anthon H. Lund, Seymour B. Young, and Heber J. Grant. The artists were given priesthood blessings as well as ample instructions and advice — much of which was practical common sense that would help these young men who had never traveled so far from home. Lund advised them to "be wise in their talk, dont preach Mormonism in time and out of time.... DONT teach mysteries but the pure simplest principles of the gospel that can be proven from the scriptures." Grant gave some final words of advice that seem slightly contradictory. Though all of the apostles advised the men to be careful to avoid trouble, Grant added, "See every thing on earth that you can." 11

At the suggestion of George Ottinger and Dan Weggeland, a fourth young

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9 Ibid.


11 Diary of John B. Fairbanks, Brigham Young University, Harold B. Lee Library, Special Collections, p. 1.
artist would later join the group. Edwin Evans was set apart on September 2, 1890, by Francis M. Lyman.

Early on Monday morning, June 24, 1890, John Fairbanks put some finishing touches on a portrait he had been painting, kissed his three youngest children, who were sleeping, and walked to the train depot with his wife. After traveling from Salt Lake City to Provo, he left the train and went to the home of stake president David John, where he finished another portrait he had been working on. At 12:30 he met Lorus Pratt and John Hafen at the train station. As they boarded an eastbound train, Hafen, with tears in his eyes, was visibly moved by the significance of the occasion. Lorus Pratt cracked a few “dry jokes” and the moment of melancholy passed. In its place, the excitement and the magnificent scenery pulled them into thoughts of what was to come.

Fairbanks carefully recorded the cross-country journey in his journal. Everything seemed unbelievably “grand and magnificent” to this farm boy from Payson, Utah. No superlative seemed adequate. He wrote of the countryside: “It was grand beyond description,” and again, “more grand and majestic than the former.” 12 Around Kansas City the landscape became “picturesque,” with farmhouses, outbuildings, and rustic fences and gates dotting the countryside. Niagara Falls was their first extended stop. The falls, according to Fairbanks, were the “grandest scene I had ever witnessed.”

When they arrived in New York, they visited art museums and galleries, beginning with the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Fairbanks remarked, “I there had the greatest treat that I ever had in art.” 13 Their last night in New York, they went to the Brooklyn Bridge and stood on a pier to watch the moonlight reflecting in the East River the images of streamers flapping in the wind.

Their steamship, the Nevada, was also impressive to the Utahns. Its masts and sails topped a deck that Hafen described as being as long as “from our house to the corral.” But when they boarded it on July 1 with their trunks, cameras, and other regalia, they quickly learned that parts of the ship were less luxurious than others. Hafen described their second-class cabin as being about seven by eight feet, or as long “as our pantry.” Each cabin had four bunks and a small porthole. The air in the room was moist and “disagreeable.” Although they all suffered some degree of seasickness, Fairbanks suffered the most violently; he was sick until they sighted land the last day of the voyage. 14

The food was poorly cooked and often spoiled. Breakfast, which was served promptly at 7:00 A.M., consisted of porridge, beef, potatoes, and bread. A second meal, served from 11:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M., was pretty much the same except for the addition of rice and cold meats. There was no evening meal.

During the day those passengers who felt well enough wandered about the deck, gathering together in groups for conversation or debate. A group of Salvation Army workers held daily services, including speakers and lively singalongs. Apparently their message appealed to some, for Hafen reported, “They have made several converts during this voyage.” 15

12 Ibid., p. 11.
13 Ibid., p. 4.
14 Ibid., p. 8.
15 Ibid., p. 10.
The three Mormon elders took the opportunity to preach as well, manifesting the dual nature of their mission. Fairbanks considered their efforts generally successful. He wrote in his diary: “We had a number of arguments with people but as usual when Mormon Elders argue with people of a different denomination we came out victorious.”

Despite the beautiful weather and pleasant company, the voyage was generally monotonous and the constant noise of the engines made study difficult. The men had agreed earlier to make the best possible use of their time. Hafen said: “We made a rule between us that we must produce a sketch every day or be fined 10 cents. The fine imposed so far on our trip was on Lorus, one day he was so busy teaching the gospel to fellow passengers that he forgot to make a sketch so he had to fork over 10 cents.”

These long days at sea were filled with nostalgia over Zion and “our mountain home.” Hafen wrote:

The land of Zion becomes a fitting name; it does not sound superfluous. The towering mountains, the vallies, flowers, fields, air, clouds, and azure blue all seems holier and purer to me than the lands and ocean space I have fleeted through since I left the home of the Saints of God. . . . It is like looking at a grand painting; stick your nose right onto the picture and one can see nothing but harsh daubs and smears of the brush, but step back some distance where one can get a glimpse of the whole grand composition and it looks beautiful. Those course daubs transform themselves into beautifull flowers and grasses and the whole harmonizes into a beautifull creation that one likes to look upon.

After eleven days at sea, the Nevada docked at Liverpool on a gray, rainy day. Hafen described the city as “a forest of chimneys and quaint old churches.” He was particularly impressed by the cobblestone and brick roads, which contrasted so dramatically with the dirt roads of Springville. The men registered at a hotel that shared a common wall with the building used by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. After bathing for the first time in two weeks, they met downstairs to eat a meal of bread and milk. The warm moist bread and fresh milk tasted so delicious after the poor fare on the ship that Hafen said it was “just the finest treat we could possibly realize.” Fairbanks, ever the optimist, described it as “the best meal he ever ate in his life.”

The trio spent several days in London, where they toured Madame Tausaud’s waxworks, the Tower of London, and the Houses of Parliament, and visited the National Art Gallery several times. One of their first orders of business in London was to acquire the look of cultured men of the world rather than that of farm boys from Utah. Hafen paid $16.25 for a “fine black coat and vest with pants of a lighter color,” saying it was the finest he had ever had. They also bought film for their cameras and art supplies for school. The next leg of their journey would take them to Paris itself.

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16 Ibid., p. 9.
17 Ibid., p. 9.
18 Letter from John Hafen to Thora Twede Hafen from Steamship Nevada, July 11, 1890.
19 Ibid.
In a letter to Thora, John Hafen recounted the momentous day of their arrival in France.

July 24th Pioneer day, we departed for Paris. Leaving London at 8:30 a.m. we arrived at Dover somewhere about noon. From here we crossed the English channel. I was seasick all the way, nothing but puke, puke, the whole time I thought my stockings would come up. The ride on the train from Calais to Paris was quite nice for scenery, but not much comfort in the cars, they are not to be compared to American cars. I cannot describe the feelings we experienced in being surrounded with a people of another tongue. Could not make ourselves understood and could not understand, but we got here all the same in some shape or other and now I feel like a dummy. We are much pleased with this city.  

Paris was a pleasing city indeed. It was exciting, volatile, swirling with innovations in science, government, morality, social order, and art. A most interesting world it was for three art missionaries from Utah.

By 1890, the impressionist movement that Manet had introduced had begun to move in exciting new directions. The term “Impressionism” itself came from an 1874 work by Claude Monet entitled “Impression: Sunrise,” a luminous and sparkling painting that was said by critics to be so bright that it made their eyes smart. During the year that Hafen, Fairbanks, Pratt, and Evans were in Paris, Monet was at Giverney painting haystacks in various kinds of light and also working on his series of paintings of poplars. Degas and Renoir were painting their impressions of Parisian life. While Cezanne and Seurat were converting Impressionism into a more classical and severe style, Van Gogh, sometimes called an “Expressionist,” was pursuing an opposite course. He met Degas and Seurat in Paris in 1886 and was electrified by what he saw. Though he painted for only ten years, for him it was color that gave expression, feeling, and content to his works.

Yet these new artistic movements flourished upon the tradition, heritage, and art of previous ages that adorned the palaces, museums, and galleries of France. Perhaps the sheer weight of the more traditional art was as important to Hafen, Fairbanks, Pratt, and Evans as were the new art directions and the swirling color of Paris life. Hafen later wrote:

Language is feeble to explain the benefit of a sojourn in the city of Paris imparts to an aspirant for knowledge; for it is not only within the walls of a school room that one learns lessons, but from the monuments of architectural skill and taste which adorn its boulevards. The combined skill of centuries of the sculptor’s art which have enriched its galleries and magnificent parks; likewise the inspirations of the artist thrown upon canvas, of which this city is a veritable storehouse, spanning art history from its earliest period to this progressive nineteenth century.  

