Table of Contents

- Mormon Women, Other Women: Paradoxes and Challenges
  Anne Firor Scott, 3

- Strangers in a Strange Land: Heber J. Grant and the Opening of the Japanese Mission
  Ronald W. Walker, 21

- Lamanism, Lymanism, and Cornfields
  Richard E. Bennett, 45

- Mormon Missionary Wives in Nineteenth Century Polynesia
  Carol Cornwall Madsen, 61

- The Federal Bench and Priesthood Authority: The Rise and Fall of John Fitch Kinney’s Early Relationship with the Mormons
  Michael W. Homer, 89

- The 1903 Dedication of Russia for Missionary Work
  Kahlile Mehr, 111

- Between Two Cultures: The Mormon Settlement of Star Valley, Wyoming
  Dean L. May, 125

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Contents

Mormon Women, Other Women: Paradoxes and Challenges
*Anne Firor Scott* 3

Strangers in a Strange Land: Heber J. Grant and the Opening of the Japanese Mission
*Ronald W. Walker* 21

Lamanism, Lymanism, and Cornfields
*Richard E. Bennett* 45

Mormon Missionary Wives in Nineteenth Century Polynesia
*Carol Cornwall Madsen* 61

The Federal Bench and Priesthood Authority: The Rise and Fall of John Fitch Kinney's Early Relationship with the Mormons
*Michael W. Homer* 89

The 1903 Dedication of Russia for Missionary Work
*Kahlile Mehr* 111

Between Two Cultures: The Mormon Settlement of Star Valley, Wyoming
*Dean L. May* 125

FRONT COVER: Leaders of the Latter-day Saint Relief Society, in a photograph taken by C. R. Savage in about 1880: Elizabeth Ann Whitney, counselor in the general Relief Society presidency; Emmeline B. Wells, editor of the *Woman's Exponent*; Eliza R. Snow, general president of Relief Society.


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Leading women of Zion, circa 1880: Zina D. H. Young, Bathsheba W. Smith, Emily P. Young, Eliza R. Snow (Smith)
Mormon Women, Other Women: Paradoxes and Challenges

By Anne Firor Scott

My title allows so many possibilities, all interesting, that I should begin by defining my terms. The “Mormon women” of this particular discussion are those Maureen Beecher has called the “leading sisters” of the nineteenth century, those who established and led the various Relief Societies and their associated organizations, beginning in Nauvoo in 1842. As daughters, sisters, and wives of the leading men of the Church, they constituted a small, visible elite, recognized and looked up to by Mormon women generally. Most of them were plural wives.1

The “other women” of my title also represent an elite, but not a small one. They were the women in the United States at large who organized and ran the thousands of women’s voluntary associations through which nineteenth century women shaped a public role for themselves.

These two groups of women shared roots. The first generation of both grew up, broadly speaking, in the same culture. At the time The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized, the prevailing ideology of gender in the United States was built on the doctrine of separate spheres. The male sphere was public and encompassed wage labor, the professions, government, business, and higher education. Woman’s sphere was the private world of the home, child raising, and

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moral authority. Women were thought to be pious, compassionate, and intuitive by nature; men were said to have stronger minds. Wives were expected to obey their husbands—or, in the absence of a husband, a father or brother.

This division of function was supported with evidence from the Bible and was reinforced from the pulpit, the lecture platform, the popular novel, and scores of advice books. It was built into the law—women could not vote, hold office, sit on juries, or, if married, own property, unless by special dispensation. The division was also embodied in social custom. Women were not expected to hold high positions in any church, to go to college, to practice law, or to speak in public.

Women's status and experience in any society is always shaped by at least three things: the prevailing ideology of sex roles, the actual conditions of life, and the presence or absence of a demand for equality on the part of women themselves. In the United States in 1830, despite the uniformity of ideology, the conditions of women's lives varied widely, depending on region, class, race, ethnicity, and degree of affluence. A demand for "women's rights" was barely beginning to be articulated. The degree to which the ideology matched actual practice varied widely.

When the followers of Joseph Smith broke away from the dominant American culture and began to form their own unique subculture, they took with them the ideology of separate spheres and male superiority. Mormon theology was avowedly patriarchal and invested the custom of male domination with divine sanction. While Protestants everywhere relied on biblical sanction for female subordination, Mormon theology went a step further: men were defined as members of a priesthood whose authority over women was not to be questioned.

Because Mormon women and other American women started out, so to speak, together, and then took different roads, the two groups present an unusual opportunity for comparison. If one asks, what difference did the different roads make, the fact that both groups of women organized and developed all-woman associations for a variety of purposes provides a well-defined focus for analysis. Was the experience of Mormon women in their voluntary associations markedly different from that of other women in the thousands of associations which, by the end of the nineteenth century, had come to dominate community life in every part of the country? Even a tentative effort to answer this question takes us into interesting speculations about the importance of ideology in shaping women's experience and in their progress toward emancipation and equality.

Let us look first at the broader picture, at women's associations in American society generally. Thirty years before Joseph Smith's first revelations, women had already begun to organize. In the 1790s, following patterns long since established by American men, they began to
develop their own groups, first for the care of poor widows and orphans. Before long their concerns broadened to include the poor of either sex. Groups calling themselves by various names, but known generically as benevolent societies, began to spring up in the cities, towns, and villages. Then came women's missionary societies and, in quick succession, temperance, education, and moral reform associations. By the 1830s, when Mormonism appeared on the scene, women were forming the first all-female antislavery societies.

As the westward movement accelerated in the 1840s, women replicated their eastern experience in new communities. While men organized business and government, women took responsibility for establishing churches, schools, and welfare institutions.

In the beginning women's societies seemed so clearly to reflect the values attributed to women—compassionate care for the poor, concern for the morals of the family and the community—that hardly anybody realized just how subversive of the conventional scheme of male-female relations they might become.

The Civil War brought a vast increase in opportunity for women on both sides of the conflict to take public responsibility, especially in the North in the context of the United States Sanitary Commission. By the time the war ended, many women had had experience handling large budgets, organizing and transporting a massive volume of supplies, going themselves into highly dangerous situations—in short, exercising the kinds of public power that the ideology reserved for men.

It was a heady experience, and when the war ended, many women hoped to continue in what they modestly called a "wider sphere of usefulness." The rapid increase in population and the extreme mobility of the last half of the century, the growth in industry and cities, the influx of immigrants, all created new social challenges that ambitious women seized as opportunities. At the same time more women were going to college and the number of self-confident women, accustomed to thinking for themselves, began to increase.

In the midst of all this social change, a new wave of women's organizations took shape. They appeared in large towns and small, even in country villages. Literary clubs for self-education, educational societies for founding women's colleges, working-women's societies to help wage earners, the vast Women's Christian Temperance Union with its "do everything" reform program, two national suffrage associations, settlement houses, educational and industrial unions . . . and so on and on. Each of these groups had a social agenda. Many of them undertook to create various other social institutions: schools, kindergartens, juvenile courts, school lunch programs, parks and playgrounds, public health programs, immigrants' protective associations, libraries, homes for orphans and for aged women, symphony orchestras, trade unions, museums—to name a few.

When the great Columbian Exposition opened in Chicago in 1893,
women from all over the country came to demonstrate their varied public activities and to share enthusiasm and ideas, and went home reinvigorated. The General Federation of Women's Clubs had almost a million members, and astute observers were characterizing the nineteenth century as the "woman's century." By this they probably referred to two things. First, women had visibly and in important ways begun to change community and social life all over the United States. In ten more years a member of Congress would announce to his colleagues that "this is fast becoming a government of the women, for women's views and by the women's clubs." Second, they meant the extraordinary change in women's status, and in the prevailing ideology, brought about largely by their own efforts. One great driving force behind this remarkable change in the status and experience of women had been the voluntary associations, organized by and for women.

In the early twentieth century, the momentum of women organizing on their own behalf continued to grow, and by 1920, had modified the Constitution to make women full voting citizens, had opened wider the doors to education and the professions, and had provided a tool with which newly enfranchised women were able to exercise far-reaching political influence.

Meantime, as this dramatic story was being played out from Boston to San Francisco, from Seattle to St. Augustine, and almost everywhere in between, what had been happening among the Mormons?

When Joseph Smith organized The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, he did more than offer a new theology. He laid the groundwork for what would rapidly become an unusual subculture, one that was destined to be quite different in some essential ways from the dominant American culture. Contrary to American custom, church and state were one. The authority of the men who ran this theocracy was seen to be of divine origin. Like other Americans, Mormons believed in separate spheres for men and women, but in their case the separation was at once more stringent in ideology and less stringent in everyday life than elsewhere. In theory and in theology, men were responsible for all public life, and in private life they were expected to rule their families. At the same time, the exigencies of the Mormon situation required women to be in charge when men were away, as they so frequently were, on church business. Plural wives were often expected to earn their own keep and take full responsibility for their own children. The makings of a paradox are already evident. More was expected of Mormon women than of almost any other women in the country, but at the same time their responsibility to obey members of the priesthood was unquestioned.

The practical demands on Mormon women grew during the first half century of the church's existence. Theirs was the typical frontier experience made more rigorous by persecution, financial stringency, and the extraordinary challenge of settling in a most inhospitable environment.
In spite of all these pressures, Mormon women of the first generation, which included many converts from New England and upstate New York where women's associations had long flourished, moved rather quickly to establish a Female Relief Society. The first meeting, initiated by a woman, took place in Nauvoo in 1842. Joseph Smith made it a point to be there, and advised the women as to how they should proceed. He encouraged the formation of a society “under the priesthood and after the pattern of the priesthood.” He recognized ways in which such a group might be quite useful, but was careful from the start to keep it under control. The choice of Emma Smith for president and other women close to Joseph Smith as counselors established a pattern that would continue for many years. From the fragmentary evidence about that first effort at organization, we may tentatively infer, first, that Joseph Smith saw a women's organization as a useful conduit through which church policy would be carried to the members; second, that with the revelation about plural marriage in mind he particularly saw the need of female support; and, third, that he wanted to be sure that the women in charge were those he could trust. He told the sisters that they should seek to improve the morals of the community and thereby “save the elders the trouble of rebuking; that they may give their time to other duties.” The most important part of this early encounter between the women and the Prophet was that some of those who were there (and some present-day scholars agree) believed that Joseph Smith saw the organization as a parallel to the priesthood, or even as conferring priesthood status upon women. Though this interpretation was never widely accepted, the leading women referred to it often in years to come.

The Relief Society not only undertook to care for the poor in the familiar pattern of the benevolent society; it also contributed in various practical ways to the building of the Nauvoo Temple. The membership grew rapidly, from twenty-six to more than a thousand members, and in a short time the society took its first public stand when it petitioned the governor of Illinois to protect Joseph Smith from certain lawsuits then pending against him. The society continued to be active during 1843, “forwarding the temple and relieving the wants of the poor,” and in a slight portent of things to come, one member resigned because she felt that the women were “taking the bishops' place in looking after the poor and soliciting donations.” In March 1844, what turned out to be the last recorded meeting of this first Relief Society was held. It has been suggested that Emma Smith's opposition to the practice of plural marriage had something to do with putting an abrupt end to the women's meetings, but in any case, by June of that year President Smith was dead and every hand in the community had to be turned to the problem of survival.

There were a few women's meetings in Winter Quarters, some for sewing and quilting, some for prayer, and some for various spiritual exercises. The revelation about polygamy, though not yet public, was already being followed by a few people, and plural wives began tenta-
tively to discuss the matter with each other. In later years, one important function of women's meetings would be that of supporting each other as they tried to learn how to live in polygamy.

Once the Saints were settled in the Great Basin, women's meetings began again. As early as 1851, a Female Council of Health heard lectures by physicians about health care and dress reform. Representatives of this group worked in all but two of the nineteen wards in Salt Lake City, caring for the health needs of poor people. As time went by, concern for the needs of Indians was added to their general responsibility for the poor. By 1854 there were twenty-two Indian Relief Societies, and during the Utah War women's groups were called upon to help clothe the army. In 1857 Sarah Kimball was elected president of a Relief Society in the Fifteenth Ward of Salt Lake City. It is some indication of the strength of the women's desire to work together that so many groups were formed in the midst of the struggles of the 1850s.

By the 1860s it was clear that Mormon society would survive, and its numbers were increasing rapidly. Each new outlying settlement meant more work to be done. At the same time, the completion of the transcontinental railroad brought with it a whole new set of challenges. One was the danger that money needed for capital accumulation and the creation of a viable economy would be spent importing goods from the east. Another was the threat of vastly increased non-Mormon settlement in Utah.

Contemplating this situation, Brigham Young decided that it was time to again make the women's Relief Societies a formal part of the church structure. The bishops were told to set up units in every ward, and the redoubtable Eliza Snow, widow of Joseph Smith and wife of Brigham Young himself, was put in charge of the whole project.

Here as in so many aspects of early Mormon history, Brigham Young was a key figure. On the one hand his views about the women were clear: they should obey their husbands and do as they were told. His advice to a young man was quite in character: "fit you up a little log cabin, if it is not more than ten feet square, and then get you a bird to put in your little cage. You can then work all day with satisfaction to yourself, considering that you have a home to go to and a loving heart to welcome you." But so, too, was his statement: "We believe that women are useful, not only to sweep houses, wash dishes, make beds, and raise babies, but that they should stand behind the counter, study law or physic [medicine], or become good bookkeepers and be able to do the business in any counting house, and all this to enlarge their sphere of usefulness for the benefit of society at large. In following these things they but answer the design of their creation."

Believing firmly that men should make major decisions and that wives should always obey their husbands, he nevertheless saw clearly that the great utopian experiment could not succeed unless he used every scrap of talent available—so he praised and encouraged women
and gave Eliza Snow a great deal of responsibility for bringing the women's energy to bear on some of his major projects. As a Mormon scholar noted in 1942, Mormon thinking about women has been determined by two major forces: the scriptures of the church and the interpretation of those scriptures by church leaders, on the one hand, and the actual historical situation at various points in the church's history. This was one of the times when the needs of the historical situation and the interpretation of Brigham Young clearly overrode the formal tenets of theology.

It is not clear that Young's views were altogether shared by every bishop. For example, the minutes of the Fifteenth Ward Relief Society for January 1868 note that "Brother Bywater . . . [made] some lengthy remarks upon the good and evil that would result from Female gatherings and [he] believed that the good that will result from the Female Relief Society would overbalance the evil." Unfortunately the secretary did not spell out just what the evil was that the good brother feared, but she did note that he closed with "good exhortations to the sisters." From the record it is clear that Mormon women had a considerable tolerance for male exhortation; whether they were guided by it all is another matter.

In the early meetings of this particular Relief Society, Sarah Kimball, who had been chosen president, made it quite clear (though in diplomatic language) that she wanted the sisters to be as independent as possible. She had thought, she said, of asking the brothers for assistance, but concluded that they had enough to do and that the women should learn to raise their own money. Women are inventive, she argued, and what they understood they could carry out.

In St. George at about the same time, another bishop made his anxiety even more explicit: When it came to helping the poor, he said, the sisters could provide clothing but the dispensing of flour, meat, and so forth "is the responsibility of the Bishops . . . anytime you need help ask my brethren here to help you out." He was evidently fearful of allowing any male prerogative to be exercised by the women, for fear, I suppose, that one thing might lead to another.

As local Relief Societies were formed, the bishops designated which women were to be officers—often members of their own families; and while the men fretted about giving women too much freedom, Brigham Young gave them big jobs to do. When the women proposed to found their own journal, with his great-niece Lula Greene as editor, he approved. The *Woman's Exponent* began publishing in 1870 and was soon bringing women all over the Great Basin in touch with each other.

The women were called upon to undertake vital tasks—building and managing cooperative stores, raising money for the Perpetual Emigration Fund, initiating silk culture, organizing the Deseret Silk Association, saving grain, developing home industries, promoting the United Order, organizing the younger women as well as themselves into "retrenchment societies" (as part of the effort to preserve capital),
teaching children, helping young women to go to medical school. By 1888 the Relief Society general board owned land and buildings worth $95,000. They did all these things and more and in the process came to insist upon controlling the institutions they were creating.\(^{18}\)

The grain storage program is a good example. Taking on the demanding task of collecting grain all over the Territory, and arranging for its storage against the day of famine, once a program was in place the sisters assumed it was theirs to control. When local bishops assumed otherwise, the women stood on their rights and appealed to the General Authorities, who instructed the bishops to mind their manners and ask the women for grain when they needed it.\(^{19}\)

The Relief Society did not confine itself to projects suggested by the priesthood. On its own initiative the society built, staffed, and ran a hospital and a school for midwives, as well as a nursing school. Money was raised to help women secure training. Local societies undertook many forms of public service as need arose, including building libraries and kindergartens. In the process members learned, as did their counterparts in other parts of the country, to run organizations, manage money, speak on their feet. Their confidence improved accordingly.\(^{20}\)

Eliza Snow told the sisters in 1877 that their work in home industries was "doing just as much as an Elder who went forth to preach the gospel."\(^{21}\)

The right to vote, which Utah women were second in the nation to secure, was to some extent a gift from the male hierarchy. This did not mean, however, that Mormon women were indifferent about suffrage. In February 1870 the Fifteenth Ward Relief Society met to consider retrenchment and other matters, and several members spoke about the recent achievement. Eliza Snow suggested that a committee be set up to thank the governor for signing the bill (as the society had urged him to do). Then Sarah Kimball said that she had waited patiently for a long time for this event, and now that it had occurred she was ready to, as the minutes put it, "openly declare herself a woman's rights woman, and called for those who would to back her up. Whereupon many manifested their approval." She went on to talk about the prejudice that women would have to overcome now that they were to be in public life.\(^{22}\)

Relief Society women were soon taking an active part in territorial politics, educating themselves as they went along.

Both suffrage and Relief Society work had results that Brigham Young, for all his foresight, had not envisioned. Having gotten the right to vote themselves, Relief Society women became strong supporters of the national suffrage movement, and Sarah Kimball became a vice-president of one of the suffrage associations. If the pages of the *Woman's Exponent* may be taken as valid evidence, by the late seventies the leading sisters were strong feminists who were thoroughly in touch with the women's movement in the rest of the country.
The *Exponent* itself developed in a direction perhaps not foreseen. Its masthead carried the slogan: “For the rights of the women of Zion and the rights of women of all nations.” Emmeline Wells, its second editor, described the journal as “power in the hands of women.”

From the very beginning the editors offered their readers a great deal of information about the women’s rights movement as it was developing in the larger society. Nearly every question that agitated women’s rights advocates elsewhere was discussed: dress reform, health, women’s rights to speak in public, equal pay, opportunities for higher education. Women’s accomplishments, large and small, were enthusiastically reported. The radical wing of the suffrage movement came in for repeated praise: Stanton and Anthony were viewed as heroines. In 1883 Emmeline Wells spoke of their influence: “[The] seed was planted in my soul by reading *The Revolution* [Stanton and Anthony’s radical journal]. . . . I could never have done the work I have done in this territory had it not been for the work Miss Anthony did before me.”

The *Exponent*, while recognizing the demands that plural marriage made on women, usually treated polygamy as a feminist cause. Over and over a spirited defense of the institution was based on its capacity to liberate women and help them develop independence. Emmeline Wells’ statement was typical: “[It] gives women the highest opportunities for self-development, exercise of judgment, and arouses latent faculties, making them more truly cultivated in the actual realities of life, more independent in thought and mind, noble and unselfish.”

Edward Tullidge commented in 1881 that the men at first had looked on the *Exponent* as a mere women’s whim, harmless, to be sure. But now, he said, “it wields more real power in our politics than all of the newspapers in Utah put together.”

Viewing all this activity and strongminded behavior, it is not surprising to find the Mormon women at the Columbian Exposition taking a full part in that great whirl of woman-centered activity, sharing ideas and enthusiasm with women from all parts of the country.

Back home in Utah after this encounter with other women leaders, activist women were almost immediately drawn into a battle to restore woman suffrage (which the Edmunds-Tucker Act had abolished in 1887). In 1895 the two parties were engaged in electing delegates to a constitutional convention; both wooed potential women voters. The women, who demanded pledges of support for suffrage, made sure those pledges were remembered when the convention met. Orson F. Whitney, a leading Mormon, lived up to his pledge, arguing that “it is woman’s destiny to have a voice in the affairs of government. . . . This great social upheaval, this woman’s movement is making itself felt and heard.” The result, he said, would justify “woman’s participation in the great cause of reform.” Brigham H. Roberts, another leading Mormon, argued with equal vigor on the other side, calling up all the famil-
iar antifeminist arguments and telling women that they would unsex themselves and lose control of the “domestic empire” if they were able to vote. (He did not explain why this dire result had not followed during the twenty-seven years that Mormon women voters had taken an active part in territorial affairs.)

The suffragists won, and immediately afterward elected three women to the new state legislature, the best known of whom was a Democrat, Martha Hughes Cannon, the first woman in the United States to be elected to a state senate. A medical doctor and a longtime suffragist, she was a plural wife (whose husband had run for the senate on the Republican ticket and had been defeated). She had spoken at the Columbian Exposition and had strong ties with the national women's rights movement. Cannon's career in the legislature was a forecast of things to come. Her legislative work centered on public health, children's needs, education, and the problems of working women, subjects that would form the agenda of hundreds of women legislators after national suffrage was adopted in 1920.

Looking back from 1900 over the fifty preceding years, we would have to agree with Maureen Beecher that during that time “women were their own acknowledged and unquestioned leaders. With operational power thus vested in a cohesive group of faithful, conscientious women, it is not surprising that they and their sisters contributed so remarkably to the political, educational, economic and social well-being of the Mormon community and of the Intermountain West.”

If this analysis stopped in 1900, the conclusion would have to be that neither ideology nor formal male domination do much to alter the fundamental thrust of women's voluntary associations or the consequences of their existence for the society and for the women who take part. Leaders among Mormon women, while always giving lip service to the notion of woman's sphere, contributed to Mormon society in ways that they and others thought were as essential as the contributions of the priesthood. Working in their own groups, they developed self-confidence and exercised initiative as women in similar groups elsewhere did. To be sure, the bishops came around and gave advice, but the women looked to their own officers for guidance. Woman's work was central to the success of the Mormon enterprise, and church leaders told them so. In 1892 Joseph F. Smith praised the women in a speech full of strong statements about the inherent equality of male and female. “Why should one [sex] enjoy civil rights and the other be denied them?” he asked rhetorically. Orson Whitney's speech to the constitutional convention was in the same vein. But even as he spoke, things were beginning to change. Brigham H. Roberts's speech provided a better forecast of the future than that of Whitney, as he called upon “Christian wives and mothers” to “retain that empire [the domestic empire], shun the political arena, avoid the rostrum, beware of unsexing yourselves. If you become embroiled in political agitation the queenly
aureola that encircles your brow will fade away and the reverence that is paid you will disappear." 31 It was a far cry from Brigham Young.

In 1906 the same Joseph F. Smith who in 1892 had spoken so firmly about women’s equality, now church president, began to talk about the need for strengthening the priesthood as the governing body of the church. He launched a reform movement for that purpose. Though the centralization that followed was general and applied to all the auxiliaries, it had the effect of restricting women and giving greater power to men.32 Since 1896, women of the Relief Society general board had been working to raise money for a building of their own. By the time the money was in hand, however, they were told that the bishops and several other groups would occupy the building with them, whatever the intent (perhaps it was simply an economy move). To the women it was bound to seem like a renewed effort to keep tabs on their activities.

The question of women’s precise spiritual role in the church was also an issue. For many years women had practiced the spiritual functions of washing and anointing and of blessing and healing the sick. As we saw earlier, some women had obliquely argued that certain priestly functions belonged to women, acquired either through marriage or through Joseph Smith’s words to the first Relief Society in Nauvoo, or both. For years some sisters had worried about these matters: just what could they and could they not do as good Mormons? In the mid-nineties, according to Ruth May Fox, Zina Young had been asked whether women did indeed hold the priesthood in connection with their husbands. Her response was, “We should be thankful for the many blessings we enjoy and say nothing about it. If you planted a grain of wheat and keep poking and looking at it to see if it was growing you would spoil the root.” 33 Nevertheless, some women persisted in asking for guidance, and of course what they heard was that they could not consider themselves part of the priesthood.34 Zina Young been quite right: it would have been better not to ask.

Mormon women had never failed to take motherhood seriously. Yet in 1902, in what appears to have been an effort to reemphasize the doctrine of separate spheres, “mothers’ classes” were initiated by the Relief Society, and by 1914 a plan of study on this subject was prepared that all the individual stakes were required to use. Progressive era women outside the Mormon community talked a great deal about motherhood at this time—but for the purpose of arguing that their responsibility as mothers demanded that they undertake public efforts to improve the communities in which their children were growing up. The Relief Society materials concentrated instead on what mothers should do within their homes. In 1915 the independently owned Exponent closed down and the Relief Society Magazine, owned by the society and therefore under the control of the church, took its place. In 1916 the Relief Society visiting teachers, who for many years had been free to decide for themselves what they would talk about as they visited neighboring
families, began to be instructed as to what they should say. Where were all these decisions being made? Surely not by the women alone.

In the early 1920s, in what must have seemed to some old-timers like a return to the good old days, the Relief Society joined other women’s associations across the country first in lobbying for the passage of the Sheppard-Towner Act for Maternal and Infant Health, and then in carrying out the statewide program that was required by the law.35

In spite of this piece of contrary evidence, however, it seems clear that from the turn of the century the independence and initiative of Relief Society women—the key women leaders in Mormon life—were under siege.36 The society continued to do important work, but more and more it was drawn under the umbrella of church policy. The women were no longer setting their own agenda.

This, then, is the puzzle: During the middle and late nineteenth century when powerful American public men had, for the most part, been adamantly antifeminist, Mormon leaders, beginning with Brigham Young, had been at a minimum ambivalent about, and at a maximum strongly supportive of, strong, independent women. Through the years from 1850 to the turn of the century, the leading sisters in the Great Basin had been in step with or slightly in advance of the most advanced feminists in the country and had generally been accepted as such by those feminists. Emmeline Wells and Sarah Kimball deserve a place in the feminist pantheon along with Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton.

Then, just as American feminism generally was getting into high gear for its extraordinary push during the years 1900-1920, just as the new generation of college-educated women was moving to the fore in the suffrage associations, just as one state after another was moving into the suffrage column—in short, just as legal and social emancipation came to be a real possibility for many American women, Mormon women fell back. The male leaders of the church changed their stance, and apparently—despite private bitterness—there was no public outcry from the women.

If this description is accurate, the central question is, why did it happen that way? It is a question that has been raised by laymen and historians alike, and the motivation for finding an answer is high among non-Mormons as well as Mormons.

The materials for seeking an answer are numerous. The church is, of course, known for its concern for historical records, and primary sources abound. A large and growing body of writing on the history of Mormon women provides the beginning point. The answer is likely to be found, I think, not in one cause but in multiple causes, perhaps reinforcing each other. Let me suggest some of the places we might begin to look.

One obvious subject for examination is the church’s general ideological development after polygamy was outlawed and statehood
achieved, and how that development affected women. Several historians have seen these two events as marking a dramatic change in Mormon life, including a turn away from the dreams of a utopian community and toward much more traditional economic goals. If that was the case, what were the precise implications for women?

Another subject for study might be called the generation question. The characters of the first generation of leading sisters were forged in a demanding frontier society. The Darwinian selection that always accompanied frontier settlement was perhaps more stringent among the Mormons than among most other settlers—and those who survived were likely to be the strongest and most independent, female as well as male.

Part of the generation question has also to do with converts. I understand that a large demographic study is underway among church historians. Perhaps when it is finished, patterns of conversion will emerge. Were there marked differences in the kinds of people who joined the church in its early, utopian days compared to those who joined when it had become a going concern? Were people attracted to the church after 1900 whose belief systems were likely to include a conservative view of women’s roles?

Still another quite fascinating part of the generation question has to do with Mormon men. Brigham Young was a vital factor in the early development of women’s leading part in Mormon society. Has anyone, I wonder, looked carefully at the presidents who followed him to analyze the evolution of their views on the woman question? Certainly it seems clear that by the time of the grain storage controversy during the first World War, when Emmeline Wells’s name was signed to a document without her knowledge and the women’s grain was given away without their consent, the General Authorities were no longer following the pattern laid down by Brigham Young.

Then there was polygamy. In certain ways plural wives had, as they often argued, unusual opportunities for developing independence. I think—to choose one example—of Ellis Shipp going off to study medicine in Philadelphia, encouraged by Brigham Young, financed by the Relief Society and her sister wives, leaving her children for those same sister wives to raise. Her career as a medical doctor, builder of medical institutions, trainer of midwives, and pioneer in so many ways would have been difficult, perhaps impossible, had she been her husband’s only wife. The Relief Society president of the Salt Lake Stake wrote that the plural wife “became freer and can do herself individually things she never could have attempted before; and work out her individual character separate from her husband.” Martha Hughes Cannon was quoted in the San Francisco Examiner as saying that “if her husband has four wives she had three weeks of freedom every single month.” Many other similar quotations could be cited. It is significant that nearly all of the leading sisters of the first two generations were plural wives.
Perhaps polygamy figures in another way. As long as it was the received doctrine of the church, it was absolutely essential to the survival of the community that women not become disaffected. During most of the late nineteenth century, the Mormon community was under attack by the federal government as well as by American public opinion on this issue. Had women apostatized in great numbers, the whole enterprise would have been doomed. From the point of view of the General Authorities, then, it was vital to have strong-minded women leaders who would speak up for the institution—and one way to do that was to give such leaders a chance to develop, to make them an integral part of the enterprise. Was this the explanation for the fact that the *Exponent* was permitted to take such radical stands? Once polygamy was ended, the women's support was no longer so vital. Coincidentally, perhaps, the *Exponent* soon disappeared, to be replaced by a journal controlled by the church.

The most difficult part of the question I have posed is this: Why did the very kinds of activity and experience that had prepared other American women to move rapidly toward emancipation apparently cease to work that way for Mormon women? Why did a group of leaders who had enjoyed a considerable measure of informal power and of independence, who had made themselves into significant characters, accept the restrictions that were gradually placed upon them? Why did they disengage from the national networks of women and go off in a different direction from those with whom they had once been so much in step—or, indeed, whom they had once led?

Some of the points I have raised about the change itself bear upon this issue as well. Perhaps the new generation was made up of different kinds of people, either because their experience had been less rigorous, or because patterns of recruitment had changed—or both.

One hypothesis worth investigating would take us again to the comparative approach. American women in general have always faced a great deal of opposition when they have tried to change the structure of male-female relations. There is nothing Mormon leaders have said or done in this regard that could not be replicated in some record of non-Mormon men. We have only to recall the solemn words of the Supreme Court telling Myra Bradwell she could not be admitted to the bar because God had designated men to apply and execute the laws, or the numerous heated debates in Congress with their dire prophecies of ruin if women voted.

The difference was that feminists who were not Mormons were free to fight back, and they had a variety of precepts available with which to counter antifeminist arguments. They could put the Declaration of Independence up against Saint Paul. The logic of the phrase "all men are created equal and endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights," though it applied in 1776 to a minority of Americans, was in the end bound to work itself out. The very pluralism of American society gave women many grounds upon which to stand and fight.
Mormon women, by contrast, had no alternative doctrine. Mormon theology was the ideology of the government and of the community. That theology was wholly controlled by men. Since women are not admitted to the priesthood, there have been no women prophets. When the General Authorities began to practice overt antifeminism, devout Mormon women had no choice but to obey—or to apostatize, which few wanted to do.38

Mormon women could, of course, have simply asserted their right to be part of the priesthood, to have general revelations. If any did so, I have not seen the record. So far as I know, there was no Mormon counterpart of Elizabeth Cady Stanton's Woman's Bible or of the secular Declaration of Sentiments adopted at Seneca Falls.

My task as I have defined it here is historical. I have not looked beyond 1920. But the questions are not of merely antiquarian interest, for in the whole society we are now in the midst of one of the periodic waves of antifeminism that seem to follow any time women make great strides. This so-called backlash is most apparent in the defeat and seeming death of the Equal Rights Amendment, but it comes to the fore in many ways in small communities and large. Analysis of the past that will help us understand under what conditions women move toward equality and when they are pushed back from it are potentially of great significance to all of us who believe, with those women of 1848, that "all men and women are created equal and endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights."

NOTES

Note: Marjoleine Kars, who provided research assistance during the composition of this paper, deserves a great deal of credit for its existence. She was indefatigable in the search for published material on the history of Mormon women and shared with me the excitement of reading through the successive issues of the Woman's Exponent. We talked often about what we were finding, and I hope she may be heard from again in connection with some of the intriguing questions raised here.


5. Relief Society Minutes, March 17, 1842, quoted in *A Centenary of Relief Society, 1842-1942* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1942), p. 15.


8. Ibid., p. 17.


14. Snow's own independence and self-image may be inferred from the fact that she was still Eliza Snow, not Smith or Young. Her talents were formidable and, had she been male, might well have led her to the First Presidency.


16. Manuscript minutes in the Archives, Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City.

17. Ibid.

18. All these projects and many others are recorded in successive issues of *Woman's Exponent*, 1873-1890. See also Mulvay, "The Liberal Shall Be Blessed," pp. 214-15.


22. Manuscript minutes of meeting of the Ladies Cooperative Retrenchment Society, Saturday, February 19, 1870, Archives, Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City. See also Mulvay, "The Liberal Be Blessed."


27. Jean Bickmore White, "Woman's Place Is in the Constitution: The Struggle for


37. See Embry, "Grain Storage" for the details of this affair.

38. This is, of course, a very complex subject. See Claudia Bushman, "Mystics and Healers," in Claudia L. Bushman, ed., *Mormon Sisters* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Emmeline Press, 1977), pp. 1-23, and Carol Cornwall Madsen, "Mormon Women and the Struggle for Definition," p. 41. In 1906 Orson F. Whitney said that Joseph Smith had taught that "the sisters . . . were to enjoy the benefit and blessings of the priesthood . . . the delegated authority of God." Did "enjoy" mean they could practice? It seems unlikely. Madsen's article is the strongest statement I have seen of women's rights to practice certain priesthood functions, but she stops short of arguing that they have an independent right to function as the priesthood does.
Dedication of Japan for preaching the gospel. Left to right: Louis A. Kelsch, Alma O. Taylor, Heber J. Grant, Horace S. Ensign
Strangers in a Strange Land:  
Heber J. Grant and the Opening of the Japanese Mission

By Ronald W. Walker

Look!
In a world circumscribed by iron
A poor dynamo is panting momentarily
Set in a white circle.
(Murano Shiro, “Hammer Throw”)

When Heber J. Grant returned from a two-week vacation in Pacific Grove, California in February 1901, the news at first seemed favorable. His associate in the Quorum of the Twelve, Francis M. Lyman, had been asked to preside over the church’s European Mission. Elder Grant congratulated himself that “missionary lightning had once more escaped me,” “heaved a sigh of relief,” and embraced Lyman in mock celebration.¹

Since Grant’s appointment as a General Authority almost two decades earlier, rumors had often circulated about a forthcoming proselytizing mission. Each time, however, the reports died stillborn. During the 1880s, the Mormons and their gentile opponents warred relentlessly on theological, political, and even commercial terrain, and it was repeatedly deemed that Elder Grant’s business acumen was too important to the Utah scene to allow a foreign assignment.

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The repose given to Elder Grant by Lyman’s assignment to the Liverpool office was short-lived. Two days after his return from California, during the General Authorities’ regular temple meeting, he heard George Q. Cannon, first counselor in the First Presidency, announce the decision to open a new mission in Japan. “The moment he made this remark,” Heber later recalled, “I felt impressed that I would be called to open up this mission.” This prescience, however, brought a flood of reasons why he should reject the call. The Panic of 1893 and its subsequent depression had crippled his finances. He calculated his net worth to be a negative $30,000. Moreover, his signature appeared on financial notes carrying $100,000 debt. Because of his straitened circumstance, neither of his wives had a home of her own, while his mother’s house was mortgaged to assist with his obligations.

