Journal of Mormon History

Volume 23 | Issue 1 | Article 1

1997

Journal of Mormon History Vol. 23, No. 1, 1997

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

Part of the Religion Commons

Recommended Citation
Available at: https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/mormonhistory/vol23/iss1/1

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

CONTENTS

LETTERS vi

ARTICLES

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

- The Web of Print: Toward a History of the Book in Early Mormon Culture David J. Whittaker, 1

TANNER LECTURE

- National Perceptions of Utah's Statehood Howard R. Lamar, 42
- St. Johns's Saints: Interethnic Conflict in Northeastern Arizona, 1880-85 Mark E. Miller, 66
- LDS Sister Missionaries: An Oral History Response, 1910-71 Jessie L. Embry, 100

REVIEW ESSAY

- Issues in Writing European History and in Building the Church in Europe Review of Bruce A. Van Orden. Building Zion: The Latter-day Saints in Europe Wilfried Decoo, 140

REVIEWS

-- Dean L. May, Three Frontiers: Family, Land, and Society in the American West, 1850-1900 Charles S. Peterson, 177

-- Irene M. Bates and E. Gary Smith, Lost Legacy: The Mormon Office of Presiding Patriarch Craig L. Foster, 181

-- A Gentile Account of Life in Utah's Dixie, 1872-73: Elizabeth Kane's St. George Journal Connie Lamb, 185

-- Richard S. Van Wagoner, Sidney Rigdon: A Portrait of Religions Excess David J. Whittaker, 189


-- Mary Lythgoe Bradford, Lowell L. Bennion: Teacher, Counselor, Humanitarian Ted L. Wilson, 197

-- Richard P. Howard, Restoration Scriptures: A Study of Their Textual Development Robert J. Woodford, 200

-- Thomas G. Alexander, Utah: The Right Place, the Official Centennial History Wayne K. Hinton, 203

-- Anna Jean Backus, Mountain Meadows Witness: The Life and Times of Bishop Philip Klingensmith W.
Paul Reeve, 207

This full issue is available in Journal of Mormon History: https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/mormonhistory/vol23/iss1/
[Staff of the Journal of Mormon History]

Editorial Staff
Editor: Lavina Fielding Anderson
Editorial Staff: Susan L. Fales, Kenneth A. Hansen, Janet Jenson, Linda Lindstrom, Marti S. Lythgoe, Marianne Perciaccante
Managing Editor: Martha Dickey Esplin
Book Review Editor: Richard L. Jensen
Letters Editor: Jean Bickmore White
Editorial Manager: Patricia Lyn Scott
Business Manager: G. Kevin Jones
Abstracts Editor: Kenneth R. Williams
Compositor: Brent Corcoran
Designer: Warren Archer

Board of Editors
Mario S. De Pillis, University of Massachusetts at Amherst
Susan L. Fales, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah
Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah
Roger D. Launius, NASA, Washington, D.C.
Dean L. May, University of Utah, Salt Lake City
Isleta Pement, Temple School, Independence, Missouri
Marianne Perciaccante, Ithaca, New York
Susan Sessions Rugh, St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, Minnesota

The Journal of Mormon History is published semi-annually by the Mormon History Association, 2470 N. 1000 West, Layton, UT 84041 (801) 773-4620. It is distributed to members upon payment of annual dues: student, $12.50; regular, $15; sustaining, $20; Friend of Mormon History, $50; Mormon History Association Patron, $500 or more. Single copies $10.

The Journal of Mormon History exists to foster scholarly research and publication in the field of Mormon history. Manuscripts dealing with all aspects of Mormon history are welcome, including twentieth-century history, regional and local history, women's history, and ethnic/minorities history. First consideration will be given to those which make a strong contribution to knowledge through new interpretations and/or new information. The Board of Editors will also consider the paper's general interest, accuracy, level of interpretation, and literary quality. The Journal does not consider reprints or simultaneous submissions.

Papers for consideration must be submitted in triplicate, typed and double-spaced throughout, including all quotations. A preferred length is twenty pages, but longer manuscripts may considered. Authors should follow the Chicago Manual of Style, 14th edition (see a recent edition of the Journal) and be prepared to submit accepted manuscripts in IBM-DOS format, WordPerfect or ASCII. Send manuscripts to the Journal of Mormon History, P.O. Box 581068, Salt Lake City, UT 84158-1068.
CONTENTS

LETTERS vi

ARTICLES

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS
The Web of Print: Toward a History of the Book in Early Mormon Culture  David J. Whittaker 1

TANNER LECTURE
National Perceptions of Utah's Statehood  Howard R. Lamar 42

St. John's Saints: Interethnic Conflict in Northeastern Arizona, 1880-85  Mark E. Miller 66

LDS Sister Missionaries: An Oral History Response, 1910-71  Jessie L. Embry 100

REVIEW ESSAY
Issues in Writing European History and in Building the Church in Europe
Review of Bruce A. Van Orden. Building Zion: The Latter-day Saints in Europe  Wilfried Decoo 140

REVIEWS
Dean L. May, Three Frontiers: Family, Land, and Society in the American West, 1850-1900  Charles S. Peterson 177
Irene M. Bates and E. Gary Smith, *Lost Legacy*: The Mormon Office of Presiding Patriarch  
Craig L. Foster  181

A Gentile Account of Life in Utah’s Dixie, 1872-73: Elizabeth Kane’s St. George Journal  
Connie Lamb  185

“Richard S. Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon: A Portrait of Religious Excess*  
David J. Whittaker  189

H. Donl Peterson, *The Story of the Book of Abraham: Mummies, Manuscripts, and Mormonism*  
Stanley B. Kimball  195

Mary Lythgoe Bradford, *Lowell L. Bennion: Teacher, Counselor, Humanitarian*  
Ted L. Wilson  197

Richard P. Howard, *Restoration Scriptures: A Study of Their Textual Development*  
Robert J. Woodford  200

Thomas G. Alexander, *Utah: The Right Place, the Official Centennial History*  
Wayne K. Hinton  203

Anna Jean Backus, *Mountain Meadows Witness: The Life and Times of Bishop Philip Klingensmith*  
W. Paul Reeve  207
LETTERS

Alger Marriage Questioned

In order to accept the narrative of Joseph Smith's and Fanny Alger's relationship as Todd Compton presents it in “Fanny Alger Smith Custer: Mormonism's First Plural Wife?” (Spring 1996), we must suspend our disbelief. We must accept that Ann Eliza Webb Young, who wasn't even a twinkle in her parents' eyes when all this was going on, was a credible witness; that sixteen-year-old Fanny Alger, three to four years younger than most women when they married, quickly accepted a "marriage" that would give her no legal or financial claims on her husband, and that her parents approved the marriage; that Warren Parrish, who in 1837-38 did his best to publicly destroy Smith, failed to mention the alleged Alger pregnancy in all his verbal attacks; and that the national press, which loved to extrapolate on Smith's foibles, ignored the polygamy angle during the 1830s.

We must also accept that two years prior to Smith's public declaration that he would assume the authority to perform marriages, Levi Hancock, a man who had no civil authority, willingly and quickly accepted Smith's demand that he perform a "marriage." We must also believe that even with a wagon Hancock was able to get a pregnant Fanny out of a window that was more than twenty feet above the ground. This is all a bit much to swallow.

There is one fact we do know: on 16 November 1836 Fanny Alger married Solomon Custer in Wayne County, Indiana. That fact alone should speak loudly and authoritatively—and should put this matter to rest. Whatever the relationship between her and Smith, Fanny Alger did not behave as if it were a marriage. Nor, apparently, did Fanny's parents. They took her to Indiana against Smith's wishes that she go to Missouri with Levi Hancock, and they permitted her marriage to Custer. Considering nineteenth-century legal and social demands on husbands and the required submissiveness of wives, Fanny's and her parents' actions are a good indication that no "marriage" existed.

This article is an excellent example of the common failure of Mormon historians to consider what little evidence female participants do leave with the same determining weight they give the public discourse and memories of the men involved. What more could Fanny Alger have done to prove to us, and perhaps to her contemporaries, that she was not Smith's wife?

What did go on between the two
of them? I don't know. Smith probably thought of his relations with Fanny as divinely sanctioned, as he viewed nearly everything that he did. But there is no contemporary evidence, in either Smith's words or actions, that he thought of it as a marriage. Nor is there any contemporary evidence that by 1833, or even 1836, the ideological underpinnings were in place that could make polygamy reasonable and acceptable to the Alger family. Demonstrating little understanding of nineteenth-century marriages, Compton seems willing to call this a "marriage" when he found evidence that a ceremony was performed and that the couple consummated the union with sexual intercourse. This is a rather sparse definition of a very complex, socially and legally defined relationship. Even if all took place as Compton states, by any definition of marriage, Cowdery was closer to the mark when he called the relationship an affair.

In later nineteenth-century Utah, the Hancock and Alger families had everything to gain by remembering and promoting Fanny's relationship with Smith as a celestial polygamous marriage. As Compton notes, her sealing to him guaranteed their eternal salvation. And they had a great deal to lose by accepting the continuing public allegations of Fanny's fornication and Smith's adultery. Without Levi Hancock's particular spin on the events, Joseph Smith was a fallen prophet, and the Hancock and Alger families were committing a damnable sin by having sexual relationships with persons other than their lawfully wedded spouses. That is a powerful incentive to remember history in a particular way. And those memories continue to cloud our understanding of early Mormon sexual relations.

Janet Ellingson
Salt Lake City, Utah
The Web of Print: Toward a History of the Book in Early Mormon Culture

David J. Whittaker

INTRODUCTION

Some Native American origin myths of the Southwest tell of Spider Woman whose thoughts, words, and actions wove the web of life and of the world. It was she who taught the ways to create the web of community in which an individual found his or her identity. In Pueblo culture, to tell a story is to spin an elaborate web which draws each person who hears it to the center of the world. Such stories are “complex webs of language which become ceremonial acts performed in order to maintain the world as both knowable and inhabitable.”

DAVID J. WHITTAKER is Senior Librarian and Curator, Archives of the Mormon Experience, Special Collections and Manuscripts, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. He served as the President of the Mormon History Association, 1995-96. Most recently he edited Mormon Americana: A Guide to Sources and Collections in the United States (Provo, Utah: BYU Studies Monograph, 1995), which won the Western History Association’s Dwight L. Smith Award for the best bibliographic or reference work on western history.

Ultimately historians are storytellers; they spin webs of meaning which attempt to connect us to each other and with the past and whatever the future holds. Without our stories, as Leslie Silko suggests in her novel *Ceremony*, the universe would be a dangerously chaotic place to live. Storytelling in traditional societies contains the power of healing and wholeness; stories invite the hearer into the connectedness of the community where the stories are kept alive. This "web" is always fragile, not because the stories are lacking in power, but rather because the world and its witchery are always seeking to destroy the connectedness the stories can give the individual and community. Storytellers perform oral texts; they give their communities "performed books."3

While there is much of value in all of this that we could pursue, I wish to borrow and expand the metaphor of the "web" and apply it to the history of books in Mormon culture, focusing mostly here on the nineteenth century. I will try to do several things: (1) introduce the emerging discipline of book history, (2) examine the role of books in Mormon thought, and (3) suggest some broader topics for our study of the book in Mormon culture by applying the two main approaches to book history: the British focus on analytical bibliography, and the French focus on books and culture. One tends to focus on publishing as a business and the book as an economic product and physical artifact, the other on the book as a cultural artifact, an important tool in intellectual and social history. Together they suggest a new focus for book history.

Throughout this essay I used *book* very broadly to mean printed matter in any form: broadsides, pamphlets, newspapers, periodicals, and books. This address is a kind of "Needs and Opportunities for Research" paper, with some examples and sources. While the focus is on the nineteenth century, much of what I am trying to analyze will suggest topics for the twentieth century. David Reynolds's recent cultural biography of Walt Whitman began by noting that "literary texts are intricate tapestries whose threads can be followed backward

---

3Perhaps the most sacred stories in our own tradition, such as Joseph Smith's First Vision, the coming of Moroni, and the appearance of Peter, James, and John, are best understood on this level.
into a tremendous body of submerged biographical and cultural materials.” Here I suggest a few of these threads as we move to more fully research and write our own book history.

**THE DISCIPLINE OF BOOK HISTORY**

The impact of the printing press on western culture had been felt in many ways in the centuries before Joseph Smith was born. Its influence was manifest in all areas of intellectual pursuit, but its products were particularly potent as tools of debate and dissent during the Protestant Reformation, the later English Puritan Revolution, the Enlightenment, and, in the more recent memories of early Mormon converts, the American and French Revolutions. Scholars have been analyzing these movements through the printed matter that engendered and then sustained them. Sometimes dismissed as babbling polemics, studies of this western print culture have shown how valuable these items can be in helping us understand early social and cultural movements. For example, Bernard Bailyn's Pulitzer Prize-winning study of the pamphlets of the American Revolution and Robert Darnton's detached analysis of the imprints of the Revolutionary France have suggested what great potential there is in a closer look at the print culture. These revolutions were clearly fought with words before they were fought with deeds.

---


The discipline of book history has emerged fairly recently. It was broadly described in 1982 by one of its practitioners, as "the social and cultural history of communication by print" whose purpose "is to understand how ideas were transmitted through print and how exposure to the printed word affected the thought and behavior of mankind." 7 For those who are engaged in this new book history, this interdisciplinary study of the "Communications Circuit" involves all the processes a printed work goes through, from the author to the publisher to the printer and their suppliers, to the shippers, to the booksellers (peddlers to bookstores), and finally to their consumption by the readers, either through purchasing or borrowing from friends, reading clubs, or libraries.

The study of books as economic products and of publishing as a business looks closely at: (1) production and technology, which includes paper, inks, presses, presswork, typefounding, physical facilities, bids, publishing companies, design, printing processes, binding, insurance, contracts, and copyright; (2) editing, which traces the work from manuscript to typesetting, as well as subsequent editions; (3) advertising through advertisements, catalogs, trade publications, to more personal sponsorship; (4) distribution, including storage and warehousing, sales, bookstores, distributors, subscriptions, book clubs, trade routes, transportation (mails, peddlers, canal boats, wagons, railroads, etc.); and (5) consumption, which studies the marketing issues of getting printed items into the hands of readers—


including purchasing, borrowing, gifting, and literary and tract societies.

The study of books as cultural artifacts adds other significant topics including: (1) authorship—the who, what and why questions of book creation; (2) the history of texts, which considers analytical and historical bibliography; (3) the history of reading, which examines such subjects as literature, audience (invented or actual), and questions of gender, age, class and occupation as well as reading practices (public and/or private), reviewing practices, literary associations, and technological topics as they relate to reading from eye glasses to artificial lighting; (4) intellectual history which, considering books broadly as essential vehicles of information, examines such topics as the kinds of knowledge that are available in print culture, the various levels of discourse at work in any given culture, the relationship of material form and mode of reading, the information environment, as well as the information spectrum ranging from broadsides and almanacs to medical and law books; (5) libraries, in which book historians seek to understand how printed knowledge is gathered and then organized in a society; and (6) censorship, in which the issues of publication and the structures of social and political authority are understood, as well as books as alternative voices in a given culture. Books are thus both manufactured artifacts and conveyors of meaning\(^8\) and every aspect from production to consumption commands the attention of book historians.

Currently, scholars in several European countries are preparing multi-volume “Histories of the Book.”\(^9\) A five-volume “History

---


\(^9\) *Histoire de l'Édition Française* (5 volumes planned), Henri-Jean Martin and Roger Chartier, series editors. The British project, *History of the Book in Britain* (6 volumes planned; David F. McKenzie and David McKitterick, series editors);
of the Book in America" has recently been announced.\textsuperscript{10} Cambridge University Press is only one of several publishing houses that are issuing monographs on book history; and a number of scholarly organizations devoted to book history have emerged, several of which publish newsletters and bibliographies and sponsor annual meetings. Particularly active in the United States are SHARP (Society for the History of Authorship, Reading, and Publishing) and the American Antiquarian Society's "Program in the History of the Book in American Culture."\textsuperscript{11} The National Libraries of the United States and England (Library of Congress and the British Library) have organized Centers for the History of the Book, and other organizations have followed their example.\textsuperscript{12} Courses on book history are now offered at various universities that go beyond the bibliographical and textual history courses that have been the usual offer-


\textsuperscript{11}\textit{SHARP News}, C/o David Finkelstein, Department of Print Media, Publishing and Communication, Napier University, 10 Colinton Rd., Edinburgh EH10 5DT, Scotland, $15 a year; and \textit{The Book: The Newsletter of the Program in the History of the Book in American Culture}, issued since November 1983 by the American Antiquarian Society. Write to Director of Research and Publications, AAS, 185 Salisbury Street, Worcester, MA 01609-1634.

\textsuperscript{12}Center for the History of the Book in the Library of Congress; Center for the Book, British Library; Center for the History of Print Culture in Modern America (University of Wisconsin-Madison and State Historical Society of Wisconsin); and the Center for the History of the Book (Pennsylvania State University at University Park). For a list of book history periodicals with addresses, see the 1996 \textit{Membership and Periodicals Directory, SHARP}, pp. 38-40.
ings in library science schools. Several universities now offer graduate degrees in book history.

The history of books has a long heritage but one that, until recently, has been quite compartmentalized. Textual criticism and technological histories of printing have been topics of scholarly interest for years.

\[13\] SHARP News contains sample course syllabi.


Studies of specific texts and authors have appeared with increasing regularity since the Renaissance. Studies have been made of specific genres particularly of biographies and autobiographies of writers and publishers, literary periods, individual influential works, best sellers, and histories of newspapers, magazines, paper, binding, book illustrations, and specific presses. Until recently...
most of these studies were analytical, rather than cultural bibliographies. Then studies began to appear on such topics as almanacs and “street literature” (ballads and broadsides) which sought to relate the printed works to the larger study of societies, and particularly to levels of reading below the “elite.” This “street literature” has become another tool in the efforts of social historians to tell the story of those people who have, until now, lacked a history.¹⁷

All these studies provide models and sources for current work in book history. Yet while several comprehensive histories of book publishing in the United States have appeared,¹⁸ few have had any impact on Mormon studies. And Mormon publishing has yet to be noticed by the larger culture.

**BOOKS IN MORMON CULTURE**

Mormonism emerged in a democratic age which was defining itself by what it printed. Robert Wiebe noted that by the 1830s “America was a talking society where millions, not hundreds, shared the responsibilities for maintaining connections, spreading informa-

---


tion, and persuading one another of the truth.”19 The openness and power of the American press caught the eye of de Tocqueville in the 1830s, and Robert Baird noted in 1843 the extensive religious use of the press.20

Joseph Smith’s Literacy

While the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints began with the visions of Joseph Smith, it was the Book of Mormon that first gave physical substance to the young prophet’s claims. As a printed and bound volume, it was a tangible artifact whose contents have since provided the textual web of the Mormon identity. From the beginning, this book was linked to another world, and internally its message provided a strong testimony of the role of books in the creation and survival of the communities whose histories are recorded therein.21 In its first chapter, Lehi reads a book brought to him in a vision which connects him to a cosmic world-view. The Book of Mormon continually invites the reader into a world of record-keeping and into the religious web of meaning and identity that its stories and teachings weave. Jesus’ appearance and personal inspection of religious records add more weight to the importance of the written record (3 Ne. 23). Joseph Smith’s own revelations extended this web, creating a latter-day community of saints. It should be no surprise that Joseph Smith’s code name in the Doctrine and Covenants was Enoch, a keeper and revealer of sacred books.22 His early


22David J. Whittaker, “Substituted Names in the Published Revelations of
efforts to establish a literary firm and church printing house, and later a School of the Prophets, members of which were to seek knowledge “out of the best books,” remind us that Joseph Smith lived and moved in a print culture (D&C 70; 88:118, 77-82; 109:14). The Lord, Sidney Rigdon suggested to early Mormons, never intended to raise up “a society of ignoramuses.”

The variety of early Mormon publications testify how valuable the printing press was to the Church’s survival. Much of its limited capital was devoted to obtaining and operating printing presses, and some of its most talented converts were involved in publishing. Wherever Mormons established themselves, they left a published record of their presence. (See Appendix.)

Joseph Smith’s role in these publishing efforts needs further clarification, both personally and organizationally. Fawn Brodie in 1945 asserted that “painless research can uncover the sources of all [his] ideas” in Joseph Smith’s information environment. Such an assertion denied genuine religious experiences for him but assumes broad literacy on Smith’s part, a question that she never really addresses, nor does she seem to have read much of the potentially large quantity of printed material available to him.


26Some idea of the range can be gathered from the pioneering work of Charles Evans, American Bibliography: A Chronological Dictionary of All Books, Pamphlets and Periodical Publications Printed in the United States of America from the Genesis of Printing in 1639 down to and Including the Year 1820 (1800) with Bibliographies and Bibliographical Notes, 12 vols. (Chicago: Author, 1903-34) and by his successors: Ralph Robert Shaw and Richard H. Shoemaker, American Bibliography: A Preliminary Checklist, 1801-1819, 19 vols. (New York: Scarecrow Press, 1953-63); Frances P. Newman, American Bibliography: A Preliminary Checklist 1801-1819, Printers, Publishers, and Booksellers Index, Geographical Index (Metuchen,
We still have much work to do before we can begin to answer these questions: What did Joseph Smith read? Why did he read it? What was its potential impact on him? Emma Smith and many of Joseph's associates left statements suggesting that, in the formative years of the Church, Smith simply did not have the education or vocabulary to have produced a complex volume like the Book of Mormon. Emma recalled that Joseph was "ignorant and unlearned" and could "neither write nor dictate a coherent and well worded letter, let alone a book like the Book of Mormon." His own mother wrote that he was not "inclined to the perusal of books." Yet it is important to realize that Webster's 1828 Dictionary defined "literate" primarily as being read in classical literature, an elitist definition that meant Smith probably was "illiterate." However, his revelations reveal a rich sprinkling of biblical sources with an awareness of extra-biblical material, evidence of a careful reading of the Bible, to say the least.  

Joseph Smith, Sr., was a teacher and certainly taught...
his children to read, write, and do simple math—more in accordance with what we would consider to be literacy. These were his “whole literary acquirements,” as he himself noted in his 1832 “History.” Joseph’s mother also actively schooled her children.

The King James Version of the Bible was obviously very important in shaping early American culture, both because of its public readings and quotations in church services and in personal readings. Its language and stories seem omnipresent, but the appearance of Noah Webster’s *Dictionary of the American Language* in 1828 was a major force in nationalizing the language, a goal Webster felt strongly about. Mormon writers and editors surely felt its growing impact on the American press, but no one has examined this issue.29

William Gilmore’s recent study of the print information flowing through Windsor County, Vermont, and its influence on the Smith family suggests that our historical studies have been very limited.30 Newspapers and other publications were readily available in and near Windsor through formal channels like stores and informal networks of itinerant peddlers, borrowings from friends and neighbors, and word of mouth. While Bibles were the most popular book in family inventories, other books also were present in increasing numbers. Such a study of the cultural geography of knowledge suggests that it would be reasonable to assume that the Smith household had an almanac or two. Lucy Mack Smith remembers an uncle bringing Thomas Paine’s *Age of Reason* to the household.31 But it is difficult to see where Joseph could have found time


31Lucy Mack Smith, Preliminary manuscript of *Biographical Sketches*, bound photocopy of holograph, 27. I bought this photocopy, with typed numbers at the
to fully absorb this growing print culture, given the family's near poverty and the need for unremitting physical labor. His first immersion in publishing issues probably came as he struggled to find a printer for the Book of Mormon, the subleasing of Grandin's printing press, and his dealing with subsequent use of the unpublished text by Abner Cole, and then meeting the heavy expenses of publishing the volume—all very real and concrete experiences in the world of the village printer.

Joseph Smith soon learned of another consequence. The professional network of these printers and their apprentices who took anti-Mormon sentiments wherever they relocated and the effect of the Federal Post Office Acts of 1792 and 1784 which allowed newspapers to be mailed nearly free to other newspaper offices meant that negative reports spread far and wide, leaving the Mormons unable to defend themselves against a growing tide of gossip and innuendo. Village newspaper offices could also function as bookstores where people gathered to share information of all kinds.

This negative press encouraged the early establishment of a Church press, William W. Phelps's assignment as "printer unto the Church" and Joseph Smith's compilation of his own history (JS—H I). Even more important than combating "false reports then in

\[\text{foot of each page, from Deseret Book in 1986.}\]

\[\text{32 Richard Bushman, } \textit{Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism} \text{(Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984); Gordon C. Thomasson, Papers, 1971-75, MSS 1901, Special Collections and Manuscripts, Lee Library. In contrast, John Brooke, } \textit{The Refiner's Fire, the Origins of Mormon Cosmology, 1644-1844} \text{(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), assumes an implausibly broad range of reading materials for Joseph Smith.}\]


circulation,” early Mormon newspapers served for internal communication, creating a network that linked leaders and missionaries in a web of community.35 While more study is needed, it seems that Joseph Smith played a limited role in the production and distribution of written material, due to the press of other activities, but the importance of this printed material is clear.36

The Role of Print in American Society

The printed word in that age of economic and political uncertainty had great power and cultural authority in creating personal and institutional coherence. This 1830s view was very different from that of Sir William Berkeley, the royal governor of Virginia, 160 years earlier: “I thank God, there are no free schools nor printing, and I hope we shall not have these [for a] hundred years; for learning has brought disobedience, and heresy, and sects into the world, and


36Although Joseph Smith was critical of John Taylor’s proofreading, he urged, “I believe you can do more good in the editorial department than preaching. You can write for thousands to read, while you can preach to but a few at a time.” Later, according to Heber C. Kimball, Joseph complained that Taylor as editor was reluctant to let Smith do anything with the paper. History of the Church, 5:367; Wilford Woodruff, “Historian’s Office Private Journal,” 14 March 1860, mss., Historical Department Archives, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter LDS Church Archives).

printing has divulged them, and libels against the best government. God keep us from both!\textsuperscript{37}

Jacksonian democracy took a robustly enthusiastic view of literacy and education; however, Berkeley was right in one respect: The printing press was political from its beginning and was linked “with issues of authority and the control of knowledge.”\textsuperscript{38} For much of the colonial period, the editorial and mechanical functions of printing were separate. Aristocrats and the gentry exercised control over information as an important social function. Information filtered down through society.\textsuperscript{39} The Great Awakening and the American Revolution democratized the press in America, but it was not independent. Rather parties and organizations established their own publications to attract and hold an audience to whom they conveyed certain cultural values, thus uniting political parties and social cultures in the early republic. De Tocqueville saw the power of the press in creating and sustaining political life in 1830s America—how in fact it provided a social glue in a geographically diffuse nation.\textsuperscript{40}

The early Mormon use of newspapers fits into these same patterns. Except for scriptures and hymnals, the Church initially printed primarily newspapers; until the 1850s, they were the most important American vehicle for creating and maintaining organizational ideology and structure. Books were less widely available, expensive (one book could cost a day’s wages for a skilled worker), and seldom addressed public issues directly. Major books usually first appeared, installment by installment, in newspapers.\textsuperscript{41} The federal government essentially subsidized newspapers by letting


\textsuperscript{38}Gross, “Printing, Politics, and the People,” 377.


\textsuperscript{40}De Tocqueville, \textit{Democracy in America}, 517-20.

them be mailed free or cheaply and by a public patronage system for printers of governmental publications. Thus, books were often viewed as high culture—objective and genteel—while newspapers represented popular and polemic culture.

By the mid-nineteenth century, the number of publishing houses has grown and the penny press had expanded, driving a further split between culture and power in the intensive battle for capital and audience. The newspaper increasingly played up stories of crime and of the American underworld, reaching for the growing middle-class audience and losing even more of their social status. The colonial socially conservative role was replaced by an entrepreneurial spirit that increasingly divorced the intellectual from the journalistic content in these papers. More and more Americans turned to books for ideas and values, and the rise of the novel only heightened the split.42

Mormon newspapers lagged several decades behind these general American trends. When Jules Rémy and Julius Brenchley visited Salt Lake City in 1855, they noticed the Deseret News’s broad perspective and content:

... sermons, editorial articles, facts and events occurring throughout the world, historical fragments, biography, poetry, fables, allegories, curious anecdotes, narratives of travellers and missionaries, political and religious correspondence, description of machines and objects, scientific discoveries, sketches of manners, accounts of battles, culinary and other recipes, hints to farmer and gardeners, perplexing enigmas, ambitious anagrams turning most frequently on the names of their leaders, finally advertisements, notices, marriages, as so many savory morsels.43

The isolation of the Great Basin also encouraged the Deseret News’s strong community role,44 until the coming of the railroad in 1869

---


44 Despite acute shortages—even when publication was suspended by lack of paper—there was never any question about the importance of the newspaper itself. Richard Saunders, “‘Rags! Rags!! Rags!!!’: Beginnings of the Paper Industry in the...
ended Mormon intellectual as well as economic isolation. Products of national publishing houses found a market in Utah, the railroad itself generated a reliance on print material (i.e., time-tables), and railroad trips offered long hours for reading which had been impossible on bumpy stagecoaches. Like W. H. Smith in England, American booksellers found railroad stations ideal places to establish bookstalls and stores. And such technological improvements as gas lights and reading glasses encouraged reading. The Godbeite heresy encouraged both capitalistic economics and broader exposure to national literature. The Godbeites, an educated group, had already discussed this literature in their *Utah Magazine* (1868-69) and the Liberal Institute showed an awareness of the connections between cultural and social authority. As authors of Mormonism’s first professional histories, Edward Tullidge and T. B. H. Stenhouse used their published histories to control an interpretation of the past increasingly at odds with Mormon group identity. Predictably, as publishing ventures multiplied in Utah, some felt that they wove additional strands in the web of the Mormon experience; others feared that they would tear it apart.

### Periods in the History of Mormon Books

The history of books in Mormonism may be organized into several overlapping periods. Freelance publications accompanied Church-supported publishing establishments Mormonism’s earliest years. No copy exists of what appears to be the first Mormon pamphlet, a work by a Mr. Higby, known only through its citation

---


in the first anti-Mormon book. Almost all of these earliest publica-
tions were missionary or Church-related—usually newspapers and
pamphlets, supplemented by broadsides and an occasional almanac.
The most expensive projects were the Book of Mormon, the Book
of Commandments (later the Doctrine and Covenants), and hym-

cipals. Mormon authors had a choice of small, hand-operated Mor-
presses or hiring another press to print their works. The
increasing mechanization of the American press made it possible to
use new processes like stereotyping, and to buy presses, fonts, and
other supplies from already established publishers. Cincinnati was
an important publishing center during the Nauvoo years. Mormon
authors patronized Glezin and Shepard (1837-40) and Shepard and
Stearns (1841-43) in Cincinnati; Parley P. Pratt patronized Joseph
W. Harrison and W. Molineux regularly in New York City. Benjamin
Winchester did business with Philadelphia's Brown, Bicking and
Gilbert and with the "United States" Book and Job Printing Office.
Several printers in Boston had Mormon clients, but no studies of
these firms has yet been conducted. Unfortunately, few of the
business records of these publishing houses or even of the larger
firms have survived; still, book scholars are endeavoring to recon-
struct these businesses—their work with authors, publishing philoso-
phies, and their economic histories. Mormon work with British

48 Eber D. Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled [sic]* (Painesville, Ohio: 1834), 133.
University Press, 1972); and D. C. Greenham, *Textual Scholarship: An Introduction*
50 Edward A. Henry, "Cincinnati as a Literary and Publishing Center,
Western Book Trade: Cincinnati as a Nineteenth Century Publishing and Book Center*
(Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1961); and John Charles Neone, "The
Press and Popular Culture in the Early Republic: Cincinnati, 1793-1848" (Ph.D.
diss., University of Notre Dame, 1982). See also H. H. Dugger, "Reading Interests
and the Book Trade in Frontier Missouri," (Ph.D. diss., University of Missouri,
1951).
51 Michael Winship, *American Literary Publishing in the Mid-Nineteenth Century:
Republic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996); and Winship,
"Publishing in America: Needs and Opportunities for Research," *Proceedings of the*
publishers is better documented, mainly because Brigham Young kept the bids and publishing agreements of the earliest years.\(^{52}\)

Records of Mormon publishing companies are likewise incomplete and uneven. Surviving are some records from John Taylor's editorship of the *Times and Seasons* in Nauvoo and some records of Utah Territorial imprints—government projects that provided bread-and-butter economics for Utah printing presses.\(^{53}\) The most tempting records are the manuscript volumes of the "European Mission Publications Accounts and Ledgers," which reveal in detail the growth and distribution of Mormon publications, the centralizing of the Mormon press in Liverpool, the overproduction of LDS works, the creation of tract societies, the growth of Church debt and its consequences, and the critical importance of the *LDS Millennial Star* for nineteenth-century Mormonism.\(^{54}\) Their size (eighteen-plus large volumes) and detail will require much work and patience to use them.

In 1860, as Church leaders moved to establish its own press in England, the formative period of LDS publishing came to an end. The most prolific author, Parley P. Pratt, was dead and the central theological positions were in print. Few works appeared until after Brigham Young's death in 1877, and then they were primarily issued by the commercial press of George Q. Cannon & Sons, or by various auxiliaries. Newspapers and pamphlets, the major vehicles of Mormon ideas and communication before the Civil War, increasingly gave way to magazines and books, thus mirroring American publish-

---


ing trends with a slight lag. Mormon printing moved from the hand press era where editorial, typesetting, and publishing functions were combined, to mechanized publishing, which separated editorial and technological chores. Here commercialization became more important; even the *Deseret News* advertised the pills and quick cures as well as the latest fashions and mechanical inventions. But most of those who set the type, did the editing, and performed the routine operations of Mormon publishing have remained unstudied to this day.

**THE AMERICAN CONTEXT**

When early Mormon authors turned to the pen and the press to tell their stories, they had a large number of potential models and precedents to follow. Publishing in Western civilization was over three hundred years old when Mormons established their first printing press. English Puritans had generated many printed items, and their descendants carried on this tradition in New England. A recent study of five generations of religious publications found that 531 ministers published 1,567 works, from sermons and primers to works on theology and ecclesiastical history. Their quality also varied, but the sheer quantity and variety provided a broad base for education, political, and religious discourse during the colonial period. Daniel Boorstin has argued that this growing print culture was the eventual basis for the “public printer” and an important source for American democracy.

The Great Awakening of the 1740s helped launch a new literary genre: the evangelical newsletter and magazine, which helped institutionalize the highly emotional and sporadic movement, developed revival techniques, and spread them widely. In addition, the Great

---

55 Almost no research has been done on the Typographical Association of Deseret. An early list of the Printer’s Ten Commandments appears in the *Deseret News*, 16 July 1856, 145. Brigham Young’s repeated attempts to obtain financial accountability from the editor can also be seen in his correspondence.


Awakening dramatically increased the number of both churches and members, which in turn led to more itinerant preachers (who carried printed matter into the frontier) and to division within the established churches. The ultimate consequence of stressing individual conversion—the heart of these revivals—was a serious challenge to all forms of traditional authority.

The growing power of the press (particularly as it expanded beyond the official patronage of colonial governors) and religion’s key role in the coming of the American Revolution can be seen in the published works of Isaac Backus, an itinerant Baptist preacher of Connecticut. Of his thirty-seven pamphlets, his most important was the 1773 *An Appeal to the Public for Religious Liberty Against the Oppression of the Present Day*. It argued that true freedom of religion required separation from both the state and from other established churches. Backus’s arguments for freedom from religious taxation without representation in the established churches was only a small step away from the political position enunciated by American revolutionaries. Pamphlets like these were part of the vigorous tradition of debate, both oral and written, which led to American independence.

The Revolution itself set off a number of other revolutions, both social and cultural. The first census (1790) placed the total population of the United States at 3.9 million. Just seventy years later, another census recorded a population of 31.4 million, an expansion of about 35 percent per decade before the Civil War. But the rate of growth in publication was even more spectacular. Colonial presses expanded from fewer than fifty in 1775, most located on the eastern seaboard, until, in 1783, “not one important inland town lacked its own press.” From 1801 to 1833, the number of newspapers published simultaneously in the United States increased from two hundred to twelve hundred and, by 1860, to almost

---

three thousands. From a few hundred magazines being published in 1830, the numbers shot up to over a thousand by 1860.\textsuperscript{61}

Religious publications also took a new form, accompanying the rise of denominations during the Second Great Awakening after 1800. No longer guaranteed favored status by the state, denominations stressed social programs more than theological debate and voluntary associations of believers that opened possibilities of interdenominational cooperation. Combined with a strong missionary impulse, these denominations found that they could effectively meet their needs for tracts and publications by creating interdenominational agencies.\textsuperscript{62} Particularly active in printing and distributing religious literature were the American Bible Society, the New England Tract Society, the American Tract Society, and the American Sunday School Union—all interdenominational cooperative groups. By 1820 the American Bible Society had distributed almost a hundred thousand bibles, while the New England Tract Society had, by 1823, printed and distributed nearly 800,000 tracts and was publishing a bi-monthly magazine, a Christian almanac, and a series of children's books. These groups were following the pattern of the London Tract Society, which had distributed 58 million tracts by 1824.\textsuperscript{63} Simultaneously, secular impulses like the Lyceum Movement


and curricular developments were emerging to enrich American culture. 64

Joseph Smith's New England heritage included much when we consider the full range of this cultural and religious milieu. In fact, Mormon epistemology encouraged the young prophet and his followers to reach up as well as out. Its most important claim was its new revelation restoring lost authority and lost truths, but it also stressed a horizontal revelation—a need to search out things of "good report" on earth (Articles of Faith 13). The divine junction to "study" things out and to seek knowledge "out of the best books" (D&C 8, 9, 88:118) surely intensified Mormon hunger for print information. 65 When Joseph Smith evaluated Willard Richards, his Church historian, he told him he generally did a good job, except that he did not sufficiently notice the larger world in his writings. 66

---


66 History of the Church, 5:298. Surely the "war of words and tumult of opinions" Joseph Smith remembered from his youth among the various denominations included their printed works. JS—H 1:10.
The Press and Dissent

Although the role of the press in the American Revolution and other polemics is well known, Mormon dissenting presses have been largely ignored except for the *Nauvoo Expositor*. In 1835 in Kirtland, the Whitmer faction had objected to printing Joseph Smith’s revelations as another attempt to centralize power. Whitmer thought that such a publication was a sure sign of apostasy because it imposed authoritarian structures. Many devout believers insisted that religious freedom in the Church should match the political freedom of the republic. I have argued that this fear for religious freedom was very important for the Church during the 1830s, pervading the writings of many during the decades which followed. These concerns may have prompted the January 1842 revelation giving the Quorum of the Twelve control of the *Times and Seasons* in 1842.

On 23 June 1838 the Missouri High Council met in Far West and assigned sole proprietorship of the Church’s printing establishment to Thomas B. Marsh. In April, Marsh had been assigned to edit and publish the *Elder’s Journal*; but its printing press and type, acquired from John Whitmer, was assigned to Edward Partridge. Marsh’s disaffection in October 1838 therefore raised the possibility of an opposition press. Although his control of the publishing machinery must have worried Church leaders, the possibility did not materialize. The *Expositor* affair must be viewed in this context.

---

67 David Whitmer, *Address to All Believers in Christ* (Richmond, Mo.: David Whitmer, 1887), esp. 30-62.
The authority of print can be seen in the extensive use of published material in the 1844-45 succession crisis following Joseph Smith's death. Parley P. Pratt's assignment to take control of the Church's New York newspaper and his subsequent issuing of the policy statement on "Regulations for the Publishing Department of the Latter-day Saints in the East," was the logical outcome of earlier developments. The Quorum of the Twelve and other groups that flourished, if only briefly, maintained strong publishing efforts. It was not an accident that James J. Strang, who drew the largest following, also had the largest publishing program.

The pamphlet wars of this era offer a rich source for historians of Mormonism. Reuben Miller's support for and then condemnation of Strang's claims deserve a study themselves. How much of the Mormon vocabulary of defense and persecution was articulated.

(Winter 1965): 862-903. Another important topic is the suppression of printed matter. See Noel Perrin, Dr. Bowdler's Legacy: A History of Expurgated Books in England and America (New York: Atheneum, 1969); and Paul S. Boyer, Purity in Print: The Vice Society Movement and Book Censorship in America (New York: 1968). The Utah Territorial Laws, sec. 28, forbade the printing and distribution of obscenity. Although relatively few books in LDS history were officially censored in the nineteenth century, these episodes deserve a detailed study: Brigham Young's censoring of several of Orson Pratt's writings, the condemnation of a hymnal compiled by David Rogers, a pamphlet on polygamy (The Peace Maker) issued in Nauvoo by Udney Hay Jacob and its second condemnation in 1860 when it was reprinted by Paul Harrison in England, and the 1853 edition of Lucy Mack Smith, Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith.

The products of the Strangite press, still largely unstudied, appear in Northern Islander, 24 January 1856. Most people read Strang's letter claiming succession from Joseph Smith in print, not in holograph. William Smith, Letter to Strang, Nauvoo, 17 March 1846, reports the effect of Strang's printed material on Lucy Mack Smith and Emma Smith. Strang Collection, MSS 447, item #14, Beinecke Library, Yale University. Mormon forgeries, beyond the much-publicized productions of Mark Hofmann, must consider the curious Defence in a Rehearsal of My Grounds for Separating Myself from the Latter-day Saints, allegedly written by Oliver Cowdery and published in Norton, Ohio, in 1839. No original exists and it is known only from the version printed by R. B. Neal, an anti-Mormon in Cincinnati at the end of the nineteenth century.
during these critical times? Groups and individuals tend to define themselves in times of crises, often by defining and stating what they are not. Group understanding of the martyrdom of Joseph Smith and the place of the Quorum of the Twelve were more clearly shaped during this time. It was clearly a time when an official Mormon press was more clearly established. Dale Morgan pioneered the bibliographical study of the opposition imprints, but much more needs to be done.\footnote{Dale L. Morgan, "A Bibliography of the Church of Jesus Christ, Organized at Green Oak, Pennsylvania, July, 1862," \textit{Western Humanities Review} 4 (Winter 1949-50): 45-70; Morgan, "A Bibliography of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints [Strangite]," ibid., 5 (Winter 1950-51): 43-114; Morgan, "A Bibliography of the Churches of the Dispersion," ibid., 7 (Summer 1953): 255-66; Steven L. Shields, \textit{The Latter Day Saint Churches: An Annotated Bibliography} (New York: Garland Publishing Co., 1987); Sara Hallier, "An Annotated Bibliography and Literature Analysis of Official Publications of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, 1853-1900" (M.A. thesis, University of Missouri, Columbia, 1985).}

\textit{Mormon Libraries and Associations}

To discuss books and the Mormon experience is to look more closely into both the culture and into American society—to study books produced by members and those brought into Mormon homes. Chad Flake's Mormon historical bibliography identifies fairly thoroughly items that Mormons published,\footnote{Chad J. Flake, \textit{A Mormon Bibliography, 1830-1930: Books, Pamphlets, Periodicals, and Broadsides Relating to the First Century of Mormonism} (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1978); Chad J. Flake and Larry W. Draper, \textit{A Mormon Bibliography, 1830-1930: Ten-Year Supplement} (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press). A title index to both volumes is Flake and Draper, eds., \textit{A Mormon Bibliography, 1830-1930, Indexes} . . . (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1992); Peter Crawley, \textit{A Descriptive Bibliography of the Mormon Church: Volume 1, 1830-47} (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, BYU, forthcoming).} but very little has been done toward understanding the hows and whys of Mormon book production or in identifying books that Mormons read. Church-produced newspapers and magazines regularly cited or referred its readers to this larger literature. Inventories and book lists exist for the Manchester city library in New York, the 340 volumes in the Nauvoo Library and Literary Institute, the Utah
Territorial Library, and other Utah libraries; but much more needs to be done.\(^77\)

We have also gathered little information on personal libraries. Charlotte Haven in Nauvoo inspected Sidney Rigdon’s “library on some bookshelves in the kitchen. It was a very good student’s collection,—Hebrew, Greek, and Latin lexicons and readers, stray volumes of Shakespeare, Scott, Irving’s works, and a number of other valuable books.”\(^78\) Joseph Smith donated printed items to the Nauvoo Library and Literary Institute, and its first president was Benjamin Winchester, an early Mormon author. Rigdon told its members in April 1844 that “his own first studies were commenced in a circulating library” and that “his own rise to notoriety were all derived from the privilege [sic] of a Library.”\(^79\)

A sixty-three-page *Catalogue of the Utah Territorial Library* was prepared and published in October 1852 by William C. Staines, the first territorial librarian.\(^80\) It provides important clues to the Mormon information environment and how this information was organized.\(^81\) The largest of its thirty-eight categories are history and

---


\(^79\) Nauvoo Library and Literary Institute, Minutes, 17 April 1844, LDS Church Archives. See also George W. Givens, *In Old Nauvoo: Everyday Life in the City of Joseph* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1990), 253-62.


biography, novels were gathered separately from “polite literature,” and the largest number were published in the late 1840s or 1850/51, suggesting the role of federal funds in the new territory’s library acquisitions. English traveler Richard Burton visited this library in 1860:

Being in want of local literature, after vainly ransacking the few bookstalls which the city contains, I went to the Public Library and, by sending in a card at once obtained admission. As usual in the territories of the U.S. this institution is supported by the Federal Government, which, besides $1500 for books, gave $5000 for the establishment, and $400 from the treasury of Utah is paid to the territorial librarian, Mr. John Lyon, who is also a poet. The management is under the Secretary of the Territory, and the public desire to see an extra grant of $500 per annum. The volumes, about 1000 in number are placed in a large room on the north side of the “Mountaineer” office, and the librarian attends every Thursday, when books are “loaned” to numerous applicants. The works are principally those of reference, elementary, and intended for the general reader, such as travels, popular histories, and novels.  