Moreover, the life of avant-garde Paris was in part denied the Utahns because of their great desire to consecrate their learning to their faith. This constant coupling of faith and art was the hallmark of the year that followed, particularly in Hafen’s case. His desire was to draw from his study the truth, the very basis, the foundation of what would be his life’s work and to join it suc-

20 Letter from John Hafen to Thora Twede Hafen from London, England, July 22, 1890.
21 Ibid.
cessfully to his fervent faith and belief. For some this dualism has been a barrier; for John Hafen it was the catalyst and the cornerstone for his work.

On July 24, 1890, their first night in Paris, the art missionaries found lodging in the “art quarter” and then searched out the apartment of C. E. Dallin, noted Utah sculptor. Not finding him at home, they left a message with their address on it. Dallin visited them the next day and let them know that J. T. Harwood had left for Switzerland the previous day and would not be returning. Dallin himself would be leaving for Boston in a few days. Hafen recognized that “we may be left to ourselves excepting J. W. Clawson,” who was already in Paris with the family. Clawson was also studying art but was not as well known as Harwood or Dallin. On this first day, Hafen and his companions also visited an art gallery. Hafen wrote to Thora, “By jove it is fine, it beats anything I have seen yet.”

It was apparently on this same day that the missionaries made their way to the Académie Julian and introduced themselves to students and professors. The Académie Julian was recognized as one of the better schools for art instruction. Hafen wrote, “There are several schools of painting of more or less merit, but the École des Beaux-Arts — a national institution and the Académie Julia, Peinture, take the lead.” The school, which had already seen the likes of Mormon artists Harwood, Dallin, and Clawson, was founded in 1868 by Rodolphe Julian, a bookshop assistant from Marseilles who had come to Paris to study art under Coignet and Cabanel. Students at the academy worked freely under such master teachers as Tony Robert Fleury, Benjamin Constant, Gabriel Ferrier, and the conventional neo-academician Bouguereau. In 1890–91 Hafen worked under Constant, Lefebure, and Doucett.

In 1890, the school had just opened another atelier across the Seine from its location on Rue Fromentin. This location, at number 31 Rue de Dragon, was a bit of a surprise to the art missionaries. Hafen described their first morning at the school. At the time they were residing in the Latin Quarter and had walked from there down grand boulevards, past the Panthenon, Notre Dame, and the tower of St. Jacques.

Leaving those grand boulevards we entered rue St. Denis, a narrow street. With quick steps we pass grocery shops, shoe, drug, dry goods, vegetable and every other kind of shops that the modern Shylock has ever thought of; expecting every moment to behold the magnificent academy building my fancy had pictured. When, all at once, here we are! Yes, we were here in a narrow court or yard of a feather cleaning and pillow factory; a few packing boxes and bales of feathers lying about. In front of us, on a two story rickety old building was the sign, sure enough, Académie Julia Peinture.

As Hafen and his friends climbed the old stairway, on the walls they saw prize studies from models and daubs of paint. At the top of the stairway was the sky-lit atelier. It is perhaps no surprise that during these first days Hafen

22 Ibid.


sensed his need to join the experience of learning his craft with his sincere desire to serve his church. He wrote:

I hope above all things God will give me divine assistance so I can make unusual progress, for there is lots to learn. I feel satisfied with the aim of art as it is understood by artists and professors of the school here: and also acknowledge the hand of God in answering my daily prayers for guidance in my calling for I have as yet not had to undo any of my ideas as to what true art consists off. There is a herculean task before me which if I accomplish in so short a time allotted for me here it will be through the miraculous power of God and nothing short of that. 26

Though the Académie Julian was highly respected, the new moods of French art were moving away from the traditional approaches presented there. Matisse was at Julian during the very time the Utah art missionaries were learning their craft. When he left soon afterwards, one professor allegedly concluded, "He's a dangerous man; he'll have to be off quickly." 27 Drawings done by Matisse at the Académie Julian show the prevailing teaching methods used by art schools of the day. Students spent many long class hours copying objects from nature and from plaster casts. It was such unimaginative exercises that prompted Matisse to leave. 28 But perhaps Julian was just the right school for Hafen, Pratt, Fairbanks, and Evans. It had served other Mormon artists well and succeeded in teaching the important basic fundamentals.

During these first days at the school, Hafen wrote that he "enjoyed the companionship of the Holy spirit constantly." He strongly sensed his need to have not just the experience of learning art but also the companionship of the Spirit to bring this experience to fruition. He already felt that he recognized higher possibilities for himself, but he saw his faithfulness to the gospel as a catalyst to reach his goals. "I feel that I will have to commence at the bottom and submit myself wholly to my Heavenly Father," he wrote. "In times past I have found ideas, how one should paint, and what kind of aim a painter should have. . . . I could not see how or through what method they could be attained, neither how high a degree of perfection those ideas could be carried to by a being." Hafen's words reveal an almost visionary concept of the heights he might reach: "I have now the privilege of seeing the highest pinnacle of success, and not only that but the sky and space beyond that. Whether I will ever pass that point or even approach it, will depend wholly upon my faithfulness to the Gospel and the assistance of Almighty God." 29

As their first few weeks of schooling progressed, it was obvious that Hafen felt the need of God's help. On August 8 he wrote, "I have a testimony that the Lord will enable me to accomplish all that is necessary in the year allotted for me to stay here." 30 One of his companions at school suggested that

26 Letter from John Hafen to Thora Twede Hafen dated July 25, 1890.
27 Herold, "The Academie Julian."
30 B. F. Larsen, "John Hafen," unpublished manuscript, Brigham Young University, Harold B. Lee Library, Special Collections.
it would be necessary to remain two or even three years. "But I tell him," Hafen said, "that he may entertain such ideas but I do not. I am booked for a year, but more than that, God's servants have blessed me with power to accomplish my mission and get all the knowledge of art required, and I know that God is able to help me to live so that I will realize these blessings. I have acted continually in harmony with the promptings of the Holy spirit, and the result has been good ever time." 31

In a letter to Thora six weeks later, he seemed cautious about his progress:

I have now about 15 or 18 sketches from nature: nearly all of those represent a change or turning point in my art career. I do not know whether I can send anything home good enough to sell. The paintings I now produce are not so nice as those I have made at home in one sense of the word. They are all studies with a motive in them, ie a striving after truthfull drawing and blocking in the pure lights and shades of nature without any regard to detail, which only comes by practice of years. I am not surprised that J. T. Harwood's pictures he sent to Salt Lake were not as good as those he made before he went to Paris. I find this is the well known case with all the students out here. Some of their paintings are daubed in such a way that one is pussled when they are right side up and when not. Those cases are extremes. So many young men are slow to understand what is wanted of them. God has so planed things for our good that we can see his hand manifested in our behalf from the very time of starting until now. 32

By mid-October Hafen was deep into his studies. He was beginning to make value judgments about his own work and to see and feel new ideas for his art. He sensed a need to add power, life, and spirit to his work, but he wisely tempered this feeling with an understanding of more subtle things. On October 19, 1890, in a letter to Thora that was rilled with X's and O 5s, he described a painting that had recently sold for $250,000. He said it was not a particularly grand painting, but a "good plain simple immitation of nature." "A common uncultivated observed would pass it bye in an art gallery with just a squint at it but look closely and observe what a spirit of humble reverence is manifested in those figures. . . . Although I am drawing from modles my mind is more and more centering on landscape work." 33 Perhaps this statement from Hafen tells us as much about the philosophy of his future work as anything we could read. It is his landscapes that catch our attention. His phrase "humble reverence" seems to describe well his simple, personal look at nature.

Christmas day, 1890, was the first Christmas John and Thora had been apart in their eleven years of marriage. Though Hafen wrote his Christmas letter to Thora in the midst of one of the worst winters ever recorded in Paris, he said nothing about the climate. He seemed to be gaining confidence in his work, because for the first time he expressed a desire to enter the salon exhibit, which featured the best of traditional art, with no Impressionists accepted. John told Thora about his Christmas dinner at the American Students Association, where he enjoyed sweet corn and plum pudding. In the same letter, under a date of December 28, he described a gallery opening for American artists. His description of the ladies' dress may not have pleased Thora alto-

32 Letter from John Hafen to Thora Twede Hafen, September 19, 1890.
33 Letter from John Hafen to Thora Twede Hafen, October 19, 1890.
gether: "Their arms are entirely bare and fully half of their bosoms are exposed. Sister Clawson said in balls in high circles, the dress just supports the bottom of the breasts and don't cover them at all." Perhaps wisely, John said no more about French female attire. He went on to tell Thora, "I long for some good pies and cakes like you make. . . . The French people don't know how to make pastry at all. There are no such things worth having here." Perhaps wisely, John said no more about French female attire. He went on to tell Thora, "I long for some good pies and cakes like you make. . . . The French people don't know how to make pastry at all. There are no such things worth having here." Perhaps wisely, John said no more about French female attire. He went on to tell Thora, "I long for some good pies and cakes like you make. . . . The French people don't know how to make pastry at all. There are no such things worth having here." Perhaps wisely, John said no more about French female attire. He went on to tell Thora, "I long for some good pies and cakes like you make. . . . The French people don't know how to make pastry at all. There are no such things worth having here.