As President Cannon continued for twenty-five minutes, Heber quietly weighed financial and religious commitments. Then came the expected statement: “We hear that Brother Grant has overcome all his great financial difficulties and has announced that he is going to take a trip around the world to celebrate his financial freedom, and we have decided to stop him halfway around at Japan, to preside.”

Having extended a call to Heber, President Cannon yielded to President Lorenzo Snow, who, since becoming Mormonism’s prophet, seer, and revelator in 1898, had slashed at every uncertain expenditure. Fearing that Elder Grant’s precarious finances might somehow encumber the church, President Snow had some specific questions in mind. First he wanted to know whether President Cannon had accurately quoted the apostle about touring the world.

“Heber, did you make that statement?”

“Yes, I did, but there was an extra word in it, and the word was ‘if.’” Grant had no plans to leave if he was unable to retire the rest of his debt.

“Well, then, you are not free?”

“No, I am not free, I owe a few dollars.”

President Snow wanted specifics. “Well, what are you making?”

“A little better than $5,000 a year.”

“Can you afford to lose that $5,000 for three years while you are in Japan?”

“Yes, I can.”

In later years, the memory of this incident remained very much alive. “He tried for ten minutes to get something out of me [about my debts] and could not do it,” Grant remembered. “Finally I said, ‘President Snow, with the blessing of the Lord I think I can arrange all my affairs to go on this mission, . . . and it will be time enough for me to come and tell you I cannot when I feel in my heart I can’t.’”

“The Lord bless you, my boy,” said President Snow, obviously pleased. ‘We will give you a whole year. You go right to work and fix up your affairs to go on this mission.’”

As the meeting concluded, President Snow assured Heber that if he
worked diligently, he "would accomplish a greater labor than any I had ever accomplished before in my life" and hinted that China might soon be opened for Mormon proselytizing as well as Japan.  

The decision to launch a Far East mission had not come precipitously. As early as 1851, when Salt Lake City was not much more than a pioneer outpost, the First Presidency had written that "the way is fast preparing for the introduction of the Gospel into China, Japan, and other nations." Nine years later Brigham Young dispatched Walter Murray Gibson to Japan, but the missionary stopped en route in Hawaii, where his religious impulses receded and he carved for himself a political career.  

Curiously, there had also been contacts between Mormon leaders and high-level Japanese leaders. In the spring of 1871, Salt Lake Stake President Angus Cannon met Prince Hirobumi Ito as they traveled together on the Union Pacific. Already a major actor in Meiji politics, Ito would later serve as a special envoy, as a proconsul, and several times as prime minister. During their several-day journey across the Great Plains, the Japanese minister repeatedly inquired after Mormonism. "He listened most attentively . . . and expressed a desire to learn more," Cannon reported. 

Even more auspicious, Mormon leaders in 1872 had cordial discussions with members of the high-ranking Iwakura mission. Headed by Prince Tomomi Iwakura and composed of over one hundred Japanese government leaders and functionaries making a reconnaissance of the United States and Europe, the traveling embassy became snowbound in Utah for two weeks. With nothing else to do, they visited Utah points of interest, attended Mormon religious services, and called on several prominent church leaders, including Brigham Young, Speaker of the House John Taylor, and Lorenzo Snow, then president of the Legislative Council. Snow recalled that their visit was "very pleasant," and the officials "expressed considerable wonderment as to why we had not sent missionaries to Japan." The diaries of several of the visitors as well as the embassy's official five-volume report contained little of the prejudice normally accorded Mormons of the period. 

Subsequent contacts ensued. In 1888 the Japanese Consul at San Francisco, Koya Saburō, visited the territory, followed the next year by another party of dignitaries. Seven years later, when Elder Abraham H. Cannon, Grant's associate in the Quorum of the Twelve, called on Koya, he was urged to open a Mormon mission in Japan. Considering the favorable opinion of Utah held by Prime Minister Ito, Cannon said, Koya "thought it very probable that we might secure permission to preach the Gospel in Japan without any government interference; in fact his people are anxious to hear the Christian religion proclaimed, as they have an idea that the success of the English-speaking people is due to their language and their religion." 

All this was prologue to Elder Grant's call. At the time of his selec-
tion, he was forty-four years old, the husband of two plural wives (a third had died seven years earlier), and a leading businessman. He was president of the State Bank of Utah, the Salt Lake Theatre Company, three insurance companies, and the Cooperative Wagon and Machine Company, one of the largest retail outlets in the territory. In addition, he served as chairman of the Utah Sugar Company and Zion's Cooperative Mercantile Institution, two leading Utah businesses, and was a board or committee member of a half dozen other organizations.

Grant had left school while a teenager, and the hectic pace of his business life had subsequently given him little opportunity for reading and reflection. At the time of his call, he was the only apostle who had not served a regular proselytizing mission. Most had served several. All these circumstances left Grant feeling unprepared and inadequate. "I do not know when anything has struck me much harder than being called to Japan," he confided. "I really dreaded being called to the British mission . . . , but I look upon the European mission in comparison to opening up the work in Japan, as a picnic on the one hand and a great labor on the other. However, I shall go and do the best I possibly can."

Part of Elder Grant's hesitancy, of course, could be explained by his finances, which within an hour or two after the meeting of the Twelve he tried to improve. Locking his bedroom door, he prayed for relief. "I told the Lord I did not want to wait until tomorrow morning to make some money, but I wanted to put in that afternoon making a little." An impression came. "Get the Sugar Company to pay a stock dividend, that they can pay the same [money] dividend on the watered stock as they were doing on the original."

The Utah Sugar Company, founded only a decade earlier to provide Utah's farmers with a much needed cash crop, was at last reaping large profits, which in turn fueled ever increasing stock splits, higher dividends, and feverish speculation. Although the company's reserves hardly warranted the action, Grant hoped for another round of share splitting and dividend boosting. With the board scheduled to meet the following day, the timing was exquisite. After concluding his bedroom supplications, he hired a buggy and went to entreat the Salt Lake City-based directors, informing them of his mission call to Japan and pointedly reminding them how his earlier support of the company had ruined him during the Panic. The next day the board unanimously approved Grant's proposals and his securities jumped $16,000, an increase that temporarily left him incredulous. Catching his breath, during the next several weeks he further speculated in the stock and reaped enough profit to pay all of his debts, including a $13,000 note that had been owing for over twenty years.

With his finances in hand, Grant turned to organizing his mission. He handpicked three men to go with him. First, he requested the
twenty-nine-year-old Horace S. Ensign, who had earlier served as his private secretary and most recently had returned from a three-year mission in Colorado. In addition to his business and church experience, Ensign possessed a magnificent baritone voice that Heber hoped would attract Japanese attention. Second, he selected the mustachioed, bespectacled Louis A. Kelsch, who after his conversion to the church had filled missions to the Southern States, the Pacific Northwest, England, and Germany. Since 1896 he had presided over the Northern States Mission with headquarters in Chicago. Elder Kelsch accepted Grant's invitation with alacrity. Finally, Grant asked Alma O. Taylor, an eighteen-year-old living in his own Salt Lake City congregation, to join the mission. Taylor, who was cherubic-faced but serious-minded, had studied at Chicago's Harvey Medical College and worked in his family's undertaking business. Upon receipt of his call, he sought Japanese-language textbooks and began studying Buddhist philosophy.

These four men constituted what became known as the "Japanese Quartet," the first wave of the intended Mormon missionary force to Japan. It was hoped that they would "go on ahead," Grant noted, "look over the country, see what we can do, and if everything is all right and conditions are propitious we will then send for our wives and will probably need more Elders." During this first stage, the missionaries planned to spend a year learning the language and then begin proselytizing.

Grant approached his mission in his usual ambitious style. He first planned to ask his business and banking friends in New York to prevail on President William McKinley to speak to the Japanese ambassador on his behalf. Perhaps the ambassador would in turn write favorable letters of recommendation. In another variation still more bold, Grant considered the possibility of getting himself appointed to head the American legation in Tokyo. But his fellow General Authorities vetoed these and other ideas as too extravagant, requesting that the mission start out in a "humble way."

Shortly after 11:00 P.M. on July 24, 1901, Heber J. Grant and his companions boarded the train for Portland, en route to Japan. The date had not come by chance. Suggestive of the weight that the Mormon community placed upon the mission, Grant had chosen to start on Pioneer Day, the anniversary of Brigham Young's 1847 entrance into the Salt Lake Valley. Because of the possibility of cohabitation prosecution, neither of Heber's wives were there to see him off. There was, however, a partially compensating crowd of one hundred and fifty friends and relatives, including Heber's mother, Rachel, eight of his ten children, and six of the General Authorities. As the train pulled away from the station, Heber claimed to have never been happier in his life. He was now, with the support and love of hundreds of friends and relatives, off to introduce the gospel of Jesus Christ to Japan.
Months before Elder Grant's arrival in Japan, the mainline Protestant clergy planned a major campaign to mark the turn of the new century. In early 1901 they began with a series of neighborhood prayer meetings in the nation's largest cities. These failed to stir enthusiasm. But as the Whitsunday festivals began in early summer, their program gained momentum. To advertise their planned revivals, the staid ministers adopted the flamboyant methods of the Salvation Army, which only recently had entered Japan. The Protestants placed notices of their meetings in newspapers and posted eye-catching placards. They canvassed house to house, extending special invitations to those who were thought to be open to Christian influence. Capping their preparations, an hour or two before their scheduled meeting banners and lanterns were hoisted through the street, Christian hymns were loudly chanted, and broadsides were distributed.

While the Protestants' "Forward Evangelistic Campaign" earned a relatively small harvest for a nation of forty million, most clergymen were buoyed. They had been about their task since at least the early 1870s, when the government had granted the Christians religious tolerance, but gains were always hard won. During the last decade, they had become still more difficult. Part of the problem lay with Meiji policy. When the nation ended its self-imposed isolation and embraced Western culture, some government leaders equated Christianity with material progress and looked upon the ministers with favor. But by the 1890s Japan again turned inward. The popular watchwords of the time became: "Down with frivolous Europeanization!" "Keep to our national heritage!" "Japan for the Japanese!"25

These were not the only conditions working against the missionaries. The setting of rural Japan was especially restrictive. There, tenant farmers who comprised half of the nation's population until the middle of the twentieth century were fettered by feudal social structures and the historic family system, both of which during the period of anti-Christian reaction were reformulated and given new life. Religious and social change became increasingly difficult, with many Christian congregations, begun optimistically only a few years earlier, waning and eventually closing. Even in the more fluid urban society, there were challenges. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the nation's military expenditures exacted heavy and impoverishing levies. Under this burden, some former Christian converts, who had hoped that their new faith would assist them in getting ahead, recanted. Thus, at the very time that the Mormons launched their mission, despite the Protestants' public clamor and mass rallies, the Christian churches were afflicted by declining attendance at their mission schools, slower conversion rates, and widespread apostasy.26

Part of the problem lay with the Christian missionaries themselves, who too often failed to separate their own Western and national ways from their Christian message. Many Japanese bridled under such eth-
nocentism, complaining that the Christian churches were "mere importations," with titles, organizations, methods, and teachings that had "nothing to do with the interests or needs of the Japanese." All this created stony soil. When Heber J. Grant and his companions approached Japan, Christianity had at best a toehold. The Greek Orthodox denomination may have had 30,000 Japanese members; the Roman Catholics, 55,000 (many of these descended from families who had been Christian for three hundred years); and the Protestants, who had been most active since the Meiji Restoration, 70,000. Taken together, the Christian population constituted a little more than one-third of one percent, and, given the ephemeral discipleship of many Japanese, even these figures were probably inflated.

* * * * *

Early in the morning of August 12, land was sighted, and at 10:00 A.M. the Empress of India dropped anchor at Yokohama on the western coast of Tokyo Bay's expansive waters. Quarantine checks required about an hour, following which the "Japanese Quartet" took a steam launch for shore. For Heber J. Grant, their arrival came none too soon. "I said good bye to the Empress without any regrets," he said. He had been seasick much of the way.

Several days after landing, the missionaries found themselves in the center of a growing controversy. Learning that a local boardinghouse had turned them away because they were Mormons, a Yokohama newspaper charged the innkeeper with religious "fanaticism." Another journal quickly defended the act, with charges and countercharges soon filling the press. "A heavy war is raging," wrote Alma Taylor only eight days after the missionaries' arrival. While many of the newspaper features were "severe" or "slanderous" against the missionaries, the dispute in Taylor's mind nevertheless brought invaluable publicity.

During the following weeks, Grant worked long hours defending Mormonism in the press. Not understanding the toil involved in composition, he grew frustrated that his writing required time-consuming draft after time-consuming draft. "I have never felt my own lack of literary knowledge so keenly as since I came here," he confided to his Utah friends. And as he had so often expressed since the beginning of his mission, he also lamented his unfamiliarity with the fine points of Mormon theology. He found such topics as original sin and the Mormon view of premortal life "difficult to fully explain."

With newspaper publicity came letters and visitors, the receipt of which soon began to be a part of the missionaries' daily routine. While claiming a lively interest in the Mormons' religious message, many of their visitors, as their motives were searched more deeply, seemed merely curious about the Americans. Others revealed what appeared a crass self-interest, seeking position, salary, or the opportunity to
sharpen their English language skills. The stream of these mendicants put Grant in mind of the proverbial Utah Indian: "Lots of blankets, me good Mormon; no blanket, me join the apostasize."  

This was certainly a factor in Heber's decision to vacate Yokohama for Tokyo, which, it was reported, had "fewer foreigners, a higher class of natives, a more religious sentiment, and by far better instructors in the language and much cheaper living." Thus, two months after the Mormons had debarked, they secured accommodations in Tokyo's leading hotel, the eleven-year-old Metropole, and settled into an established routine.  

Grant studied as he had never before. He read and reread the standard Mormon scriptural works, Mormon history and apologetics, Christian homilies, and several books dealing with Japanese history and culture. In candid moments he admitted that such a steady diet of studying was "just about the hardest thing on earth for me to do," though on other occasions he put forward the best possible face.  

But no amount of good cheer could camouflage the distress he felt for the Japanese language, which with its unusual syntax and thousands of Chinese ideographs posed a massive challenge for the tone-deaf Grant. Though he toiled hundreds of hours studying the language and eventually compiled a detailed, one-hundred-page notebook filled with Japanese vocabulary, his progress was virtually nil. "I do not seem to be able to remember anything that I learn and even the words that I have learned when I hear someone else use them I do not recognize," he complained. For such an achievement-oriented man, who preached the universal virtue of pluck and application, the unyielding, flint-hard language exacted a heavy emotional toil. With considerable pain, he finally reconciled himself to his language failure and devoted himself to what seemed more profitable pursuits.  

Still there remained the language study of his colleagues, and on the missionaries' move to Tokyo, Grant hired their prime Japanese investigator, T. Hiroi, whom they had met in Yokohama, to serve as tutor. But the man's talents failed to speed the younger men's progress, and Taylor and Ensign argued for living among the Japanese in order to learn the language. Grant was reluctant. From the beginning, he had hoped that the mission could "start at the top" with the country's more influential citizenry. That would require learning "standard" or literary Japanese and not the dialects of the people.  

The tension between the missionaries and their leader unsettled Grant. Four nights in the middle of November he slept fitfully, and he admitted to friends back in Utah that, while he seldom was attacked with "the blues," he could "almost get up an attack this morning and not half try." With Ensign and Taylor increasingly restive and even demanding, Grant finally yielded, though the decision went against his better judgment. The action was confirmed the next day by what seemed a cold and
distant letter from the First Presidency that appeared to contradict everything he had done since arriving in Japan. The missionaries were told to avoid newspaper controversy and mingle among the people, and, in Elder Grant’s case, they were pointedly instructed to resume language study. "I would have appreciated ONE word of approval," the apostle lamented, "but as it was not written I had to accept it as an evidence that there was none to give." His reaction probably owed as much to his own emotional state as to the letter’s actual contents. Obviously written in haste and without full attention to Grant’s various reports, it gave offense where none was intended. Nevertheless, he hastened to implement its directions. "I know that to obey is the only way for an apostle," he told a friend. He and Kelsch secured accommodations at a nearby boardinghouse, while Ensign and Taylor moved to a hotel catering to the Japanese trade.

Before their separation, the Mormons had entertained at Hiroi’s request two men of unusual demeanor, Toranosuke Miyazaki and Goro Takahashi. Miyazaki, the scion of a prominent family, would later distinguish himself as the self-proclaimed “Messiah-Buddhist,” a spiritual leader who mixed Christian primitivism with the native culture. But it was Takahashi who clearly attracted Grant’s eye. He had already gained the Mormons’ confidence by publishing on his own initiative a defense of their mission in the Sun, a leading Japanese periodical. Takahashi spoke English well, read Hebrew and French, and even understood some Egyptian. He had distinguished himself as an educator, lexicographer, one of the five Japanese translators of the Protestant New Testament edition, and a prominent Christian polemicist. While resisting Grant’s pleas to convert, Takahashi volunteered to write a book introducing the Mormon mission to the Japanese public.

There were other impressive investigators. In mid-February 1902, Grant and the other missionaries dined at the home of S. Ichiki, who, according to Taylor, had “figured prominently in many of the wars in Japan especially during the troubles of the Meiji restoration.” Also present were Miyazaki and a Mr. Suyenaga, a newspaper editor. The Japanese appeared drawn to Mormon teaching, especially to the missionaries’ description of Mormon economics and group life. Ichiki and his friends promised to arrange a hearing for the Utahns before a group of literati drawn from the national press and members of the lower house of the national Diet.

Ichiki’s presence was obviously formidable. Hiroi, who claimed to know him well, noted that in his circle Ichiki “speaks and the rest obey” and reported that the man “executes whatever he decides to do no matter how hard or what the odds.” Takahashi, obviously overwhelmed, found Ichiki to be “a man such as is rarely found in Japan.”

Suddenly, almost in spite of themselves and certainly contrary to the low-profile language-training mission they had at first conceived, the Mormons seemed on the verge of considerable success. The momen-
tum continued when Hajime Nakazawa, who described himself as a Shinto priest with influence over fifteen hundred followers, appeared at Grant’s rooms. In previous visits Nakazawa had expressed dissatisfaction with his religion and voiced a desire to investigate Mormonism. When his superiors learned of his conduct, they severely rebuked him and eventually expelled him from his order. This hastened his seeking. On March 8, 1902, Nakazawa became the missionaries’ first formal convert, baptized along the shoreline of Tokyo Bay.

Other candidates were also petitioning. Attracted by the newspaper publicity, men who knew little of the missionaries’ beliefs sought baptism, and Heber J. Grant found that the chance for adding names to the church’s rolls was ample if he merely accepted every request made of him. But in each case he put them off, demanding formal instruction. Some candidates had impressive credentials. Mr. Koshiishi, editor of the newly established *Tokyo Shimbun* and apparently a compeer of Ichiki, petitioned Grant several days after Nakazawa’s conversion, but a catechizing of the applicant found that he knew “practically nothing of the gospel” and that he would be “stepping blindly into the church.” Like others before him, Koshiishi was refused.

More persistent was Saburō Kikuchi, who the Mormons were informed was a Christian preacher holding open-air meetings in Ueno Park attended by from five hundred to fifteen hundred people. Unlike others before him, Kikuchi would not be dissuaded, showing his determination by vaingloriously offering himself to be crucified, if necessary, for the faith. Grant yielded before such ardor. Once again, only two days after Nakazawa’s rite, the missionaries rowed into the nearby bay, where Kikuchi was baptized. In keeping with the Mormon practice of conferring priesthood authority on its male laity, both converts were ordained to the office of elder.

Kelsch, Ensign, and Taylor must have observed these events with troubled feelings. The day before Nakazawa’s baptism, just as the mission appeared to be gaining success, they learned that Grant would be returning to Salt Lake City for a visit. When Ensign woke Taylor with the news, the zealous youth could hardly believe it. “The idea, I thought to myself, of Bro. Grant thinking of returning home. Why he has only been here it seems for a week or two.” However, the time had not passed so quickly for Grant. Imprisoned by his inability to learn the language and ill-fitted by temperament to the slow, almost monastic life of his mission, he greeted the opportunity to return home as a welcome relief. Moreover, with his eldest daughter announcing her engagement and a new church president about to be sustained, the apostle also had personal and official reasons for leaving. He sailed for America in March 1902.

A half year later Heber J. Grant was back in Japan, accompanied by nine new missionaries. Four were unmarried: Frederick A. Caine, Erastus L. Jarvis, John W. Stoker, and Sandford Wells Hedges. The other
five were married or had family ties. Marie and Joseph Featherstone had just been "sealed." Mary Ensign was called to join her husband, while Grant looked forward to the companionship of Augusta and their daughter, Mary. The presence of the women, he thought, would add a sense of permanence to the mission. 57

The unmarried elders joined Alma Taylor at a Japanese hotel that provided room accommodations and one Western and two Japanese meals a day for fifteen dollars a month. The married missionaries, including Grant himself, secured a "semi-Japanese" house, only a block or two from the residence of the crown prince, that had five Westernized rooms and six in the Japanese style. 58 While the Japanese section was clean and pleasant, its sliding doors and shutters seemed too confining to the Americans. When walking through this part of the house, they felt "in a box" and consequently used it only for storage. 59

The mission headquarters sat on a small hill, surrounded by a high board fence. Immediately outside the front gate was a rickshaw stall, which was normally occupied by half a dozen cabmen waiting for fares. Still further beyond, situated immediately in front of the house, lay a four-hundred-acre Japanese army parade ground, with barracks in the far-off distance. 60 From their vantage on the hill, the Mormons could observe the soldiers, who sometimes drilled from dawn to dusk. During the summer season, the troops wore white duck suits, with contrasting navy blue caps trimmed in red. Augusta thought the young recruits picturesque, sitting as they often did "on the green grass, their guns stacked and [their] bugles hanging on them." 61 The troops were preparing for the nation's impending conflict with Russia.

Elder Grant used a highly personal reason to secure permission for Augusta to travel with him to Japan. Though his three wives had borne him an even dozen children, Heber's only two sons had died. In Mormonism's turn-of-the-century patriarchal society, the prospect of having his name "blotted out when I die" was deeply distressing. 62 Accordingly, he had appealed to his superiors that Augusta "will soon be past all hope [of bearing a son] . . . , unless in the near future we can be together." 63 But even this chance was slim. Their only child, Mary, had been born thirteen years earlier.

Perhaps for the first time since their marriage eighteen years earlier, Augusta and Heber now experienced what could be described as a normal and unhurried relationship. Each evening, they strolled through the neighborhood, walking across the parade ground or maybe down close to an adjoining railroad track. 64 The couple noticed new things about each other. For one thing, Augusta sensed that Heber's patience did not run as deep as she supposed. Heber readily conceded the point. "When a man is at his office and away from the little annoying things that come in a home almost every hour, he may be very patient," he reflected. "But the change comes when he has his office [in his home] and these things [are] with him all the time." 65 Augusta found
it strange to see her husband study, take so much rest, and, for that matter, be so closely tied to the mission home and its domestic concerns. Once she discovered him scrubbing the kitchen floor, an act that an offended domestic servant immediately halted.66

Elder Grant had hoped that the literary-inclined Augusta could assist with his official mission correspondence, but the newspaper controversy had lapsed in his absence in Salt Lake City. Augusta's writing ability, however, did fill an important function. Her many letters to friends and relatives in Utah chronicled their everyday life. After one rain shower, she found the family's shoes "moss grown," while their clothing had "patches of mould . . . that looked like small vegetable gardens." The offending articles of clothing had to be brushed, shaken, and sunned. "The houses smell mouldy," she complained; "every one that I have been in has the same smell and the ground is never dry around the yard. When we get into bed the sheets and clothing feel perfectly wet, as all our clothing does when we put it on in the morning."67

The carnivorous mosquitoes were especially troublesome. On Augusta's first night in Japan, she set aside her protective netting. As a result, the insects kept her awake most of the night, and upon arising she was a "perfect sight." There were numerous other pests, "strange and marvelous." "When we keep the mosquitoes out the fleas have their turn, and we saw outside our windows three immense spiders. . . . One night a rat ran across the net over the bed, and then there was a great scrimmage to catch it, and the bravest man who was 'not afraid of a rat,' skipped up on the bed in a hurry when the pest ran over his bare foot," Augusta wrote. There seemed to be no end to such afflictions. Once, she insisted, the men in the mission home caught in the dead of night "two of the strangest looking great big things" imaginable, which they took outside and tied to a tree. According to Augusta's excited and perhaps imaginative report, some of the irritating creatures had forked tails, while others had long horns or hoods over their heads. Still others had a "thousand legs."68

As the months progressed, the missionaries developed an established Sunday regimen. The Mormons reserved morning for themselves, when the entire contingent gathered at the Grant home for Sunday School. These services were conducted in English, with a choir, consisting of everyone present, lending musical counterpoint (Heber joined Caine, Ensign, and the women in establishing the melody).69 At 2:00 P.M. the Mormons invited the Japanese to worship with them, and six to a dozen usually did so. Often young male students whose composition changed weekly, the visitors closely observed the missionaries' mannerisms, inquired about Western music and culture, and asked occasional questions about religion. To place them at ease, the Americans eventually held this meeting in the Japanese part of their home, trading chairs for native floor cushions and forgoing the use of the Westernized piano.70
Such low-key and low-profile dealings with the Japanese were a major change from the excited and publicized moments that had followed the Mormons’ first arrival. Not only had the newspaper controversy passed, but so also had the opportunity to teach Ichiki and his supposedly influential friends. During Heber’s absence in the United States, Japanese authorities had placed them under arrest, possibly as the result of their political beliefs or activity. Chagrined by having had contact with men who had become felons and apparently fearing adverse publicity, Elder Grant accepted their imprisonment as prima facie evidence of insincerity. “I have to smile when I think of the important men we thought we had made friends with, now being under arrest,” he wrote. He made no further effort to contact or teach them.\(^71\)

There were other signs of unraveling. Despite his initial expressions of interest and sympathy, Hiroi, the missionaries’ salaried translator, had grown increasingly aloof and uncooperative. He was eventually dismissed with two months’ notice and what was hoped to be an assuaging dinner at the Metropole Hotel.\(^72\) The missionaries’ converts were even less satisfying. Shortly after his baptism, Kikuchi had proposed that the Americans underwrite his venture to sell patent medicine. When they declined, the Japanese proselyte announced the need to “set aside religious duties for a time.” He was seen rarely again by the Mormons.\(^73\) Hajime Nakazawa seemed similarly motivated. Following his conversion, he requested fifteen hundred dollars to start a job-printing office. Failing to carry his proposition, Nakazawa threatened to revert to his Shinto vocation unless the missionaries employed him. Begudgingly, Elder Grant extended to him a loan, but when Nakazawa’s wife sought further support, the apostle declined. “My impression is that the only interest either one of . . . [the Nakazawas] have in the Church or us is to try and get some money,” he confided to his diary.\(^74\) Months later events appeared to confirm Heber’s judgment. Nakazawa was captured while attempting to burglarize the mission home.

With several converts producing similarly unlikely records, Grant’s overall assessment was dour. “I think we have had some fearfully poor material join the Church,” he concluded.\(^75\) “The way some Japanese jump at the gospel and then drop it as soon as they learn there is no pay in it or no employment is really amusing.”\(^76\) Doubtless the Japanese view of the matter was different. Accustomed to the Protestant practice of allowing some of their converts active and often paid leadership roles, they saw no inconsistency between religious quest and personal advancement. Indeed, many Japanese Christians expected it.

This certainly was the case of Goro Takahashi, the scholarly polemicist and self-styled Mormon adviser and critic. He hotly criticized Grant for not supporting Nakazawa’s printing venture, and following the burglary of the mission headquarters, he compared Nakazawa with Victor Hugo’s tragically impoverished Jean Valjean. “Of course, speaking intellectually, you have no responsibility for . . . [Nakazawa’s] doing,
but intellect is not all and all. Everybody knows that Nakazawa lost his lucrative profession for sympathizing with Mormonism. . . . But Mr. Grant quite cold bloodily has left him destitute of help.”

The Mormons were not swayed by Takahashi’s argument, preferring to believe that the scholar’s scorn reflected his own failed ambition. Elder Taylor had a pat scenario: Because President Grant had first entertained the Japanese scholar at the prestigious Metropole Hotel and talked expansively about Mormonism’s past achievements, Takahashi had assumed that the Mormons intended to spend millions of dollars funding Japanese charitable projects, which might in turn provide a sinecure. According to Taylor, Takahashi “dreamed himself into the position of [the Mormons’] chief Japanese advisor, director, or something else with a mint and a name.”

At least in the Mormon eyes, Takahashi had been treated fairly. Shortly after their initial meeting, Elder Grant had advanced Takahashi about four hundred yen (two hundred dollars) for his proposed book, after which Takahashi had further exposed himself by borrowing against his royalties. When the book failed to sell, he sought another loan from Grant. Rather than advance more money, Grant at length decided to relieve the Japanese’s financial embarrassment by buying most of the 700-volume run. Eventually the Mormons placed 362 books with members of the National Diet’s House of Peers and another 8 to high-level functionaries. The rest were apparently used in their proselytizing.

*Mormon Kyō to Morumon Kyōto* (loosely translated *Mormons and Mormonism*) was, in fact, an able, several-hundred-page work that introduced the basic Mormon story and history to the Japanese audience, but it was also filled with archaeological and philological excursions, a philosophical defense of polygamy, and an extended discussion of Mormonism’s ability to meet modern social ills. These topics gave the volume a “heavy” quality that no doubt dampened sales in a market that already found Mormon topics passé.

The failure of *Mormon Kyō to Morumon Kyōto* and the young missionaries’ growing estrangement from their former contacts failed to dampen their enthusiasm. During a conference in early 1903, they politely challenged Grant’s cautious policy that more time and preparation were required before active proselytizing could begin. Describing himself “surprised and pleased” by their attitude, Heber immediately rescinded a request to tour Mormon churches in the Samoa, New Zealand, and Australia, a long-standing personal goal, and began preparation for the start of formal Mormon preaching.

After producing a tract that introduced Mormonism to the Japanese public in broad terms, Grant hired the Kinki Kan Hall for the formal inauguration of Mormon preaching in Japan. The history-conscious missionaries carefully recorded their proceedings. Two of them tried to deliver their message in Japanese. Caine’s effort drew muffled
titters, but Taylor flawlessly recited the content of the Mormons' new tract. Then Elder Grant followed with a sixty-five-minute sermon. Setting aside carefully selected Bible references, the mission leader spoke with "very good liberty" on such basic Mormon themes as the mission of Joseph Smith and the church's Articles of Faith. Despite the missionaries' initial protests, hearty applause followed each song and talk, and when the crowd learned that an English text of Taylor's remarks was available, the response was immediate. According to Grant, "there was a rush like those trying to get to a bargain counter at a Z.C.M.I. special sale."83

Several weeks later, the elders were dispatched to their fields of labor. Two went to Naoetsu on the Japan Sea coast, two were assigned to Nagano, where Heber had toured during his first months in Japan, and four, including Grant himself, were retained in or near Tokyo.84 The day after he and his companion began distributing tracts, Ensign reported himself "very happy."85 But such enthusiasm was hard to sustain. At one location the missionaries learned that imposters calling themselves Mormons had already preceded them, leaving behind "a bad record" and a ruined image. Elsewhere rumors circulated that the Mormons were Russian spies, which may have partially accounted for the countryside's sometimes hostile behavior.86 Elder Hedges reported after distributing tracts in a small village that initial receptivity had quickly turned negative. At one house, "the door was slammed so quickly in my face that I did not know what struck me."87

The Mormons' lack of success deeply troubled Heber and brought on one of his periodic dark moods. He wondered if the lack of discernible progress could be traced to a possible failure in his leadership, and though the First Presidency had long released him from the mandate of learning Japanese, he still brooded over his inability to grasp the language. "To the end of my life I may feel that I have not done what He expected of me, and what I was sent here to do," he complained.88 His increasing isolation may have contributed to his negative feeling. With his elders now in the field and his own movement restricted by the barriers of language and culture, Grant, in the words of Taylor, "irked at the leash, as any man of energy and action would do."89 During the late spring and early summer of 1903, his emotions widely oscillated, sometimes within the narrow range of a single letter. He might first petition the First Presidency for eight or ten more missionaries, for he clearly hoped for concrete results before leaving his mission.90 Then, a paragraph or two later, as the reality of the Japanese mission once again imposed itself, his steadfastness wavered. Wasn't his time "being thrown away"? Couldn't he be more productive elsewhere? Such ruminations were probably encouraged by B. F., his brother, and by others who repeatedly assured him of his imminent release.91

Heber himself may have precipitated this prospect, but in a way consistent with his sense of duty. In early May he had written to Anthon H.
Lund, President Smith’s newly called counselor in the First Presidency, hinting of his availability to succeed Francis M. Lyman as head of the European Mission. Heber did not wish the Presidency to think that he was calling himself on a mission or releasing himself from another. “I am well and happy and as contented as I ever was in my life, and feel that I can live here for years with pleasure,” he wrote. Still, and here he made his point explicit, “I would love to be where I could have something to do.”

Nor was he prepared to leave the question entirely in the hands of the First Presidency. Frustrated and anguished, he retired to some woods for prayer. “I told the Lord that whenever He was through with me . . . [in Japan], where I was accomplishing nothing, I would be very glad and thankful if He would call me home and send me to Europe to preside over the European mission.” By his own account, it was only the second time during his life that he had sought a church position (the other was an earlier plea to serve on the board of the Young Men’s Mutual Improvement Association to serve the youth).

Presumably Heber’s personal struggle was kept from most of his missionary associates, who, in contrast to his own self-doubts, seemed to have a high estimate of his labor. Certainly his leadership often left them moved. Once, after Elder Stoker had turned his ankle and the sprain discolored with infection, Heber suggested that the missionaries fast and pray in Stoker’s behalf. He called them into a meeting, where he began with singing and more prayer. Then he and others spoke of the spiritual healing that they had witnessed. “The feeling that characterized the meeting grew stronger & stronger,” Stoker reported. “I was almost overcome.” Elder Ensign then took some consecrated oil and rubbed it on the afflicted limb and asked for an immediate healing as a “testimony” for all present. As the final act, President Grant laid his hands on Stoker’s head and promised the “free & perfect usage” of the foot. As he spoke, Stoker sensed a movement within the limb and a snapping sound. The conclusion was as spectacular. The missionary “involuntarily” stood on his feet and walked for the first time in ten days.

By the third week of August, Grant had surrendered any hope that he might soon leave the country. A recent letter from Abraham O. Woodruff, his associate in the Quorum of the Twelve, carried no intimation of a release despite an earlier request for discreet information. News from Grant’s family was more to the point. These sources suggested that while President Smith had not yet decided the timing of his return, the most likely possibility lay with early next year. Grant claimed himself “not in the least disappointed” with this information; and with his sense of duty again paramount, he expressed the hope for six more months of service in order to get things “to moving.”

To avoid the extremes of the Tokyo summer and position himself in what appeared the mission’s most promising area, Grant took his family
to Hojo, a seaside resort in Chiba Ken. There, on August 23, he received a registered letter informing him that a cable was being held in Yokohama. He could, however, have its contents relayed to him in Tokyo. He left for Tokyo at once, arriving at the Metropole sometime after midnight. The decoded message left him stunned. "You are now released," it cryptically read. "Leave the business in the hands of Ensign." Rather than the emotional relief that Grant had long assumed his release would bring, he now felt deep and painful regret. His tearful prayers that evening contrasted the seeming "failure" of his mission with the larger-than-life successes of his apostolic predecessors. It was 5:00 A.M. before he was able to set aside his thoughts and fall asleep.

Two hours later and somewhat refreshed, he had a more objective view. Writing several letters, he acknowledged the success of his earlier ministry and was also confident about upcoming events. "I have a willing heart," he reflected, and "know that I will do more [good work]." But his mind clearly remained troubled. "I am in hopes that I am not released, . . . that it is only a call to come home," he wrote the First Presidency. But his resolve vanished before he ended his sentence. "I have done so little here," he concluded, "it may be felt that it is better to use me in some other field where I can do more good."