Richard F. Burton, The City of the Saints and Across the Rocky Mountains to California (1861; New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962, edited by Fawn M. Brodie), 259-60. Lyon, also an early Mormon cultural critic, was librarian from 1860 until 1876 when the library was reorganized. T. Edgar Lyon, Jr., John Lyon: The Life of a Pioneer Poet, Specialized Monograph Series, Vol. 6 (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1989). Hubert Howe Bancroft, History of Utah, 1540-1887 (San Francisco: History Co., 1889), 714-15, reported that this library contained 4,500 volumes by 1883. A call to contribute books is John Milton Bernhisel, To the Authors, Editors, and Publishers of the United States, broadside (New
A study of this library must not only appraise content but also how knowledge was organized on the shelves. We lack patron records to tell us who borrowed books on the one day per week it was open; but Brad Westwood’s study of Eastern architectural pattern-books in the library on Utah buildings should be duplicated for other areas like theater, agriculture, and science.  

Various scientific and literary societies in Utah were important vehicles for public readings, lectures, and discussions of books and ideas. Occasionally a diarist recorded his or her reading material, but our studies have tended to ignore this kind of information. An important exception has been Lewis Clark Christian’s identification of materials on the West cited in Mormon newspapers and journals before 1847. More could be done, particularly on trail literature and guidebooks, some authored by Mormons.

What other books did the pioneers manage to take West with them? Also, was the early Utah language experiment, Deseret York, 1850), copy in the LDS Historical Department.


Alphabet, at its heart, an attempt to create a really distinct web of community through the creation of a new text.\textsuperscript{87} Literary societies gathered funds for book purchases and sponsored lectures on topics as diverse as the “Geography of Earthquakes” by Karl Maesar or “Light and Actuizism” by C. R. Savage. Salt Lake City Twentieth Ward’s Young Men’s Institute covered a broad range of cultural and scientific topics during the 1870s and 1880s.\textsuperscript{88}

What books did individuals own? Probate records may help answer that question; but the U.S. Government began keeping records about consumer spending habits in 1884. Some Eastern states kept census records about consumer spending starting in 1869, and national figures are available in the twentieth century for household expenditures on textbooks, newspapers, and books. Business publications of the publishing industry can be quite valuable for book historians.\textsuperscript{89}

How many could read? Studies suggest a much higher literacy rate for Americans than for Europeans in the nineteenth century. Did the great number of British converts affect Mormon literacy levels?\textsuperscript{90} When B. H. Roberts as a boy in England saw two or three pages of a newspaper fluttering on a country road,
I rushed out and gathered them up and brought them to [Mrs. Tovey, with whom he was staying], begging her to read to me. . . . This matter of the old lady reading to me was something of a passion with me. She read the scriptures to her husband when evenings were spent at home and on Sunday morning to enable him to memorize the scriptures he used when preaching. Naturally I listened, very often entranced. Sometimes the church paper called the *Latter-day Saint* Millennial Star was read. . . .

On every occasion when there was an opportunity, my one plea was to be read to. . . . The reading, however, on this occasion was very brief, for the weariness of Mrs. Tovey and the heat of the day soon induced a snoring sleep. I sat alone with the paper and my thoughts, marvelling at the miracle: that a paper could speak to one if he only had the power to read it. . . . I spoke out loud: "Will the time ever come when books and paper will speak to me? Will I ever read books?" Then a peculiar silence, and the soul-voice said: "Aye and you'll write them too."

Later apprenticed to blacksmith James Baird in Centerville, Utah, Roberts joined the Young Men's Club of Centerville:

This was a company of young fellows who were banded together with

---

their associates to encourage reading and meeting at stated periods—usually once a week—and to retell the stories of their reading. There was an entrance fee to pay of $2.50 and after that a monthly payment of $.50 for membership, all of which was turned into books. Also if there was any failure on the part of a member to attend meeting, there was a fine of $.50 for each offense. As the association had continued through several years, the accumulation had amounted to considerable sums of money. The number of books they purchased therewith was considerable for a country hamlet and made a rather considerable library for boys.91

Roberts became the best-read and eventually the most published person in the Church. He clearly benefitted from a society that nourished a print culture. Other impressively literate Mormons during the Utah period include T. B. H. Stenhouse, Edward Tullidge, George Q. Cannon, Andrew Jenson, Orson Spencer, Orson Pratt, Emmeline B. Wells, and James E. Talmage, all extensive readers. Were they exceptions? The extensive printed matter used in Mormon missionary efforts in Great Britain, Scandinavia, or Wales will help answer this question.92

Mormon Reading Tastes

What literature entered LDS culture? Brigham Young kept himself apprised of books about Mormons and tried to keep a regular flow of newspapers into Utah.93 The growing national popularity of the novel prompted outspoken condemnation from Brigham Young and George Q. Cannon, but their very disapproval


93The extensive Brigham Young Letterbooks, Brigham Young Collection, LDS Historical Department, clearly reveal this. See also Stephen Kent Ehat, “How to Condemn Noxious Novels,” Century 2 (BYU student publication) 1 (December 1972): 36-48.
reveals the growing presence of these works in Mormondom. The dime and “noxious” novels of crime and seduction, a number of which depicted Mormons negatively, were no doubt their major concern. George Q. Cannon published the *Juvenile Instructor*, begun in 1866, and his “Faith-Promoting Series,” beginning in 1879, partly to provide more wholesome reading material for the youth of the Church.

One appeal of novels is that they offered a new way to achieve a kind of national community even as the economic and transportation revolutions of the nineteenth century broke up traditional village communities. Novels of domestic life tied far-removed communities into a common national identity, helping to create a strong sense of cultural nationalism. Were the novels that Mormons read important in the Americanization process for these religious immigrants? A nationally popular post-Civil War novel, *The Gates Ajar* (1868) by Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, was also popular among Mormon women. Designed to comfort those who had lost loved

---

94For George Q. Cannon, see “Select Your Reading,” *Juvenile Instructor* 1 (15 August 1866); *Conference Reports* (5 October 1897): 32-42; and “Editorial Thoughts: What Do You Read?” *Juvenile Instructor* 34 (1 January 1899): 22-23.


96Biographies of Joseph Smith for youth and inspiring accounts of missionary experiences also countered strong public criticism of polygamy. See Lawrence Read Flake, “Development of the *Juvenile Instructor* Under George Q. Cannon and Its Function in Latter-day Saint Religious Education” (M.A. thesis, BYU, 1969); Carol Cornwall Madsen, “‘Remember the Women of Zion’: A Study of the Editorial Content of the Woman’s *Exponent*: A Mormon Woman’s Journal” (M.A. thesis, University of Utah, 1977); and Madsen, “A Mormon Woman [Emmeline B. Wells] in Victorian America” (Ph.D. diss., University of Utah, 1985). Anne Wells Cannon, Emmeline’s daughter and later co-editor of the *Exponent*, reflected on “Books As I Know Them,” (ca. 1930), 16 pp., mss., Lee Library, BYU, revealing broad reading in secular literature. Gender issues such as literacy differences (if any), whether men read differently than women, and whether the print culture is gender-biased have hardly been touched in Mormon studies.

97Zboray, *A Fictive People*.

ones, Phelps's novel projected the life of the family, reunited after death, into the heavens. While Mormon theology had already done this, surely such a novel provided cultural reinforcement. Furthermore, the fact that the ideal family was monogamous in novels may have helped ease Mormon readers past the Manifesto of 1890 and into their twentieth-century position on the family.

Simultaneously with the growth of a mass reading audience, reading itself shifted from the public sphere to the private after the Civil War. Domestic architecture began to provide for libraries in the home; book cases begin to appear in mercantile trade catalogs; wall-paper patterns begin to include literary themes, and busts and reproductions of literary figures like Shakespeare became part of interior decor. Surviving photographs of middle-class families show bookcases in the background or books on a table or in the hands. Couches began to change styles, with the U-shaped seating areas no longer facing each other for ease of conversation, but rather forward to provide more private space for reading. The parlor card game “Authors” became quite popular. Yet to be studied is how and when these cultural changes began to show up in Mormon homes. What Louise L. Stevenson calls “reading advisors” appeared after the Civil War to advise Americans on how to read and what to read, enlarging and expanding the earlier work of household manuals. One of the most popular was by the president of Yale College, Noah Porter.


Because much of the new literature was increasingly secular, a Mormon response was the “home literature” movement after 1880. As growing access to German biblical criticism and human evolution became more common during the 1870s and 1880s, Mormons were drawn more to the British religious response, which produced literary and evocative “lives of Jesus.” These volumes, in turn, greatly influenced James E. Talmage’s *Jesus the Christ* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1915).\(^{101}\)

**CONCLUSION**

Alma, when entrusting sacred books to his son Helaman, counseled him about their importance: They had kept Nephite civilization alive and had “enlarged the memory of this people,” fixing their core values and the central role of the Messiah in their cultural identity (Alma 37:8). Those stories have remained at the center of the Mormon experience ever since as its printed literature continues to weave more fully the web of community. In various ways each of us have experienced this web of print. But as historians of the Mormon past, we need to be more aware of this part of our heritage, even more so as we contemplate the impact of the electronic text. Books are both commodities and cultural artifacts. From one perspective, they provide an index to a variety of economic

---

factors in our society; from another they help us take the cultural pulse of a society. We obviously have much work ahead of us before we can fully understand just how Mormons have experienced and participated in the world of print.

I conclude with two observations. Wallace Stegner, speaking of archaeologists, noted that their discoveries “give us only the most tantalizing glimpses; they make us judge of a culture by the contents of a small boy’s overall pocket. Time sucks the meaning from many things, and the future finds the rind.” In studying printed works of the past, we must be alive to the danger that we will fail to fully draw out the meaning from each work, either the full meaning of the author’s intent or just how the work was received, understood, and used. Intellectual history is the most difficult kind because it requires the impossible task of reading and digesting everything.

The second caution is Socrates’ story of Theuth, inventor of the alphabet and writing, who tried to convince the Egyptian King Thamus that his invention was a perfect “recipe for memory and wisdom.” But King Thamus argued:

If men learn this, it will implant forgetfulness in their souls; they will cease to exercise memory because they rely on that which is written, calling things to remembrance no longer from within themselves, but by means of external marks. What you have discovered is a recipe not for memory, but for reminder. And it is not true wisdom that you offer your disciples, but only its semblance, for by telling them of many things without teaching them you will make them seem to know much, while for the most part they know nothing, and as men fitted, not with wisdom, but with the conceit of wisdom, they will be a burden to their fellows.

Where Stegner warns how incomplete the task will remain, Thamus cautions that the written word cannot substitute for the spirit. Both remind us of the metaphor with which we began.

---

104 Joseph Smith also expressed reservations about the power of print: “The best way to obtain truth and wisdom is not to ask it from books, but to go to God in prayer, and obtain divine teaching.” 3 October 1841, *Teachings of the Prophet*
Because Mormonism reaches up as well as out, the web of print connects and sustains the community by addressing the fundamental truths of the religion and also by expressing these truths in the communication medium of each generation. Historians can learn much from this print culture; but in critical ways, the inner spirit will elude the tools of historical scholarship. Thus this web of print "captures" us only to the extent the web of our sacred stories captures a reality beyond ink on paper.

APPENDIX

MORMON PUBLICATIONS BY LOCALE:
A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

New York

Missouri


**Ohio**


**Illinois**


**England and British Empire**


Crawley, Peter, and David J. Whittaker. *Mormon Imprints in Great Britain*


Kanesville, Iowa Territory


Utah and the West


Flake, Lawrence. “The Development of the Juvenile Instructor under George


“Journalism in Pioneer Days.” In Kate B. Carter, ed., Heart Throbs of the West 5 (Salt Lake City: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1944), 129-68.


_____.


_____.


_____.


_____.

National Perceptions of Utah’s Statehood

Howard R. Lamar

The long and frustrating but dramatic history of Utah’s struggle to gain statehood—or more accurately of the Mormon Church’s efforts to gain statehood—has been told often, thoroughly, and well by both Utah and Western writers. It could be called a tragic tale that somehow ended on a most happy and successful note. The fantastic celebration of statehood in January 1896 in Salt Lake City with unforgettable parades and ceremonies and the powerful emotional drama of the transfer of the reins of government from federal territorial officials to the new state government brings one close to tears even after a century’s passage.¹ With good reason the state-

¹A convenient new account of Utah’s long struggle for statehood is Ken Verdoia and Richard Firmage, Utah: The Struggle for Statehood (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1996). See also Gustive O. Larson, The “Americanization”
hood story has been the subject of articles, television shows, and conferences throughout 1996, for statehood symbolized both Mormon liberation and political maturation.

I note that your welcoming roadside signs say: "This is still the right place." Certainly it seemed the right place on Monday, 6 January 1896 as thousands gathered in Salt Lake City, creating crowds, that, as the Associated Press reported to the entire nation, "made locomotion well-nigh impossible through the public thoroughfares."2 (The word gridlock was not yet in fashion.) The Associated Press described how Grand Marshal Robert Taylor Burton and his aides guided the procession, which included "the Sixteenth Infantry, U. S. A. commanded by General Penrose of Fort Douglas, the Utah National Guard, the State and City officers, the organized pioneers of the Grand Army of the Republic, Indian war veterans and all the civil societies of this and surrounding cities."3

Patrick H. Lannan, owner of the Salt Lake Tribune and scarcely a friend of the Mormons, was so caught up in the spirit of celebration that he boasted to a reporter for the Chicago Tribune, "In almost every town of over 500 inhabitants . . . there were parades, speeches, fireworks, thanksgiving services and balls. Ogden and Provo led in this respect, the demonstrations there being on a large scale."4

Even so, those ceremonies could not match the visual spectacle, poignant speeches, and beautiful songs and music that greeted everyone who crowded into the Tabernacle that day. They were overwhelmed by a huge flag in the ceiling, its forty-fifth star made incandescent with red, white, and blue electric bulbs, with red, white, 


3"New Star Cheered," Chicago Tribune, 5 January 1896, 1, 3. The Tribune's description was a forecast of the parade printed a day before the actual parade.

4Ibid., 3.
and blue streamers running from the flag down the walls to bunting and a huge American eagle set among the towering organ pipes. In addition an electric sign spelled out "UTAH."  

Once the ceremonies began, the transfer of political authority from Acting Governor Caleb Walton West to incoming Governor Heber M. Wells was probably the most moving and symbolic event of the day, but Governor Wells’s inaugural address was equally extraordinary for its remarkable combination of a realistic factual approach and gracious prose.  

Although it is clear that the Associated Press carried a standard account of the statehood ceremonies to major newspapers across the nation, there has been less coverage of how other parts of the United States responded to the news that Utah was at last a state in the Union. In this address, I wish to focus my remarks on these national perceptions by looking at the comments about statehood, Utah’s constitution, and its choice of its first two senators as found in a dozen major newspapers and magazines between July 1894, when President Grover Cleveland signed the Utah Enabling Act, and July 1896 when Utah’s senators and its representative at large were part of the Washington scene. Incidentally, the regional newspapers reveal a surprising perspective on the older issues of polygamy and Church domination of Utah politics. In addition, their responses were generally so positive that it suggests Utah leaders had carried out one of the most successful public relations campaigns ever mounted in the nineteenth century. 

Before discussing newspaper coverage, however, let us start with a scene in the U.S. House of Representatives on 12 December 1893 when that body was considering House Bill No. 352, entitled “To enable the people of Utah to form a constitution and a State government and be admitted into the Union on an equal footing with the original states.” On that day Congressman Joseph Wheeler of

---

5"The New State," New Orleans Times-Picayune, 7 January 1896, 9, describes the huge flag in some detail. For a slightly different description, see the San Francisco Chronicle, 6 January 1896, 3. Excellent photographs of the highly decorated interior of the Mormon Tabernacle are in Verdoia and Firmage, Utah, 177-88.

6"Utah’s Officers Are Installed," San Francisco Chronicle, 7 January 1896, 4, quotes parts of Wells’s inaugural address.
Alabama, an ex-Confederate general whose mastery of military strategy was reputedly second only to that of Stonewall Jackson and Jeb Stuart, moved consideration of Bill No. 352. Wheeler was supported by Congressman Constantine Kilgore of Texas, another former Confederate general although he disagreed on certain provisions.

Totally opposed, however, was Elijah Adams Morse, Congressman from Massachusetts, who objected, saying the bill needed an amendment forbidding polygamy. Kilgore responded that it was not needed, then quoted President Benjamin Harrison's speech in Salt Lake City in which he told a Mormon audience that he believed in "one and only one uncrowned queen in every American home." Kilgore implied that all was well because the Mormons had taken Harrison's advice.

Congressman Morse then proceeded to dredge up all the old stereotypes about the mistreatment of Gentiles and how the territory was full of recently arrived immigrants who knew nothing about America. Nor could Morse resist referring to polygamy as the remaining of the twin "barbarisms" that the Republican party had sworn to eradicate. But William Cogswell, also of Massachusetts, objected to Morse's remarks saying: "All the evidence is against you."

When Morse retorted by citing the names of old Mormon leaders and their crimes, Congressman Case Broderick of Kansas, formerly a private in the Union army, responded by saying: "They are all dead, that crowd." At that point John Alfred Pickler of South Dakota asked if Morse's real objection was not polygamy but "the fact that it allows another Western State in the Union a representative upon the floor of Congress?" Morse then tried the small population argument—namely, that it was unfair to have two senators for only 250,000 people when New York State had only two for its millions. The response was that Delaware and Rhode Island likewise had few people. Morse's rebuttal to that argument was that those two states had fought in the Revolution and that made it all right.

When pressed for the sources of his negative information,

---

7 Congress of Deputies, 53rd Cong., 2d sess., 1894, 26, pt. 1:118, 174-82. Unless otherwise noted, the account of the bill's passage comes from this source.
Morse said that he had a brother in a Utah coal company and that he had also read Ann Eliza Webb Young's story of her marriage to Brigham Young. (He mistakenly gave the title as The Fifteenth Wife of Brigham Young.) Congressman Wilson from Washington State was unimpressed, saying, "The non-Mormon people out there are a pretty robust set of people, and can take care of themselves." Unfazed, Morse retorted that there was a "very large population south of here that cannot take care of itself."  

At this point Utah's delegate, Joseph L. Rawlins, rose to say that statehood was a political and not a moral issue and, in a swipe at Morse, noted that the leaders who brought in polygamy were all born and educated in New England. That brought applause from the House members. Knowing that he had the sympathy of a majority of the Congressmen, Rawlins felt free not only to indulge in humorous hyperbole but to make jocular misstatements. For example, when asked if there were still Mormon and Gentile newspapers in Utah, Rawlins said that was no longer the case.  

Mr. Wilson of Washington then asked: If Utah became a state, "will it dispose of the Ute question and their removal from Colorado?" to which Rawlins jocosely replied: "I think we will take the whites and leave Colorado to the Indians if we can get into the Union." To which the House responded with more laughter. Addressing Morse's charges more specifically, Rawlins said Utah now had the population and a good educational system and that the outrages of the past, like the Mountain Meadows Massacre, were now history. One congressman then observed to Rawlins, "Why you were not even born when that happened." Rawlins corrected him: "I was only seven years (old) at the time but I did not participate in it." That produced even more laughter from the members. In a more serious vein, Rawlins observed that there had been a recent massacre of Chinese at Rock Springs and much violence in the recent  

---

8Morse was referring to the black population of the American South whose voting rights at that very moment were being denied by conservative white legislators.

9Despite Rawlins's denial, the Deseret News still espoused Mormon views, while the Salt Lake Tribune, espoused Gentile ones; naturally, they were hostile to each other.
Carnegie Steel strike. He then responded to Morse’s citation of Ann Eliza Young’s book by observing that Brigham Young was now dead; turning to Morse, he inquired facetiously, “Did you know that?” Here the Congressional Record reported “laughter and confusion in the Hall.” Finally Rawlins reminded his hearers, “Both the national parties in their platforms have declared in favor of the admission to the Territory,” as had both parties in Utah.

After adopting certain amendments, the House passed Bill No. 352 the next day; the following summer, after more amendments, the Senate passed the bill on 10 July 1894. Three days later the House accepted the amendments—which were mostly about election dates and procedures—and voted overwhelmingly to admit Utah. On 24 July, a date already significant in Utah history, the House received a written message from the President’s office that he had signed H. R. 352. And, as is well known, during the next sixteen months, there followed a constitutional convention in March 1895 and an election of state officers, along with approval of the constitution in November 1895, so that by December 1895 everything had been done in preparation for statehood. Thus it was that on Saturday morning, 4 January 1896, Cleveland signed the declaration admitting Utah to statehood. When the news reached Salt Lake City by telegraph, shots were fired and the celebrating began.

If we go back to the 1893 House proceedings for a moment, it is remarkable how quickly hostility had been changed to friendly support. That was not just happening in Congress, the national press, and in Utah, but in neighboring Arizona as well. In his excellent study, Take Up Your Mission: Mormon Colonizing Along the

---

10 These events may be followed in the Congressional Record, 26, pt. 7: (9 June-12 July 1894) 7251; pt. 8: (12 July-28 August 1894) 7384, 7425, 7514, 7836.

11 President Grover Cleveland signed the 4 January 1896 Utah Statehood Proclamation with no public fanfare. Indeed, Utah officials were kept waiting in an anteroom until he had signed the document with an ordinary wooden pen. Cleveland’s disinterested attitude has been attributed to the press of financial crises, but one may surmise that he was also disappointed that Utah had gone Republican despite the efforts he and the Democratic party had made to secure Utah’s admission during his first term. See “The Forty-Fifth State,” New York Times, 5 January 1896, 16, and “Inaugural of a State,” Washington Post, 5 January 1896, 5.
Colorado River, 1870-1900, Charles S. Peterson recounts how, after experiencing years of hostility in Apache County, the Mormon settlers, with support from Governor John Zulick and the Cleveland administration, became active in Democratic politics. Although initially strongly anti-Mormon, after 1886 the Apache County Republicans also soon found that they needed Mormon votes to win elections. Peterson concludes: “The simultaneous development of party politics in the territory and division of church members between the two major parties” created “cross-currents of interests and political need which overrode the Mormon-Gentile cleavage, thus permitting an effective association of the two groups.”

Meanwhile to the north, the long and bitter anti-Mormon crusade in Idaho, epitomized in the careers of its first Republican delegate, Theodore F. Singiser, and U.S. Marshal Fred T. Dubois, was winding down. As Leonard Arrington has observed in his superb recent History of Idaho, Dubois had helped get the “harshest anti-Mormon legislation ever enacted passed by the Idaho legislature.” Mormons could not hold county offices, or vote in general elections. At one point the legislature even “carved a new anti-Mormon county out of Oneida called Bingham.”

Two years after Idaho became a state in 1890, however, the Republican State Committee, led by William E. Borah, “dropped criticism of the Saints and welcomed them into the party.” The Democratic State Committee soon followed “with a statement that they were willing to let the Saints vote.” In 1894 when the Mormon right to vote was finally cleared of legislative and judicial hurdles, Arrington writes that, in that year’s elections, “competition by both parties for the Mormon vote was intense.” And when the new Idaho legislature met in February 1895, a combination of Republicans, Democrats, and Populists voted to repeal the anti-Mormon Test Oath of 1885. With that gesture of goodwill, concludes Arrington, “the Idaho anti-Mormon movement was over.”

14 Ibid., 430-32.
Let us now look eastward and westward to see what some leading newspapers were saying about the prospect for statehood for Utah—the New York Times, the Washington Post, the New Orleans Times-Picayune, the Chicago Tribune, the San Francisco Chronicle, and the Los Angeles Times. In 1895 and 1896, the newspapers were preoccupied with the effects of the Panic of 1893, bitter debates over free silver, the rise of Populism, and a crisis with Great Britain over Venezuela, leading to long discussions over the meaning of the Monroe Doctrine. Nevertheless both the Mormons and Utah statehood got excellent coverage in the New York Times and in other papers across the nation.\(^{15}\)

On 3 January 1896, the Times printed an article entitled, “Mormons Heading East: More Missionaries About to Enter Field Hereabouts.” The story was based on an interview with Samuel W. Richards, president of the Eastern States Mission, and Arthur F. Barnes, a businessman from Utah. Richards commented that nine missionaries were already in the New York area with twenty additional elders about to come. The Times obligingly printed the “Articles of Faith” of the Church as well. Barnes described the five U.S. mission fields and then noted that the headquarters of the Eastern States Mission was in Brooklyn “just over the bridge.”\(^{16}\)

Barnes responded to the reporter’s inevitable questions about polygamy by saying that missionaries never discuss polygamy since it is no longer practiced. Actually both Richards and Barnes seemed to have their minds more on Utah politics, for they confided to the reporter that they were Democrats, then commented that the missionary forces had been used as a weapon against the Utah Democrats by such powerful Republican leaders as George Q. Cannon, first counselor in the First Presidency, who sent Mormon Democrats on missions so they could not strengthen their party at home.


This partisan lament was forgotten when, on the following day, the Times carried an upbeat article entitled “Utah’s Riches Untold: Statehood Will Be Followed by Great Developments.” This time the Utah spokesman was businessman Spencer Clawson who predicted that “Within A Few Years the New State Will Take a Prominent Place in the Mining World.” Clawson’s optimistic prophecy neatly coincided with Cleveland’s 4 January proclamation approving the Utah Constitution and declaring the territory a state.

The article noted the presence of a large body of Mormons in New York City—the St. Denis Hotel was “practically the headquarters of Utah representatives.” The reporter observed that “among those who will be in the city today are A. H. Woodruff, son of Wilford Woodruff, the venerable President,” Junius P. Wells, brother of the recently elected governor of Utah, and Spencer Clawson, who was not only a prominent Republican, “but one of the largest wholesale dealers in Salt Lake City[,] . . . well-known among the dry goods men in New York . . . He has visited them annually for the last twenty-five years.”

In a subsequent interview held at the Waldorf, Clawson dwelled at length on the arrival of statehood. “Saturday will be a great day for Utah,” for after six constitutions had been rejected, Utah now had one. When the new state constitution took effect on Monday and the new state officers were inaugurated, “all the people of the State will take part in the general rejoicing. Indeed, Clawson thought it would be the greatest political gathering in Utah’s history, but added, ‘Politics will cut no figure in the rejoicing.’”

Continuing in his role as economic prophet, Clawson asserted that statehood would bring rapid development, especially of a large

---

17 New York Times, 4 January 1896, 6, Clawson’s remarks were used in a headline, hence the capitals.

18 Ibid. The paper also listed the following Utahns as being in New York: A. W. McCune, president of the Salt Lake City Railroad Company and a major stockholder in the Salt Lake Herald; Robert Patrick, Jr., M. A. Romney, A. W. Pullen, Selden I. Clawson, Walter Dinwoody, John Derm, a prominent mining operator, Samuel W. Richards, Arthur F. Barnes, T. G. Odell, Fred Myer, William Ballentine, and Albert Scowcroft. The men named were described as businessmen in Salt Lake City and Ogden.

19 Ibid.
mining industry. Further, Salt Lake City will become the chief "distribution point for Utah, Eastern Nevada, Western Colorado, Western Wyoming and Southern Idaho." Clawson listed Utah's resources as silver, iron, salt, water power, copper, coal, and just now gold because the cyanide process made it cheaper to extract. Finally Clawson recalled that previously Utah did not know how to advertise as Colorado and Montana did, "but New York men are beginning to go there."

On Sunday, 5 January, the *Times* reported that Cleveland had signed the Utah proclamation. After reassuring its readers that the new state legislature would not revoke the constitutional clause forbidding polygamy, the paper asserted, probably incorrectly, that the majority of incoming state officials were non-Mormon. Governor Heber M. Wells was "a broad-gauged businessman" and also a very good actor who had taken "leading parts in the Home Dramatic Company for many years."20 (One assumes that when you have a new state it is best to start off with a governor who is a good rather than a bad actor.) The *Times* then speculated about who the legislature would name as Utah's first two senators. And this question might well be called Act II of the Utah statehood drama.

When Frank J. Cannon and Arthur Brown, a non-Mormon lawyer and politician, were named Utah's senators later in January, the *Times*'s upbeat pro-Mormon stance suddenly cooled, obviously because "Both Are Strong Advocates of the Free Coinage of Silver."

"The tone of the Senate will not be elevated by the Utah Senators," opined the *Times* sententiously, saying Brown was so pugnacious he will be another Tillman.21 On the other hand, Cannon "rather delights in his ability to play politics," makes flowery speeches, and uses stage techniques. In a contemptuous comparison, the newspaper predicted that Cannon "will almost be a counterpart of Senator Dubois of Idaho who is noted for his manipulation in the Senate and his own State," and added further insult by declaring that Cannon's


21 Benjamin R. Tillman, then a senator from South Carolina, was not only outspoken in his speeches but also threatened to attack his enemies with a pitchfork!
"political prominence has not been due to his native ability but to his name and the power of his father," George Q. Cannon.  

If the Times's preoccupation was with Utah's business potential and its senators' views on the silver issue, the Washington Post was concerned with politics, ceremony, and the constitution. It noted that, on 4 January, "the signature of the proclamation was awaited with great interest by Governor West and Delegate Cannon, just outside the President's room." West and Cannon were called in after the signing, and West was given the pen, which was later exhibited in Utah.  

The Post also carried a special article, datelined Salt Lake City, which noted that the committee on the inauguration consisted of George Q. Cannon, chairman of the Republican State Convention, Judge O. W. Powers, the Democratic chairman, and Dr. R. A. Hasbrouck, the Populist chairman.  

In addition to recounting details about the actual celebrations, the Post commented approvingly on the conservative nature of the Utah constitution with its emphasis on a small debt, a tax of no more than eight mills, a ban on the use of the credit power of the state for railroads, no appropriations for a capital building for five years, and low salaries for state officials. Naturally the paper also approved the clause forbidding polygamy and a promise of full provisions for public schools.  

Although the New York Times and the Washington Post stressed different aspects, most of the content for both was provided by the Associated Press, as one realizes when looking at the Utah statehood coverage in the New Orleans Times-Picayune. Even so, the Picayune's coverage was extensive and favorable. For this Southern paper, the theme of reconciliation in Governor Wells's inaugural address must have had very special meaning for readers with vivid memories of Radical Republican Reconstruction in Louisiana. One can imagine their thoughts as Wells rhetorically asked, "What more in the way of proof is needed for sincerity than the fact that Judge Zane, who  

24 "Great Rejoicing at Salt Lake," ibid.
sentenced hundreds of Mormons to the penitentiary, now sits upon this platform as the honored choice of the electors of Utah for the highest judicial office in the state,” and “that a Mormon born and reared should be delivering from the same platform this address as the governor of Utah.”

Given the troubled and tragic past experiences of the Mormons at Nauvoo, it is perhaps not surprising that the Chicago Tribune gave what may have been the fullest coverage of statehood events outside of Utah itself. Certainly a major factor in such extensive coverage was a “Special Message to the Tribune,” datelined 4 January from incoming Governor Wells. Wells's Tribune message was certainly one of the most effective “soft sells” in behalf of statehood on record. Obviously it was an arranged printing; and although it is clear that much of what he had to say was to be a part of his inaugural address, this text is more assertive. Wells began by noting correctly that Utah had a greater population than the states of Delaware, Nevada, Montana, Idaho, or North Dakota, then asserted: “Its industrial wealth is greater than any of its surrounding sisters”—a statement which Coloradans would probably have violently disputed.

After Tribune readers were assured that there would always be separation of church and state and that polygamous marriages would continue to be prohibited, Wells declared, “Our youth have been taught that patriotic love for country perpetuates liberty.” In a moving peroration Wells said, “Utah stretches forth its arms and beckons to the densely peopled districts of the East to come out and share its glories.”


The favorable captions about Utah statehood in the Chicago Tribune, 5 January 1896, are intriguing: “New State Cheered; Utah Becomes a State Amid General Rejoicing; Flags to the Breeze; Move Is for the Best; Governor Wells Sends a Special Message to The Tribune; Five Years of Trial to Come.”
The Chicago Tribune also interviewed Patrick H. Lannan, owner of the Salt Lake Tribune who declared, “I think Statehood is for the best” but could not resist observing: “Nevertheless, it was the business houses and homes of the Mormons that bore the heaviest weight of bunting today, and it was the Mormon Temple that was brilliantly illuminated from ground to dome, and not the other Christian churches.” 28

The Chicago Tribune even printed congratulatory telegrams to Governor Wells. From Washington, D.C., Frank Cannon urged Wells “to lift your eyes to the mountains and kiss the valleys of our dear Mother Utah and thank God for freedom.” From New York City Spencer Clawson wired what I would call an economic potential message symbolically addressed to H. M. Wells, at the State Bank. The message was: “While on the summit how looketh the promised land?” 29

The paper devoted an entire section to the “Story of the Efforts of Utah to Become a State,” again possibly a planted article which featured interviews with both Church President Wilford Woodruff and C. C. Goodwin, politician and long-time editor of the anti-Mormon Salt Lake Tribune. Both men exhibited unbridled optimism. Woodruff thought Utah had a fabulous mineral future: “Wait until the time when all the [minerals] begin to be put into commercial form!” Utah’s climate was so healthy, he added, that it “is a natural sanitarium.” Moreover, the diversified scenery will inspire children. “In Utah twenty-five years hence, people will look for artists, poets, painters and sculptors.” 30 One wonders if the parents of Solon and Gutzon Borglum were still living in Ogden and read Woodruff’s words.

In turn, Goodwin explained how the national Democratic party had failed to get statehood during Cleveland’s first term and how that failure had lured John T. Caine and other leaders into the Republican party. In sum, anyone reading the Chicago Tribune could

---

27 Chicago Tribune, 5 January 1896, 1, 3.
28 Ibid., 3.
29 Ibid.
30 Ibid.
come away with a history of Utah, some knowledge of its leaders, and a very positive image of the new state.

A sampling of two leading California newspapers reveals very different perspectives about the meaning of Utah statehood. The *San Francisco Chronicle*, for example, was obsessed with the national debate over whether to keep the gold standard or remonetize silver. One of its lead articles on 4 January 1896 was not about Utah, but "The Plan to Make Arizona a State." The *Chronicle* lamented that Arizona's statehood would be opposed by the gold men in the House of Representatives where they had the majority, while it would be supported by the pro-silver senators, who were a majority in the U.S. Senate. The prognosis was that the House would never admit a state which would send two more silver senators to Washington. Arizona being in effect an economic satellite of California, it is easy to see why events there were followed so closely. Indeed, the next day the *Chronicle* showed its true colors by declaring for Arizona statehood regardless of the silver crusade. To keep Arizona out, opined the *Chronicle*, "is a gross and unpardonable outrage upon the people of the Territory, who are citizens of the United States and who are entitled to come to full stature of civic mankind." One can only guess that Utah statehood had set the *Chronicle* to thinking about Arizona statehood, as, of course, Arizonians already were.

The *Chronicle*'s associative reasoning appeared in another form after it had reprinted the standard Associated Press accounts of Cleveland's proclamation, statehood ceremonies in Salt Lake City, and the great rejoicing throughout Utah. However, in the same issue, it reported that South Carolina's new constitution disfranchised Negro voters, prohibited divorce, and outlawed the Pinkerton detectives, who had gained an unenviable reputation as strikebreakers who promoted violence to give labor a bad name. Exhibiting open contempt for South Carolina, the *Chronicle* wrote: "Taking the instrument altogether it is very typical of South Carolina."

The *Chronicle* gave full and totally favorable coverage of the

---

statehood ceremonies in Salt Lake, saying it promised to be “the biggest demonstration ever seen in the intermountain country.” In an editorial on Utah’s admission, the paper asserted that the old fears of renewal of polygamy and Church domination were groundless. Reasonable people all now understand these two issues are “outworn.” Again revealing its own pro-silver stand, the Chronicle declared Utah to be “sound as a dollar on the financial question.” All Utahns “regardless of party believe silver is a true, genuine historical, and necessary metal.”

Unlike many other newspapers, the Chronicle closely followed the contest for the first Utah Senate seats, noting in great detail why George Q. Cannon lost out to his son Frank, who, incidentally, had once been a reporter for the Chronicle. The paper also provided biographies of both Cannon and his fellow senator, Arthur Brown, who was described as a protectionist and a radical free silver advocate.

However, after praising Brown as a faithful Republican and “lawyer of marked ability,” the Chronicle had second thoughts. On 16 January, the paper quoted the Salt Lake Tribune as saying the choice of Arthur Brown for senator “will do nothing good for the Republicans locally; and it will signify nothing for Utah before the Nation.”

On the other hand, the paper saw Cannon as a good choice, whose voice in the Senate in favor of silver “will be heard along with those of Teller and Jones and Morgan.” In praising Cannon, the Chronicle took its cue from an editorial in the Rocky Mountain News of Denver which called Cannon “thoroughly and heartily a Western man, full of Western ideas and energy and enterprise and at all times will be found defending the rights and interests of the great trans-

\[34^\text{San Francisco Chronicle, 6 January 1896, 3, 4.}\]

\[35^\text{Utah’s Admission, } San Francisco Chronicle, 7 January 1896, 4.\]

\[36^\text{The Chronicle followed Utah’s senatorial fight from 9 January, when it speculated about Colonel Isaac Trumbo’s chances to be a senator, to the choice of Cannon and Brown in mid-January. For an exceptionally detailed account of the complex maneuvering and final votes, see “Utah Republicans Select Senators,” San Francisco Chronicle, 15 January 1896, 4.}\]

\[37^\text{San Francisco Chronicle, 16 January 1896, 4.}\]
Missouri region." Newspapermen especially should be pleased at Cannon's choice, added the Denver paper, for he "has long been one of Utah's brightest journalists, second in rank only to Judge Goodwin of the Salt Lake Tribune." Goodwin, incidentally, had been the Rocky Mountain News's choice for the second Utah Senate seat.

To the credit of the Chronicle, it followed the story of the Utah senators through the swearing-in ceremonies 27 January. Ironically, it was Senator Fred Dubois of Idaho who presented Frank Cannon's credentials, while Senator Burrows of Michigan, which was Brown's home state, presented those of Brown.

I would like to close my summary of how a number of newspapers from all over the nation covered Utah statehood with a brief look at the comments of the Los Angeles Sunday Times. Here one finds the first hint of editorial negativism when, on 29 December 1895, the Times printed an interview with Mormon Bishop Richard W. Hart who was visiting relatives in Kansas during the Christmas holidays. Contrary to what everyone else was saying, Hart stated that the Church "will rule in the matter of choosing state officials" and, once free from federal influence, would again adopt polygamy. One begins to realize that Hart was not without personal reasons for his comments, when he told the reporter that he already had three wives and was being urged to take a fourth on his return from missionary work in Georgia. Only a day later, however, the Los Angeles Times had rejoined the chorus of praise in an article praising the Mormon settlers at Mesa, Arizona, and extolling what they had done throughout the Gila Valley.

In addition to printing the usual Associated Press story about the inauguration, the Times described the inaugural ball as "by far the most notable social event that has ever taken place in the city.

---

38Rocky Mountain News, 15 January 1896, as quoted by the Chronicle, 16 January 1896, 4.
39San Francisco Chronicle, 28 January 1896.
40Utah Still Mormon: Another Interview with Bishop Hart," Los Angeles Sunday Times, 29 December 1895, 3. The Times further identified Hart as a member of the last Territorial Legislature.
41A Mormon Colony to Start Near Phoenix," Los Angeles Times, 30 December 1895, 10.
Society in gorgeous costume tried to eclipse the brilliance of 10,000 electric lights that shone from above.\(^{42}\) (The more one reads, the more it seems that the largest cost of the Utah statehood celebrations was the electric bill!)

Later in January the *Los Angeles Times* also wrote approvingly of Utah’s constitution, focusing particularly on the clause which “guarantees to every citizen the right to accept employment whenever he can obtain it, and makes interference with this right a felony.” Reading between the lines, it looks as if the paper was in favor of strikebreaking. Indeed, the paper supported this clause so strongly it urged that the provision should be imbedded in the constitution of every state in the Union. And finally the *Times* predicted that, given Utah’s wonderful resources, it “seems destined to become in due time, one of the greatest and richest states in the Union.”\(^{43}\)

All in all, both the Mormons and Utah statehood had about the most favorable national press from key newspapers one could hope for. The reasons are both obvious and obscure. The strongest and by far the most significant was the Church’s decision to cooperate with the federal government rather than resist. Second, the Church’s political leadership was not only wide-ranging but often brilliant. Third, the favorable image conveyed to the national press by Salt Lake City editors and reporters was articulate and persuasive, especially after the *Salt Lake Tribune* joined in the effort. Fourth, both Mormon and non-Mormon businessmen had established major contacts with Eastern and California investors and businessmen. As is well-known, Colonel Isaac Trumbo came to Utah representing Havemeyer sugar interests and hoping to be a senator. Frank Cannon was in the beet sugar business. Others wanted to build a railroad connecting Salt Lake and Los Angeles. Still others were excited by the gold discoveries at Mercur. Allusions to Utah with its mineral resources becoming a second South Africa were not uncommon. And of course the ferocious debate over whether to remonetize silver or continue on the gold standard seemed destined to


\(^{43}\)“Utah’s Constitution,” *Los Angeles Times*, 11 January 1896.
benefit Utah no matter how that debate was resolved, for Utah had both metals. Fifth, after years of resistance, Congress had admitted the four omnibus states in 1889 and Idaho and Wyoming in 1890. Of the six admitted, only one, Washington, had a population comparable to Utah's. Moreover, both American politicians and the public were disgusted by the contrast between relatively unpopulated and unprosperous Nevada and the booming, well-populated territory of Utah. Utah deserved a fair shake. As The Nation observed in 1894 when Congress passed the Enabling Act, "The only cause for regret about the admission of Utah is the fact that it was not annexed to Nevada and the two made one state. This was practicable now, but it will be next to impossible hereafter. As it is, the sagebrush State, with its petty population constantly dwindling, remains insoluble."  

In short, no state coming into the Union after the Civil War with the exception of golden Colorado in 1876, and fertile, forested Washington in 1889, had as much in its favor as Utah. All agreed that the Mormons had indeed made the desert blossom as the rose, a phrase that was quoted ad nauseam.

**Dissenting Views: Home Missionary Literature**

But had all been forgiven? We recall C. C. Goodwin's observation that the Christian churches in Salt Lake City were not celebrating statehood. While it is well known that Protestant denominations, and especially the Methodists and Presbyterians, had crusaded against Mormonism and polygamy for over thirty years, it was unclear whether their views had shifted after the Manifesto of 1890. A sampling of Methodist, Presbyterian, and interdenominational home missionary journals provides revealing clues that the hostility was unabated.

In the monthly publication of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, The Church at Home and Abroad, phrases like "a priest-ridden people" were still being used in 1894.  

---


45 "Report on Home Missions," *The Church at Home and Abroad* 15 (January 1894): 38. This periodical is subtitled: *Published Monthly by Order of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America*. The actual publisher
rian minister, Reverend N. E. Clemenson, while reporting what seemed to be a successful Presbyterian revival and set of conversions in Mount Pleasant and Spanish Fork, still warned: “Utah’s hope and future glory and property lie in the Christianization of her people in God’s redeeming power and not in the intrigue, selfishness and folly of the politicians. Give us first the territory for Christ and then we shall be ready thankfully, because safely, to receive Statehood.”

A year later the journal sounded an alarm: “Mormon missions in almost every state in the Union have received a quickening impulse ever since the passage of the enabling act by which Utah is coming out from under the national administration into the power of a sovereign state.” The one bright spot that the Presbyterians noted in their generally sober, even gloomy, reports was that their schools had helped foster a belief in and support for public schools in Utah.

A far more realistic account of local Protestant missionary efforts appeared in the September 1896 issue of the *Methodist Review* by the Reverend F. S. Begge, who wrote: “Mormonism is the dominant religious, social, mercantile and political force in Utah, which has lately become one of the States of the Union. Beyond this, it is getting large control among the people of three other States, Nevada, Idaho, and Wyoming, and is extending into Arizona and New Mexico. . . . It is in the West to stay.” Begge added that most businessmen “do not care how many wives a man has if he can secure his trade.” Moreover, although the Christian churches of the East had spent over two millions of dollars in Utah over the last twenty-five years—more than was spent in any other western state or Territory, the effort had been largely wasted. He lamented, “If two

is its Board of Publications and Sabbath School Work, headquartered in Philadelphia.


48 “Public schools are steadily winning their way in Utah and are among the forces upon which we must depend to make of that wonderful territory a glorious American state. Salt Lake City already has some of the finest and most modern public school buildings in the United States.” *The Church at Home and Abroad* 17 (June 1895): 472.
hundred real Mormons have been changed and made into earnest evangelical Christians during that time we have not been able to discover them.” He then listed very cogent reasons for the Gentile missionary failure, which I will not detail here.49

Needless to say, Begge’s remarks sent his fellow missionaries into a state of shock; and at their annual meeting in Ogden during September 1896, they promised a rebuttal. Yet the Reverend T. C. Iliff, when asked to pen a response, declined to do so. So far as I have been able to ascertain, nothing but a brief and weak rejoinder ever came forth. Instead, the Methodists asserted, as had the Presbyterians and the Congregationalists, that “the Christian schools have wrought a marvelous reformation throughout the length and breadth of Utah.”50 As late as 1903, Joseph Bourne Clark, Secretary of the Congregational Home Missionary Society, wrote a revealing book, Leavening the Nation: The Story of American Home Missions. Here, too, Clark admitted that missionary zeal in Utah was “inclined strongly towards educational efforts…. The hope of the people was felt to be in the children almost alone.” But Clark ended his essay with an admonition to fight “Mormonism and Romanism.”51

While Protestant missionary publications continued to show concern about Mormonism, a brief review of national journals and magazines suggests a striking lack of interest. During 1896, no coverage on Utah’s statehood appeared in four major publications, the Atlantic Monthly, Harper’s Monthly, the North American Review and The Review of Reviews.