During the holidays, the long absence from family and friends began to tell on the missionaries. Apparently Lorus Pratt had had some problems or had become discouraged, because Hafen, in his Christmas letter, wrote, "Bro. Pratt wrote us from Liverpool that President Brigham Young advised him to remain and fulfill his mission; so he will return sometime tomorrow." Pratt returned to Paris within a few days.

In an impassioned letter to Thora in January, Hafen repeatedly decried the power of Satan: "It seems that a warfare is going on continuously between the evil and good powers upon spirits. Writing to friends seems to be played out for awhile. I can hardly get words and language into shape so as to be understood by my sweet wife." He added that he must finish his painting and get back to drawing so that he could enter something in the school competition. "I have some good news to tell you," he continued. "Bro. Pratt has succeeded in making a drawing last week good enough to take into the concours. Johnny and Edwin say it is an excellent drawing. A concours consists of the best drawings selected every week out of the school." In response to Hafen's apparent discouragement, Thora wrote, "I guess it is harder for you to exercise faith out there where you see all those grand paintings, but remember dear that you are to 'succeed beyond your highest expectations,' those words strengthen my faith and I feel like clinging to them. God has helped many of his servants when they have been humble and needed his help." In March, Hafen received a letter from George Q. Cannon, in which President Cannon complimented him on his progress and counseled him to retain the Spirit. Hafen had apparently written to Cannon in January and asked if the missionaries should remain in France in the face of financial problems. Cannon replied:

In thinking about the position of yourself and fellow students, we feel that is better for you to have liberty to stay until a reasonable time to give you opportunity to acquire the knowledge that is imparted in the schools there, so that you may return satisfied and prepared for an artistic career here. Money is exceedingly close with us now. We have had the most stringent time for three months past that has ever been seen in the Territory since money began to circulate among us. The stringency is felt more by the men of means, if anything, than by the people of more moderate circumstances, because their obligations are larger, and it is almost impossible to borrow. We have decided, however, to send you $500.00 which we will direct to Brother Pratt in a draft, to be used for the

34 Letter from John Hafen to Thora Twede Hafen, December 25, 1890.
35 Ibid.
36 Letter from John Hafen to Thora Twede Hafen, December 25, 1890.
37 Letter from Thora Twede Hafen to John Hafen, January 19, 1891.
38 Letter from Thora Twede Hafen to John Hafen, February 19, 1891.
benefit of you all, and we shall remit some more to you in a short time. We trust that this will bring you the relief you need and enable you to pursue your studies undisturbed by the fear of want.39

Perhaps encouraged by the church officials’ confidence as well as the new funds, the artists persisted in their studies and by April three of the four had work accepted into the concours. “This week my drawing went into the concour again,” John wrote to Thora. “This makes two in for this month. Edwin Evans, Lorus and Willie Claxon’s also went in. Johnny [Fairbanks] is the only one left out. I earnestly hope he will succeed next week as this will be his last chance.”40

A week later John wrote to Thora that he would be finishing his schooling very soon but that Pratt, Fairbanks, and Evans had decided to stay another year. He also reported that Fairbanks had not had any of his work accepted in the concours.41 This letter was sent from Auvers, where Hafen and Fairbanks apparently went often to sketch. At the end of April Hafen planned to stay in Auvers for a week before returning to Paris to wrap up his affairs there.

On May 31, 1891, John wrote Thora his last letter from Paris. He told her of a visit to Versailles with Fairbanks and Pratt, declaring, “I considered it the most magnificent and largest Palace in the world.” He also instructed Thora to send letters to him in Switzerland from that time forward. For the next few weeks he painted and sketched in Switzerland. He also visited relatives and tried, with little success, to work on his genealogy.

In July Hafen received a letter from President Cannon with a check for $300 enclosed, which enabled him to settle his affairs in Europe before his journey home. The letter ended with a brief description of conditions at home: “Everything is moving along very quietly here. There is much political discussion. The weather is remarkably cool; in fact, it is the coolest summer that we have known. Today, as I write, it is not uncommon to see persons wearing light overcoats.”42

We do not know exactly when John Hafen left Paris. He probably left for London shortly after he received the letter from President Cannon. He may have spent a few days visiting art galleries in England. He arrived in Salt Lake City on August 17, 1891.

One year later Hafen began work on the mural for the Garden Room of the Salt Lake Temple, a partial fulfillment of the intent of his mission. After Fairbanks and Evans returned the following year, they painted original murals for the World Room of the temple.

For many years the missionaries continued to exert a profound influence on art in Utah, though the residual and lingering effects of this experience are difficult to assess.

Perhaps the influence of John B. Fairbanks was most significant in terms of his progeny. The dynasty of artists that was formed through his sons J. Leo

39 Letter from George Q. Cannon to John Hafen, March 7, 1891.
40 Letter from John Hafen to Thora Twede Hafen, April 18, 1891.
41 Letter from John Hafen to Thora Twede Hafen, April 27, 1891.
42 Letter from George Q. Cannon to John Hafen, July 11, 1891.
and Avard would continue until the present. Both men recognized the importance of their father's example. J. Leo Fairbanks declared: "My father's attitude, his willingness to sacrifice everything to his art, has been an inspiration to me and I firmly believe has changed my whole career. Without his example I would have undoubtedly followed a more lucrative career." 43

After finishing his obligation to work on the Salt Lake Temple murals, John Fairbanks went to Provo to teach one of the first college art classes at Brigham Young Academy. To help support his family of twelve children, he opened a photography studio, with J. Leo working alongside him. In 1898, after the death of Fairbanks's wife Lily, the family moved to Ogden, where John became the first supervisor of art in the public schools. In 1902 he accompanied a group of archeologists on the Cluff expedition to Mexico, Central America, and South America to test the validity of Book of Mormon stories. While he worked as official "director of art and photography" of the expedition, his son J. Leo supported the family. When John Fairbanks returned to Utah, J. Leo left to study art in Paris.

Edwin Evans, like Fairbanks, became a highly respected teacher of art. One student called him a "stimulating, exacting, and sometimes merciful teacher." Another student, Mabel Fraser, said that Evans demanded the "utmost of effort, honesty and originality. . . . He believed in art as a life-long force of growth and expression." Although Evans held several teaching and administrative positions in the art departments of schools and academies across the state, his twenty years as a teacher and department chairman at the University of Utah were the most significant.

Lorus Pratt was actually more popular before he went to Paris than after, and he would fight a lifelong battle against poverty. Despite the enduring hardship to his family, he continued to paint. However, there was never a time when he could support his family by the sale of his paintings alone; he was forced to work at odd jobs to supplement what sales he made. He had to use his paintings as barter and often to pay bills.

And so we return to John Hafen. He was the least suited of the four men to actually work on the temple murals because during his year in Paris he had adjusted so well to easel painting. After his work on the Salt Lake Temple, he painted in Seattle and in Monterey, California, becoming enamored with painting the sea. In 1901 he solicited and received another commission from the Church for which he received twelve monthly payments of $100 each for paintings on a variety of subjects, including a series of portraits of General Authorities.

In the last ten years of his life Hafen received recognition for his work in the Midwest, through exhibitions in Springfield, Illinois, and throughout Indiana. But he was always on the brink of financial ruin. Just months before his death he traveled through the small towns of Utah on his bicycle, trying to peddle his paintings for just about any price. At the same time he was the president of the Utah Art Institute.

43 Quoted in Robert S. Olpin, Dictionary of Utah Art (Salt Lake City: Salt Lake City Art Center, 1980), p. 74.
Yet John Hafen was proclaimed the premier painter of his day by art critic and patron Alice Merrill Horne, and he was remembered by his contemporaries as both a man and a painter of the finest fiber. Though his work never seemed to attain high recognition, he was nevertheless unwilling to compromise his standards, unwilling to contradict what he believed was most important in art — the portrayal of truth.

John Hafen's philosophy of art centered on a conviction that aesthetic expression is a vehicle through which God's message may be portrayed. He called this conviction "truth in art." He called upon artists to become "wise hearted" so that they might more accurately and intelligently master the methods necessary to let the truth come through. In this effort he credited God, acknowledging him as both the source and the inspiration in all good art.