Grant already knew that there was only one available steamer that could get him to America in time for the October 1903 general conference, and he quickly booked passage. He also requested that all of the Mormon missionaries return to mission headquarters for a two-week farewell conference, the highlight of which took place in the wooded terrain above Yokohama harbor. Commemorating the dedication of the mission exactly two years earlier, the missionaries rehearsed their original program, repeating the same hymns and reading an outline of Elder Grant's dedicatory prayer. There was, however, a significance to the site that was probably unknown to any of the group besides himself. At the beginning of the mission, he now explained, he had often come to the place to dissipate his melancholy in prayer.

The three-hour meeting, in Grant's phrase, was "the one meeting of all meetings ever held in this land." While all twelve missionaries were "blessed with remarkable demonstrations of the Spirit," he seemed specially endowed. Invoking his apostolic authority, he blessed his missionaries and reminded them of their duty. "I never saw a man that was as full of the Spirit of God as he was then," recounted one of the young men.

Eight days later, Augusta, Mary, and Heber embarked on the S.S. Aki Maru. He left with a surprisingly high view of the Japanese. From his many contacts and experiences, he sensed the nation's great military potential. Moreover, he saw the Japanese as "patriotic beyond any people" he had ever known, and described them as "workers." Their ambition and curiosity seemed limitless except, lamentably, on the paramount matter of religion. Yet, there was something within Grant
that suggested that he himself had not experienced the last chapter. To the end of his career, he would remember the emotion he had felt during the pronouncement of his dedicatory prayer. "I feel impressed that there is yet a great work to be accomplished there. . . . How soon this may come I do not know." 103

He departed with the hope of returning someday. His experience, he realized, had not been entirely negative. He had placed on his frame a precious fifteen pounds, and his quieted nerves once again permitted Spencerian writing. Moreover, he had outfitted himself with a pair of spectacles that corrected a stigmatism that for many years had hindered reading and studying. 104 Nevertheless, despite listing all the positive things he could muster, he knew that Japan had aged him "at least ten years" during the two he had spent in the land of the Mikado. 105

As the ship departed, his missionary friends walked to the edge of the bund to see him off. At first they shouted pleasantries across the mooring. Then, as the Aki Maru gradually steamed from port, they waved handkerchiefs until the passengers could no longer be seen. 106

NOTES

1. Heber J. Grant (hereafter Grant) to Louis A. Kelsch, March 2, 1901, Grant Letterpress Copy Book (hereafter LPCB) 31:373, Grant Papers, Library-Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah (hereafter LDS Archives). Also see Grant to Rachel Ivins Grant, February 16, 1901, LPCB 31:321. Because current LDS archival policy limits the access and use of materials, particularly those of the presidents of the church, I have been unable to verify many of my footnote citations. I have supplied box and folder information only when access to materials cannot be established by using the Heber J. Grant register. All such specific references pertain to the Grant Papers.

2. Undated and untitled memorandum, Box 145, Folder 4, Grant Papers. See also Grant Typed Diary, February 14 and 16, 1901, Grant Papers; Grant to Rachel Ivins Grant, February 16, 1901, LPCB 31:321; Grant, "Ram in the Thicket," Improvement Era 44 (December 1941): 713.

3. Grant, "Ram in the Thicket," p. 713. Nearly identical wording is found in "Undated and untitled memorandum," p. 1. Also see Grant Typed Diary, February 14, 1901.


10. Angus Cannon, quoted in *Deseret Evening News*, April 6, 1901, p. 9. Also Angus M. Cannon to Marquis Ito, July 23, 1901, Box 34, Folder 34.


13. Abraham H. Cannon Diary, April 19, 1895, Abraham H. Cannon Papers, Brigham Young University. It is uncertain if Koya was serving as consul at the time of his 1888 visit.


16. Grant, Remarks at New York Chapel, May 22, 1938, Box 156, Folder 4; “Undated and untitled memorandum,” p. 7; Grant Typed Diary, February 23, 1901.

17. Ensign had been before the Salt Lake City public as a singer since the age of ten. The *Deseret Evening News*, April 6, 1901, p. 9, provides a biographical sketch. Also see Grant to Joseph A. McRae, n.d. but about March 18, 1904, LPCB 38:468, and Biographical Sketch contained in LPCB 33.

18. *Deseret Evening News*, April 6, 1901, p. 9, and Biographical Sketch, LPCB 33. A copy of Kelsch’s *A Practical Reference Arranged Especially for Missionaries of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* can be found in Box 194, Folder 1, Grant Papers. For his reaction to the call, Kelsch to Grant, March 11, 1901, LPCB 31:419.

19. Grant Typed Diary, May 10, 1901; Biographical Sketch, LPCB 33; *Conference Reports*, October 1903, p. 12; Grant to Joseph E. Taylor, June 2, 1912, LPCB 45:463; Grant to Francis Grant, February 10, 1934, Family Correspondence, Grant Papers.

20. *Deseret Evening News*, April 6, 1901, p. 9; Grant to Anthony W. Ivins, September 15, 1901, and Grant to Frederick Beesley, March 29, 1901, LPCB 33:233 and 423 respectively; and Lucy Grant Cannon Diary, March 14, 1901, excerpts in possession of author.


24. Grant Diary Entries inserted in LPCB 34:1, July 25, 1901.


27. Anesaki, *History of Japanese Religion*, p. 405. See also Kiyoshi and Fujio, “Chris-


29. Grant Diary, August 12, 1901, LPCB 34:8.


32. Grant to Joseph F. Smith, October 14, 1901, LPCB 33:287-89.

33. Grant to B. F. Grant, August 24, 1901, LPCB 33:149.

34. Taylor Diary, August 19, 1901; also Grant to Lorenzo Snow and Joseph F. Smith, August 26, 1901, LPCB 33:141. Their experiences were by no means unlike those of their earlier Protestant counterparts.

35. Taylor Diary, August 28, 1901.


37. Grant to Francis M. Lyman, March 6, 1903, General Correspondence.

38. Protestant missionaries also found the Japanese language to be formidable. "Sherwood Eddy concluded, on the basis of his long experience with missionaries in every part of the world, that if one were to include reading and writing as well as speaking, Japanese is probably the most difficult language in the world for a foreigner to learn." Drummond, *History of Christianity in Japan*, p. 148, footnote. The language-gifted Alma Taylor described the task of learning Japanese akin to "striking a pick against flint rock." Taylor to Grant, May 22, 1902, General Correspondence.


40. Grant Diary, September 18-20, 1901 [single entry], LPCB 34:36.

41. Grant to Junius F. Wells, September 30, 1901, LPCB 33:268.

42. Grant Diary, November 5-17, 1901 [single entry], LPCB 34:76; Grant to Francis M. Lyman, November 15, 1901, LPCB 34:427-30.

43. General Authorities to Grant, November 8, 1901, LPCB 34:108.

44. When Anthon H. Lund, a newly called counselor in the First Presidency, wrote a softer letter to Grant several weeks later, Grant's fury was still not spent. He told Lund that he took the Presidency's letter as "a polite way of telling me I had been wasting my time in the past" and then complained, "When a man is thousands of miles away from home and done his best and all that he has done has been done with the full approval of his associates a letter like the one I got from you is appreciated more than words can tell, especially when it came in connection with the official letter of the Presidency which gently but kindly 'sat on me.'" Had parts of the original letter been written by George Gibbs, the Presidency's sharp-tongued secretary, Heber claimed that he would have merely dismissed its contents with the ejaculation, "Confound Gibbs' sarcasm." Grant to Anthon H. Lund, December 22, 1901, LPCB 34:149-50.

45. Grant to Francis M. Lyman, February 21, 1902, LPCB 35:2.


48. Senichi Hisametsu, "Kambara Ariake," *Biographical Dictionary of Japanese Liter-
Walker: Heber J. Grant and Japanese Mission


49. Grant, Conference Reports, April 1902, pp. 47-48; Grant to Goro Takahashi, December 13, 1901, LPCB 34:140; Grant Diary, December 7-19, 1901 [single entry], LPCB 34:145.

50. Taylor Diary, February 13 and 16, 1902.

51. Taylor Diary, February 16, 1902.

52. Taylor Diary, February 22, 1902.

53. Occasionally Grant recorded such incidents, see Grant Diary, December 7-19, 1901, LPCB 34:447.

54. Taylor Diary, March 10, 1902. After Grant's refusal to approve the request, several of Koshiishi's associates described the man as insincere and self-seeking.

55. S. C. Richardson notebooks, LDS Archives; Grant to Kelsch, Ensign, & Taylor, April 4, 1902, LPCB 32:192; Conference Reports, April 1902, pp. 45-46.

56. Taylor Diary, March 7, 1902[?].

57. Grant to Nakazawa Hajime, May [?] 2, 1902, LPCB 35:204.

58. Grant to Smith, Winder, and Lund, n.d., excerpts in Grant Diary, July 23, 1902; Grant to "All the Loved Ones at Home," July 20, 1902, LPCB 35:362; Augusta Grant to "My Dear People," September 17, 1902, LPCB 35:478; Grant to B. F. Grant, July 24, 1902, LPCB 35:365.

59. Augusta Grant to "All the Dear Folks at Home," July 29, 1902, LPCB 35:427-29.

60. Augusta Grant to "All the Dear Folks at Home," July 29, 1902, LPCB 35:427-29, August 8, 1902, LPCB 35:442-43.

61. Augusta Grant to "Family at Home[?]," May 11, 1903, General Correspondence.


63. Grant to Joseph F. Smith, October 14, 1901, LPCB 33:287-89.

64. Augusta Grant to "All the Dear Folks at Home," July 29, 1902, LPCB 35:427-29.

65. Grant to Lucy Grant Cannon, December 1, 1905, LPCB 40:592.

66. Augusta Grant to "My Dear People," September 17, 1902, LPCB 35:480.

67. Augusta Grant to the "Folks at Home," August 8, 1902, LPCB 35:442-43.

68. Augusta Grant to the "Folks at Home," August 8, 1902, LPCB 35:442-43. Reading Augusta's description before it was posted, Heber and Mary complained that the account suggested the Japanese pests were as "big as cows." Augusta refused to budge. "I tell them to write their [own] version."

69. Deseret Evening News, June 5, 1903, p. 4; Grant Typed Diary, March 1-10, 1903; Mary Grant to Fannie Gardiner, August 10, 1902, LPCB 35:446.

70. Grant to Sandford W. Hedges, May 19, 1903, Japanese Mission Letterpress Copybook 1:39, LDS Archives; Letter of Augusta Grant, May 11, 1903, Family Correspondence; Grant Diary, May 24, 1903, LPCB 36:320.

71. Grant to Kelsch, Ensign, and Taylor, June 18, 1902, LPCB 35:260; also Grant
to Joseph F. Smith, John R. Winder, and Anthon H. Lund, October 1, 1902, General Correspondence.

72. Taylor Diary, May 17-19 [single entry], 1902; Grant to Kelsch, Ensign, and Taylor, April 16, June 18, and June 28, 1902, LPCB 35:146, 260, and 441. Grant responded to Hiroi's demands with an even hand. "We did all we could to make things pleasant for you while you were in our employ," he wrote. "Surely you must not blame us that you could not get the employment that you wished at the time you stopped teaching us, neither must you blames us for what people say. We never gave any one to understand that you had joined our Church. We would have been proud to have had you do so, had you been converted to the truths which we have to offer, but as you know we have no desire to have any one join with us unless they have become convinced that we have in very deed the plan of life and salvation as again restored to earth direct from heaven." Almost two decades later, Hiroi, who at the time was studying in New York, sought a $1000 loan from Grant, claiming a monied and influential group now supported him. T. Hiroi to Grant, June 23, 1920, General Correspondence.

73. Taylor Diary, October 20, 1903, and February 28, 1904; Grant, Conference Report, October 1903, p. 13.

74. Grant, Conference Report, October 1903, p. 13; Grant Typed Diary, March 11-20 [single entry], 1903; Grant Diary, July 2, 1903, LPCB 36:490.

75. Grant to Horace S. Ensign, January 20, 1905, LPCB 39:269-70.

76. Grant Manuscript Diary, June 22, 1903, Grant Papers.

77. Gorô Takahashi to Horace Ensign, December 20, 1903, Taylor Diary of the same date.

78. Taylor Diary, December 20, 1903.

79. Grant to Joseph F. Smith, John R. Winder, and Anthon H. Lund, January 20, 1903, General Correspondence; Taylor Diary, March 22, 1906; Brady, "Japanese Reaction to Mormonism," p. 165. The distribution of Morumon Kyo to Morumon Kyoto to Diet members was not consummated until 1906, three years after Grant's departure from Japan.

80. Brady, "The Japanese Reaction to Mormonism," translates large portions of Morumon Kyo to Morumon Kyoto. Brady also discusses the first Japanese book about Mormonism, Morumon Shu, a 94-page, pocket-sized volume written by Uchida Akira under the pen name Uchida Yu. Rough translations of several chapters of Takahashi's work are found in Box 148, Folder 2. For Takahashi's proposed ten chapter table of contents, see Conference Report, April 1902, p. 48.

81. Grant Typed Diary, February 1-28, 1903 [single entry]; Grant to Joseph F. Smith, John R. Winder, and Anthon H. Lund, February 19, 1903, General Correspondence.

82. Grant Diary, April 18, 1903, LPCB 36:149; Grant to Joseph F. Smith, John R. Winder, and Anthon H. Lund, April 20, 1903, LPCB 36:61-62; Grant to J. Golden Kimball, April 23, 1903, LPCB 36:81-83. Grant variously estimated the size of the crowd to be as high as 650.

83. Grant Diary, April 25, 1903, LPCB 36:102.

84. Grant Diary, April 20 and 23, 1903, LPCB 36:61-62, 81-83; Taylor Diary, April 9-22 [single entry], 1903.

85. Grant Diary, April 30, 1903, LPCB 36:155; Grant Manuscript Diary, May 9, 1903.

86. Grant to Horace Ensign and Frederick Caine, May 22, 1903, LPCB 36:300; Grant Manuscript Diary, May 9, 1903.

88. Grant to Francis M. Lyman, November 15, 1901, LPCB 34:430; Grant to Matthias F. Cowley, May 12, 1903, LPCB 36:239-41.


90. Grant to Francis M. Lyman, June 10, 1903, LPCB 36:385-86; Grant to Joseph F. Smith, John R. Winder, and Anthon H. Lund, June 10, 1903, LPCB 36:394-95.

91. Grant to Matthias F. Cowley, May 12, 1903, LPCB 36:240; Grant to "Brother" Tanner, July 15, 1903, General Correspondence; Grant to Frederick Caine and Sanford Hedges, July 17, 1903, General Correspondence; Grant to Rachel Grant, July 28, 1903, Family Correspondence.


94. Stoker Diary, July 20, 1902, LDS Archives.

95. Stoker Diary, March 11, 1903; Horace S. Ensign, "Incidents Connected with the Japan Mission," April 12, 1904, Box 147, Folder 11; Mary Grant to "My Dear Sisters," March 14, 1903, Box 126, Folder 8; Grant Typed Diary, March 11 to 20, 1903; Grant to Joseph F. Smith, John R. Winder, and Anthon H. Lund, March 19, 1903, General Correspondence.

96. Grant to Anthony W. Ivins, April 24, 1903, LPCB 36:84; Grant to Abraham O. Woodruff, August 17, 1903, General Correspondence; Grant Manuscript Diary, August 20, 1903; Grant to Rachel Grant, September 2, 1903, Family Correspondence.

97. Grant to Horace S. Ensign, August 24, 1903, General Correspondence; Grant Manuscript Diary, August 23, 1903; Taylor Diary, July 11 to August 31, 1903 [single entry].

98. Grant Manuscript Diary, August 23 and 24, 1903; Grant to Joseph F. Smith, John R. Winder, and Anthon H. Lund, August 24, 1903, General Correspondence; Grant to Rachel Grant, August 24, 1903, Family Correspondence.

99. Grant to Joseph F. Smith, John R. Winder, and Anthon H. Lund, April 24, 1903, General Correspondence; Grant to Rachel Grant, August 24, 1903, Family Correspondence.

100. Horace Ensign to Joseph H. Felt, September 12, 1903, General Correspondence; Taylor Diary, September 1, 1903.

101. Stoker Diary, September 1, 1903; Horace Ensign to Joseph H. Felt, September 12, 1903, General Correspondence; Ensign, "Incidents Connected with the Japan Mission," April 12, 1904, copy in Box 147, Folder 11.

102. Grant to Anthony W. Ivins, June 20, 1904, LPCB 38:635.

103. For early expressions of this sentiment, Grant to Joseph E. Taylor and Alma O. Taylor, January 25, 1904, and September 28, 1905, LPCB 38:217 and 40:312.

104. Remarks of Rachel Grant, February 13, 1902, Relief Society Minute Book B, 1898-1902, Thirteenth Ward Papers, LDS Archives; Grant to Junius F. Wells, September 30, 1901, LPCB 33:267-68; Grant to Eva[?] Grant Moss, January 10, 1915, LPCB 50:478.

105. Grant to J. Wilford Booth, March 1, 1906, LPCB 40:912.

106. Stoker Diary, September 8, 1903.
Kanesville Crossing, from a painting by W. M. Jackson. Photo courtesy of Utah State Historical Society
The soil was rich in western Iowa, the crops were good, and the harvests better than expected. "I must say," said Warren Foote, "that I have prospered beyond my expectations. Two months ago I commenced work and now I have six acres fenced and planted to corn. The soil is most excellent."¹ A year later, in 1848, other Mormon farmers in areas near present-day Council Bluffs harvested over thirty-five hundred bushels of corn, eleven hundred bushels of wheat, and equally gratifying amounts of garden vegetables.

But corn and other garden crops were not all that flourished there on the eastern banks of the Missouri River between 1847 and 1852, for developing in the local social and religious climate were various religious interpretations of the faith of Joseph Smith that so challenged Brigham Young's authority over The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to cause serious debates and significant numbers of departures.

The Latter-day Saints were then in acutely perilous times. Joseph Smith, their prophet-leader, through whom the Church was founded in upstate New York in 1830, had led his followers through troublesome days in Kirtland, Ohio, and western Missouri, and most lately in western Illinois. While the problems in Ohio resulted less from outsiders than from inside malcontents and economic depression, those in Missouri were more complicated and life-threatening. As early as 1832, Joseph Smith had indicated that Independence, Missouri, then but a fledgling

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outfitting river town on Missouri's western border, was the “center stake of Zion,” the destined site of the anciently prophesied New Jerusalem. As such, it was to be the central focus point and gathering place for the church and site of a grand temple. Mormon attempts to “Zionize” Independence sparked negative reactions from a populace concerned not only with such curious theology but also with the sudden influx of primarily New England, potentially antislavery settlers. The situation was further exacerbated by Mormon overtures to convert the Indians, or Lamanites (as Book of Mormon theology described them), whom many Missourians regarded as potential if not proven enemies. Because of such local persecution, the Mormons were forced out of Independence into adjacent Clay and Caldwell counties in northwest Missouri.

Antagonisms in Missouri persisted and reached a boiling point in 1838 when Governor Lilburn W. Boggs issued his infamous “extermination” order designed to drive the intruders out of the state. With nowhere else to go, the Latter-day Saints found refuge in western Illinois on a tract of land in Hancock County just north of Quincy, Illinois, in 1839. There they built their beloved city of Nauvoo, the “City Beautiful.” For five years the church consolidated its strength and membership there on the banks of the Mississippi River, built a majestic temple, and grew in prominence until the murder of Joseph Smith at Carthage, Illinois, in June 1844. Joseph's unexpected death, from which the church was still in a state of collective shock, represented a recurrence of persecution and oppression from a once friendly Hancock County neighborhood, which had come to view the church, its teachings, and its political and economic presence with increasing suspicion and distrust.

By 1845 Brigham Young, interim leader of the church by right of his position as president of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, recognized the dangers and futility of remaining any longer in Nauvoo, which by 1845 boasted a population of approximately fifteen thousand to seventeen thousand people. Accordingly, following a blueprint of departure drawn up in the summer and fall of 1845, Brigham, as he was popularly called by the Saints, and his fellow leaders made plans to relocate the church to freedom and safety in some isolated valley in the Rocky Mountain West.

Largely because of rumors of an imminent attack against church leaders, and of an advancing federal army, the exodus began in considerable confusion and prematurely in February 1846 with the most healthy and best prepared leading the way. Due to bad weather, inexperience, initially poor organization, and constant discussions and changes in route and travel plans, the advance party, “the Company of the Twelve,” did not complete their crossing of what is now Iowa until June 1846, two months behind schedule. The delay frustrated Brigham’s initial plan to reach the mountains that year and required a layover somewhere in the vicinity of the Missouri River.
Shortly after the arrival of the vanguard companies at the Missouri River near the present-day city of Council Bluffs, and even before the jostling caravans of remaining Saints had followed the trek across Iowa, the Mormons were asked to staff a battalion of five hundred of their most able-bodied men to serve as foot soldiers in Stephen W. Kearney's Army of the West, as part of President James K. Polk's Mexican War effort to wrench California from Mexico. Brigham's agreement with Polk's request, made largely to obtain necessary funds to finance their westward travels, served only to confirm an already inevitable conclusion—that the "Camp of Israel" must find a temporary home in the wilderness. The decision resulted in Nebraska's first modern city, Winter Quarters, which sprang up almost overnight in the fall of 1846 on land now situated in Florence, Nebraska. By December 31, 1846, Winter Quarters had several hundred cabins, shanties, and sod houses, a dancing school, a council house, a large store, an unofficial endowment house, several streets laid out in New England town fashion, and a population of almost five thousand. Numerous other settlements and smaller towns sprouted up on the Iowa side of the Missouri River and within a hundred-mile radius of Miller's Hollow, or Kanesville (now Council Bluffs), Iowa, swelling the numbers of Mormons in the Missouri River frontier to almost twelve thousand.  

With the Mormons clustered together on frontier territory and, in some cases, on Indian lands, and awaiting word on both place and prophet, one is prepared to understand how it was that opposition developed among the ranks. The church, in its uprooted and distended situation, was in a double crisis: without a recognizable headquarters or gathering place—in short, without a home—and without a permanent, formally instituted leader as president to succeed the fallen Joseph and to inspire a people poised on the verge of an unknown future and an uncharted frontier.  

The purpose of this article is to shed light on the causes of defection, generally, from Mormon ranks during the exodus period (1846-1852) and particularly of two special threats to Brigham's fledgling presidency: the Lamanism of the once master temple builder, Alpheus Cutler, and the Lymanism of Bishop George Miller and apostle Lyman Wight. Though little known in church history today, they were at the center of a very real chapter in the Mormon movement west.

Signs of Unrest

For several reasons, hundreds of Latter-day Saints by 1846 had decided they had experienced enough of Zion's glories and her tribulations and opted for a new life, some even for a different faith. Wrote one observer, once the decision to winter at Council Bluffs had been announced, "Several apostatized from the church and [went] down into Missouri." The following spring, as Brigham and his pioneer company headed west, many of his former followers headed in the opposite di-
rection, never to return. Hosea Stout reported “great numbers going off through disaff[ection].” The Mormon ferry was so “thronged continually with [wagons] to cross” that authorities temporarily vetoed further crossings. Noah Packard reported soon afterwards “a number of people” in Iowa “that are or have been Latter-day Saints, but ... most of them lie low and keep dark.” Brigham worried that the church stood to lose members in direct proportion to the length of time it took him and his colleagues to locate a new headquarters in the West and to establish means of funding and expediting mass migrations of those left behind. “It is for the salvation of the Church,” he admitted, that they must find a new city, and quickly.

Why the unrest? Several factors converged simultaneously at the Missouri to cause noticeable subtractions, most of which demand more elaboration than time and space here permit. Sickness and death discouraged some. Many had suffered terribly through the winter of 1846-47, shivering in hooves, sod shanties, soggy wind-swept tents, or, unbelievably, canvas-torn wagons. Until the first green vegetables appeared, many suffered from serious malnutrition, and scurvy deaths later swept the camps in epidemic proportions.

Others left for economic considerations, opting for choice homestead acreages in western Iowa or Missouri rather than risk all on some unknown mountain wilderness. A few, once relatively well off, had given out so much in tithing and private loans and other means without repayment that, as Brigham himself admitted, “they lose confidence in all their brethren and lose the good spirit; this leads to apostasy.” One who did leave later wrote his son, saying, “While in Winter Quarters I found if I kept other men’s [counsel] instead of my own, I could not support my family.”

Many were dissatisfied with other things, such as perceived excesses of the Winter Quarters police, the distribution of land apportionments, the handling of returned battalion monies, negligent sheep and cattle herdsmen, and delinquent cabin-builders. Hosea Stout, Winter Quarters police chief, who was in the thick of criticism, wrote in May 1847, “There was as much dissension now as ever I saw in or at any other period of Church history.”

To these frustrations must be added declarations of opposition to Brigham Young’s ordination to the presidency in December 1847 and related doctrinal disputes. While the enigmatic “negro prophet” McCurry, the self-proclaimed “Ancient of Days,” master magician, and musician, all in one, had temporarily led some women into an adulterated, unauthorized form of celestial marriage, and while for a time a warm dispute arose over the doctrine of resurrection and reincarnation and Adam’s place therein, these were but passing doctrinal brushfires. A greater cause for concern was plural marriage. More public at Winter Quarters than ever before in Church history, it caught many of the uninitiated offguard. When John Neff, for example, the purchaser of the
Winter Quarters mill and one of the town's wealthiest men, first became aware of the practice, he almost left the church. Only after much personal intervention and explanations by the highest church authorities was he persuaded to stay. If Neff encountered such difficulties, presumably others less carefully instructed suffered similar confusion and made a clean separation.

Throughout it all, Brigham worried that while he was away, “men would rise up and complain that the Twelve were not right and that they themselves were the ones to lead and govern the people.” He had already seen that happen in the person of James J. Strang at Nauvoo, who, from his base in Voree, Wisconsin, had attracted some two thousand to three thousand defectors, including two apostles and several other leaders. Strang remained a very real threat but seemed content to let Brigham flee in failure to wherever he was going and then mop up the pieces. Rather than Strang, the two most serious contenders to emerge at the Missouri were Alpheus Cutler and George Miller.

Lamanism—“Indian Cutlerism”

Writing about the problems he was experiencing in, as he put it, “guiding the course of the little ship... to the harbor in the Great Basin,” apostle Orson Hyde, who had been assigned to remain behind to bring on the emigrants and who was an eyewitness to the developing debates, said, “We have had use for all the moral power, and spiritual strength, wisdom, and intelligence that we possessed, to compete with the refractory spirits that have sprung up here like mushrooms since your departure from us.” One such perceived threat was Alpheus Cutler.

Cutler (1784-1864), a veteran of the War of 1812, had been a loyal soldier of the Restoration since his conversion in Chautauqua County, New York, in 1833. He moved his family to Kirtland, Ohio, the next year and in 1836 moved further west to settle in Ray County, Missouri. His talents as a stonemason and builder, which he employed so liberally in the building of the Kirtland Temple, qualified him for membership on the Far West Temple building committee. At the invitation of the Quorum of the Twelve, he accompanied them on their secret return to Far West in April 1839 and led the work of laying “the south-east chief corner stone of the temple, according to revelation.” He likewise worked on the Nauvoo Temple, was appointed to the Nauvoo high council, and eventually was a member of the Council of Fifty. Shortly after his arrival with Brigham and the advanced companies at the Missouri, Cutler, at the age of sixty-two, was ordained senior president of the newly formed Winter Quarters high council and was assigned to locate a suitable site for the winter on the west bank of the river. His choice, the so-called Cutler's Park, was rejected by the Twelve, who opted for a supposedly healthier location three miles closer to the river.

Cutler's slow but gradual break with Brigham Young must be seen
as a result of a difference over place and priorities, that is, that the church should not *in toto* depart into the wilderness and in the process renounce all claims to property and interests in the center lands of Zion at Independence, Missouri. Further, he argued, the day of converting the Lamanite should not be postponed. As other factors developed, not the least of which were the broken marriages of two of his daughters to apostle Heber C. Kimball, the proddings of his closest followers for him to act decisively, and the promptings of several Indian chiefs for him to come as a teacher and missionary to their tribes, Cutler’s allegiance waned. Gradually he developed a certain conviction in the rightness of his cause, a growing independency of thought, and ultimately, doctrinal opposition to Brigham’s policies. He believed that just as Moses had been led of the Lord to gather ancient Israel only to see them wander in exile for forty years, so Joseph Smith had likewise been raised up but his people were now wandering under faulty leadership. Cutler saw himself as a modern-day Joshua “to lead up to Zion in this generation.” And with respect to the redemption of the Lamanites, the issue was clear: since gentile Americans had spilled the blood of God’s prophets, the gospel must now be taken away from them and given to the Lamanites.

Several months before the dissolution of Winter Quarters in May 1848, Cutler, his family, and some of his associates moved back across the river to settle about twenty-five miles southeast of Kanesville at Big Grove, Mills County, Iowa. They renamed the community Silver Creek. The immediate reason seems to have been an apostolic commission for Cutler to accept an invitation from Delaware and Oneida Indian tribes, then a few miles west of Independence, Missouri, to provide training in farming, mechanics, blacksmithing, and milling, and to establish schools for their children. The Delaware, some of whom Cutler knew from his New York days, even requested missionaries, to which Brigham Young, when he heard the news, said, “That pleases me—let Father Cutler be the man to preside there.”

Many weeks later Cutler arrived back in camp with a report of his mission to the Delaware and Oneida Indians. He was, obviously, very excited with the reception the Indians had given him. Not only were they willing to pay a good price for the education and training requested, but they were also planning to bring other transplanted Iroquois tribes into the agreement. Cutler then went on to talk of a Lamanite “alliance” of several thousand Indians along the Missouri River that could be marshaled into some kind of army of redemption. Such a force could level Fort Leavenworth in six hours, Cutler thought. “The Indians know all about the adjournment at Far West and understand all about our matters,” he continued, and went on to speculate what a distressing power such an alliance could have on Missouri.

However, Brigham, who had recently approved the sale of temple property in Independence for needed income and who had been trying
desperately to sell off both the Kirtland and the Nauvoo temples, had
his eyes on the West, not the East, on the future, not the past. Neverthe-
less, he remained interested—though noncommittal—throughout Cut-
ler’s report. While expressing an interest in the possible economic ad-
vantages, he reminded Cutler that Joseph Smith had committed to him
and to none other “the keys to open the Gospel to every Lamanite na-
tion.” Provoking Indian warfare was the one ace in his hand he knew his
enemies feared most, and while he did not condone the use of force, he
aimed to keep his Missouri and Washington critics guessing. Brigham
further instructed Cutler “to keep his eye on this matter and general the
business.” How much more can be read into Brigham’s charge is un-
certain; but as events soon proved, Orson Hyde, George A. Smith, and
other leaders in attendance during Cutler’s reporting saw no more in
Brigham’s remarks than instructions for Cutler to improve the tempo-
ral and spiritual well-being of the Delaware.

By the fall of 1848, Cutler’s mission and his interpretation of it had
become a source of conflict. Cutler, Bishop Luman H. Caulkins, and
several others of the Silver Creek Branch were manifesting an increas-
ingly secretive and independent attitude. Throughout the winter, the
rift between Cutler’s followers on the one hand and Orson Hyde and
the Pottawattamie high council on the other had ruptured into open
conflict.

In a series of wintertime investigations into this “Indian Cutlerism”
or “Lamanism,” the high council queried a noncooperative Bishop
Caulkins and a taciturn Alpheus Cutler, who seemed more and more
influenced by his outspoken supporters. From Cutler’s point of view, he
was responsible only to Brigham and, perhaps, to Joseph. From the per-
spective of the high council, any secret pacts or alliances to stir up the
Indians to open warfare were totally beyond the mark. Ezra T. Benson
rebuked Caulkins and said the plan, “if carried out, would lay the knife
to the throat of this people. . . . You manifest a spirit to ride over us
roughshod and we will not put up with it.”

Shortly afterwards, probably in the summer or fall of 1849, the
Silver Creek Branch severed all allegiances to the high council, and sev-
eral advocates began preaching their doctrines throughout the nearby
settlements. As one high councilman put it, “as many as were for them
were against us.” Lamanism attracted adherents mainly from among
scattered branches east of the main Mormon settlements and along the
Nishnabotona River in present Fremont County. Wrote Chauncey
Whiting, one of Lamanism’s staunchest advocates, in a letter to an un-
sympathetic relative, “I suppose you are making arrangements to go to
the Valley this Spring [1849]. But we intend to put a clog in the road so
large that you cannot climb over it and draw your mind to the true point
of compass. . . . I would not go if I knew I could dig gold enough every
day to load a six horse team.”

Orson Hyde, in a letter to Brigham Young in April 1850, pointed to
the difficulties Lamanism posed: “Everything is precarious with us here. Indian Cutlerism in 500 forms would rage like wild fire through this country if the strong arm of power were not upon it all the time. I do assure you . . . that it requires the utmost care, diligence and watching over this people to keep their eye towards the Salt Lake Valley.”

Later in 1850 Cutler, with about two hundred followers, moved approximately thirty miles further southeast to establish the town of Manti on the eastern border of Fremont County, about three miles southwest of Shenandoah, Iowa. It was there that Cutler actually oversaw the formation of a church, “The True Church of Jesus Christ,” and, as leader and Joseph’s temporary successor, authorized baptisms, endowments, and other ordinances. In his capacity as president, he was assisted by Edmund Fisher, first counselor, and Chauncey Whiting, second counselor. He did lead an expedition to the Delaware on Grasshopper Creek in northeast Kansas in the 1850s, but with only mixed results. He died in Manti in 1864, after which most of his followers emigrated northward to Minnesota. Others eventually returned to Independence, where a small remnant survives today. 

While Cutlerism may be but little remembered, the Lamanism that once contended among the Mormon branches in 1849 and 1850 posed a formidable if fleeting challenge.

Lymanism—“The Texas Epidemic”

But Cutler was neither the only threat to the westward movement nor even the most serious. Another “seven fold hot country movement” raging through the branches at about the same time was the “Texas Epidemic.” While presenting a Lamanite-redemption doctrine similar to Cutler’s, though without the overtones of militancy that characterized early Cutlerism, “Lymanism” defiantly challenged Brigham Young’s leadership, denied the supremacy of the Council of the Twelve Apostles over the Council of Fifty, called for the renunciation of private property in exchange for a community of goods, and opposed the move to the Great Basin, which, by the summer of 1847, had begun in earnest.

Lyman Wight, still a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, and stubbornly loyal to a mission call he felt had been extended by Joseph Smith personally for him to establish a mission in Texas among the Lamanites, had become increasingly critical of his file leaders. From his base of operations in south-central Texas, he sharpened his attacks on his fellow companions and was convinced the Saints were going the wrong direction and after the wrong leader. After Brigham Young’s presidential ordination, the gloves came off and Wight, that “Wild Ram of the Mountains,” stirred in opposition.

In his published tract “An Address by Way of an Abridged Account and Journal of My Life . . . With an Appeal to the Latter Day Saints,” Wight made very clear his opposition to Brigham’s course. As to anointing a new president, since Joseph Smith had held the keys to this dispen-
sation in both life and death, and since Joseph had ordained him (Wight) an apostle, he believed that no new president was authorized and certainly no pretender could render his apostleship null and void. “The keys he will ever hold,” Wight said of Joseph. “I appeal to all those of a like ordination unto myself that they have neither power nor authority given them, to move me from this station, nor to place any long eared Jack Ass to fill a place which has never been vacated. . . . And should they come up before the throne of God, when my name is called as one of the Twelve, and they should answer the same, I shall be there and they will then find that instead of dancing over the ashes of our beloved brethren Joseph and Hyrum they will be dancing to the tune of Jack. And the only tune that he would play was ‘Over the Hills and Far Away.’”30 This last reference reflected Wight’s opposition to what he saw as Brigham’s wild-goose chase west when he should have stayed closer to the land of Zion in Missouri, for, as he argued, “God himself has declared that there should be none other place appointed, until that place be full.”