The Nation, on the other hand, was fascinated with the fact that the Utah constitution allowed women to vote “on equal terms with men and establishes the novelty in judicial terms of a jury of eight men instead of the traditional twelve. . . . The newer States of the West are naturally far more ready to break with the traditions and try experiments than the older commonwealths of the East.”52 The

49Methodist Review 78 (September 1896): 754-57.
50Ibid., 78 (November 1896): 962-63.
52“The Week,” The Nation 60 (23 May 1895): 392; and “The Week,” ibid.,
Nation was much less enthusiastic about Utah's two Republican senators, however, arguing that they will be "red hot" for free coinage. . . . The sound money cause will thus be put at a further disadvantage in the Senate where its representatives are already in a minority. The next thing to be expected is a strong movement for the admission of Arizona, New Mexico, and Oklahoma and the consequent strengthening of the free-coinage element in the upper branch by six more votes."53

Sounding an uncannily contemporary note, The Nation concluded that the swearing in of two new senators from Utah brings the Senate to ninety members—"almost twice as many as sixty years ago. . . . The Senate was never so large a body as now, and it never stood lower in public esteem. . . . The Senate to-day is a less conservative body than the House, and it is more easily carried for any wild scheme. Not only has it lost its old hold upon the public, but it is regarded with a growing contempt."54 This was written exactly one hundred years ago. So what else is news, ladies and gentlemen?

**Evaluation and Analysis**

One comes away from this admittedly selective survey of the national media's perceptions of Utah statehood with a sense of awe about how Utah's leaders carried it off. From 1890 onward it was not only an extensive and coordinated campaign, but often a brilliant one. Not every statehood campaign had a set of able lobbyists in Washington which included not just religious representatives but politicians from both parties. Few states had as able and vocal a set of business spokesmen in New York City—a group that incidentally had close connections with Mayor Abraham Hewitt. Not every potential state had such good connections to the news media or had an incoming governor who could send an eloquent special message to the Chicago Tribune. Not every statehood campaign could have avoided the silver and gold debate by seeming to embrace both sides.

61 (14 November 1895): 338.
53Ibid., 62 (1 January 1896): 23.
Perhaps most remarkable of all, statehood was shepherded through the House and Senate not by Delegate Rawlins alone, but by a curious mixture of two former Confederate generals—Kilgore of Texas and Wheeler of Alabama, both Democrats—and three Union veterans—William Cogswell of Massachusetts, John Alfred Pickler, a Republican Congressman from South Dakota, and Case Broderick of Kansas. The latter had served on the Supreme Court of Idaho between 1884 and 1888 but had returned to his native Kansas where he was elected to Congress.\(^{55}\)

But that is only part of the story of coordinations. Though initially cool to Utah, President Benjamin Harrison not only promoted statehood for all western territories but had a western network that often had ties to his home state of Indiana. Indians held territorial offices all over the West. Statehood supporter Senator John L. Wilson of Washington State, hailed from Indiana, where his father had been a Congressman, and Delegate Joseph Rawlins had attended Indiana University.\(^{56}\)

Historians tend to isolate Utah’s history not only from that of the nation but from that of the other western states. Yet the whole statehood saga suggests that this is an incorrect approach. Utah’s troubles and fortunes were tied to issues that troubled other western states just as the territory had been bound to the national north/south fight over slavery, the attitudes of Radical Republicans, and the national silver crusade. The message one gets from recounting the Utah statehood story is that it was a symbolic event of great


\(^{56}\) As both senator and U.S. President, Benjamin Harrison was active in territorial affairs throughout the West, particularly in Dakota Territory. He was instrumental in creating Oklahoma Territory and in advancing the cause of civil government in Alaska. Harrison’s role in Dakota Territory politics is detailed in Howard R. Lamar, *Dakota Territory, 1861-1889: A Study of Frontier Politics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1956) 256-59, 264, 272.
importance to the entire nation, whether the focus was constitutional, political, economic or ideological.\(^57\)

In conclusion three general comments seem in order. The first is that Wilford Woodruff's Manifesto of 1890 not only liberated Utah Territory but much of the West and some of the nation itself. It looked as if Utah, Arizona, and Idaho were marching toward democracy, whereas South Carolina and the American South were not. Second, the late Richard Hofstadter has suggested that the West espoused free silver for cynical economic and political reasons only.\(^58\) Hofstadter was tragically wrong. He did not understand that the Westerners saw silver as the key to a better way of life for the West and that Frank Cannon, Senator Henry Moore Teller of Colorado, and Congressman William Jennings Bryan of Nebraska were their trusted leaders in the cause. The dreams of what silver would do for the West, while not necessarily rational, were totally misunderstood by the East. As Leonard Schlup has noted, so committed was Senator Frank Cannon to free silver in its larger context, that he walked out of the Republican National Convention of 1896 and joined the Teller rebels. Later in his career he joined the Democrats to support William Jennings Bryan for the presidency not once but twice.\(^59\) Certainly Cannon's commitment was more ideological than cynical.

And finally, it is said that the Spanish-American War of 1897-98 marks the true reconciliation of the North and South; symbolically, as ex-Confederate like Congressman General Joe Wheeler volunteered for service in that conflict and commanded black troops.\(^60\)

\(^{57}\) Lamar, Far Southwest, 401-11.


\(^{59}\) Leonard Schlup, "Utah Maverick: Frank J. Cannon and the Politics of Conscience in 1896," Utah Historical Quarterly 62 (Fall 1994), 335-48. Although no special collections on Utah statehood are mentioned in David J. Whittaker, Mormon Americana: A Guide to the Sources and Collections in the United States (Provo, Utah: BYU Studies, 1995), Part II of this volume is invaluable for anyone seeking to trace the papers of Mormon political leaders during both the earlier and final statehood crusades. See especially “Biography,” 70-74, and Part II, 93-38. An obvious older source is Andrew Jenson, LDS Biographical Encyclopedia, 4 vols. (Salt Lake City: Jenson History, 1901-36).
To me, however, that reconciliation began politically, and with great significance for the West, when Northern and Southern Congressmen gave up pairing a Democratic or pro-Southern state with a Republican or pro-Northern one by deciding to admit the four omnibus states in 1889 and Idaho and Wyoming in 1890. Utah’s admission story is another, and by far the most dramatic example of reconciliation, not just in Utah, but in Congress and elsewhere—for example, in Arizona where Governor Zulick, backed by Cleveland, began to include Mormon settlers in the regular political process.

Utah’s statehood is a story with such a positive outcome that we certainly should still be celebrating it a century later, for it is evidence of a further step in the slow realization of a more complete American democracy. Most remarkable of all, Utah statehood occurred in 1896, with everyone approving, although the nation itself was in violent turmoil over economic, labor, financial, and third party issues. The way that political and public relations near-miracle was achieved is cause alone for prolonged celebration.

---


St. John's Saints: Interethnic Conflict in Northeastern Arizona, 1880-85

Mark E. Miller

In the Arizona Territorial courtroom on the afternoon of 10 August 1885, the jury prepared to read its verdict in the case of United States v. David King Udall. Udall, the long-bearded polygamist bishop of the St. John's Ward, stood accused of having perjured himself about a homesteading claim filed by his friend Miles Romney the previous year. The stern and portly U.S. district judge, Sumner Howard, no friend of Udall's and an avowed opponent of Mormon polygamy, waited in anticipation. The courtroom in Prescott was packed with interested spectators; but at least a few of them must have wondered if Udall had received a fair trial, given the strong anti-polygamy stance of the judge and many of the jurors. And surely others questioned why this case was tried at all, since the government was then prosecuting almost no land fraud cases in the West.

Furthermore, just a few weeks earlier, Udall and five other

MARK E. MILLER is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of History, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona. He thanks his parents for their support and Dr. Roger L. Nichols and Peter Steere for their help with this project.
Mormon leaders had been tried for polygamy by the same court. Udall’s case had been dismissed because his second wife could not be located, but the other five had been convicted and sentenced to varying prison terms. This perjury case seemed to be an excuse to prosecute Udall on another charge, but many felt that polygamy was the real reason. In any case, the trial was the climax to five years of intense, interethnic conflict involving Mormons, Mexican-Americans, and Gentiles in the high desert town of St. Johns, Arizona.

The struggle pitted Mormon leaders against the “St. Johns Ring,” a group of about six non-Mormons, led by Solomon Barth, a German Jew. In many ways, it was a classic struggle for political control of a community between “oldtimers” and “newcomers,” but the contest here was playing itself out under the guise of a moral issue. Barth and his associates took the position that the Latter-day Saints posed a serious threat to community morals, primarily because of Mormon plural marriage. This position, widely shared by thousands of nineteenth-century Americans, roused intense emotions that somewhat shielded men like Barth from the scrutiny of acts against Mormons which came close to the line of the illegal and, finally, crossed over. They used both their legal and political within the community to undercut the Saints, culminating in the court case against Udall. They also found support among the leading citizens of Prescott, the territorial capital of Arizona and location of the court.

The Mormons by 1880 had fifty solid years of conflict with neighbors under their belts, but the experience of Udall and the Saints in St. Johns represents an interesting variant of the traditional, “old settler/Mormon” conflict, because it involved Mexican-American Catholics as well as Protestant Anglo-Americans. The interethnic conflict had began about 1879 as Mormons expanded into north-eastern Arizona from Utah and encountered strong opposition from the Catholics, Protestants, Jews, and non-believers from Hispanic, American, and European backgrounds already established in St. Johns.\(^1\) The strife resulted from economic and political competition as well as religious differences.

\(^1\)Although there were Indians in the locale, they did not have enough of a power base or a sufficient level of social recognition to be represented in this cultural clash.
Strongly defining themselves as an ethnic group connected by the "blood of Israel," the Saints had, for thirty years, freely cultivated their unique beliefs, practices, and institutions including theocracy, polygamy, and collective economic experiments. The St. Johns settlement was part of Church President Brigham Young's 1872 decision to establish a settlement corridor south into Sonora, Mexico, to secure the Saints' political territory. In 1873, he sent an exploratory expedition into the Little Colorado River Valley, crossing into Arizona at Lee's Ferry northeast of the Grand Canyon. Returning sunburned and beaten, a member of this party, Andrew Amundsen, candidly described the region as "the most desert looking plase that I ever saw, Amen." Undeterred, Young sent another party in 1875 under Daniel W. Jones, who spoke Spanish. This expedition reported more positively that the grazing was promising, though the channel of the Little Colorado River channel was "wide with quick sand bottom and would probably be difficult to control." Young felt that the report was sufficiently positive and authorized the first settlements along the lower reaches of the Little Colorado in 1876. Like other Mormon colonists, these Arizona settlers took their assignment as a religious duty, expecting to sacrifice greatly but also expecting divine intervention to help them achieve success.

The First Presidency organized four companies each with fifty men and their families to settle the Lower Little Colorado region. Lot Smith, Jesse O. Balenger, George Lake, and William C. Allen led the four groups, most from northern Utah. As the lower river was sparsely inhabited by a few Gentiles and Spanish-Americans, the Saints soon began building irrigation dams and planting crops along

---


4 Ibid., 15-16.
MORMON SETTLEMENTS IN ARIZONA
1880-85
the cottonwood-lined stream. Allen’s group established a village named “Allen’s Camp” in April of 1876, though the name was later changed to St. Joseph on 21 January 1878 in honor of Mormon prophet Joseph Smith. Smith’s company established Sunset, three miles north of the “Sunset Crossing” of the Little Colorado, while Lake’s company established itself three miles west of St. Joseph, naming their settlement Obed. Balenger’s group located four miles southwest of Sunset Crossing near present-day Winslow. All four organized themselves under the United Order and experienced varying degrees of success. The January 1878 census reported 564 inhabitants of the lower Little Colorado villages, including 115 families.5

From the most prosperous settlements of Sunset and St. Joseph, Mormon families spread south and east toward the well-watered White Mountains. By Christmas of 1876, twenty families purchased a ranch on Silver Creek and began moving to the site which they christened Woodruff. Among the families were Nathan Tenney’s from Utah via San Bernadino, California; later that year, Lorenzo Hatch and his family arrived from New Mexico. Another early settler, William J. Flake, became particularly disenchanted with life in the United Order and, with the blessing of Apostle Erastus Snow, then in exile in Arizona, in late summer of 1878 established a village near Woodruff on Silver Creek, calling it Snowflake after himself and Snow. Snowflake then became a center of Mormon settlement in Arizona and a source of migrants to St. Johns and eastern Arizona.6

Although competition for such scarce resources as wood, water, and arable land would no doubt have been a recipe for conflict if the non-Mormon population had been denser, the disagreements along the Little Colorado took, not an economic form, but a moral one. Polygamy had always been illegal as “bigamy” and had been specifically outlawed by statute (though not enforced) in Utah Territory in 1862. In 1878, the U.S. Supreme Court had ruled that plural marriage was not protected under the Constitutional

---

guarantee of freedom of religion. In 1882, Congress would add teeth to this judicial determination with the Edmunds Act, denying practitioners the right to vote and requiring wives to testify against their husbands. Thus, the Udall-St. Johns conflict took place against a national background of intensifying social and legislative hostility to the Mormons' peculiar marital practices.

David King Udall, a twenty-nine-year-old farmer and business owner, was bishop of Kanab, Utah, the husband of Eliza Luella ("Ella") Stewart Udall, and the father of one child, Pearl, on 28 May 1880, when he received a letter from Church President John Taylor, successor to that office after Brigham Young's death in 1877. Udall was an experienced frontiersman, farmer, and partner in a successful mercantile store; in his later years, he would receive the honor of presiding over the Arizona Temple (1927-34). The letter read: "It has been deemed expedient by the Council of the Apostles to call you to St. Johns, Arizona Territory, whilst you will be appointed to the office of Bishop of that ward." Udall's daughter Pearl later reminisced that her parents, like all orthodox Mormons, believed that "a call from the Church was a call from the Lord and was not questioned." However, Udall was somewhat apprehensive about


8David King Udall was born in St. Louis, Missouri, on September 1851, the eldest child of David Udall and Eliza King Udall. The Udalls were English immigrants who settled in Nephi, Utah, in September, 1852. In 1870 David Udall was called to fill a mission in Kanab, Utah. Eliza King Udall died while David was still a boy, an event that had a profound effect on him. As he later recalled, "Frequently in my boyhood, I went to mother's grave to pray, as by her knee I had learned to depend upon my heavenly father." Udall remained in Kanab, where in 1873 he met Bishop Levi Stewart's daughter Eliza Luella and married her in the Salt Lake City Endowment House 1 February 1875. David King Udall and Pearl Nelson Udall, *Arizona Pioneer Mormon: David King Udall, His Story and His Family* (Tucson: Arizona Silhouettes, 1959), 2-3; "Biographical Sketch of Eliza Stewart Udall," Box 1, fd. 3, David King Udall Papers, Special Collections, University of Arizona Library, Tucson; Thomas E. Sheridan, *Arizona: A History* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1995), 191.

9John Taylor, Letter to David Udall, 28 May 1880, Box 2, fd. 3, Udall Papers.

the call saying, "We felt we were going into another world, strange and far away; we dreaded it all the more because Ella was frail and our baby was less than three months old."\(^{11}\)

While wrapping up their affairs and preparing to move, David and Ella Udall received an urgent letter in June from John Nuttal, secretary to the First Presidency, informing them that the state of affairs in the fledgling Mormon settlement near St. Johns necessitated their immediate presence to strengthen the town. Hastening their arrival, the Udalls reached the vicinity of St. Johns on 6 October 1880, the first trial in a long line of difficulties.\(^{12}\) Mormons had established themselves in the area in 1879 about one mile from the town of St. Johns in a village they called Salem. According to Udall, by 1880 there were fifty families in Salem, living largely on barley sent to them from Sunset on the lower Little Colorado.\(^{13}\)

In 1880, St. Johns proper was a fairly large village of flat-roofed, adobe houses set close to the sandy banks of the Little Colorado River. A group of Spanish-Americans had established the town in 1874; its population six years later consisted of several hundred "Mexicans and a few Americans."\(^{14}\) Their unquestioned leader was Solomon Barth, a Jewish trader only five foot three inches tall, and gifted with boundless energy. In addition to founding the community, he also owned much of it. Born in Prussia in 1842, he had in 1855 immigrated to America, ironically with an uncle who had converted to Mormonism and settled in La Paz, Arizona. In late fall 1860, Barth moved to Cubero, New Mexico, on the road between Albuquerque, New Mexico, and San Bernardino, California, after he acquired a contract to carry the mail between the two towns. There, he married Refugio Landavazo y Sanchez,\(^{15}\) the daughter of a prominent Spanish-American, Don Francisco Landavazo y Ortega,


\(^{13}\)Udall and Udall, *Arizona Pioneer Mormon*, 70, 74.

\(^{14}\)"Record of the St. Johns Ward of the Eastern Little Colorado Stake of Zion," Udall Papers, Box 1, fd. 13.

\(^{15}\)Isaac Barth, "Refugio Landavazo de Barth: An Apache County Profile," *St. Johns Herald-Observer*, 17 August 1940, 1, Box 1, fd. 13, Udall Papers.
a former New Mexico territorial senator. Barth began trading with the Indians, rapidly acquiring a reputation as something of a renege. In 1867 a federal court indicted him for larceny, a charge which included trading liquor without a license to the local Zuni.

In 1870, Barth’s brothers, Nathan and Morris, joined him in Cubero where Morris also married a Spanish-American woman, Perfecta Savedra. Shortly after they arrived, the brothers contracted to supply grain to the U.S. Army at both Fort Wingate, New Mexico, and Camp Apache in central Arizona. Barth then launched a new venture as an outgrowth of this contract. In early 1874, the brothers led some thirty families of employees (mostly their ox-drivers) and others, west to El Vado (the ford) on the army road. Among the Spanish-Americans was Don Marcos Baca and his wife, Doña Maria de San Juan Baca. Another group, including Don Antonio Gonzales and Don Jose Garcia and their families, came from Socorro, New Mexico, the next year. Barth named the settlement San Juan de Padilla for Doña Maria de San Juan, though the name was later anglicized to St. Johns by ring-member and postmaster, Ebenezer S. Stover, who reportedly exclaimed, “It is time those Mexicans found out they are living in the United States!”

But this year also marked a double appearance for Solomon Barth in the area’s criminal records. He pled guilty to illegally selling liquor to the Indians in 1874, was charged with stealing two mules from the federal government, and paid a fine of a thousand dollars for larceny later that same year. Solomon Barth, the town’s founder and principal citizen, seemed an unlikely candidate as its voice of moral rectitude and reform.

Another Anglo who anchored the fledgling community was

---


famed Navajo trader John Lorenzo Hubbell (1853-1930), who moved to the town from New Mexico in late 1870s, set up a store, and married Lina Rubi (1861-1913), daughter of another prominent local Spanish-American, Don Cruz Rubi. Thus, early settlement at St. Johns resulted from a large out-migration of Hispanics from New Mexico Territory. This mixture of Anglos, Jews, and Hispanics formed the first cohesive group in the area.

Unlike the Mormon-dominated lower Little Colorado area, Hispanics, or Spanish-Americans, formed the largest segment of the population in St. Johns. By 1877, perhaps six hundred lived in the town and surrounding villages. However, the differences in culture between the Barths and Hubbells and the larger Hispanic population soon became apparent. Traditionally, the latter group held land informally, in common. Barth and Hubbell took advantage of this custom by quietly acquiring most of the homestead rights and water claims in the area. Thus, unknown to the Hispanics, they had no legal right to some of the land they farmed. By the time LDS emissary Ammon Tenney arrived to purchase land for the Church in November 1879, Barth owned most of the town including the mercantile store, hotel, farms, and much surrounding undeveloped land.

Ammon Tenney, a settler on the lower Little Colorado and missionary to the local Indians, was selected to scout the area by Wilford Woodruff, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve who would succeed John Taylor as president of the Church. Given the relative success of the 1876 settlements along the lower Little Colorado, Woodruff was overseeing a plan to establish LDS settlements in the next logical location—the area to the east. Tenney notified the St. Johns's townspeople of the Mormons’ intentions to settle in large numbers. Not unnaturally, many of the Hispanic and Gentile residents of St. Johns reacted with apprehension. Many

18"Hubbell Genealogy," Records of Hubbell Trading Post, finding guide, Special Collections, University of Arizona Library, Tucson.
20Udall and Udall, Arizona Pioneer Mormon, 75.
21Ammon Tenney Papers, Box 2, fd. 8, Arizona Historical Society; Peterson, Take Up Your Mission, 34.
Anglos and Hispanics likely had heard that the group was extremely cohesive and feared that Mormons would vote together, establish their own stores, generally pose a challenge to traditional Christian community morals, and possibly threaten the economic position of non-Mormons in the town.

However, Solomon Barth seems to have been motivated primarily by the commercial opportunity this event offered. On 16 November 1879, he closed a deal selling a large tract of land completely surrounding the Hispanic part of town to Tenney for 750 head of American cows. The Mormons received a quit-claim deed and partial water rights. Most of the Hispanics, not fully comprehending U.S. law, were angered when the first Mormon colonists from Salem began surveying land quite close to St. Johns. The Mexican-Americans felt that the undeveloped areas around St. Johns were communal lands to be used by all. Barth, Hubbell, and some Hispanic leaders such as Sheriff Alejandro Peralta and Thomas Perez of the Apache County Board of Supervisors, both appointed by the territorial governor in 1879, played upon this misunderstanding to further league themselves with the large Hispanic worker population against the newcomers. Barth and Hubbell took advantage of this rift and the fact that they had married Hispanics to gain popular political support against the growing number of Saints. With their established economic power and government influence, Barth, Hubbell, and others consolidated themselves into a cohesive organization known as the St. Johns Ring. Barth had considerable leverage within the group because of his economic resources and the fact that he served as Apache County’s representative to the Territorial Legislature.

22 Bill of Sale, 16 November 1879, Box 6, fd. 10, Udall Papers.
23 Arizona Republic, 15 September 1935; Thomas Perez File, Arizona Historical Society; Jane Eppinga, “Apache County Sheriffs Dealt with the Lawful and the Awful,” Arizona Sheriff, Spring 1992, 12-14, in Barth File, Bloom Archives. According to this article, Peralta allegedly could not read, write, or speak English and therefore was unfit for the post. Both he and Perez were also accused of being in “the pocket” of Barth, as Perez may have also been one of Barth’s sheepmen.
After the Arizona Legislature created Apache County from Yavapai County at the prodding of Barth and A. Franklin Banta, a resident of the area and a former military scout, on 24 February 1879, Barth briefly entertained thoughts of joining with the Mormons to divide up the political offices in St. Johns. However, a miscommunication between Ammon Tenney and Lorenzo Hubbell led Barth to believe the Mormons had acted in bad faith. For the elections of 1880, Mormons in Snowflake agreed to meet Barth and the fledgling ring to discuss an accommodation. Ammon Tenney was entrusted to schedule the meeting; but because he was involved with railroad business out of town, he was unable to contact Barth and Hubbell. The “Mormon-Barth ticket” never materialized, and mistrust developed between the two groups.

The fledgling ring was becoming a potent force in St. Johns, having allied with the Hispanics against the Mormons by the time Udall arrived with Ella and three-month old Pearl in November 1880. That spring, Erastus Snow had advised the Mormons of Salem to abandon the village and move to a site on higher ground that Tenney had previously purchased in St. Johns proper. One of the first things Udall dealt with was an angry letter from Marcus Baca, one of the early Spanish-American settlers, Hubbell, and thirty other Spanish-Americans, protesting the settlement of the Mormons from Salem around their village. The fact that this letter was addressed to the Mormons and not to Barth, who had sold the land, demonstrated the skill of the ring in using the ignorance of some of the Hispanics against the new settlers. In the letter, Baca and Hubbell accused the Mormon “sect” of preparing to take over the town. Baca and Hubbell also stated that “the members of the Mormon sect live

28 Ibid., 69.
under blind obedience to their leaders” and obviously had the “intention of surrounding and oppressing us.” They warned, “Every Catholic town has its rights by antiquity” and vowed to “place all the means in its [a Catholic community’s] power to impede the establishment of the Mormons.” Thus, by November 1880, Barth and Hubbell had betrayed the interests of the Hispanics, profited financially from the Mormons, and succeeded in aligning themselves with the majority of Hispanic workers against the Mormons. It was a deft, though unethical, maneuver.

The following day, Udall wrote to Baca and the others, offering to call a public meeting to discuss the Mormons’ intentions. But Udall also stated, “As for the insinuating and insulting sentences in your document, I will not condescend to reply.” The Spanish-Americans soon discovered that they had no legal claim and the Mormons triumphed. However, Udall rather sympathetically recalled later, “The Mexicans resented us and we did not blame them very much, their ‘squatters rights’ had not been properly respected by those who sold the land to our people.”

Much like the St. Johns Hispanics, the Mormons were predisposed by a long history of tensions with their neighbors to believe they were being “persecuted,” and many of them also privately expressed disdain for Mexican-Americans and Catholicism. These prejudices, though widely held attitudes among nineteenth-century Americans, exacerbated the economic, ethnic, and political hostilities.

In late November 1880, Udall traveled to Utah to relate the Saints’ difficulties and succeeded in securing a loan from President John Taylor to pay off the Mormons’ debt to Barth. Back in St. Johns, Udall won a postal contract in July 1881 to carry the mail from Fort

---

29 Marcus Baca and D. Lorenzo Hubbell, Letter to David Udall, 26 October 1880, Box 6, fd. 10, Udall Papers.
30 Udall and Udall, Arizona Pioneer Mormon, 79.
31 Ibid., 77.
Wingate to Fort Apache, a significant move in his ability to provide for his family. Throughout this trying period, Udall remembered that the “mainspring of our efforts was faith, industry, and cooperation.”

On 8 March 1881, LDS President John Taylor notified Udall that his “forces” would be strengthened soon by twenty-nine additional families. The arrival of these settlers, probably within a few weeks, put additional strains on the available arable land along the river. Also, as the Anglo-Hispanic leaders had feared, the Saints began establishing their own administrative systems in St. Johns. By the fall of 1881, the Mormons formed a quasi-public committee to plan development, set up a communal mercantile store with Udall named its superintendent, and established their own schools, thereby separating themselves from the rest of St. Johns. A brief moment of cooperation between the two groups came in September 1881 when the Mormons and the Anglo-Hispanics formed the “United Forces of St. Johns” in response to Apaches raiding out of the nearby White Mountains. However, this cooperation was not sufficient to reverse the adversarial nature of the relationship. Throughout 1881, the groups continued to watch each other with suspicion.

By 1882, the ring had stabilized to five men who firmly controlled the police forces of the community. Ebenezer S. Stover, later postmaster and a ring member, was elected sheriff in 1880, replacing Peralta amid allegations of election fraud. Tomas Perez, a Civil War veteran from Durango, Mexico, succeeded Stover in 1882. Solomon Barth seems to have been the leader with his brothers generally supporting his moves. The United States District Attorney, Charles L. Gutterson, was also influential in the ring along with John Lorenzo Hubbell, who besides being elected St. Johns’s sheriff in 1883, operated a trading post for the Navajo at nearby Ganado, Arizona.

---

33Ibid., 80; “Reminiscences of D. K. Udall,” Udall Papers, Box 6, fd. 6.
35John Taylor, Letter to David Udall, 8 March 1881, Box 2, fd. 3.
36St. Johns Ward Records, 8 September 1881, Box 1, fd. 13, Udall Papers.
George A. McCarter joined the ring in 1884, when he began publishing the rabidly anti-Mormon *Apache Chief*, later the *St. Johns Herald*, both from his office in St. Johns. After gaining the post of United States Court Commissioner, McCarter rapidly acquired the reputation among Latter-day Saints of being a virulent Mormon-hater, and nothing in the available records counters this impression. These men comprised a true "ring," dominating political and legal offices, manipulating the local economy to their benefit, and aggressively asserting their views against the Mormons in McCarter's paper.\(^{38}\) The Saints soon realized they could not simply keep the peace by keeping to themselves. To forestall the creation of a separate Mormon community, the County Board of Supervisors, on which no Mormons sat, merged the Saints' schools with the St. Johns school district in early 1882 and planned further incursions on their autonomy. In the face of these measures, the Mormons felt compelled to enter local politics.\(^{39}\)

Potentially, the Mormons comprised a considerable force because the LDS Church urged bloc voting by its members as a sign of religious loyalty.\(^{40}\) However, this Mormon advantage was actually cancelled out because local politics were so thoroughly dominated by the ring. The Mormons had alleged election fraud as early as 1879 and in every election thereafter. When Mormon John Hunt reportedly claimed fraud in one of these elections, the ring engaged in legal delays until the term expired.\(^{41}\) Not content with stuffing the ballot box, election officials, who were all members of the ring or associated with them, also intimidated Mormon voters, threatening them away from the polls.\(^{42}\) However, because the sheriff's department and courts were also dominated by the ring, there were no investigations.\(^{43}\) After the passage of the Edmunds Act on 22 March

---


\(^{42}\)Cunningham, "Rings in Arizona," 19; Udall, *Arizona Pioneer Mormon*, 92; Fish, *Life and Times*, 35. For general allegations of election fraud against Barth, see Wagoner, *Arizona Territory*, 89-90.
1882, the Saints lost additional political power because polygamous Mormons were now officially denied the vote. On election day in November 1882, the voting official refused Udall a ballot saying, "We have decided that no polygam[ist] should vote today." The further assumption that all monogamous Mormons were also sympathetic to polygamy led to repeated efforts to deny all Mormons the franchise, an effort that succeeded in Idaho in December of 1884.

In mid-summer 1882, the political struggle led to violence. The first outbreak occurred on 27 June 1882, when a group of Spanish-Americans gathered in St. Johns for the annual "St. Johns Day" festivities. When local cowboys and Mormons came to watch a bullfight, an altercation erupted between the Mormon Greer brothers and their cowboys and the local Hispanics. The Greers had reportedly cut their "ear mark" into the ear of an unfortunate Mexican-American boy caught rustling a calf from their herd, an event which did not endear them to the Mexican community of St. Johns. The fact that the Greers were cattlemen from Texas encroaching on the Mexicans' sheep pastures did not help matters either. Both sides hurled insults, then began fighting. The oldest brother, Nat Greer, fled behind the Barth Store to hide, was found, and ran for new cover as shots were fired at him from the roof of the store. During a lull, Mormon leader Nathan C. Tenney attempted to make peace but was fatally shot by a bullet fired from Barth's store. His death shocked and sobered the combatants; Tenney spoke Spanish and had befriended many Hispanics. However, Sheriff Ebenezer S. Stover arrested only the Greer brothers—no inquiry or charges were ever brought against the others.

Relations between the two groups remained tense but there

44Wells, Anti-Mormonism in Idaho, 27.
45Udall and Udall, Arizona Pioneer Mormon, 92.
46Madsen, "At Their Peril," 437; Wells, Anti-Mormonism in Idaho, 58.
were no further outbreaks of violence during that year. However, a happier event that year contained the genesis of further conflict. On 6 May 1882, in the presence of his first wife, David Udall married Ida Hunt, a clerk in the St. Johns co-op store, which Udall managed. Church President John Taylor had reacted to the intensifying federal pressure by urging faithful Church leaders to take additional wives, and the Udall family felt that David was responding to this direct ecclesiastical pressure. Though Ella was from a polygamous family and expressed support in general, she resisted this second marriage, perhaps feeling betrayed since Ida had been boarding in her home. After returning from the St. George Temple, Ida remained at her father’s home in Snowflake, Arizona, until 25 August when David brought her to St. Johns and established her in Ella’s house. Ida was apprehensive and wrote in her journal: “In nearing the town, it seemed that all powers of darkness were arrayed against me . . . going to share another woman’s home and husband. . . . Our neighbors on three sides were Mexicans and I felt that their wicked influence and spirit surrounding the place had something to do with the foreboding I had.” Although the Udall household had difficulty in adapting to plural marriage, they were committed to persevere.

The next year was something of a political respite, although a discouraging trickle of Saints, disenchanted with the relatively unfertile soil and sour relations with their non-Mormon neighbors, began returning to Utah that year. Then in 1884, several violent incidents rocked the town. In March, some locals ransacked the house of Mormon Don C. Babbitt. Babbitt complained to Sheriff Hubbell, who had succeeded Perez some time earlier that year; Hubbell took no action. In April, a group of non-Mormons including the clerk from Sol Barth’s store began taking down fences in the LDS area of town with the obvious intention of “jumping” the Mormons’ claims to this land. A group of Mormon men stopped them, and Hubbell arrested Udall and several others later that day. Though Udall and the others were later acquitted, no action was

---

49 Fish, *Life and Times*, 252.
taken against those who had dismantled the fences and trespassed. Ida Hunt Udall, who had witnessed the event from her window, wrote indignantly in her diary that “these outlaws were backed by the whole, jew, gentile, and Mexican town. . . . The spirit of bloodshed seemed to be in the very air.”\textsuperscript{51} Mormons had several other lots jumped the following week with similar results. According to Ida, “it became evident that St. Johns must have help, in the shape of more permanent substantial citizens of our people, or the place would have to be abandoned.”\textsuperscript{52} Determined not to give in to these illegal pressures, the stake sent Miles P. Romney and Jesse N. Smith to Salt Lake City in April to petition John Taylor for more settlers; Taylor responded by calling an additional hundred families from Utah, who began reaching St. Johns in the fall of 1884.\textsuperscript{53} According to Ida, the word that new settlers were coming “was joyful news indeed, and served to cheer the people greatly.”\textsuperscript{54}

Then in September, A. Franklin Banta, long an associate of Barth’s, pressed Solomon Barth for payment of a debt. The discussion turned into a fist-fight. Solomon Barth began choking Banta who, in self-defense, jabbed Sol repeatedly in the head with his metal fingernail file. Viewing the commotion, Nathan Barth shot Banta through the neck with his .44 revolver. Miraculously, Banta survived only to be arrested by Deputy Sheriff Perez. The Barth brothers were allowed to go free, reportedly without even being questioned. Also somewhat miraculously, Banta patched up his friendship with Sol Barth which lasted until their old age.\textsuperscript{55} Thus, through 1884, Sol Barth and the ring continued to be immune to legal inquiry.

\textsuperscript{51}Ellsworth, \textit{Mormon Odyssey}, 69, 263.
\textsuperscript{52}Ibid., 69.
\textsuperscript{53}Ellsworth, \textit{Mormon Odyssey}, 69; Fish, \textit{Life and Times}, 252; Fish, “History of the Eastern Arizona Stake of Zion and of the Establishment of the Snowflake Stake by Joseph Fish, Stake Recorder 1879-1893,” 60, manuscript, Joseph Fish File, Special Collections, University of Arizona Library, Tucson.
\textsuperscript{54}Ellsworth, \textit{Mormon Odyssey}, 69.
Since attempts at isolation and appeals to the established channels of governance had failed, the Mormons next formed an alliance with Gentiles in Holbrook to curb the St. Johns ring. Holbrook, fifty-three miles northwest from St. Johns, had been settled by Atlantic and Pacific Railroad employees in 1881. In 1882 the town was renamed in honor of H. R. Holbrook, a railroad engineer and, according to Mormon historian Joseph Fish, "was not a Mormon town." By 1884 Holbrook was growing due to its place on the railroad and its leaders, M. T. Burgess, F. M. Zuck, and E. R. Carr, had an interest in courting Mormon support to move the courthouse to Holbrook. In 1884, St. Johns was the seat of Apache County; but if it could be shifted to Holbrook, then the ring would have less control over the important county courts and less pull within the police force, as well as less opportunity to defraud the Mormons and other citizens. As such, the economic and political advantages to Holbrook were sufficient to motivate its merchants, politicians, and other leading men to organize an "independent" ticket in the June 1884 elections with the Mormons to oppose the "anti-Mormon" party and move the courthouse to Holbrook. This attempt was unsuccessful, but it set the scene for retaliation by the ring, fearful of future alliances.

In addition to the police force and politics, anti-Mormons controlled the court system. As U.S. Court Commissioner, McCarter could decide which cases to prosecute and frequently "chose" cases against Mormons first. Alfred Ruiz, associated with the ring, worked as clerk of the St. Johns court while the Apache County District Attorney, Charles Gutterson, had the reputation of despising Mormonism. In addition to failing to grant Mormons their legal rights and protections, these men used the court system to harass several Mormon men with nuisance suits beginning in 1882. With Sol Barth

Under Miles P. Romney, Mormons began publishing the *Orion Era* that year.

57Fish, *Life and Times*, 188.
59Udall and Udall, *Arizona Pioneer Mormon*, 132; Fish, *Life and Times*, 247. According to Fish, Gutterson became a member of the ring when Ebenezer S. Stover left the county saying he could not bear to live among Mormons any longer.
generally serving as foreman in cases such as the fence-jumping incident and water disputes, grand juries often brought indictments against Mormons for such illegalities as unlawful assembly, larceny, and perjury, although most failed to be prosecuted. All in all, the Mormons spent over $7,000 between 1882 and 1885 defending themselves against these legal maneuvers, with the Church often collecting money for the expenses of individuals.  

Ring leaders had made polygamy an issue as early as March of 1884, drawing heavily on the national opprobrium in which it was held.  

U.S. Presidents Rutherford B. Hayes (1877-80) and his successor, James A. Garfield (assassinated 1881) both Republicans, had delivered speeches on the legal and moral issues involved before Congress. President Chester A. Arthur, who assumed the office upon Garfield’s assassination, in his first annual message to Congress on 6 December 1881, declared that polygamy was “an odious crime revolting to the moral and religious senses.” By the early 1880s, the national crusade against polygamy had reached new heights. Throughout the United States, politicians and Protestant leaders launched a drive against polygamy and the defiant LDS officials in Utah. The “moral outrage” over condoned polygamy became widely publicized in denouncing the prospect of Utah statehood.

The “Mormon question” loomed large in the West, and perhaps nowhere greater than in Apache County. Because northern Arizona had a large polygamist Mormon population by 1884, the “evil” practice became a focal point of discussion in the region. Although the business, political, and legal practices of the ring seem to have been of decidedly dubious quality, it is perhaps possible that the religious and moral sensibilities of its members were genuinely outraged by Mormon breaches against conventional Christian monogamy. Press accounts centered not only on issues of moral impropriety but also on the perceived disregard for United States law by the Saints. Emboldened by the growing anti-polygamy and

60 Fish, “History of Eastern Arizona Stake,” 37.
61 Ellsworth, Mormon Odyssey, 69.
anti-Mormon sentiments in the region, McCarter, Barth’s successor as leader of the ring, and other ring members disguised their political attack against the Mormons in St. Johns by stressing the moral “evils” of polygamy and Mormon lawlessness.

Mormon accounts of the polygamy prosecutions of 1884 stress the ring’s control over the local legal system. Certainly they had a point. Fairness seemed unlikely with Sol Barth acting as foreman of most grand juries and his employees as jurors. Still, polygamy was a crime and Mormon polygamists were breaking the law. Those indicted were open polygamists and, therefore, subject to the law. However, as U.S. Court Commissioner, McCarter possessed the power to decide when to press legal action against offenders; thus, the ring possessed a potent enforcement weapon which it wielded enthusiastically. An editorial by McCarter on 30 May 1884 revealed his sentiments toward Mormons and explained the vengeance with which he prosecuted them: “How did Missouri and Illinois get rid of the Mormons? By the use of the shotgun and the rope. In a year from now the Mormons will have the power and the Gentiles had better leave. Desperate diseases need desperate remedies. . . . Hang a few of the polygamist leaders such as Udall and [Miles] Romney.

McCarter’s paper, Apache Chief, renamed the St. Johns Herald in 1884, was relentless in its anti-Mormon attacks. My review of the 1884-85 issues reveals local, anti-Mormon editorials and stories about the national crusade against polygamy in every surviving number. St. Johns Herald, University of Arizona Library Collection, and Special Collections, University of Arizona Library, Tucson. Peterson remarks that McCarter’s arrival in St. Johns in 1882 and publication of his papers did much to raise the polygamy issue to new heights. The fact that Sumner Howard, a strong anti-polygamist, was appointed Chief Justice of the Arizona territorial courts in 1884, serving in both Prescott and St. Johns, also did much to intensify the crusade against polygamy and Mormons. In 1885, following the lead of Idaho, former Apache County ringleader Ebenezer S. Stover introduced a bill to disenfranchise anyone believing in polygamy. The Stover Bill easily passed both houses of the legislature. Overall, Peterson claims that Arizona Gentiles abandoned their “wanton permissiveness” of polygamy, turning to a crusade against it from 1882 to 1887. Peterson, Take Up Your Mission, 228, 231. The national crusade against polygamy included the passage of the Edmunds Act supported by President Chester A. Arthur and passed on 22 March 1882. Wagoner, Arizona Territory, 117. For information on Stover’s role and praise of his efforts see St. Johns Herald, 12 March 1885, 1; and St. Johns Herald, 30 April 1885, 2.
Grind out their very existence or make them comply with the laws of the people."\(^{64}\)

Ten days earlier, McCarter had filed a complaint on behalf of the Territorial Land Office against Miles Romney, David Udall, and Joseph Crosby on the grounds that they had falsely sworn that Romney had qualified for a preemption land claim (similar to a homestead claim).\(^{65}\) Miles Romney, then forty, was a respected Mormon architect and craftsman who was called to St. Johns from St. George, Utah, in 1880. The husband of three wives in 1884, Romney was a focus of the anti-polygamy attack.\(^{66}\) As editor of St. Johns's Mormon paper, the *Orion Era*, he wrote extensive exposés on the ring, earning the personal enmity of McCarter. To McCarter, the fact that a polygamist bishop, Udall, was involved in this case only made it more attractive for prosecution. Joseph Crosby had reached St. Johns from Utah's Dixie on 6 November 1881 and, with his wife Maude, worked at Romney's lumber shop.\(^{67}\) In early June 1884, McCarter, as court commissioner, called Udall, Romney, and Crosby in for a rigid examination; at its conclusion, he ordered them arrested.\(^{68}\)

The facts of the case are these: In the spring of 1883, Romney had filed a homestead claim for 160 acres of prairie land thirty miles south of St. Johns called the Kitchen Springs Ranch. On 28 April 1884, Romney called Udall and Crosby as witnesses that he had fulfilled the requirements to receive a patent to the claim, including making "improvements" and establishing "continuous residence" by building "suitable housing" and living on the place as required by the homestead laws of 1862. The district clerk in St. Johns, Alfred Ruiz, asked Udall if Romney had resided continuously on the ranch

---

\(^{64}\)McCarter, editorial, *Apache Chief*, 30 May 1884, 1.

\(^{65}\)Complaint, F. D. John against David Udall, 20 May 1884, Box 6, fd. 10, Udall Papers.

\(^{66}\)Andrew Karl Larsen, *Erastus Snow: The Life of a Missionary and Pioneer for the Mormon Church* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1971), 371; Hansen, *Letters of Catherine Romney*, xi, 5. Miles P. Romney married five wives: Hannah Hood Hill (1862), Caroline Lambourne (1867; divorced 1873), Catherine Jane Cottam (1873), Annie Maria Woodbury (1877), and Emily Eyring Snow (1897).

\(^{67}\)Hansen, *Letters of Catherine Romney*, 24, 38.

\(^{68}\)Ellsworth, *Mormon Odyssey*, 75.
from 1883 to 1884. Udall promptly answered “no,” knowing that Romney’s main house was in St. Johns. Udall then explained that he saw Romney family members and employees working on the ranch. Ruiz then gave Udall his interpretation of the law, stating that Romney had “continuous residence” if he did not intend to abandon the ranch and had built a house there. Udall then changed his answer to “yes” because he knew Romney intended to live on the ranch in the future and had built a small cabin for their present needs. Ruiz recorded this answer. Hearing this, Crosby answered in the same fashion. The clerk took down these unqualified answers and submitted the claim, with its accompanying affidavit, to the federal land office. Four weeks later, McCarter filed a complaint of fraud on behalf of the land office.

To press their case, the ring lobbied former St. Johns resident Ebenezer S. Stover, as well as Judge Sumner Howard who presided over the territorial courts in Prescott. Under their influence, the grand jury subpoenaed the three men, and Udall and the others dutifully made the 250-mile trip to the territorial capital of Prescott, riding horseback fifty-three miles to Holbrook and then taking the train west. After hearing Udall’s testimony, John Campbell, the strong-minded jury foreman, former congressman, and rancher, persuaded the jury that no fraud was intended. The indictment was dropped, and Udall returned to St. Johns.

The ring was not ready to quit, however. In November 1884, the district court called Udall back to Prescott on the charge of unlawful cohabitation. At the same time, it also indicted James N. Skousen, William Flake, Christopher J. Kempe, B. H. Wilhelm, Ammon Tenney, and Peter Christopherson. The Church advised

69 Transcript of Trial (holograph), United States v. David King Udall, 3-5 August 1885, U.S. District Court, 3rd Judicial District; Alfred Ruiz, letter to President Grover Cleveland, [no day] September 1885, both in Box 6, fd. 5, Udall Papers.