While others were more successful in matching their skills to the market, Hafen's temperament and philosophy of art barred him from mass popularity. In a letter to Alice Horne written just months before his untimely death, he gave his own explanation as to why he had never been able to seize the public's attention — but why, after all, it didn't really matter:

I divide the art profession into two classes at all times in history. In one class are the painters, in the other division are artists. There are very great men on either side. . . . I believe the tendency of the present age is strongly inclined to the painting side of art, and trouble seriously with commercialism. In fact commercialism is the cause of the present day art leaning to the painting side. Art is a tender, sensitive plant, requiring to be carefully nursed and kept clean of obnoxious weeds. It passes the eye to the heart and stirs the emotions, while painting only delights the eye. The two cannot be combined in painting and be pure art — I don't say good art. I wish to emphasize the word "pure" in this relation. The art of painting and sculpture reaches human understanding through the eyes; music through the ears; literature through language to the mind. The eye cannot entertain itself with two things at once; much less can it stir the heart when the "how it is done" is loudly present. . . . On this point I am fighting almost alone in the world.  

The art mission was unique. Never since then has there been an attempt to repeat the experience, although the immediate results of the effort were markedly successful. The temple murals of the "art missionaries" represented the best that Zion had to offer. Since that time the missions of the Church have dealt with the temporal and spiritual needs of the Saints rather than the aesthetic areas of their lives.

A few reasons apparently explain why the time was right then for such an experiment and why it has not happened again. In the leadership of the Church at that time was an unparalleled combination of personalities who saw the importance of a union of art and the gospel message; who felt sufficiently moved by the concept of an art mission to authorize the use of the limited funds of the struggling church to support it; and who, finally, saw that the development of the talents of these four young men would serve the glory of the Lord.

There was also an important difference within the artists, for whom no line separated their art from their lives with the Spirit. Each man expressed the desire to consecrate his talent to the building up of the kingdom. Each recognized that talents were gifts from God. The art mission was not just a financial

44 Ibid.
arrangement; rather it reflected a true sense of divine purpose. To John Hafen and his fellow students in Paris, theirs was a mission in fact.

For a pamphlet entitled *O My Father*, Hafen illustrated the words of Eliza R. Snow's hymns and added this summary statement:

The influence of art is so powerful in shaping our lives for a higher appreciation of the creations of our God that we cannot afford to neglect an acquaintance with it. We should be as eager for its companionship in our homes, for it has as important a mission in shaping our character and . . . our happiness as anything that we term necessities. Life is incomplete without it. A religious life is not an ideal religious life without art.⁴⁵

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⁴⁵ Booklet prepared by Eliza R. Snow and John Hafen (n.p., n.d.).
MORMON HISTORY ASSOCIATION

TWENTY-FIRST ANNUAL MEETING

Salt Lake City, Utah
MAY 1–4, 1986

Program Committee:
Dean L. May, Cherryl L. May, Chairs;
Paul M. Edwards, Jessie Embry,
Ronald K. Esplin, Grethe Peterson,
Richard Poll, Grant Underwood

Local Arrangements:
David C. Racker, Chair;
Martha Bradley, Craig Fuller,
George Van Komen

Members of the Mormon History Association will receive program and registration information by mail. For membership information, see inside front cover.

Plan Ahead for Future Annual Meetings

Twenty-third Annual Meeting: Logan, Utah
Twenty-fourth Annual Meeting: Nauvoo, Illinois area
Twenty-fifth Annual Meeting: Hawaii
NOTES, VIEWS, AND REVIEWS

Three recent or forthcoming books in Mormon history have dealt with the politics of church leadership: Leonard J. Arrington's *Brigham Young: American Moses*; D. Michael Quinn's, *J. Reuben Clark, Jr.: the Church Years*, and E. Leo Lyman's *The Mormon Quest for Utah Statehood* (to be released in the summer of 1986). A leading scholar of American religious history and two accomplished political scientists were invited to write extended reviews of these books for MHA readers. We are grateful to the reviewers and to the Brigham Young University and the University of Illinois Presses for providing copies for review.

The number of studies of women in the Mormon past has grown dramatically since 1977, when the first bibliography of such studies was printed. The volume and quality of this work justified, in our judgment, publication of an update, compiled by Lyn Scott and Maureen Ursenbach Beecher.

Finally, inasmuch as this volume ends my term as editor, I would like to thank the readers, the writers, the typesetter and publishers, the Board of Editors, and the editorial staff of the *Journal of Mormon History*, with whom I have worked over the last five years. Our common interest and labors in advancing scholarly study of the Mormon past have been challenging and at times frustrating, but rewarding in many ways. This Dean passes the blue pencil of editorship to the Dean of Mormon Studies, Leonard J. Arrington, with gratitude for added time to pursue his own research but not without regret for associations production of the Journal has occasioned.

Dean L. May

Arrington’s Moses

By Stephen J. Stein

In 1864 Brigham Young offered the following self-assessment in a sermon: “I have never particularly desired any man to testify publicly that I am a Prophet; nevertheless, if any man feels joy in doing this, he shall be blest in it. I have never said that I am not a Prophet; but, if I am not, one thing is certain, I have been very profitable to this people. In the providence of God he has placed me to take charge of his flock, and they have been abundantly blessed under my administration.” ¹ This statement underscores why Leonard J. Arrington subtitled his biography *American Moses*, for both the American and the Mosaic dimensions of Young’s life are reflected in the homonymous themes of profit and prophet.

On first glance Arrington’s choice of a subtitle seems puzzling. Admittedly, the Latter-day Saints have always reserved a special place for America in their understanding of the plan of history, but Brigham Young spent much of his career fleeing from the jurisdiction of the United States, casting aspersions upon its legitimacy and authority, and condemning the ways of its Gentile population. At times he epitomized the anti-American thrust of nineteenth-century Mormonism. It was also not unusual for Mormons to associate their leaders with biblical heroes. However, those depictions have commonly been uncritical and adulatory, resembling hagiography more than biography. By contrast, Arrington’s work shows professionalism from beginning to end. It manifests his desire to steer a course between those who would simply praise and those who would damn Brigham Young. In his biography Arrington seeks to reveal the complexity of the second president of the Mormon church. For that reason, on second glance his subtitle strikes me as very apt.

Arrington is, of course, ideally suited to write this biography of Brigham Young. His distinguished career of research and publication, teaching and public service, has prepared him well for the task. More than twenty-five years ago he published his *Great Basin Kingdom: An Economic History of the Latter-day Saints* (1958), a work that marked him as one of the most talented of the post-war historians of Mormonism. Subsequent publications have established his reputation firmly. His capacity to communicate the peculiar genius of the Mormon experience to those within as well as outside the Mormon community is strikingly evident in the volume he co-authored with Davis Bitton entitled *The Mormon Experience: A History of the Latter-day Saints* (1979), the best single book available on Mormonism. But the biography of Young rests on more than Arrington’s reputation. It draws upon an immense body of manuscript materials never before systematically used by scholars. The scholarship in this work is voluminous, impressive, and erudite.

Arrington’s biography is a carefully crafted portrait of Brigham Young that features the complexity of the Mormon leader by underscoring his massive contributions to the transitional period of western resettlement and Mormon colonization in the Great Salt Lake basin while not denying the existence of problems created by his leadership during the same years. In other words, Arrington is determined to reckon with the diverse traditions of historiography. His biography is no piece of hagiography, no whitewash over the blemishes that appear in the record. He intends to carry his account beyond eulogy by confronting the full range of evidence, and in this he succeeds, thereby separating himself from many who have written previously on Young. At the same time there is a nurturing strain in this volume, for Arrington silently presents Young as a role model for contemporary Mormons.

The story of Brigham Young the American makes good reading. There is a little of everything needed for the typical saga of success — humble origins, love of hard work, a sweetheart with blonde hair and blue eyes, skillful hands, a mobile family, trust in God, hardship, and more hardship. Young’s story is truly remarkable for the success that he achieved; by his death in 1877 he enjoyed great wealth, political power, and cultural influence as well as all of the benefits associated with these things. Nevertheless, Arrington has not chosen
to use the rags-to-riches theme as the unifying center in the biography, although Young's achievements do constitute the outline or structural framework for the account. Rather Arrington unlocks the complexity of Young by focusing upon his religious experiences and his sense of spiritual vocation. According to Arrington, Young is distinguished from countless other successful Americans who built empires and fortunes by the fact that he was driven by a religious vision of "a kingdom of God." Young was a "theocrat," in Arrington's words, one who put religious above secular concerns. Here is the linkage between the American and the Mosaic dimensions in the biography.