Wight’s call for creating an economy based on community ownership of private means, or what he called “the pure principle, the Celestial law of God,” reflected his deep opposition to the law of tithing and the alleged economic inequities it caused among the Mormons. To Wight, tithing served only to drain the poor and enrich Church leaders. It was a poor substitute for Joseph’s Law of Consecration. 31

Wight completed his stirring appeal, speaking in the context of one specifically called of Joseph Smith, by calling for a gathering to Texas in preparation for Zion’s redemption: “Come then, all ye inhabitants of the earth, come ye to the beautiful vallies of Texas, the confines of Mexico, together with all their beautiful tributaries, where you neither have to wait to irrigate your land, nor face the stern frost and snow. . . . go forth as one common family. . . . go with us even up to the land of Zion, to the place appointed for the building of the Temple . . . even upon the Western borders of the State of Missouri.”32

Finally, Wight blamed the serious health problems the Mormons were experiencing at Winter Quarters on their following a false leader. “This Priesthood [Presidency] is given by lineage and . . . a change of this Priesthood would of necessity change the laws and ordinances of God. [But] they have changed the ordinances and broken the new and everlasting covenant which bringeth sore scourges and destruction upon the saints . . . and many have already fallen in the wilderness.”33

While much in Lymanism can be attributed to the teachings of Lyman Wight, then in Texas trying to set up a southern rallying point for Brigham’s defectors, its most active agent and supporter at the Missouri was George Miller. Miller, a Nauvoo convert, had risen to become associate presiding bishop of the church. According to Wight, he too had been commissioned by Joseph Smith to settle Texas. During the exodus across Iowa, Miller had manifested a genius in trail-blazing that
was matched only by his increasing independence and criticism of Brigham Young, for the two men possessed powerful, conflicting personalities and divergent views on the seat of power in the church. “Brigham Young and myself had frequent sparrings as it respected the legitimate authority to lead the Church,” Miller wrote years later, “as I always conceived the leadership of the Twelve nothing but a usurpation of authority, that could not under any circumstances be exercised rightfully by any quorum of the Church.”

Brigham sent Miller and James Emmett on a special fact-finding mission to Grand Island (Nebraska) in July 1846, only to later learn that the two had set up their own winter quarters, without authorization, among the Ponca Indians on the Niobrara River in northeast Nebraska. Miller’s views on travel routes to the Rocky Mountains and the ultimate destination of the church eventually clashed with Brigham’s in a series of Christmas 1846 meetings of the Council of Fifty at Winter Quarters. With Brigham’s “Word and Will of the Lord” in January 1847 and the subsequent triumph of the Quorum of the Twelve’s plan over the plan of the Council of Fifty, Miller broke with Brigham in total disgust, took Emmett and many others with him, and headed south to confer with Lyman Wight in Texas and to make plans to deflect as many of Brigham’s followers as possible. Brigham worried that in his absence west, Bishop Miller, a well-liked, respected, and courageous individual with many loyal admirers, would “soon break off to the South and lead many uneasy spirits with him.”

Brigham seemed perplexed with how to handle the problem. Because of Wight’s well-known allegiance to Joseph Smith, the apparent assignment Joseph bestowed upon him, and other reasons, Brigham was reluctant to remove Wight from the apostleship, even though he knew that Wight had no further intentions of following him. Significantly, it took the Pottawattamie high council to make the first move toward disfellowshiping Wight after it had become unarguable that he and Miller were doing all in their power to undermine Brigham’s authority and the emigration process. Lack of action might be construed as approval of Wight’s cause. Consequently, George Miller and James Emmett were cut off from the church that same fall.

The longer the First Presidency hesitated in acting on Wight’s standing in the quorum and in the church, the more success Wight and Miller’s emissaries stood to realize. In the fall of 1848, William Snow reported on the decision of the Pottawattamie high council to send elders, seventies, and high priests in pairs once every two weeks to visit each of the forty or fifty branches scattered about. “You will see the object of our circuit riders,” he told Brigham, “when you learn that we have pamphlets coming in among us from all quarters containing there [sic] instructions, revelations and invitations . . . to come to Texas, Vorea [sic], Kirtland, Jackson and I don’t know where all.”

And pamphlets were not all. That same fall, several missionaries
from Texas were circulating throughout the region, urging everyone to rally around Lyman Wight's standard. Peter Haws, Lucien Woodworth, Heber Johnson, Spencer Smith, and Lyman Whitney, to name only a few, accepted the message and made plans for an early southern departure. Haws and Woodworth were particularly adamant about taking orders only from the Council of Fifty.

Lymanism seemed to make its greatest impact among scattered branches away from Kanesville and among those who had taken temporary work in Missouri. Its influence reached such proportions that Hyde felt obliged to publish a pamphlet late in 1848 condemning Wight's "boasting and defying spirit," his stubbornness, his doctrine of communitarianism, his defiance of the First Presidency, and his increasingly narrow view that his mission to Texas was more in keeping with Joseph's vision than with Brigham's.

Lymanism peaked during the winter of 1848-49 before rapidly declining in influence. Its sudden demise can be attributed to two things: first, George Miller's and later Lyman Wight's excommunication from the church, actions that, in Orson Hyde's words, were "an effectual cure of the Texas Epidemic," and second, George Miller's sudden separation and resignation from Wight's Texas colony in 1849. Miller became so disgusted with Wight's intoxication and imperious manner that he left him to join with Strang in Wisconsin. Wight died in relative obscurity in 1858.

Conclusion

The impact of Lamanism and Lymanism upon the Mormon settlements in western Iowa, while significant, should not be overstated. For a number of reasons, the two movements made fewer inroads than their advocates desired. Neither was a well-organized or well-defined operation, and both lacked funding for sustained campaigns. Wight and Miller lacked a local headquarters or beachhead, while Cutler removed himself further from the field of action. More importantly, Mormon leadership implemented an ambitious and successful circuit-rider system that kept lines of communication open with the outlying branches. The effective use of the press in the form of the Frontier Guardian tended to defuse the situation. And the relatively rapid emigration west and constant population turnovers likewise discouraged a permanent alternative presence. It is estimated, then, that slightly over two hundred followed Cutler and a comparable number opted for Lyman Wight and George Miller.

As to the grand total of those who left the church while at the Missouri between 1847 and 1852, the numbers are significantly higher. Based on the Mormon populations in Iowa and Nebraska in December 1846, the number of British converts who arrived at Council Bluffs between 1848 and 1852 and who subsequently crossed the plains, the estimated Mormon population in Utah Territory in 1852, and the annual
average rate of mortality, an estimated 2,132 quit the church, a percentage rate of 11.2 percent.\(^4\) (This figure does not take into account those who left the church at Nauvoo or in the Salt Lake Valley after 1852.)

Corn crops remained good throughout these years. And such harvests provided much allegorical sermonizing and reflection on various points of the developing doctrines, growth, internal changes, and destiny of the young church. It was a time of change, an era of transition and of considerable turmoil. Of all the sermons given to address the challenges and answer the questions inevitable during such trying times, perhaps none were as fitting to their situation and as comforting to the majority of the people as apostle Amasa Lyman's "parable of the corn." This he delivered in December 1847 during the conference in which Brigham Young was sustained president, prophet, seer, and revelator of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, declaring:

Let farmers come to America and see you plant corn, and see it come up out of the earth and see the young and tender blade. It looks beautiful and green. They know it is corn; but let them be from it for 4 or 5 months and take them to the same field and show them the same corn and they will be ready to swear that it is not corn at all—and so it is with many in this Church. They believed primitive Mormonism, that was all right—all reasonable and appeared beautiful—but after staying away from the Church 4 or 5 years they come back and are ready to swear that it is not Mormonism, because it has not waited for them; but like corn has grown up from a young and tender blade to tall corn bearing fruit... if they stay in the field all the time with the corn and cultivate it and see it in all its various stages from the time it comes up till it is ripened then they know the corn wherever they see it.\(^6\)

NOTES

1. Journal of Warren E. Foote, June 3, 1847, in the Archives of the Historical Department, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah (hereafter referred to as LDS Archives).

2. For a detailed summary of Mormon population in the area, see the author's recent dissertation, "Mormons at the Missouri: A History of the Latter-day Saints at Winter Quarters and at Kanesville, 1846-52—A Study in American Overland Trail Migration" (Ph.D. diss., Wayne State University, Detroit, 1984), pp. 173-76.


5. Noah Packard to Brigham Young, February 6, 1848, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Archives.

6. Journal History, April 5, 1848, LDS Archives.


10. Journal of Wilford Woodruff, November 21, 1847, LDS Archives. Evidence suggests that Adam and his place in Mormon theology and in the resurrection were much discussed and debated during the Mormon stay at Winter Quarters. Death was such a common occurrence that opportunities to discuss death and resurrection abounded.


12. Ibid., March 26, 1847, 1:243.

13. Orson Hyde, George A. Smith, and Ezra T. Benson to Brigham Young, April 5, 1849, Brigham Young Papers.


15. Shortly before his death, Joseph Smith organized the “Grand Council” or “Council of Fifty,” theoretically made up of men, mostly members of the church, whose purpose was to serve as an advisory body in such matters as Joseph’s presidential campaign, the relocation of the church, coping with political and social opposition and persecution from within and without the church, and other general concerns. The role of this secret council, often referred to obliquely in contemporary journals or mentioned not at all, seems to have been a point of contention even among its members. Perhaps Joseph’s unexpected death prevented a visible unfolding of the council’s true role and purpose. Whatever the case, its role has since been much discussed by those who contend it was a body of real political and ecclesiastical power and by others who argue it was merely a glorified think tank or, as apostle George A. Smith once called it, a “debating society.” The truth probably lies somewhere in between. Brigham Young clearly gave it an inferior role to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in both political and ecclesiastical concerns. Unfortunately, the minutes of the Council of Fifty have either been destroyed or are not otherwise accessible. For clashing views on this subject, see Klaus Hansen, *Quest for Empire—The Political Kingdom of God and the Council of Fifty in Mormon History* (Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1967); and D. Michael Quinn, “The Council of Fifty and Its Members, 1844 to 1945,” *Brigham Young University Studies* vol. 20, no. 2 (Winter 1980), pp. 163-97.


17. See Journal History, March 31, 1848, and *Diary of Hosea Stout* 1 (November 10, 1847): 287. Lewis Dana, one of the few Mormon Indian converts among the advanced companies of the Saints heading west, apparently played a major role in negotiating the agreement.

18. Meeting of the Quorum of the Twelve and others, November 8, 1847, Brigham Young Papers.

19. Meeting of the First Presidency, the Twelve, the high council, and others, December 29, 1847, Brigham Young Papers.

20. Ibid.

21. By early March 1849, the *Frontier Guardian* in Kanesville reported that Cutler had “undertaken to establish a new church and [they] talk of settling in Jackson county, Missouri, or in some other way to join with the Indians below.” *Frontier Guardian*, March 7, 1849, p. 2.

22. “A Report” by Orson Hyde, George A. Smith, and Ezra T. Benson to Brigham Young, April 5, 1849, “chapter 3,” Brigham Young Papers. Declared the high council, “We understand it [Cutler’s Mission] to be to preach the Gospel, baptize those that believed, build mills, teach schools, do good to the people they were among, inculcate peace and union. But Caulkins said it was something entirely different from that. The building of mills and teaching of school was merely to cover up what they were doing.”
23. Pottawattamie High Council Minutes, August 17, 1850, LDS Archives.
24. Chauncey Whiting to a relative, April 22, 1849, as quoted in Clare B. Christensen, comp., *Before and After Mt. Pisgah* (Salt Lake City: Clare B. Christensen, 1979), pp. 180-81.
25. Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, April 27, 1850, Brigham Young Papers.
27. Ibid. See also the "Reminiscences of Abraham A. Kimball," p. 5, LDS Archives.
29. For a good review of Lyman Wight, see Davis Bitton, “Mormons in Texas: The Ill-fated Lyman Wight Colony, 1844-1858,” *Arizona and the West* 2 (Spring 1969), pp. 5-26.
30. Lyman Wight, “An Address by Way of an Abridged Account and Journal of My Life from February 1844 Up to April 1848 with an Appeal to the Latter-day Saints,” p. 13, LDS Archives. Wight believed that few, if any, of the current apostles had sacrificed and suffered as much as he had for Joseph and that because of this, he was “indemnified” from any punitive action. “Notwithstanding their long ears and slanderous tongue,” he complained, “they will find them too short and too feeble to compete with a man who has gained his right and inheritance by passing through the sufferings which I have passed through.”
31. Ibid., p. 15.
32. Ibid., p. 16.
34. “Correspondence of Bishop George Miller,” pamphlet, p. 30, under the date of July 1, 1855, LDS Archives. Miller’s views on priesthood organization and succession differed significantly from those held by Brigham Young: “I considered the order of God’s kingdom, in its full organization, to be, a Prophet at the head, with his home ministry, consisting of a High Council, chosen from among the High Priests after the order of Melchisedec, High Priests, Elders, Priests, Teachers and Deacons, and amenable to the Prophet, the Chief Shepherd of the flock; the quorum of the Twelve Apostles, under the direction of the Chief Shepherd, of equal authority as a traveling High Council, with the Seventies to help them; whose duty is to open the gospel to the nations, and have jurisdiction on all the face of the earth.” In Miller’s view, no quorum in the church, not even the Twelve Apostles, could exercise any authority in the church “except under the legitimate head of the church . . . all acts of the several quorums were invalid, unless so directed.”
35. The Journal of Norton Jacob, April 6, 1847, Utah State Historical Society. For more on this subject, see the author’s article “Finalizing Plans for the Trek West: Deliberations at Winter Quarters, 1846-1847,” *Brigham Young University Studies* 24 (Summer 1984): 301-20.
36. Wrote George A. Smith and Ezra T. Benson in a letter to Brigham Young, “You may consider that our action today in the case of Lyman Wight is rather hasty, after your bearing so long with him, but we discovered that a number of the persons affected with the ‘Texas Epidemic’ are busy visiting remote branches and instilling into the minds of the people the ideas that the authorities dare not interfere with Lyman in his course for he was right, however much they might say against him they would take no public action.” George A. Smith and Ezra T. Benson to Brigham Young, October 7, 1848, Brigham Young Papers.
37. Winter Quarters High Council, December 3, 1848.
38. William Snow to Brigham Young, October 2, 1848, Brigham Young Papers.
39. George A. Smith, Ezra T. Benson, and Joseph Young to the First Presidency and Twelve, October 2, 1848, Brigham Young Papers.

40. Ibid. "We understand that many who went to Missouri to get better and do better than they could to remain among the Saints have . . . become convinced that the Presidency of the Church are wrong, and that Lyman is right."

41. George A. Smith to Brigham Young, October 9, 1848, Brigham Young Papers.

42. See Minutes of the Winter Quarters High Council, December 3, 1848, LDS Archives; "A Report" from Orson Hyde, George A. Smith, and Ezra T. Benson to Brigham Young, April 5, 1849, Brigham Young Papers. Miller was cut off in late 1848.

43. Ibid.


45. Arriving at an accurate number of those who left the church at the Missouri is difficult. The chart below is a rough approximation based upon three estimates: calculations of the numbers of Latter-day Saints on the Missouri and Mississippi rivers in December 1846; the numbers of British emigrants who began arriving at the Bluffs from 1848 to 1852 and who crossed the plains; and the estimated Mormon population in Utah as of 1852. Data for the British emigration were taken from in-house emigration books and calculations in the research room of the LDS Archives. The 14,500 figure for Utah in 1852 was derived from a forthcoming official population study being compiled by Earl Olson and others summarizing church membership through the years. The approximate death rate is in line with the regular Nauvoo death rates and the reduced death rate at the Missouri in 1848 (not counting the scurvy and other death rates of 1846 and 1847).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Mormon population on the Missouri and Mississippi rivers, December 1846</td>
<td>11,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total British Mormon emigrants, 1848-52</td>
<td>6,992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrivals back from California (est.)</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total potential number who could have crossed the plains to Utah up until December 1852</td>
<td>18,992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated 1852 Utah population</td>
<td>14,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number who did not go west</td>
<td>4,492</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less average mortality loss at 40 deaths per 1000 over 5 years, based on 11,800 pop.</td>
<td>2,360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated total who did not go west</td>
<td>2,132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of those at the Bluffs who did not go west (not including Nauvoo defections)</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Missionaries at Laie, Hawaii, 1888
Mormon Missionary Wives in Nineteenth Century Polynesia

By Carol Cornwall Madsen

In 1848, two months after their arrival in the newly settled Great Salt Lake Valley, Mormon converts Jonathan and Caroline Barnes Crosby were called by church leaders to serve a mission in the Pacific islands. Duty triumphed over their misgivings. “After laboring and toiling so long to get to a place where we could feel ourselves at home,” Caroline wrote in her journal, “we have now got to take another and ever more tedious journey and take up our abode among the wild sons of nature, perhaps for several years, but it is all for the gospel’s sake, therefore we do not wish to murmur, but keep our eyes upon the recompense of reward, that rest which remains for the people of God.”

The Crosbys did not leave for their mission until 1850, when they departed with Caroline’s sister Louisa Barnes Pratt, who was going to join her husband in Tahiti, three other missionary couples, nine children, and three single male missionaries.

The next year, four other Mormon women accompanied their husbands to the Sandwich Islands, where they joined five male missionaries who had opened the mission for Mormon proselytizing the year before. These nine women, and the eighty other Mormon missionary wives who followed them into the Polynesian mission field before the turn of the century, were part of a worldwide Mormon female mission-
ary force that numbered more than two hundred by 1900. Virtually all of these female missionaries were married women who either accompanied or joined their missionary husbands in mission fields throughout the world. Their experience was characterized by the ambivalence of church leaders toward female participation in the missionary enterprise and ambiguity in articulating their missionary roles. Utilized at first almost exclusively as the domestic and financial supports of their proselytizing husbands, missionary wives did not find a ministerial function in mission service until the latter part of the century. Although some mission leaders perceived the need for a broader scope of mission activity for women, it resulted primarily from the initiative of individual missionary wives and the establishment of church auxiliary organizations for women and children in the islands, which offered them administrative and teaching opportunities among the natives.

This small contingent of Mormon women comprised a little known segment of a dramatic evangelistic movement in nineteenth century America in which women were major participants. First organizing tract and missionary support societies early in the century, women later became more directly involved as missionary wives in the field, and finally, by century's end, served as proselytizing missionaries themselves. Missionary work opened new avenues of religious expression and commitment for women. Traditionally prohibited from serving in ecclesiastical positions in the major sects, they had been relegated to personal or peripheral religious activity. Missionary work provided a viable and integral place for them in Christian ministry.

Female missionaries broadened the meaning of evangelism to include the dissemination of Christian service as well as dogma. By capitalizing on their "distinctive" female qualities, they carved a solid role for themselves in foreign missions, where they attempted to inculcate some of the essentials of American Victorian culture, especially among the so-called heathen nations, along with principles of Christian behavior. Victorian women were especially suited to missionary labors wherein their natural characteristics flourished: piety, altruism, self-sacrifice, and compassion. The female missionaries heeded the call from their subjugated sisters in faraway heathen lands, reaching those women whose religious and social customs made them inaccessible to male missionaries.

Serving a mission became another expression of the benevolent and reform activity initiated by American women throughout the century, a significant outlet for expressing Victorian feminism. The challenges posed by strange and exotic fields of labor in the Pacific islands or the Far East only intensified women's commitment to effecting America's manifest religious and cultural destiny. The foreign mission field evoked images of heroic service, particularly in single women, who comprised the majority of the Protestant missionary force in the latter part of the century and who perceived a mission call as an opportunity not
only to do but also to be something of worth. While the reality seldom matched the expectations of either noble service or exotic adventure, a mission did provide a measure of personal fulfillment and self-realization while providing opportunity for religious service.

Thirty years before the first Mormon missionary couples reached the islands, several waves of Protestant missionary couples had already brought Christianity to Hawaiian shores. By the time the Mormons arrived in 1850, the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions, which supported the Protestant effort, had already declared the islands sufficiently Christianized to close the mission. During that thirty-year period, seventy-two New England Protestant women, most of them as missionary wives, served in the islands, many of them living out their lives in the mission field.

The foundation laid by earlier missionaries proved a mixed blessing to the Mormons. “To read of their savage customs and their idolatry,” wrote Louisa Barnes Pratt of the Tahitians, “and now to see their docility, their genuine piety, their ingenuity and skill in mechanism; who would presume to say that the British missionaries had not done them good? Little good could we have done them had they not had bibles and hymn books in their own language, published by the missionary societies in England.” Converting the natives from one Christian religion to another, however, met strong resistance, not only from the natives but also from the well-established and jealously protected Protestant community in the islands. Religious tolerance had been begrudgingly extended to the Catholics in the Sandwich Islands a decade before the Mormons arrived, and it was granted only reluctantly to the Mormons, their espousal of polygamy being an additional deterrent. Despite these impediments, the first Mormon missionaries, who arrived in 1850, converted nearly a thousand natives their first year of proselytizing. The arrival of four missionary couples along with several other male missionaries the next year added three thousand more converts within the next three years.

Besides encountering antipathy, if not outright hostility, the first missionary wives in the Sandwich Islands and the five in Tahiti faced additional challenges and frustrations common to each other and to their Protestant counterparts several decades earlier. Language and cultural barriers were formidable, and few of the women ever fully penetrated them. The natives’ uninhibited, unstructured, and unregulated way of life ran counter to the most basic of Christian or Victorian standards. The apparent lack of maternal or domestic responsibility among native women appalled mission wives, who kept a wide distance between native children and their own. Acculturation was clearly to be the task of the haole or foreigner, not of the host in this cultural encounter. The unresolved tension between their maternal and missionary duties, however, proved to be even more disquieting to the missionary wives. Some Protestant wives bore eight or more children while in the mission
field. Mormon women, who served for shorter periods, were nonetheless heavily burdened by familial obligations. One Mormon missionary wife and mother of four expressed this tension as she lamented her inability to visit a native women's meeting. “I could not go,” she wrote, “as much as I would have liked to on account of my family chores.” After a year in the field, the dual demands had not lessened. “I can see two or three different ways in which I could spend every moment of my time to good advantage,” she wrote, “but have to content myself with doing what I can and letting the rest go undone.” The often futile attempt to reconcile the conflicting role responsibilities eventually caused Mormon leaders to reassess the effectiveness of married women in the mission field.

More significant than their shared difficulties were the differences in the primary missionary tasks assigned to Mormon and Protestant missionary wives. At the outset, the motivation for mission service differed. Many New England wives had long sustained dreams of serving missions as an outward manifestation of inner conviction and rejoiced when the opportunity came through their husbands. Mission service under the American Board of Foreign Missions was purely voluntary and initiated by the prospective missionaries themselves. Charlotte Fowler Baldwin was typical of the Protestant missionary wife who decided early in her life that she “wished to consecrate herself to Christian mission work”; she joyfully accompanied her husband to the Sandwich Islands in 1830. Laura Fisher Judd, another New England missionary, had long cherished “an ardent desire to go in person to some part of the heathen world and carry the news of our Saviour’s love.” Her opportunity came when she married Dr. Gerrit Parmele Judd, a missionary-physician bound for the Sandwich Islands in 1827. Since few women in the early part of the century attempted foreign missionary work alone, some women married missionaries in order to realize their own religious ambitions. While not all New England missionary wives cherished a desire to serve in the mission field, a remarkable number shared the evangelizing enthusiasm of their husbands and welcomed the opportunity to express it.

Unlike their Protestant predecessors, Mormon missionary wives sent to the Sandwich Islands neither volunteered for mission service nor perceived it as a vocation or necessary fulfillment of pious proclivity. Indeed, their presence in the mission field throughout the nineteenth century was often problematic. While the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions prohibited single men from serving in the Sandwich Islands, Mormon leaders preferred them. A basic reason for this difference lay in Mormon doctrine, which designated proselytizing as a fundamental priesthood responsibility and thus a male ecclesiastical duty. Serving from three to five years, missionaries proselytized without purse or scrip, dependent on the hospitality of converts and local inhabitants for their sustenance. Although some
Madsen: Missionary Wives in Polynesia

Mormon women were called in connection with their husbands, many joined their husbands in the field largely through their husbands’ “importunings,” as Brigham Young explained, or by their own decision to keep their families intact. After 1865, missionary wives were specifically called with their husbands to the islands, although there was always latitude for their own decision. When Frederick Beesley was called to the Sandwich Islands in 1885, for example, he inquired about the possibility of marrying and taking his wife with him. His bishop left the decision to the potential bride, who acquiesced immediately to the marriage proposal but only reluctantly agreed to the mission, never having “been desirous of going there.”

The Protestant call to missionary service was internally generated, a spiritual yearning to serve God and his church in this particular way. The call for Mormon missionaries was external, initiated by church leaders and accepted by members as a duty of membership. As a result, a mission call for Mormon women was at best an inconvenient interruption in the natural flow of their lives and at worst an ordeal to be patiently endured. “The thoughts of being so suddenly broken up in all our business affairs occasioned no small degree of confusion in my mind,” lamented Caroline Crosby. She had obtained a large quantity of straw for braiding and had intended to do business “on a large scale,” but the plan was left unfulfilled. Sarah Partridge was obliged to leave a thriving millinery business and two married children, including a daughter whom she had intended to assist during her impending childbirth. Moreover, she had to sell all of her household goods to pay her passage to the islands. Maria Nebeker, a plural wife, found it necessary to sell her home, farm, cattle, and city lots in order to accompany her husband to the islands. “It seemed I was then offering my Isaac,” she wrote. “Yet I never faltered, sold all but a change of clothing for my child and myself, and I thought not of myself—only to perform my duty.”

Newlyweds Matthew and Elizabeth Noall had just completed their first home, built from the proceeds of Matthew’s fledgling carpentry business. Julina Lambson Smith took only her youngest child with her to the islands and pined incessantly for those she had left behind. These women experienced no sense of inner call to the ministry that might have mitigated their feelings of isolation, sacrifice, temporariness, and homesickness. A foreign mission was not necessarily the realization of a spiritual dream for them.

Protestant wives assumed comparatively well-defined missionary tasks because of the strategy of Hiram Bingham, mission leader, in segregating Hawaiian women for the special counsel and instruction mission wives could give them. They established schools for native children and women, conducted prayer meetings and other spiritual gatherings for women and organized maternal associations in order to instruct the women in homemaking and child care. The May day in 1820 when Sybil Bingham assembled fourteen native girls in her Hawaiian cottage...
marked the beginning “of the first school ever assembled in the land,”
a school that was replicated wherever the missionaries established a
post. By precept and example the women educated the natives in their
charge not only in academics but also in proper Christian female be-
havior. To reenforce their spiritual and moral development, the mis-
sionary wives conducted weekly prayer meetings. Since they were finan-
cially supported by the American Board, the primary constraint in their
endeavors was the demands of their own families.

Role expectations for Mormon missionary wives were not so clearly
defined; they evolved to meet varying contingencies. The first nine
Mormon missionary wives who settled in the Sandwich Islands and on
Tupuai in Tahiti assumed with their husbands the full financial burden
of their mission. To allow their husbands maximum time to learn the
language and proselytize, most of these women carried the financial re-
sponsibility alone. Favorable conditions on Tupuai lightened the task of
support for Caroline Crosby and Louisa Pratt. Louisa’s husband had es-
established a congregation of Mormons on the island during an earlier
mission, and the members welcomed the new missionaries with places to
live and generous supplies of food, even though French law prohibited
the natives from supporting foreigners or foreigners from becoming
dependent on the natives. Louisa Pratt viewed her situation with some
content: “Although we are placed here with no salary, and forbidden by
the French governor to demand anything of the people, yet the Lord
provides for us all,” she wrote soon after arriving. “All our wants are
supplied. The missionary can go to the woods, shoot wild fowls and
ducks, the taro patches are free.” The Pratt sisters, relieved of the
heaviest burdens of self-support, had experiences that more closely cor-
responded to those of the earlier Protestant missionary wives than to
their contemporaneous Mormon sisters. They organized schools,
boarded native children for “civilizing,” and conducted meetings with
native sisters, where they “propounded Church doctrine.”

The four missionary wives who arrived in Hawaii in 1851 did not
fare so well. Each couple was assigned to a different island where the
women attempted to establish a school, sew for the natives, or braid hats
and household items in exchange for money, food, or living quarters.
Patsy Perkins had no success at all, and she and her husband both re-
quested permission to return home. They were soon followed by Elvira
Woodbury, who, although a little more financially productive through
her teaching and sewing, lost her health and was advised to leave the
field. Moreover, while Caroline Crosby and Louisa Pratt found the Ta-
hitians to be extremely generous and concerned with their well-being,
missionaries in Hawaii found many of the natives there reluctant to pro-
vide food or shelter, to patronize their schools, or to associate with the
missionaries. Thus they were forced to move frequently, constantly
seeking hospitable surroundings. After two years, a third mission wife,
Jane Lewis, also returned home for her health, leaving only Mary Jane
Hammond, who stayed more than five years, teaching, sewing, instructing the natives in handiwork and housekeeping, and bearing two children. Her missionary husband, Francis, utilized his leather craft to assist in sustaining his family. Both learned the language well, and this facility, along with their own resourcefulness and the friendlier mood on Maui, where they had settled, enabled the Hammonds to purchase land and build a small thatched home of their own. Their house was "comfortable, clean, and airy" and proved to be a haven for other missionaries. "Their society has been a solace to me, as also to the rest of the brethren," wrote George Q. Cannon, one of the earliest Mormon missionaries in the islands. "Sister Hammond will not, I think, be soon forgotten by us, for she has been truly sisterly, as Brother Hammond has been brotherly." By 1855 Mary Jane Hammond was busily employed. "She is indeed a good woman as well as very industrious," wrote one missionary. "She keeps one boarder besides all the Elders [missionaries] that happen to come along, which is not seldom, does all her own sewing and washing and cooking, takes care of three small children, teaches a school of 10 scholars and takes in sewing for other folks to the amount of 2 or 3 dollars a week."

The Hammonds' dependence on the natives extended to midwifery, native help that was often disdained by many Protestant missionary wives. Without any white female assistance in childbirth, the Hammonds turned to three native converts for assistance. As he observed their work, Francis Hammond declared them to "far excel our people in knowledge of this kind," being particularly impressed with their mode of treatment. The Hammonds thus sustained themselves throughout the five and a half years they spent together in the islands.

By the time the Mormon missionaries left Polynesia in the mid-1850s, primarily because of unsettled conditions in Utah, more than four thousand natives had been converted in the Sandwich Islands alone. Membership dwindled to a thousand, however, before the Hawaiian mission was formally reopened in 1865.

The Mormon concept of gathering, or the assembling of Church members into one community where they could worship and live together, collectivized the role of the missionary wives, ten of whom were sent with their husbands, along with a number of other single male missionaries, to settle and maintain the Mormon colony at Laie, Hawaii, in 1865. About 125 native members joined the settlement, centered on a sugar cane plantation that was to provide the financial base for the mission and a spiritually and economically beneficial environment for the natives. The burden of financial support was transferred to both the native members, who worked on the plantation, and those male missionaries who were specifically called to superintend the enterprise. Those missionaries who did not work on the plantation proselytized for six-month periods on the other islands. Their wives remained at Laie.

In a letter to King Kamehameha V, Brigham Young explained his
purpose for sending Mormon missionary couples to Laie: "They will go there as religious leaders but while this is their calling, they will not confine their labors to spiritual matters only. According to the precepts of our religion the spiritual and temporal are so intimately blended that we view no salvation or system of salvation as being complete which does not provide for the welfare and preservation of the body as well as the salvation of the spirit." 40

The King acquiesced to the Church’s desire to secure a profitable agricultural venture to support the mission but also cautioned that no effort be made to “gather His [the King’s] people for instruction in the principles of your Church.” The Mormons would have his full support as long as their activity on the plantation at Laie remained only “agricultural and mechanical.” Despite religious tolerance, the continuing antipathy toward Mormons compelled him to deny them recognition “on a footing with Christian missionaries as teachers, as those words are ordinarily understood.” 41

When the first ten missionary couples arrived at Laie, they found a plantation house, a small rock house, and three native huts, most of which were uninhabitable. With native help, they repaired the dwellings and constructed additional quarters. Most of the missionaries found it necessary to find employment in order to support themselves until the sugar mill became productive.

Unlike Louisa Pratt, who had been “called, set apart, and ordained” to aid her husband in “teaching the people,” 42 the women sent to Laie were primarily “set apart to administer to the wants of their husbands” and secondly to “teach righteousness to the people.” 43 Their duty to their husbands, however, evolved into demanding domestic responsibilities that allowed them little time to interact with the natives or assume any of the more conventional female missionary tasks. They provided supporting services for the mission, performing traditional household tasks on a large, communal basis, while attending to the needs of their own families. Only a few of the wives were able to enlarge their mission experience to include more typical evangelizing activities. Whatever idealistic illusions they may have attached to their mission experience, these soon yielded to the inescapable reality of life on the plantation, where they found they had merely transplanted their customary domestic functions to rockier soil and a wider terrain.

The missionary couples, who at first lived independently of one another on the plantation, eventually developed a system of communal living in which food production and preparation were rotated and meals and social activities shared communally in the plantation house. Each of the wives was assigned a single male missionary whose clothes she washed, ironed, and sewed when the missionary visited the plantation for the semiannual conferences of the mission. Only two of the original ten women were engaged in nondomestic employment for the mission. When Mildred Randall’s husband became dissatisfied a few
weeks after arrival and returned home, she elected to stay in Laie, where she organized a small plantation school for the native children. She remained in the field until Brigham Young released her in 1866. Maria Nebeker, also left alone after her husband returned to Utah, enjoyed her work in the plantation store. "Almost from the time of my arrival the store had been mostly under my care, as I soon managed to speak the Hawaiian language well enough to do business in a small way," she wrote. Maria found satisfaction in her mission experience in being "useful, not only to [her] husband but to the natives." These two women were among the minority of mission wives who found useful occupations for themselves within the context of their mission assignment. For most, the community kitchen and care of the plantation house dominated their experience in the islands.

Far more women than men returned early from their missions, almost all for health reasons. No woman escaped long periods of ill health. While many of the wives welcomed even the excuse of bad health to return home, others felt duty-bound to complete their missions. Sarah Partridge, for example, declined an opportunity to leave when her health failed, preferring to "tough it out as the time is so short now." Of the original ten women sent to Laie in 1865, four returned to the States after one year, four remained five years, and two stayed six years. Three additional couples joined the group in 1869. Without an official policy, most women served between two and four years in the mission field. From 1865 to 1900, fifty-one women spent one or more years in Laie with their husbands. Three women each served two missions, and records show two men returning a second time with a second wife.

In 1873, Mildred Randall became the only woman to return to the mission field without her husband. She resumed teaching at the plantation school, and maintained herself from the proceeds of the school, receiving no other financial assistance. Her straitened circumstances did not discourage her, however. "I am on a foreign mission, and the first woman who has ever been sent on such a mission without her husband," she proudly informed her sister in Virginia. "I consider it a great privilege and shall endeavor to do all the good I can while here."

For the missionaries at the Laie settlement, the interest of royalty marked the beginning of better relations with the government. In 1874, as part of a tour of the islands to meet his subjects, consolidate his support, and affirm his goal to advance commerce and agriculture, newly elected King Kalakaua visited Laie. More than three hundred natives gathered in the enclosure outside the mission home to hear him express his interest in the success of the plantation and his pleasure in seeing the condition of his people and the large number of Hawaiian children, a bonus in view of the rapidly decreasing native population. This was the first of many royal visits that drew the Mormons into closer personal contact with royalty and the Church into the circle of royal approval.
When Jane Molen and her husband, Simpson, the newly appointed mission president, arrived at Laie in 1876, the missionary force had dwindled to two couples on the plantation and five single male missionaries in the islands. Jane developed an immediate sisterly bond with Mary Ann Lambert and Minerva Woolley, both of whom were newly married. Jane, seventeen years married and childless except for an adopted daughter, assisted the younger women in the births of their children and provided companionship when their husbands proselytized on other islands. With a minimum of both maternal and mission duties, the missionary wives had opportunity to develop their friendship. Only Jane, who replaced Mildred Randall as schoolteacher, had a mission assignment that extended beyond her share of plantation house duties. The three women frequently picnicked by the ocean, gathering up some of the native children for an afternoon of swimming, reading, and conversation. At least one evening each week, one or more of the women, accompanied by their husbands or other missionaries who were at Laie, rode horses into the nearby hills to gather oranges or look for guavas, coffee beans, and rice. In the mission yard they played lawn croquet with the natives and ended the evening with communal prayers and nostalgic stories of home. The congeniality of the women reflected the easy rhythm of the plantation life at that time.