70 Ellsworth, Mormon Odyssey, 76.

71 Udall and Udall, Arizona Pioneer Mormon, 117; for information on Campbell, see Wagoner, Arizona Territory, 89.

72 Peter Christopherson was the bishop of Round Valley, thirty miles south of St. Johns and a member of the stake high council since 7 November 1880. Wilhelm was one of the first settlers of Concho, Arizona, several miles west of St.
all of the men to stand trial, feeling optimistic on two legal points: that polygamists married in Utah could not be tried in Arizona and that the statute of limitations (three years) would protect them.  

Both defenses failed. Kempe, Tenney, and Christopherson were convicted under the territorial bigamy law and sentenced to the Detroit House of Corrections for three years. Seeing this outcome, Flake and Skousen pled guilty in return for a lighter sentence of six months at the Yuma Territorial Prison. The court was unable to prosecute Udall because his second wife, Ida Hunt Udall, had fled with her child on 28 September to live with Udall's parents in Nephi, Utah; consequently, the authorities could not locate her to testify.  

These were the first polygamy cases prosecuted in Arizona, and the *New York Times* declared them "a good beginning" for "the successful treatment of this matter in Arizona should lead the authorities in Idaho, Wyoming, Nevada, and Colorado to bring their polygamists to the courts without delay."  

Thus, Arizona was openly hunting down polygamists, and the ring had apparently won its contest for the control of St. Johns. Udall was clearly in a precarious position. John Taylor apparently rethought his determination to make the St. Johns colony a success and haven for polygamists. On 30 January 1885, Eastern Arizona Stake President Jesse N. Smith sent Udall a letter from Mill Road, about fifteen miles south of St. Johns toward the White Mountains, informing him that President Taylor wanted no more of the brethren imprisoned and urging them to "at once repair to the place of refuge via Williams Valley or Pleasanton [New Mexico]" to the Casas Grandes River in Chihuahua, across the border in Mexico.  

Accordingly, forty to fifty families from

---


*Fish, "Arizona Stake,"* 36.  

*Jenson, "Biographical Sketch,"* Box 6, fd. 5, Udall Papers; Ellsworth, *Mormon Odyssey*, 79, 84. *Fish, "Arizona Stake,"* 36, says Wilhelm was also in hiding. Details of his life are sketchy, but George Crosby, Jr., "Stake Historical Sketch," 25 July 1917, Udall Papers, Box 1, fd. 13, identifies him among the founders of Erastus, Arizona.  

*"Colonies of Polygamists,"* *New York Times*, 7 December 1884, 8.  

*Jesse N. Smith, Letter to David Udall, 30 January 1885, Box 2, fd. 3, Udall Papers.*
St. Johns and the surrounding villages of Erastus, Round Valley, Luna, and Alpine migrated during the winter of 1885-86 to Mexico. Only Udall, the last polygamist leader and apparently untouchable on that charge, was left in St. Johns. While it is unlikely that more than 10 percent of the area’s Mormon men left for Mexico, the polygamist attack certainly halted migration to Arizona.  

However, anti-Mormons were not willing to accept Udall’s victory. A group in Prescott, possibly led by Stover or Howard, agitated for another grand jury in the Romney “homesteading fraud” case. No one notified Udall, Romney, or Crosby, so without testimony the grand jury indicted the three separately for perjury and scheduled a trial for the summer of 1885.

In the interim before the trial, McCarter’s paper was sold to Henry Reed in early 1885. McCarter, by 1885 a husband and father of two children, was still serving as court commissioner. Reed continued his predecessor’s policy of printing emotional tirades against the Mormons; and in 1885, the St. Johns Herald proudly proclaimed itself “the only exclusively anti-Mormon paper in Arizona.” Editorialts and articles focused on the group’s immorality (polygamy), disregard for law, and blind adherence to their leaders. Editorialts expressed “outrage” over the treatment of Mormon women and their “enslavement.” According to one article, “Women have been the greatest sufferers from the foul Mormon Ulcer.” Mormons were not “good Americans” because they were in thrall to domineering bishops who disobeyed laws and led them astray. Many editorialts invoked the memory of the Mountain Meadows Massacre, a tragic chapter in Mormon history.  

---

77Peterson, Take Up Your Mission, 234.
79“Every issue of the St. Johns Herald during 1885 contains numerous anti-Mormon articles as well as attacks on the Mormon paper, the Orion Era. Few issues exist of the Orion Era.
80“Not Persecution, Justice,” St. Johns Herald, 16 April 1885, 2; ibid., 19 March 1885; 16 July 1885, 2.
81St. Johns Herald, 6 August 1885 2; “Perjurer Must Go,” ibid., 20 August 1885, 2; ibid., 12 February 1885, 1. “A Few Points on Mormonism from All Parts
harboring murderers, inflicting blood atonement on sinners, and performing bizarre rituals. The Herald also urged Mormons to abandon their religion, publishing, for example, a speech by Judge Sumner Howard exhorting “Mormon youths” to “turn from their present beliefs and practices.” The paper then editorialized that the Church sought “to re-enslave followers, and in its effects degrades the race and lowers them to the level of the meanest animals.” Other papers in northern Arizona, like the Arizona Weekly Journal published in Prescott, warned about “the modus operandi of the Mormon Church in taking possession of Arizona,” assured its readers that the Church controlled all Saints, and hailed the day when “honest, individual settlement[s] shall be protected by the law against the polygamous hordes of Mormonism, sent out from Utah to occupy, control, and contaminate our beautiful Territory.” Increasingly the Herald and other papers attacked all Mormons, not just polygamists, thus reflecting and fueling the anti-Mormon sentiment. Eventually many claimed that “the Mormon [was] beyond reason,” and logically, beyond rights. The Herald even declared, “then by their own acts will they [have] declared war.”

According to Udall, throughout this trying period “the Mormons fought back and did not take the vilification lying down, though they carefully avoided acts of violence.” With Romney in

of the Country,” ibid., 19 March 1885, 1, contains stories of alleged Mormon atrocities and defections from the religion from numerous western states; W. L. Rusho and C. Gregory Crampton, Desert River Crossing (Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith Company, 1981), 26, 27, 43. In 1857, under the orders of Mormon leaders in Cedar City, Utah, a group of LDS men led by John D. Lee united with the local Indians to massacre about 120 California-bound emigrants, sparing only the youngest children. In 1877 federal authorities caught, tried, and executed Lee. Later evidence showed that Lee did not order the slayings but rather had become the scapegoat for the action. Juanita Brooks, The Mountain Meadows Massacre, 2d ed. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962).

83St. Johns Herald, 12 February 1885, 1.
85St. Paul Globe, reprinted in the St. Johns Herald, 30 July 1885, 2; Atlanta (Idaho) News, reprinted ibid., 30 July 1885, 2; ibid., 17 March 1885, 1.
Mexico, the Saints attempted to counter the Herald’s accusations in the Orion Era, now published by John B. Milner, who had arrived on 25 October 1884 from Utah to help the Mormons with their legal troubles.\(^86\) John Taylor continued to send monogamous “forces” to strengthen Mormon settlements in northern Arizona, and about 200 arrived in mid-June 1885.\(^87\) On 30 July 1885, the St. Johns Herald reported that Mormon leaders in Salt Lake City ordered the United States flag flown at half-mast on the Fourth of July to protest the federal pressures.\(^88\) Many interpreted this act to be treasonous—further proof that devoted Mormons like Udall obeyed no laws other than those of the Church’s.\(^89\) The Salt Lake Tribune, shocked, quoted President John Taylor’s statement that “the rest of the country are our enemies and we must not yield to them. . . . When they enact tyrannical laws, forbidding us the free exercise of our religion we cannot submit. God is greater than the United States.”\(^90\) The St. Johns Herald, in turn, often reported acts of defiance by Mormon leaders in Utah.\(^91\) While he awaited trial, Udall received letters from John Taylor, Apostle Joseph F. Smith, and Apostle Erastus Snow repeatedly referring to the Gentiles as “our enemies.” Apostle Brigham Young, Jr., assured Udall that “we will subdue the World.”\(^92\) Such open defiance of the national government made it easy for Arizonans to believe that Mormon leaders like Udall would not hesitate to break any federal law, including the terms of the Homestead Act.

In late July 1885, Udall and Crosby were arrested and sent again to Prescott. During the previous winter, Miles and Annie Romney and their children had fled to Mexico to avoid prosecution for polygamy. Catherine Romney and her child went to St. George, but

\(^{86}\) Udall and Udall, Arizona Pioneer Mormon, 116; Fish, Life and Times, 258.
\(^{87}\) “More Mormons,” St. Johns Herald, 18 June 1885, 1.
\(^{88}\) St. Johns Herald, 30 July 1885, 2.
\(^{89}\) Ibid.
\(^{90}\) Salt Lake City Tribune, 6 January 1880.
the records are silent on the whereabouts of his third wife. Udall later recalled that it “was doubtful if his absence in any way contributed to [my] subsequent difficulties.”\(^9\) Even before Udall and Crosby arrived, editorials rejoiced at the prosecutions about to commence. On 23 July, the *Herald* notified readers that “private advice from the Capital [Prescott] inform[s] us that the chances are good” that Udall would serve a penitentiary term in Detroit.\(^9\)

At the very least, the zeal of McCarter and the other ring members in continuing to press this questionable case seems highly misplaced. The West was rife with many more flagrant frauds. The Preemption Act of 1841 and Homestead Act of 1862 were open invitations for fraud. Speculators regularly used the laws for illegal purposes. Local settlers, to circumvent the “suitable housing” requirement, often rented portable cabins and wheeled them from claim to claim, hiring witnesses to say they saw a house on the land. Federal land agents were spread so thin that adequate inspection was impossible.\(^9\)

Presiding over the trial was Judge Howard Sumner, a law school graduate from Brockport, New York. He had practiced law in Michigan and been appointed United States Attorney for Utah Territory by Ulysses S. Grant in 1876. In 1877 he prosecuted the government’s case against John D. Lee and had also planned to prosecute Brigham Young for polygamy. After Young’s death in 1877, Howard felt that his “mission” in Utah was over and returned to Michigan; but on 18 March 1884, Arizona Governor Frederick Tittle appointed him Chief Justice, a stump from which he made numerous anti-polygamy speeches. His reputation as a jurist was sound, and many felt he “had a great love for the law,” which may explain his zealosness in upholding it against polygamy. The St. Johns *Apache Chief* relayed Howard’s warnings about “the designs of the foul and unscrupulous priesthood,” soon after he was appointed in 1884.\(^9\) The prosecutor was U.S. District Attorney James Albert Hansen, *Letters of Catherine Romney*, 113; Udall and Udall, *Arizona Pioneer Mormon*, 118.


Zabriskie, a colonel in the Union Army when he came to Tucson during the Civil War; he moved his family there in 1878 and was appointed by President Chester A. Arthur to be Attorney General of Arizona in 1881. Attorneys James A. Rush, Harris Baldwin, and John Herndon defended Udall and were paid by the Church.

Joseph Crosby’s trial began on 24 July 1885 with the empaneling of a twelve-man jury. Crosby pled “not guilty” to the charge of perjury; and on 28 July, the jury returned a “not guilty” verdict. Because Crosby’s testimony and Udall’s had been identical on the affidavit, a “not guilty” verdict seemed probable for Udall as well. However, Udall reported that Howard had not let Ruiz nor himself testify about the circumstances surrounding the affidavit and the jury deliberated for several hours, with several split votes. Udall also noted that Sumner “was frightful mad” when the verdict came back. Additionally, the St. Johns Herald portrayed Crosby as Udall’s dupe: he had “undoubtedly made the affidavit on the representation of that polygamous Bishop.” Crosby was released but stayed on for Udall’s trial.

On the morning of 3 August 1885, the jailer took Udall from his stonewalled cell in the Yavapai County Jail to the courthouse. There he was charged with perjury, to which he pled “not guilty.” Udall’s defense team began by challenging the jury selection as being hostile to Udall. Howard overruled the challenge on the grounds that it was “not specific in form,” meaning it was not worded

96John S. Goff, Arizona Territorial Officials (Cave Creek, Ariz.: Black Mountain Press, 1991), 100-103; Peterson, Take Up Your Mission, 229.

97Trial transcript, Box 6, fd. 6, Udall Papers. Additional information from the trial transcript comes from this source. Alfred Zabriskie Biographical File, Special Collections, University of Arizona Library. Baldwin defended Udall after he was arrested during the fence-jumping incident in 1882 and also for Udall’s first perjury indictment in 1884; Udall and Udall, Arizona Pioneer Mormon, 117; Baldwin advertised his specialty as “land business.” St. Johns Herald, 12 March 1885, 1, advertisement. None of the attorneys was LDS.


99Udall, Prison Journal, 11 August 1885.

100Trial transcript, Box 6, fd. 3, Udall Papers.
correctly. Zabriskie called the registrar of the U.S. land office, Thomas Ming, to verify Romney’s preemption forms, which were entered as evidence. Zabriskie stressed that the wording of the oath Udall had sworn stated that a full prosecution would be pursued for fraudulent statement. Alfred Ruiz then testified that the only structure on the Kitchen Springs Ranch was a ramshackle log cabin and “one of the rooms of the building had caved in.” Ruiz next stated that Romney always lived in St. Johns where he ran the Orion Era, adding that he saw the editor personally nearly every day in town during the disputed year.

During cross-examination, Udall’s attorney asked Ruiz, “And Sir, is it a fact that when parties come to you with a view of instituting procedures to obtain title to public land that they consult with you and seek your advice and that you give them advice in relation to the sufficiency of residence upon land which has been entered to obtain final title from the government?” Zabriskie objected to this question as “immaterial and irrelevant.” Howard agreed.

Udall’s attorney then unveiled the defense’s main argument. The crime of perjury necessitated intent to lie, to “willfully, corruptly and falsely swear to a material matter” under oath. Had Udall offered any other answer besides the “yes” that appeared on the homestead affidavit in answering whether Miles Romney “resided” at the ranch? Zabriskie objected and Howard sustained, noting that the written evidence was clear and unambiguous and therefore could not be contradicted with further testimony. Udall’s defense attempted four more times to ask Ruiz whether Udall qualified his answer. Each time Howard refused to let him answer. Thus, Howard excluded all testimony that Udall relied on Ruiz’s advice that abandonment was a matter of intention only.

Zabriskie then called eight other prominent Apache County residents, including Sol Barth, who testified that Romney had always lived in St. Johns and that the ranch cabin was dilapidated. Interestingly, Barth came as one of Udall’s witnesses, having broken with McCarter and the other ring members sometime in 1884.

Zabriskie then called eight other prominent Apache County residents, including Sol Barth, who testified that Romney had always lived in St. Johns and that the ranch cabin was dilapidated. Interestingly, Barth came as one of Udall’s witnesses, having broken with McCarter and the other ring members sometime in 1884. Udall’s

---

101 Compiled Laws of the Territory of Arizona (Detroit: Richmond, Backus and Company, 1877), 84.
102 David King Udall, Letter to Ida Hunt Udall, 29 July 1885, in Ellsworth,
lawyer attempted to admit evidence about the custom of leaving the land for long periods to live in town, but the judge denied its admissibility. Udall’s team thus had to rely on the relatively feeble argument that Romney lived at the ranch for weeks at a time during 1883. Several witnesses testified that they saw Romney’s sons on the ranch mending fences and building corrals, yet this evidence did not, apparently, prove Romney’s “residence.” When Udall was put on the stand, Zabriskie forced him to admit that Romney built a house in St. Johns in 1883. When asked if he knew where Romney resided from 1883 to April 1884, he answered “no, not positively.”

The trial lasted three days. After closing arguments by both attorneys, Howard admonished the jury that their “duty” was to try Udall on the charge prosecuted against him and not any other offense he may have been guilty of, a veiled allusion to polygamy. He also noticed that no man could be convicted of perjury for taking an oath to facts he was innocently mistaken about. The relevant facts of this case concerned “a fixed, permanent” home “continuously resided in” and not abandoned. Unfortunately for Udall, the evidence presented at trial clearly showed that Romney had never occupied the ranch, but just intended to move there in the future.  

Howard dismissed the jury at 4:00 P.M., and they returned thirty minutes later with a verdict of “guilty.” The marshals then took the bishop to an underground cell to await sentencing. After realizing the ambiguity of the case during the trial, Zabriskie privately asked the judge for a light sentence; but on Monday, 10 August, Howard sentenced Udall to three years in the Federal House of Corrections in Detroit. Udall remembered Judge Howard saying that “I had a fair trial, and was found guilty of the crime of perjury; and that a man of my intelligence was more culpable than were others.” Howard also intended to fine Udall five hundred dollars but waived it after hearing Udall’s heartfelt statement about his family’s hardships. The jailer then re-imprisoned Udall in Yavapai Jail where he began keeping a journal on the insides of envelopes. While waiting

---

Mormon Odyssey, 113.

103 Trial transcript, Box 6, fd. 3, Udall Papers.
104 Udall, Prison Journal, 6 August 1885.
105 Ibid., 10 August 1885.
in his cell, Udall wrote how he felt. "Oh God, please deliver me. . . . If I am to suffer imprisonment, let it be for my religion and not for the heinous crime that will be a disgrace to me and my family throughout life; What will my family do? No home of their own and no means to live on?"\textsuperscript{106}

On 2 September, Udall arrived in Detroit where he was assigned to make chairs. Prison officials, after witnessing his dignified demeanor, allowed him to bunk with Ammon Tenney, who had been sentenced to three years in the penitentiary the year before.\textsuperscript{107} President John Taylor and George Q. Cannon sent Udall a letter stating, "We and all your friends are perfectly satisfied respecting your innocence" and instructing the St. Johns' Ward to pay three hundred dollars to assist his family. When he received this word, Udall wrote in his journal, "I am Mormon and thankful for it."\textsuperscript{108} At the prompting of Udall's father, Taylor sent Hiram B. Clawson to Arizona to obtain letters urging a release and employed attorneys to Washington, D.C., to work for Udall's pardon.\textsuperscript{109}

However, the victory of the ring was shortlived. Some time before the trial, Barth had broken with the other ring leaders over unknown, personal conflicts. The others later accused him of destroying county records and fraud against the county and themselves. He was tried in Prescott, probably in the same courtroom in which Udall had faced Sumner, was convicted of destroying county records, and was sentenced to ten years in the territorial prison at Yuma.\textsuperscript{110} Lorenzo Hubbell, even at the time of Udall's trial, seemed to have misgivings about the prosecution. Since coming to St. Johns he had slowly formed more amicable business and civic relationships with many Mormons and softened his anti-Mormon stance. Ruiz,
although he was a member of the ring, likewise had strong misgivings about whether justice had been served. He had obviously been willing to testify on Udall’s behalf but had been prevented by Zabriskie and Sumner. He and Hubbell broke with McCarter almost immediately; a month to the day after Udall’s sentencing, these two, joined by several other prominent county officials, wrote to President Grover Cleveland, a Democrat, requesting that he pardon Udall. Even more tellingly, Zabriskie, the prosecutor, also signed this letter. Udall’s attorneys reinforced it with a separate letter detailing the ambiguous circumstances of the case. Either the ring had fallen apart, or Udall’s trial had, for these ring members, pricked even their somewhat leathery consciences with its obvious injustices. It is also possible that the Udall trial focused more generalized concerns about the extreme injury they were ruthlessly causing the Mormons of St. Johns. In any case, it seems to have been a turning point.

In October 1885, President Cleveland appointed Conrad Meyer Zulick as governor of Arizona. A former New Jersey lawyer, Zulick was a director of the New Jersey and Sonora Copper Company who had lived in Tombstone since 1884. Zulick, commissioned in late fall, 1885, promptly made overtures to court the Mormon vote against the strong Republican party in the territory. To secure their favor, he advocated easing the judicial pressure against the Saints. The climate had suddenly become favorable for clemency. Cleveland, reviewing the evidence and reading letters on Udall’s behalf, stated that “while the said Udall was technically guilty of the offence, it is not believed that there was a willful and corrupt intent to commit a crime” and promptly pardoned him. Early on the morning of Thursday, 17 December 1885, the bishop received the handwritten, 11 by 24” pardon exonerating him. Udall “fell down to thank and praise the Lord.”

111 John Lorenzo Hubbell, Alfred Ruiz, W. B. Leonard, Henry Hunning, Ernest Tee, C. L. Gutterson, William Rudd, Dionicio Baca, and E. C. Bunch, Letter to President Grover Cleveland, 10 September 1885; James Zabriskie, Letter to David Udall, 24 August 1885; Rush, Baldwin, and Herndon, Letter to Grover Cleveland, 11 September 1885, all in Box 6, fd. 4, Udall Papers. Gutterson is known to have been a prominent member of the ring.

112 Goff, Territorial Officials, 96-97; Wagoner, Arizona Territory, 221, 243.

113 Presidential Pardon, 12 December 1885, Box 6, fd. 4, Udall Papers; Udall,
By 4:30 P.M. on 23 December, he was home again in St. Johns. In late 1886, Cleveland pardoned all convicted polygamists. Thus, Udall served only three months in prison largely because of a fortuitous realignment in the St. Johns Ring accompanied by changes of heart by Hubbell and Ruiz, efforts by the LDS Church, and a sympathetic U.S. president.

David King Udall's trial culminated a five-year period of interethnic conflict fostered by the St. Johns Ring. Men like Solomon Barth and George McCarter, fearing the Mormons' potential political and economic power, had taken all of the steps within their power, whether legal or not, to retain control. Because the 1880s were times of strong sentiments against polygamy in particular and Mormons in general, the ring played upon anti-Mormon feelings to incite actions against the group and to establish alliances with Hispanics. By creating a scapegoat, they diverted attention from their illegal activities, such as ballot stuffing and theft against the county, and insured for a time that Mormon "whistleblowers" were silenced. They were able to silence the opposition newspaper by forcing its effective editor, Miles Romney, to flee to Mexico. Although it was logical to attack Romney for his polygamy, the ring did not hesitate to use the shaky claim of land fraud instead, which also proved an effective back-up attack on Udall. The court in Prescott almost certainly would have never tried Udall for perjury if it had not been for the strong encouragement from McCarter and perhaps Ebenezer S. Stover and Sumner Howard in Prescott.

Although Udall was convicted and sentenced, he was vindicated in the court of public opinion and, within three months, was pardoned by the U.S. president. Barth, who had seemed immune to all legal restraints for years, was convicted of fraud and destroying records. By 1887, McCarter lost his post as Court Commissioner, reportedly because of alcoholism.

Although Mormonism in Utah was only halfway through its worst decade, the ultimate outcome was still successful. In the face

Prison Journal, 17 December 1885.
114Ellsworth, Mormon Odyssey, 173.
115St. Johns Herald, 5 May 1887, 2.
of unrelenting federal pressure, new legislation, and threats of ever
stiffer penalties over the next few years, John Taylor’s successor,
Wilford Woodruff, issued a proclamation withdrawing Church sup-
port for new plural marriages in 1890. Utah was granted statehood
in 1896.

In Arizona, as a sign of the times, Udall remarked that Hubbell,
though once “a bitter enemy of the Mormon people[,] . . . when he
came to know us and we to know him, we became true friends.”
From July of 1887 to April 1922 Udall served as president of the St.
Johns Stake, an ecclesiastical honor that recognized his devotion to
the Church and his personal spirituality.117 In 1927, he capped even
that achievement when he was appointed president of the newly
constructed temple in Mesa, Arizona. Several of the descendants of
this once-despised polygamist bishop and wrongly convicted per-
jurer achieved prominence in Arizona and national affairs. Among
other respectable descendants, his son Levi became, ironically, an
Arizona Supreme Court Justice. Grandson Stewart Udall served as
Secretary of the Interior under U.S. presidents John F. Kennedy and
Lyndon B. Johnson. A second grandson, Morris Udall, served as

Today, St. Johns is still a thriving Mormon community set amid
the desert grasslands of northeastern Arizona. A huge elm, called
the “centennial tree,” planted by Udall in 1887, still grows in front
of the family home on the town’s main street. A plaque recognizes
him as the planter. Descendants of the Mormon Udalls and the
Catholic Barths still live near each other, go to school together, and
interact in common ways, though on much more amiable terms than
in the past century. As Udall said, once they “came to know us, and
we to know [them] . . . we became true friends.”

116 Udall, Arizona Pioneer Mormon, 181. Here, Udall is referring to a letter
Hubbell wrote Udall when Ida died in 1915. The two had been friends for years
prior to this date.

117 “Stake Presidents of St. Johns Stake,” Box 1, fd. 13, Udall Papers.

118 Udall and Udall, Arizona Pioneer Mormon, 181; my observations in March
1995; Mark E. Miller, Interview with St. Johns native, Lovine Brown Shields, January
1995; “LDS Church Celebrates 150th Anniversary of the Trek West,” and “Second
Ward Takes Top Prize in Pioneer Days Parade,” both in Apache County Herald, 1
August 1996, 8, 9.
INTRODUCTION
When I served as an LDS missionary from 1974 to 1976, the people in eastern Canada frequently asked me in surprise, "You have women missionaries?" They were used to seeing two young men dressed in white shirts and ties, but they did not expect to find Mormon women at their doors. While I did not explain the differences between men and women missionaries to these contacts, I could see the differences. Unlike the young men, I had not been encouraged to go on a mission. The men went when they were nineteen years old, but Church leaders would not allow me to go until I was twenty-one. I sensed that the Church saw the men as fulfilling Jesus Christ's command to his disciples, "Go ye into..."
all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). While women missionaries were allowed, even appreciated, they seemed to be afterthoughts.

That image has changed in the 1980s and 1990s. Many young women have planned on missions for years. Rather than snickering at “old maid lady missionaries,” some young men hope to marry a returned sister missionary who can share similar memories, commitments, and goals. Still, Mormon Church leaders do not encourage women to go on missions. They see marriage as women’s main goal in life and believe that missions should not delay a woman’s search for an eternal companion. For example, in 1971 Thomas S. Monson, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve and the missionary committee, stated that missionary work for women was “optional. We do not wish to create a program that would prevent them from finding . . . a proper companion in marriage, because that is their foremost responsibility if such is able to happen.” However, if women want to serve, “we are happy to have them.”¹ This position has not changed in the intervening twenty-five years. In February 1994 Apostle Boyd K. Packer defended the Church’s decision to ask every worthy LDS young man to go on missions without giving the same encouragement to women. He asked rhetorically, “Is that discrimination?” then illustrated the comparative importance of women’s marriage above their potential missionary service by giving a hypothetical situation. If a woman accepted a mission call and was in the Missionary Training Center but there received a proposal of marriage, according to Elder Packer, “we allow her to go home and be married.”²

Has this always been the LDS Church’s view of women missionaries? When women have served, what have been their experiences? This paper will examine the history of women missionaries in the LDS Church and the Mormon leaders’ views of sister missionaries. It will then present the results of a Charles Redd Center oral history project of women who served missions between 1930 and 1970.

These stories are so remarkably similar, no matter when they served, that this characteristic itself merits some analysis.

**METHODODOLOGY**

There has been very little research on women missionaries in the LDS Church. In about a hundred interviews conducted by the LDS Historical Department with male missionaries during the early 1970s as part of its James Henry Moyle Oral History Project, interviewers never asked about women missionaries, and elders rarely mentioned them. Perhaps elders had very little contact with the sisters, or perhaps the women's work was, for any number of reasons, "invisible" to the men. The interviewers, frequently Gordon Irving, the past director of the Moyle Oral History Project, asked specifically about women missionaries in interviews conducted with about fifteen mission presidents. Many had served in Latin America, Irving's research interest.

Traditional Church sources also had very little information on sister missionaries. Most mission historical records include a listing of programs and missionary transfers but do not include stories about missionaries. Quorum of Twelve and Missionary Department minutes are closed to researchers. One readily available source is the circular letters from the First Presidency to mission presidents, stake presidents, and bishops. Many of these up to 1951 are in James R. Clark's *The Messages of the First Presidency*, while others since that date are available at the LDS Church Archives. This archive also has some diaries and letters from women missionaries, but usually the collec-

---

tion focus has been on gathering mission histories. There has been no concentrated effort to tell the stories of sister missionaries.

Yet hundreds of women members have served missions, their memories forming a large but untapped and largely unrecognized resource. Prompted by this lack of information, I launched an oral history project through the Charles Redd Center for Western History at Brigham Young University, partially funded by grants in 1992 and 1994 from BYU's Women's Research Institute. We found interviewees initially through a press release issued by BYU's Public Communications Department, which appeared in the *Deseret News's Church News* and many Utah newspapers. Initially I requested contacts from women who had served before 1960, because I wanted to explore a period when comparatively few women served as missionaries. A second announcement expanded the time period to 1970.4

The response was immediate and gratifying. More than 250 women from throughout the United States telephoned the Redd Center or wrote. I mailed a survey form to each woman and 147 women completed them for a response rate of about 58 percent. A few respondents also completed surveys for deceased female relatives who had left letters, histories, or journals about their mission experiences. The women who responded served missions between 1910 and 1971.

From these surveys, we organized our interviews. I hired Rebecca Ream Vorimo, a BYU history student, as the interviewer.5 She had worked for the Redd Center as a transcriber before serving a mission from June 1990 to November 1991. She had been called to the Spain Seville Mission but, unable to obtain a Spanish visa, served several months in the Washington D.C. North and the Mexico Mexico City North missions before receiving her final assignment to the Mexico Torreon Mission. Rebecca was an excellent interviewer because her own mission experiences were fresh enough that she could relate easily with the women. Because Rebecca was a full-time student and because the Redd Center had limited funds,

---

4See for example, “Former LDS Women Missionaries Sought,” *Provo Daily Herald*, 10 April 1994, clipping in Redd Center files.

5As the interview citations show, Rebecca Ream married Pasi Vorimo in the spring of 1993 and used only her married surname after that point.
location became the most important factor in selecting interviewees. Most of the interviewees were living in Utah Valley and a few resided in Salt Lake County. Rebecca conducted fifty-six of the sixty interviews.

Rebecca and I developed an interview outline which included questions about early religious experiences, the decision to serve a mission, the reaction of family and friends to the call, finances, training before leaving on the mission, travel to the mission field, first impressions of the area, experiences contacting people, and relationships with companions, other missionaries, and mission presidents. The concluding questions were about what the woman enjoyed about her mission, what she found challenging, and the effect of the mission on her life.

The Redd Center’s method of identifying interviewees had built-in limitations besides those imposed by location. It was not random; women respondents contacted the Redd Center voluntarily, obviously because they wanted to participate in the project. Our respondents therefore felt good about most of their mission experiences; these positive aspects were no doubt further emphasized with time. Women who did not have satisfying memories of their missions probably chose not to respond to the Redd Center request either because they did not want to recall unhappy memories or because they did not think that the Redd Center wanted their views. Further studies, without these time and financial limitations, might find a random sample of returned LDS sister missionaries.

**SISTER MISSIONARIES: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

As I conducted my research, I learned that women missionaries have been part of the LDS tradition for many years. Calvin S. Kunz gathered the names of over two hundred Mormon women who were involved in missionary work from 1830 to 1898. The first women to travel with missionaries were Joseph Smith, Jr.’s, mother, Lucy Mack Smith, and her niece Almira. In 1831 they accompanied Hyrum Smith to Missouri to locate a temple site, visiting Lucy’s relatives in Pontiac, Michigan, en route. During the 1830s and 1840s, fewer than fifteen other women traveled with missionaries, usually their husbands.6

Despite this early activity, Church leaders disagreed about
sending women to accompany their husbands. It was not until 1850 that women's names appeared for the first time on the Church's official missionary lists. That year Jonathan Crosby and Caroline Barnes Crosby left for a mission in the Pacific Islands accompanied by Caroline's sister, Louisa Barnes Pratt, whose husband, Addison Pratt, was already in Tahiti. Louisa recorded in her journal that Brigham Young "said I was called, set apart, and ordained to go to the islands of the sea to aid my husband in teaching the people." However, also in 1850, Heber C. Kimball, then in the First Presidency, announced in general conference that "all elders when they start on missions . . . [should] leave their families at home, and then their minds will be more free to serve the Lord."  

Although Louisa Barnes Pratt wrote that she was "set apart" as a missionary, the rite may have been only a blessing. According to Susa Young Gates, the first women were not formally set apart until 1865. On 15 May that year, nine women were called to go on missions with their husbands. Mildred E. Randall, who went to Hawaii with her husband, was "set apart to administer to the wants of their husbands" and then to "teach righteousness to the people."  

Historian Carol Cornwall Madsen's study of women serving in Polynesia during the nineteenth century with husbands shows that the women had no formally assigned duties but rather made personal decisions about how and how much to be involved in missionary work. For example, Elizabeth Noall, the wife of Hawaiian Mission President Matthew Noall, wrote in 1895 that while some women "toiled hard in the two-fold duties of temporal and spiritual duties," others "take things easy' and . . . spend their time to no advantage."  

Furthermore, because there was no clear role for women missionaries, very few served and nearly all of the two hundred Kunz

---

6 Kunz, "A History of Female Missionary Activity," iii, 12-17.  
7 Quoted in ibid., 17, 19.  
8 Susa Young Gates quoted in ibid., 19, 30; Madsen, "Mormon Missionary Wives," 68.  
identified were married women accompanying their husbands. Between 1830 and 1864, an average of fewer than one woman missionary went per year. Between 1865 and 1878, the rate rose to nearly two, to four between 1879 and 1889, and to thirteen during the last decade of the nineteenth century. This sudden increase, according to Kunz, stems from a broad definition of missionaries. Mormons could serve missions to promote the auxiliaries in the local area, to study at schools in the East or in Europe, or to do genealogy. Between 1885 and 1900 at least 178 Latter-day Saints, both men and women, served genealogical missions. For example, of sixteen women set apart as missionaries in 1891, nine were genealogists. Typically, those engaged in family research volunteered, went to Salt Lake City, were set apart by a General Authority, and received a clergy discount train ticket. Apparently the ordination not only served as spiritual encouragement but also to qualify these workers for the substantial transportation savings available if they were formally identified as “clergy.”

The first single woman to serve a mission was apparently Christine Benton Anderson, who worked with the elders in her home town of Bornholm, Denmark, in 1851. Kunz found nine other widowed, divorced, or never-married women who served missions between 1851 and 1898. However, these women were not “certified” as missionaries. A 1890 article in the Young Women’s Journal, the publication of the Young Women’s Mutual Improvement Association, discouraged young women from going on missions. The author, “Viola,” wrote that “proclaim[ing] the gospel to the nations of the earth” was “not [their] mission.” Instead the young girls should focus on service at home. “Are not the souls of those born in Zion, as precious to the Lord’s sight, as those who are brought from afar?”

However, only seven years later, Joseph W. McMurrin, presi-

---

dent of the European Mission, asked for women missionaries. The next year McMurrin, Ephraim H. Nye, president of the California Mission, and George Osmond, president of Star Valley Stake, wrote separate letters to the First Presidency “in reference to the good which could be and is accomplished by lady missionaries from Zion.” McMurrin’s letter “gave instances in which our sisters gained attention in England where the Elders could scarcely gain a hearing.” I could find no reasons why these men asked for women missionaries. In an unpublished history of women in the Church written during the 1920s, Susa Young Gates commented on some advantages of having women go on missions: “It was felt that much prejudice could be allayed, that many false charges against the women of the Church could thus be refuted, while the girls themselves would receive quite as much in the way of development and inspiration as they could impart through their intelligence and devotion.”

In response to McMurrin’s request, George Q. Cannon, a counselor in the First Presidency, announced at April 1898 General Conference, “It has been decided to call some of our wise and prudent women into the missionary field.” Even before this announcement, Apostle Brigham Young, Jr., set apart Harriet Maria Horsepool Nye, the wife of Ephraim H. Nye, president of the California Mission, on 27 March 1898. She received a certificate identifying her as a proselyting missionary, apparently the first time this happened in the Church.

Four days later on 1 April, two single women were set apart as proselyting missionaries and assigned to England: Inez Knight and Lucy Jane (Jennie) Brimhall. Susa Young Gates explained, “[The] presidency of the mission made it clear that the same authority which called the men to their missions also called the women.”

---

17 Ibid., 53; Kunz, “A History of Female Missionary Activity,” 54.
quently, Knight's and Brimhall's work paralleled that of the male missionaries. They distributed pamphlets door to door, held street meetings, and participated in Church conferences. Because of health problems, Brimhall returned home in November 1898; but Knight continued her mission until 19 May 1900. She reported that some elders were uncomfortable with her presence, one instructing her, "Now take care of yourself because it is bad enough to have you here, without having you get sick on our hands."  

Lydia D. Alder, a member of the Relief Society General Board, wrote "Thoughts on Missionary Work" for the *Woman's Exponent* in 1901 applauding the efforts of the first women missionaries. They had "gone in peace and returned in safety. . . . They had the privilege of speaking on the streets of many lands, or in the places." She then quoted Francis M. Lyman, who had served as president of the European Mission, as saying, "The lady missionary is no longer an experiment, but an unqualified success." She did not elaborate on why Lyman felt they were successful. Since Lyman was then president of the Quorum of Twelve, did he encourage the calling of more women missionaries? Unfortunately, no records are available to answer that question. The number of women serving missions the next year, though, was not large. In 1902, 839 men and only 27 women (approximately 3 percent) left on missions.

Throughout the early twentieth century, the numbers of women missionaries remained small. Many Church-wide appeals for missionaries spoke only to men. For example, the First Presidency, then consisting of Joseph F. Smith, Anthon H. Lund, and Charles W. Penrose, wrote a 1912 Christmas message urging: "There are constant calls for additional missionaries. Especially are experienced elders needed in lands where other languages than English are

---

20 Mangum, "The First Sister Missionaries," 64-65.
21 Quoted in Gates, "Missionary Work," 34.
Three months later in March 1913, the First Presidency wrote to stake presidents: “We are greatly in need of more missionaries. We have received a number of requests from the various missions for more elders.”

However, only two years later, this same First Presidency was appealing for women missionaries. In 1915 they told stake presidents, “We are greatly in need of lady missionaries in the United States Missions.” The women were to be “physically and financially able to perform missions” and “good, steady, representative women, not too young, with a good education and knowledge of the Gospel” and “experience in the auxiliary organizations.” The letter especially appealed for a “few stenographers.” A 1916 letter also requested “lady stenographers to labor in the Eastern, Southern, Western and California Missions.” In 1917 the *Young Women’s Journal* proudly announced that 668 women had served as missionaries in the previous five years.

World War I slowed missionary work throughout the world. In 1914 Church leaders withdrew all missionaries from Europe but explained: “The missionary work in Great Britain has been continued as well as in other parts of the world, and will be carried on as the Lord may open the way, but will not be abandoned entirely.” However, once the United States entered the war in 1917, the number of missionaries dropped. There were no First Presidency letters commenting on this development; however, in 1919, after the war was over, Anthon H. Lund and Charles W. Penrose, on behalf of the First Presidency, told stake presidents: “The war appears to be over and our young men are being mustered out of the service. . . . Brethren, we need missionaries.” They encouraged bishops to check their membership records and “get every available man who

---


26 First Presidency, to Serge F. Ballif, 20 January 1915, and First Presidency to President Serge F. Ballif and Counselors, 5 August 1916, ibid. 4:335 and 5:34-35.

is worthy of recommendation and financially and physically able to go.” There was no mention of women missionaries. 28

I found one article and two letters published during the 1920s that referred to women missionaries. In 1921, Apostle David O. McKay published “Our Lady Missionaries” in the Young Women’s Journal. He confessed that, twenty-two years earlier as a missionary, “I [was] averse to the idea of calling ‘Lady Missionaries.’” After seeing two successful women in the Scottish District, he still wondered, “Were they unique? . . . The experience of the intervening years has changed me; for many an instance has driven home the fact of the sweetness, potency, and permanency of the work of our lady missionaries.” A recent around-the-world tour of missions had convinced him that the women were “not only equal but superior to the men in ability, keen insight and energetic service.” 29 A 1922 letter to a stake presidency signed by Charles W. Penrose and Anthony W. Ivins explained, “All of our mission presidents are calling for Elders. . . . Several of our missions are in need of lady missionaries—sisters who are not too young and who have good educations and have been active in the auxiliary organizations of the Church at home.” Later that year, President Heber J. Grant joined his counselors in asking stake presidents to make sure that all missionaries, “brethren and sisters,” were in good health before they were called. 30

During the rest of the 1920s and most of the 1930s, the First Presidency issued very few calls for missionaries, but most of these mentioned women. In 1933, Heber J. Grant, Anthony W. Ivins, and J. Reuben Clark sent a “Word of Appreciation” to all missionaries, praising them for “following the example of the Master,” and commenting, “In one respect we have deviated from the custom of the primitive Church greatly to our advantage, we have included women as well as men in our missionary system.” A 1934 First

30 First Presidency to Joseph R. Cardon and Counselors, Cache Stake, 1 March 1922, ibid., 5:211-12; First Presidency to Joseph E. [sic] Cardon, Cache Stake, 9 December 1922, ibid., 5:221.
Presidency (President Grant, David O. McKay, and J. Reuben Clark, Jr.) request for missionaries also included women: “All of our missions are calling for additional laborers. We do trust that as economic conditions improve that a goodly number of brethren and sisters will be recommended.” In 1935, Heber J. Grant, J. Reuben Clark, Jr., and David O. McKay were pleased with an increase of 417 missionaries in that year, despite “present financial difficulties.” A year later Church leaders organized missions in stakes and emphasized that most of the missionaries should be “Seventies, but . . . High Priests and women may be called to serve.” In 1940, this same First Presidency cautioned stake presidents to recommend only “worthy young men and women to represent the Church as missionaries. The Mission Field must not be looked upon as a reformatory.”

Although the manpower shortage caused by World War II might have opened missionary opportunities for women, the First Presidency’s circular letter on the subject prohibited their calling: “In view of this existing emergency, and of the exceptional hazards which will now be incidental to missionary work, we ask you to discontinue the recommendation of lady missionaries until you receive further instructions.” This policy, with few exceptions, continued throughout the war. A 20 November 1943 letter said, “The policy heretofore announced not to call sisters into the mission field during the emergency and in the absence from the missions of brethren of the Priesthood to take the lead in missionary service, still obtains” with three exceptions: stenographers when needed, schoolteachers serving only during the summer, and wives accompanying husbands who were too old for the draft.

From World War II to the present, the policy has varied.

---


32 First Presidency to Presidents of Stakes and Bishops of Wards, 23 December 1941, ibid., 6:143.

33 Circular Letter, 26 July 1943, Missionary Instructions to Presidents of Stakes and Bishops during World War II, 20 November 1943, ibid., 6:114, 204-5.
During the Korean war, Church leaders worked out a cooperative arrangement with the U.S. Selective Service. The First Presidency, then consisting of George Albert Smith, J. Reuben Clark, and David O. McKay, told “stake and mission presidents and ward bishops” in 1950 that the Church would not call young men on missions who had received “Certificates of Acceptability” from the federal agency. It also stated, “Young men should be twenty years of age before they depart for their missions” unless they had completed two years of college or been in the military. Those men had no age limitation.

Despite this severe limitation on the numbers of men available for missions, Church leaders did not ask for more women. Instead, they also placed restrictions on them. According to the letter, “Young women should be twenty-three before they are recommended for missionary service.” (It is not clear when this age limit was made a policy, but it had been in place as early as the 1930s.) The letter continued: “Because of special requests from mission presidents for more experienced help, the age limit has temporarily been lowered to twenty-one.”\(^\text{34}\) Even this policy was temporary. The next year David O. McKay, during the first general conference he presided over as President of the Church, told stake presidents and bishops not to recommend women until they were twenty-three.\(^\text{35}\)

Until 1955 the LDS Church continued its “self imposed” quotas and cooperated with the United States Selective Service boards when calling male missionaries.\(^\text{36}\) During this time, the First Presidency’s circular letters retained the age policy on women missionaries and also raised the age limit on male missionaries to twenty. A 1952 letter reiterated these policies and continued, “Please do not ask us to make exceptions to these age minimums unless further instructions are issued permitting such.”\(^\text{37}\)

In January 1953, as mission presidents appealed for more office


\(^{35}\)David O. McKay, Report of the Semi-Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 7 April 1951 (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, semi-annual), 81.

\(^{36}\)First Presidency to Stake Presidents, 1 September 1955, First Presidency Circular Letters, Historical Department Archives of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (hereafter cited as LDS Archives), Salt Lake City.