The story of Brigham Young as a Moses also makes good reading. The biblical Moses, you will recall, was a prophet, a leader, a guide, a savior of his people, a lawgiver who spoke face to face with God. In the words of the Book of Mormon, it was Moses who "was commanded of the Lord" to do a great work, and "by his word" it was accomplished (1 Nephi 17:26). Therefore, it is natural that Brigham Young should be linked in the Mormon mind (and by Arrington) with the image of the Moses who prevailed over Pharaoh and his hosts, for Young triumphed over the enemies of the Latter-day Saints. However appropriate and traditional this association, Arrington's use of the figure of Moses is not exhausted by this one heroic dimension. The same Moses who parted the Red Sea and conversed with God on Mount Sinai also murdered an Egyptian in a fit of rage — call it "righteous anger," if you please — and became impatient with God at Meribah. In other words, Moses was more complex than most heroes today. And everything did not come out rosy at the end; Moses was barred from entering the Promised Land. In like manner, Brigham Young displays great complexity.

But did Arrington have in mind these multiple dimensions when he subtitled the biography American Moses? I think it is likely he did. He is at pains in the preface to make public notice of the fact that this volume represents "a private, not a church project," that it was written on his "own time" and not at the expense of the Mormon community. Furthermore, no official sanction by LDS authorities has been given to the biography or the views contained in it. His prefatory disclaimers would be unnecessary and unwarranted were it not for the fact that he served as director of the Historical Division of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints from 1972 to 1980 and during those years brought to that agency a new level of professionalism, sophistication, and openness — influences felt by a whole generation of young Mormon historians. For these same reasons, Arrington and his colleagues in the historical profession have recently felt the sting of conservative critics within Mormonism who have attacked scholars who do not bolster and support the official teachings of the church. Does Arrington's biography serve the interests of the Mormon church? Probably not in the manner that the leaders of the Latter-day Saints might wish, for he reaches a very mixed judgment concerning this American Moses, raising some questions he does not answer.

Arrington points to Young's conversion to Mormonism as the pivotal event in the story line of the biography. His conversion took place in the context of a family awakening to Mormonism. Influenced by the religious ferment of western New York, Young joined the infant church when he became persuaded
of its claims on biblical and rational grounds. Once convinced, he never swerved from his new commitment, which was confirmed for him by gifts of speaking in tongues and faith healings. He became a novice preacher and dedicated disciple — so dedicated, in fact, that he left a seriously ill wife and two young daughters in order to spend the summer of 1832 itinerating on behalf of his new faith, a peripatetic pattern that became characteristic of him throughout his lifetime. Following his wife's death, according to Arrington, there was "nothing to prevent [Young] from devoting himself fully to the church." From this moment on, his devotion to the church and his "intense personal attachment" to Joseph Smith became the functional equivalents of marriage. This radical sense of religious vocation drove him through the following years as he moved from convert to disciple, from apostle to president of the church. This kind of dedication, however, seems more appropriate for the resident of a monastery than for the head of a large and sprawling polygamous family unit. Unfortunately, Arrington has not chosen to probe deeply the side effects of Young's radical sense of vocation. He seems content to hold up the example of Young's religious commitment for an admiring contemporary Mormon audience.

Miracles abound in the story of this American Moses, more miracles than one might expect in a critical scholarly biography. These miraculous happenings served to confirm Young's prophetic vocation for himself, his family, and his potential followers. Among the miracles described are the healing of an epidemic in Zion's Camp, the appearance of an inexhaustible supply of money in Young's trunk on the journey to England, the breaking of a deadly calm on the return voyage, and (most famous of all) the prophetic linking of Young with Joseph Smith following the assassination of the latter. These miracle stories played an important role in the transmission of Mormon traditions concerning Brigham Young over the past century. They have strengthened the sense of providential care felt by the Latter-day Saints. Arrington usually allows these accounts to stand without commentary as though they are sufficient unto themselves — which they are not. He seems unwilling to clarify the functions of these folkloristic traditions in the development of the Mormon community or within the biography itself. Miracle tales are commonplace in diverse religious traditions; they serve to provide credentials for emerging religious leaders.

The religious vision of Brigham Young also translated into prodigious ecclesiastical and civil accomplishments. His role as colonizer and organizer of the new western society led to achievements with few parallels in American history. The contemporary vitality and significance of Mormonism within the intramountain area of the United States is a living monument to his leadership. Arrington's biography may be at its best when it catalogues Young's achievements in such diverse fields as agriculture, technology, commerce, politics, and manufacturing. These achievements earned Young his reputation as a pragmatic man of action. The reputation is well-deserved. However, Arrington has placed his own status among Mormons in potential jeopardy by acknowl-

2 Arrington, p. 33.
edging that these accomplishments were often achieved at some loss or expense. For example, he is at pains to deny the charge that Young was arbitrary or autocratic in his administration of authority, but the evidence in the biography substantiates that Young often rode roughshod over those who opposed him. Arrington pictures Young as a sensitive, warm-hearted, tender individual; yet it is clear from this account that he was not above the use of violence to achieve his ends. Arrington defends Young against charges of financial self-aggrandizement at the expense of the church, but he acknowledges that it was virtually impossible to separate personal and ecclesiastical finances. Arrington portrays Young's religious concern for the Indians as benevolent, but the story shows how one person's benevolence is often manipulative and exploitative of other people.

In the biography Arrington hopes to gain new respect for Brigham Young as a religious thinker, one whose power and vigor of mind merit more attention than they have received. Although he acknowledges that Young's success as religious organizer was more impressive, yet he attempts to depict the second president as a theologian who explained, reconciled, and clarified for his followers the biblical and historical materials of the tradition. Systematic Young was not, for most of his theological statements were occasional addresses of one kind or another, sermons or discourses delivered to or written for the Saints. The category "theologian" is not a comfortable fit for Young, whose activities seem better characterized as those of a lay preacher. Arrington says almost as much when he declares that Young's accent upon "the earthly role of religion" qualifies him for the important title of "prophet," one who cares for the needs of his people. Commonly the prophet and the theologian occupy different positions and play different roles in the development of religious communities. Young's life leaves little doubt which is the more apt characterization for him.

The religious vision of Brigham Young involved a family dimension from the very beginning. The importance of the family is a major theme in the biography. Arrington presents Young as a model husband and father. Certainly he was one of the most unusual husbands and fathers in American history. Appendix C in the biography lists the sixteen women by whom Young had fifty-seven children and the nine plural wives by whom he did not have children. In addition, "some thirty women" were sealed to him for eternity only. Young's initial response to the doctrine of polygamy had been very negative, but once convinced, his commitment to its practice was total. Arrington describes Young as very concerned about all of his wives and children, solicitous of their welfare, and especially preoccupied with their spiritual development. In other words, he was an ideal example for twentieth-century Mormons. Unfortunately, Arrington's characterization strains against the rest of the account. The heavy official obligations that demanded Young's immediate attention and his almost constant travels undercut severely his capacity to be the ideal husband of many wives and the caring father of many children. As is so often the case, family took second place to occupation. Arrington's praise therefore seems ill-founded. There are also other questions concerning Young's family

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8 Ibid., p. 421.
life that remain unanswered — in fact, that remain unasked. These are, ad-
mittedly, tough questions, but it is no longer satisfactory to accuse of voyeurism
those who ask these questions. The study of family history, the concern for
understanding fertility patterns and sexual practice, and the growth of women’s
history — these and other developments of the past two decades demand that
the following questions be addressed: What was the nature of the relationship
among Young’s wives? What was his pattern of sexual activity? Did he have
sexual intercourse with more than one wife on any given day? What does it
mean that several wives were known to be his “favorites”? What were the
charges brought against him by Ann Eliza Webb, who sued for divorce? These
and other questions promise to throw additional light upon Young, his atti-
tudes towards family issues, and his actual practices.

Even Brigham Young’s personality and style reflect his sense of religious
vocation. He adopted the posture of a biblical prophet and seemed content to
play the role, no matter how offensive it might be. He could be censorious,
brash, outspoken, stubborn, opinionated, and meddlesome if he thought it
would advance the cause of the Saints. He appeared confident that he knew
the will of God, and he was quick to speak for God. He was not the kind of
person most individuals would care to have for a neighbor. Fortunately, his
self-confidence and self-righteousness were moderated somewhat by a genu-
inely friendly, humane, earthy, and humorous nature — Yankee qualities,
some might say. Arrington has recorded numerous delightful examples of
Young’s humor, including the remark, “The Lord knows if I had lost a rib for
each wife I have, I should have had none left long ago.” 4 As for personality
type, Young eludes categorization. He remains an enigma, winsome and repul-
sive, charismatic and offensive — complex beyond imagination.