Only the semiannual conferences held at the chapel at Laie disturbed the otherwise slow-paced routine, for then the schoolhouse and chapel had to be whitewashed, rooms in the plantation house cleaned for guests, food prepared for visiting members, and mending and sewing completed for the returning missionaries. The additional work was offset by the joy of reunion, as missionaries and members gathered together for a week of physical and spiritual rejuvenation. Together the women shared the work, looking forward to the six-month respite that followed.

Limited white companionship and the long separation from home and friends intensified the relatively brief relationships that developed at Laie. Sarah Partridge and Armeda Young, the only two missionary wives in Laie for more than a year in the early 1880s, developed a mutual dependence, and Armeda’s decision to return home early left Sarah extremely despondent. But Armeda deferred her departure until another missionary couple arrived, and shortly before her own return, Sarah welcomed two other women, Julina Smith and Esther Farr, and their husbands, both families taking up residence in the mission house and assisting with the work.

By 1880 the Laie settlement had achieved many of its initial goals. Church membership had increased throughout the mission, the population at the settlement had more than doubled, the sugar industry was productive, and the Church had obtained official government recognition. The role of the missionary wife, however, remained essentially undefined, subject to fluctuating needs. She continued to recreate the
home life that had been temporarily interrupted, took her turn at kitchen duty when necessary, and extended her sphere of usefulness to include sewing for the single male missionaries. Some women also assisted occasionally in the commercial or educational affairs of the plantation.

During the last two decades of the century, however, the pace at Laie accelerated. Growth of the settlement and expansion of the missionary force intensified the support duties of the mission wives. When Sarah Partridge left Utah for Hawaii in 1882 with her husband, Edward, who had been appointed mission president, she observed that many of her friends thought she was going on a pleasure trip. "As to how near they are right," she wrote, "I can judge better after a while; but I think I can see anything but an easy time ahead." She was more prescient than her friends. The communal experience and shared duties at Laie engendered affectionate bonds of sisterhood and memorable moments of mutual satisfaction for the extended family of missionaries, but the unrelenting intensity of the work also carried seeds of discord and discouragement.

Sarah was among the first of the missionary wives to experience the debilitating effects of an increased physical workload. Soon after their arrival, her husband appointed her superintendent of the mission house, where she cooked, washed, cleaned, and sewed for eighteen people, only four of whom were members of her family. When the mill was running, she had to cook for an additional twelve men along with the single male missionaries who occasionally resided in the plantation house. The semiannual conferences brought little pleasure to her. In preparation for one, she "whitewashed the large room . . . made ten loaves of bread . . . cut and made two pair of garments for Brother Gentry with Stan's help [her son] and finished [her] washing . . . and made a lot of fried cakes for supper," all in one day. A late meeting kept her up until eleven. She arose the next morning at four o'clock to prepare food for a missionary couple who were leaving for Honolulu. After they left, despite her fatigue from the previous day's work, she completed a large sewing project. When three unexpected visitors rode up to the door at noon, her "heart almost stopped." "This was enough at any time to make me sick," she wrote, but more so on that particular day. "The only thing I could do was to face the music," she concluded, and after making supper for them, a challenge by itself in the absence of plentiful food supplies, and relinquishing her own bed to one of them, she slept little and found herself exhausted and sick the next day. Such days became commonplace for the Laie missionary wives.

Within six months after Sarah Partridge's departure from the mission in 1885, the mission received its largest number of missionary couples since settlement of the plantation twenty years earlier. Nine Utah couples moved to Laie to join those already there, most of them taking up quarters in the new plantation house that was completed soon
after their arrival. While the new accommodations were more commodious, the kitchen more suited to American-style cooking and convenience, and the large public rooms more suitable for meetings and gatherings than the prior home, the workload of the domestic staff increased proportionately. Enoch Farr, the new mission president, continued the practice of his predecessor—a policy that remained throughout the duration of the plantation—of installing his wife as domestic superintendent with two women assigned each week to kitchen duties. Julina Smith, like the other missionary wives, found the workload necessary but oppressive: “I took the work Saturday and worked very hard scrubbing and cleaning all day, for I found everything dirty and filthy. . . . I have had no one but May [a native girl] to help me and have helped wash all the dishes/have mixed a big batch of bread every night and done most of the scrubbing. The kitchen don’t often look as nice and clean as it does now/this is my second day on another week, it is hard for me but I thought I could do it better now than I could in another few weeks [when her baby was due]. I will not have to come in again before I am sick/the work will not be as hard this week as it was last for everything is clean and in order.”

Twice when Julina was on kitchen duty, a beef was slaughtered, “which means a great deal of extra work.” An exacting housekeeper, she often criticized the kitchen work of some of the other women who seemed to withhold the effort she was willing to expend. The semiannual conferences continued to add to the workload. “I so dread the work in the kitchen during conference,” complained Elizabeth Noall, who, along with the other wives, also had to do mending and sewing for the single missionaries. When she received kitchen duty for two successive conferences, she suspected that another woman had deliberately altered assignments so that conference week would fall to her.

The women also dreaded washday but submitted to it in the interest of promoting modesty, cleanliness, and industry among the natives. In their determination to transplant American culture to the Hawaiians, missionaries refused to recognize the superiority of Hawaiian adaptation to the tropical climate. Rather than adopting, to some modest measure, a carefree attire, the missionaries maintained their own bulky styles and imposed them on the natives, which required hours of washing, starching, drying, and ironing. On ironing day, even the earlier Protestant mission wives drew the pity of the natives, who could only have wondered what moral or hygienic value compensated such backbreaking work. The value of example in dress as well as in behavior, however, was endemic to the missionary cause. Louisa Pratt expressed its importance thirty years earlier: “On these occasions [holidays] we dress ourselves in a becoming and tasteful manner, ornament our rooms as we would to receive fashionable and refined company, all for the purpose of example that they may understand our customs, and to stimulate them to imitation and improvement.”
Newcomers usually attempted to keep up with their weekly wash while assigned to kitchen duty but soon found it too much. "Scrubbed the kitchen (on my knees), did the cooking, and washed all the afternoon till six o'clock, then got supper [for twenty], and was so very tired when night came I could scarcely move myself, or open my mouth to say my prayers," wrote Julina Smith. 61 A two-week wash load, while doubly taxing, appeared to be the better of the two alternatives. "I could not do both," she quickly discovered.62

In 1889, Selena Pack, wife of mission president Ward Pack, catalogued some of her complaints: "The food wasn't good, nothing to cook, the rooms were too small or someone else was favored in having better ones." She herself came under criticism for not rising to the duties of a mission president's wife. But like many of the other wives, she had to face the demands of a new marriage, a difficult pregnancy, a long and life-threatening childbirth, and a worsening asthmatic condition, which forced her to leave the field after little more than a year.63 She had little time, energy, or inclination to learn the language, attend meetings, or take her turn at kitchen duty. Indifference, uncooperativeness, and a tendency to shirk responsibilities were qualities that the shared and onerous workload easily generated, since most of the missionary wives were young brides, like Selena Pack, whose first priorities were their marriages and babies, four of whom were born in a two-month period in 1886 and another a few months later.64

The sense of duty often prevailed, however, despite the women's inability or disinclination to do the work. Ann Howell Burt was never physically capable of the demanding domestic assignments. When the mission president first saw her, thin and pale from the long ocean voyage, he observed that she would never be able to do her share in the mission. She was determined to do so, however, and after two weeks' recuperation, she appeared in the kitchen at five o'clock each morning to cook for the twenty residents of the mission house. When her health failed a year and a half later, she went home but sent back one of her husband's plural wives to complete the remainder of what turned out to be a five-year mission.65

There was little that was ennobling or spiritually rewarding in the drudgery of the domestic work assigned to the missionary wives at Laie. Some seemed able to accept it more good-heartedly than others. But the exhaustion produced by the work, the friction that it often generated, and the eagerness to reach its end were woven into a common pattern that overlay the Laie experience for women. Nevertheless, they accepted the work, however reluctantly, as part of the mission call, a sacrifice that women were used to making, a necessary though unpleasant duty that contributed to the missionary effort.

The occasions at which women traditionally presided—birth, sickness, death—bridged the antagonisms and united the women in rituals common to their sex. Julina Smith, a midwife, attended the birth of
Elizabeth Noall’s first baby eleven days after the birth of her own child. Within the next two weeks, she assisted at the births of two more babies and attended to their needs during their first critical months. Few of the Mormon missionary wives were trained in nursing and midwifery, many of them never having experienced giving birth themselves when asked to assist in a delivery.66 Julina Smith’s skills were valued in the mission, but used almost exclusively among her sister missionaries rather than among the natives.

Two strong-minded missionary wives, Elizabeth Noall and Susa Gates, viewed the management of the mission house and personal responsibility to the mission differently and found numerous occasions to express other petty irritations with one another. Yet it was Elizabeth who gave up her own room in the mission house for Susa and her husband and tended their sick child for several nights until his death. She continued to watch nightly with their second child, who died of the same illness a week later. It was also Elizabeth who prepared the bodies for burial and made their burial clothes. At Susa’s request, Elizabeth wrote letters bearing the tragic news to their families in Utah.67

Besides the natural kinship that developed, if only temporarily, in sharing these traditional female duties, the mission wives also created a spiritual cohesiveness when they washed and anointed a sister in childbirth or pronounced healing blessings on one another when occasion demanded.68 The exercise of spiritual gifts, long a female practice in the Church, provided women personal access to this kind of spiritual power outside traditional priesthood channels.

In 1892, when Elizabeth Noall returned with her husband to preside over the mission, she instigated a weekly meeting for the missionary wives, ostensibly to study gospel principles and other subjects relating to the “advancement of women,” but also to draw them into closer bonds of unity and purpose. She also prepared a set of by-laws governing their temporal and spiritual activities. Having experienced the tension that resulted from too much physical work and too little cooperation during her first mission, she hoped to develop a stronger sense of union and sisterhood through the weekly meetings. Her expectations were realized. Ellen Cole, a new mission bride in 1898, immediately felt the unity and camaraderie fostered by the informal gatherings of the six missionary wives then at the plantation and was pleased to note their acknowledgment of “the blessings we enjoy and how favored we are to be chosen to come here as missionaries, as there are many sisters who are anxious to have this privilege.”69 The attitude toward mission work had appreciably altered from the decade before.

Two factors contributed to a more clearly defined and diversified expectation for Mormon missionary wives that moved them away from serving only as supportive appendages and becoming direct contributors to the missionary effort.70 The first resulted from a reassessment of their value to the mission. Living on the plantation for nearly three
years in the mid-1880s, Joseph F. Smith, a counselor in the Church’s First Presidency, observed the daily activities of the wives and calculated the expense of maintaining families in the mission field against their contribution to the mission. While they undoubtedly made life more comfortable for their husbands, he opined, and many attempted within their limited time to assist in mission work, their collective productivity did not justify the expense of travel and maintenance. “There are some exceptions to the rule here,” he wrote to Church President John Taylor, “which makes the contrast the more striking.” Few of the women learned the language and most of them attended meetings irregularly, he complained, two major drawbacks in their effectiveness. “Two or three good women, who are not afraid to work, and who are capable of making themselves useful among the Natives, by setting an example, and otherwise teaching their more ignorant, dark-skinned sisters, would be a positive blessing and benefit to the mission,” he advised. The others, by implication, were a drain on the mission’s resources and overall effort.71

Mission President Matthew Noall later observed that too many women were under the mistaken impression that they were in the mission field only as “wives” and not as “missionary teachers.”72 While neither policy nor practice had encouraged women to extend their mission service beyond domestic maintenance, new opportunities to serve were unfolding. The complexity of missionary work and development of Church auxiliaries and other social programs clearly bespoke a more active participation of the missionary wives. “Unless spiritual-minded women could be secured for Hawaiian Missionaries,” Noall wrote, “their presence here is more of a detriment than a benefit. . . . The spiritual-minded woman, who would actually apply herself and get the language, could do as much good as an Elder of equal application can,” he asserted. He insisted that no more sisters should be sent than were actually needed for a specific assignment.73

Elizabeth Noall, the self-motivated missionary wife of Matthew Noall, also publicly registered her dissatisfaction with the performance of some of the missionary wives. “Many an energetic sister has toiled hard in the twofold duties of temporal and spiritual labors,” she told readers of the Young Woman’s Journal in Salt Lake City, “while there have been those. . . . whose dispositions have inclined them to ‘take things easy’ and to spend their time to no advantage, little thinking of the lessons they were teaching by their examples before a people already developed almost to perfection in spending their time in indolence.” She also lamented the fact that the women were not as carefully chosen for missionary activity as their husbands. Too many, she felt, spent their time looking after the needs only of their husbands and not extending the same solicitous care to the single missionaries and to the natives.74

Unable to effect an immediate change in the number or type of
women sent to the islands, some of the mission presidents, most of whom served for three to five years, maximized the women's usefulness and capitalized on those who were willing or able to take on additional duties by systematizing their work on the plantation and utilizing where possible individual abilities. Domestic work in the mission house was lightened so that specific women could be assigned as clerk of the plantation store, elementary gradeschool teacher in the mission school for native children, and plantation bookkeeper or assistant. These additional assignments added to the workload of the women so assigned but gave them a more precise sense of mission involvement.

Even more significant in providing definition and scope to the mission experience of Mormon women and more direct contact with the natives was the organization of the women's auxiliaries in the islands. In 1873 a small native Relief Society was organized at Laie and staffed entirely by native women whose charge was to relieve suffering, raise money for mission needs, and learn needlework and housekeeping skills from their foreign sisters. Members worked in the sugarcane fields and donated a day's wages to the Relief Society for its benevolent projects. Its success resulted in a missionwide organization two years later, with native women forming a general presidency who presided over the societies in each congregation or branch of the Church throughout the islands. Nine months later, a young men's and ladies' Mutual Improvement Association was organized, and in 1883 the children of the mission were organized into a Primary association. Before 1883 the auxiliaries were headed by native members. Afterwards, native women continued to head the local units while the mission president's wife presided over the missionwide board supervising the auxiliaries. Sarah Partridge, the first missionary wife to preside over these organizations, reluctantly accepted the assignment from her husband, but despite her timidity and inability to speak Hawaiian, she visited the various units on Oahu, taught the native women and girls to make quilts, raised sufficient money to complete a Relief Society home on the plantation, and conducted the semiannual Relief Society conferences. These associations provided a notable outlet for many missionary wives to express creative spiritual and organizational imagination. Moreover, they gave women opportunity for an ecclesiastical missionary role among the natives.

In addition, missionary wives began serving as traveling missionaries to the other islands to coordinate the work of the auxiliaries. The major limiting factor in their usefulness in these organizations was their general inability to learn the language fluently. Elizabeth Noall was one of the few exceptions. She spoke fluent Hawaiian and became the first mission Relief Society president to conduct the semiannual Relief Society conferences at Laie without a translator. Only twenty-one when she was first appointed Relief Society president, she served twice
in that capacity and found that the assignment fulfilled her sense of mission. “I begin to feel well repayed [sic] for what little I have studied in the language and I feel interested in my work,” she wrote in her diary. An organizer like her husband, she inaugurated semiannual Relief Society fairs, fund-raising events at which the native women displayed and sold the handiwork they had learned. Native women had always been generous in their donations before fairs were instigated, Elizabeth Noall reported to the Relief Society leaders in Utah, because their wants were few and they could usually find a little to spare. But her intent was to prevent idleness and its attendant ills by teaching habits of industry and usefulness. One might wonder at the usefulness of the baby booties and sweaters they learned to knit, the chair and sofa tidies they learned to crochet, or the pillow slips and shoulder shawls they learned to embroider, but the skill and the occupation were more important than the product. Civilizing the natives carried its own price, however. “Oh dear! it’s trying on the patience, they like anything exciting but the work must be all play in order for them to stick to it,” Elizabeth Noall discovered.

Her counselor, Nellie Beesley, concurred: “I am tired to death of it all. They wear my patience to a thread!”

Besides needlework, the missionary wives taught native women housekeeping skills and maternal responsibilities, domestic tasks new to them. “Heretofore the husbands and fathers have done the most of the cooking,” wrote Relief Society president Lucy M. King to general Relief Society president Zina D. H. Young in Salt Lake City, “but foreign customs, habits and industries, leave no time for the exercise of former vocations; hence the necessity of Hawaiian women learning kitchen duties.” Inculcating their own male and female role divisions was calculated to instill authority, responsibility, and cohesiveness to the casual kinship relationships characteristic of the Hawaiians.

Within the framework of these auxiliaries, each Mormon missionary wife created either a negligible or a significant role for herself. Selena Pack’s physical condition prevented any viable missionary contribution. Sara Partridge accepted duty as Relief Society and Primary president, but her own timidity and inability to speak Hawaiian curtailed extensive activity. Elizabeth Noall, on the other hand, acquired the language and vigorously pursued the possibilities presented by her administrative office as Relief Society president. She not only conducted meetings, traveled throughout the mission, and taught in the other auxiliaries, but she also translated lesson material, songs, and organizational guidelines for the native sisters, organized exhibition fairs, and toured the mission as translator for Church officials. With only the broadest of outlines, the auxiliary administrative posts offered wide latitude for interpretation.

The personal impact of the dramatic cultural encounter experienced by Mormon missionary wives in Polynesia was always voiced in
terms of the uneven relationship between the missionary and the native despite the special consideration merited by the Polynesians, who were believed to be, by the Latter-day Saints of that time, a remnant of the House of Israel. To redeem them from their ignorance and unrighteousness and bring them to a knowledge of their ancestry were the tasks of the missionaries, who adopted an attitude of cultural and religious noblesse oblige. “Our desires as missionary sisters,” wrote one missionary wife, “are to accomplish much good to our sisters who have been less favored than ourselves. . . . ‘They that be whole need not a physician but they that are sick.’” The rationale for teaching native women generally useless handicrafts, Elizabeth Noall made clear, was to help them “renounce their slothful and indolent habits and make them more fit for the association of white people.”

Like their Protestant counterparts, and Americans generally, Mormon missionaries disguised an implicit racism in their paternalistic benevolence and perceived their relationship with the natives as parental even after conversion. Frequently, the American Board of Foreign Missions questioned the tardiness with which converted Hawaiians were ordained or admitted into full church membership in the Protestant missions, a reluctance that reflected an unwillingness to admit the natives to equal status within the church. Protestant missionary wives segregated their children from the natives to protect them from the uncivilized ways of native children, sending them back to New England for their education. Ancillary to their religious objectives was their cultural mission, which admitted as little cross-cultural pollenization as possible. One compelling advantage to the native from this cultural conquest, however, was to equip him with the tools necessary to confront the escalating foreign incursion on his once isolated paradise.

While Mormon missionaries shared nineteenth century Western world assumptions of cultural, religious, and racial superiority, there were within Mormonism the footings of integration and community. Through their reliance on the natives for food and shelter as they proselytized among them, Mormon missionaries became assimilated, if only briefly, into native life while creating a physical and spiritual interdependence and trust. The Church’s reliance on a lay priesthood for ecclesiastical governance on all hierarchical levels, giving native men authority and priesthood offices equal to those of the missionaries, also had the potential to eliminate racial and cultural barriers. As the missionaries formed new congregations of converts, they ordained native men as priesthood leaders, just as native women were appointed to preside over the women’s associations. This ecclesiastical structure generated a religious brotherhood and sisterhood that mitigated, if not erased, cultural antipathies.

The concept of religious community was further enhanced by the principle of gathering, as expressed in the settlement at Laie, which
brought natives and missionaries together in economic, religious, and social activities. Native and American men worked together in the cane fields and at the mill. Native and American women shared domestic and benevolent duties. Religious services on the plantation were integrated. Even while they complained about the natives' laziness and lack of cleanliness or perseverance, the missionary wives enjoyed the ebullient spirit of aloha that erupted in joyous feasts and celebrations in honor of the white haoles who had brought them a unique form of Christianity. While none of the women diarists recounted the formation of a single close friendship with a native woman, they noted their loyalty, generosity, and childlike effort to please.92

For the duration of the nineteenth century, the stereotypical image of the missionary wife persisted. In 1900 a Mormon missionary in Samoa extolled the value of the mission wife by applauding her service as effective as a surrogate mother to the single male missionaries, a patient teacher to the Samoan children, and a noteworthy example of proper Christian womanhood. The proselytizing, he added, was more appropriately left “to the sterner brothers.”93 Voicing his own concern about the changing policy regarding female missionaries, George Q. Cannon, who fifty years earlier had noted the sacrificing role Mary Jane Hammond had assumed in caring for the first Mormon missionaries to the Sandwich Islands, cautioned that only “wise, prudent, and suitable” women were to be called to serve missions. “To some lands under some circumstances suitable women might go,” he said.94 While the LDS Church would not move headlong into uncharted waters, it hesitantly joined the surge of female missionary activity that dominated the Protestant missionary movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The missionary experience was unique in the lives of nineteenth century women. It provided them a new form of religious service. While there was seemingly little spiritual reward or joy in many of the mission tasks assigned Mormon missionary wives, their presence in the field expanded the boundaries of the religious and social spheres in which they had traditionally functioned and opened new and more satisfying avenues of usefulness for those who followed. Even without the female missionary boards such as those that flourished in the late nineteenth century in support of Protestant female missionary activity, Mormon women entered the mission field in ever-increasing numbers after the turn of the century.95 Unlike their nineteenth century forerunners, most were single and all were sent as certified proselytizing missionaries.

The Mormon female missionary movement, did not succumb to a secularized society or a cessation of evangelic zeal as did the Protestant movement.96 For Mormons, missionary activity was not a sporadic outcropping of religious fervor but a basic principle of faith, an ecclesiasti-
cal priesthood responsibility that came to be shared with women. Rather than only part of a larger phenomenon in an interesting phase of American religious history, Mormon missionary wives in the nineteenth century were the vanguard of a continuing Mormon female religious commitment.

NOTES

1. Caroline Barnes Crosby Journal, October 25, 1848, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah.

2. Missionary Record, vols. 1-3, Archives, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, hereafter LDS Archives. The company consisted of Louisa Barnes Pratt and her four daughters, Ellen, Francis, Lois, and Ann Louise; Jonathan and Caroline Crosby and their son Alma; Joseph Busby and wife; Thomas Tompkins, wife Jane, and two children; Brother McMertry, wife, and child; Sidney Alvarus Hanks, Simeon A. Dunn, Julian Moses, and Hiram Clark, the young orphaned brother of Emmeline B. Wells, who was under the care of Louisa Pratt throughout their mission.

3. Details concerning the opening and development of the Sandwich Islands Mission can be found in Andrew Jenson, Manuscript History of the Hawaiian Mission of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, LDS Archives. See also George Q. Cannon, My First Mission, 2nd ed. (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor Office, 1882).

4. From 1830 to 1840, several other Mormon women accompanied their husbands to missions in the United States and England, but these few instances did not represent formal Church policy, and a consensus was never reached throughout the nineteenth century on the advisability of sending women on missions. Information concerning Mormon female missionaries throughout the nineteenth century can be found in Calvin Kunz, “A History of Female Missionary Activity in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830-1898” (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1976).

5. In 1843 Church leaders counseled newly called missionaries not to leave until their families were provided for, implying that they were to be left at home, and in 1849 Brigham Young attributed the few instances where wives joined their husbands in the mission field to “the importunings of men.” Heber C. Kimball, Young’s counselor, added that without their wives, the minds of missionaries “will be more free to serve the Lord.” See Joseph Smith, History of the Church, 2nd ed., 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1949), 5:350-51; Journal History of the Church, July 8, 1849, April 8, 1850.


9. The status of women in some of the heathen countries in the late nineteenth century is described in Helen Barrett Montgomery, Western Women in Eastern Lands
Madsen: Missionary Wives in Polynesia

(New York: Macmillan, 1910), pp. 45-75. That in many instances there was similarity in female social disabilities of heathen and American women seemed to have escaped the notice of the author. See especially p. 53.


12. “The American Board of Commissioners have formally withdrawn from the Sandwich Islands as a mission station, the natives having been redeemed from paganism. The work has been done in thirty years at an expense of $800,000,” is a quotation from The Argus, reprinted in the Manuscript History of the Hawaiian Mission, December 20, 1853.


16. Manuscript History of the Hawaiian Mission, April 1854. Minutes of meetings of the Hawaiian Evangelical Association (the local offspring of the American Board of Foreign Missions) indicate that members of the association felt that the novelty of Mormonism would soon wane, that it appealed only to the “more profligate and vicious” type of native, and that “the Lord [would] allow them to go so far and no farther.” (May, June 1854, pp. 8, 10, 12-15, 21, 25, quoted in Comfort Margaret Boch, “The History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Hawaii” (M.A. thesis, University of Hawaii, 1941), pp. 22-23. See also Kuykendall and Day, pp. 78-79, and Smith, p. 316.

17. Welter, pp. 114-16. Patricia Grimshaw discusses the tension experienced by most of the Protestant missionary wives between the exercise of their public missionary duties and their maternal responsibilities and the accommodation they attempted to make between the two, pp. 489-521.

18. Sara Partridge Journal, July 1, 1882, LDS Archives.


21. Ibid., p. 171.

22. Frederick Beesley Journal, October 28, 1885, LDS Archives.


25. Maria Nebeker, like many plural wives, owned her own home and property, some of which she had acquired from a prior marriage. Manuscript History of the Hawaiian Mission, July 7, 1865.


27. Julina Lambson Smith Diary, January-July 1886, LDS Archives.


34. Simpson Montgomery Molen Diary, December 14, 1855, LDS Archives.

35. Francis A. Hammond Journal, April 15, 1853, LDS Archives.

36. The Church did not send additional missionary wives to Tahiti from 1853, when Caroline Crosby left, the last missionary wife to leave, until after the turn of the century, although four were sent to New Zealand and fifteen to Samoa between 1885 and 1900. See Missionary Record, vols. 3 and 4, 1881-1900. Thus, the focus for missionary activity for the remainder of the century is on the Sandwich Islands.

37. Salt Lake City, as headquarters for the Church, remained the primary gathering place for Mormons, but Hawaiian law prohibited natives from emigrating during this period, although a few did.

38. An earlier settlement had been established at Lanai in 1854, ultimately attracting nearly two thousand native Saints, but no missionary wives participated in the settlement, Mary Jane Hammond being the only one still in the islands. In 1858, because of political conditions in Utah (a threatened take-over by the federal government in response to reports of Mormon insurrection in Utah), all of the Mormon missionaries throughout the world were recalled and the settlement at Lanai was left under the leadership of natives. Membership dwindled. The Church in Hawaii further disintegrated under the leadership of a Mormon elder who arrived in 1861, ostensibly to reorganize the mission, but who recognized the economic advantages of the settlement and created church policies to facilitate his personal interests. The experiences and exploits of Walter Murray Gibson are included in most histories of Hawaii, since he played an influential role in the government after the failure of the Lanai experiment and his excommunication from the Church. See, for example, Kuykendall and Day, pp. 133, 161, 164, 166-71; and Ruth Tabrah, *Hawaii, a Bicentennial History* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1980), pp. 72, 81, 90, 95.


42. Louisa Barnes Pratt Journal, in Carter, p. 199.

43. From a blessing given to Mildred Randall, one of the 1865 missionary wives, under the hands of Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, George A. Smith, and George Q. Cannon, with Heber C. Kimball as mouth, May 15, 1865, Salt Lake City, Utah, Mildred Randall Papers, LDS Archives.

44. Brigham Young to Mildred E. Randall, October 15, 1866, Salt Lake City, Utah, Mildred E. Randall Papers.

46. Sarah Partridge Journal, February 1, 1885.
47. Maria L. Nebeker and Mary Cluff stayed until 1870; Louisa J. Bell and Anna World stayed until 1871. The longest missions were served by Mary Jane Hammond, five years, and Alice Woolley, who served from 1895 until 1921 with her husband, who had a special assignment to superintend the sugar mill at the plantation. Names of missionaries and dates of service can be found in the Manuscript History of the Hawaiian Mission.

48. Mildred Randall, Margaret Cluff, and Elizabeth Noall served twice in the islands. Joseph Dean served with his wife Sarah from 1877 to 1881 and with his wife Florence from 1887 to 1888, when they left for the Samoan Mission. John Burt served with his wife Ann from 1890 to 1892 and with his wife Elizabeth from 1893 to 1895. See Manuscript History of the Hawaiian Mission.

49. Mildred Randall to her sister [unnamed], February 14, 1873, Laie, Oahu, Randall Papers, LDS Archives. For details about her school, see Mildred Randall to Brigham Young, October 5, 1874, reprinted in Manuscript History of the Hawaiian Mission.

50. Tabrah, pp. 80-84.
52. Comfort Margaret Boch explores the changes in opinion toward the Mormons in her thesis, pp. 85-86. After repeated appeals by the Mormons, the right to perform marriages was finally extended to Mormon missionaries in 1877 after a visit of Queen Kapiolani to Laie. Manuscript History of the Hawaiian Mission, October 31, 1877.

53. Jane Hyde Molen Journal, February 12, 1876, to August 12, 1877, LDS Archives.
54. Julina Lambson Smith was a plural wife of Joseph F. Smith, counselor in the First Presidency of the Church, who had served two previous missions in the islands. Esther Farr was wife of the new mission president, Enoch Farr, who succeeded Edward Partridge. It was appropriate for both of these couples to take up residence in the mission house.

57. Julina Lambson Smith Diary, February 27, 1886.
58. Elizabeth Laker Noall Diary, September 28, 1886, Matthew Noall Papers, Special Collections, Marriott Library, University of Utah.

60. Louisa Barnes Pratt Journal, January 1, 1852, in Carter, p. 278.
61. Julina Lambson Smith Diary, July 20, 1886.
62. Julina Lambson Smith Diary, February 2, 1886.
64. See, for example, Elizabeth Laker Noall Diary, August 18, 1886; November 3, 1886; November 13, 1886.
66. Ellen Cole was one who became an instant midwife. "I have been in Sister Woolley's room all day," she wrote in her diary November 15, 1899. "She gave birth to a baby boy at 12:15 today. She got along real well. There was only Sister Musser and a native woman and myself with her. We were all inexperienced but she was greatly blessed and everything worked all right and we are all very thankful for deliverance." Libbie (Elizabeth) Noall served as midwife to Wilhelmine Madsen before she had had a child herself, and she found the experience rather unnerving. Diary, May 24, 1887.
67. Elizabeth Laker Noall Diary, February 24 to March 2, 1887.

68. See, for example, Louisa Barnes Pratt Journal, in Carter, pp. 264, 275, 288; Julina Lambson Smith Diary, February 14, 1886; Matthew Noall, To My Children, pp. 46-47; Ellen Cole Journal, February 2 and March 4, 1901. Louisa Pratt recorded more instances than did other diarists of extending spiritual administrations to the natives, who seemed especially desirous of them.

69. Ellen Cole Journal, July 1, 1898.


72. Matthew Noall, To My Children, p. 49.

73. Manuscript History of the Hawaiian Mission, April 10, 1893.


75. Manuscript History of the Hawaiian Mission, October 8, 1873, and July 6, 1875, and Woman’s Exponent 18 (November 1889): 94-95.

76. The Mormon Relief Society had originally been organized in 1842 in Nauvoo, Illinois, by Joseph Smith. After his death in 1844, it suspended activity and did not resume its benevolent functions on a churchwide basis until the winter of 1867-68. Headed by Eliza R. Snow in Salt Lake City, societies were organized wherever the church had a branch.

77. Manuscript History of the Hawaiian Mission, July 6, 1875.

78. Manuscript History of the Hawaiian Mission, May 18, 1877 (the first anniversary of the new association).

79. Hearing of the Mormon Relief Society, Queen Kapiolani visited Laie in 1877 with the intent of organizing a King’s Relief Society among her subjects to help the sick and suffering and hopefully arrest the rapid depopulation of the natives. It was a decade-long effort and resulted in some success, though not what she had anticipated.

80. Accounts of these missionary travels can be found in Ellen Cole Journal, June-July 1900; and Elizabeth L. Noall, “Woman’s Work on the Sandwich Islands,” Woman’s Exponent 21 (October 1, 1892): 53; 21 (December 1, 1892): 84-85; 21 (January 1, 1893): 98.

81. Proceedings of a typical Relief Society conference can be found in the Woman’s Exponent 21 (May 15, 1889): 167.

82. Elizabeth Noall Diary, May 28, 1887. See also Woman’s Exponent 26 (February 1, 1898): 255.

83. Woman’s Exponent 16 (August 15, 1887): 43.

84. Elizabeth Noall Diary, November 2, 1888.

85. Homespun (Susa Young Gates), “What the Sandwich Island Children Are Doing,” Juvenile Instructor 23 (October 1, 1888): 301. Other references to teaching handicrafts to the native women and children can be found in Woman’s Exponent 13 (June 1, 1884): 1; 16 (August 15, 1887): 43; 16 (November 15, 1887): 92-93.

86. Lucy M. King to Zina D. H. Young, April 16, 1889, Salt Lake Stake Relief Society Record, 1880-1892, LDS Archives.

87. Woman’s Exponent 23 (August 1, 15, 1894): 171.

88. Elizabeth Noall to Zina D. H. Young, December 1888, Salt Lake Stake Relief Society Record, 1880-1892.


90. Both George Q. Cannon and Matthew Noall expressed somewhat patronizing
but generally sincere feelings of regard for the natives as a result of their close contact with them. In 1851 George Q. Cannon observed that though the natives were prone to sexual immorality, a complaint of all Christian missionaries, they did not seem to “lose the Spirit” and acquire the bitter apostate feeling common to white men who indulge in moral transgression. “They were not given over to the spirit of unbelief as other races are,” he commented. He accounted for the difference, first, “because their ignorance of the Lord does not hold them to so strict an accountability,” and second, expressing a Mormon doctrine, “because they are of the seed of Israel, and to them peculiar promises have been made.” (Cannon, My First Mission, p. 54.) Matthew Noall observed forty years later that while the loose morals of the natives were well known among foreigners and proved a constant object of vigilance on the part of the missionaries, their standards were not so very different from those of Americans. “Whatever they did was done in the open, while in America, our so-called unsavory acts are covered up.” (Noall, To My Children, p. 26.)

91. Gallagher analyzes the success of the Mormons in Hawaii from this perspective, pp. 95-103.

92. Only one of the women diarists expressed any type of emotional bonding with natives when she left. See Sarah Partridge Journal, March 18, 1885. Ellen Cole indicated that the mission had brought happiness amid the toil. See her journal for August 25, 1901.


94. The cautionary phrases, as Calvin Kunz points out, suggest the qualified nature of the First Presidency’s acquiescence to the mission presidents’ requests. See George Q. Cannon, general conference address, Official Report of the Sixty-Eighth Annual Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, April 6, 7, 8, and 10, 1898 (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, n.d.), p. 7, reprinted in Kunz, pp. 35-36.

95. The agitation for female missionaries came from several mission presidents in fields other than Hawaii who felt their assistance necessary to gain entrance “where the Elders could scarcely gain a hearing.” (Journal History of the Church, March 11, 1898.)

96. Hill, pp. 6, 161-91.
Steven F. Christensen Award

The Mormon History Association announces the Steven F. Christensen Award, to be issued first at the 1988 conference in Logan, Utah. This award, to be given each year to the best paper presented at the association's annual meeting, honors the memory of one of our most generous and courageous members. Those wishing to assist in its funding can send a donation to the Steven F. Christensen Memorial Fund, P.O. Box 7010, University Station, Provo, Utah 84602.
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BRECK ENGLAND, The Life and Thought of Orson Pratt (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1985)

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MELVIN T. SMITH for his outstanding service as director of the Utah State Historical Society and as archivist for the Mormon History Association, and for his many other contributions to Mormon History.
FLORENCE SMITH JACOBSEN for her warm and creative leadership of the Arts and Sites Division of the LDS Historical Department and for her friendship to Mormon scholars.
EDITH J. ROMNEY for her selfless labor in preparing over 70,000 typescript pages of archival material housed in the LDS Historical Archives and for her friendship to Mormon scholars.
EUGENE E. CAMPBELL (posthumously) for his service to Mormon history, his scholarly publications in that field, and his friendship to the many who remember him as their teacher.