\(^{37}\)First Presidency to Presidents of Stakes and Bishops, 14 March 1952, ibid.
help, this same First Presidency asked stake presidents to look for "a few competent stenographers and bookkeepers . . . among sisters who are at least twenty-one years of age." Submitting a woman's name for consideration though was not to be considered a call.\(^{38}\) With more women coming to work in the offices, the First Presidency told mission presidents that it was "inadvisable to keep a [male] missionary in the office during his entire term of service." Instead, "one or two of the young women" could do the work.\(^{39}\) By July the First Presidency informed local leaders that they had all the women they needed as stenographers except those speaking foreign languages. "This fact, coupled with the hope of getting more young men into missionary service has led us to suspend permission to recommend young women under twenty-three for missions."\(^{40}\)

In 1960 the First Presidency responded to mission presidents' on-going appeals for more missionaries in two ways. First, in May they encouraged the mission presidents to use more local members as missionaries and to operate the Church organizations. Second, they dropped the age requirements in June for some men and women missionaries. Men could serve missions at nineteen if they had completed two years of college or one year of college and six months of military service. All American men over eighteen were required to register with the Selective Service and were eligible to be drafted unless they had a deferment. Women would continue to go at twenty-three; however, local Church leaders could recommend twenty-one-year-old women with office skills "who were sufficiently mature and able." Just one month later, the First Presidency allowed all men to serve at nineteen but retained the policy on women's ages.\(^{41}\)

In 1964 the First Presidency dropped the age for sister missionaries to twenty-one but warned sternly, "It is hoped that normal social opportunities leading to proper marriage will not be inter-
rupted nor disturbed by such recommendations. Those young women who do not have reasonable marriage prospects but who are personable, qualified and worthy may be recommended.” The only major change since that point has been a 1971 policy establishing the term of missionary service for single women and couples as eighteen months instead of twenty-four.

This sister missionary policy has stayed the same since the early 1970s. In 1997 Church leaders typically do not call women until they are twenty-one and most serve for eighteen months. There are some countries where native missionaries serve at a younger age and for less time because of educational requirements for men and women and military obligations for men.

While many missionary instructions in the First Presidency letters have applied to both men and women, some have focused on women. In 1979 the Church leaders asked mission presidents to be aware of special health problems of couples and older single women. A 1982 letter focused on missionary safety. After giving general instructions, the Church leaders explained, “We are especially concerned about our lady missionaries, and your particular attention is needed in regard to their welfare and safety.” The letter said mission presidents should watch where women lived, where they worked, especially at night, and who they taught, cautioning against women teaching men without adult member chaperons. Sister missionaries were not to use bicycles unless women in the country normally rode them, and they should not ride at night or in areas where automobile traffic was heavy. The letter concluded, “You should make sure that these principles and any others that are necessary for your lady missionaries [are stressed] repeatedly. You must also act promptly at the first sign of danger, before a threat becomes a crisis.” In August 1994 the Church leaders published a

---

42 First Presidency to Mission Presidents, Presidents of Stakes and Bishops, 12 February 1964, ibid.
43 First Presidency to Mission Presidents, 8 March 1971, ibid. There is considerable flexibility for older couples. Women over forty may be called to serve for only a year; and couples may choose to serve six months, a year, or eighteen months.
44 First Presidency to Mission Presidents, 6 December 1979, ibid.
45 First Presidency to Mission Presidents, 19 May 1982, ibid.
pamphlet giving dressing guidelines to just women. The publication included pictures of acceptable dress and emphasized, for example, that skirts must be at midcalf.⁴⁶

**NUMBERS OF WOMEN MISSIONARIES**

With the Church’s changing but always reluctant policy about calling women as missionaries, how many have served? To answer that question, I examined the missionary lists in the LDS Church Archives—a chronological list on microfilm of all of the missionaries called. I chose random years, starting with 1930 to examine the same period covered by the Redd Center interviews, and counted how many women were set apart during a selected month. Usually I chose January because the numbering started at the beginning of each year. After 1961 the mission list was arranged alphabetically for the entire year, so it was impossible to do only one month. Figure 1 shows the number of single women compared with the number of single men who served on missions. While the number of total missionaries dropped during World War II and the Korean War, the number of sister missionaries rose. However, when the missionary force increased again after the Korean War, the percentage of women dropped.

**WOMEN’S EXPERIENCES AS MISSIONARIES**

What type of experiences did these women have on their missions? The oral histories in the LDS Church Archives and those conducted by the Redd Center provide a partial answer. The most interesting conclusion is that missionary stories—those from men and women—did not vary much whether they served in the 1930s or the 1960s. Their narratives were very similar to what I might tell about my mission. We all spent most our time knocking on doors. We all contacted people in public places. We all wanted to teach people the gospel. And the results (not very successful) were also the same.

Details, of course, differ. For example, while I stood with a display board at a mall or a university campus, missionaries in the

---

⁴⁶Pamphlet, 11 August 1994, ibid.
Numbers of Elders and Sisters, 1931-1961

*Numbers represent the missionaries set apart in January of each year, except for those with *, which are June
1930s and 1940s sang and preached on a street corner. They had no standard lessons (adopted in the 1950s). They handed out pamphlets (tracts) instead. They sometimes rented public halls for illustrated lectures on Mormonism or even on Utah. Teaching people in their homes was called cottage meetings, and the content could vary widely.

The post-World War II missionary boom changed many things. In 1948, the Anderson Plan, one of the earliest standard plans, was developed in the Northwestern States Mission by Richard L. Anderson, later a professor of Church history and religion at BYU. Missions adopted this plan on an ad hoc basis. In the 1950s, the first standard plan used Churchwide was a set of six lessons that the missionaries memorized word for word, no matter what language they were teaching in, supplemented by flannel board pictures first, then with a series of pictures placed in a looseleaf (a flip chart). In the early years, the missionaries called the people they were teaching “friends”; later missionaries called them “investigators.”

Other differences included the missionaries' work with members. By the time I served my mission, most areas had organized congregations run by the members. Missionaries occasionally had to help, but that was not their main responsibility. However, up through the fifties (and even later in international missions), missionaries directed church activities when members were few and inexperienced. Missionaries served as branch presidents and even in the women’s auxiliaries if there were no sister missionaries in their districts. Women frequently organized Primaries for members and nonmembers, hoping to find nonmember families interested in religion. They also routinely served in the women’s auxiliaries.

The tasks sister missionaries performed on their missions have also changed. Many women in earlier decades worked in the mission office as secretaries, stenographers, and clerks. However, women from later decades more frequently concentrated strictly on proselyting. My mission may not have been typical, but the president did not allow sisters to work in the office. I never heard an explanation for this policy. He may not have wanted to stereotype women as

---

secretaries, he may have found it tidier to have secretarial positions available as part of the hierarchical arrangement of offices that priesthood-holding elders could move up in, or he may have found it simpler in avoiding elder/sister romances to not let them work together in the office.

Despite these variations, the stories in the oral histories sounded the same. Missionaries remembered dramatic stories of success or failure, summarizing routine experiences with a few generalizations. Their missions were turning points in their lives where they made important decisions about their religious beliefs. They defined their greatest happiness as finding people who accepted their message and joined the Church. Their greatest challenges were persuading people to listen; their greatest disappointments were people who listened but who would not join. Often, as I read the interviews, I could not tell whether the women served in the 1930s or the 1960s from the stories that they told.

**PATTERNED STORY-TELLING**

This similarity and patterning in story-telling demanded more investigation. Folklorists, whose work has strong parallels with that of oral historians, have asked corresponding questions. According to William A. Wilson, Mormon and Finnish folklorist and former director of the Charles Redd Center, “As we attempt to pass on knowledge of certain recurring human situations through the spoken word . . . we tend to develop structured narrative patterns, or molds, that give shape and meaning to the stories we tell about these experiences. As a result, narratives recounting all of these events might . . . all tend to sound alike.”\(^{48}\) In other words, as potential missionaries talk to relatives about their missionary experiences and listen to the homecoming addresses of returning missionaries, they develop a missionary pattern in their minds. When they go on their own missions, they already have a mental selectioning process at work, identifying which experiences are “important” (e.g., conversions) and which are “routine” (attending Sunday meetings), provid-

---

ing precedents in dealing with difficult situations (e.g., discouraging days, problems with a companion), and even suggesting the appropriate language in which to appraise experiences. Thus, when it is their turn, as a returned missionary, to tell their stories to their families and other Church members, they have models that explain and give meaning to their experiences. And thus the cycle continues.

Wilson also explained that missionaries tell two types of stories. First, there are the stories that they tell among themselves. By telling these stories, the missionaries establish common ground with friends who shared the same experiences in the same mission or who had similar experiences in other missions. Second, missionaries tell stories to other people, often to encourage others to go on missions.49

Kathleen Flake, a returned sister missionary, dramatized the differences between these stories in an *Exponent II* article in 1976. She recalled eating at McDonald’s with four friends, three of whom had served missions and one of whom had not. When the woman who had not been on a mission asked, “What do I need to do to prepare for a mission?” the others responded with answers such as “pray,” “read the Book of Mormon,” and “be flexible.” When Flake was alone with one of the returned missionaries, she asked about those responses. The other woman responded, “And then, Sister, get ready for the biggest shock of your life.” Flake continued, “That’s all we said to each other about the incident. I guess that means we didn’t need to say more. We knew what we meant.”50 In other words, there were coded messages that other missionaries—in this case, sister missionaries—understood. But these women would not tell those stories to prospective missionaries. Even though the Redd Center interviewees were talking to a returned missionary, they came from another generation and wanted to explain their missions in positive terms. The stories that they told were similar to those related in their homecoming talks or to any other stranger who asked about their missions.

Folklorist Kim S. Garrett who studied family stories identified

---


some needs met by the creation and maintenance of traditional accounts: "Every family that recognizes itself as a unit has its own taboos, legends, and traditions. It even has its own language which is built on shared experiences and expresses common values and goals. . . . Family lore, like other folklore, not only mirrors the group's habits, motivations, and aspirations, but also acts as a cement that welds individual members of the group together in time as well as space." Family stories "and the morals extracted from them are simply vehicles used by the family to pass its ideals and modes of conduct." 51

Folklorist Jan Vansina agrees: "Every tradition has a purpose and fulfills a function." One function is to provide unity through shared experiences. Another purpose is to teach proper behavior. Vansina explains: "In every society, each role or status is modelled after an ideal to which every holder must conform. . . . Approval is accorded the closer an individual approaches to the ideal norm, and disapproval the more he deviates therefrom." 52 Missionary stories provide models of how those devoting their lives full-time to preaching the gospel should behave. They also suggest ways that members should continue to rely on God and share their testimonies after they return from that full-time service.

The positive experiences of missionaries strongly influences the telling of missionary stories. As an analogy, folklorist Steven J. Zeitlin studied courtship experiences among twentieth-century Americans. In the high level of frequently repeated patterns, he found objective evidence of Leo Tolstoy's intuitive observation, which forms the first sentence in his famous novel, Anna Karenina: "All happy families are alike but an unhappy family is unhappy after its own fashion." 53 The stories in my interviews can, arguably, be used to show that "all happy missionaries are alike." Unfortunately,
I do not have examples to show if “unhappy missionaries are unhappy after their own fashion.”

A final reason, though, why all the stories sound the same is because whether women served in the 1930s or the 1960s they had the same assignments. They had limited ways to describe knocking on doors, typing reports, and organizing Primaries. For example, as a missionary, I spent most of my mission knocking on doors. Just as on many days Mormon Church President and diarist Wilford Woodruff recorded only, “Worked on the farm,” sister missionaries recalled the routine of tracting each day. Only extremely good or the very bad encounters stand out in the memory. While interviewees could recount a typical day, the only specific memories they had of endless tracting were of people who let them in or of those who slammed the door in their faces.

Women Missionaries’ Stories

Many common themes shape the telling of Mormon women’s missionary experiences. I will focus on five: mission calls, tracting experiences, relationships with elders, general feelings about the mission experience, and overall effects of the mission. Although other themes are available—relationships with companions, the comfort or spartaness of the missionaries’ housing, modes of transportation, memorable members, experiences with the mission president and/or supervisory staff—I chose these five as being typical of missionary work in general for both men and women and also to show how women matched their personal experiences with the patterned narratives. I chose the stories at random from different decades to underline my point about their similarity and report at least two stories on each theme from two different periods.

The Mission Call

For all the women interviewed by the Redd Center, the mission experience began with the call. Nila Albrecht Carlson grew up in Fremont, Utah, graduated from high school in 1933, and worked at a local store for a couple of years. Then “I decided I would like to go on a mission. I talked to the bishop about going. Of course, he was anxious to have me go. I think we’d had only one other girl in our town that had ever served a mission, so this was something
special.” Carlson left for the North Central States Mission in October 1935.54

Ingrid J. Anderson grew up in Idaho Falls, Idaho. During World War II, she worked for an insurance company in Salt Lake City and attended the Capitol Hill Ward. She recalled, “One Sunday in 1944, the bishop of that ward called me into his office and asked if I would go on a mission. A mission had not entered my mind before that time, because not many lady missionaries had been called. Most of the elders had returned from their missions by that time and were in the military. Calls were being made to girls who worked in offices with the thought that they could somewhat hold the missions together until the elders returned.” When asked how she felt about the call, she replied, “It was a surprise, but I was quite pleased about it.” Anderson also served in the North Central States Mission.55

Bonnie Brown Marshall, a resident of Los Angeles, was working in Salt Lake City in 1961 and living with roommates her own age. She recalled, “The Church had just lowered the age for lady missionaries to twenty-one. My friends and I all talked about this and agreed this was a great opportunity for some girls to get to go on missions. . . . We were so glad that this was happening. But it was not for us. We were really socially active. . . . At that time there was quite a social stigma on being a lady missionary.” Marshall mistakenly remembers that the previous age was twenty-four (it was actually twenty-three), but her perception that “the attitude was, if you couldn’t get married, you went on a mission” was common. According to Marshall, her friends just “talked about [going on a mission, then] set it aside, and went to our homes at the end of the summer.” However, the idea did not end for Marshall. Her bishop in Los Angeles asked her to come in when she returned home. She feared—correctly, as it turned out—that he would call her on a mission, so she avoided him for three

54 Nila Albrecht Carlson, Oral History, interviewed by Rebecca Ream, 12 January 1993, 3, LDS Missionary Oral History Project, Charles Reed Center for Western Studies, Manuscripts Division, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah (hereafter LDS Missionary). The women are identified by the names they used at the time of the interview, even though they served their missions exclusively as unmarried women.

weeks. Finally her conscience forced her to meet with him. After thinking about his invitation, she decided it was something she “should” do. She served in the East Central States Mission.

The circumstances for these calls thus showed considerable variation. One woman approached her bishop; the bishop initiated the request for the other two. The women who responded to the survey reported almost equal numbers of those who initiated the conversation with their bishop and those whose bishops first approached them. While a few were reluctant to go at first, of course, all those interviewed eventually went. The mission call was the opening to a new experience.

Typical Mission Tasks

After a short stay in Salt Lake City, the elders and sisters traveled to their designated missions. First they went to the mission headquarters where they met the mission president. The president assigned the new missionary (a “greenie”) to work with a veteran missionary (a trainer) in a specific area. While the women talked about a variety of mission experiences, three frequently mentioned topics were tracting, working in offices, and working with the Church’s auxiliary programs. The tracting stories best illustrate the point that all the stories sound the same.

Thelma Cropper from Globe, Arizona, went on a mission to the Northern States Mission in 1931 and spent the first fifteen months of her mission in Grand Rapids, Michigan. She explained, “We’d go tracting from nine to twelve every day, five days a week. We went singly, not together, because there were so few missionaries. There were only about two thousand in all of the world. It was quite a responsibility to go alone and tract. We wouldn’t be able to do that now.” The only specific experience she recalled from tracting was meeting a “spiritualist with the table. She was going to convert us. Needless to say, we didn’t get very far . . . converting her.”

Nancy Tenney Anderson, an Englishwoman, served in her

---

57 Thelma Cropper, Oral History, interviewed by Rebecca Ream, 14 January 1993, 2, 5, LDS Missionary.
home country between 1946 and 1948, immediately following World War II. She had a companion in Birmingham who “loved tracting, and I loved tracting. . . . I can remember one week we went tracting . . . from dawn to dark. . . . We would go out, and we would tract and tract because [my companion] loved to walk. They were long streets, long roads, and little country lanes. It didn’t matter where. . . . We just would go out, and we would tract to our hearts’ delight. . . . There was an excitement. We would knock on the door, and we wouldn’t know who would come to the door. It wasn’t frightening like I would imagine it can be today in some instances.” She recalled being met with two typical but opposite reactions: some who had lost relatives during the war were looking for a new faith, and some had lost all faith because of the war.58

Wydonna Jeanette Bodily Andersen of Berkeley, California, went to the Australian Mission in 1960. When she first arrived, her companion “took me out tracting straight off even though I had a miserable cold. To this day that first street is the street that stands out in my mind. The house is vague, and I can’t remember the family. We walked in, and Sister Peterson said, ‘Okay, Sister, this is your discussion.’ We had flannel boards. Anybody can look at pictures and tell a story. I’d heard her do it once. So I did it, and I bore testimony to the investigator that I knew Joseph Smith was a prophet. I was so shocked. It just came out, and I knew! That street was for me. That was where I was converted or finally found out I was converted.”59

These women’s stories about tracting are focused on its highly routine nature and the many hours they devoted to it as a missionary activity. They recalled specific instances only when they had special experiences such as Andersen’s receiving a testimony or Cropper’s contacting a spiritualist. Except for details like the comparative rarity of sister missionaries in the 1930s or the war-caused reactions of people they tracted out, the stories could be interchanged without creating difficulties in the time frame when each served.

59 Wydonna Jeanette Bodily Andersen, Oral History, interviewed by Rebecca Vorimo, 12 May 1994, 6, LDS Missionary.
Tracting is also one of the areas of missionary work where the experiences of sisters and elders are virtually identical in how the stories were shaped: the hours were long, the work was routine, and the results were comparatively sparse. However, other sources reveal that many mission leaders and missionaries believed that sisters got into more doors than elders. James A. McRae, president of the Western States Mission, headquartered in Denver, Colorado, around the turn of the century, felt that women “seemed to get access to homes that cannot be opened by the Elders.”60 A YLMIA lesson in the Young Women’s Journal in 1917 agreed, “When tracting in a large city, a lady gains admission to many homes closed to elders. Honest hearted women whose husbands or fathers, suspicious of strange men, object to their having Gospel conversations with elders, are permitted to learn of the Gospel from the lips of the lady missionary.”61 An elder reporting from the East Central States Mission in the 1940s praised the women for getting “into homes where elders have not been accepted.”62

Interviewees agreed with this assessment. Helen Turner Starley, a young widow from Delta, Utah, went to the British Mission in 1958. She and her companion were assigned to a town that had shown itself inhospitable to “several sets of elders. . . . Maybe I’m prejudiced,” she confessed, “but I think that we did get into homes where fellows couldn’t.”63 However, there are no records by which to ascertain whether this commonly held belief is accurate. No study has yet been done on the comparative success of men and women missionaries at being invited in for a further discussion after a “door approach,” as missionaries’ self-introduction is now called. Perhaps the stories grow out of an intuitive sense that housewives, more often home during the day than men, feel more comfortable talking to two women and are reluctant to let two men enter their homes. Enid

---

Poulson Peterson, who served in the Western States Mission in the 1930s, expressed this reasoning. “Many women stayed home in those days, and they felt more confident in inviting two girls into their home than two men. We averaged about four houses in a morning tracting before we were invited in. . . . The elders would sometimes go all day on a cold day and not be invited in. In that regard, women were more successful.”

Tracting stories are also a good example of how missionaries fit their experiences to an established mode. Since all missionaries spent at least some time knocking on doors, those were the types of stories that women and men were used to hearing in homecoming talks. They entered the mission field expecting to spend significant time tracting—almost as a test of their diligence and endurance—and therefore found that portion of the mission field meeting their expectations. As a result, their mission narratives including knocking on doors as a component.

Because nearly all missions had rules about finding new investigators by tracting, knocking on doors therefore measured obedience and, consequently, formed the foundation for inspirational stories about divine direction. A very common story is, “We were going to quit, but we knocked on one last door and got in.” When returned missionaries tell these stories to Church members, they help bind the group together, reaffirming the belief that God blesses missionaries for serving him. The stories also show that God blesses those who worked long hours and follow mission rules. Tracting is a short-hand way of communicating that the missionaries obediently worked long hours and of confirming that hard work brought blessings.

Relationships with Elders

Just as Christ sent his disciples out by twos, Church leaders typically assign Mormon missionaries companions. Although a missionary also works periodically with other missionaries, including district and zone leaders or other supervisors, the overwhelming majority of a missionary’s time is spent with his or her companion.

64Enid Poulson Peterson, Oral History, interviewed by Rebecca Vorimo, 3 May 1994, 14, LDS Missionary.
The expectation of spending every waking moment (except bathroom time) in the presence of another person can easily become a source of strain, especially when exacerbated by personality differences or incompatibilities. The Redd Center asked interviewees to comment on their relationships with their companions and with other missionaries. While not all the women interviewed described stress-free relationships with all of their companions, there was an underlying sense that they were doing the Lord’s work and needed to overcome difficulties. Since they frequently told the stories to emphasize the importance of missionary work, they usually downplayed any differences. However, that does not mean that some did not have problems of incompatibility.

Although all of the interviewees talked about their companions, I have chosen to focus on the sisters’ relationships with elders for a number of reasons. First, because missionary work is defined as the responsibility and religious duty of men in the Mormon Church (but as optional for women), the presence of women in the mission field can be interpreted along a range of responses from “partner in the work of God” to “unwelcome intrusion.” Second, in a culture as strongly oriented toward marriage and family as Mormonism, the presence of unmarried men and women in the same locale automatically raises courtship potential that, given the context, must also be suppressed or worked around carefully.

The first conclusion from the interviews is that the level of interaction among sisters and elders varied widely from mission to mission. Thelma Cropper who was in the Northern States Mission in 1931 said that the sisters “got along really well with” the elders. Since there were very few missionaries, sometimes an elder would be assigned to work without a companion. The sisters frequently invited the companionless elder to lunch. “We thought as long as there were two of us there, it was legal,” she explained, affirming the rule that two missionaries of different genders could not be alone together. She felt elders and sisters, as missionaries, did the same work. It was different “only inasmuch as a female might present it differently than an elder might but not greatly. . . . They would go tracting and then meet with anybody they could.”

65 Cropper, Oral History, 5, 7.
Lorna Steadman Mockli, serving in the Northern States Mission in 1949, acknowledged that "there were a few romances among missionaries; but their mission president tried to prevent personal interests from developing by articulating no-contact rules: "They were supposed to be in their part of town, and we were in our part of town." As a result, "we didn't ever do a lot with the elders. We'd meet together if there was something to plan . . . [like] district conferences." Their proselyting methods were "about the same. They tracted just like we did." 66

Ruth H. Cardon arrived on her mission in Hawaii in July 1955. Her mission had much more relaxed rules than Mockli's. "It was not uncommon for the sisters to invite the elders for dinner. I never saw any inappropriate behavior between elders and sisters. It was always good fun. We had lots of outings on P-days." She also recalled a mixture of experiences: "You flirt with some, and you wonder how some people ever got on missions. You wonder at the elders who were what we now call chauvinists. We didn't have that term in common usage back in those days. Some elders who were district leaders were a little inflated in ego. I didn't get along with them as well." 67

The second conclusion that can be drawn from the interview data is that the sisters not infrequently felt they were perceived negatively by at least some elders. Some sisters felt that some elders resented the presence of sister missionaries. Clara Jensen DeGraff, who served in the Northwestern States Mission from 1939 to 1941, recalled: "The elders were very disdainful. In the first place, they didn't think girls should even be there. They felt missions were a duty of elders, and they were a privilege for ladies. They told us that frequently. In the beginning, they just tolerated us. They didn't think we were useful." 68

Judy Dianne Jorgensen Call, who served in the Cumorah

66Lorna Steadman Mockli, Oral History, interviewed by Rebecca Ream, 2 March 1993, 9, LDS Missionary.
Mission, New York, from 1967 to 1968, echoed this feeling. Some elders, she sensed, had “this underlying feeling of ‘I guess you’re on a mission because you can’t get married or something.’ That kind of underlying feeling I resented. I was out there because I knew I was going to serve a mission.” She continued, “There was also a feeling sometimes with the elders, ‘Oh, we have to take care of the sisters.’” Nancy Tenney Anderson, an Englishwoman whose mission was in Britain from 1946-48, however, felt that the elders provided “a kind of protectiveness there [that] I don’t know whether you would find now or not but it was really great.”

Elaine C. Carter, serving from 1966 to 1968 in the Alaskan Mission, was acutely aware of her minority status. There were “probably never more than a dozen lady missionaries at one time,” in a mission of about two hundred. She recalled: “In every area that we went into, we had to convert the elders to sister missionaries.” Part of the need for “conversion” resulted from the sisters themselves. Although “a number . . . were really good,” she was grimly aware of female predecessors who had not been an asset to the mission. “They were sick a lot. They caused contention in their districts. They didn’t keep mission rules. They flirted with the elders and called them late at night. They did a number of things that were not appropriate. So every area we went into one of our jobs would be to convert [the elders] to the fact that lady missionaries had a place in the mission field.”

Eka Paia (Su’a) Palmer grew up in Hawaii and returned to her parents’ native Samoa on a mission in 1967. There she concluded that sisters were the “hardest proselyters” but defined different roles for each: “Elders shouldered the leadership, but sisters affected missionary work through the spirit with which they carried their responsibilities. They certainly affected the morale of the district in which they worked.”

---

70 Nancy Tenney Anderson, Oral History, 10.
72 Eka Paia (Su’a) Palmer, Oral History, interviewed by Bryon Holdiman, 28
Each interviewee was asked to compare the work of the sisters with that of the elders, and most said they did the same things. However, some of the sisters who perceived negative assumptions about them established a competitive relationship to establish that they were “real” missionaries. Before Sherlene Hall Bartholomew left for the South German Mission in 1964, she had heard from her boyfriends that women missionaries were “sick whinies.” Strongly motivated to overcome that negative image, she stood up at the testimony meeting in the mission home held for new arrivals in Germany and “vowed . . . to outwork any elder in my district,” announcing that “they might as well be warned ahead of time.” The elders did not seem to resent her competition because “we had hard-working elders.” Looking back, however, she “[felt] bad about this attitude. The spirit of competition has no place in the work of the Lord.” She was ill for a long time after she returned home because “I wore myself to a frazzle.” 73

Clara Jensen DeGraff, a missionary in the Northwestern States in 1939-41, recalled that her companion once suggested, “Sister, let’s beat the elders this month. Let’s be the top producers in the mission.” DeGraff accepted the challenge, and the sisters’ companionship went on to place more copies of the Book of Mormon than the mission’s former top achiever, “Elder Hooks from Wyoming.” Not only did they achieve their goal of being “top producers that month” but “we did it again twice. It was very satisfying, raising many an eyebrow among the missionaries. We both loved it.” 74 Nancy Tenney Anderson said this competition sometimes led to problems. “Especially in Birmingham [England], there were some jealousy, some feelings, especially when we got more hours tracting than they did.” 75

It was harder to discover if these perceptions of the sister missionaries as either competitive and respectable partners or as “sick whinies” or romance-bent flirts were, in fact, part of the elders’

May 1994, 14, LDS Missionary.

73Sherlene Hall Bartholomew, Oral History, interviewed by Rebecca Vorimo, 9 June 1994, 18, 20, LDS Missionary.

74DeGraff, Oral History, 15.

75Nancy Tenney Anderson, Oral History, 10.
horizon of impressions about women missionaries. Although over a hundred elders were interviewed for the LDS Church Historical Department oral history project, they were not asked about sisters and rarely volunteered any information. I asked three male friends who had served during the same period as the interviewees how they felt about women missionaries. William A. Wilson, a missionary to Finland from 1953 to 1956, said, “When I entered the mission field, I subscribed to the widely held notion that sister missionaries were a flaky lot who had been unable to find husbands and who could make little contribution to ‘real’ missionary work.” However, his opinions changed as he “began working closely with sister missionaries.” He later married Hannele Blomqvist, a Finnish woman who served a full-time mission in her home country when he was there. Since then, both of their daughters have served missions and he has had returned sister missionaries in his classes, some collecting folklore stories. He summarizes, “Based on my mission experiences and on observations since that time, I now believe sister missionaries are more committed, hard working, and often more spiritual than the elders.” Thomas G. Alexander, who served in the West German Mission from 1956 to 1958, worked with sister missionaries in only one area but was impressed with their work, especially with the auxiliaries. Ron Shook, a Southern Germany missionary from 1960 to 1963, felt that elders’ opinions of sister missionaries were “slightly ambivalent. On the one hand, it was trendy to speak of them as a nuisance since they couldn’t do their own baptizing. On the other hand, it was well known but not spoken of that they worked much harder than most of the [male] missionaries.”

Although individual missionaries differed greatly in their ability to teach or in their effectiveness as proselyters, these differences did not seem to be related to gender in the recollections of either the elders or sisters. As a result, the one indisputable (and most obvious) difference between the two groups was inevitably highlighted. Male missionaries held priesthood while sister missionaries did not. Men could perform baptisms and other ordinances, giving them a pronounced institutional role. How important, however, was this fact in their day-to-day functioning as missionaries?

Very few of the sisters interviewed mentioned priesthood as a difference. Louie H. Greenhalgh’s viewpoint was typical. She had served in the Southern States from 1951 to 1952. When asked to
compare her work with that of the elders, she said, "I think we pretty much did the same things except they could give blessings, baptize, and confirm. . . . That didn’t bother me any. I had grown up in an LDS home, and it never occurred to me that women were being left out. I’m satisfied with what I do in the Church and don’t really care if I have to do other things. I get irritated when I hear people talk about the poor women of the Church and how they are not allowed to do things. They say they are underprivileged, I guess you would call it. It makes me really kind of angry because I’d never felt that I was left out." 76

One interviewee felt very strongly that, because elders had priesthood authority, the sisters should therefore defer, seek instructions, and "follow." Sherlene Hall Bartholomew, working in the South German Mission in the middle 1960s, resisted when a zone leader introduced what he thought was a new program. She had already tried this innovation and found it ineffective, so she initially ignored his suggestions. However, when she found that her work suffered, she reconsidered, adapted his suggestions, and felt this time that they worked. "I finally realized that I had to humble myself," she explained. "Even though this elder seemed like a real jerk, I was learning that the Lord honored both his priesthood authority and his leadership, leaving me jerking by myself." 77

Although it is popular to talk about gender-specific "ways of knowing," relationship values, and problem-solving styles, only a few of the interviewees identified any gender-related differences. Judy Dianne Jorgensen Call, a missionary during the late 1960s, explained, "I think women have a different loving compassion than the elders. We could pick up on concerns a little more." 78 Aldine Case Benson, who served in Tennessee just after World War II, met her husband while he was serving in the same mission. He "said to me many times afterwards, ‘Until I met you out in the mission field, I wondered why lady missionaries were out there.’" She explained: "I think that spiritually the lady missionaries can touch people. I think

77Bartholomew, Oral History, 18.
78Call, Oral History, 6.
of women as being more spiritual." She immediately qualified this generalization by adding that "I really feel like we had some outstanding missionaries in our mission field." But the more typical reaction was Benson's comment that the work "was just the same. I don't know of anything that was what you would call different."79

Feelings about Missionary Experiences

Elders and sisters liked and disliked the same mission experiences. They enjoyed meeting people. Elaine De Graff Walker, who served in the Northern States Mission in the 1930s, commented, "I love people. When I think about it now, I can see all these faces that I knew. They were just delightful. . . . I had some good spiritual experiences, too."80 Ingrid J. Anderson's experiences in the North Central States Mission in the 1940s were similar: "I enjoyed meeting so many different people and having the opportunity to talk with them about the Church, especially when they were interested and we could hold cottage meetings. It was a wonderful feeling when we held good meetings with the people. It was as though we were walking on air when we came home. In the blessing that Brother [John A.] Widstoe [an apostle] gave me when I was set apart before departing for the mission field, he said that I would receive great joy at the firesides of many people. How true that was."81 And in the 1960s Deanne Malmstrom Roberts, serving in Argentina, recalled, "I just enjoyed seeing a new country and learning a new culture and language. I enjoyed the great people we met. Argentines were really fun to get to know. I haven't kept in touch with any of them, but they were just always very friendly and open and fun. It was a great experience."82

Missionaries were disappointed when they did not find converts. But the shapes of missionary narratives provided them with ways of explaining and accepting this otherwise negative conclusion.

They frequently referred to their missionary efforts as "sowing seeds," an allusion to Jesus Christ's parable of the sower who scattered seeds in various environments (Matt. 13:3-8). They adapted the parable to build in an assumption that germination could be long delayed. Elaine De Graff Walker, who was in the Northern States Mission in the early 1930s, used this metaphor when she appraised her mission performance: "I was a hard working missionary. I filled out my little forms and did as much tracting as I was supposed to have done. I did all the things that I should have done. I made a lot of friends, but I don't know of very many converts I made. I hope I sowed some seeds." 83 Eva Coombs Whitaker, who served in the Northern States Mission 1946-48, used the same metaphor: "There weren't a lot of baptisms but I'm sure we planted seeds." 84

Some of the challenges the women mentioned were specific to a particular locale or living situation. Some struggled to learn a new language. Betty Jo Beck Ivie, who served in Germany in the mid-1950s, "had majored in German at BYU, so I was quite confident I knew the language." She was startled to discover "I couldn't understand anything or very little that was said to me in German. I could speak a little." Her first companion, a refugee from East Germany, "helped me with my German and my lessons." She especially had trouble in Feuerbach where "they speak a dialect called Swäbisch. It's close to the Swiss dialect. If they spoke Swäbisch, I was totally lost. If they would speak high German, I could catch some of it." 85 Jennie Jones who went to Switzerland in 1954, also had problems learning German. "I think the language was a big challenge. I remember writing in my journal, 'Will I ever learn this language?' I had a dream one night where I dreamed it was a year later and I still didn't know any German." 86 Other elements of the local culture were sometimes challenging. Jackie Webster Hainsworth of Philadelphia and Provo, who served in the Southwest Indian Mission in 1956,

83 Walker, Oral History, 2.
84 Eva Coombs Whitaker, Interview form, LDS Missionary.
85 Betty Jo Beck Ivie, Oral History, interviewed by Rebecca Vorimo, 5 May 1994, 3-4, LDS Missionary.
recalled, “The hardest thing was in the middle of the night walking down the hill [to the outhouse], but even that we got used to.”

Other difficulties involved the missionary schedule and constant rejection of their message. Rosemary Walker Christiansen, who went to Alaska on a mission in 1967, said, “Getting out of bed to do the studying in the morning was a real challenge for me.” She recalled with amusement once in Anchorage when she and her companion “woke up [only] a few minutes before [the elders] arrived” for breakfast; but they could not tell that the sisters had overslept because, as she overheard them say later, “Sister Walker is too happy and pleasant.” She continued, “I think we were really pretty good about getting out when it was time to contact. However it was frightening, scary, not knowing what we were going to face. Having to face door after door of people saying ‘no’ was also very difficult.”

**Effect on Life**

Returned missionaries in their homecoming talks frequently describe their missions as the “best two years” of my life. Marilyn Davis Prete, who went to England in the 1950s, attempted to explain why: “I think the total spirit of the Lord was in the mission field helping us at that time. It was one of the greatest things. That’s why people say it’s the greatest two years of their lives. At that point in time, the Lord is working overtime helping.” Jennie Jones, who served in Switzerland in the 1950s, remembered often thinking, “How can I last for two years? This is so hard.” But she repeated the familiar story when she returned. “When I came back, I said it was the most wonderful time in my life. It was when I looked back on it.”

Others felt good about their missions but specifically challenged the “best two years” formula. Enid Poulson Peterson, who

---

87 Jackie Webster Hainsworth, Oral History, interviewed by Rebecca Vorimo, 14 June 1994, 13, LDS Missionary.
88 Rosemary Walker Christiansen, Oral History, interviewed by Rebecca Vorimo, 19 July 1994, 8, LDS Missionary.
90 Jones, Oral History, 17.
served in the Western States Mission during the mid-1930s, observed, "To me, a mission was not the easiest two years of my life. Now that I have a husband and a family, maybe it was not even the best. But they were probably some of the most challenging years and surely among the most rewarding years of my life." Clara Ann Dilworth Perry who went to Texas in the early 1960s also challenged the "best two years" formula. "Heartaches and trials prepare us for greater things and greater missions even than a formal mission. I think that we have to let go of those wonderful years that we had in the mission field and go forward. Like I said, it was a springboard forward into something even better and greater. We should not just keep holding on and letting that still be our best year and a half or two years."  

Numerous interviewees and respondents to the survey described their missions with similar positive terms: "wonderful," a "foundation for life," a "springboard for life," and a "turning point." Jennie Jones said her mission "laid a strong foundation for me. I don't believe until I went into the mission field I really know what my testimony was. . . . I think it was a big help with my testimony and helped me be strong after that. Before that I just sort of took it for granted." Elva K. Miller, who served in the Southern States Mission in the 1930s, agreed: “I’m sure my mission gave me a background, a foundation. It gave me courage.” Kathryn Kelly Price said of her 1940s mission to the Eastern States, “I don’t know what my life would have been without my mission. I feel like it is such a foundation for me.” Rosemary Walker Christensen who served in British Columbia and Alaska in 1967-69 said, “During my mission was when all the

---

91Peterson, Oral History, 20.
93Jones, Oral History, 18.
pieces of the gospel came together. . . . It was the foundation to go from to move forward in my life.”

**SUMMARY**

I began my research project expecting to find unique historical developments or unexpected paradoxes in sister missionaries’ service. I found instead a remarkable historical consistency. Although Church leaders initiate calls and set policies that permit women to serve missions, their official attitude has remained the same since 1898: women are allowed to serve missions but they have never been encouraged to do so as a duty. Marriage has always been seen as women’s primary goal. Although comparative figures are difficult to obtain, the number of women serving missions in comparison to the number of men serving has always been a small fraction except when wars have severely restricted the number of men who have been called.

After their missions, most of the interviewees married and had families. They seldom worked outside the home but held numerous positions in their wards and stakes. They talked about how the mission helped in their new roles such as wife and mother and part-time Church worker. Aldine Case Benson explained that her mission “prepared me for the opportunity to teach my children and to hold the positions that I have had in the Church. Everything has revolved around the fact that I had that experience to draw from.” She felt that her mission “better prepared me for my life, the problems, the heartaches, and the things that I’ve gone through with family, children, and the death of my husband.” Nancy Tenney Anderson even felt that missions for women were

---

96Rosemary Walker Christensen, Oral History, interviewed by Rebecca Vorimo, 19 July 1994, 9. In addition to its obvious metaphors drawn from daily life, the “foundation” metaphor may reflect Ephesians 2:20: “And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.” This scripture, which every missionary since the 1950s has memorized as part of a discussion on the necessity for priesthood authority, found ready personal application to missionaries who taught, studied, and lived a constantly religious life. They saw the missionary years as the foundation of their religious lives, a time when Jesus Christ became the corner stone of their identity.

more important than for men because women "have the teaching of the children. Time and time again I find myself saying, 'When I was on my mission . . .'."\(^9\)

The few who did not marry or who were divorced or widowed at the time of their interviews also felt that their missions had helped them face their lives. Muriel Thole joined the Church in England and then served a mission there. After she was released, she came to visit former missionary companions and got a part-time job working at BYU. She later was hired as a cashier and worked for the university for thirty-six years. She commented that her mission "gave me a real strong faith prompting life. . . . I feel that my conversion was built upon by being a missionary and by being a missionary I made my life. I wouldn't know any life other than the LDS BYU life."\(^99\)

For most of the interviewees, their missions confirmed the importance of personal faith and signaled a major, full-time commitment during the eighteen months or two years of their service. It was the most intensive public Church service that they performed. It is no wonder that they searched for intense language to describe its significance in their lives.

LDS women who served missions between the 1930s and the 1960s did not have experiences very different from the elders who were in the field at the same time or from missionaries of other decades, including my own experiences in the 1970s. Other sociological and structural reasons aside, part of that reason is the patterning of Mormon missionary stories. Mormon teenagers learned what people did on missions by listening to homecoming talks. These not only inspired the young men and women to go on missions but also gave them a pattern with which to understand their own mission experiences. They absorbed the stories about the results of hard work, the need to obey the mission rules, and the growth of personal faith. Then when they went on their own missions, they looked for those elements and found them. When


\(^99\)Muriel Thole, Oral History, interviewed by Rebecca Ream, 30 September 1992, 6, LDS Missionary.
they returned, they repeated the stories and started the pattern all over again.

Another reason is that the structure of missionary work has changed relatively little over the years. While the terms used to describe the missionary work have changed, most missionaries still spend most of their time trying to meet nonmembers. Throughout the time period of this study, most of that time was spent knocking on doors.

Though it had never bothered me that, as a missionary, I did not have the priesthood and could not baptize, I wondered if other sister missionaries were concerned. The women I studied echoed my feelings. They accepted without difficulty that men’s ordination to the priesthood was largely irrelevant to the quality or the nature of the women’s missionary efforts. While the women’s movement has made women more aware of inequalities that emerge from differential treatment, such perceptions do not seem to have been significant for the Redd Center interviewees. Obviously a full study of how this larger social shift affects the attitudes, perceptions, and achievements of Mormon women currently serving missions is a topic for another study. According to William A. Wilson, “Not being required or expected to serve, but serving anyway makes the sister missionary nobler in my book than many elders.”

Missionary work is crucially important in the LDS Church, yet there have been very few studies about how the work affects the missionaries—elders or sisters. Instead, most research has focused on the histories of the missions. The Redd Center oral history project is a first step toward examining the experiences of women missionaries with some degree of breadth and depth. These interviews can be studied using a variety of critical theories to understand the women’s feelings about their missions. In addition, the folklore that women missionaries tell each other needs to be collected and analyzed. Only then will Mormons have a better picture of how the mission experience has affected young single women.

---

100 William A. Wilson, personal conversation, 25 September 1995.
101 William A. Wilson’s folklore students at BYU have begun collecting these stories, preserved in the Folklore Archives in the Harold B. Lee Library.
Issues in Writing European History and in Building the Church in Europe

Wilfried Decoo


INTRODUCTION

Although I found praiseworthy aspects in Bruce Van Orden's Building Zion, my honest appraisal is that it embodies many of the limitations that have more than once disturbed me about Utah-produced stories of the Church and its members in "foreign" countries. I realize that much of what follows must inevitably be personally painful to this book's author. I am sincerely reluctant to inflict such distress, and I seriously considered declining this review because of this personal dimension. But as a European Latter-day Saint with thirty-three years of experience in the Church, WILFRIED DECOO is Professor of Applied Linguistics and Educational Media at the University of Antwerp, Belgium. He is president of the Didascalia Research Center, advisor to the Belgian National Science Foundation, and director of international educational projects. At the University of Antwerp he has served as chairman of the Department of Education and as vice-dean of the College of Humanities. He has been a member of the Scientific Council of the Russian Ministry of Education.
I also felt that I had a responsibility to share my views—otherwise, I could not be honest in continuing to feel dissatisfied with future problems if I have not made a good-faith effort to explain, as objectively and carefully as possible, what I see as the limitations of this book. My sincere hope is that I may help American authors to be more sensitive to a number of aspects when they write books dealing with the Church in foreign continents or countries in preparation for the time when regional members may produce more of their own histories.

Like Van Orden, I write from the perspective of a devout Latter-day Saint. This also explains my occasional use of “we” and “us” when I want to make clear that I share in the responsibility of what we as a Church and as members are doing.

In the first part of this review, I will give a descriptive overview of the book. In the second part, I will substantiate my criticism in a number of general areas. The third part will assess Van Orden's analysis of the progress of the Church and offer alternate explanations. The fourth part will contain a few proposals that I hope will be helpful.

I realize that this review goes beyond a discussion limited only to the book's contents and that the form of the review essay allows me to discuss some items in a broader perspective. It is my hope that the concepts discussed in this essay will lead to an on-going dialogue on historiographical issues of concern to all writers and readers of Mormon history.

**Overview of Building Zion**

Chapter 1, a short introduction, sets the tone of the book: the glorious perspective opened by the recent revolutions in Eastern Europe brings to millions the restored gospel of Jesus Christ, a fulfillment of prophecies by LDS Church leaders. Here speaks a vigorous Mormon, recalling his own missionary work in the Germany of the 1960s in the shadow of the Iron Curtain. Chapter 2, “The Kingdom Rolls Forth,” sets the theological context for universal missionary work: The mighty directives of Christ to preach the gospel to every creature are now leading to a millennial fulfillment, with the United States as the “Lord’s Base of Operations” and the Church bringing peace, prosperity, and salvation to the nations of the world.

The next nine chapters provide a concise and fast-moving history of the main periods and events of the relation of the Church with Europe, illustrated with helpful maps and a number of interesting photographs. The remarkable missions of the early Mormon apostles to the British Isles are described in detail against the dramatic background of the U.S. Church's various movements in Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois (chap. 3). Then follows the expansion of the work in Britain and the beginnings in other European
countries in the middle of the nineteenth century, giving us an engaging overview of bold missionaries setting up the first branches amid sometimes severe opposition (chap. 4). Chapter 5 describes the major "gathering to Zion" of 1840-1900 of some 85,000 European converts to join the Saints in building Zion in America. Van Orden concludes rightfully that their contribution to the emerging Church "cannot be overstated" (p. 90). Chapter 6 surveys Church events in the various European countries between 1850 and 1914—a composite story of ups and downs, of growth and decline. The declines were closely related to the deteriorating image of the polygamous church in the United States between 1850 and 1980, with a slow reestablishment after 1890. The period between the two World Wars saw notable growth in Germany but much slower progress in other European countries (chap. 7).