Arrington’s biography, a handsome volume, has a modern, almost impres-
sionistic portrait of Brigham Young on the dust jacket. This publication is
marred only by the fact that the printers have reversed the order of the two sets
of illustrations in the text, an unfortunate but not fatal blunder. The illustra-
tions themselves provide excellent pictorial support for Young’s story. The
portrait on the dust jacket by Stephen Alcorn is a fitting symbol for the book.
Alcorn pictures a resolute and determined Brigham Young, jaw firmly set and
eyes narrowed resolutely. Only snowy puffs of his beard and the backward
sweep of his hair imply some softness in the man. His shoulders, the brow, his
mouth and chin express a sense of power. Alcorn has caught the complexity of
the man, a mixture of pragmatist and prophet, colonizer and churchman,
financier and lover, which makes Young’s story so engaging and Arrington’s
biography so valuable.

4 Ibid., p. 197.
The burgeoning of scholarly publications on the history of Mormon women in the 1970s suggested a need for historians interested in the topic to share their work, discuss concepts, talk about new approaches and subjects as yet unexplored. Dean Martin Hickman of the College of Family, Home and Social Sciences at Brigham Young University agreed to fund an invitational conference to be held in Provo, October 19, 1984. The planners, Mary Stovall of the Women's Research Institute, and Carol Cornwall Madsen of the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Church History, both of BYU, invited those historians who had published in the field and were astonished when some forty-seven responded positively.

The funding provided sufficient assistance for participants to come from California, the Midwest, and, most particularly, from New England. Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, of the University of New Hampshire, and Claudia L. Bushman, most recently affiliated with the Delaware commission celebrating the bicentennial of the Constitution, came as speakers to the conference. Dr. Ulrich stressed in her presentation how male paradigms, male models, do not reveal the essential elements of women's lives and experiences; Dr. Bushman spoke of material culture — as exemplified in a collection of Relief Society work-day projects — as a tool of writers of women's history. D. Michael Quinn, Brigham Young University, addressed "Some Thoughts on Integrating Mormon Women's History into Mormon History." There was a greater than usual

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amount of time given to discussion among the participants, all of whom had published in the field. At the beginning Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, who with Patricia L. Scott had compiled the beginning bibliography, spoke on the types of historical studies that had been published over the decade; at the end Carol Cornwall Madsen led a wrap-up discussion to suggest areas yet to be opened to historical dialogue.

In order to assess what had been published in the history of Mormon women, we compiled this bibliography, taking as our starting point the excellent bibliographical essay prepared by Carol Cornwall Madsen and David Whittaker, "History’s Sequel: A Source Essay on Women in Mormon History," which appeared in 1980 in the *Journal of Mormon History*. That paper had surveyed articles and books published up to 1977; we continued our listing from that point. The increase in volume demanded that we not comment, as Carol and David had done, but simply list items.

We have, however, arranged the items into general categories based on what materials we found. It will be quickly seen in what follows that historians are still focussing heavily on biography and autobiography, but it is also apparent that work is being done in topics such as the religious, intellectual, and political lives of women. Family life, including polygamy, is receiving increasing attention, as are domestic history and women in the marketplace. Since most items deal with more than one of these general concerns, we trust users will consult related sections as well as the obvious ones. It is our hope that this bibliography, now expanded far beyond what was used at the conference itself, will aid scholars in the study of many aspects of the lives of Mormon women and, thus, encourage even more research and writing in the area.

We acknowledge with thanks the financial assistance of Dean Hickman, and of Mary Stovall and Leonard J. Arrington, directors of our sponsoring institutes. We appreciate the participation of the conference attendees in providing copies of their own publications lists. And we thank most sincerely Marilyn Rish, whose impeccable typing and attention to detail gave this publication its final sheen of respectability.

We recognize our fallibility and beg forgiveness in advance for omissions and errors. It is our intention to keep this project current and so encourage readers and users of this publication to submit to the Women’s Research Institute, 940 SWKT, BYU, Provo, UT 84602, further items as they appear.

### Autobiography, Letters, Diaries


Campus Education Week Program. *Voices From the Past: Diaries, Journals and Autobiographies.* Provo: Division of Continuing Education, Brigham Young University, 1980. (Includes six autobiographical diary excerpts from Mormon women.)


**Biography**

Scott and Beecher: Bibliography of Mormon Women


**Women in the Home**


**Family Life**


**POLYGAMY**


**Education**


**Women in Business and Professions**


Murphy, Miriam B. “Women in the Utah Work Force from Statehood to World War II.” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 50 (Spring 1982) : 139-59.


**Pioneer and Frontier Life**


ORGANIZATIONS


**Religious Life**


**Politics**


LITERATURE


*Exponent II* 1974–


PERFORMING AND VISUAL ARTS


INTELLECTUAL HISTORY


**Contemporary Life**


*Exponent II* 1974–.


Bibliographies and Guides


MORMON HISTORY ASSOCIATION AWARDS FOR 1984

BEST BOOK (INTERPRETIVE):

BEST BOOK (DOCUMENTARY):
Dean C. Jessee, *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1984)

T. EDGAR LYON AWARD FOR BEST ARTICLE:

FRANCIS M. CHIPMAN AWARD TO OUTSTANDING YOUNG SCHOLAR:
Clifford L. Stott for *Search for Sanctuary: Brigham Young and the White Mountain Expedition* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1984).

SPECIAL CITATIONS:
To the LDS Museum of Church History and Art, Salt Lake City, for “exceptional grace in presenting the Mormon past.”
To Jeffery O. Johnson, “for professionalism in the management of Mormon archives” while working for the LDS Church Historical Department’s Library-Archives, 1969-84.

OTHER AWARDS:
Grace Fort Arrington Award for Historical Excellence: To Gordon Irving, coordinator, James Moyle Oral History Program, LDS Church Historical Department for his work with Mormon oral history since 1972.
The reader of Michael Quinn's biography of J. Reuben Clark\(^1\) may feel a bit like President Harry Truman when briefed by economists on economic matters. As they developed an economic scenario, they often added, “but on the other hand.” In exasperation the President is reported to have exclaimed, “Get me a one-armed economist!” The “on the other hands” that emerge in Quinn’s work are not the sole creations of the author, but are prompted by the many paradoxes in the extraordinary life and times of J. Reuben Clark. His life was long, varied, and often complex. The biography will surprise even those who thought they knew him.

My first consciousness of J. Reuben Clark was when he was a member of the First Presidency of the Church during the administration of President Heber J. Grant. My parents held him in high esteem as a Church leader, and they were closely aligned with his political and public views. I was admonished to listen to what he had to say in church and public settings, but serious consideration of him in both of these roles did not develop until after World War II. Then as my interest heightened in church and gospel matters, and my study of politics enhanced my public awareness, I found Clark even more fascinating as he clearly bridged both worlds.

His religious sermons were usually filled with substance and not froth. They were meaty, doctrinally filling, and soul satisfying. His priesthood address at general conference in April 1953, for example, was especially soul searing to me.

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as it bore in on the power of the priesthood in such a forceful way that I shall never forget it. He said, in part: "Let us not treat the Priesthood lightly... We should never engage in any act... to which we might not invite the Spirit of the Lord to participate with us... [or] that will either deprive us of the Priesthood, or that will in any way impair our ability and power to exercise it.” He then told the story from the Bible of Christ finding a fig tree that bore no fruit and cursing it that it should not thenceforth furnish fruit to any man. He said that critics had difficulty understanding this act and that he did not intend to explain it, but he wanted to use it as an illustration of what will come to priesthood bearers who do not exercise the priesthood properly. He concluded with this thought:

When you think of what that Priesthood means, you men of families, with children,—how glorious it is to be able to go to the Lord when one of them is ill and particularly when the doctors tell you there is no hope, how glorious it is to go the Lord and ask for his help, doing this through the power of the Priesthood which you possess, and with the knowledge that if not contrary to his wisdom, he will grant that help.

And what a tragedy it would be, if, when that time should come, and it will come to most of you, sooner or later, what a tragedy it would be, if your right to invoke your Priesthood had been lost through transgression. What a tragedy to find you were in the position of the fig tree that had been forbidden thereafter ever to bear any fruit.