Other Awards
Grace Fort Arrington Award for Historical Excellence: JAN SHIPPS, professor of history and religion at Indiana University, Indianapolis, for her book Mormonism: The Story of a New Religious Tradition (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), and for important contributions to Journal of Mormon History, Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought, Sunstone, and other periodicals.

William Grover and Winnifred Foster Reese History Award: CAROL CORNWALL MADSEN for her dissertation "A Mormon Woman in Victorian America: Emmeline B. Wells" (University of Utah); and REX COOPER for his dissertation, "The Promise Made to the Fathers: A Diachronic Analysis of Mormon Covenant Organization with Reference to Puritan Federal Theology" (University of Chicago).
Judge John Fitch Kinney. Photo courtesy of Utah State Historical Society
The Federal Bench and Priesthood Authority: The Rise and Fall of John Fitch Kinney’s Early Relationship with the Mormons

By Michael W. Homer

When John Fitch Kinney, chief justice of the Utah Territorial Supreme Court from 1854 to 1857, was reappointed to that same position in 1860, the Deseret News welcomed his return and expressed its hope that “the friendly relations heretofore existing between us, will not be impaired by any circumstances that may hereafter arise.” At the same time Brigham Young noted that Kinney had not been ashamed to “walk arm in arm” with Mormons, and singled him out, together with Thomas L. Kane and Leonidas Shaver, as one of the few outsiders who had spoken in defense of Mormonism during its history of persecution. For these acts of friendship, Young assured his audience that Kinney would obtain “a kingdom of glory.” Because of these comments and the good relationship he developed with the Mormons during his second term as chief justice and as Utah’s delegate to Congress, most Mormon historians have taken for granted that Kinney enjoyed the confidence of the Mormons during his first term as well. But a careful examination of his first term reveals that Kinney was unable to maintain good relations with the Mormons, even though he desperately wanted to, and that the warm welcome he received in 1860 was a complete turnaround from the disparaging statements made about him by the Mormon leadership four years earlier, when he left the territory.

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The nature of territorial government made tensions between most judicial appointees (even those, like Kinney, who were not openly hostile to the Mormons) and local residents inevitable. Like the residents of other territories, the Mormons resented territorial status and could not understand why members of their own community were not appointed to the judiciary, as in the State of Deseret, instead of non-Mormons who had never resided in the territory. This resentment encouraged the Mormons to utilize the power of the legislative and executive branches, which they controlled, to check and neutralize the power of the "carpet-bag" judiciary. Accordingly, the Mormon-controlled legislature assigned unpopular justices to districts that had little or no population, broadened the jurisdiction of the Mormon-controlled probate courts to include original jurisdiction in both civil and criminal cases (enabling litigants to resolve their disputes before Mormon judges instead of federal district court judges who were presidential appointees), and prohibited the district courts from citing, rendering, arguing, or adopting case law adopted by courts outside the territory.

Because of these legislative initiatives, the two batches of judicial officers appointed to Utah between 1851 and 1854 resigned before completing their terms and complained bitterly about the Mormons' circumvention of federal authority. Kinney was recommended in 1854 to fill a vacancy created by the departure of these judges, at least in part because he had become acquainted with the future settlers of Utah ten years earlier as a young lawyer and merchant in Lee County, Iowa, and, after being appointed to the Iowa Supreme Court in 1847, had continued to have dealings, both legal and commercial, with the Mormons residing in Pottawattomie County. It was hoped that because of his prior association with them, Kinney would be able to establish friendlier relations with the Mormons than his predecessors had. By his own account, he accepted the appointment to "disabuse the public mind, and to show the World the slanders that had been perpetrated upon [the Mormons]."

When Kinney and his family arrived in the territory in August 1854, he was thirty-eight years old and described by his contemporaries as a "short, fat man, decently attired and of respectable appearance." Several days after Kinney's arrival, Edward J. Steptoe, a colonel in the United States Army, entered the territory with three hundred troops to investigate the murder of John W. Gunnison and a surveying crew, which some of the federal officials who had deported the territory claimed was Mormon inspired. Kinney and Steptoe were close in age and outlook and soon formed a close friendship. In October Kinney dutifully went to Nephi, Manti, and Fillmore to hold court. Steptoe went with him "to preserve his scalp." Brigham Young had suggested that Steptoe meet with friendly Indians regarding the Gunnison affair "and have them bring the murder[ers] in order to save trouble, expense
and loss of life.” Steptoe took this advice and while in central Utah talked with the Indian chief Kanosh and gave him presents while “[t]he murderers of Lieutenant Gunnison were there wearing the clothes of the whites they had killed.”

In addition to befriending Steptoe and attending to his judicial duties, Kinney was initially successful in gaining the acceptance of the Mormons. During his first few months in the territory, he held numerous interviews and seemed pleased with Utah and its people. He had practical reasons for cultivating the Mormons’ good will. It was important to the success of his commercial ventures. Within two weeks of his arrival, Kinney placed advertisements in the *Deseret News* inviting the public to purchase goods, including clothes, hardware, groceries, notions, perfumes, and tobacco, from his store, located at the Union House. By December he was described as “one of the heaviest merchants in the City.” The Union House also served as his family’s residence, a hotel and his courtroom, and some foreign observers, including Remy, Brenchley, and Chandless, criticized Kinney for mixing merchandising with his judicial functions, noting that it was too convenient for Kinney to house jurors at the Union House at government expense. Nevertheless, such activities were not only consistent with his prior practice in Iowa but also not without precedent among jurists in other territories. Thus, when Kinney’s business partnership organized a party for Steptoe and his officers during the holidays, he also invited his most notable Mormon patrons, including Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Jedediah M. Grant, and other church officials. The party solidified Kinney’s good rapport with the Mormons; Hosea Stout reported that both “saints and sinners enjoyed themselves extremely [sic] well Judge Kinny [sic] though a stiff Presbyterian who never had as he said graced a Ball room in his life could not refrain from dancing.” The affair lasted until “about three in the morning when all returned home well satisfied.”

The Mormons were also interested in establishing good relations with the federal officials because of rumors that President Pierce did not intend to reappoint Brigham Young as governor, in part because of complaints made by former officials who had left the territory. The Mormons hoped the recommendation of the officials, then present in the territory, that Young be reappointed would counteract these complaints. Thus, several days following Kinney’s party, Daniel H. Wells asked Kinney and the other federal officials to sign a petition calling for the reappointment of Young. Since good relations had been established in the four months since Kinney’s arrival, all of the federal officials agreed to sign the petition. Commenting on his support for Young, Kinney noted that the people’s choice should be considered in the selection of a governor. Although Steptoe also signed the petition, he “thought it might be good policy to appoint another man for
governor on the ground that such an appointment would have a better influence in removing the political prejudice which existed against Gov. B. Young at Washington.”

Following the signing of the petition, Kinney, Steptoe, and the other federal officials were invited to a party on January 1 that was organized in their honor at the Social Hall. Kinney and the officers were reported to be “highly delighted,” and George A. Smith noted that, for the second time in one week, the “old Presbyterian danced as lively as any of us.” During the party, Kinney not only danced but also made remarks acknowledging the harmonious relations existing between the federal officials and the Mormons:

I rejoice in my heart that there has been such good feelings maintained here since my arrival among you. We are all brethren. We meet here on the same platform. We are all on the same level, all travelers together to the same unknown country, and it is my desire that the same kind, good feelings, may always be here and exist, shall I say between both Saint and Sinner, and continue, that has existed and been maintained since my arrival in this city. I wish you all a happy new year. May we all be found promoting the union that prevails here throughout the valley.

Kinney’s wish for continued good feelings was placed in jeopardy several weeks later when the residents of Utah received disappointing news from their delegate in Congress that President Pierce had decided, even before receiving the petition signed by Kinney and the other officials, to replace Young with Steptoe. This meant that for the first time since arriving in Utah, the Mormons were in peril of having a gentile officiate in their affairs, something Brigham Young had said would not happen as long as God wanted him as governor.

Before news of President Pierce’s decision reached Salt Lake City, the legislature passed a measure on January 19, 1855, assigning Kinney to the judicial district encompassing Salt Lake City—an assignment reserved for justices the Mormons liked—at the conclusion of Judge Leonidas Shaver’s term. Speaking to the legislature on that same day, Kinney congratulated it for its “wise policy of enacting few and simple laws” and stated that he was sufficiently pleased with the territory that he might remain all his life. Governor Young responded by stating that he was “equally pleased with Judge Kinney” and reconfirmed this evaluation several weeks later in private correspondence.

At the same time the legislature was meeting, the Supreme Court convened for the first time since Kinney’s arrival and adopted rules, admitted persons to the bar, and disposed of three cases that had been appealed from the district and probate courts. One of the cases placed Kinney, for the first time since his arrival in the territory, in an awkward position with the Mormons. It concerned an act of the legislature,
passed in 1854, that prohibited courts in Utah territory from citing the common law or any decisions by judges in other jurisdictions.\textsuperscript{39} The common law was an extremely sensitive subject to the Mormon leadership, which characterized it as a "labyrinth of abominations" that invited disputes and dissension.\textsuperscript{40} Although the application of the common law in the United States had been debated since colonial times,\textsuperscript{41} the Mormons' attitude toward the common law was based on their distaste for outside interference in legal matters and the fact that the common law specifically forbade the practice of polygamy and, in the Mormon's opinion, failed to adequately discourage or punish immorality. By the time the controversy arose in Utah, however, Congress had provided specifically that common-law jurisdiction vested in the territorial courts.\textsuperscript{42} Considering the strongly held and freely expressed opinions of the Mormons about the evils of the common law, it would have been politically expedient for Kinney to uphold the challenged statute.\textsuperscript{43} Instead, he demonstrated his willingness to differ with the Mormons in judicial matters; on February 8, several weeks after the legislature had adjourned, he held that the legislative act was invalid and that the common law was in full force in the territory.\textsuperscript{44}

Despite this decision and Steptoe's appointment as governor, Brigham Young spoke positively of both Kinney and Steptoe in a discourse delivered at the Salt Lake Tabernacle on February 18,\textsuperscript{45} but he did argue that "the laws of the US and the Congress" gave Utah "the privilege of excluding common law at pleasure" in order to regulate morality.\textsuperscript{46} He therefore warned the gentiles, presumably the soldiers, that if any interfered with any of his wives and daughters, he would "cut their throat," and swore that he would not submit "to the wickedness in [their] midst." He also stated, "If I continue to be Govr. I shall make my G[overnor]ship submit to the Pd [priesthood] of my God and his commands."\textsuperscript{47} Significantly, Young's remarks were not expressly critical of Kinney, and, in fact, Heber C. Kimball noted with obvious pleasure on the same day that Kinney had informed church leaders that he believed the religious teachings of Mormonism were true.\textsuperscript{48} Thus, it must have come as quite a surprise to Kinney when, on February 25, 1855, Kimball delivered a harsh discourse in the Tabernacle during which he accused Steptoe's soldiers of taking undue advantage of Mormon women with the aid of the federal officials,\textsuperscript{49} and suggested that Kinney's decision regarding the common law was partially responsible: "I hate a court and despise it and that is why I think so much of lawyers we have made Laws and now they want the Common Law they want all hell aint I right (yes) ye Lawyers?"\textsuperscript{50} Recalling the incident some time later, Kimball wrote:

Some time in February . . . I got up to speak . . . and exposed their [the federal troops'] wickedness [and] abominable corruptions in our midst, and they all took an offense. Judge Kinney, Mr. Holman [the state's attorney], the officers in command, with all the soldiery. . . . It was quite an earthquake for them. . . . This trouble was brought upon us in consequence of their breaking through the bulwarks with women.\textsuperscript{51}
According to Stout, Kimball's discourse created "much hard feelings ... with the gentile part of our community towards the authorities of the church because they have come out boldly and proclaimed against their iniquity."\textsuperscript{52} Kimball was also convinced that his remarks created a rift in relations: "Previous to this we were the finest men that lived, and they had expressed it publicly and privately, and afterwards they said there was not a meaner set of men than we were, from the Governor down, and they were ready to take our lives."\textsuperscript{53}

Brigham Young's earlier discourse demonstrates that the Mormon leadership believed that the application of the common law in the territory thwarted efforts to discourage and punish immorality.\textsuperscript{54} Kimball's remarks made this belief even more apparent. Thus, Kinney credited the breakdown in relations between himself and the Mormon leadership to the agitation created by his decision in which he declared the legislative act "dispensing with the 'common law' in direct conflict with the Organic Law giving the courts common law jurisdiction." On March 1, within a week after Kimball's discourse, Kinney wrote a letter to the United States Attorney General charging that his decision had "brought back all the vengeance of Brigham Young and his deluded followers. The avowed doctrine of the 'great apostle' is that the authority of the Priesthood is and shall be the law of the land."\textsuperscript{55} In the same letter Kinney complained, for the first time, about the Mormons' domination of territorial government and the jurisdiction conferred on the probate courts in civil and criminal cases. He also noted that if the jurisdiction was taken away, a cry of persecution would be raised. Despite his recent praise of the legislature, he also charged that Mormon legislators were actively attempting to prevent the federal courts from doing their business by limiting the district courts to "one term a year while they provide that the Probate Courts should be always open."\textsuperscript{56} To resolve this problem, Kinney suggested that Congress pass a law requiring additional terms in the Utah federal courts but requested that his letter not be made the basis of any congressional action so that he could continue to exert some influence on the Mormons.

Although the soldiers' indiscretions, Kinney's decision regarding the common law, and Kimball's subsequent accusations against the federal officials may all have caused some of the old tensions between the federal judiciary and the Mormons to resurface, Kinney's continued alienation can only be understood in the context of a power struggle between the judiciary and the Mormon-controlled executive and legislative branches. This power struggle intensified in the spring of 1855, when the accused killers of Gunnison and his party were finally tried before a Mormon jury at a trial presided over by Kinney. At the conclusion of the trial, the jury discharged three of the Indians while sentencing three others to the penitentiary for three years each for murder in the second degree.\textsuperscript{57} Kinney was outraged by the verdict. He thought all of the defendants should have been convicted of first-degree murder, and
wrote another secret letter to Attorney General Cushing on April 1 in which he accused the Mormon leadership of exercising improper influence: "The verdict is a strange one, in violation of the law and the instruction of the court and can only be accounted for upon the ground that the authority of the Priesthood is paramount to the law of the land." The Mormon leadership was aware of Kinney's complaints. Brigham Young responded in his own private correspondence that he thought "the Col., Judge, Attorney and Company made asses of themselves by the way in which they conducted the whole [Gunnison] affair," and that Kinney was only disappointed in the result because he did not have the privilege of "stringing up some Indians." He also accused Steptoe's soldiers of raping one of the defendants.

By the conclusion of the Gunnison trial, the relationship between the Mormons and Kinney had significantly deteriorated. Thus, when Steptoe decided to decline his appointment as governor—which Young later regarded as proof of divine intervention—and rescind his prior recommendation that Brigham be reappointed, Kinney joined him in writing a letter to President Pierce in which they suggested that Brigham Young be replaced by a gentile. On the same day Kinney wrote a letter to Attorney General Cushing in which he stated he would be available for the appointment himself in the event Steptoe declined:

I have also been shown a letter from the President to Col. Steptoe, in which he inquires whether Judge Kinney will accept the appointment of Governor in the case he declines. In reply I have to say I very much desire Colonel Steptoe to be the governor. He is the very man in my opinion for the people and times. Colonel S. will submit his views to the President and I truly hope they may prove satisfactory. But if not and the President is of the opinion that I can be useful in that capacity, I will accept if appointed.

Shortly after Kinney notified the attorney general of his desire to be governor, Steptoe and his soldiers left the territory. Although Kinney was disappointed by the departure of his good friends, he saw in it an opportunity to disassociate himself from their unpopular actions. Thus, on April 20 he wrote to Brigham Young that his "feelings and views towards you and this people are the same as they were three months since. They are unchanged," and that he had been "improperly connected with those whose conduct I exceedingly dislike, and their [sic] is an effort to make me suffer the disgrace which properly belongs to others." Although Brigham Young believed, and later informed visiting journalists, that Kinney had "aided the troops of Colonel Steptoe in carrying off women belonging to the Saints," he responded to Kinney's letter by disclaiming knowledge of any facts that would cause Kinney to take a hostile position against the Mormons and stated that he was happy that Kinney's views concerning the Latter-day Saints remained unchanged. Young did suggest, however, that if Kinney believed unjust accusations had been made against him, the best course for Kinney to follow would be to live them down.

Unbeknownst to Kinney, the Mormons were aware of his ambition
to replace Young as governor. Thus, when he informed Young in May that he intended to travel to Washington to take care of official duties, Young noted that "it is rumored among the 'knowing ones' that he intends visiting the Capitol before he returns, to try if possible to obtain the Governorship of Utah." Heber C. Kimball also noted, "As Colonel Steptoe would not accept of the governorship, he is going for it. He has not told us so, but we smell rum. He, Kinney, is a damned hypocrite and a damned rascal, and all he brought with him." Even Stout speculated that Kinney's "business evidently is to try to have Governor Young removed and Judge appointed in his place." Even though Kinney departed for Washington in late May, he returned to Utah less than a week later after experiencing some problems on the trail. Shortly after his return, Young boasted: "There were many applicants for the office [of governor], but they have not yet got it and the Lord can baffle them as long as he pleases." Although it is questionable whether Kinney discarded his ambition to become governor, it is clear that he did not attempt another trip to Washington until the following spring. Thus, even though Young's term had expired, the Mormon leader retained the governorship because of a provision in the Organic Act, which provided that the governor would continue to hold office after the expiration of his term "until his successor shall be appointed and qualified." Kinney's thinly veiled desire for the governorship further strained his relationship with the Mormon hierarchy. When he returned, he sold his interest in his store and was apparently anxious to leave the territory and return to the Midwest by fall. But within a month of his return, Judge Shaver, who had remained extremely popular with the Mormons throughout his tenure, died in his sleep. Shaver's death meant that Kinney would now become the district judge in Salt Lake County, because of the legislature's act the previous January, and he perceived this as an opportunity to rehabilitate himself among the Mormons. He therefore asked Brigham Young and other church leaders to participate in eulogizing Shaver at his funeral. But his request had no long-term effect on his relationship with the Mormon hierarchy, and neither Kinney nor Shaver's replacement, William W. Drummond, compared well with the "quiet" Shaver.

Drummond, who had been appointed several months earlier, was sworn in within a week of Shaver's death, and quickly became Kinney's friend and alter ego, filling the void created by Steptoe's departure. On August 30, 1855, less than a month after Drummond's arrival, Kinney, Drummond, and other federal officials wrote a letter to Attorney General Cushing complaining about the high prices of products and labor, which they claimed were inflated because they were not members of the Mormon community, and noting that they were further disadvantaged by being "cut off from every possible blessing in society—even from
hearing the preached gospel of the blessed son of God.”

In order to compensate for these conditions, which no doubt seemed worse to Kinney after he sold his mercantile interests, the federal officials requested increases in their salaries, which they insisted were not comparable with judges' salaries in other territories.

The Mormons were aware of the Kinney–Drummond alliance, and several days following the posting of their letter requesting more money, Heber C. Kimball observed: “Judge Kinney is a bitter enemy against us, and Judge Drummond, who came on this season, seems to be one with him.” At about the same time Brigham Young refused an invitation to visit Remy and Brenchley at their hotel, which was also where Kinney lived, because Kinney had supposedly aided Steptoe's soldiers in carrying off Mormon women the previous spring. Nevertheless, the presence of Kinney and Drummond was not as worrisome to the Mormons after the departure of Steptoe and his soldiers, and on September 8 Heber C. Kimball gloated, “Since we came down on the Gentiles lately 'like a thousand o'brick', we have pretty well scared them all out of the Territory, and we are anticipating a very quiet and peaceful winter.”

Despite Kimball's optimism, Kinney and Drummond made decisions during the winter of 1855-56 in their respective district courts and as a supreme court, which continued to irritate the Mormons. In November Kinney once again invalidated an act of the legislature on the basis of the common law when he ruled in the case of *The People v. Moroni Green* that the federal courts were not bound by an act of the territorial legislature, which provided that grand juries had to be selected from residents of the county where they were located, because under the common law a grand jury could be selected from persons residing in a federal court's jurisdiction. Meanwhile, Drummond, while holding court in Fillmore, tried additional suspects in Gunnison's murder, to the annoyance of the Mormon leadership, and, in charging a grand jury in another trial,

emphatically declared that under the organic Act of the Territory of Utah the Legislature could not confer, civil and criminal jurisdiction by law on the probate Courts, or any powers whatsoever [other] than matters of Probate proper and that the judiciary act conferring these powers on the probate courts were not only contrary to, and inconsistent with the organic act; but an unwarranted stretch of power, not only beyond, but amounting to an abnegation of all law.

By December the tension between the federal judiciary and the Mormons and the controversy over the power of the probate courts and the application of common law in the territory were at their highest level in two years. Thus, when Samuel Richards wrote to his brother Franklin that the Supreme Court would meet in January, he accused Drummond of having “brass to declare, in open Court, that the Utah laws are founded in ignorance,” of attempting to “set some of the most important ones aside,” and of trying to “raise a row if possible, and
make himself notorious." He also sarcastically suggested that "[w]hen Judge Kinney, and all the poor miserable lawyers get gathered in here, what a blessed Jubilee we'll have, won't we?"

Richards could not have anticipated the extent of the "jubilee," which began shortly after the opening session of the Supreme Court in Fillmore, when Drummond had an argument with a Jewish merchant named Levi Abrams and a fight broke out between Abrams, Drummond, and Drummond's black servant, Cato. Shortly after this fight the Mormon-controlled probate court, located in Millard County, called a special session, empaneled a grand jury, and found a bill of indictment against Drummond and his servant for assault with intent to kill. They were subsequently arrested on the evening of Saturday, January 5, 1856. This indictment and arrest set up a legal confrontation between Mormon and federal authority in the territory, the importance of which was understood by most observers, including Samuel Richards, who wrote his brother that Drummond had "virtually ruled our Probate Courts out of power in his decisions, but we will now know whether Probate Courts can act or not, especially in this case."

On the Monday following his arrest, Drummond presented a petition for a writ of habeas corpus to the Supreme Court for the release of himself and his servant from imprisonment on the ground that the probate court had no criminal jurisdiction to issue an indictment. Kinney was in favor of issuing the writ immediately, but Stiles, who at this time was still a Mormon, "wished to hold it under advisement." On Tuesday, January 8, Drummond abandoned his petition to the Supreme Court because Kinney and Stiles remained deadlocked and instead petitioned Kinney for the same writ, in his capacity as a district-court judge. Kinney immediately granted it. Drummond was released, and the case was argued before Kinney the same day. During those arguments the first issue discussed was whether Almerin Grow, an attorney Kinney had previously suspended from practice, could argue on behalf of Levi Abrams as a territorial district attorney. Kinney ordered that he could not, and Grow was required to withdraw. Other procedural objections were also raised, and the merits of the case were not finally reached until that afternoon. According to Stout, the case was then "debated until night when the court adjourned until tomorrow."

On the following day, when Kinney, Stiles, and Drummond left their lodgings for the statehouse, a posse intercepted Drummond and prevented him from leaving. Thereafter, Kinney went to a makeshift courtroom in a local schoolhouse to hear closing arguments from opposing counsel concerning the powers of the probate court in exercising criminal jurisdiction. By the end of closing arguments, the attorneys for Abrams realized that Kinney would rule adversely to them and made a deal with Drummond that if he would withdraw his petition challenging the jurisdiction of the probate courts, they would not pursue their ac-
tition against him in the probate court. According to Hosea Stout, the deal was made in an effort to save the probate courts' jurisdiction:

It now seemed that the death Knell of the probate Courts would inevitably be sounded, as Judge Kinney's known and avowed opinion was adversely to the powers of the probate Courts, yet their time had not come for Judge Drummond on the meeting of Kinney's court withdrew the suit and thus the Probates lives. This ended the affair of the Habeus Corpus and also ended the prosecution against Judge Drummond.89

Although this compromise did resolve a crisis and was probably welcomed by Kinney, who never seemed anxious to openly rule against the Mormons, it did not improve relations between the Mormons and the federal officials. In fact, less than a week later Almerin Grow, the attorney Kinney had earlier suspended from the bar and refused to allow to argue on behalf of Abrams, sued Kinney for five thousand dollars in federal district court. This case was handled summarily when Kinney and his attorney, Hosea Stout, moved to dismiss the charges, and the motion was granted.90 Not surprisingly, the same complaint was filed against Kinney two weeks later in the probate court. Not wishing to repeat the Drummond episode, that court also granted a motion to dismiss on the ground that it lacked jurisdiction to try Kinney for his judicial acts.91

Following Drummond's release, the Supreme Court met once again and affirmed Kinney's holding in the Moroni Green case that federal grand jurors need not reside in the same county where a federal court is held. Drummond, writing for the court, could not resist the opportunity to publicly criticize the probate courts, which were responsible for his recent imprisonment, as well as the Mormon influence in the territory:

The law must be construed by men learned in the Law, and not by virtue of any Priesthood, and while we are willing to make due and proper allowance for the inexperience of the Utah Legislators, duty to the law of the land and particularly to the form of the American Judiciary requires us to say that the acts of the Legislature of this Territory in encroaching on the provisions of the Organic Act are unwarranted in law.92

Drummond's lecture could have had no other effect than to further alienate the Mormons from both Kinney and Drummond. This became apparent following the adjournment of the Supreme Court when the legislature and the governor took actions that demonstrated not only their dissatisfaction with Kinney and Drummond, but also their ability to check the powers of the territorial judiciary. First, Brigham Young granted a pardon to Moroni Green, who had been indicted by the federal grand jury.93 Then, one day following the adjournment of the court, the legislature passed a resolution redefining the judicial districts of the territorial courts, removed Kinney from the Salt Lake District, and reassigned him to a new district in a relatively unpopulated northern part of the territory.94
Despite his removal, Kinney was elected a vice-president of the Brigham Young Express and Carrying Company ten days later, and three weeks after that, he was chosen a delegate to the state constitutional convention. However, rather than signaling an improvement in his relations with the Saints, these actions may have shown only that the Mormon leaders recognized the value that a gentile of Judge Kinney’s stature could lend their efforts to convince Washington that they were no longer isolated from the rest of the country but were ready for statehood. But whatever Kinney’s status in the Mormons’ eyes, his reassignment to the judicial equivalent of “outer darkness” remained unchanged.

In fact, Kinney claimed that the legislature changed his district for precisely the same reason Kimball had criticized him in the Tabernacle one year earlier, namely, his decision that the act forbidding the use of the common law by Utah courts was invalid. According to Kinney: “For this decision—Salt Lake County & City—my district where I resided was taken from me by the legislature. Attached to Carson County 500 miles distant & a new district created for me in the northern part of the Territory is sparsely inhabited except by Indians and destitute of the necessary comforts of life.” He considered the legislature’s action as an “insult to me and my family personally” and “an utter deprivation of all judicial power.”

Kinney also felt that he had been “legislated out of office” and later rationalized that he was forced to leave the territory “out of respect for the government and my high position.” Thus, by spring Kimball’s earlier description of driving Steptoe and his soldiers from the territory by coming “down on the Gentiles lately ‘like a thousand o’brick’” now seemed applicable to Kinney as well, and on April 13, 1856, Kimball again gloated: “Judge Kinney with others, are making every exertion to leave, and you may be assured that there is no good saint that will mourn.” One week later Hosea Stout noted that Kinney and his family had finally departed the territory. Following Kinney’s departure, Drummond was assigned to the Carson Valley district, but within weeks of his arrival he left for California. With his departure, the territory had lost yet another batch of judges in less than two years.

Kinney’s assertion that he left the territory “out of respect” for his office is not totally accurate. His departure was also motivated by pressure from his wife and children, who were especially opposed to the peculiar practices of Mormonism and who had wanted to leave the previous fall. Although a daughter later asserted that the family “liked many of the people but . . . did not like their religion,” Mrs. Kinney was more frank in her assessment of the Mormons when she wrote upon her return to Iowa, “We are all well and glad to get back to the land of Bibles and Sabbaths, I can compare it to nothing but a release from a lunatic asylum.”

Kinney was more pragmatic than his wife and never seemed conde-
scending in his attitude toward Mormon doctrines. Even after he left
the territory, he continued to speak positively about the Mormons while
he attempted to obtain another appointment in the Midwest with the
help of his brother-in-law, Augustus Hall, a congressman from Iowa.
Initially he obtained a leave of absence until October 1856, but when
Hall proved to be of little help in obtaining another appointment for
him, Kinney requested and received an extension until the spring of
1857. Despite the extension, Kinney was unsuccessful on obtaining
another appointment, and by May 1857 he was prepared to return to
resume the duties of his "respected" office in Utah, provided he was "affor
ded the protection necessary to sustain and enforce the law," but be-
fore he could return to Utah, he was informed by the new administra-
tion that he had been replaced.105

Shortly after his replacement, Kinney moved from Iowa to Ne-
braska City, Nebraska, which at that time was regarded by young entre-
preneurs as a place of opportunity. He had been disappointed with the
results of his merchandising in Utah, and Nebraska City appeared to
present a favorable alternative.106 It was there, in the fall of 1857, that he
first learned that James Buchanan had sent a military expedition to
Utah and appointed a new governor to replace Brigham Young—both
of which Kinney had tacitly encouraged. Kinney, always a pragmatist,
did not gloat that his recommendations had been followed, nor did he
choose to publicize his past secret denunciations of the Mormons for
local consumption. Instead he perceived in the Utah Expedition an op-
portunity to induce Russell, Majors, and Waddell, the shipping com-
pany that had a government contract to supply goods to the army, to
utilize Nebraska City as the loading and departure point for the govern-
ment supply trains bound for Utah. In January 1858 he was elected
chairman of a meeting convened to convince Majors that Nebraska City
was the best location of all Nebraska towns for the departure point, and
his efforts were successful.107

Shortly after obtaining this contract, Kinney helped organize the
Democratic party in the territory and sought its nomination for Con-
gress. His prior association with the Mormons may have hurt his
chances for election, for he was defeated. However, he did not lose his
appetite for public office, and in fulfillment of the prediction made by
Judge Stiles four years earlier—that if he left Utah he would eventually
feel "compelled to come back"108—he soon looked to Utah for another
appointment. Even though his departure from Utah Territory in 1856
had been welcomed by such church officials as Kimball, Kinney had al-
ways been careful to limit his public differences with the Mormons to
substantive issues, refraining from attacking their morality or intelli-
gence. Even after leaving Utah, he continued to speak positively about
the Mormons in public109 and limited his criticism to private correspon-
dence to the attorney general.

Kinney's approach contrasted sharply with that of Drummond,
who, during his tenure in Utah and after his resignation, was critical of the Mormons in both public and private circles. In his letter of resignation in March 1857, which he distributed to the press, Drummond not only accused the Mormons of disrespect for federal authority but also alleged that they had perpetrated the murders of Gunnison and Shaver and had harassed federal jurists in Utah to prevent them from functioning in their appointed offices. The publication of Drummond's letter was fortuitous for Kinney, who did not join his old ally in denouncing the Mormons but instead continued his policy of speaking favorably about them. Because of this contrast, the Mormons were apparently comfortable in utilizing Kinney's remarks to the 1855 legislature commending their efforts, his support of the petition recommending the reappointment of Brigham Young, and his request that the Mormon leadership speak at Shaver's funeral to refute Drummond's allegations that the Mormons did not get along with the federal judiciary and had poisoned Shaver. Kinney did not object to Mormons' use of his name to refute Drummond's letter (even though it was circulated throughout the country), and one year later, in March 1858, he even “expressed very friendly feelings toward the Saints, especially toward Governor Young” when he came in contact with a Mormon missionary, and “offered to render essential service to any of our brethren that needed [it], and assured me that I might fully depend on his integrity toward us.”

Thus, when Brigham Young again complained the following January about the class of judges sent to Utah, he excluded not only Reed and Shaver but also, Kinney. By 1860, after a fourth batch of federal jurists had left Utah, all indications were that Kinney had been well received during his first appointment, so it was not surprising that he was reappointed to the chief judgeship and welcomed back by Brigham Young and the Deseret News.

Given the experiences of Kinney as chief justice between 1854 and 1857, it is ironic that he was welcomed back to the territory three years later with such enthusiasm. However, his problems with the Mormons had been caused by his judicial opinions, which struck down legislative innovations meant to control the judiciary, his close relations with Steptoe and his soldiers, and his ambition to succeed Brigham Young, and not because of vicious and unsubstantiated personal attacks. Even when he was accused of aiding Steptoe's soldiers in carrying off Mormon women, Kinney refrained from criticizing the Mormons' practice of polygamy. His discretion, which was in stark contrast to that of other justices, made him acceptable to the Mormons and enabled him to return to Utah to accomplish the political objectives that had previously eluded him in Nebraska Territory. By 1860, it was far easier for both Kinney and the Mormons to remember the good relations that had existed between them in the fall and winter of 1854-55 than the circumstances under which he had left the territory in the spring of 1856.
NOTES


2. *Deseret News*, November 28, 1860, p. 305. See also Journal History, October 8, 1860; *Journal of Discourses* 8 (Liverpool, 1855-86): 204. Although Young did not mention Kane by name, the “friend” he referred to was almost certainly Kane.


4. Kinney left the territory in 1856 but was not replaced as chief justice until 1857. See notes 100-105 and accompanying text.


10. Due to his friendly relations with the Saints in Iowa, Kinney became known as a “jack Mormon.” Bancroft, pp. 489-90. George P. Stiles was appointed as an associate justice the same time as Kinney. Stiles was nominally a member of the church and had a previous Mormon connection in Nauvoo, where he served briefly on the city council. See Joseph Smith, *History of the Church* 6:212; Juanita Brooks, ed., *On the Mormon Frontier: The Diary of Hosea Stout* 2 (Salt Lake: University of Utah Press): 525 n. 26.

11. Historian’s Office Letterpress Copybook, Archives of the Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (hereinafter LDS Archives), 1:75-76, January 19, 1855.


15. Ibid.


17. Ellen Kinney Ware, “A Retrospect,” Typescript, Nebraska State Historical Society (hereinafter NSHS).

18. Letter from Augustus Dodge to John F. Kinney, November 14, 1854, Hall-Kinney Collection, NSHS.
19. Deseret News, September 7, 14, 21, and October 19, 1854. The Union House or Union Hotel was located on the northeast corner of First North and Second West streets, across the street from Union Square, which is now the West High School block.

20. Journal History, December 22, 1854, citing the St. Louis Luminary, March 24, 1854. This date is probably incorrect, since Kinney did not arrive in the territory until August 1854.


22. Remy and Brenchley, 1:206-8; Chandless, p. 185.

23. See, for example, Guice, pp. 60-80.

24. Steptoe also enjoyed the confidence of the Mormons at this time despite several scuffles that occurred between his soldiers and some Mormon youth. Brooks, Diary of Hosea Stout 2:536.


28. Ibid.

29. Historian's Office Letterbook, George A. Smith to Charles H. Smith, February 7, 1855, LDS Archives.


31. Journal History, January 4, 1855; Millennial Star 17 (February 17, 1855): 110. Stenhouse claims Pierce tendered the governorship to Steptoe "early in December." Stenhouse, The Rocky Mountain Saints, p. 281. "It is said that the colonel's letter of appointment was not hastily delivered after it reached Salt Lake City, and between the arrival of the mail at which the letter of appointment was delivered, dancing parties were given that secured the kind feeling of the colonel and his officers." Ibid.