Chapter 8, "Post-War Western Europe," begins in 1945 with Ezra Taft Benson's "miraculous journeys" into liberated and occupied zones, followed by the slow and steady growth towards the first stakes and temples, to the impressive area conferences of the mid-seventies. Chapter 9 recalls the "touching stories" of the pockets of Saints surviving behind the Iron Curtain until 1990 and the "miraculous events" that allowed the building of the Freiburg Temple in the 1980s. Chapter 10 describes the maturation of the Church in modern Western Europe from 1974 to 1996, missionary work expanding into new areas, new stakes being organized, new temples dedicated, and many more local missionaries called. Chapter 11 is a sequel to Chapter 9, extolling the new era of missionary work in Central and Eastern Europe. Chapter 12 concludes by analyzing the challenges ahead of us: cultural intolerance, materialism, hedonism, and secularism. Van Orden evaluates influences on the Church's future and returns to his starting point—the glorious perspective of the kingdom of God which will be established in all the nations of the earth.

This organization is easy to follow, with clearly organized chapters delineating major historical periods. Each chapter starts with an overview of the most relevant dates and events. Within each chapter, clear subtitles allow the reader to quickly distinguish the logical subtopics, usually a country-by-country survey within the period. The index is relatively detailed.

Van Orden consistently provides a contextual discussion to situate Mormon events within the major social and political events of the time, both in the United States and in Europe. He wants to understand the rationale behind missionary success or decline. Above all, the book is very pleasantly written, aimed at a broad LDS audience, with a balanced and welcome variety of general trends and concrete details, of description and vivid quotations.

Building Zion can thus be read as an engaging, faith-promoting,
inspiring book. It is the kind of book Mormons will enjoy reading. They will find pride in the obvious progression of the kingdom of God, will be impressed by the gigantic efforts of their leaders and fellow Saints, and will feel their souls stirred by page after page of growth, success, milestones, opening doors, and miraculous events. And indeed, a stirring story it is, from the beginnings in Preston, England, to the present temples and stakes in many places on the Continent.

My admiration for these qualities is sincere, and I fully recognize that Church leaders try to encourage testimony-building history. Van Orden's love for and devotion to the Church and the gospel breathe through his manuscript. It seems ungracious, even curmudgeonly, to criticize, yet I feel that *Building Zion* contains major deficiencies beneath its shining surface. The internationalization of the Church is a very important part of the future of the Church in the twenty-first century; it requires much more attention, much more critical attention, and much more scientific attention.

**CRITIQUE IN GENERAL AREAS**

I take specific issue with Van Orden in the following general areas: limitations of the sources used, inaccuracies in factual details and interpretations, stereotypes and generalizations, lack of intercultural understanding especially in relation to Central and Eastern Europe, and unfair charges of racial intolerance in European wards and branches. My comments include not only errors of fact, but also problems of perception and interpretation. These admittedly subjective matters invite further discussion and will, I hope, draw the attention of specialists better equipped than myself.

**The Sources and Their Limitations**

The discovery, critical evaluation, and objective use of original sources are crucial steps for the scholarly historian who wants to add new information, correct and refine former insights, and unravel the web of causes and consequences. These are not Van Orden's purposes. He only compiles from easily available secondary sources to write a popular history. *Building Zion* thus uses magazine and newspaper articles, LDS books and articles on European and British Mormon history, BYU masters' theses on European missions, and LDS biographies of major LDS figures. For recent

---

1 Typographical errors are few, but include Darmstandt instead of Darmstadt and Surinam instead of Surinam (pp. 62, 238). Church population figures are mistakenly given for "Europe" instead of "Britain" (p. 128). Henry D. Moyle "somberly" (soberly?) prophesies amazing baptismal success (p. 178), and the beginning of World War II is dated at September 1929 instead of 1939 (p. 121).
decades, the sources are increasingly limited to articles in the Church News, the Ensign, the New Era, and Tambuli (the English version of the Church international magazine for Filipino Saints). For example, Chapter 10, "Modern Western Europe," cites eighty-six sources in seventy-four notes; 63 percent are from the Church News or Church magazines (thirty from the Church News, nineteen from the Ensign, seven from the New Era, and seven from Tambuli), thirteen from unpublished papers written at BYU (presumably by some of "my hundreds of students, whose term papers have often been valuable . . . in my writing this and other volumes," p. xii), five from popular LDS books, two from Latter-day Digest, and one each from the Deseret News Almanac, the Provo Daily Herald, and the Journal of Mormon History—the only scholarly and professional source.

I found nowhere in the book a source that was not written in English. This linguistic hurdle is a serious one. In Europe 92 percent of the population speak other languages. Numerous books and articles have been published in European languages dealing with Mormonism from a European point of view. Among the non-English and non-LDS sources that remain untouched by researchers are police or ecclesiastical reports on early Mormon individuals and groups in Europe, texts of governmental regulations against the Church, or the travelogues of occasional European visitors to Utah who interviewed early Mormon immigrants from Europe. A major but often neglected source is the journals and letters of LDS converts written in their native languages. For example, Sybren van Dyk, a remarkable Dutch convert of the 1860s, kept a fascinating journal in Dutch. It describes how he labored heroically to build the Church in the Netherlands, emigrated to Utah in 1869, and returned twice to the Netherlands as a significant mission president (1871-74, 1880-82).

---


4Sybren van Dyk, Missionary Journal, 1871-74, LDS Historical Department Archives, Church of Jesus Christ of Lattteday Saints, Salt Lake City; Don E. Greathouse, "Sybren van Dyk, n.d., van Dyke family files, Sybren van Dyk, "Life Record," n.d., van Dyke family files. Although this material is available in the
Moreover, the domination of Utah-generated sources, especially from official publications, means that the focus is strongly on uplifting stories about Church "progress," not a balanced or in-depth analysis. In other words, public relations concerns rather than historical concerns seem to underlie the selection of material to reach the author’s goals.

A second problem is the lopsided focus on Americans. The book’s subtitle is "The Latter-day Saints in Europe." In point of fact, the book deals in very large measure with American Mormons temporarily in Europe, especially mission presidents and visiting General Authorities—their travels, meetings with members and missionaries, key speeches, units organized, and various endeavors to further the work. Twenty-two of the thirty-two portrait-illustrations show American LDS leaders and missionaries—all male. The European converts themselves, especially for the lengthy period from 1837 to approximately 1960, are usually treated statistically, not as individuals.

Yet crucial questions certainly must be: What was it like to be a European Mormon in the nineteenth century or first half of the twentieth century? What were the social, educational, political, and religious backgrounds of these people? What did conversion entail? What role did prospective emigration play? What happened in families when one or more members converted? How did family dynamics react to the conversion of only one? How were Mormon units organized and to what extent could converts participate in the organization? How were meetings conducted? What was different in teachings and practice compared to today? How did converts cope with the doctrine of plural marriage? How were gender roles implemented? What were the psychological and practical dimensions of the emigration decision, repeated so many thousands of times? These fascinating topics, which should have been at the core of the book, are painfully lacking.

More examples of local members are included in chapters of more recent decades where they make cameo appearances to briefly tell a
conversion story or give a short testimony. Snapshots of a few converts also adorn these later pages, sprinkled between the history the American visitors are making. Although they help relieve the American-only focus, these idealistic stories appear as isolated islands: there is not a word about the social and demographic backgrounds of these converts, the crises and adjustments in family dynamics caused by conversion, the adaptation to their non-LDS environment, their functioning in the LDS unit, the challenges to remain active, life in a part-member family, etc. I certainly do not intend this comment as disparagement of idealistic stories of Church members. I published numerous such accounts in Horizon, a Dutch independent LDS magazine (1982-83), and I often use them as powerful illustrations in Church talks and lessons. Rather, my criticism raises concerns about one-sidedness and shallowness in an important book meant to present "the Latter-day Saints in Europe."

A third consequence of using only secondary and Utah-generated sources is a lack of balance in the selection of the few members and events which typify Mormonism in each European country. Since Van Orden chooses only from among the pool of already published articles on European Saints in American LDS sources, these "typical" Mormons are overwhelmingly local leaders with American connections that brought them to the attention of the Church News or Church magazines in the first place. The advantages of original research and extensive interviewing in each European country are obvious. Such interviews would no doubt have produced a more representative distribution from the main European regions. For example, as a Flemish Belgian, I regret that Van Orden cited only a member from my own region but overlooked Wallonia, the French-speaking part of Belgium, where the Church has existed much longer and where stalwart members have served with distinction and faithfulness for more than half a century.

The fourth limitation is an unsettling question: To what extent can we trust the stories in Church publications, which Van Orden uses so abundantly, as objective historical sources? This is a delicate matter. The Paul H. Dunn debacle should have taught us how much damage can be done when personal accounts are embellished for greater effect. More than once, when I personally knew the situation well, I have noticed that stories about members in Church publications are sometimes superficially researched and that the desire to glorify our people leads across the border of truth. Once such a story has been published, it is difficult for loyal members to correct it, for this could be embarrassing both to the person presented in the story and to the person who tells it. But if the errors are never identified, what kind of history do we pass on to future generations? And if they are identified by outsiders, LDS credibility may be sadly
damaged. It is clear that we need a stronger ethical code for this kind of LDS journalism.

Fifth, I am also concerned about the student papers, most of them written between 1990 and 1994, that Van Orden draws on for a significant portion of his data. Although some graduate students are no doubt people of mature years and wide experience, it is not clear whether they or undergraduates are the authors of these papers. If the latter, how much accuracy and historical insight can be expected of young and inexperienced students, desirous to comply with certain expectations and working primarily for a grade? If they are American, they grew up reading accounts of Saints in other lands that were largely self-promotional. In other words, without careful training, it would be difficult for them to go beyond the received model of how such stories "should" be told and to ask critical questions of the published and authoritative sources they were researching. If the students are European, to what extent do they represent the average European LDS? To what extent do they feel obliged, perhaps unconsciously, to tell an embellished story of conversion and of Mormon conformity without flaws?

A sixth concern about sources for me is that, except for quotations, Van Orden does not give sources for the greatest part of his data. Certainly, a heavily footnoted text, both expected and desirable for a scholarly history, is not necessarily desirable for a popular history. However, this writing style greatly hampers the reader's ability to check dubious and controversial elements. Worse, not quoting precise sources for each element gives the impression that the author conducted much original research himself and became an expert through his own merits, while those who did the actual work are often not or not sufficiently recognized.

Concerns about Accuracy

Closely related to my concerns about sources are my concerns about embellishments and inaccuracies in telling the Mormon story in Europe. I understand that what one reader may uneasily call embellishment, a second reader may call simply a good writing strategy: deleting or minimalizing one's flaws while maximizing one's accomplishments. Van Orden commendably wishes to foster pride in Mormonism's European past. However, I feel that such an approach should remain within the limitations imposed by the facts. In my opinion, Van Orden did not do so.

Because I am familiar from my own research with the establishment in 1849-52 of the French Mission, it serves as a case in point in analyzing the accuracy of the account in Building Zion.

- "In 1850 the government of France . . . considered all public meetings a threat to the new head of state, Louis Napoleon. Consequently,
government officials forbade any substantial meetings of the Saints" (p. 60). This dramatic situation makes the missionaries’ struggle even more heroic, but it is inaccurate. The French Constitution of 1848, far from prohibiting public gatherings, had restored full freedoms of speech, press, and meetings and instituted universal (male) suffrage. A political conflict in 1850-51 developed between the General Assembly, which passed laws limiting universal suffrage and the press, and President Louis Napoleon, who strongly favored universal suffrage because of his immense popularity at the time. “All public meetings” were not considered a threat, and certainly not to the popular head of state. Restrictive regulations did exist, but they seem to have had little effect on early Mormon meetings, certainly not when John Taylor drew large crowds to public lectures and debates in Boulogne in June 1850 nor in December 1851 when a conference in Paris attracted more than four hundred. Only because it took place immediately after Louis Napoleon’s coup d’état was this well-attended Paris conference not widely publicized by the LDS leaders. And only by the end of Taylor’s mission in France were these substantial meetings made more difficult by regulations limiting the number in attendance to twenty.

- “Government officials kept a watchful eye on the missionaries. Elder [Curtis] Bolton even spent three months in prison in Paris” (p. 60). Certainly being imprisoned for the truth’s sake has made missionaries more heroic since the days of the Apostle Paul; and the risk of being imprisoned in France was real during the 1850s. However, I found no indication in any of the contemporary sources that Bolton was ever imprisoned in Paris, certainly not during the 1850-51 period where Van Orden situates it. References to Bolton’s mission in the Journal History of the Church, including some of his personal letters, do not mention imprisonment. Neither does his diary nor his correspondence with James H. Hart during the period he was in Paris. Curtis E. Bolton, Diary, 1838-53, LDS Historical Department; Edward L. Hart, “John Hyde, Jr.: An Earlier View,” BYU Studies 16, no. 2 (Winter 1976): 305-12. Given the silence in these obvious sources and, without a citation, it is puzzling to know where Van Orden found this information. (My thanks to Richard L. Jensen for additional archival research on this point.) Unfortunately, no sources at all are cited for this section about Mormonism in France (pp. 70-71, 328-31). To whom should this research, including possibly the errors, be attributed?
Napoleon became emperor in December 1852. He was elected as republican president in 1848 and reelected as such in December 1851 after his coup d’état. He did not “proclaim himself emperor” but was endowed with the imperial dignity by universal male suffrage with an overwhelming majority. The Constitution of 14 January 1852 and the subsequent presidential decrees cannot be called “martial law,” even if political repression became severe. Martial law was not instituted until January 1858, following an assassination attempt against Louis Napoleon.

- “Elder John Taylor, ordered out of the country, retreated to England” as a consequence of the alleged martial law in March 1852 (p. 61). It is indeed more heroic to be ordered out by a tyrannical dictator who has imposed martial law on his country than to simply leave as planned. But that is, in fact, what happened. Elder Taylor left Paris on 21 December 1851, not in March 1852, and arrived a week later in England. There is no indication that Elder Taylor was compelled to leave France. He may have been worried by the political turbulence, but he was not “ordered out.” The French police wanted to question him, but he did not learn of their desire until he received a letter from Curtis E. Bolton. Taylor himself refused a heroic reading of these events when he told a Mormon audience: “Some people have asked me if I was not pretty near being taken up and put in prison by the authorities of France. I might have been, but I did not know it.”

- Van Orden calls Louis Bertrand, an early French convert, “formerly a propagandist for the Communist Party” (p. 61). Conversion to Mormonism would no doubt be enhanced by such a background, but the designation is incorrect. A French section of the international communist movement was not founded until 1920 and adopted the name, “Parti Communiste Français” only in 1943. True, “communist” ideas and experiments, in a pre-Marxian sense of an idyllic utopia, had flourished in France since Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the eighteenth-century novelist and philosopher. But although Bertrand was political editor for Le Populaire, mouthpiece for French socialist Étienne Cabet’s idyllic “communist” Icaria, his personal pre-Mormon ideological convictions responded to the Messianism of Hoënè Wronski, who tried to reconcile religious dogmatism and political liberty. Bertrand’s conversion to Mormonism in 1850 was therefore easy; furthermore he had already spent seven years in the United States.

- Bertrand “wrote well, and many of his articles were published and

---

7 *Journal of Discourses*, 1:26; see also 6:259-60.
reviewed favorably in a prestigious literary magazine" (p. 61). The historical facts are, again, different. Bertrand published his "Mormon story," including the story of his personal conversion and an account of the history and beliefs of Mormonism, as a series of articles in 1861 in *La Revue Contemporaine*. I have never seen any indication that they were reviewed anywhere. These essays were later published as a book, and this book—not the articles—was mentioned in Charles Dickens’s literary review *All the Year Round* in 1863. To call this weekly journal a "prestigious literary magazine" exaggerates its status. And was the review "favorable"? After a sarcastic rendering of Bertrand’s defense of Mormonism, the reviewer concludes: "What is to be said of such a book as this, treating of such a people as the disciples of Mr. Joseph Smith? Simply that here is a new instructive leaf in the long long volume of credulity and imposture."

- Bertrand “also wrote a letter to Napoleon III, who responded by ridiculing the Latter-day Saints” (p. 61). This statement gives the impression that Napoleon III responded personally, in writing or orally, to Bertrand. This is not the case. According to Bertrand, M. Moquard, a private secretary of Napoleon, mentioned to Bertrand that the emperor read his letter, laughed at it, and tore it to pieces. While the evidence is quite clear that the emperor did not treat Bertrand’s letter respectfully, there is no report that he ridiculed Mormonism verbally while tearing up the letter and, though amused, did not order or even threaten to imprison or interrogate Bertrand or any other Mormons.

In short, although *Building Zion* tells an exciting tale of founding the Church in France amid dangers and alarms, the facts are sometimes quite otherwise. Furthermore, these seven examples of factual and interpretative errors all appeared in only two pages. LDS history is fascinating on its own merits; it does not require such shallowness of research and such inflation of sensational elements to hold the reader’s interest.

I performed the same exercise for a twentieth-century topic, a two-page description of the Church in Belgium, with which I am obviously familiar.

- "Over the centuries, both groups [the Walloons and the Flemings] have maintained a divisive rivalry" (p. 239). This statement, reinforcing the image of European ethnic intolerance which Van Orden emphasizes (see below) is a distortion of history. Van Orden should have written: "Over the centuries those two groups have always lived peacefully in close proximity,

---

never engaging in armed conflict with each other, and never causing even a single fatality because of their differences. They faced together the foreign powers who invaded their regions century after century and fought unitedly for their independence in 1830. Only in the late nineteenth century did a social and political Flemish movement arise that agitated for lingual and cultural rights. Although tense at times, the opposition between (some) Flemings and (some) Walloons never led to situations like those in Ireland or Yugoslavia. Belgian politicians became masters in the art of debate and compromise, always able to find solutions to their lingual and economic disputes. Walloons and Flemings have always felt deeply united at times of national joy or sorrow, even if Belgium is now slowly dissolving into a federation of more independent communities, as in Switzerland."

- "Beginning in the 1980s, street signs and important documents were printed in both languages" (p. 239). The data are wrong. Originally all aspects of Belgian public life (administration, law, school, army) were in French. The "Dutchisation" in Flanders came along through many laws, the first in 1873, then major ones between 1898 and 1914. Criteria for bilingual approaches apply only to Brussels and language-border regions. Minor changes and amendments have been ongoing since.

- "This rivalry between the Walloons and the Flemish was a hindrance to Church leaders trying to integrate all the various nationalities and languages into district and stake unity" (p. 239). I have been involved since the end of the 1960s with Church leaders from both lingual communities and as a long-time member of the legal association representing both Church communities. The best of feelings and mutual understanding have always characterized our cooperation. The financing for the maintenance of the Brussels chapel by various units caused some tension but had nothing to do with a Walloon/Flemish "rivalry." The integration of various lingual groups into one unit was discussed once. But since different missions have always operated (one for French speakers and one for Dutch speakers) and since there is a long-standing policy of creating separate unilingual branches or wards, the discussion did not proceed further. Van Orden is not justified in claiming that a Walloon/Flemish "rivalry" was hindering Church leaders or forcing them to take action different from their standard operating procedures.

- "The two languages spoken by Belgian citizens—French and Flemish (similar to Dutch)—have . . ." (p. 239). Belgium has three official languages, not two. The third, German, is spoken in the eastern cantons. "Flemish" is not an official language of Belgium; Dutch is. And it is not just "similar to" but identical, in grammar and lexicon, as officially determined by the legal "language union" between Flanders and the Netherlands—although there remain oral dialectal variations and some peculiar word choices in some
Flemish and Dutch regions. Since the author states in the same terms that “Romanian is similar to the Italian language” (p. 284), where these languages are very different, such comparisons reveal basic ignorance of European languages.

- “. . . Mons, forty miles east of Brussels” (p. 240). Mons is forty miles southwest of Brussels.
- “New milestones were reached in 1974 with the creation of the Belgium Brussels Mission” (p. 240). No mission was created at that time. The name of the Franco-Belgian Mission, created in 1963 with headquarters in Brussels, was changed in 1974 to the Belgium Brussels Mission, as part of the worldwide standardization of mission and stake names.
- “The Flemish members and missionary program, which had been part of the Netherlands Mission, were assigned in 1975 to the Belgium Antwerp Mission, but in 1994 missionary work among the Flemings was moved back to the jurisdiction of the Netherlands Amsterdam Mission” (p. 240). The information is inaccurate. The Antwerp Mission was closed in 1981 and the area reassigned to the supervision of the Netherlands Mission, then reopened in 1990, and reassigned to the Netherlands Mission in 1994.
- “In 1994, the Antwerp Belgium Stake was created for the Fleming members” (p. 240). The information is inaccurate. The stake also comprises wards and branches of the south of the Netherlands. We are sensitive about ensuring that our Dutch brothers and sisters do not feel excluded.
- Elder Charles Didier, “a linguist by profession . . .” (p. 240). Neither Elder Didier’s university degree (master in economic sciences) nor his career have anything to do with linguistics.

In summary, the three and a half pages analyzed here reveal eighteen errors and inaccuracies. If such a rate could be extrapolated to the book as a whole, it would contain about 1,500 errors and inaccuracies. Most readers tend to trust an author as the “expert” unless they encounter material on which they have first-hand information. On these two topics, which I know about from research (the opening of the French Mission) and from personal experience (conditions in contemporary Belgium), I found serious reasons to mistrust the general level of accuracy in this book. Even for a popular history, the standards of accuracy should be higher.

Stereotypes and Generalizations

Another characteristic of Building Zion which disturbs me is the use of stereotypes and generalizations. The first is the creation of a one-sided kind of “heroic” history. There is no doubt we need heroes—as examples, for inspiration, and for consolation. Yet the typology of heroism depends to a great extent on culture and fashions. There seems to be a strong tendency, fostered by the Church News and by Church magazines, reinforced
through conference talks and lesson material, to identify international LDS heroes as those who make great physical sacrifices, preferably under primitive circumstances. Recently I heard two American authorities, independently from each other, in two different European countries, tell the story of a poor tailor in a remote village who sold his sewing machine, his only means of income, to get to the very distant temple. In one story, the tailor was a Filipino who reached the temple after days of travel from island to island in a primitive boat. In the second story, the tailor was a Brazilian who spent days on a crowded and ramshackle bus. Van Orden tells similar stories: a family of eight crowds into a small van for a forty-hour trip to the temple (p. 252), a woman walks a dozen miles to attend church (p. 171), children are sentenced to imprisonment and hard labor (p. 113), a missionary has one side of his head “mashed” in (p. 129). These stories are indeed poignant, but heroism thus becomes a temporary physical sacrifice, easy to tell and to visualize and sometimes even misused for cheap, sentimental effects.

Our search for heroes must take us to examples of individual European Saints who have faithfully endured, especially when that endurance requires remaining active for decades in struggling branches torn apart by problems; providing local leadership in demanding positions with few resources; dealing with ostracism and mockery by relatives and former friends; surviving with healthy spirituality while enduring social and psychological distress; being the only Mormon in a part-member family, often for a life-time; being single in a Church that concentrates on temple-married couples with children, etc. The story of these quiet heroes is yet to be told. The story of the poor tailor, even if it is seen as a parable, does not address these struggles.

Furthermore, these poor-tailor stories have a darker subtext. What

11 The Church News series, “Pioneer Members in Various Lands” (begun June 1996) seems to continue the tradition of selecting for its subjects major priesthood leaders with American connections, a supportive wife in the background, and, if possible, dramatic life episodes. I emphasize: I do not disparage such stories per se; I only ask for more balance and a better reflection of reality, particularly since a very large number of exceptional “pioneers” in the international Church are women and singles who have “only” decades of patient loyalty to offer. Since Van Orden is preparing a number of books on pioneer members in every land (announced on LDS sites on the Internet) as part of the 1997 sesquicentennial celebration, a reiteration of this concern seems timely.
are we ordinary members doing to earn divine commendation? Average members, who have no spectacular one-time sacrifices to point to, may fail to see decades of loyalty in their true light, feel discouragement, or even fall prey to guilt. Worse, to outsiders, such examples exhibit one characteristic of a cult—namely exorbitant requirements. For example, members spending their life savings to attend a faraway conference with the Prophet certainly proves their devotion, but such a sacrifice could also be viewed as irresponsible, cult-like guru-worship. Publications about sects, their discussion in the media, and parliamentary investigations in France in 1995 and in Belgium in 1996 condemn such extreme demands. Although most LDS would know the reasonable limits of Church requests, our stories and talks about total sacrifice may miscommunicate to others (including some members), confirming that we are a sect. I would not argue that all such stories should be discarded. Some function as symbols and develop into sagas that carry our culture. But it should be obvious that more variety and realism are necessary to address real needs and reflect contemporary circumstances.

Another reason I am uncomfortable with such stories is that they tend to stereotype foreign members as bons sauvages, cheerful in their poverty, living in primitive villages and ethnic houses, attired in native dress (especially for souvenir photographs), and making their way over cobblestone streets, winding mountain paths, or palm-covered beaches. The cover illustration for Building Zion, a charming painting by Utahn Al Rounds, obviously typifies the “look” the author or the publisher wants to associate with Europe: a cobblestone street passing through a picturesque nineteenth-century village. Worse, such happy-native stereotypes often entail infantilization of the other, justifying and feeding (unconscious) American paternalism towards foreigners. An unintended manifestation of this paternalism may be the nonchalant, condescending, or less mature tone which I have observed that American visitors often adopt when they address a “native” conference audience.

---

12. My personal files contain dozens of recent press articles about this problem. Being obliged to sacrifice all personal belongings to the demands of a sect is at the core of the discussion on sects in several European countries and in the European Parliament. See also Jean-Marie Abgrall, *La mécanique des sectes* (Paris: Payot, 1996), 147-61. For the example of members spending their life savings to attend a conference, see Gerry Avant, “Tears Flow, Faith Grows as Filipinos Greet Prophet,” *Church News*, 8 June 1996, 4. The story is made even more pathetic because some of these members sat so far away from the stand that they could not even see President Hinckley’s face, only hearing his voice as their reward.
Building Zion deals in other popular generalizations: “The French way of life melds high achievement and exquisite leisure,” “Italian members talk and argue enthusiastically. They enjoy vehemently expressing their feelings and opinions,” and “It was and is a national trait [of Finns] not to share personal feelings with many people” (pp. 243, 250, 167). Such stereotypes do a disservice to the genuine diversity among individuals in any given country. Stereotypes and generalizations also appear in other topics but these will be discussed under the next headings in the review.

Intercultural Understanding and Central and Eastern Europe

Dramatic events during the research period of Building Zion guaranteed a prominent place in the book to the collapse of international communism in 1989. Van Orden sees the demise of communist regimes in 1989 as the fulfillment of prophecy, enabling whole populations, long deprived of freedom and religion, to listen to the Mormon missionaries and accept the gospel. “The Iron Curtain has indeed fallen,” he rejoices, “and millions of our Heavenly Father’s children have heard the gospel in their own tongue” (p. 267). I likewise truly rejoice in that thrilling perspective. But reality is more complex than this happy picture, and those bleaker realities are catching up to Van Orden’s grand expectations.

Since 1993 I have been interested in the missionary efforts of several foreign churches and cults in former Communist countries. A great deal of information about Mormon efforts and achievements circulates through Church channels, of course; but my extensive work in the Russian Federation also brings me into regular contact with high government officials, academic colleagues, and school teachers in many parts of the country. I also have educational projects running in Bulgaria and Romania, which are the source of many personal exchanges. With these friends, I often discuss religion, culture, and foreign missionary activities, including Mormon missionary activity.

In spite of what we would like to achieve and notwithstanding some local successes and rewarding experiences, the number of LDS baptisms is relatively low and, after the first wave, already diminishing. Some young units are already racked by internal problems. Rates of defection are already high in some areas. Some regions have taken political action to curtail the operations of foreign missionaries. And various newspapers have published negative reports on Mormons, calling them an infiltrating sect. As an example among press reports attacking the LDS Church in formerly Communist countries is Katerina Ruseva’s long article in Bulgaria’s Sofia Duma. She calls the Mormons the “CIA’s new generation” and claims they will “direct future Balkan conflicts” thanks to their microfilming of Bulgar-
ian archives, which they can sell to the Turks. The Genealogical Society of Utah is "a cover name for the Mormon sect" whose "tentacles have already penetrated into Bulgaria." 13 Although such reporting resembles run-of-the-mill nineteenth-century slander, it is clear we are not being welcomed with universally open arms. Moreover, concern about potential misuse of genealogical material is not misplaced. Ethnic purges are definitely not an impossibility in Eastern Europe, and it would be disastrous if local copies of our genealogical microfilms were to be used for such a process.

Another spectacular example of anti-Mormon bias happened in June 1996, when Russia's new political star Alexander Lebed railed against foreign religious groups, calling the Mormons "scum" and "mold" and lumping them together with the terrorist Japanese Aum sect. Political reactions from the West made Lebed back off a little, but his attitude remained negative: "How would they [the Mormons] feel if Russia launched an 'air raid' of Orthodox preachers on Salt Lake City?" 14 Lebed's attack should have been a cold shower for the Church. It should trigger self-examination about our skills at intercultural communication and our level of multi-cultural understanding. Was it opportune, culturally and politically, to publicize our conversion ambitions as we did in the early 1990s?

Van Orden, excited and optimistic about the great opportunities given to the Church by the sweeping aside of the Iron Curtain, allowed his triumphant Chapter 11, "Central and Eastern Europe" to circulate on open LDS sites on the Internet for months prior to the publication of the book. Did he realize that it would also be read by many East Europeans hooked on the Internet and interpreted as Mormon bragging about ideological invasion? In his enthusiastic and eagerly told story of the LDS vanguard authorities entering communist countries in the late 1980s and of the first pioneering missionaries in the early 1990s, Van Orden devotes not one word to the deeper feelings and the complex challenges of those millions undergoing massive changes. They are all presented as a passive mass, waiting to be liberated from religious ignorance by the gospel message.

In contrast, here are some of the concerns that I have heard my colleagues, friends, and professional associates from Central and Eastern Europe voice—concerns that we should at least be listening to. These people have passionate cultural, religious and political antecedents which we need

---


to better understand. In essence, they say: “We have the impression that outsiders like easy, black and white history. To them, in the former Soviet-Union, atheism and the harsh repression of the Orthodox Church had destroyed religion. They imagine that during the Communist regime all our churches were closed and stood deserted, that any believer was persecuted and killed, that the population at large was wandering in religious emptiness. Now that the Iron Curtain has been taken down, these foreign sects think it is their divine duty to fill that emptiness. What they don’t understand is the magnitude of our ancestral Orthodox faith, the deep-rooted traditions of our culture and our soul, the generations of dedicated priests who have always continued to nurture the millions, in spite of limitations or persecutions. What does the West know about our history? Even in the darkest days, our priests kept lighting the candles, opening the icons, and singing the medieval hymns. They kept doing their pastoral work; they were the constant refuge for the scared, the persecuted, the hungry. With little or no means, they kept the Spirit burning. How could we desert them now for a foreign cult?

“Who can understand the tragic depth of our past decades? In Russia the blood of 60 million men, women, and children cries from the gulag soil. And here we stand now, the guilty who never had their Nuremberg, and the survivors, suddenly cast together into this new society full of turmoil. As Solzhenitsin said, After all the mutilation, the perversion, the slaughter, we—we—must sanctify our ground again; we must find room for reflection and the difficult meeting of each other, without anger, revenge, nor suspicion. It is a monstrous but holy task. It can happen within the womb from which all Russians come—from our ancestral faith, within the walls of those paternal church buildings we all know and where we can forgive and be forgiven. Our ancient religion, with its unshaken Byzantine roots, is the place where it must happen, where it is happening. If democracy gives us finally any right, it is the right to have the time to do it on our own. But they do not give us time. The Baptists, the Mormons, the media preachers have been waiting behind the iron gates with the eagerness of vultures enjoying the weakening of an enemy they did not even have to fight. We did the battle for them, during decades of torment. But now that the gates are open, they plunge into our disarray, adding to the spiritual chaos.

“See how those juvenile Mormon missionaries come in, thinking they are making history, proud to step on former Communist ground, backed by a multinational system with millions of dollars, while we are trying to find some mortar and paint to restore the splendor of our buildings. It is easy to lure our young adults into listening to them: exciting contact with Americans, free English lessons, humanitarian help, new appealing imported goods of high quality. These missionaries gather for themselves
glorious stories, embellishing any experience, to tell back home to their congregations. But they leave behind hidden tragedies. Converts may indeed come rather easily, especially on society’s fringe, but most will leave again, quickly or slowly. We see it daily, this easy infatuation with things from the West, this quick accepting of an American utopia we all dream of, this fire of novelty. Then come the routine, and the disappointments, the pain, the loneliness. After only a few years, the newly imported foreign religions in our country count already many more defectors than faithful members. How much public dissent has been provoked, how many families disrupted, how much energy wasted, energy that we could have used for bringing peace among ourselves and building the highly needed national harmony?"

I do not necessarily agree with the preceding comments nor do I say that these voices are representative of all. But they help us understand Alexander Lebed’s indignation, which is a harsh phrasing of the resentment and anger felt by many in some of these countries. Can we understand their feelings? It is not because the Church gave Russia “thousands of tons of aid and ran relief programs worth $14.5 million,” as some Mormons remarked in their angry reaction to Lebed, that we can claim the right to snatch people from their familial and historical roots, as they see it. It should also be clear that “freedom of religion,” as now generally accepted in these countries, is not the same as “freedom to detach someone from his or her national religion.” The indignant U.S. reactions to Lebed’s statement claim this newly established “freedom of religion” in Russia but without making that culture-sensitive distinction.

The matter also includes a serious warning: in some of these countries legislation against foreign cults can easily be passed, the political constellation may shift, and the risk of persecution must be taken into account. The disturbing reality is that the Church has an evacuation plan for its missionaries, but not for its local converts. In one country I was told that the LDS Church would be wise not to keep membership records of its local converts—at least not in the country itself. In this context, perhaps some of the conversion stories from former Communist countries may be more troubling than they first appear.

15"Trials of Faith," Salt Lake Tribune, 20 July 1996, Internet-edition. Official LDS spokesman Don LeFevre also called attention to the Church’s “considerable humanitarian service in Russia over the past five years.” “LDS Church Officials Eager to Give Lebed Accurate Information,” Deseret News, 28 June 1996, Internet edition. Such patronizing reactions can be even more irritating to people who do not want to be treated, certainly not publicly, as a Third World country.
For example, Van Orden reports a *Church News* account of an eleven-year old Romanian boy with an orthopedic problem (pp. 284-85). Dragos’s mother appealed to the Mormon humanitarian missionaries in Bucharest, and arrangements were made to fly the boy to Salt Lake City for treatment. He stayed for three months with an LDS family, attended their ward, and was taught Mormon doctrine in “his Blazer B Primary class.” At Temple Square, he wrote in the guest book: “I want to be a Mormon.” After his return to Bucharest, missionaries taught Dragos and his parents and they joined the Church. Certainly generosity and compassion were manifest on his behalf—by the Church, the surgeons, and the host family. As Mormons, we can appreciate the story. But turn the situation around: imagine an eleven-year old Mormon boy from an impoverished area, sent for surgery to affluent Kuwait without his parents. Everything is paid for by a wealthy imam. The boy stays for three months in a Muslim home, attends the mosque, and is taught Islamic doctrine. Finally the lad returns to his Mormon parents, healed, but with the message: “I want to be a Muslim.” And this LDS family leaves the faith to become Muslim too. It is hard, under these circumstances, not to wonder if there was an element of manipulation of minors—perhaps unconscious—in Dragos’s experience, for which outsiders could reproach us. The point is: we need to become more interculturally conscious of how our efforts may be misunderstood and how they can undermine what LDS Public Relations is trying to build.

I cannot help fantasizing about what might have happened if the Mormon Church, rather than immediately sending in eager preachers to Central and Eastern Europe, had first offered major assistance to the crushed and needy national religions: funds and assistance in restoring their buildings, scholarships to their student priests, and books and equipment for their seminaries. The Mormon endeavor would have been unique.

**Charges of Racial Intolerance**

For me, the lowest point of the book was Van Orden’s description of racial and cultural intolerance within the Church. I realize that my strong feelings may color my efforts to sound objective, but I hope the following will explain my indignation. Let me first quote the specific passages: “From the 1960s on, increasing numbers of workers, refugees, and asylum seekers have spread into western Europe. Some have accepted the gospel and joined the Church, but as cultural outsiders, they have not always been welcomed immediately into local branches and wards” (p. 13). The author returns to this theme of intolerance as the first “challenge” facing Church growth in Europe (pp. 314-16). After two pages of moralizing on racial and cultural intolerance and after having stated that “the continent of Europe provides some of the worst examples of racial unrest, religious animosity,
ethic hatred, intolerance, and mutual distrust in the world," Van Orden adds:

Converts to the Church in western Europe are often not native to the country in which they are baptized. In fact, missionaries frequently find more receptive spirits among displaced peoples than among the English in England, the Dutch in the Netherlands, the French in France, and the Germans in Germany, for example. Consequently, congregations in country after country in Europe have struggled with accepting, fellowshipping, and assimilating new, culturally different members. Young missionaries filled with the Spirit of their calling to reach out to "every creature" have been confused and disappointed when investigators of the main culture and ethnic background have been welcomed with open arms and hearts but people of other colors and cultures have not. (p. 316)

The accompanying endnote states: "More than half of these new members from different cultures have not been retained. As a rule, new members from different cultures who are Caucasians have been easier to assimilate than blacks or Asians. People who were not from a Christian tradition in the first place, especially Muslims living in Europe, have generally had a difficult time finding fellowship among the Latter-day Saints" (p. 320).

These statements and allegations of racial intolerance within the Church are a serious matter. But let me first make very clear that I agree that lingering racism continues to be a serious threat to the democratic institution in European countries as such. Every European country has its extreme right-wing parties with an anti-foreigner agenda, usually obtaining between, in the past decade, 5 and 10 percent of the votes. At the same time, it should be noted that the vast majority of the electorate is outspokenly anti-racist. Thus, racist and anti-racist propaganda are very much present in the political realm and in daily life, especially in those cities with a high proportion of allochtones. (Allochtones is a neutral word used in official terminology, meaning people residing in a country to which they are not native.) There is an extreme sensitivity about the subject, because it is naturally linked to Hitler's efforts to exterminate the Jews and to the horrifying spectre of ethnic cleansing. Much of the post-war European agenda has worked for social justice and international equality against that spectre. Attitudes and acts of racial intolerance now fall under criminal law. Thus, accusations of racial intolerance are among the most inflammatory and perilous charges that can be made inside Europe today.

Yet Van Orden quite calmly, without apparently realizing the gravity of the charge, describes European LDS "congregations in country after country" as struggling with intolerance and racism. The question is whether the facts bear out Van Orden's charges. I cannot assert that there have never been and are not now cases of racial and cultural intolerance in the Church
in Europe. But I have never heard of such accounts firsthand, in spite of my intense involvement in Church matters for over thirty years in Belgium and the Netherlands, where nearly all Church units are multiracial and multicultural. I called a dozen branch, district, and stake leaders, present and former, who together have wide experience in most European countries, to ask about their knowledge of incidents of discrimination in LDS units in European units. To a man, they confirmed a complete absence of knowledge of such incidents. I asked allochtone LDS converts in various wards about their welcome and integration; they also unanimously confirmed they never felt any intolerance.

But my experience extends beyond this lack of confirmation for Van Orden's thesis. As a local Church leader (branch president, district president, and counselor to several mission presidents in Belgium and the Netherlands) I know something about the integration of allochtones in our units. I vividly remember the first family of political refugees our branch welcomed in the 1970s, a destitute family with four small children. Our tiny unit stretched far beyond its resources: finding adequate housing, remodeling it completely, providing transportation, organizing language teaching, helping to find a job for the father and appropriate schools for the children, and negotiating with the landlord, insurance companies, immigration officials, social services, town hall administration, police, etc. That is the pattern of welcome and integration I have seen repeated over and over again for hundreds of allochtones in many units. Some have grown to become dedicated and stalwart local leaders, sustained by all. Some have turned inactive, but not in a higher proportion than autochtones, and for the same reasons.

Because of the relatively high influx of allochtones with needs and problems, many units concentrate their compassionate service primarily on helping these people meet their needs. Indeed, helping them has become more demanding over the years. Small units often carry a continual heavy burden to provide help for lodging, clothing, transportation, legal assistance, and hospitalization, besides the difficult psychological support to be given in intercultural communication. Some members even struggle with police and immigration services to avoid the expulsion of allochtones they have come to love as their own. In church, members provide many hours of exhausting translation; sometimes special classes are organized. Many allochtones receive welfare help, often for months and sometimes for years. Home and visiting teachers, youth groups, bishoprics/branch presidencies, elders’ quorum and Relief Society presidencies, and ordinary members strain their own resources to share and serve—and this in an area without LDS Social Services, without Deseret Industries, and without scores of helping hands available. In my opinion, one of the finest elements of
Mormon social history in Europe since 1970 is the unselfish humanitarian service offered to needy allochtones by a relatively small number of members with very limited resources. And I have not yet spoken of our members' active participation in humanitarian drives for Third World countries . . .

Because Van Orden speaks of racial intolerance only in generalities and does not point to actual research among LDS "congregations in country after country," I surmise that his main source are the returned missionaries he mentions: they are "confused and disappointed" because of what they interpret as lack of hospitality for their investigators. I can understand their reaction. Dedicated to the Lord, pepped up by their programs, pressured by their goals, and tracting for months without success—these factors all must heighten their longing for convert baptisms. When they succeed in finding "more receptive spirits among displaced peoples" and bringing them to local units, they may well experience confusion and disappointment when they encounter a cautious response. But I would argue that this caution does not normally stem from racial or cultural intolerance. Letters of instruction from the Europe Area Presidency to all stake, mission, and district presidents, set policies restricting the baptism of refugees, asylum seekers, Muslims, and Israelis, some of whom may not be baptized even if they request it and are worthy. 16 This is vital information which Van Orden should have mentioned. These policies are governed by concerns about true conversion, legality, safety, and family unity, and grow out of political situations and peculiar problems with which the Church must deal. Indeed, some allochtones, especially Muslims, endanger their lives or those of others by converting. Others join or try to join the Church for economic reasons, like the German post-war "Tin-can Mormons" to whom Van Orden refers (p. 158). Some are "religious tourists," moving from one church to another (or even attending several simultaneously) to profit from each passage. Some live in adultery or polygamy, but hide it. I have firsthand experience with allochtones who lured members into making financial contributions, hiding illegal aliens, assuming legal liability for their stay, or becoming involved in risky political matters. I have also seen autochtone members carry such burdens, too, with courage and unfailing love.

When missionaries enter the meetinghouse with an allochtone investigator, questions must be asked with reference to official instructions. How can we be sure what his exact legal status is? What about moral worthiness if his culture understands such matters differently? How to make sure if a candidate is not joining the Church for social and economic reasons? Yet

16 See, for example, "Policies concerning work with refugees and asylum seekers," Europe Area Presidency, Letter to priesthood leaders, 27 June 1990.
discovering the answers to such questions is not easy in a teaching/conversion context; and our dual system of jurisdictions—missionaries and ward/branch leader—enhances the possibility of misunderstandings. The missionaries are eager to baptize, but the local leader has been told to be cautious or even to refuse baptism.

Furthermore, the problem of how new investigators are perceived and welcomed must be understood in the broader context of small units that must often struggle to exist for decades. It is a fact of human nature that people are more willing to seek religious answers or change religions when they have distressing needs: financial, legal, marital, social, or psychological. While the history of the Church in Europe can be told on a national level, as Van Orden does, it is lived at the level of the basic units, a history that Van Orden does not tell. That history, for the most part, shows a very small group of leaders, sometimes inexperienced and struggling with problems of their own, trying to solve the continuous serious problems of individual members. Many of these leaders burn out in the process. In that context, it is understandable, though not justifiable, that they find it difficult to wholeheartedly welcome yet more people with pressing problems, whether the prospective convert is allochtone or autochtone. Such regrettable reserve stems not from intolerance but from feelings of powerlessness and even despair because we cannot properly help them. In such circumstances the welcome will usually be heartier if the investigators are well-educated and stable, if they have social prestige and professional assets that can strengthen the unit and improve the image of the Church. Such bias, where it exists, is understandable, though less than ideal.

Van Orden, perhaps unwittingly, contributes to this bias by pointing out that "educated people" join the Church (pp. 275, 302) and by systematically identifying converts who have prestigious professions: "a highly respected businessman," an attorney and movie maker, a professor, a deputy ambassador, a member of Parliament, "a respected physician," a pediatrician, a linguist, a chief executive officer of a large firm, a senior vice president of flight operations and chief pilot of Lufthansa, a "retired colonel," a "noted architect and industrial designer," a federal judge, an ear, nose and throat surgeon, two "medical doctors," an Olympic speed skater, and "a leading nuclear physicist" (pp. 172, 186, 209, 213, 222, 236, 240, 244, 245, 247, 256, 277, 278, 298, 302). These are not representative professions for the overwhelming majority of the membership, and Van Orden nowhere tells stories of converts who are migrant workers, refugees, or asylum seekers.17

---

17 Ecclesiastical calling is also treated as a prestige item, with Van Orden
To conclude this matter of racial intolerance, I realize that my lengthy reaction stems from the indignation of seeing local units unjustly accused. European LDS who have given and who are still giving so much to help and integrate allochtones do not deserve Van Orden's generalized affront. On the other hand, if there are proven cases of racism within the European Church, they should be identified clearly and deeply regretted.

WHERE DO WE STAND AND WHY?