A year earlier, on February 13, 1952, J. Reuben Clark had delivered the Pi Sigma Alpha (honorary political science society) lecture at the University of Utah entitled “Our Dwindling Sovereignty.” I was then completing my studies in political science and beginning my teaching career. My years in the military service were ever so recently behind me. The tragedy and horrors of war propelled me toward seeking solutions to world problems, and American internationalism and the United Nations promised hope for a better world, a peaceful world, I thought. Clark's address was unsettling to me. At that juncture in history, how could anyone argue for a nationalist, isolationist position? Even the title of the address was a contradiction! He spoke authoritatively from his world affairs experience, the data he supplied in support of his position was impressive, his logic and his arguments were difficult for me to refute — yet I could not agree with him. (Nevertheless, as a student of Latin American history I applauded his Memorandum on the Monroe Doctrine, written as Undersecretary of State in 1928, which repudiated U.S. intervention in Latin America under the guise of the Monroe Doctrine.)

Intervening years, and especially the Vietnam war, have brought me much closer to many of Clark’s political views, but he continued to be an enigma for me. I had respect for him as a Church leader but at the same time I was concerned about the partisan role he carried on in his Church position. I had mixed feelings about the man. The real problem was that I did not know him.

2 Conference Reports, April 1953 (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints), pp. 52–56.

3 J. Reuben Clark, Jr., “Our Dwindling Sovereignty” (Salt Lake City: University of Utah, 1952).
We were a generation apart, traveled in different circles, and were personally unknown to one another. I was in no position to understand the man properly, as few were.

George Nash, who as a scholar at the Hoover Presidential Library undertook a multivolume biography of Herbert Hoover, gave an address at the library commemorating the 111th anniversary of President Hoover's birth. In explaining the value of the Lou Henry Hoover papers to his work, he said: "The biography of a great man is more than a simple chronicle of his public acts. A true biography seeks to recreate the warmth of a life being lived. It seeks to depict the whole man, not just the outward man." The best biographers, Nash believed, "bring them back alive." This is what he hoped to do for President Hoover, whose public career and political views were strikingly similar to those of J. Reuben Clark's.

Michael Quinn's book *J. Reuben Clark: The Church Years* has indeed brought President Clark "back alive," as did Frank Fox's *The Public Years*. Quinn has breathed life into a man I did not know and could not have known. He still is an enigma, paradoxical, controversial, inspirational; but I can understand and appreciate him more, identify and empathize with him, and differ with him but respect him. The author's work is comprehensively researched, selectively developed with care, and the facts are allowed to fall where they fall without tilting the narrative toward tidiness. Some literary license is taken to add the "warmth of a life being lived," but not at the expense of skewing the biography.

The book left the impression that Clark in his early life was a selfish, career-oriented man who was initially willing to subordinate his family, heritage, and religion to worldly success; but during the last third of his life, his public career became secondary to that of serving his church, his people, and his God. Remarkably, he moved from positions at the local level, such as Sunday School teacher, to first counselor to President Heber J. Grant without any Church administrative office in between. Nevertheless, his public administrative experience aided in his long-lasting Church contributions, which include "the centrally directed Church Welfare Plan, reorganization of Church finances, establishment of Assistants to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, establishment of regional priesthood leadership, closed-circuit media broadcasts of general conferences to outlying Church wards and stakes, simultaneous translation of general conferences into the languages of non-English speakers, and construction of multi-ward buildings."  

J. Reuben Clark was a partisan Republican opposed to the New Deal, but he moderated the virulent anti-New Deal positions and statements of President Grant, a nominal Democrat. He opposed the meddling of Church officials in political affairs during his public years, but as a Church leader, he had a call in part to be the public spokesman of the Church, and his own political meddling was considerable. J. Bracken Lee declared that he would not have been elected governor of the state of Utah in 1948 without Clark's support. Lee said he began to lose Church support "when McKay demoted Clark"

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4 Quinn, *The Church Years*, p. 281.
with the appointment of Stephan L Richards as President McKay's first counselor.5

J. Reuben Clark was ordained to the proselyting office of a seventy when he was eighteen years old, but he was never a zealous missionary. He opposed religious dogmatism and was tolerant of others' religious views. He was unalterably opposed to sin and spoke often of the evils of a sinful life, but he was filled with compassion for the repentant sinner. His most powerful sermons pertained to priesthood, and his most eloquent were about the Savior.

He distrusted "intellectuals," which is difficult to square with his lifetime intellectual and scholarly pursuits, but I suspect his real concern was with the "pseudo-intellectuals." His Church years emphasized the need for a balance of secular studies with those of faith. He was concerned, however, with what he perceived as the mental laziness and conformity of the members of the Church.

Another seeming paradox, among many too numerous to mention in the scope of this review, was Clark's attitude toward the military and war during his Church years.6 Earlier in his public life he had been an internationalist. He later served as a major in the Judge Advocate General division of the Army and on special assignment to the U.S. Attorney General's office during World War I, in which he supported military efforts and opposed pacifism. "During nearly thirty years as an elder statesman in the First Presidency, however," Quinn writes, "President Clark's pronouncements on war indicated that his views had experienced a transformation varying from subtle shifts of emphasis to complete reversals."7 This change I find quite understandable. As Fox explains in his biography, Clark learned to hate war during W.W. I. "To the end, Reuben had remained the reluctant soldier."8

Clark's career work in international law, his hope in pacifism, his faith in progress were all casualties in the war. He was the diplomat, and disputes were better resolved through diplomacy than through militarism and war. He was also a believer in Christ, whose message was peace on earth, goodwill toward men. What I find difficult to reconcile was his near pro-German stance during World War II and his bitter anticommunist position following. From our vantage point in time, was Hitler's Germany not worse than or at least as bad as the post-war dictatorships?

At general conference in October 1947, J. Reuben Clark gave an address that went against the current of the pioneer centennial. He intended to challenge "the incessant adulation of prominent pioneer leaders of Mormonism rather than the common folk of pioneering, and the tendency of present Latter-day Saints to bask in the reflected glory of their ancestors."9 His eloquent

5 Author's oral interview with J. Bracken Lee, November 28, 1979.
7 Quinn, The Church Years, p. 201.
8 Fox, The Public Years, p. 271.
9 Quinn, The Church Years, p. 103.
address left his audience with the message that each individual must stand on his own accomplishments before God, and that there is no place for an aristocracy in the Church. Even so, prior to his death he discussed a biography of his own life and what he had done that might be worthy of note. It appears his priorities were those of his public years, or was it a matter of modesty about his Church contributions? I prefer to conclude the latter, and I am thankful to those who agreed to have the biography of his Church years published — that I might finally come to know Brother Clark.
MORMON HISTORY ASSOCIATION
ENDOWMENT FUND

The Mormon History Association invites contributions to a special Endowment Fund established in 1979 to further the Association's goal of promoting the understanding of Mormon history and scholarly research and publication in the field. Tax-deductible donations to the fund will be invested in a trust fund established at Zion's First National Bank in Salt Lake City. Interest from the account will help defray publication costs of the *Journal of Mormon History*.

For further information, contact Jessie L. Embry, Executive Secretary of the Association.
Political Deliverance — At a Price:  
The Quest for Statehood

By Jean Bickmore White

Few concepts are of greater interest to political scientists and political historians than those relating to the acquisition and use of political power. If we define political power as the ability to influence or control the making of public-policy decisions (or to keep any decisions from being made and thus protect the status quo), it becomes clear that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints had little power to influence directly the decisions of the United States government during most of Utah's territorial history.

Without voting power in Congress, the Saints were vulnerable to legislation that controlled their voting rights, confiscated church property, and sent a large number of their leaders to prison. They had no voice in the selection of territorial governors, judges, and other powerful officials appointed by a political patronage process. The very existence of the Church as an institution seemed threatened by a hostile federal government after passage of the Edmunds-Tucker Act in 1887 and the pressures of the "raid."

It is small wonder, then, that Brigham Young and his successors as president of the Church gave a high priority to the attainment of statehood for the territory. With statehood, they believed, the Church and its members could elect their own officials and be free of what they regarded as persecution by the federal government. Consequently, the leaders of the Church developed and used various strategies to attain this aim. The First Presidency became, in effect, a committee for statehood.

The difficulty of this task can hardly be exaggerated. Relatively few in number, clearly dominated in political matters by the Church hierarchy, and

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involved in a marriage practice morally distasteful to virtually everyone else in the country, the Mormons for most of the latter half of the nineteenth century would appear to have had little chance to see the territory become a state. Yet before the turn of the century the elusive prize was theirs.

How did Utah gain statehood? This question is addressed by Edward Leo Lyman in the aptly titled Political Deliverance: The Mormon Quest for Utah Statehood. Statehood was sought as deliverance from a multitude of troubles; it was gained by artful deployment of the slender resources of the Church to cement political bargains—some of which Church leaders may not have understood they had made.