35. Millennial Star 17 (1855): 208.

36. Brigham Young to John Taylor, Brigham Young Letterbook 1:908-12, LDS Archives.


39. See note 7 and accompanying text.

40. James R. Clark, ed., Messages of the First Presidency (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1968-75), 2:154. The Mormons felt they owed their allegiance not to the common law, but to a higher law, and they did not need gentile judges to tell them what that law was. See Brigham Young's speech of January 13, 1856, as recorded by Wilford Woodruff: "I know the meaning of the marrow and the pith of the Laws and the very principle upon which they are built much better than the Judges do. I know the meaning of them & the Duty of all the officers in this Territory." Wilford Woodruff, Wilford Woodruff's Journal, vol. 4, 1 January 1851 to 31 December 1856, Scott G. Kinney, ed. (Midvale, Utah: Signature Books, 1983), p. 393.


43. Arguably, the Organic Act was ambiguous. Kinney could have construed the provision giving the supreme and district courts "common law jurisdiction" as merely allowing them to hear cases that did not arise under legislative enactments, not as dictating the law that the courts were to apply in such cases.


46. Thomas Bullock Minute Collection, February 18, 1855, LDS Archives.

47. Ibid. Significantly, Brigham Young's statements regarding the common law and regulation of morality remained in the version of his remarks published in the *Journal of Discourses*; for example, 2:182.

48. Thomas Bullock Minute Collection, February 18, 1855, LDS Archives.

49. Brooks, *Diary of Hosea Stout* 2:551; Heber C. Kimball to William Kimball, May 29, 1855, Historian's Office Letterbook, LDS Archives. A purported transcription of the address appeared in the *Deseret News* on December 5, 1855, and in the 1856 volume of the *Journal of Discourses*, 3:160-64. Based upon Kimball's and Stout's descriptions of the discourse, the published version was liberally edited. Thomas Bullock's minutes of Kimball's remarks reveal that Kimball was upset with Kinney: "I went and told Judge Kinney a dream I ad about im they went and told lies to the Officers and I sa they shall be cursed for ever until they repent." Thomas Bullock Minute Collection, February 25, 1855, LDS Archives.

50. Thomas Bullock Minute Collection, February 25, 1855, LDS Archives.

51. Heber C. Kimball to William Kimball, May 29, 1855, Historian's Office Letterbook, LDS Archives. See also *Journal History*, May 29, 1855.


53. Heber C. Kimball to William Kimball, May 29, 1855, Historian's Office Letterbook, LDS Archives. See also *Journal History*, May 29, 1855.

54. On March 11, Brigham Young also expressed displeasure over Kinney's decision and observed that "Judge Kinney decides that common law is the law of the Territory but can not show the law for it it has not jurisdiction here until it is made the law of the land and Judge Kinney has got to take that back." Thomas Bullock Minute Collection, March 11, 1855, LDS Archives.

55. John F. Kinney to Attorney General Cushing, March 1, 1855, Records Relating to Appointment of Federal Judges for Utah Territory, United States Archives (hereafter National Archives).

56. Ibid.


58. John F. Kinney to Attorney General Cushing, April 1, 1855, National Archives.

59. Brigham Young to John Taylor, Brigham Young Letterbook 2:171-80, LDS Archives.

60. *Journal of Discourses* 2:319. Although it is by no means clear when Steptoe rejected his commission as governor, it is the author's opinion that he did so in February or March of 1855. Nevertheless, both Tullidge and Waite state that Steptoe rejected the commission before signing the proclamation on December 30, recommending the appointment of Brigham Young. See C. V. Waite, *The Mormon Prophet and His Harem*, 3d ed. (Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1866), pp. 26-28; Tullidge, *The History of Brigham Young* (New York, 1877), pp. 239-40.

61. John F. Kinney and Edward Steptoe to Franklin Pierce, April 1, 1855, National Archives.

62. John F. Kinney to Attorney General Cushing, April 1, 1855, National Archives.

64. John F. Kinney to Brigham Young, Brigham Young Papers, April 20, 1855, LDS Archives.

65. Remy and Brenchley, 1:206-7. On June 17, 1855, in a discourse at the Tabernacle, Young spoke of those who had tried to “coax your wives and daughters away from you,” wanted to “prostitute them” and who “coaxed them away.” *Journal of Discourses* 2:322.

66. Brigham Young to Kinney, Brigham Young Papers, April 20, 1855, LDS Archives.


68. *Journal History*, May 29, 1855.


70. *Journal of Discourses* 2:319. Young also stated that even if he was replaced, “my power will not be diminished,” and that his influence was derivative of the priesthood. *Ibid.*, pp. 322-23. On Kinney’s return, Stout wrote, “Judge Kinney returned this Evening having proceeded to the Weber & the advance companies had left him. The thoughts of the Indians & the waters of the Weber proved too much for his courage.” Brooks, *Diary of Hosea Stout* 2:556. In contrast, William W. Phelps observed that “Judge Kinney has returned, having broken his carriage he started to turn Govr. Young out of office.” Thomas Bullock Minute Collection, June 3, 1855, LDS Archives.

71. Organic Act of the Territory of Utah, section 2. The Mormon press reported that Pierce was “humbugged” in his attempt to appoint a new governor and would therefore make no more. *Millenial Star* 18:205.

72. Mary J. Hall Barr to Jennie Hall, August 26, 1855, John F. Kinney Collection, NSHS. Following the sale of his store, Kinney continued to purchase personal items from poor immigrants and sell goods during his court sessions. For example, *Millennial Star* 18 (1855): 252.

73. George A. Smith to Richard Lyman, June 29, 1855, Historian’s Office Letterbook 1:207, LDS Archives; Brooks, *Diary of Hosea Stout* 2:557. Despite Shaver’s popularity with the Mormons, it was later alleged that the Mormons had poisoned him. See infra notes 110-11 and accompanying text.

74. See note 33 and accompanying text.

75. The Mormons later utilized Kinney’s request as evidence that they did not order Shaver’s death and that they had good relations with the federal appointees. *Millenial Star* 19 (1857): 328-33.

76. Executive Book A, July 9, 1855, Utah State Archives.

77. Kinney, Drummond, Barr, and Hart to Cushing, August 30, 1855, National Archives.

78. *Journal History*, August 31, 1855.

79. Remy and Brenchley, 1:206-7, 290.

80. Heber C. Kimball to James Ferguson, September 8, 1855, Historian’s Office Letterbook 1:259, LDS Archives.

81. See *The People v. Moroni Green*, 1 Utah 11 (1856), upholding Kinney’s ruling.


84. Ibid.

85. Brooks, *Diary of Hosea Stout* 2:583. Various versions of the Drummond/Abrams dispute are extant. Remy claims that Drummond ordered his Negro slave to assault Abrams after a gambling quarrel. Remy and Brenchley, 1:469-70. Waite claims Abrams was hired to assault Drummond and delivered an insulting message to him, and that

88. Ibid.
89. Ibid, p. 584. Waite writes that as part of the compromise, Drummond agreed he would not interfere with the probate courts. Waite, p. 39.
91. Ibid., p. 590.
93. Pardon of Moroni Green, February 2, 1856, Utah State Archives.
96. Brooks, *Diary of Hosea Stout* 2:592. As a federal appointee, Kinney may have automatically been a candidate for the convention. The group of candidates ran unopposed, so “there was no cause for any excitement” over the election. Ibid., n. 66. See also Thomas Bullock, February 10, 1856, LDS Archives.
98. Ibid.
99. Ibid.
100. Journal History, April 13, 1856. Despite Kimball’s remarks, one periodical reported that Kinney obtained a patriarchal blessing before leaving (*Atlantic Monthly*, March 29, 1859, p. 364), and Kinney’s daughter claims that a Mormon who met the description of Orrin Porter Rockwell guided them out of the territory (Ellen Kinney Ware, “A Retrospect,” NSHS).
102. Although Stiles remained in Utah he was excommunicated on December 22, 1856 (*Wilford Woodruff’s Journal* 4:519-20), and left the territory on April 15, 1857, shortly after the official resignations of Kinney and Drummond. See Brooks, *Diary of Hosea Stout* 2:611, 625.
103. Ellen Kinney Ware, “A Retrospect,” NSHS.
104. Hannah Hall Kinney to Samuel and Hannah Chapin Hall, July 16, 1856, John Fitch Kinney Letter Collection, NSHS.
106. *The Nebraska News* (Nebraska City), November 28, 1857, p. 4, col. 4; February 27, 1858, p. 3, col. 1.
107. *The Nebraska News* (Nebraska City), February 20, 1858, p. 2, cols. 1-2; February 27, 1858, p. 2, col. 1.
108. See note 37 and accompanying text.
109. Within a few months of his leaving the territory, the *Millennial Star* reported that Kinney had supported both polygamy and the admission of Utah as a state in a public discussion with gentiles in the presence of Mormons. *Millennial Star* 18 (August 30, 1856):534.

111. *Millennial Star* 19 (1857): 324-35. In July 1857, *The Mormon* reported that the Mormons would "not tolerate corrupt officials." It went on to state: "Judge Drummond they condemn, and deny his statements in toto. They acknowledged that with such officials as Chief Justice Kinney, Judge Shaver and Colonel Steptoe they have no fault to find." *Journal History*, July 11, 1857.

112. *Journal History*, June 21, 1858.

113. Brigham Young to A. Calkin, January 14, 1859, Brigham Young Letterbook 5:30-32, LDS Archives. In an article in the *Atlantic Monthly* in March 1859 (p. 264), Kinney, Drummond, and Stiles were accused of being without "judicial sanctity": "Kinney, the Chief Justice, as the keeper of a grocery-store, dance-room and boarding house, enforcing the bills for food and lodging against his brethren of the law by expulsion from the bar in the case of non-payment, and so tenacious of life, that, before departing from the Territory, he solicited and received from Brigham Young a patriarchal blessing." On February 7, 1860, the *People's Press* in Nebraska City (p. 8, col. 3) responded by asserting: "We have recently met several intelligent gentlemen from that Territory and we have become satisfied that the article referred to did great injustice to the Judge. Those gentlemen complain bitterly of the character of the officials sent to that Territory by this and the preceding National Administration but they all unite in saying that Judge Kinney was generally popular with the people of Utah, and was regarded by them as an honorable and upright Judge."

114. See notes 1 and 2 and accompanying text. The *Daily Omaha Nebraskan* reported November 4, 1860 (p. 2, col. 2), that Kinney arrived in Utah "in excellent health, and met with a cordial welcome from his old friends and acquaintances."

115. Subsequent to his first term in Utah, Kinney was associated in the public mind with the Mormons. After he was admitted to the practice of law in Nebraska Territory on June 8, 1858, an attorney objected to a question he asked of a witness. When asked for the basis of his objection, the attorney stated: "'If that is the kind of question of law by which he, Kinney, proposes to free this criminal, no wonder Franklin Pierce banished him beyond the snow-capped mountains to Utah.' The Judge promptly decided the case, and said the objection was a good one, but was not the law." T. M. Marquett, *The Effect of Early Legislation Upon the Courts of Nebraska*, 6, Proceedings and Collections of the Nebraska Historical Society 103 (1894).
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 eighth of these lectures, presented at the 1986 annual meeting of the association in Salt Lake City, was by Anne Firor Scott, former president of the Organization of American Historians and professor of history at Duke University. It is printed in this volume of the Journal of Mormon History, pages 3-19. The 1987 Tanner Lecture, scheduled for presentation in Oxford, England, on July 6, will be by J. F. C. Harrison, professor emeritus of the University of Sussex. His subject will be “LDS Working Class Biographies: The Nineteenth Century Context.”
Joseph J. Cannon (photo taken about 1903 in Stockholm) and Francis M. Lyman (photo taken about 1890 in Salt Lake City). Photos courtesy of Church Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
The 1903 Dedication of Russia for Missionary Work

By Kahlile Mehr

“Poor, ignorant, oppressed Russia; freedom will come some day. May that time approach steadily without the horrors of bloodshed and revolution.”¹ So wrote Joseph J. Cannon, traveling companion of Francis M. Lyman, after the two had returned to England from Russia in the fall of 1903. Lyman, senior member of the Council of the Twelve, was then serving as the European Mission president. He had toured the remote realm of the czars to see if the time was propitious to commit LDS missionaries there. The duo visited both St. Petersburg and Moscow, unheralded and unnoticed by their hosts. Ambitiously hopeful, Lyman dedicated the land preparatory to beginning proselytizing work there. The event is not well known to Latter-day Saints today because little resulted from the effort expended at the beginning of this century to penetrate a land that yet remains impervious to the LDS message. Perhaps more could have been achieved than was. If the opportunity did beckon, then why was nothing accomplished at that time? What can be learned from this venture?

The dedication of Russia for missionary work is rooted in the LDS concept of gathering Israel from its ancient dispersion. Throughout the church’s history, its leaders have characterized missionary work as an effort to reconstitute the dismembered family of Israel. In the words of Brigham Young, “We are to build up and establish Zion, gather the House of Israel, and redeem the nations of the earth.”² While the dis-

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person of Israel is clouded in the historical record, Lyman felt that many of Israel had come to Russia. In a 1903 letter to the First Presidency, he wrote: "I have felt it would be well to lay before the Lord the condition of that vast Empire of His children, and ask that the way may be prepared by the enlargement of religious liberty so that the gospel may be preached and published to that great northern people, where no doubt the blood of Israel flows generously." 

This same idea may have been the inspiration behind the commission given by the Prophet Joseph Smith in 1843 for Orson Hyde and George J. Adams to go to Russia. Had they gone, Russia would have been the third foreign nation, after Canada and Great Britain, to be visited by missionaries. But Joseph Smith was murdered and the project was never undertaken.

Besides the doctrine of the gathering, there were more immediate motives behind Lyman's desire to dedicate Russia. He recounted to Joseph F. Smith, successor to Lorenzo Snow as church president, that Snow, on the occasion of setting him apart as European Mission president, had told him to get into every corner of the European Mission as soon as possible. Lyman's formal commission from the First Presidency conveyed similar import:

It will now become your duty to take charge as President of the Mission, of all interests connected therewith; to see that the gospel is preached as far as possible, throughout the nations where the elders now labor, and, as the Lord shall open the way, to seize any new opportunities which may present themselves for the introduction of the Gospel to regions where it has not yet been preached.

Thus, the general counsel had been given and it was up to Lyman to provide the framework for achieving it.

Thoughts of a mission to Russia began to interest Lyman shortly after his arrival in Europe in 1901. As European Mission president, he directly supervised the missionaries in Great Britain and indirectly those laboring on the continent. Subordinate missions in Scandinavia and several in Europe were each headed by a mission president who reported to Lyman. While his headquarters was in Liverpool, England, he frequently visited the missions on the mainland. It was during his first tour of Scandinavia that he began to look eastward to the yet untouched expanses of Russia. He wrote to Joseph F. Smith in 1903, "Ever since my trip to Scandinavia in 1901 I have had it in my mind to put elders into Finland and into Russia."

The event precipitating the actual dedication of Russia appears to have been an unexpected political development. On Friday, March 13, 1903, the czar issued a proclamation providing for freedom of religion throughout the realm. Those of a non-Orthodox persuasion were supposed to be able to practice their creeds openly. The decree was proclaimed in the Western press as perhaps the most significant act of state since the emancipation of the serfs.
Lyman felt prepared to take advantage of the opportunity. He wrote to the First Presidency in May 1903 that he intended to test the czar's professions in favor of religious liberty. The First Presidency was willing to entertain the possibility. In a letter to another apostle, Heber J. Grant, then in Japan, they wrote that Lyman was contemplating moving missionaries into Finland and Russia and that they would doubtless soon learn what the czar's manifesto amounted to.

The 1903 manifesto was the first of several manifestos to be issued through 1905 that guaranteed religious freedom. Rather than being an affirmation of the tsar's aspirations, they were, in reality, an aberration. Hopelessly reactionary, Nicholas II had persecuted non-Orthodox religion in Russia during the first decade of his reign. His offerings in the early 1900s appear to have been a sop to appease tensions in the empire—an unsuccessful gesture, as witnessed by the revolutions that convulsed Russia in 1905 and 1917.

Without the hindsight of history, Lyman formulated the following proposal: Two men, ages twenty to twenty-five, were to go to Russia for four years. They were to be of "superior intelligence." Their main purpose would be to learn the language and "to in a modest way advocate the Gospel and feel their way gently and wisely till they master the situation and can recommend to us the next best step to be taken." Lyman felt their work, if successful, could later be carried on by native members. He wanted the First Presidency to have the elders called and on their way by July or August, when he intended to bless Russia for the preaching of the gospel.

Lyman's proselytizing plan was a novel departure from the traditional LDS missionary pattern of preaching doctrine at the first opportunity. It reflects a cautious attitude toward a society perceived as radically different from societies of western Europe—stock from which the early Latter-day Saints derived their cultural bias. This alien perception was reinforced by the gulf between the Catholic and Protestant religious traditions of the West and the Orthodox traditions of the East. Few if any Saints had any acquaintance with Russian customs, the Russian language, or Russian religion. Lyman's plan aimed at dispelling the dearth of knowledge that mystified possibilities for converting Russian souls.

The response of the First Presidency, which was sent to Lyman at the end of May 1903, shows they were hesitant to commit themselves to such a venture. They wrote, "The promised liberty of worship in Russia, we fear, will take some time before it will be enjoyed." Their caution was probably due to the reports then filtering into the West of pogroms being renewed against Russia's Jews. Not long after the Russian manifesto was issued, race riots erupted in Kishinev, a major city in southern Russia, and in other localities throughout the pale of Jewish settlement. The incidents were given enough attention in the West that Theodore Roosevelt, the American president, petitioned Russia to halt
the massacres. The prospects for religious freedom might have seemed dimmer than even before the manifesto.

Lyman remained hopeful, in spite of the resurgence of pogroms against the Jews. Having received the hesitant response of the First Presidency, he responded in June 1903. Agreeing with their dismal estimate, he still promoted the attempt, arguing:

I have thought as feelers, prospectors or fore-runners we could afford to place two able young men as students in St. Petersburg for three years to master the language, and become thoroughly acquainted with the people and the laws, and in that way get a foothold that we could ever after maintain. . . . If it was found in one two or three years it was necessary to increase the number, all well, and if not we could withdraw for a time, and would have men ready for the work when the way should open. This suggestion is I think in harmony with the modesty we are compelled to observe at home and abroad while the elements are so disturbed. 12

Thus, while the political turmoil of the period dictated caution, in Lyman’s view it did not foreclose on his plan.

The “disturbed” elements referred to by Lyman included not only the persecution of Jews in Russia but also the disruption of LDS missionary efforts in central Europe. Since Lyman’s arrival in Europe, the threat of banishment had hedged missionary work in many quarters. Soon after his arrival, Henry Mathis, laboring in Hungary, was deported. Having been imprisoned several days, he was put on a train and warned not to get off until he was out of the country. 13 The following year the threat of expulsion began to loom in the heart of continental Europe—Germany. Lyman noted in a letter to the First Presidency in May 1902 that there appeared to be a scheme contrived by the clergy to remove all missionaries from Prussia, a major component of the German Empire. 14

As the furor continued to grow, Lyman became concerned that should Prussia expel all missionaries, other countries might be soon to follow. 15 He sought the assistance of the First Presidency to elicit United States government support. The U.S. ambassador to Germany was not favorable to the Mormon cause. Lyman perceived an even greater enemy at work. He lamented in a letter to Heber J. Grant that the prospects for converts were better in Germany than any other section of the continent, and he presumed the devil had likewise discovered this. 16

The turmoil climaxed in April 1903 when Prussia and Mecklenburg, kingdoms of the German Empire, formally banished the missionaries. This act did not cause the chain reaction Lyman had feared. But the denial of religious liberty in Germany would naturally have tinged his fear of the same occurring in Russia, where religious liberty was yet but a promise.

Lyman’s approach to opposition was moderation. He had directed the missionaries in 1902 to avoid confronting the ministers. 17 After the expulsion order had been given, he discussed his plans in a letter to Lof-ter Bjarnson, a missionary in Iceland:
Mehr: Missionary Dedication of Russia

We must study moderation in presenting our cause for the consideration of the world. We may well avoid debate and every kind of contention. If we meet those who do not want our doctrines we may turn quietly to others till we find those who do. All that we do should be done pleasantly. We cannot hope to convert the many people, only a few such as the Lord can draw by His Spirit to the fold."18

This disposition to moderation would later temper his enthusiasm in pursuing missionary work in Russia.

While banishment was being faced in Europe, an equally serious challenge to the church in America would also have impact on the Russian venture. Reed Smoot, an apostle as was Lyman, had been elected as the United States senator from Utah in January 1902. Opposition arose in many quarters to his being permitted to take his seat in the Senate on the basis that it would violate the separation of church and state in government. The political battle brought many church activities under national scrutiny and in 1903 increasingly absorbed the attention of the First Presidency to the exclusion of attending to other matters, such as Russia.

The pogroms, the banishment, and the Smoot hearings had a negative influence on the denouement of the dedication of Russia, as we shall note in more detail later. Countering these problems was Lyman's buoyant optimism to accomplish the assignment given him as European Mission president. He supported the opening of many new fields of missionary work. His attitude is characterized by his bold, even flamboyant, words to Brigham Young, Jr., president of the Council of Twelve Apostles in January 1902: "We are planning to break over into Austria from Switzerland and into Finland from Sweden."19 Missionaries were sent to Austria in the spring of 1902 for the first time in many years. During a summer tour of the Mediterranean, Lyman dedicated Italy, Greece, Turkey, and Egypt for missionary work. In the fall of 1902 he encouraged Hugh J. Cannon, German Mission president, to send missionaries to Prague to test the situation there.20 When the First Presidency proposed the reopening of the South African Mission in the winter of 1902, Lyman responded ebulliently that he did not have the slightest hesitation to do it.21 Before the year was out, he had submitted a proposal to the First Presidency that he perform a world tour at the end of his stay in Europe in which he would visit the Eastern Hemisphere and leave an apostolic blessing on India, China, Japan, the Philippines, Australia, New Zealand, Samoa, and the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii).22 The proposal was not approved. Yet Lyman remained ever buoyant, explaining to the First Presidency that their decision had removed a great burden from him, and he rejoiced that he would now be able to turn to other responsibilities.23

At the end of June 1903, Lyman left for Scandinavia on the first leg of his trip to Russia. Before departing, he reaffirmed his purpose in a letter to a fellow apostle, Matthias Cowley: "If I take the pulse of those peoples and turn the key for the introduction and preaching of the Gos-
pel I shall feel that we have another foothold in an important and extensive section of the whole world where we must yet preach the Gospel of the Kingdom as a witness before the end shall come.”

After touring through Norway, Sweden, and Finland, Lyman and his traveling companion, Joseph J. Cannon, arrived in St. Petersburg on August 5, 1903. They might have been stranded at the station indefinitely had it not been for the propitious arrival on the scene of an Englishman who was fluent in Russian and able to get some response out the scores of cabbies who merely shook their heads when addressed in English. Once located at the hotel, Lyman and Cannon were surprised to find Elder John P. Horne in the room to one side and Elder Kenneth Crismon in the room to the other. Both were German missionaries who had been in Christiania, Norway, for Lyman’s dedication of the Oslo chapel in July and had preceded Lyman and Cannon to St. Petersburg to be present for the dedication.

In St. Petersburg, Lyman and Cannon were delighted to find a faithful LDS family—the Lindelofs, who had been baptized in St. Petersburg eight years earlier. Johan, the father, was originally from Finland, where he became acquainted with the church through the missionary efforts of John Bloom. Johan witnessed the incarceration of Bloom in 1883 because he had baptized Johan’s mother and grandmother. Johan later moved with his family to St. Petersburg. By 1895 he had decided to be baptized himself. He corresponded with President Sundwall of the Scandinavian Mission, and Sundwall sent a lone missionary, August Joel Höglund, to St. Petersburg in June 1895. He baptized both Johan and his wife, Alma. Other missionaries visited the family in 1896, 1897, and 1900. The Lindelofs warmly welcomed each new visitor, and all went away favorably impressed with them. Two of Johan’s children and a Finnish woman, of whom we know only the name, Amalia Josefina Lindbohm, were baptized prior to Lyman’s arrival in 1903, bringing the total number of baptisms in Russia to five.

Lyman viewed this family as a refuge for any future missionaries to Russia. The family was likewise delighted to hear of Lyman’s proposal to send missionaries there on a permanent basis. Even though the First Presidency had not endorsed his plan, he seems to have felt that they would support him eventually.

The prayer of dedication was offered the next day, August 6. Because the Russians had not yet abandoned the Julian calendar, it was according to their dating July 24, a day commemorated by the Latter-day Saints in memory of the pioneers entering the Salt Lake Valley in Utah. The location they chose for the prayer was the wooded fastness of the Summer Garden, situated at the junction of the Neva River and the Fontanka Canal, just east of downtown St. Petersburg.

The group seated themselves on a park bench. A canopy of stilled leaves hung on the tree branches above while patches of blue sky peaked through. The four men sat with their heads bowed and Lyman
prayed. The 200-year-old city reached out in all directions from the park. A city built to bring Russia out of its oriental isolation, it rested tranquil during the half-hour prayer of its occidental visitor.²⁹ In the words of Joseph Cannon:

It was a fervent petition for the Lord to open this great land that His servants may preach the Gospel here. . . . He prayed that religious liberty might be given that all may worship unhindered and without persecution. . . . He called upon the Lord to bless this great empire, in many respects the greatest in the world, and endow its rulers with wisdom and virtue, that there may be peace and progress here, that darkness may flee and the voice of His servants may sound the glad tidings to the uttermost parts of this great land.³⁰

Lyman described his feelings in the following words:

The very peace of heaven was upon us. A more perfect spirit or occasion could not be conceived. Our hearts were melted within us for joy. . . . It was a glorious a quiet and peaceful moment as I remember ever to have experienced.³¹

Three days later, Lyman and Cannon stood in Moscow, the wall of the Kremlin looming in front of them. Lyman prayed a second time for the emergence of religious freedom and “petitioned the Lord to send servants full of wisdom and faith to declare the Gospel to the Russians in their own language.”³² Thus he prayed that missionary work might begin, that religious liberty would take hold, and that peace and progress would prevail. It was the culmination of the counsel of a prophet and the hopes of an apostle to take advantage of the unprecedented declaration of a Russian czar. Was there really any opportunity to succeed?

There was a chance. Several Christian denominations had penetrated into Russia during the latter half of the nineteenth century. The Baptists were the most successful, with some twelve thousand adherents in 1886.³³ By 1903 the number was approaching eighty thousand.³⁴ Proselytizing illegally, Baptist missionaries were often incarcerated or exiled.³⁵ While dissent from Russian orthodoxy was dealt with harshly by civil and religious authorities, the Baptist success demonstrated that it was not impossible to oppose this obstacle.

The Latter-day Saints might have had similar success if they had mounted a sustained effort. To do this, they would have had to do several things. The first would have been to make a commitment of manpower. With five hundred to six hundred missionaries at any one time in the various missions of the British Isles and Europe,³⁶ Lyman felt overwhelmingly deficient to proselytize the millions of the continent. He wrote to Heber J. Grant in June 1902:

We are generally in need of more men, and if we had, then we could open up fields in France, Italy, Austria, Russia and Greece. . . . We are doing so little among the millions of the Father’s family, that at our present pace we are not gaining on the world. It grows faster than we are warning it. . . . We could open into France on the borders of Belgium and into Austria Hungary on the borders of Switzerland, into Russia from Sweden if we find we have the men to put into that work.³⁷
A few men could probably have been spared for Russia in the plan conceived by Lyman, but availability of manpower for an extended effort seems to have appeared imposing to him.

The limitation on the size of the missionary force in this period appears to have been financial. At the turn of the century the church was heavily in debt. Likewise, many families did not have the wealth to sustain family members on missions. An experiment to deal with this situation was conducted in some United States missions. Elders were permitted to work during the day to earn the money to support themselves and do missionary work at night.38

Another obstacle was the language barrier. Few in the church could speak the languages of the countries east of Germany and south of Switzerland. When missionaries ventured into these countries, it was normally to work with groups speaking German or some other language known by the missionaries. Language was not an insurmountable barrier, as proved by the success of Alma O. Taylor in Japan during the first decade of the mission there, from 1901 to 1910. It took him that long to learn the language and translate LDS scriptural texts into it. A person such as Taylor might have made some headway in Russia.

A more serious obstacle was the perception of Mormonism as a heretical sect that siphoned converts off to Utah and enslaved them under a dictatorial theocracy where they were forced to live polygamy. Such was the image that the church was attempting to counter in the Smoot investigation. Mormon missionaries would probably have been opposed by the Russian Orthodox Church, not to mention the other Christian minorities already in Russia.

Finally, unlike the Baptists, the Latter-day Saints hesitated to preach in countries where they were not legally recognized. Their doctrine encouraged obeisance to civil government even when that government opposed their work.

Within this context, let us review what was accomplished at that date. Taking advantage of the stay in St. Petersburg to observe the religious traditions of worship, both Lyman and Cannon were unfavorably impressed. Cannon describes the scene they encountered at the Kazan Cathedral:

Russian churches have no seats, and there is room for the devotee to kneel or prostrate himself if he wishes. People of all classes were there. Beggars in their rags (their purpose being to obtain charity), the lame, the halt, the blind, laboring people, richly clad men and women, officers of the army, all kissed the same icons, made the cross and bowed before the images, and in some cases kneeled and touched their foreheads to the floor. One poor fellow, evidently with a heavy weight on his conscience, we noted when we entered, making the cross, kneeling, bowing to the floor and rising again only to repeat the movements. During the whole time we were there he continued.39

Such worship would have seemed entirely unacceptable to those accustomed to the more staid atmosphere of congregational worship practiced by the Latter-day Saints at that time. Lyman later wrote to the
First Presidency: “We shall need much help from the Lord to open up the Gospel in this church ridden country. Idolatry is brazen at every sight. I have seen people in many countries who were slaves to it, but never anything like what is met here every day and all the time.” Such comments must not have been encouraging even if the First Presidency were inclined in the first place to find the requisite missionaries to go there. Lyman had further intimation of the problems missionaries might encounter in Russia when he and Cannon traveled to Moscow and prayed in the Alexander Garden next to the Kremlin. Here it seemed to Lyman as if they were besieging Satan’s stronghold, a center of spiritual darkness and diabolical priestcraft.

Returning to Liverpool in August, Lyman found a remarkable missionary awaiting his instructions—Mischa Markow. Baptized in 1886, Markow, a native of Hungary, had previously proselytized in Hungary, Serbia, Romania, and Bulgaria. Now he had returned to Europe for a second mission. Markow must have appeared as the answer to Lyman’s hopes for the land he had just dedicated, for he commissioned the missionary to go to Russia. Lyman had as yet received no commitment from the First Presidency to pursue the Russia venture. Still, he sent Markow, cautioning him to “be wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove.” He did not want Markow to be banished or imprisoned, nor did he want anything to occur that might hinder future efforts in Russia. Consistent with his earlier response to trouble in Germany, he counseled moderation and explicitly told Markow that if he was in danger, he must flee.

Soon after Markow departed, Lyman received a letter from the First Presidency, written before they received details of the dedication of Russia. The time lag for correspondence was between two and three weeks, so a month might pass before a query was answered. In the letter, the First Presidency expressed their hope that conditions for missionary work in Russia were more favorable than anticipated. They had not yet vetoed Lyman’s proposal, so he took the opportunity to press his plan. He responded that he was favorably impressed with the people, if not with their superstition and idolatry. His advice was to go ahead with the project, but he added, “I would not urge this matter upon your attention, and whatever the Spirit indicates to you is just what will please me.” Whatever his hope for success in Russia, he thus communicated his willingness to defer without resistance to the authority of the First Presidency.

The response came in a letter dated September 23, 1903. The First Presidency had not been persuaded. They explained that the matter of the Russian mission required more careful consideration than they had time to give it at present. Preoccupied with the pending Smoot hearings, stunned by the banishment from Germany, and unconvinced that religious liberty would prevail in Russia, they sidestepped the issue for the while.
As this letter was making its transit through the post, Markow was en route to Russia. Arriving in Riga, Latvia, on October 9, 1903, he registered with the district court. Markow was aware that the Mormons were perceived as a fanatical sect in eastern Europe and that the name carried a negative connotation. He circumvented certain banishment by registering as a preacher of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The registrar shortened it to Church of Christ so as to fit into the space provided in his register. 48

Markow’s missionary approach was not at all like that earlier proposed by Lyman to the First Presidency. He began immediately to place some of his 150 German tracts among the inhabitants of the German enclave in that city. He preached that their priests did not have authority from God because of the apostasy and that the authority had been restored. Within a short while three families requested baptism. 49 Had he baptized them, the history of the church in Russia might have been different. Success might have encouraged Lyman and persuaded the First Presidency to reconsider. As it was, Markow began to encounter opposition, and thus deferred performing the baptisms. Apparently informed on by a Baptist pastor, he was summoned to court. The court advised him to get a lawyer and have the lawyer petition the governor for permission to preach. The lawyer Markow consulted did not dare assist him nor did he feel that anyone else would. Criticizing the Orthodox Church was punishable by two years’ exile in Siberia, and converting anyone from orthodoxy carried a sentence of twelve years. Whatever the sentence, few were known to return from Siberia. 50

Markow’s German contacts pleaded with him to stay, saying that he would not be endangered if he preached only to the Protestants and Catholics. Yet he felt himself endangered, and remembering the counsel of Lyman, he prepared to leave. He departed on November 5. 51 He reported to Lyman, who by now had received notice of the First Presidency to cease proselytizing in Russia. Obediently, Lyman assigned Markow to Turkey for the remainder of his mission. Lyman himself would soon leave Europe to preside as president of the Council of Twelve Apostles.

One speculates about what may have happened had Lyman sought to approach the First Presidency in behalf of the families that had desired baptism in Riga. If missionary work had been restricted to foreign minorities, the Russian authorities might well have ignored it. A small foundation might have flourished in the wake of events fast transpiring to bring real religious freedom to Russia, if only of temporary duration.

In 1905 the persecution of Christian denominations in Russia was relaxed. Baptists were afforded legal recognition by the government, and within the next six years, they obtained twenty-five thousand converts, nearly a fourth of their total strength. Other Christian denominations experienced similar surges of converts. 52 In September 1905, Peter Mattson, the new president of the Swedish Mission, visited
the Lindelof family in St. Petersburg. Responding to their warm reception, he was encouraged to consider sending missionaries to Russia. However, no action was taken, and there is no indication that Heber J. Grant, who succeeded Lyman as president of the European Mission, ever responded to the opportunity.

Had congregations been established during the period, what might have become of them during the Russian Revolution? The fate of the Lindelofs may be revealing in this respect. In 1918 their home was raided, they were dispossessed, and their children were sent to Siberia, where some of them died. While this was more a result of their wealth, which the revolutionaries coveted, rather than their religion, an incipient Church organization might not have survived the indiscriminate ravages of the revolution. The more established Baptists survived and flourished in the post World War I era until the Stalinist purges thinned their numbers. Today the Baptist faith remains strong in Russia, with ever-increasing evidence that their numbers are on the rise despite the continued opposition of the government.

The opportunity for LDS missionary work in Russia may come again. The Church is arguably more prepared than formerly to commit the manpower, to field the language expertise, and to manage a church membership behind the iron curtain (as evidenced by its work in East Germany). The Lyman episode seems to be most significant as an expression of a hope that still pervades church aspirations. The opportunity was seemingly present at the beginning of this century, but the church did not pursue it. A chance was lost. The dedication of Russia did not achieve its purpose. Yet its occurrence remains a fact, and its fruition may only have been delayed.