The very title, Building Zion, illustrates the perspective that the progress of the Church is continual and glorious. The writing communicates that perspective with enthusiastic phrases: "a brighter day," "momentum of conversions," "astounding growth," "a New Era," "unprecedented world growth, especially for the Church in Europe," "a milestone," "rapid development," "marvelous growth," "rapid growth," "great harvest"... (pp. 1, 132, 133, 179, 162, 187, 219, 273, 300, 301). I, too, find such excitement invigorating and encouraging; but constant triumphalism is not, in my opinion, a helpful perspective when objective assessment is required. It creates a false context that blurs our perception of reality and impedes a sober and beneficial analysis of our actual accomplishments upon which serious plans to improve the future must be based. Where do we really stand after a century and a half of Mormonism in Europe?

Growth in Numbers of Mormons

On the one hand, the Mormon population in Europe has increased significantly. We must be deeply impressed and moved by the immense labor devoted to building the kingdom in Europe. From the first meetings in England in 1837 to the present European stakes and temples is indeed a gigantic leap, made possible through millions of hours of work, given by tens of thousands of dedicated missionaries and members, to preach, teach, fortify, struggle, build, and inspire. We must also be extremely grateful to the General Authorities who spare no effort to continue to build the Church in Europe. In 1996 estimated Church membership in Western Europe stands at the proud figure of 347,000 (p. 222). From my own daily experi-
ence in the Church for more than thirty years, I can also clearly see progress: two wards in my city, stable and better-trained local leaders, more local missionaries, and a slowly emerging second generation.

Still, any objective observer must acknowledge a colossal discrepancy between the prophetic goal that the kingdom of God “shall roll forth, until it has filled the whole earth” (D&C 65:2), which Van Orden cites as both his starting point and conclusion (pp. 5, 320), and the present reality. That reality in today’s Western Europe is that our 347,000 members represent 0.09 percent of the total population, fewer than 1 out of every 1,000 people. Furthermore, about one out of four members is active. Our effective membership in Europe would number about 87,000 or 0.02 percent. The two wards in my city thus represent 200 active members in an area populated by two million people—or one Latter-day Saint per 10,000 people.

Even more telling, mission productivity has been very low for the past two or three decades. In the Netherlands Mission, for example, an average missionary knocks on some 150 to 200 doors a day. But he will not baptize more than one person a year. Given also the rates of defection of converts and the growth of the population as such, we are now at a virtual standstill. Even the figures of “astounding growth” or “momentum of conversions” in certain places and periods, such as in Germany in the early 1920s need to be placed in perspective. Germany’s “record high” figure of 1,795 converts in 1924 came when the total German population was about 70 million and that “momentum” quickly levelled off (pp. 132-33). There are no signs that we can expect significant improvements, let alone spectacular ones, from our present arrangements. In contrast, the Jehovah’s Witnesses, with a comparable mission history in Europe and comparable demands, have made about ten times more members in Europe than the Mormons. Many other proselytizing religious minorities, viewed globally, are also quite more successful than the Mormons.18


19The 1995 French Parliamentary report on sects gives an overview of new minority religions (“sects”) in France, enabling us to view the success of Mormonism against other groups: between 260,000 and 500,000 people have joined such minorities. Alain Gest et Jacques Guyard, *Les sectes en France* (Paris: Assemblée nationale, 1995). The Mormons number 26,000 on the record. Buddhism is progressing strongly all over Europe: there are 600,000 active converts in France alone and two million sympathizers; it has now been granted weekly time on national French television as that nation’s fifth largest religion. “La cinquième religion de France acquiert le droit à l’écran,” *Le Soir*, 4 January 1997, 13. The Mormons trail
Legal Status of the Church

On the subject of the "official recognition" of the Church in European countries, Van Orden mentions such recognitions as part of a proud confirmation of the status the Church has attained in each country. Yet these descriptions are themselves ambiguous. Van Orden notes that the Church was granted "official recognition" in Germany in 1953, in the Netherlands in 1955, in Spain in 1968, in Portugal in 1974, in Czechoslovakia in 1990, in Norway in 1991, in Russia in 1991, in Bulgaria in 1991; "official legal status" in Italy in 1993; "legal recognition" in Poland in 1977; "recognition" in Hungary in 1988; and "legal status" in Finland (no date) (pp. 170, 168, 186, 263, 275, 230, 295, 288, 250, 211, 278, 167). But what do these terms mean? What is the value and extent of each of these recognitions? How do they compare with the status accorded other churches? The subject calls for serious comparative study.

Reasons for Missionary Success/Failure

Why has Mormonism grown so slowly? Van Orden suggests only external reasons for unsuccessful periods in missionary work, and these reasons are, moreover, self-contradicting. For example, "The decline of the Church in Britain after 1870 reflected a general apathy toward religion... . The gradual secularization of society, including religion itself, had supplanting religious devotion" (p. 101). "Elders encountered unenthusiastic responses from a people whose religious traditions had eroded" (p. 116). "In general, the British people [between 1920 and 1939] were more pleasure seeking and less interested in religion... . Science and other forms of learning were more highly esteemed than religious devotion" (p. 128). From the 1980s to the present, missionaries in Britain "encountered increasing resistance to their message from the upper two classes (p. 226). "Earning a living and acquiring possessions took precedence over interest in religion" (p. 170). In Norway "prosperity" and in Sweden, the "sexual revolution" cause citizens to turn away from religion (pp. 231, 232). In short, far behind.

Indeed, the understanding behind "recognitions" can be bizarre. In Belgium an American mission president confirmed in a letter that the Church was officially recognized as a Church (copy in my possession). He based his claim on the fact that the Church had registered as a non-profit organization (something anyone can do) and that the statutes had appeared in the State Paper. In the Netherlands I was shown the "official document of recognition": a perfunctory form-letter from a Dutch Ministry acknowledging receipt of the Church's request for recognition, sent shortly after the request had been submitted.
religious apathy, the decline of traditional religions, materialism, and secularism retard missionary work. However, in other countries, missionary work is difficult because religion remains important in the lives of people. In Germany after World War II, "the people as a whole clung to their long-standing religious traditions" (p. 170). In Greece, "the pervasive presence of the Greek Orthodox Church . . . hindered the work" (p. 258). In Ireland "religious and family traditions are still strong" (p. 226). I was quite surprised to learn that "Dutch pride in reclaiming much of their land from the sea has proved a stumbling block to missionary efforts" (p. 238). Hence, religious tradition-alism and chauvinism are also stumbling blocks. I understand that both sets of generalization could be supported by examples. I also understand that missionary perceptions of obstacles to the work may or may not be sufficiently culture-sensitive to reflect real causes. But such contradictory generalizations are certainly not helpful in planning new ways of approaching prospective converts.

Building Zion is equally general when it comes to describing missionary success: "The German people [after World War I] were humble, perhaps for the first time in centuries" (p. 131). "Former East Germans remained more humble and teachable than the average citizen in Germany's secularized west" (p. 206). Nigerian, Ghanaians, and West Indians in Britain "were humble and receptive to the gospel" (p. 225). "Portugal was the poorest country in Western Europe, and the resultant humility of the people created receptive hearts" (p. 256). Contradictorily, the Church "grew rapidly in Italy in the late 1960s and 1970s, especially in the northern provinces, which were going through a period of industrialization and social transformation. Moving into new homes and new lifestyles, many people felt freer to explore the gospel" (p. 185). Again, the same "reasons" are given to explain both missionary success and missionary failure.

In Van Orden's final pages, an almost apocalyptic vision explains lack of missionary success: "Pornography, homosexuality, public nudity, prostitution, and general immorality are prevalent"; "the continent of Europe provides some of the worst examples of racial unrest, religious animosity, ethnic hatred, intolerance, and mutual distrust in the world"; soccer has become a European "national religion" that "draws people's attention away from God"; "sports excesses have undermined missionary work." Materialism, hedonism, and secularism have "taken over Europe in the twentieth century" (pp. 316-17).

These characterizations of the whole European population are not only simplistic and demagogic, they certainly are not helpful either. Van Orden does not define "materialism," "secularism," or "hedonism," explain what percentages of the population are affected by them, draw a boundary
between inappropriate excesses and an appropriate striving for financial independence, education, and happiness, nor draw on sociological studies for what they can tell us about shifting values and ethics in Europe. I found the generalized image of an "immoral" Europe preposterous. In spite of obvious and serious problems, from which no country in the world is free, tens of millions of Europeans are honest, value-driven, and responsible citizens. They care for their families, educate their children, and actively support social and humanitarian work: school organizations, Scouting, programs for the handicapped, the elderly, the immigrants, the refugees; Red Cross, Amnesty International, Oxfam, Foster Parents, Doctors without Frontiers, health and environmental organizations, and hundreds of other moral and cultural leagues and societies that have no international names. They respond generously to calls for aid to Third World countries and to medical research. The "White March" of 20 October 1996, called for by two families of murdered children, brought more than 300,000 Belgians marching silently in Brussels for the largest demonstration ever held in the country: it was a poignant event in behalf of morality and values, identified as a landmark in the exteriorization of the moral majority. A petition signed by some 3 million people had preceded the march—this in a tiny country of 10 million.

Secularization? A major error often made is to equate "not going to church" (which can easily be measured statistically) with "being non-religious." Certainly, traditional European Christianity has experienced a major downward trend in church-going. But even the approximately 10 percent that still go "very regularly" represent 38 million people in West Europe. Islam counts almost 10 million faithful in European countries. About 100 million West Europeans are "occasional" church-goers. More important, not going to church regularly does not mean that personal faith, in whatever form, has vanished at the same rate. French opinion polls (and the French are supposed to be very secularized) reveal that 24 percent of the people are still "firm believers," 44 percent believe in life after death, and 66 percent believe in God.21 Among many others the German theologian Eugen Drewermann analyzes this contrast between the crumbling of institutionalized religion and the growing individual need for "religiosity-of-the-heart."22

A 1996 survey about "values" among 2,000 Belgian students, ages seventeen to twenty-six, revealed that 22 percent say that their belief in God

21 Results of 1994 CSA and Sofrê polls, cited in Frémy, Quid 1996, 624.
plays an "important role" in their daily lives, nearly half pray, and 73.3 percent see themselves as part of a religious ideology. Interestingly, of this last group, 21.9 percent want to be "Christian," but not Catholic any more—confirming their willingness to move to other churches; also important is that the figure of about 26 percent "nonbelievers" has not grown for many years. Moreover, from a Mormon point of view, this kind of secularization also means the loosening of the grip of "apostate churches" and the bringing of greater freedom to convert to a new one. Research indicates that most Mormon converts in Europe were formerly members of traditional Christian churches who had become alienated from their structural religion before meeting the LDS missionaries. All this would mean that the present "secularization" offers major opportunities for LDS conversions.

In short, I see the picture much differently than Van Orden. I do not believe that there is a "general apathy towards religion" in Europe. There is, at least among a significant portion of the population, an ongoing interest in religiosity and in other forms of "alternative spirituality" like New Age movements. The media, through various programs, confirm this interest in religious matters. Basically, even if hidden under a surface of assumed indifference, there remains a profound hunger for answers to eternal questions, intensified by the crumbling of traditional ideologies and by the anxieties of the time, and always brought to light at dramatic moments in life.

Alternate Explanations

I disagree with Van Orden's reasons for the lack of missionary success. In contrast to his external reasons, I think we must look within the Church.

First, one should understand that Mormonism still seems as exotic and curious to many Europeans as Hare Krishna would seem to many of the solid citizens of Provo, Utah. A mysterious, polygamous group in the Far West still constitutes the furtive image most people have of Mormonism. Obviously, for Latter-day Saints who have been surrounded for three, four, and five generations with stakes and temples, general conferences, BYU, Education Weeks, Temple Square broadcasts, Mormon pageants, and Mormon parades, it is hard to adopt the outsider's perspective that Mor-

monism is an exotic and tiny cult. For such outsiders, conversion must therefore involve first a balanced introduction to the reality of the Church and next the genuine miracle of a divine testimony that Mormonism is indeed the only true gospel of Jesus Christ, restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith. But then we need to be able to bring that mighty message with much more clarity and directness to many more people.

In spite of all our missionary efforts, we should realize that probably more than 99 percent of the European population has never seriously been exposed to Mormonism. Tracting and street contacting are still our most widely used proselytizing methods in spite of their general ineffectiveness. The vast majority of Europeans will not invite strangers into their homes and will withdraw when approached on the street. In addition to a general caution about strangers, many Europeans attribute a negative image to sects that use these methods. Moreover, people with jobs are simply not home during the day, and people on their way to and from work seldom have the time for a religious discussion. And millions go by car anyway.

Member referrals, though more successful, are not a sufficient answer. Members' limited social circle may already be exhausted, they lack access to large or different social layers, they may not be able to overcome deep-rooted cultural obstacles that guard religious privacy, they may not want to isolate themselves further from their surroundings, and they may not want to involve their relatives or friends in a painfully struggling local unit. In short, present Mormon proselyting methods quite systematically exclude the possibility of presenting the gospel message in a normal way to the vast majority of potential converts.

But even if our missionaries could enter the homes of many more, many of these missionaries, however valiant, spiritual, and obedient, simply lack the resources to address the needs of many listeners. Of course, only the Spirit can confer a testimony. As a seventeen-year-old in 1964, I felt an immediate and overwhelming witness from the very first contact. But most investigators have many questions and need thoughtful and persuasive answers. Modern gospel scholarship offers broad insights, historical information, scriptural study methods, and sociological contexting, yet such resources are not part of the missionaries' standard presentations nor personal backgrounds. Although my evidence is anecdotal and limited to personal observations, I have often noticed that the more successful missionaries are slightly older. They offer a broader range of background experience and more mature personalities. There are very few such missionaries. The present missionary system no doubt meets well the needs of thousands of twenty-year-olds for personal training, religious dedication, and such personal enhancement as learning foreign languages and traveling
abroad; however, I feel that it does not meet equally well the need of the Church for more converts in Europe.

What can be done to improve the work? Except for fatherly admonitions on tolerance and kindly wishes for peace and unity (pp. 319-20), Van Orden identifies only three essential elements for effective missionary work—all of them external: "religious freedom, stability in the government and economy, and relative peace in society" (p. 319). Certainly these factors are helpful; but they are not sufficient, as is obvious to anyone who looks realistically at conversion and retention rates in West Europe for the past half century, where we have had religious freedom, stability, and peace. In the present European context, our own arrangements are clearly not adequate for a breakthrough, not even for a small one. But even within a "secularized" world as discussed, it is realistic to assume that a minimum of 10 percent of the European population would be fairly to genuinely interested in new religious ideologies: some 38 million West Europeans and 36 million in Central and Eastern Europe. The Mormon message is so unique and powerful that it must reach the hearts of millions, in the same way it has reached and changed the hearts of handfulls.

**CONSTRUCTIVE SUGGESTIONS**

This review is not the place for an extensive discussion of what could be done to improve the work. Not only does it surpass the normal boundaries of a review, but it also deals with a topic that lies beyond *Building Zion* itself. Moreover, I fully realize both the arrogance of such an endeavor and the lack of space to develop ideas with sufficient background and nuance. But neither do I want to leave the frustrating and unhelpful impression of having given critical remarks without a constructive counterpart. Allow me to briefly list a number of suggestions, some of which are based on my personal experience over many years, including successful experiments while I was involved in various mission and district capacities and in a number of private endeavors. Of course I am aware of the vast complexity and varied facets of Church work. Of course I understand there are research projects and committee work on high levels, where items which I discuss here superficially, can be based on much more precise and complete data. Of course I realize some suggestions may seem utopian or even whimsical. But I feel strongly about offering them and hope that my desire to be helpful may be felt.

Basically, improvement comes from a strategic approach involving as many aspects of the work as possible. This broad-based approach contrasts with the more usual tendency to focus temporarily on only one or a few aspects, like a specific public relations action, a new tracting method, or a
reactivation drive. Improvement must be viewed within a global perspective, including all relevant aspects. To achieve steady and overall improvement, it is necessary to work on as many criteria as possible at the same time, for a long period, and in a coordinated and homogenous way because all have relative importance to the whole and are often mutually reinforcing. It is better to score a B-minus on all than an A-plus on one. I will mention a few items in each of four main areas: missionary work, public relations, the health of the local LDS community, and scientific support.

**Missionary Work**

- Call more missionaries after their college studies—with more maturity, more background, more deeply developed personalities, and more creativity. Fewer may respond to the call, and they may require a different style of leadership than younger people, but their impact, in my experience, is usually much higher.

- Reform the missionary discussions so that they do not consist of simplistic, formulaic, and irritating questions, which many investigators experience as manipulative efforts in sectarian reasoning to make them come to predetermined conclusions. Revised discussions would add more depth to the presentations and provide better answers to typical questions of investigators.

- Put our full message on a high-quality and well-designed interactive CD-ROM, arranged to interest and intrigue users, with menus allowing users to turn to those parts that interest them first, and with optional levels of depth. The same medium can carry a dozen different languages to choose from. Distribute hundreds of thousands of copies free to PC-users—people with professional backgrounds who would never open their doors totracting missionaries. Make the same program downloadable through the Internet at no charge and advertise maximally its availability.

- Make massive use of cheap flyers to put in mailboxes, with captivating messages inviting people to request more information, either by mail or through visits.

- Make use of clubs, fraternities, organizations (see available listings in each town) in order to address larger groups, by sending them a proposal for an LDS presentation.

- Advertise in the media with more boldness and creativity. We are to preach, not just moral Christian messages, but the clear tidings that the eternal gospel restored through a prophet who spoke with divine beings.

- We already have health missionaries. Call also another brand—"talent missionaries," exceptional singers, pianists, violinists, guitarists—to devote two years of their young lives to perform in behalf of Mormon missionary work, to uplift LDS Church services and conferences, and to
Inspire the youth. In the same vein, call "sports missionaries," to provide training service to clubs and teams in their field of operation, to participate in tournaments and donate the prize money to charitable organizations. Although of less importance in view of the real mission goal, the possibility for these young people (both talent- and sports-missionaries) to continue using and training their exceptional abilities during their missions is an important educational argument.

- Provide a practical publication geared towards family and friends of (potential) converts in order to ease tensions and make friends.

Public Relations

For the importance of public relations, Van Orden points to the example of Sweden in recent years—the Herreys winning the Eurovision Song Festival, the building of the temple, the widely publicized ambassadorship of Gregory Newell, and the royal visit to the temple grounds (pp. 232-35). He is also ravished by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir visit which "completely won over the Russians" (p. 294). I fully agree that such positive visibility contributes to improve the Church image, to interest people in the Church, to fortify members, and to ease tensions in part-member families. But the events Van Orden refers to are highly exceptional and locally limited. How large and how lasting is their effect? We also need more constant and evenly spread public relation influences.

- Organize more LDS performing groups from the Wasatch Front traveling worldwide on goodwill tours (with, as incentive, combining tourism and uplifting Church service).

- Multiply the Mormon Tabernacle Choirs (I understand they have to turn away many good candidates and oblige the veterans to leave after a limited number of years anyway) and make them smaller at the same time. Choirs of forty to sixty voices would have much more impact in LDS chapels, churches of other denominations, and medium-sized concert halls than the present massive but very rare performances in major halls in a few select cities around the world.

- The Wasatch Front has more to offer: multiply Mormon children’s choirs, youth choirs, and orchestras and get them involved in international

---

25When I met the Church in 1964, the Netherlands Mission sponsored the "Mormon Four," a quartet of missionaries gifted with excellent voices who, distinguished by a special jacket, performed all over the country. They were a terrific help. My wife, who was a teenager in the 1970s, got interested in the Church, like thousands of others, through the Osmonds.
exchanges with other choirs and orchestra's: they will discover the world and enhance the image of the Church; their peers will visit Utah.

- Have BYU performing groups serve the Church and missionary work even more, with professional impresarios organizing their performances in close collaboration with mission presidents and local Church leaders. At present, their potential is not always best used.

- Ask BYU and other LDS professors to sign up for a coordinated system of academic “Mormon lectures around the world”—on fascinating subjects within their field, for a broad public, and with a link to the religious experience. Such yearly lectures series would be sponsored by the Church in various countries, preferably in cooperation with local universities. The professors could combine such lectures as much as possible with their international assignments—research tasks, conferences, or visiting professorships.\(^{26}\)

- Have Church Public Relations provide LDS-related stories that will “make the news” elsewhere—varied, fun, fascinating items that papers, radio and TV are looking for, not the traditional pieces our PR department judges newsworthy. This project would require creativity to dig out the unexpected with attractive titles: (1) “Battlestar Galactica in Mormon Space”; (2) “Mormons Live Longer”; (3) “International Business Thrives on Languages: Returned Mormon Missionaries Set the Tone”; (4) “Surf to Your Great-Great-Grandfather on the Internet”; (5) “Tithing: Mormons Have the Answer for Bankrupt Christian Churches.” Have outsiders present these stories to the public.

- Use the talent and sports missionaries, whom I mention above, for regular PR impact.

**The Health of Local Units**

Each local LDS community needs to be a healthy, functioning unit. Balanced and happy local units are essential in keeping our converts, taking into account the present very low rates of retention in Europe (about 50 percent after one year, 10 percent after ten years).

- Develop a strong didactics of religion to seriously enhance the quality of lessons and talks in Church; such didactics should include restrictions on marginal interpretations of doctrines and rules, more and

\(^{26}\)In the 1970s I set up such Mormon Lecture Series in Belgium, with both visiting BYU professors (who were most generous in their participation) and local non-Mormon professors. We kept this series going for several years in a renowned cultural center, and it had a significant and positive impact on the image of the Church.
better teaching aids, the training of questioning and conversation techniques, a better ratio of knowledge versus morality. (Our research indicates that knowledge ranks top as testimony-builder.)

- Publish a different Church international magazine, lively and fascinating, to address more varied interests, with much more LDS news, candid discussion of issues relevant to contemporary Mormon living, direct and practical suggestions to prevent typical problems and to tackle them when they occur, more humor, and more depth. In contrast to Utah where the community is physically established, international areas need such a magazine as a community-creator through reading.

- Have the Church Educational System pay special attention to the educational potential of young LDS children: since most convert families come from lower social layers (which in Europe is a major handicap for school progression), parents need to be trained on how to enhance the opportunities for their children. Revise church programs that are detrimental to school work.

- Monitor the rhetoric of our demands: also those who are (still) weak should feel at home in the Church, even if the final goals remain unchanged.

- Listen more carefully to the workers in the vineyard, by which I mean experienced branch presidents and bishops, local Primary, Young Women, and Relief Society presidents, who sometimes have much to suggest from years of service, but whose voices are seldom heard in a top-down hierarchical structure.

- Adapt home and visiting teaching to the culture: respect for privacy, avoidance of clannishness.

- Work on a constructive relation with the host society, instead of (often unwittingly) compelling LDS converts to break with their former

---

27This was our conclusion after inquiry among 2,000 readers of the independent Dutch LDS magazine Horizon. Horizon 2, no. 6 (1983): 26.

28A very successful experiment with such a magazine was the independent Horizon (1982-83), which I published for the Dutch-speaking members in Belgium and the Netherlands, to prove the need for a different Church International Magazine (CIM). I had the support of many friends at BYU and related organizations and copyright agreements with various LDS editors to use material. In two years time, Horizon had twice as many LDS and interested non-LDS subscribers than De Ster, the CIM in Dutch. I felt I had achieved my purpose and hoped the Church would take over. Indeed, Horizon received congratulations from several General Authorities and from the Church’s Public Relations Office. I was asked to make a full report of the experiment so that the editors of CIM could profit from it. CIM improved in a few minor ways, but a real breakthrough never came.
social circles (Scouting, artistic endeavors, humanitarian activities) and isolating them in a tiny struggling branch.

- Set up cooperative relationships with professional social services from the host society to help handle cases of people in serious need. Provide more professional-practical training to local leaders to handle social and psychological distress.

**Scientific and Scholarly Support**

Although I understand that Church work is a spiritual task based on inspiration, I believe that decisions can be informed by accurate scientific data and methodologies. What are the possibilities of such an approach? The current concentration of LDS academic specialists in the United States hampers easy access to international sources and fieldwork abroad. Yet it would not be difficult to invite (more) European professors of sociology, psychology, pedagogy, pragmatics, and history who have legitimate and positive interest in new religious movements to study aspects of Mormonism. Nor should it be difficult to involve LDS colleagues in the United States in international LDS research with the professional cooperation of academic departments in various countries. Non-LDS students could be encouraged to produce papers, theses, and dissertations. Certainly some of these studies will yield helpful data; but more importantly, they will nearly always make influential friends, whether their interest remains professional or becomes personal. At present our best non-Mormon friends seem to be academic researchers, especially sociologists studying religion.  

I have always had excellent relations with the Antwerp Faculty for Comparative Religions, where I am regularly invited to lecture on Mormonism. In Belgium, renowned professor Karel Dobbelaere of the Catholic University of Louvain has been a stalwart defender of religious minorities like the LDS

---

Church, testifying in our favor before the Belgian Parliamentary Investigation Commission on Sects. 30

Appropriate subjects for research topics that would not only provide valuable information to Church leaders but also information of great interest to European intellectuals abound. To pick just a few from a much longer list: (1) “Mormon Children in a Non-Mormon World”; (2) “LDS Part-Member Families: Patterns for Concession and Compromise”; (3) “School Performance of LDS Children”; (4) From Blessed Baby to Missionary: A Longitudinal Study of Religious Consciousness”; (5) Patterns of Family Home Evening in LDS Families”; and (6) “Reactions from Relatives and Friends to an LDS Conversion.”

Not the least of the advantages of such research is that the next author to write a history of the Church in Europe would have solid and valuable European data from which to draw.

CONCLUSION

Although my misgivings about Building Zion are many, perhaps it is still a necessary book, even though it is not a good book, because it makes apparent the need for critical reflection on the study of international Mormon history—on the persons and subjects it should treat, on the value of sources, on the dangers of triumphalism, on the misuse of naive generalizations and causalities, on intercultural understanding, and on the modalities that could improve the future.

The worst that could happen is that Building Zion will somehow be considered to have filled the need for a scholarly history—that European history will be considered “done” and that the many weaknesses of its methodology will not be overcome. It is my hope that the concepts discussed in this essay will lead to an on-going dialogue about issues of concern for all to whom Mormon history and Mormon internationalization are important.

Bruce Van Orden will respond to this review essay in the fall 1997 issue.

30Most regrettably, Church officials in Salt Lake refused a respectful request from one of Professor Dobbelaere’s students to conduct research on the missionary program in Belgium, answering his letter with a presumably standard formula that it routinely declined such requests. Missionary Department, letter, 20 January 1995.
REVIEWS


Reviewed by Charles S. Peterson

This illuminating book is a comparative examination of the values and aspirations of three agricultural communities settled between 1840 and 1910: Sublimity, in Oregon's Willamette Valley in the 1840s, Alpine, in Utah Valley, in the 1850s; and Middleton, Idaho, in the Boise Valley in the 1860s. As Dean May explains, his study is an attempt "to identify and understand the forces" that made for individualism and for community in the process of frontier settlement in hopes that it "may tell us" what the "rural past within us" means for our times (p. 8). Applying the methods by which the social history school of study has brought New England and Midwestern communities under increasingly careful examination during the last twenty-five years, May throws important light on Western American and on Mormon history, suggesting new and more intensive methodologies as well as offering an enlarged understanding of the workings of background, church, family, community, and larger influences on Mormon culture.

In the settlement of these three communities, May finds variations of purpose, differences of background, and sharp generational shifts, all within a quarter of a century. While the strong idealism of Sublimity's and Alpine's initial settlers enabled them to stay "culturally distant from" oncoming influences for a time, the great national tides that swept the Middleton settlers onto the Boise River bottoms also washed over the older communities, carrying many of their people away in the materialism and individualism of modernization and vastly altering the values and aspirations of those who remained.

Sublimity was settled by farmers (often established families), whose
roots lay in the tension between the Old South’s independent yeoman caste and its dominant planter class. Premodern in many respects, Sublimity’s yeomanry came to Oregon in neighbor/kinship groups which settled near each other, creating a scattered, but nevertheless close-knit, community. Hoping to maintain and perpetuate what May calls family dynasties, they made “sufficiency, not . . . wealth” their primary economic goal. They claimed broad acreages under Oregon’s federal Land Donation provisions; and for a time, it seemed that their “children and children’s children” might look to a self-sufficient future on the land. Directed by this “nexus of family and land,” they tilled only a “tiny portion” of the acres they owned, holding the residue “in trust” for their descendants (p. 280). Production and consumption were a single process, whose focus was in the household.

Plantation culture echoed in their substantial but scattered homes. In them offspring were born and raised while members of the extended family and neighbors made them the principal places of social and business interaction. Worship also centered in the homes, and cemeteries were located on the farms so families would be “together in death as in life” (p. 279). As May finds: “The family was not only the central institution of society, it was central to the purpose of life itself” (p. 144). “Narrow but intense,” their social world was “fulfilling, and mutually supportive.” The union of production and consumption joined with home worship to offer women important, if not fully equal, roles; and the interactions of neighbors and voluntary associations relieved the intensity of dynastic bonds (pp. 43-48, 279). Yet as strong as was its idealism, Sublimity’s vision of family, land, and community succumbed in time to the pressures of modernization, and its ways were ultimately abandoned in large measure.

Already part of the “modern world” when they arrived in Utah Valley, Alpine’s settlers were refugees from working-class poverty who had converted to Mormonism in England. Conversion and migration fragmented families, and decimated kinship groups. Church associations replaced traditional networks, and the community assumed services earlier performed by kinfolk (p. 119). Settling in a surveyed town, Alpine people lived in immediate proximity to each other, had many children, and made “family perpetuity” an adjunct to building Zion. Settlers worshipped together, served each other in unnumbered volunteer acts, and were buried in the town’s common graveyard as sons and daughters matured, filling slots vacated by the first generation. Dependent on the soil, Alpiners commuted to tiny hardscrabble farms from which they eked out a subsistence that was much more meager than that of their counterparts in Idaho and Oregon. In comparing them with Sublimity,
May points out that “neither land nor family . . . were as important as community.” Few invested in land. If a surplus was grown, it was sold or traded for “what it would bring.” In telling readers that townspeople resisted the Church’s efforts to “impose a communal economy,” took jobs off the farm, welcomed commercial opportunities, and “opted for a community of persons over a community of property,” May suggests that the cumulative role of Church members may have been more important than the will of Church leaders in molding Mormon culture (pp. 259-61, 272).

Nevertheless, the intense involvement in “church-sponsored activities” created a rich social life that formed “enduring bonds to the place” (pp. 280-81). Although per capita income lagged far behind Sublimity and Middleton, Alpine inhabitants were more attached to place than their Oregon and Idaho counterparts. Indeed, when the “kin/neighbor” community at Sublimity was unraveling in the 1880s and 1890s, the Alpine community drew “even tighter,” forming a sense of attachment that lingers yet at Alpine, where former residents and their descendants “come home to reminisce” or to be “buried with their people on the hill” (pp. 280-81). May shows women to have been active partners in both the temporal and spiritual realms but does disappointingly little in the way of “teasing out” new approaches to their role.

By contrast to Alpine and Sublimity, the settlers of Boise Valley’s Middleton were ambitious, individualistic, prosperous, and materialistic; they “minimized the number and strength of human ties” (p. 282). Settlers came after 1860 partly in flight from conscription and other dislocations of the Civil War and partly as a result of the transcontinental railroad and the development of mining in Idaho and Montana. Of the same “stock as the Sublimity folk” but radically changed by the intervening years, Middletonians were “unabashedly modern,” their lives dominated by market production and profits (p. 281). Young and largely masculine, they and their peers left the East piecemeal, moving west as individuals and nuclear families, rather than as kin groups. At one with the mining society, they formed communities on an approximate ratio of six farming towns to ten mining camps, farmed for profit, exploited land fully, met family needs “through exchange” rather than home production, frequented the market place, and “mediated” human relationships through “contracts and exchange.” Seldom looking “beyond the moment,” they sold their land at the beck of any opportunity and moved on without a backwards glance. Relatively few in number, women found little community life in Middleton, lacked the importance in the home that the union of production and consumption gave their Sublimity and Alpine counterparts, and had no role in the world of
market and entertainment that provided some social relief for men. By comparison with the other two communities, both women and men lived in a social world that was thin and incomplete. Separated from ancestor, descendant, and contemporary alike, they were thrown continually upon their own resources, confined in the end, "entirely within the solitude of" their own hearts (de Tocqueville, quoted on p. 283).

In the same spirit, May suggested that if Sublimity society could be "represented by small nodes of neighbor/kin groups that dot the landscape, and Alpine by an extensive, tightly woven community net, early Middleton would seem to be a series of points spread along the Boise River with but a few faint lines connecting families into neighborhoods or a broader community" (p. 141).

In developing these experiences, May's language is often striking and sometimes colorful. It is always effective for his purpose. Perhaps its most significant aspect rises from its utility in bringing folk history and historical analysis into a single context. For example, through the pen of an Idaho woman, Mary Spangler Luster, May keeps social inquiry in focus as he describes the personal trauma of her recognition that "communities of personal affinity" had lost much in becoming "communities of exchange." Unneeded in commercial farming and with limited access into the "male space" of agribusiness, Mary Luster survived to 1934, the "last link" in her "family's odyssey. . . . Not assured that her progeny would continue . . . on family lands, or comforted by the thought that offspring would perpetuate an enduring community . . . she alone escaped to tell us—ensuring her immortality not by dynastic or communal continuity [as Sublimity and Alpine folk had done], but by writing" (pp. 143-45).

In summary, May's comparative approach to the three societies is highly productive of insights and rich with methodological and lingual possibilities. May draws freely on earlier social histories in setting the context and orienting the reader. A good deal of general state history is involved for Utah, Idaho, and Oregon; his close work with data from the 667 census districts in them and in neighboring Nevada and Montana creates various backdrops against which the three sample communities take on varying perspectives and yield added insight. Even more importantly, May found and analyzed an impressively wide range of folk history in the three communities, drawing out information on the innermost thoughts and values of settlers by multiple approaches to their lives. As a result his analysis runs not just between the three communities but to the western region, to the nation, and indeed, to the international setting.

Not only does the book promise much; it delivers much. Mormon historians will find May's innovations useful, applying his methodology, I hope, to build a much more meaningful understanding of the Mormon
experience in the rural West and its continuing impact on contemporary lives. Professional heavyweights will find May's methodological refinements useful as they move progressively from the simple debates about the role of cooperation and conflict that characterized their early efforts. While few will replicate the broad sweep of May's research and analysis, Mormon biographers and town historians will find much to direct their thoughts and words in May's work. And finally, readers with experience in the Western hinterlands will find their own experiences in May's illuminating descriptions.

CHARLES S. PETERSON, who likes to think of himself as a historian of the Mormon hinterland, lives in St. George, Utah. Professor emeritus of Utah State University and fellow of the Utah State Historical Society, he is a former editor of the *Utah Historical Quarterly* and the *Western Historical Quarterly*, a former director of the Utah Historical Society, past president of the Mormon History Association, and member of the board and/or board of editors of the Western History Association, American Association of State and Local History, and Forest History Society. He is currently a consultant for cases involving land and water use in the Four Corners region and is working on a history of statehood to 1945.


Reviewed by Craig L. Foster

One of the distinctive offices and callings in Mormonism—part of the priesthood structure yet apart from the priesthood hierarchy—is that of the patriarch, now operationalized with one or sometimes two men (depending on demand and the health of the patriarch) ordained to that position in each stake. The patriarch's primary duty is to give patriarchal blessings, one per individual, declaring that person's descent through the Old Testament patriarch Israel (Jacob) and bestowing suggestions and promises conditioned upon the individual's continued worthiness. The office of Presiding Patriarch, a general, not a local, position, involved not only giving blessings but also providing some direction for the stake patriarchs.

In October 1979, Eldred G. Smith, Patriarch to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints since 1947, was given emeritus status as a General Authority. No one was called to replace him, thus eliminating the hereditary office which had been an integral part of the Church
organization since 1833. The retirement of the office also brought to a
close a complex and often problematic relationship between the Presid-
ing Patriarch and the members of the First Presidency and Quorum of
the Twelve.

To explain "the decline and eventual abolition of the patriarchate" (p.
9), the authors describe the conflict between the Presiding Patriarch and
the Twelve in terms of the Weberian model of authority, which is
referred to throughout the book. In establishing the early Church, Joseph
Smith exhibited the characteristics of what Max Weber defined as
charismatic authority. As the Church grew, Smith and his successors
transformed the organization into one of traditional authority, which,
Weber explained, enables a system to perpetuate the benefits of the
original spiritual experience. Subdivisions of traditional authority are
familial charisma (hereditary blood lines) and office charisma, which
often are at variance with each other. As the Church grew from a small,
charismatic, Smith-dominated religious movement into a worldwide
church, questions of authority, power, and dominance between these
two types of traditional authority developed into a struggle which
culminated in the demise of the hereditary office. The authors of this
book have done a remarkable job of chronicling developments in the
important office of Presiding Patriarch, which they rightly note has
received little attention from scholars within the Mormon community.
They organize their work as a chronological discussion of the lives and
administrations of each of the eight official patriarchs.

Years of exhaustive research through private collections, as well as in
libraries and archival repositories across the country, produced exten-
sive primary and secondary sources. Previously unpublished personal
correspondence and papers of the Smith family form a particularly
significant contribution to the study of this ecclesiastical office. To this,
the authors have added personal interviews with such key figures as
Selvoy J. Boyer, Ralph Smith, and, most importantly, Eldred G. Smith
himself, the last Patriarch to the Church. These interviews and the candid
reflections of co-author E. Gary Smith, Eldred's son, invite the reader into
an intimate space while maintaining the standards expected of a schol-
arily history. The reader garners many new insights into the lives, limita-
tions, and achievements of these Church leaders.

The development of the office of Presiding Patriarch was marked by
problems from the start. Joseph Smith, Sr., the first Patriarch to the
Church (1833-40), received a blessing from Joseph Smith, Jr., that he
would "be called a prince over his posterity, holding the keys of the
patriarchal priesthood over the kingdom of God on earth . . . ; and he
shall sit in the general assembly of patriarchs, even in council with the
Ancient of Days (p. 34). Although he was limited by distances between centers of Church growth, health, and the developing nature of the office, it was Joseph, Sr.'s, tenure which defined the office of Presiding Patriarch.

However, the most powerful and influential patriarch was unquestionably Hyrum Smith, who succeeded his father (1841-44) and was the only patriarch to be ordained by his father as the rightful successor to that office. He stood second to Joseph, not only as assistant president but in his office as patriarch. This very power and prominence ultimately became the undoing of the office. The erratic and troublesome William Smith became the third Presiding Patriarch (1845) and singlehandedly brought the office's very existence into question, a fact that created enduring uneasiness about the office among the Church's hierarchy. Indeed, if it were not for the quiet devotion and unquestioning obedience of Uncle John Smith, the fourth patriarch (1847-54), the office may very well have been abandoned in the middle of the nineteenth century.

Even so, a quiet struggle for dominance between the familial and office charismatic positions appears to have continued in varying degrees of intensity from William Smith until the elimination of the office in 1979. While the struggle was often one-sided (Uncle John and John, in particular, played a very passive role within the Church hierarchy), it was, nevertheless, a struggle punctuated by personality conflicts and moments of patriarchal resurgence. For example, Joseph F. Smith, sixth president of the Church, had his half-brother and the fifth patriarch (1855-1911), John Smith, ordain him as the prophet of the Church (p. 119). Sixth patriarch Hyrum G. Smith (1912-32) suggested that the patriarch might be the interim president between the death of an old prophet and the sustaining of a new one (p. 163). The ordination experiment was never repeated, and the “interim president” suggestion was never seriously considered. After Hyrum G. Smith came a period of uncertainty during which the office of presiding patriarch was left vacant. A decade later, a cousin, Joseph F. Smith II (1942-46) was

---

1The brother of Joseph Smith, Sr., he is consistently called “Uncle John Smith” to distinguish him from his son and successor, John Smith, who held the office much longer. Sorting out the patriarchs and their familial relationships clearly for the reader baffled by the various Johns, Josephs, and Hyrums is another contribution of the book.

2His full name was Joseph Fielding Smith. The “II” is the authors' useful designation to distinguish him from Joseph Fielding Smith, the father-and-son Church presidents and Joseph II’s close kinsmen.
selected to fill the office. After his sudden resignation for “health reasons,” Eldred G. Smith (1947-79), Hyrum G. Smith’s son, was called to fill the hereditary office.

Ironically, the patriarchs were caught in a double bind. They were frequently looked down upon and berated for not magnifying their callings if they were too passive and undynamic, yet they were regarded with suspicion and rebuked if they were assertive in their calling. Thus, the efforts of Hyrum G. Smith to magnify his calling were ultimately just as harmful to the office as was John Smith’s perceived lack of dedication to his office. Ultimately, as the authors show, the struggle between the two ecclesiastical powers was inevitable, as different men in different generations interpreted and reinterpreted scriptures and authoritative pronouncements in an attempt to understand the position and power of the patriarchal office. Not surprisingly, interpretations did not always agree. In the end, the dominance of the Twelve and First Presidency played a deciding role in defining the office and, finally, in retiring it. The authors make a persuasive case that the eventual extinction of the office was inevitable, for its continued existence would have been a standing challenge to the primacy of apostolic authority.

Obviously aware of the delicate path they tread by discussing the intimate lives and struggles of members of the LDS Church’s hierarchy, the authors approach potential foibles of the Presiding Patriarchs with honesty and tact. They do not hesitate to discuss John Smith’s (1855-1911) ambivalence toward the practice of plural marriage and his struggle with tobacco, which was in conflict with the Word of Wisdom. Nor did they shy away from addressing the alleged homosexuality of Joseph F. Smith II (1942-46) and his subsequent release as the patriarch. Also helpful is the discussion of Hyrum Fisher Smith, whose personal problems with finances and the Word of Wisdom were deemed difficult enough for him to be passed over as a patriarch.

While the authors have admirably described the lives of the Presiding Patriarchs and their office, the book is, unfortunately, not without flaws. While most of the problems are relatively unnoticeable, perhaps the greatest shortcoming of the book derives from the authors’ familiarity with the material. For example, several times between 1932 and 1942, Heber J. Grant proposed that Willard Richards Smith become the Presiding Patriarch, a proposal that would have passed over the most obvious candidate, Eldred G. Smith, who was Hyrum G. Smith’s son. Grant made this proposal because of an apparent concern about the worthiness of John Smith’s descendants. However, the authors fail to mention that Willard Richards Smith was Grant’s son-in-law and was also a son of Church President Joseph F. Smith and his second wife, Sarah Richards.
Nor did they explain Willard Smith's position, if any, in the Church or his reaction to Grant's attempts to make him the Presiding Patriarch. This curious episode thus remains puzzling and its telling unsatisfying. The authors also fail to provide much detail about Hyrum Fisher Smith's being skipped over as Presiding Patriarch in favor of his son, Hyrum Gibbs Smith or the effect of this action on the dynamics of the Hyrum F. Smith family, on Smith's attitude toward his uncle, Joseph F. Smith, and on the Church in general.

Finally, although they acknowledge Heber J. Grant's antipathy toward the John Smith-Hyrum G. Smith-Eldred G. Smith line of succession, Bates and Smith should have explained more fully the reasons for Grant's obvious aversion to these individuals or to this family. For instance, was Grant's disdain for the patriarchal family only the result of John Smith's and Hyrum Fisher Smith's Word of Wisdom problems? Unfortunately, because Grant's papers are currently unavailable to researchers, his actions may never be fully understood. However, it does indeed appear that Grant's opposition to the traditional line of succession went well beyond ecclesiastical concerns to a very personal level.

Another significant question which could have been better addressed is the inherent problem of descendancy. What are the potential problems with a hereditary position? How should the personal, ethical, and moral problems of people in line for hereditary position be treated? Is there really a "royal family" within the Church, and does the concept of a royal line extend to families of the presidents (as it did for the Smith family until recently in the RLDS Church)? If such a concept exists, who should be included? Given the fact that the Prophet Joseph's family chose not to come to Utah, did the patriarchal family fill that void for the Utah Church, thus becoming, in effect, Utah's royal family?

These minor problems and unanswered questions notwithstanding, the reading is quick and unencumbered as the authors have skillfully combined historical fact and chronology with interesting quotations and anecdotes. More importantly, despite the unarguable poignancy of the story, the authors have succeeded in delivering a strong, professional work with an impressive display of equanimity. What could have been an emotional and self-serving work is instead a thought-provoking and enlightening history. This book is an indispensable contribution to Mormon history and an important discussion of a significant, now lost, part of Church history, Church government, and the evolution of Mormon doctrine.

CRAIG L. FOSTER is a librarian in Salt Lake City and co-Executive Secretary of the Mormon History Association. He earned an M.A. and MLIS at BYU and has

Reviewed by Connie Lamb

The name of Thomas Kane is familiar in early LDS history, but less well known is his wife, Elizabeth Dennistoun Wood Kane, a cultured and talented woman. Although she was not involved with the Mormons to the same extent as her husband, she spent the winter of 1872-73 in Utah as Thomas sought a climate that would ameliorate his health. (He suffered from Civil War wounds and overtaxed his health by excessive exertion.)

With the two younger of their four children, Evan and Willie, Elizabeth and Thomas accompanied Brigham Young from Salt Lake City to St. George where they stayed for two months. The journey to St. George took twelve days, and her letters to her father, William Wood, which he published in 1874 as Twelve Mormon Homes Visited in Succession on a Journey through Utah to Arizona, provided a first-hand inside look at Mormon polygamy, then a national issue. A hundred years later, this book was republished by the University of Utah Tanner Trust Fund with editorial notes by Everett L. Cooley. He expressed regret that "Mrs. Kane left no description of her two months stay in St. George" (p. 139). However, while serving as a mission president in Pennsylvania, Norman Bowen and his wife Donna became friends with the Kane family. Grandson E. Kent Kane had Elizabeth's St. George journal among some family papers. Donna Bowen, who was helping the Kanes with genealogical research, encouraged her husband and a daughter, Mary Karen Bowen Solomon, to prepare the manuscript for publication.