The question has been dealt with before by numerous historians and has of necessity been part of any discussion of the political history of nineteenth century Utah. Fortunately, Lyman provides a helpful bibliographical essay and an extensive bibliography. Of previous works devoted primarily to the statehood struggle, Gustive O. Larson’s The Americanization of Utah for Statehood is perhaps the best known. Larson takes the controversial view that a more accommodating stance on the part of the federal government would have avoided the confrontations with the Mormons, and time would have brought changes in the political configuration and marriage practices that ostensibly blocked entry of Utah into the family of states. Although defensive in tone, Larson’s work was valuable as a major effort to trace the statehood struggle, and it provided considerable new material when it was published in 1971. Lyman delves far more deeply into the topic, using sources not available until recent years, as well as papers and documents in other parts of the country that greatly enrich the book. He also brings an added dimension by relating the Utah statehood struggle closely to the national political scene and to national issues, such as the tariff. This is a major strength of this work.

Lyman considers his work revisionist in the sense that he focuses on polygamy as the main barrier to statehood. He points out that this was the issue of greatest concern to members of Congress, who would make the final decision on statehood. This was the reason for pressure from constituents, he maintains, not concern over political dictation by Mormon leaders in territorial affairs. He discounts the often-quoted statement of Idaho Senator Frederick T. Dubois:

Those of us who understood the situation were not nearly so much opposed to polygamy as we were to the political domination of the Church. We realized, however, that we could not make those who did not come actually in contact with it, understand what this political domination meant. We made use of polygamy in consequence as our great weapon of offense to gain recruits to our standard. There was a universal detestation of polygamy, and inasmuch as the Mormons openly defended it we were given a very effective weapon with which to attack.  


3 Autobiography of Frederick T. Dubois, p. 29, as quoted in Klaus J. Hanson, Quest for Empire (Michigan State University Press, 1967), p. 170.
It would seem that there is really no contradiction here. Lyman notes that at the end of the decade of the 1860s, a substantial body of non-Mormons lived in Utah. Fearful of "the political control of the priesthood," they soon formed the Liberal political party and began a campaign in Congress to remove powers from the popularly elected territorial legislature and increase the power of federally appointed territorial officials. This non-Mormon minority certainly had much to gain by maintaining territorial status in Utah, since these officials were markedly more friendly to non-Mormon enterprises, such as mining. The problem is one of distinguishing the motivation of the anti-statehood forces and their methods.

It would seem that there was a strong economic motivation, as well as a fear of political domination, in the campaign of prominent non-Mormons against statehood, and this element is neglected by Lyman. Leonard J. Arrington has pointed out the threatening nature of the cooperative movement of the late 1860s, when an effort was made to set up cooperative stores throughout the territory and to get the Saints to avoid trading with "outsiders." 4 One need not buy the entire Marxian interpretation of history as a struggle over economic resources to see that this movement threatened the continued existence of non-Mormon enterprises in the territory. Hence the pressure on Congress to bring the Mormon economic-political establishment to heel — using the more emotionally charged issue of polygamy as the ostensible reason. Arrington comments: "That the issue of polygamy played a major role in this campaign can hardly be denied, but it seems to have been neglected that Mormon collectivism, in economics and politics was also under attack." 5 Perhaps since this was written, too many writers have tended to deemphasize the importance of polygamy as a cause for legislation to curb Mormon political power and an excuse for delaying statehood. Certainly polygamy was the issue that created the greatest difficulty for Church leaders in their attempt to change their public image and become "Americanized" enough to deserve statehood. Lyman recounts, the many attempts of Church leaders to create the impression that polygamy was on the way out, without actually giving up the doctrine or encouraging men to deny their obligations to their wives.

Ultimately, lacking direct political power in the form of votes for national legislators, the First Presidency took stock of the situation and initiated a bold campaign to change the national public image of Mormonism. By using the services of public relations men of the Southern Pacific Railroad and by discreet payment for friendly treatment from selected publications, the Church received some favorable press treatment. Unsavory though this may seem, it was a technique well known at the time and the forerunner of modern public relations techniques. As John D. Rockefeller and others with less than angelic reputations could testify, the judicious use of money has often helped to bring about a more acceptable image.


5 Ibid., p. 356.
However, this was not enough. While Republicans controlled Congress during much of this time, they were notably reluctant to bring a Democratic-leaning territory into the nation of states. Enter James S. Clarkson, an Iowa newspaper editor and twice chairman of the Republican National Committee; Judge Morris M. Estee, chairman of the 1888 Republican National Convention; and Colonel Isaac Trumbo, a one-time Utahn and non-Mormon who had prospered in California. Clarkson and Trumbo, in particular, were to play leading roles in softening opposition to the Mormons in Congress and in successfully building support for statehood after the Manifesto of 1890 supposedly had laid the polygamy issue to rest. Both had close contacts in high places in the Republican party and in Congress that could be used to good advantage. But why should they? Lyman brings out the nature of the bargain that probably was crucial to obtaining their help. Clarkson wanted Utah to become a Republican state and also sought Church backing for a railroad venture that could have been extremely profitable to him; Trumbo wanted to be a United States senator from Utah. Both could be regarded as influence peddlers of considerable skill. Both were doomed to be disappointed in receiving their part of what they felt was a bargain made with Church leaders. The details of these relationships make fascinating reading, and they reveal a certain naiveté (or perhaps disingenuousness) on the part of the First Presidency. In any event, a church that appeared to have had no direct political power had made artful compromises over a marriage practice some had vowed would never be abandoned. A church that supposedly could dictate political choices to its members did not even try to get the Utah legislature to elect Isaac Trumbo to the Senate.

As for the aftermath of these political bargains, Lyman argues that the Manifesto of 1890 and subsequent interpretations of it by Church leaders did not really mean that polygamy was to be ended. It was only meant to seem that way, an example of what one writer on political power has called "manipulative persuasion." The Smoot hearings, years later, would prove this point. He also shows that Church leaders did try to further the fortunes of the Republican party in Utah but were unable to dictate political choices to the extent that they had in the past. Moreover, they had no enthusiasm for a campaign to promote Trumbo for the Senate. They did not completely trust him, and it would have taken a formidable effort to counteract his carpetbagger image.

See Lyman's "Isaac Trumbo and the Politics of Utah Statehood," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 31 (Spring 1972): 128–39, for a fuller discussion of Trumbo and his disappointment at not receiving Church support for his Senate candidacy.

Many sources corroborate Lyman's contention that Church leaders were far from putting an end to polygamy in 1890. See, for example, Victor W. Jorgensen and B. Carmon Hardy, "The Taylor-Cowley Affair and the Watershed of Mormon History," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 48 (Winter 1980): 4–36.


Although Trumbo was embittered by the seeming lack of gratitude for his efforts to obtain statehood, apparently he was not completely alienated from President Wilford Woodruff and Counselor George Q. Cannon. President Woodruff died at Trumbo's San Francisco home while he and Cannon were visiting on September 2, 1898.
Ironically, Church leaders once accused of running a political theocracy would later be accused of not delivering on an implied political bargain.

A review can only touch on the strengths of this work. Lyman has done a masterful job in digging through a multiplicity of sources and bringing out a grand design through careful attention to historical detail. In a year when several important works on Mormon history have been published, this effort stands out as must reading for anyone who is interested in the complex relationship of the Church, the territory, and the federal government in the struggle for statehood. It shares one drawback with most studies of Utah political history of this period: it relies heavily on Mormon sources and journals and does not have such personal documentation from the non-Mormon adversaries. Lyman is to be commended for immeasurably broadening the picture with such sources as Clarkson's papers, but we are left with an incomplete understanding of why non-Mormons in the territory fought statehood so long and so vigorously. Many who have tried to obtain primary source material from non-Mormons prominent during this period (as this reviewer has) can attest to the difficulty of the task. Journals and letters from most of these individuals simply do not seem to exist.

In view of the importance of this book, one could wish for a bit more careful editing. Nevertheless, it is a most worthy effort based on many years of diligent research. It will reward anyone interested in seeing how Church leaders who appeared to be politically powerless on the national scene developed strategies and built bargains that ultimately enabled them to meet their goal.10

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10 Evidently nearly 20 percent of the voters in the statehood election of 1895 were not convinced that the territory was ready for statehood. Out of 38,992 votes cast, 7,687 were against acceptance of the new state constitution. Utah Commission Minute Book G, 413, Utah State Archives.
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