NOTES

3. Francis M. Lyman to Joseph F. Smith, June 5, 1903, Francis M. Lyman Letterpress Copybooks (hereafter Lyman Copybooks), Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Archives of the Historical Department, Salt Lake City, Utah (hereafter LDS Archives).
4. Lyman to First Presidency, May 5, 1902, Lyman Copybooks.
5. Millennial Star 63 (June 6, 1901): 369.
6. Lyman to First Presidency, May 1, 1903, Lyman Copybooks.
8. Lyman to First Presidency, May 1, 1903, Lyman Copybooks.
10. Lyman to Joseph F. Smith, May 1, 1903, Lyman Copybooks.
12. Lyman to First Presidency, June 5, 1903, Lyman Copybooks.
13. Lyman to George F. Gibbs, September 10, 1903, Lyman Copybooks.
15. Lyman to First Presidency, September 6, 1902, Lyman Copybooks.
16. Lyman to Heber J. Grant, March 5, 1903, Lyman Copybooks.
17. Lyman to Joseph F. Smith, June 12, 1902, Lyman Copybooks.
18. Lyman to Lofter Bjarnson, June 17, 1903, Lyman Copybooks.
19. Lyman to Brigham Young, Jr., January 21, 1902, Lyman Copybooks.
20. Lyman to Hugh J. Cannon, September 13, 1902, Lyman Copybooks.
21. Lyman to George Reynolds, November 12, 1902, Lyman Copybooks.
22. Lyman to Joseph F. Smith, December 19, 1902, Lyman Copybooks.
23. Lyman to Joseph F. Smith, February 27, 1903, Lyman Copybooks.
24. Lyman to Matthias Cowley, June 29, 1903, Lyman Copybooks.
28. Lyman to Joseph F. Smith, August 9, 1903, Lyman Copybooks. This letter is filed at the beginning of October, vol. 2, pp. 79-80.
29. Ibid.
31. Lyman to Joseph F. Smith, August 9, 1903, Lyman Copybooks.
35. Armitage, p. 830.
37. Lyman to Heber J. Grant, June 10, 1902, Lyman Copybooks.
40. Lyman to Joseph F. Smith, August 9, 1903, Lyman Copybooks.
42. Mischa Markow Reminiscences, p. 80, LDS Archives.
43. Lyman to Joseph F. Smith, August 25, 1903, LDS Archives.
44. Markow, p. 80.
46. Lyman to Joseph F. Smith, September 7, 1903, Lyman Copybooks.
47. *Millennial Star* 65 (October 8, 1903): 652.
49. Ibid.
50. Ibid., pp. 82-83.
51. Ibid.
52. Klibanov, p. 276.
Afton, Wyoming, looking northeast in about 1911. Tall building to the right is the LDS Stake Tabernacle, completed in 1909. Photograph courtesy of Special Collections, Merrill Library, Utah State University
Between Two Cultures: The Mormon Settlement of Star Valley, Wyoming

By Dean L. May

In June 1900, Melvin Henderson, the federal census marshal, made his rounds through the Star Valley, Wyoming, settlements. In Fairview he stopped at the home of Ole Jensen, age sixty, dutifully recording in sequence the requisite information on Jensen's considerable family, including the listing of Margret, wife; Caroline, wife; and Mary, wife. Then, apparently fearing his superiors might think it curious that there be three wives listed in the same household, he penciled one explanatory word in the margin: "Mormons." In so doing, he inadvertently revealed much about his lack of familiarity with Star Valley. After all, most of the families living there at the time were Mormon, but he identified only the polygamist family of Ole Jensen as such. Perhaps he felt that since the "Manifesto" began the process of ending Mormon polygamy ten years earlier, the other settlers in the valley had been sufficiently Americanized to make further comment unnecessary. In his superficial survey, it was plurality of wives that made people Mor-
mon, and the bulk of Star Valley’s citizens, having by 1900 abandoned the practice, required no differentiation from the folks in Mountain View, Fort Bridger, or other parts of the then Uinta county.\(^1\)

The incident underscores the fact that the Star Valley settlements have rested uncomfortably in the Wyoming setting, sharing much with their fellow citizens in the state, and yet at the same time exhibiting a distinctiveness that sets them somewhat apart, both in their own eyes and in the eyes of their fellow citizens, including to some extent the census marshal, Henderson. It is for this reason that a step back from the trees of this beautiful valley’s past, to gain perspective on their place in the broader forest of settlement experience in the West, might be helpful and instructive. How does Star Valley settlement fit into the broader context of Wyoming and western settlement? What do the communities of Star Valley share of that broader experience, and what is distinctive and unique about them?

In focusing on the context of Star Valley settlement, I would like to examine this subject under three main topics: Who settled Star Valley? Why was it settled? And what were the broad consequences of that settlement? The answers would at first glance seem obvious, and yet they are considerably more complicated than we might imagine. As we explore their many dimensions, a view of Star Valley settlement emerges that is not without surprises, paradoxes, and deeper human meaning.

First, the question of who settled Star Valley. One of the charming and instructive literary achievements documenting Star Valley’s past is a twenty-page “Historical Pageant” written in 1915 by Adelbert Wilde, Maud Burton, and Josephine Burton. The pageant was presented in Afton on August 28th of that year, no doubt in the Star Valley Stake Tabernacle, then but six years old. It is a delightful example of the romantic literary style of the time, including among its cast of characters not only the valley’s principal founders, Moses Thatcher and Charles D. Cazier, but also fifteen “spirits” representing Star Valley industries, including a Road Builder Spirit, the Spirit of the Saw Mill, the Spirit of the Telephone, and the Spirit of Creameries. There are also a Daisy, a Pansy, a Sunflower, and a Snowdrop. (Snowflakes are a common phenomenon, especially in Star Valley, but snowdrops seem quite extraordinary.)

Though Saints of the late twentieth century may find the theatrical style of that age quaint, and even amusing, it is clear that this was a serious evocation of Star Valley’s past, meant to instruct and inform, but also to tug at the emotions—to inspire as well as to teach. The pageant was to be, as the authors indicated by quoting Louis N. Parker on the role of pageants generally, “a festival of Thanksgiving to God Almighty for the blessings of the past: the opportunities of the present, and the hopes of the future.” It began, however, with a scene that tells much of Star Valley in her Wyoming setting:
Scene One
(Time 1847.)

Enter Pratt and Snow—They look around the treeless sagebrush valley of the "Great American Desert." They ride back to the approaching wagons. The Pioneers enter, most of them walking, some few riding in wagons.

Pratt, the captain of this advance company, speaks.

Pratt—Let us stop here. Our great leader would wish us to set camp hereabouts. We must put things in readiness to welcome him. On this day of our entrance into this valley it would be well for us to turn the first furrow and plant our first field.

A carriage arrives from which alight Brigham Young, just recovering from mountain fever, Clara D. Young, Lorenzo D. Young, Harriet Young, Heber C. Kimball, Ellen Kimball, and Wilford Woodruff, owner and driver of the carriage.

Brigham Young—This is the place. I have seen this place in visions and have been shown many things of the future concerning this valley.2

The valley he is referring to is, of course, the Salt Lake Valley—not the Star Valley. It is nonetheless not only poetically pleasing, but in the broader sense historically correct, that a pageant on Star Valley's past began in a Utah valley 250 miles south of Star Valley. Star Valley was settled by Mormons, a fact that made its people unusual in the Wyoming setting, profoundly altering their patterns of communication, trade, and social interaction—even their identity as a people. As late as 1915 the folk history of this Wyoming valley began, appropriately, in a Utah valley.

This meant much more than just the fact that these settlers were of a different religion. Census studies of Star Valley's formative years are problematic because the population was so small in 1880, the manuscript census for 1890 was burned, and by 1900 the valley was well past the early stages of settlement and had much of the appearance of a mature region. But even from the meager information that has survived, some interesting facts can be gleaned. Star Valley's earliest settlers were young, compared to those in other areas of Wyoming at the time. The average age (median) of members of the tiny cluster of families the census taker found there in 1880 (twenty-one persons in five households) was seventeen. The average age for all residents of the Territory of Wyoming was a much older twenty-five. Moreover, the Star Valley pioneers of 1880 were a family-oriented population, with a reasonably even balance between males and females and a large number of children. Almost half of the 1880 group (ten of twenty-one) were female, whereas but thirty-two percent were female in the entire territory. This meant that even with the Star Valley men taking more than their share of wives, the odds of eligible young men being able to find a suitable mate were probably better along the Salt River than along the Sweetwater. About thirty percent of the territory's inhabitants at the time were under seventeen, while more than half of the Star Valley settlers were in the same age group. Thus, while early settlements elsewhere in
the West almost always had a large number of men, few women and children, and a somewhat older average age, as greater Wyoming did, the Star Valley settlements had all the appearances of a long-established midwestern community right from the start. If we ask who settled Star Valley, we must answer, then, Mormons, in young family groups, with considerable numbers of children and a fairly even balance between the sexes.

Our response suggests the values of the settlers. Whereas much of the West was settled by young men moving to the frontier's mines or ranches, Star Valley was settled by families, some seeking, as we shall see, refuge from prosecution under federal antipolygamy laws, but perhaps more of them were attracted by the economic promise of virgin fields and farms. As such, these people gave an unusual and special character to this region of Wyoming, quite unlike any the territory had hitherto known. The whole population was at least as out of place in Wyoming at the time as were the Ole Jensens, and the census taker's note that these were "Mormons" should more properly have been applied to nearly the whole Star Valley population, with the appropriate suggestion that their peculiarities were thereby explained. 3

There were equally important implications in the time the valley was settled, which was early in Wyoming's history. The first major farming areas, drawing water from the Shoshone, Big Horn, and Laramie rivers, were not established until the mid-1890s. During most of the 1880s, Wyoming was a land of ranches, rail towns, and mines, with farming communities isolated and of marginal importance. There was a broad tide of new agricultural development moving at the time along the lower Boise River, resulting in the founding of a number of Idaho towns, such as Nampa and Caldwell, as centers of rich new agricultural tracts. But this current of settlers coursed west of Star Valley, into lands that were lower, more temperate in climate, and more accessible to markets. Thus, Star Valley was settled at the same time that a more general land rush to newly opened farm areas in the Intermountain West was taking place. 4

The appearance of farm villages in the rugged Wyoming mountains was late, however, from the perspective of Mormon settlement. The Wasatch Front area of Utah was pioneered in 1847, as the historical pageant of 1915 reminds us, and within a few years Utah's valleys were occupied. The first major opening to the south was Parowan, settled in 1851, and during the 1860s and '70s virtually all the promising sites in southern Utah and northern Arizona were occupied. Settlement in what was then northern Utah, including Cache Valley and the Bear Lake region, also took place in the 1860s and '70s. Mormon settlement north of these valleys was sparse, however, before the early 1880s. Thus, nearly forty years of Mormon colonization in the Mountain West was history when the pressures of population and land led to the settlement of Star Valley. 5
The common accounts of events relating to the process of settling Star Valley are somewhat confusing and contradictory, but it is important to sort them out, for they relate directly to the question of why Star Valley was settled. In December 1880, Mormon apostle Moses Thatcher sat down to recapture for his diary the previous several months. His entry began with a reference to a decision of the Council of the Twelve Apostles “about a year ago” (which would make it December 1879) that he and fellow apostle Charles C. Rich “should superintend the settlement of our people in the Salt River Valley, Wyoming Territory.” Following up on that decision, a considerable retinue of church officials visited the valley in August 1880. The company, which included Thatcher, Rich, William B. Preston, Lorin Farr, several of their wives and children, and others met at Soda Springs, Idaho, and then traveled together to the virtually unsettled valley. There they stayed at the home of a brother Robinson (possibly the David Robertson who was there in June 1880 with his wife Mary and five children, according to the census taker). Thatcher complained of the hard drive in, “owing to the wretched condition in which we found a part of the road which we found two years before in splendid condition.”

He concluded, however, that though the road was miserable, “the valley we find as lovely as ever. It is certainly one of the very finest and most beautiful I have ever seen in the Mountains.” He then proceeded to call a meeting of the valley’s settlers (as noted above, the census taken in June found twenty-one persons living in five households), choosing Charles D. Cazier “as a priest to preside for the present over the Saints of the Valley.” He recorded further that Cazier “was unanimously sustained by vote and was accordingly set apart. On suggestion the name was changed to ‘Star’ instead of Salt River Valley—Sustained.” Thatcher offered no explanation in his journal for the name change.

Rich and his group then left, but Thatcher, Preston, Robinson, Cazier, and wives proceeded to a stream referred to as Afton Creek (now Swift Creek). Thatcher then explained parenthetically in his journal that he had named the creek while in the valley on August 29, 1880. My reading of the account, however, suggests that he wrote the wrong date down, and that he in fact had named the creek in August 1878, as historian Andrew Jenson suggested. Thatcher described this earlier visit taking place in the company of apostle Brigham Young (son of the church president), B. T. Young (the apostle’s cousin), Charles C. Rich, William Preston, and the wives of Brigham and B. T. Young. It was on this earlier occasion that the valley was dedicated, as Thatcher remembered, in December 1880. “Kneeling down in the midst of this most Sweet and beautiful Valley on a lovely Sunday morning, with all nature smiling round, we humbly dedicated it, the surrounding mountains, timber and streams to the Lord our God for the use of the Saints,” he wrote. Apostle Young offered the dedicatory prayer, he said, noting further that “this valley then and now as to appearance and peaceful
heavenly influences reminds me of the early days and settlement of Cache Valley." (A citizen of Cache Valley could pay no higher compliment.) "In each was the spirit of our Heavenly Father," he continued. "Oh may his richest blessings ever rest upon it and the Saints who may reside there. How I would rejoice if I could be permitted to return there with my family each summer for rest . . . and quiet reflection as well, amid the sweet harmony of nature to tender my daily devotions to God. It seems to me that man hath never defiled or polluted that Sacred Valley—and I hope he never may. I could be happy there. But my calling is not one of ease or rest." The group then proceeded to the north end of the valley, where he named the summit Mount Observation and carved his name on a young quaking aspen. They stopped to fish in Swift Creek, "where we caught an abundance of the finest trout," and then returned home to Logan, arriving September 9. 8

The journal thus identifies without question the 1880 visit, in which Cazier was designated leader of the Latter-day Saints in the valley at the time. It also makes it clear that late in 1879 the church began plans to encourage settlement in Star Valley. It refers unmistakably to one earlier visit, probably in August 1878, when apostle Brigham Young dedicated it as a home for the Saints, and the road was in better condition. Other evidence suggests perhaps a still earlier visit in 1877 by Moses Thatcher and William Preston. 9 I have not been able to resolve with original documents whether there were in fact one or two earlier visits. If two, the 1877 visit was likely that for which an Indian named John or Jim acted as guide, as suggested by local tradition. Perhaps documentation unknown to the author or future research will settle the matter. 10

This review may clarify some of the questions that have been raised about the process leading to Mormon colonization in the Star Valley. More important, however, is the fact that official steps toward colonizing the valley took place in 1879 and 1880—two years before the Edmunds Act was passed, leading to increased pressure on polygamists, and five years before the period of intense prosecution of antipolygamy laws in Utah. Moreover, another passage in Thatcher's 1880 journal makes it clear that proposals for colonization in Mexico made that year were rejected by church officials as premature. 11 In other words, they felt no compelling pressure to stake out refuges for polygamous families in 1880—the year that Charles Cazier was appointed to head up the small group of Latter-day Saints that had gathered more or less spontaneously in Star Valley.

It is nonetheless true that very few came to the valley for at least five years after the 1880 visit. Cazier himself left shortly to return to Bennington, in Bear Lake Valley, and did not return until 1886, shortly before an official church branch was founded in 1887. What, then, led church officials to send Thatcher and Rich there to open the settlement in 1880? 8

I believe that pressures from very rapid population growth, both
from immigration and from high birth rates, forced church leaders to seek constantly for new lands where the young might hope to find a stake in life. In 1870 most Utah Valley farms were between 25 and 30 acres. In the same year, the average farm in a non-Mormon area of western Idaho was 180 acres. Farmers in the Kanab area of southern Utah in 1880 found their homesteads averaging just over 14 acres, with but 3 more acres per family of undeveloped land available. Yet at the same time there were in Kanab 109 young men between the ages of 15 and 25 who, as they established families, would clearly have to find land enough to farm. This situation was common to many Utah towns. With these considerations in mind, then, Mormon leaders of the period were always alert to new lands that could be opened by Mormon settlers. It would be no surprise that in the late 1870s and early '80s, with Utah lands virtually all taken, they looked to Star Valley as a possible home-site for Zion's youth.

A common local tradition, however, suggests that the Star Valley settlements were created as a refuge for polygamists fleeing the strict enforcement of federal antipolygamy laws in the mid-1880s. And the timing of the major migration to the valley would seem to support this view. No doubt, for some this was the case. The same Ole Jensen, for example, whose plethora of wives the census marshal felt it necessary to explain, came to Star Valley after having already served a term in the territorial prison for cohabitation. Shortly after his release, he settled all his business in Clarkston, Utah, and, as he put it, "according to council formerly given by the Apostles, I made preparations to change my home, and on 23 September 1890, myself and two wives, Lena and Mary, and their six children, started for Star Valley, in Wyoming, on account of a favorable government, where we could live without being harrassed by officers of the government." And yet there is evidence to suggest that the Ole Jensens may have been the exception and not the rule. Of twenty-one leading pioneer families listed in Lee R. Call's Star Valley and Its Communities, only seven are indicated by the writers to have been polygamists, and the incidence of polygamy is well known to have been higher among the type of community leaders authors of such accounts would select for inclusion. In the 1900 census one can clearly identify only three of 393 families listed by the census taker as polygamous. Even though the institution by that time had had a decade in which to die out, it is hard to believe, given the very few visible remnants discernible by 1900, that polygamous families at any time constituted a substantial proportion of those in Star Valley.

Thus, while the timing favors the polygamous refuge argument for Star Valley settlement, one must conclude that the number for which that was the primary attraction was few, and that most came for the same reasons people from elsewhere in America were coming to the West at the time—to find a better stake in life, especially land to farm. The Deseret News in 1885 underscored this point in recommending Star
Valley, “to the consideration of a large class in this region who are desirous of following the agricultural life, as offering about the best facilities for new settlers. Its isolation is the only thing that has prevented it being fully occupied.”

One cannot help wondering why this particular valley was chosen, given the new lands recently opened by the Oregon Short Line railroad as it crossed Idaho to the West Coast. Though all who came to the valley praised its beauty, most were intimidated by its winters and its isolation. It was precisely those qualities, however, that had kept the valley almost wholly unsettled as late as 1880. Western settlers, in their rush to the valleys of the Boise and the Snake, often passed right through Star Valley, admired its beauty, and pushed on to more settled and comfortable homesites. Thus, as the inexorable flow of Mormon migration into southeastern Idaho gained momentum, it is not surprising that an eddy of that stream would find its way to Star Valley. Moreover, the Mormons, through long and bitter experience, had an inbred distrust of areas where non-Mormons were settling in substantial numbers. Star Valley was not far beyond the older Mormon settlements, its isolation appealed to them, and they were willing to endure its hard winters to gain a valley they could command.

Even the Mormons, however, found the climate and isolation more than they bargained for. When Ole Jensen arrived in late September 1889, he reported, “it was a very cold day and my wife Mary sat down and cried, and Lena and the rest did not laugh.” Even Moses Thatcher quite pointedly specified summer as the time he would choose to visit the valley. The Deseret News, still attempting to attract settlers to the valley in 1891, had to admit that “the greatest drawback at the present is the long winters, but as the valley settle up, the people are confident that the climate will moderate.” Andrew Jenson visited from the LDS Church Historian’s Office that same year. He reported enthusiastically on the fine tomatoes, turnips, rutabagas, and other vegetables shown him, “the finest . . . that I have ever seen grown in the mountains.” But he felt it necessary to assure prospective settlers that during the last few years “the climate has become milder and better every season,” concluding nonetheless that the valley would be especially attractive to those “who are not afraid to have the dangers of mountain wilds and pioneer life generally. In fact,” he continued (trying to put an upbeat tone to the warning), “this valley is capable of giving the settlers . . . nearly all the experience that the Utah Pioneers passed through over forty years ago. Here, indeed, is still an opportunity to kill snakes and build bridges, and to achieve the glory and fame connected with being the first—the pioneers.” He was confident that “when the Lord shall have tempered the elements here to the extent that He has in many other parts of the great intermountain region (where the Latter-day Saints in former years have commenced their settlements under the most discouraging
circumstances) this extensive valley of the north will undoubtedly produce all that is necessary to sustain life and give comfort to its inhabitants.”

The early settlers took seriously the promise of a divine tempering of the climate. In 1891, Ole Jensen raised twenty bushels of wheat, one hundred of potatoes, and a nice garden. This was possible, he felt, because, “while the crops were growing, myself, two wives and children went out into fields every Sunday and kneeled down and asked God to spare our crops from frost, so that we could prosper in the land.” But, despite his early success, he had to report in 1900, “We do not try to raise much wheat as it generally gets frozen. All kinds of hay can be raised successfully. Some of the farmers raise a few potatoes and oats for their own use. We usually import our flour at $1.60 to $1.75 per hundred.” Even as late as 1931, a chamber of commerce brochure admitted reluctantly that “the winters are usually severe,” but hastened to add that they are “mild enough to allow all sorts of winter sports and the native population has a record for health and longevity.”

The short growing season and severity of the winters were no doubt principal causes of the long incubation period in Star Valley settlement. Though the area was dedicated as a gathering place for Mormons in 1878, there were very few settlers until the mid-1880s, and no substantial population until 1900. Andrew Jenson reported that the whole valley had but 174 families in October 1891 and fewer than 1,000 inhabitants. Through the late 1890s a steady stream of settlers moved from the valley to more promising climes. As late as 1901 Ole Jensen reported that “on account of the long winter, many of our Citizens became dissatisfied and some left, starting for Oregon, others for Canada, and seven of our townsmen (with their families perhaps one-fifth of the population of Fairview) left for Big Horn County, Wyoming.”

The isolation that had helped preserve the valley for the Mormons also inhibited Star Valley settlement. Bertha Maudsley, Edwin Cazier, and several contributors to the Call book mention repeatedly the problems of maintaining roads and keeping them passable during the winter season. The 1915 historical pageant, sensitive, as is all folk expression, to the fundamental currents and concerns in the people’s lives, included the road builders among the “spirits” that had blessed Star Valley settlers. A surprising number of the colorful incidents remembered from the early years in the valley are related to the problems of traversing the passes, especially in winter, by daring citizens on showshoes, sleds, or horseback, in order to bring in mail and needed supplies. The detailing of important landmarks along the freight and mail roads by Barbara Veigel and Nina Taggart suggests the critical importance of these communication link to the outside world and at the same time preserves some of the poetry of an earlier time, when the unhurried pace of wagon travel gave every hill and bend a name.
Deer Creek, Couzen's Ranch, Salt Works, White Dugway, Half Way, Samson's Tree, Beaver Canyon, Thomas's Fork, Carveen's Retreat, Whiskey Flat, Nield's Ranch, Wells' Books', Green's and Camp GiveOut were all well known to the early travelers.

Farther on were located Snowslide, the Elbow, the Falls, and Montpelier Canyon.

There was a cut-off sometimes traveled to avoid the dreaded Beaver Canyon. By this route the traveler climbed the long divide out of Thomas Fork Canyon, Took the Hale's Turntable, And then scooted down the Devil's dive, Hoping to land right side up At the bottom of The canyon.18

A principal event, important enough to be included in the official manuscript history of the Star Valley LDS Stake, was completion of telephone lines from Montpelier on July 4, 1901. Ole Jensen expressed his delight at the accomplishment. “Thus communication is opened to the world as on wings of lightning,” he wrote. Again, with unerring instinct for powerful influences on folk life, the writers of the historical pageant created a role for the “Spirit of the Telephone.”19 Frequently in official church minutes and personal diaries the hope for a railroad is expressed, with rumors every few years that the long anticipated event was about to be realized. It, of course, never was.

That fact did not inhibit the gradual rooting of thousands of settlers to the soil, and the perpetuation of an even dozen stable, prosperous communities along the Salt River from Smoot to Alpine. Pushed by the rapid population growth in northern Utah and attracted by the isolation and availability of a site so relatively close to home, the thousands who came here, in the spirit of Ole Jensen, “blessed and dedicated [the land] to the Lord for [their] future residence, and there [they] lived and had a happy home.”20

What, then, were the consequences of that migration and of the tenacity of these people? Certainly, Wyoming’s history was altered through their deeds. Star Valley was among the first major farming regions in the state, settled a decade before the building of irrigation projects opened other extensive tracts to farmers. Star Valley’s people in the 1880s seemed unusual and out of place in Wyoming, a state settled in the main by more typical frontiersmen. They soon found, however, that
it would be necessary to adapt their expectations to the climate, while they waited upon the climate to adapt itself to their presence. An intriguing note in the minutes of a stake conference held May 14, 1893, tells us that “the Elders who occupied the time during Saturday spoke principally upon temporal affairs, urging a different mode of farming than had been followed heretofore.” With Ole Jensen, the Star Valley folk learned that their accustomed habit of raising grain, vegetable, and fruit crops, as they had in Utah, would have to be altered.

They began increasingly to concentrate their efforts upon the raising of livestock. By June 1900 about ten thousand head of cattle and the same number of sheep were reported to be owned by Star Valley residents. The very next month the Deseret News announced that a large creamery was being shipped to the valley. Apparently the earlier success of A. R. Moffat, marketing butter and cheese in the mining towns of Almy, Evanston, Kemmerer, and Rock Springs, had been noticed. Quite suddenly dairies and creameries began to proliferate, including the early establishments of J. P. Thompson, Henry Harmon, Alonzo Baker, and W. W. Burton. In the twentieth century, Star Valley became the dairy center of Wyoming, with reportedly more than fifty percent of all Wyoming’s dairy farmers located there. Thus, another major contribution of the valley’s citizens to Wyoming was their building the area into the most important single source of dairy products for the state.²¹

The welcome given Star Valley’s pioneers by Wyoming’s leaders gained for the state a reputation for tolerance and fairness that has continued through the years. This reputation no doubt encouraged by 1900 a whole new wave of migrants from Utah to the north-central part of the state to settle the Big Horn Basin. Historian Andrew Jenson could not help but comment on this tolerance when he visited in 1891: “Be it said to her credit that Wyoming has always treated our people fairly and justly, while her neighbor, Idaho, has exhibited a hatred and vindictiveness towards some of her best citizens that would be more in keeping with the spirit of the dark middle ages than that of the nineteenth century.” According to Fairview’s Ole Jensen, federal law enforcement officers from Utah offered to come to Wyoming in the late 1880s to assist in prosecuting polygamists. The governor (Thomas Moonlight or Francis E. Warren) refused, “saying ‘No thank you, if we wish to prosecute the Mormons we have officers of our own.’”²²

There have been consequences of Star Valley settlement for the state of Utah as well. Most important was the opening of new economic opportunities for a generation of young people who could find no niche in the already crowded valleys of Deseret. Eighty-three percent of the 393 families recorded by the census taker in 1900 had had at least one vital event—a birth, marriage, birth of a child, or death, in Utah. And this fact had spinoffs that were equally important.

By 1868, Congress had drastically reduced the expansive original boundaries of the State of Deseret proposed by Brigham Young in 1849. Political boundaries cannot, however, contain cultural influence.
The plan for the original Deseret had a salient extending up into Southwestern Wyoming and cutting southwestward across southeast Idaho. It included the Star Valley. Thanks to the circumstances of the valley's settlement, the cultural influence of Utah, dramatically different from other states in the West, moved northward to fill almost perfectly the original boundary of the State of Deseret.

The important aspect of that interesting historical accident, however, is the fact that family ties, trading, and communications links out of Star Valley have tended primarily to go south into Utah, helping to extend Utah's cultural influence northward. Ole Jensen could conceivably have traveled to Pocatello, Rock Springs, or some other established town when making his rare trips out of Star Valley. But he invariably visited Logan or Salt Lake City. His account of an 1898 visit to attend general conference in Salt Lake City gives us a sense of how very isolated the valley was before the automobile, as well as a delightful provincial view of the city that was much more the capital of his world than Cheyenne:

I had not been to Salt Lake City, Utah for about 20 years, and I noticed a great change. The first sight being the beautiful Temple, with its spires on top, and on one of them a statue of the Angel Moroni, with a Book of Mormon in his hand. The street cars were running on schedule-time with electricity; sidewalks paved with brick, rock, etc., and water works in every house. . . . My observations showed that almost everything moves by either steam or electricity. I saw no horses used to work, and only some for touring or pleasure trips, etc. I also saw many people, both men and women, riding the bicycles with great speed, but this did not surprise me as I was posted previously about the invention. . . . I attended all meetings of the Conference and gladly received all the instructions; everything moved orderly, people dressed neat but plain. I never saw anyone intoxicated nor heard any profanity while in the city, although it may of existed. . . . The city seemed full of merchandising of every kind.23

Last, and perhaps most importantly to its residents today, the settlement of Star Valley had important consequences for the settlers themselves and for their descendants. The climate imposed upon them its own demands, forcing them in time to move from the row-crop farming they had known in Utah toward the stockraising common in other parts of Wyoming. Their Utah farm background, however, forced a compromise, leading to the development of dairy as a principal livelihood rather than ranching. Those who stayed and successfully made that adaptation improved themselves economically. Ole Jensen documented the growing prosperity, though not without misgivings. "This has been a very prosperous year," he wrote in 1898. "People have begun to appear rich, many riding in carriages, putting on style, and indulging in the worldly ways, such as tampering with intoxicants, and neglecting their duties, and to keep the Word of Wisdom. However, the majority are striving to serve the Lord." In 1900 he observed that most families now had buggies and horses and that the Saints were so careless in keeping the Word of Wisdom "that three saloons were supported in this
stake of Zion.” In 1901 he noted again that people were growing more wealthy, as evidenced by shingles replacing the dirt roofs on their pioneer homes. In 1902 the stake president reported that “the financial condition of the people was never better than at the present. There had been large crops of hay and grain.” Completion of the monumental stake tabernacle and its dedication in 1909 seemed to symbolize the permanence and relative affluence of Star Valley’s citizens.24

There were nonetheless costs attached to the removal to Star Valley. A leading geographer once noted how much study there has been of the loneliness and alienation that is a part of urban life. He was perceptive in noting that we have seldom fully understood “the anomic of the newly-settled land and newly established economy whose place in the world order of things has still to be settled.”25 The effects in Star Valley of this anomic were mitigated by the fact that these settlers brought their culture and their sense of community with them intact. There were strains, especially those imposed by the fact that these people were culturally Mormon, and hence identified with Utah, but politically had become a part of Wyoming.

There is significance in the fact that T. A. Larson, in a 600-page book on the History of Wyoming, mentioned Star Valley but twice, both times to indicate how tolerant citizens of the territory had been to the Mormon outsiders.26 Removed physically and culturally from Wyoming’s mainstream, which was centered in places like Cheyenne, Laramie, and Casper, Star Valley and its history to this day have not been fully integrated into Wyoming’s past. Yet the isolation of the valley has also kept its citizens somewhat distant from the mainstream of Mormon culture, centered in Salt Lake City. Entries in minutes of the Star Valley Stake in the mid-1890s show that its citizens were thin-skinned and sensitive about being slighted by those at the capital of Mormonism. “Some have had the idea that Star Valley is nothing but a den for wild beasts; but if such people will come and visit us and some of our conferences they will feel amply paid for their time spent.” Or, “although we are so far out of the way that we do not often have a visit from the leading authorities of the Church, yet we have a rich outpouring of the Holy Spirit and we feel built up in our most holy faith.” In many, if not most, minutes of stake conferences, the local clerk noted with obvious regret the frequent absence of visitors (as he often put it), “from headquarters.”27

Thus thrown back on their own resources, the Star Valley settlers developed an unusually strong pride in their communities and an almost fierce patriotism. I remember my first meeting with Edyth Jenkins Romney, then in her seventies or eighties, who, I believe, had not lived in her native Freedom since her youth. When introduced, she made her Star Valley nativity so clear that I never forgot that essential fact about her. When Peter Allen wrote the Deseret News in 1892, exaggerating the
harshness of winters in Star Valley and praising the virtues of Alberta, Canada, Bishop Charles Cazier thought the matter serious enough to require a reply. At his suggestion Thomas Roberts wrote, “We do not propose to sit idle and have Star Valley given a black eye, and its interests grossly misrepresented in such a manner.” Roberts advised people to go to Canada and see for themselves about its virtues: “This I think would be the safer plan. Because a man who will misrepresent one section of the country, in his enthusiasm, may do so with another.” Such provincial sensitivity is not surprising, given the bind Star Valley folk found themselves in. Culturally a part of Utah, politically part of Wyoming, they did not feel fully appreciated or understood by either.

The strain of cultural dependence, however, produces in some respects its own rewards. The need to mediate constantly between the home society and outside centers, whether Cheyenne or Salt Lake City, has been observed to impose a continuous questioning and searching that often results in unusual creativity. Moreover, what may be lost in excellence of cultural activities available in the cities may be made up for by opportunity to participate. In 1897 the people of Fairview (about two hundred residents) raised almost three hundred dollars to buy instruments for a brass band, composed of two cornets, two alto horns, a baritone, a clarinet, a snare drum, and a bass drum. Its musicians played on all important public occasions from that time on.

Contrary to our expectations, world events seemed to strike provincial areas such as Star Valley with a resonance that more populated areas may not experience. Ole Jensen, whose visits to Salt Lake City were sometimes twenty years apart, described the San Francisco Earthquake, the Russo-Japanese War, and World War I with remarkable insight and eloquence, though he often put these events in the context of Latter-day Saint prophecies of the last days.

Finally, the isolation of the provincial society causes people to rely more strongly on their own community resources, developing qualities that seem to be lacking today in many parts of the world. The spirit in local church meetings was no less strong for the fact that no visitors from church headquarters were present. When a diphtheria epidemic struck in 1891, “the people who were well came together and went about in sleighs, from house to house, and administered to those who were sick. Some were immediately healed, and in about a week they were all well, and we all rejoiced together. We were very united.” Ole Jensen’s use of political terms may have been flawed, but his insight was keen, when he wrote, “I think our people . . . are very liberal, for when our houses burn down we help each other, and when our sons are called to go on missions we help each other and on any other occasion when we need help we are ready and willing to help each other and do our part.” If these qualities were a consequence of life in the isolated Star Valley, then the game was well worth the candle.
May: Mormon Settlement of Star Valley

NOTES


6. Moses Thatcher Journal, December 14, 1880, Special Collections, Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

7. Local histories recount Thatcher's so naming the valley because its beauty seemed to make it the star of all valleys, or because several mountain peaks surrounding the valley formed a star. Thatcher's journal does not elaborate, and it is possible that there is a germ of truth in the stories, but the author's present research could not unearth evidence to verify them. See Lee R. Call, ed., *Star Valley and Its Communities* (Afton, Wyoming: Star Valley Independent, 1970), p. 1.


13. Ole A. Jensen Diary, 1890, Archives of the Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (hereafter cited as LDS Archives), Salt Lake City. Jensen usually made annual entries in his diary. A third wife stayed in Clarkston but had joined him in Star Valley by 1900.


15. Ole Jensen Diary, 1890; Deseret News, July 17 and October 6, 1891.

16. Ole Jensen Diary, entries for the years indicated in text; Star Valley: The Vacation Land of Beautiful Mountains, Streams and Highways (Afton: Star Valley Chamber of Commerce, 1931), p. 3.

17. Deseret News, October 1891, and Ole Jensen Diary, 1901.

18. Passim in the authors' works previously cited and Lee R. Call, Star Valley and Its Communities, pp. 25-32, esp. p. 26. The author has spaced the words to emphasize the intrinsic poetry of the description.

19. Andrew Jenson, Manuscript History of Star Valley Stake, July 4, 1901, LDS Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah; Ole Jensen Diary, 1901; Wilde, Burton, and Burton, Historical Pageant, pp. 15-16.

20. Ole Jensen Diary, 1890.


22. Deseret News, October 6, 1891; Ole Jensen Diary, 1890.

23. Ole Jensen Diary, 1898. The temple had been dedicated but five years before, in 1893.

24. Ole Jensen Diary for years indicated in the text; Manuscript History of Star Valley Stake, 1902.


27. Deseret News, December 15, 1894; February 23, 1895; November 26, 1898.


29. The author has reviewed this phenomenon in "Utah Writ Small: Challenge and Change in Kane County's Past," Utah Historical Quarterly 53 (Spring 1985): 170-83, esp. pp. 178-83.

30. Ole Jensen wrote of the purchase and named the musicians in his 1897 diary entry.

31. Ole Jensen Diary, 1897, 1891, 1910.
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