Norman Bowen wrote a brief preface in 1991 but died in August 1992 before publication. The family and publisher persisted to produce this delightful and insightful work. A prefatory note by Margery W. Ward, series editor, explains other assistants on the project. The original journal's spelling and punctuation have been reproduced, according to the
editor; the journal was probably compiled from notes and letters Elizabeth wrote in Utah since she refers to her diary as a source (p. 61). Annotations in various hands appear, but only Thomas’s are included in the printed version, set off in brackets and preceded by “TK:”. The text is voluminously footnoted; and while the individual notes are helpful, the sheer quantity disrupted the reading. The introduction should also explain Thomas Kane’s involvement with the Mormons, why they came to Utah, Elizabeth’s use of nicknames, and the background of the journal itself. Much of this information appears in the profile, but I had to read the book jacket and the introduction to Twelve Mormon Homes to understand the context of Elizabeth’s journal.

Elizabeth, born in England in 1836, came to New York with her family at age eight. Her mother died when she was twelve. At sixteen, she married her cousin, Thomas Leiper Kane, fourteen years her senior; they had three sons and a daughter. A voracious reader, Elizabeth filled her writings with literary allusions; her style is strong, witty, and personal, revealing her sharp and inquiring mind. She and Thomas were devoted to each other; one motive for their journal-keeping was to share their lives with each other, especially since Thomas was often away from home. In addition to home and family duties, Elizabeth was a secretary and accountant in the family land business. At forty-five, she began to study medicine, a life-long interest, and graduated from the Women’s Medical College in Philadelphia in 1883, the same year her husband died. Elizabeth continued actively learning until her death in 1909 at age seventy-three. Unfortunately, Mary Karen Bowen Solomon’s otherwise helpful profile is not documented.

Elizabeth’s St. George journal begins on Christmas Day, the day after their arrival in southern Utah. Days are noted for all entries; but because she rarely gives a specific date, it is not always possible to know exactly when a particular event occurred, and the diary has a few gaps. Far more than an account of daily activities, Elizabeth concentrates on insightful descriptions and feelings about the people and the physical surroundings. (Unlike Twelve Mormon Homes, she uses people’s names, rather than pseudonyms.) She focuses on four main topics: the Mormons/Mormonism, Indians, pioneer life, and the environment. Brigham Young was in St. George during the entire time, and her observations and reports of both his public doings and private conversations and interactions with them are woven throughout her diary. She displays a special interest in women and so her journal contains frequent descriptions of and conversations with Mormon women; she mentions the Relief Society several times. “I met none but good and kindly women there [St. George], as in the other Utah homes where I became familiar,” she avers (p. 177).
She sympathetically describes the Mormon achievement of settling Southern Utah with its hot summers, dry soil, insects, and unpredictable rains. She mentions the physical trials, especially eye diseases caused by dust from the strong, hot winds. She describes the beauty of the landscape, noting particularly rock formations and colors, caves and streams, but details some of the land's harshness as well. Having been a pioneer in Pennsylvania, Elizabeth was impressed with what the Saints had produced in the difficult land:

But how glad Uncle Sam should be to have these tamed civilised settlers come to subdue the desert and make it blossom; so that it will help to feed his miners instead of having the savage colonists who usually pioneer ahead of civilisation! . . .

I must say again I think Uncle Sam will stand very much in his own light if he drives out settlers so much disposed to "make a silk purse of a sow's ear," and really doing it too, in spite of the proverb! (pp. 90, 99)

Indians held a special fascination for Elizabeth. She talks at length about the various groups of Indians in the area and describes their looks, dress, and mannerisms, especially the Pi-edes (Piutes) and the Navajos near the Mormon settlements. Elizabeth also reports stories about the Indians told by Mormon settlers and describes the interaction between the Mormons and the Indians.

The distinction that Elizabeth maintained between Mormonism as a doctrine and Mormons as individuals and as a people provide one of the journal's most intriguing themes. Thomas seemed interested in the Mormon religion, but Elizabeth, a "Christian," disliked Mormonism, feared the Mormon influence on her husband, and saw his interest as a danger to his own faith. Her skepticism about distinctive Mormon doctrines—such as the prophetic mission of Joseph Smith and polygamy—remained strong. She and her husband agreed to receive a patriarchal blessing from the stake patriarch because "I am sure it won't make a Mormon of me, and as I feel very kindly to the old man, I mean to go and not hurt his feelings by another refusal" (p. 162). As a contemporary Mormon reader, I was particularly interested in the idiosyncratic telling of some near-canonicalized accounts. For instance, Brigham Young told the Kanes about seeing a light in the heavens the night the golden plates were found (pp. 74-75).

Elizabeth praises a Mrs. Lange as a "shrewd and hard-headed" woman, then wonders how she could have converted to Mormonism "as it seemed as if no delusion of the senses or the imagination could have come over her" (p. 67). When Elizabeth asked Brigham Young whether an Indian prophet were really inspired, Brigham replied no. "If he was
genuinely inspired—of course he would have been inspired to come at once to him, Brigham Young." Elizabeth adds ruefully, "Brigham Young is so shrewd and full of common sense that I keep forgetting he is a Mormon himself, and this answer, so natural a one from his point of view took me completely aback. I felt as if I had asked one lunatic his opinion of another!" (p. 96)

But her reserve melted as she saw the sincerity and experienced the kindness of the Mormons. A touching section of the diary records an episode when Thomas suddenly became so ill that his life was despaired of (pp. 168-70). The entire community rallied to send him choice items to tempt his appetite, to sit up with him, and to pray with him and for him. She records movingly how she came into a room unexpectedly and found an unidentified friend, presumably Brigham Young, on his knees, praying aloud for her husband. As soon as Thomas could travel, the Kanes returned to Salt Lake City and then to their home, so the diary ends soon after this period, but her closing entries communicate compunction and remorse if she has portrayed the Mormons harshly.

"If I had entries in this diary to make again, they would be written in a kindlier spirit," she wrote in one place, adding in a copied letter to her daughter, Harriet: "Though I had no vote, I felt as if I could not free myself from blood-guiltiness. . . . I have written to you as a sort of penance for the hard thoughts and contemptuous opinions I have myself instilled into you" (p. 170). Her final summation is gentle: "Erring as they may be from what I think the truth, still I cannot forget what rest and peace of soul I have enjoyed among them, and when I go back to the theoretically orthodox society of the East with its practical infidelity that asks 'Where is now thy God,' I shall look back with tender feelings to St. George" (pp. 175-76).

Elizabeth Kane, an intelligent and sympathetic though skeptical outsider among the Latter-day Saints, has provided a wealth of insight into early Mormon pioneer life and beliefs. In a collection of travel narratives usually dominated by male perspectives, it is a witty, tender, and compassionate chronicle.

CONNIE LAMB is the reference librarian for the History/Religion Department of the Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University. Her collection responsibilities are anthropology, Near East studies, and women's studies.

Sidney Rigdon (1793-1876) lived a long and interesting life. By all accounts, he was a deeply religious man and his life offers a window to both American and Mormon religious history. First as a Baptist, then as a Reformed Baptist or Campbellite, then as a Mormon, and finally as founder of his own church, he invites us into the world of nineteenth-century denominational history.

A biographer of Rigdon has a lot of material to conquer but will always lack many sources that we know Rigdon himself wrote. Family tradition reports that, following his death, his widow, Phoebe, burned his letters, drafts of his sermons and revelations, and who knows what else. A son's recollections have helped, but it has the problems that all reminiscences contain. There are scattered documents, records of people who were at various times close to Rigdon, and a variety of published sources, including material in newspapers both during and after his days with the Mormons. But in large measure, the biographer must reconstruct the life of Rigdon from the records of others, many of whom seemed to have used Rigdon as a vehicle to address other concerns such as plural marriage in Nauvoo or the decisions of the Twelve during the succession crisis of 1844. In my opinion, Van Wagoner has a tendency in this biography to rely too heavily on the more negative material, a dependency that distorts his depiction of Mormonism’s early history.

Rigdon was especially important as an 1830s preacher and leader in the Old Northwest. He influenced many conversions there and was also a factor in the Church’s move to Kirtland in 1831. His role as a scribe and assistant to Joseph Smith during the work on the “translation” of the Bible, his roles in the preparation and presentation of the “Lectures on Faith,” and his potential authorship of the many unsigned theological essays in early Church newspapers (especially in the LDS Messenger and Advocate, 1834-37) are topics demanding attention in a solid study of Rigdon. His oratory, especially in Missouri, was an important element

---


2 Regarding the Lectures on Faith, Van Wagoner argues that “the authorship
for both good and ill. Van Wagoner calls Rigdon "Mormonism's unofficial pitch man" (p. 128). His close relationship to Joseph Smith during the formative years of the Mormon Church, including his call as a member of the First Presidency, are important facets demanding scrutiny in any biographical study. Generally this biography has assembled and described the basic chronological and factual details of Rigdon's life. Rigdon's influence declined in the Nauvoo period. Joseph Smith publicly rejected him, and most Mormons remember him for his unsuccessful August 1844 attempt to claim the succession. The subsequent removal of pro-Rigdon references in Joseph Smith's *History* from the B. H. Roberts's edition has further prevented modern students from better understanding Rigdon's role in early Mormonism and particularly his potential influence on Joseph Smith.³ Mark McKiernan sees in this editing a conspiracy to cover up Rigdon's true influence on Joseph Smith.⁴ Van Wagoner is less conspiratorial but sees these deletions as a "reflection of [Rigdon's] diminished importance in the eyes of twentieth-century church leaders" (p. 223 note 16; compare p. 262). Once the hierarchy "began to tidy up Mormon history, Rigdon was swept out the back door" (p. viii).

Van Wagoner's comprehensive biography, the most ambitious to date, builds on several earlier works, which he cites throughout his work. His most important contributions are in the chapters which deal with Rigdon's life prior to his joining the Mormons and those which trace his activities after his excommunication in the fall of 1844. For example, Van Wagoner traces Rigdon's religious life on the Western Reserve in good detail. We are presented with a Rigdon who was anxious for self-recognition but who was constantly forced into humbler labor. We see his oratorical gifts as well as his egotistical need for acceptance and approval. We are also invited into the theological world of those who were seeking for the restoration of the ancient gospel with its spiritual gifts and millennial fervor. Rigdon and his followers were surely a ripe field for Mormon missionaries who visited them in 1830.

Following the death of Joseph Smith, Rigdon's life is unfolded in good question is ultimately academic" (p. 174 note 6). Of course, but a scholarly biography should address just such academic questions.

³For example, see "History of Joseph Smith," *Times and Seasons* 4 (15 April, 1 May, 15 May and 15 August 1843).

detail as well. Away from the direct influence of Joseph Smith, Rigdon was unable to provide either the leadership or the theological wholeness to sustain his religious movement. But his stress on kingdom-building, his religious rhetoric, and particularly his use of Daniel 2 were carryovers from his Mormon years. Still, one suspects that those initially attracted to Rigdon found his movement only a halfway house on their way to other Restoration schisms. Why was Rigdon unable to hold on to his initial followers, many of whom became Strangites? (p. 385 note 43). Van Wagoner does not pursue this interesting question.

Van Wagoner's suggestion that Sidney suffered from a "bipolar affective disorder" (pp. 116-18) offers an apparently plausible explanation of Rigdon's mood swings, although I am not qualified to judge its accuracy as a diagnosis. But this biography offers few new insights into Rigdon's role in early Mormonism of 1830-44. It states as factual that Rigdon authored the many essays in early LDS newspapers, was more than a secretary to Joseph Smith as they "interpreted" the Bible, and that he was mainly responsible for the Lectures on Faith. But Van Wagoner neither proves nor evaluates these assertions in an effort to understand Rigdon's life and thought (p. 163).

I was also dissatisfied with the general historical context. Van Wagoner sketches a near-caricature of early Mormon history as a backdrop. Smith and Rigdon were "indigent visionaries" who generally "sought their bread from the sweat of their followers' brows" (p. 74) and who used the "apocalyptic rhetoric and doomsday hysteria [that] abounded in early Mormon preaching" as necessary attractions to draw people away from daily routines (p. 75). The Book of Mormon had a particular appeal for "a people emerging from the twilight of visionary dreams and folk magic" (p. 132). Early Mormon consecration and millennialism were "delusions"—"prophetic failures" underlying Rigdon's eventual loss of faith in Joseph Smith (p. 90). Joseph Smith's "syncretic ability," Van Wagoner asserts, allowed him to absorb the ideas of others, including Rigdon, throughout his prophetic career; he and Rigdon "engineered" the economic programs of the Kirtland era as part of their own financial dreams (pp. 79, 82). Joseph Smith "habitually used language as much to conceal as he did to express" his ideas (p. 295), but Joseph's "backwoods savoir-faire" and his frequent misuse of languages were "plainly pedantic" (p. 290). Joseph's "moral ambivalence" was "self interpreted as divine promptings" (p. 292). Mormonism "in its purest distillation is the fused product of Joseph Smith's and Sidney Rigdon's revolutionary thinking condensed into the prophet's revelations" (p. 142). Van Wagoner repeatedly asserts that Joseph Smith was writing (and constantly emending) his own revelations (pp. 84-85, 162), thus leaving
the impression that Mormonism was just one more religious sham of Jacksonian America.

These are not views I share. I am perhaps most concerned by Van Wagoner's apparent belief that neither Joseph Smith nor Sidney Rigdon was or could be in contact with God. I disliked Van Wagoner's pejorative language, his secular descriptions of religious beliefs, and his description of religious faith as delusions, silliness, a cover for corruption, or mental illness. Such an approach to biography is clearly unfair to Joseph Smith, to Sidney Rigdon, and to Mormonism itself.

Van Wagoner is content to repeat the critical charges of the early critics of Joseph Smith regarding the Kirtland Bank (chap. 14) and the old Danite charges of Sampson Avard during the late Missouri period (chaps. 16-17). Although he incorporates some of the latest research on the Kirtland economy and the United Firm, he uses it primarily to support his negative views of Mormon economic programs. In my view, he has written a history by innuendo, not a balanced study that has carefully analyzed the earliest sources or fully considered a number of recent scholarly monographs. He gives the same weight to 1880s (e.g., David Whitmer's reminiscences) and to 1830s sources as long as they agree with his critical assessment of Joseph Smith and the early Mormon movement. In addition to mistakes in judgement, this lack of discrimination also leads to incomplete information, as in his claim that it was E. D. Howe's wife (Sophia), rather than his sister (Harriet), who was a Mormon (p. 139 note 20). In fact, both were. He even argues, as Fawn Brodie did, that Ethan Smith's *View of the Hebrews* is the real source behind the Book of Mormon (pp. 462-67). He cites negative reports of early episodes but buries his suspicion for or rejection of the account in a note. But if it is not to be trusted, why cite it in the first place? It is a failing that also, in my opinion, marred his earlier *Mormon Polygamy: A History*, 3rd ed. (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1992).

The biography suggests Rigdon's contributions to the Joseph Smith Translation (pp. 72-74) but states rather than proves Rigdon's influence. Van Wagoner describes changes to Doctrine and Covenants 81 but tells

---


6Joseph Smith, Diary, 30 April 1834, LDS Historical Department; Journal History, 22 Oct. 1867.
his readers that no published copies of the revelation have included them (p. 114). Since the 1981 edition did, we must ask how up-to-date Van Wagoner’s own edition is. Rather than helping his readers better understand the textual development of early Mormon scriptures, he simply sees these changes as more evidence of human authorship and Joseph Smith cover-ups.

I was also disappointed that the biography lacked a careful analysis of the theological influence/relationship of Alexander Campbell on Rigdon. Van Wagoner fails to draw on the insights of Nathan Hatch’s *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1989), which treats Campbell’s role in the leveling of religion in America. An important collection of Alexander Campbell’s writings is archived in the Center for Campbell Studies, T. W. Phillips Memorial Library, Bethany College, Bethany, West Virginia; thus, it should have been fairly easy to compare the ideas of the two men on any number of topics, a necessary task if we are to then assess Rigdon’s influence on Joseph Smith or early Mormonism.7

From my own work in early Mormon history, I see Rigdon as less influential than Van Wagoner does. An unexplored question in this biography is what Mormonism may have contributed to Rigdon? Did it broaden his understanding of Christ and the atonement? his understanding of scripture, of priesthood ordinances, or of revelation? Given the detail of his later religious career presented in this volume, it seems clear that Rigdon was much more the disciple of Smith than Smith ever was of Rigdon. Surely Rigdon was a zealot, but whether he was “a masterpiece of tortured ambivalence and religious fanaticism” (p. x) and for these reasons worthy of a biography is a matter each reader must determine.

Van Wagoner does not treat the important 1839-40 trip to Washington, D.C., in the terms it deserves (pp. 269-72). On this trip, Joseph Smith began to more publicly teach doctrines that would be central to the Nauvoo experience and the later claims of the apostles.8 I want

---

7The readily available *A Compend of Alexander Campbell’s Theology, with Commentary in the Form of Critical and Historical and Historical Footnotes*, edited by Royal Humbert (St. Louis, Mo.: Bethany Press, 1941) could have provided important clues.

to ask if this trip was the real beginning of the split between Sidney Rigdon and Joseph Smith: Smith moved on while Rigdon remained stuck in an 1830s view of Mormonism.

Rigdon told an audience at the Nauvoo Library and Literary Institute in April 1844 that he began his own studies in a circulating library, "that his own rise to notoriety were all derived from the privilege [sic] of a Library," and that college students "go in dunces and come out blockheads." Such a comment reveals a number of insights into Rigdon's approach to life and learning but, like this biography, leaves unanswered just how much Sidney learned from the Mormon prophet.

DAVID J. WHITTAKER is Curator, Archives of the Mormon Experience, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


Reviewed by Stanley B. Kimball

This important book, with a catchy title and a knockout cover design, is the latest in a series of valuable studies on the Book of Abraham, which began at least as early as 1912 with the challenge to the Book of Abraham facsimiles mounted by R. S. Spalding, the Episcopal Bishop of Utah (Joseph Smith, Jr., as a Translator [Salt Lake City: Arrow Press, 1912]), and which includes the pioneering work of James R. Clark, The Story of the Pearl of Great Price (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1955), and Jay M. Todd's excellent survey The Saga of the Book of Abraham (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1995). Van Wagoner's study also ignores Ronald Esplin's important "Joseph, Brigham and the Twelve: A Succession of Continuity," BYU Studies 21 (Summer 1981): 301-41, and his "The Emergence of Brigham Young and the Twelve to Mormon Leadership, 1830-1841," (Ph.D. diss., BYU, 1981).

Manuscript of the Nauvoo Library and Literary Institute, Minutes, 17 April 1844, Historical Department Archives, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City. Charlotte Haven left a useful description of Rigdon's personal library in her 5 March 1843 letter from Nauvoo. See Among the Mormons: Historic Accounts by Contemporary Observers, edited by William Mulder and A. Russell Mortensen (New York: Knopf, 1958), p. 120.

This culminating opus in the long and distinguished career of Professor Peterson of the religious faculty at BYU is really two books which continue his earlier studies: *The Pearl of Great Price: A History and Commentary* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1987), and "Antonio Lebolo: Excavator of the Book of Abraham," *BYU Studies* 31 (Summer 1991): 5-29.

The first part of this study tells the story from the discovery of the mummies in about 1818 to the Church's acquisition of the mummies and papyri in Kirtland, Ohio, in 1835 and in the Missouri period. The second basically covers the Nauvoo period through the 1967 discovery of the now-famous papyri fragments in the Metropolitan Museum in New York City. The first part is simply the best available work on the subject and will likely remain for a long time the premier study of the Book of Abraham saga to 1835. It is also a well-written armchair adventure, candid and filled with inspired guessings, brave conjectures and hypotheses, and good questions. Peterson's scholarship, organization, readability, and, above all, his extensive field/archival work (especially in Egypt and Italy), his relentless use of newspapers, court records, and the vast genealogical resources of the Church—well, Mormon historical writing just doesn't get any better than this.

We learn much that is new about shadowy Old World characters: Bernardino Drovetti, Giovanni Belzoni, and, above all, Antonio Lebolo, and Michael Chandler. The forty-nine pages devoted to Lebolo are worth the price of the book and contain many hitherto unknown primary sources, including Lebolo's will. Peterson's portrayal of another key player, Michael Chandler, is similarly valuable. Among other things, Peterson explodes the myth that the two were related. Peterson also came up with some important and fascinating information concerning the whereabouts of the mummies between the Old and New Worlds and in the United States between 1823 and 1835. (His use of shipping documents is especially notable.) We learn new things about Abel Combs, another central player whose first name was unknown before Peterson's research, who bought some of the mummies from the Smith family in 1856, and the "special mission" that Joseph F. Smith and Orson Pratt undertook in 1878 to search for the missing mummies. There is also
a chapter, “Ready Answers and Areas for Further Research,” suggesting topics for future studies.

Considering the achievement of the first half, it is very disappointing to report that the second part is essentially a draft, the unavoidable result of Peterson’s untimely death. Our good brother knew that the clouds were closing in as he wrote, “My active field work is no longer possible. My formal classroom days are over” (p. 263). Chapter 18 ends with 1880, and Chapter 19 begins in 1967—a gap of eighty-seven years. Then the book, for all practical purposes, ends with the 1967 discovery. Peterson treats the problem of just how the papyri relate to the text of the Book of Abraham through a set of conventional questions and answers, summing up his position thus: “The inspired text of the Book of Abraham, as attested by the Holy Ghost, is a witness of its divine source. Some day this dilemma, along with many others, will be solved” (p. 252).

There is no bibliography, just notes which reveal little awareness of the vast literature generated since the 1967 discovery of the papyri. Furthermore, the latter half reveals few of the narrative skills of the first. It is quite Sunday Schoolish, unscholarly, and discursive. Had Peterson lived longer, he would surely have brought the second part of his work up to the quality of the first. The press, however, must be held responsible for the fact that the illustrations of the several papyri are far too small and dark to be of any use or interest to the reader. The book ends with a poignant chapter titled “Concepts, Challenges, and Testimony.”

I met Donl on occasion, and we discussed the Book of Abraham and its many challenges. One could not be unaware of his fervor and devotion to his research, his desire to honor his God and his faith with the service of his mind. The first part of this book will not only keep his memory alive but makes an ineradicable contribution to the continuing study of the Book of Abraham.

STANLEY B. KIMBALL is a professor of history at Southern Illinois University and past president of the Mormon History Association. He describes himself as “a workaholic stuck in Greater St. Louis who has published too many books and articles, read too many papers on Mormon history, but will never retire. He is also now on the wrong side of the biblical three score and ten.”

Mary Lythgoe Bradford. *Lowell L. Bennion: Teacher, Counselor, Hu-
An iconoclast for his time, Lowell L. Bennion's life of teaching, counseling, and humanitarianism spanned an era of growing societal self-indulgence and self-centeredness. Bennion's remarkable existence found fruit in his ability to prioritize others beyond self. It is a life-story impregnated with major themes not found in most modern lives; the story combines the vigor, discipline, and love of a Mormon boyhood, a rare freedom to be married while serving a Mormon mission while young, the joy of learning as he examined his precious Max Weber's theories and intellect, and enough teaching and administering in his life work to pull it all together into a most magnificent but simple product—service and humility. Observing this potent life demands much of an inquiring biographer who must walk a tightrope perilously perched between adulation for the goodness yet aware of the undercurrents that shape character, some even negative.

Mary Lythgoe Bradford has walked that tightrope well. She investigates a man who is a modern demi-god in the minds of many. It would be easy to burn excess incense to this remarkable person and life. Though she refers to Bennion simply as "Lowell" throughout the book, an easy familiarity that makes the reader initially wonder about her objectivity, she does not fail to discuss the human and even, on occasion, the difficult side of Bennion's life. We learn Bennion was sometimes cool to strangers, could be irascible, preferred action to the sometime-neglect of administration, and lacked good fund-raising skills. Bradford also reveals that Bennion, who could so strongly stand up to Church authority over priesthood ordination for blacks and other weighty issues, was hesitant to testify at a Mormon bishop's court on behalf of a friend. Bradford also deals sensitively with the Bennion family's coming to terms with a gay son at a time when little was known about the dimensions of this difficult challenge. By insisting on Bennion's humanness and even shortcomings, Bradford weaves a background tapestry that allows Lowell to emerge as a remarkable human being.

The book is organized in four parts. "Foundations" describes Bennion's early life, a family life rich in the traditional values of personal morality, education, and service, his marriage to Merle Colton just before leaving to serve a mission in Germany, and the heartbreak of losing their first child. "Sanctuary" explores Bennion's time at the University of Utah Institute of Religion, his intimate and productive sessions with students and his extensive work in organizing Lambda Delta Sigma, the fraternity
REVIEWS

and sorority system at the institute. This setting revealed much of Bennion's personal philosophy and activism. "Halls of Ivy" deals with Bennion's service at the University of Utah as assistant dean of students, including his efforts to bring academia and the Mormon Church closer. "The 'Real' World" traces his retirement from the university, his work as director of the Community Services Council, the lives of his family, and the founding of the Lowell L. Bennion Community Service Center at the University of Utah. This life trajectory culminates in the humanistic and kindly Bennion known to his friends and community.

An important contribution is Bradford's documentation of the influence of Max Weber on Bennion. Although Bennion did not follow that interest into groundbreaking sociological studies in the United States as he might have done, he blended learning from Weber with his unflinching belief in his Mormon religion in a successful reconciliation of science and religion, no small achievement in the modern temporal world. Bennion resisted the temptation sometimes found among scientists to eliminate the spiritual side of life while seeking truth. His reconciliation of the two forces—science being hard-nosed and logical, religion being inspiration—led him to a deep understanding of the importance of combining the two into a deeply creative force in his life.

Bradford's biography explores the juxtaposition of science and religion in Bennion's life and leads the observant reader to see how deeply the reconciliation of the two affected Bennion's views. It was religion that made Bennion the deeply devoted, greatly loving person, and loyal Mormon he mostly was. But it was the science in his character building that projected him beyond orthodoxy in religious matters and inspired him to tolerance and love of Mormons and non-Mormons alike and constructive criticism even of his beloved faith when he felt it came up short. Bennion deeply believed that Christian love must be extended to all, not just his Mormon co-believers.

Bennion was often fearless in this reconciliation. His firm stands in favor of blacks holding the priesthood and of teaching strong worldly wisdom to his students at the University of Utah Institute of Religion put him in hot water with some in the Mormon Church but also allowed him a marvelous integrity of soul. Here, in Bradford's book, we find the essential Bennion: a strong and devoted Mormon who was not afraid of his own church if he felt it was not measuring up to this high standard.

Bradford summarizes: "He [Bennion] declared that 'science, political science, anthropology, history, or economics is able to tell us what the world is, where it is heading, where it has been, and where it may go, but not where we ought to go—for what values we ought to live'" (p. 180). Within spiritual Mormonism, outside the realm of science, Bennion
achieves an equally important reconciliation of two seemingly opposing ideas. He sees scripture, however radical in its demands and descriptions, as a conservative force within the modern church. It is the written record canonized to represent the truth of God, which is highly resistant to debate. Balancing this concept, Bennion see revelation as a liberal force that guides individuals in their sphere and the modern church in its sphere through inspiration from God.

This concept allows Bennion to struggle for his own definition of goodness while at the same time understanding and tolerating more conservative forces. We understand, then, the forgiving liberal Bennion who was pressured into resigning from his cherished role as institute director, thanks to the influence of the Mormon conservatives Joseph Fielding Smith and Ernest Wilkinson. Bennion himself remarked: "A society without a good conservative element is not a well-balanced society. The color-giving, life-giving element in our society is the liberal element" (pp. 246-47). Bradford amplified: "Reason, experience, revelation, and intuition are ways of knowing, he maintained, that comprise a system of checks and balances. Revelation and intuition should be checked by reason and experience, reason and experience by revelation and intuition" (pp. 246-47). Bradford thus reveals the strength of Bennion, his remarkable ability to find goodness and practical application from almost all sources and to bring them together into a fundamental philosophy of belief and service. Careful to avoid explaining the apparent, Bradford allows the reader the joy of finding the essential Bennion in the totality of the book. Bradford shows her maturity as a writer through such restraint and makes her book on Bennion credible. Even so, the author's high regard for Bennion is apparent from the opening pages.

The firing of Lowell Bennion at the Salt Lake Institute of Religion (University of Utah) in 1962 was a pivotal time in Bennion's life. Bradford documents the event well, searching carefully through memoirs, files, and diaries, and conducting interviews. Although she documents the outrage of several of Bennion's students who wrote letters and comments on the demoralization of institute students, she does not deal with the matter as a university campus event. In fact, the sacking of Bennion received considerable attention on campus; and had Bennion not decided to leave quietly, without controversy, there might have been more vigorous general opposition.

Bradford's sources, well-documented in chapter endnotes, include a sweeping literature search on Bennion and an amazing list of personal interviews conducted over a wide range of time. The pace is lively; Bradford avoids the tedium that often besets even the best of biographies.
But the most important achievement is in the re-creation of a man of remarkable character. In the modern fast-paced world of desensitizing media, glitz, and hype, Bradford reminds us that heroes still exist—human heroes who spend their lives in the true happiness of service and love. Mary Lythgoe Bradford has made a strong contribution to Utah biography in her work on Lowell L. Bennion, a contribution that was honored when her book was named co-winner of the Evans Prize in 1996. It takes a big book to adequately portray the incredible life of Lowell L. Bennion and Bradford has met the challenge admirably.

TED L. WILSON is the former mayor of Salt Lake City and is now director of the Hinckley Institute of Politics at the University of Utah. He says, "I find it difficult to be totally objective about my hero, Lowell Bennion. If that came through in the review, tough! There aren't many real heroes around any more."


Reviewed by Robert J. Woodford

Richard Howard first published *Restoration Scriptures* in 1969. It was received by many with interest and was awarded the Mormon History Association's book prize in 1970. It came at a time when Mormon scriptural texts were being scrutinized on many levels by interested scholars, and Howard, then historian of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, both contributed to and benefited from the general interest. Several other studies on the text of scriptures accepted within Mormonism appeared as theses, dissertations, or books shortly before and after this book.¹

Howard traced the development of the text of the Book of Mormon, the "Inspired Version" of the Bible, and the Doctrine and Covenants from the earliest manuscripts available to the current editions of these scriptures. He made a great contribution in his feasible explanation of how Joseph Smith received the contents of these documents, why later editing by Joseph Smith was necessary, and why it is still necessary for them to go through an editing process. Howard also made available photographs of documents, access to many of which had either been very limited or nonexistent. These photographs in themselves were of enormous value to researchers. His book was not for the casual reader but was a scholarly work that motivated readers to carefully think through the process of revelation and that of scripture criticism. Reviews of this volume included Donald D. Landon in the Saints' Herald, Alfred H. Yale in Courage, William D. Russell in Christian Century, and Robert J. Matthews in BYU Studies. Each agreed the work was important and scholarly but added relevant criticisms and made suggestions.

In this revised and enlarged publication of Restoration Scriptures, Richard Howard appraises and responds to these suggestions. His preface notes that much textual revision was motivated by Yale's criticism concerning "vague irrelevancies" in the first printing. Thus the last chapter, on scriptures relating to Zion, has been omitted and the first chapter has now become the final chapter. These changes and others have given the text a more orderly flow. Russell felt it was unfortunate that the first printing contained nothing about the Book of Abraham since the discovery of the papyri in 1967 had focused attention on that scripture, and Howard has met that need with a separate chapter. Those who are acquainted with Howard's earlier writings on the Book of Abraham will find this chapter familiar reading. However, it seems misplaced, since it appears in Part III, which is devoted to the Doctrine vols. (Ph.D. diss., BYU, 1974); and Stanley R. Larson, "A Study of Some Textual Variations in the Book of Mormon Comparing the Original and the Printer's Manuscripts and the 1830, the 1837, and the 1840 Editions" (M.A. thesis, BYU, 1974).

and Covenants. Perhaps a Part IV for just the Book of Abraham would have been in order. Matthews noted that the LDS reader might find the RLDS references to scriptures confusing. Most accommodatingly, Howard has included LDS references in parentheses after each RLDS reference. Matthews also felt that "additional research and understanding may someday dictate occasional adjustments of some of the conclusions" (as quoted p. 248). Now, twenty-six years later, Howard has included new insights that reflect his own study and that of others.

Howard also provides a useful orientation to the study. After observing that some RLDS congregations banned the first printing of *Restoration Scriptures*, he urges readers "to note, from the beginning, that this work is primarily an example of lower criticism. This means an effort to discover authentic original textual sources and to explore the historical process of published textual development. The goal is historical understandings, not apologetics" (p. 6).

The objective evidence Howard presents for the development of scriptural texts is very compelling and appears to be correct. Unlike those who deal with biblical texts, Richard Howard is working with original manuscripts in the recognizable handwriting of Joseph Smith's scribes. These manuscripts are available to any serious researcher, who can also compare them with the printed scriptures. But Richard Howard shows in side-by-side comparisons adequate examples of the different types of editing, along with reasonable explanations for the same. The reader thus has a broad view of all that has been done.

No doubt many readers will find themselves resisting at least some of Howard's interpretations of the evidence. Interpretations are inescapably subjective; and theological differences between the LDS Church and RLDS Church are a reality. However, readers who are not RLDS can overlook those differences and draw their own conclusions from the evidence Howard presents. For example, because Howard is writing about the manuscripts of scriptural texts, he must discuss the nature of revelation. He concludes that revelation to Joseph Smith did not come as word-for-word dictations, but rather as concepts that Joseph had to put into his own words, for the Book of Mormon, the Joseph Smith Translation, and the Doctrine and Covenants (pp. 24-25). This conclusion challenges the statements made by several of Joseph Smith's contemporaries that the words of our scriptures, the Book of Mormon in particular, were "dictated" and Joseph copied or reddictated exact wording or phrases.

LDS readers also need to understand that textual emendations discussed in this book after the death of Joseph Smith are those made by representatives of the RLDS Church with only brief reference to those...
done by those of the LDS Church. Also, Richard Howard does not review the work of LDS Scripture Committee for the current edition (1981) used by the LDS Church, even though Howard has made a conscientious and successful effort to report research done since the first printing. Howard writes: "What appears in these pages, then, is not a reprint of the first edition; it is hardly a new edition of it. Rather what has emerged constitutes a rather different book" (p. 5). However, as one would expect, almost all of the text describing and comparing manuscripts has not been rewritten, and that constitutes a large portion of the book.

The RLDS reader will find a useful addition in this printing. The sections of the Doctrine and Covenants first placed in the Historical Index of the 1970 edition of the RLDS Doctrine and Covenants and later removed entirely by conference action in 1990 are printed as Appendices A-E. All of the photographs of manuscripts and early printed materials have been retained in this printing but have been shifted to the back of the book.

Students of the latter-day scriptures will appreciate Richard Howard's work and will be delighted to obtain a copy of this work that has been too long out of print. Those who were not on the scene twenty-six years ago can now join in the on-going and enlightening discussion of scriptural textual history with more ease, thanks to this valuable work.

ROBERT J. WOODFORD is a native of Salt Lake City, teaches at the Institute of Religion adjacent to the University of Utah, and is a Gospel Doctrine teacher in his ward.


Reviewed by Wayne K. Hinton

Those who have long awaited a new survey history of Utah will not be disappointed with Thomas G. Alexander's *Utah, The Right Place*. Although written as a history of Utah from pre-history to the present, it necessarily covers much Mormon history that will be of interest to readers of the *Journal of Mormon History*. Since no one can write a general history of Utah without paying considerable attention to Mormons and their history, the Mormon story stands out large particularly
in Chapters 4-8 of this chronologically arranged volume of sixteen chapters. Following the compromises of the early 1890s which led to Utah's admission as the forty-fifth state, Mormon history is less prominent although still interwoven with the text.

The well-known events of Mormon history are told in some depth, with objectivity and in general accordance with what has often been repeated in the past forty years by professionally trained historians about the Mormon experience. The original research that has gone into this work is unusually extensive for a survey history, but secondary sources are also well-known and well used. Alexander effectively incorporates his earlier research on Reed Smoot, Wilford Woodruff, J. Reuben Clark, the U.S. Forest Service, the political history of Salt Lake City, and the economic development of Utah. Such a breadth of research and sources adds to the understandings, explanations, and interpretations that are provided.

Part of Alexander's thesis relative to Mormon history is that writers have often overemphasized the unusual features of Mormons and Mormonism. He argues that converts to nineteenth-century Mormonism were generally Americans or northern Europeans who brought with them definite Christian traditions, a well-developed culture, political traditions, and thrifty economic habits. Even the Mormon villages established in Utah resembled in many respects the towns and farms of the eastern and midwestern United States. Most writers, according to Alexander, have also overemphasized Utah's nineteenth-century isolation. Almost from the day of settlement, Utah became a rather well-traveled crossroads. Even though the Mormons established an authoritarian theocracy, it was not a totalitarian dictatorship, otherwise how can one explain the failure of Mormons to follow Brigham Young's admonitions about treatment of Indians, the demise of the United Order of Enoch, or even the decision to proceed with the Mountain Meadows Massacre in September 1857, without awaiting word from Brigham Young?

The story of Mormon accommodation to pressures and laws designed to Americanize them is well told. Alexander sees the events which led to statehood as a compromise and not total capitulation. Over the next fifty years, polygamy ended within the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, but not among fundamentalists, the Mormon economic kingdom gave way to a capitalist colonial economy, and Mormon theocracy receded. The Mormons, however, retained the central aspects of their religious piety.

From the abandonment of the Mormon economic kingdom and the establishment of colonial American capitalism, Alexander sees Utah following the rest of the Mountain West in its development, the major
exception being Utah's willingness to allow the federal government to take an aggressive role in protecting natural resources, largely because of Reed Smoot's interest in national parks, urban support of Forest Service conservation efforts, and Mormon community spirit. Nevertheless, the post-statehood years witnessed the triumph of European American individualism over Mormon communitarianism. The accommodation with American society even included changes in irrigation law, putting individual initiative above community welfare. A spirit of Victorian individualism swept away much of the history of the Mormon people who had tried to build a covenant community. The result is a jerry-built system that contains parts from Zion and parts from Babylon, and a Mormon Church leadership that often seems to be concerned with personal liberty and low taxes over public welfare and a conservative political ideology above community interest (pp. 373, 402).

From 1890, when religious conflicts ripped the fabric of the community and stifled economic growth, to the present, numerous ties between the Church and local and national government and national and international economic developments have been forged. Even though the Mormon Church withdrew as the principal Utah entrepreneur at the turn of the century, the persuasive power of Mormon culture continued to dominate Utah. The general conservatism of Mormon Church leadership, which usually opposed political reform, favored business enterprise, discouraged organized labor, and was often in apparent conflict with Mormonism's progressive theology that stressed the goodness of human-kind, love, and charity held sway until 1916. Then Progressive reform candidates won control of the state government and pushed through a reform agenda. By the 1920s, however, the tastes of the electorate tipped back again toward conservatism.

The Great Depression and the New Deal caused another major political shift as many Mormons voted their pocketbook above their leaders' admonitions. In the 1940s conservatives fought to recapture Utah from New Dealers with considerable active and covert support from some LDS leaders who equated active Mormonism with political conservatism. Sometimes the effort to reestablish conservatism involved extensive covert negative campaigning within the LDS community, including using smear tactics against lifelong, devout Mormons. For example, during the 1950 senatorial race, Elbert D. Thomas was accused of presiding at communist meetings and writing communist propaganda. The Law Observance and Enforcement Committee of LDS stakes in Salt Lake County published a list with candidates' names crossed off to show ecclesiastical disapproval—including Thomas's and Reva Beck Bosone's. Frank Moss's election to the Senate in 1956 signaled a revival of Demo-
cratic fortunes; and during the 1960s and 1970s, a new generation of moderate Democrats like Calvin Rampton and Scott Matheson kept many state offices in Democratic hands. However, since the breaking of a near-balance of the two major national parties by 1976, Alexander sees that a religiously based political alignment is being reestablished in Utah with active Mormons dominating the Republican party, and non-Mormons, a few active Mormons, and less-active Mormons dominating the minority Democratic party.

Alexander also deals effectively with the costs created by the conservative social agenda in Utah, including a regressive tax system, lack of funding support for public education, and the costs of fighting abortion and public prayer issues in the courts. The influence of the Mormon Church adds a dimension to the state that is truly unusual. Admittedly, this legacy includes darker elements from Mormon culture: recurrent struggles with persistent dissident fundamentalist groups, religiously motivated murders, erroneous impressions about Mormons by outsiders, and a homogeneous population that is 70 percent Mormon and, hence, can be and sometimes is unconsciously repressive of minorities. However, Alexander also argues persuasively that Utah's cultural diversity is broad based. Utahns represent a wide variety of peoples and interests: Polynesians, Native Americans, Latin Americans, Asian Americans, African Americans, and European Americans. Alexander argues that modern Utah's achievements include a cultural renaissance in renowned musical groups, the arts, museums, parks, festivals, professional sports franchises, winter sports, libraries, the annual Shakespearian Festival, dance groups, folk art, and noted literary figures that have led to international renown.

Today's Utah is quite different from pioneer Utah. The growth of commerce and industry has changed the Mormon village concept. Furthermore, its economic trail has led it from a Mormon kingdom economy, to a capitalist colonial economy, to an economy based on being a colony of Washington, D.C., to being a full-fledged member of the American commonwealth economy. Additionally, since World War II Utah has been transformed by a series of out-migrations topped off by a post-1970s return to Utah of Mormons residing in other states. Contemporary Mormons seemingly hold attitudes similar to those of most Americans in surrounding states. The LDS Church is no longer the obviously predominant factor in shaping Utah's development and its future, although there is no overlooking the continuing pervasive power of Mormon culture in Utah.

Alexander's theses are articulated with clarity, conviction, and impressive supportive research. The book is well organized and well written,
sustaining the reader's interest with the subject, with the detail, and with the writing style. For example, he summarizes in a neat set of near-epigrams the ironies of Mormon religious power in the nineteenth century:

In Missouri and Illinois, Mormons lived in states with de facto Protestant establishments. Nevertheless, Mormons had exercised both economic and political power until non-Mormons restricted them by force. By contrast, Mormonism in Utah was the de facto established church, and the Saints limited both the political and economic power of non-Mormons by establishing a test of religious loyalty for political office and by boycotting gentile businesses. This condition rankled the American majority and became a source of antagonism against the Mormons. (p. 133)

Despite the book's many felicities, a few minor items deserve correction. "Zion's" is used in reference to Zion National Park (p. 10). This is a local idiom but not a proper title. The Rivera expedition reached the Gunnison River in 1765, not 1775 (p. 56). In 1857 at Springville, Utah, George Potter killed William Parrish and his son Beeson in an ambush, wounding a second son, Orrin. But the text confusingly states: "Catching Potter in a cross fire, the assassins killed him along with William and Beeson. Orrin escaped to lodge charges against the suspected assassins" (p. 125). The plethora of economic ventures at Brigham City occurred in the 1870s, not the 1970s; and it was the Radical Republicans, not the Liberal Republicans, who fought against continued Confederate rule in the South (pp. 153, 173). The format for placing pictures and captions shifts suddenly beginning page 236; it is used inconsistently throughout the remainder of the book.

Nevertheless, this is a marvelous book, well researched, interestingly written, and well illustrated—the most comprehensive and compelling one-volume history of Utah yet published. It is the new standard, deserving of acclaim and adoption as the text for college and university courses in Utah history. The insights and interpretations of Mormon aspects of western and Utah history are equally compelling.

WAYNE K. HINTON, Utah born and raised, graduated with a degree in history from Utah State University, wrote a master's thesis on the New Deal years in Utah at Utah State University, wrote a cultural history on Mahonri M. Young as his doctoral dissertation from Brigham Young University, and also did a post-doctorate at the University of California, Davis, in environmental history. He has researched and written on the Mormon Church welfare plan, mining in Utah, Forest Service history, the New Deal years, and Utah's national parks. He is chair of the Social Science Department at Southern Utah University, where he has taught history since 1968.

**Reviewed by W. Paul Reeve**

In the aftermath of the Mountain Meadows Massacre, silence was law among those who participated. Yet as John D. Lee’s eventual execution witnessed, hiding the deaths of approximately 120 men, women, and children was a problem too complicated for an oath of silence to solve. While the government put Lee to death for his role in the massacre, other participants had to live with their memories. Philip Klingensmith, bishop of Cedar City, is one such participant. His part in the murders at Mountain Meadows, though a minor one, defined his life. Klingensmith was the first to break the vow of silence and openly confess details of the massacre. He testified at the first trial of John D. Lee in 1874, his record forming the basis of Anna Jean Backus’s *Mountain Meadows Witness*.

Backus’s book, by her own declaration, is primarily a biography of Klingensmith, her great-grandfather. In the absence of Klingensmith’s personal writings, which were destroyed by a flood, she uses the journals, diaries, and histories of Klingensmith’s contemporaries to flesh out his life. Because many questions by the defense and prosecution focused on Klingensmith’s personal background, Backus can rely heavily on direct quotes from the trial as a framework for her biography. This methodology, while keeping the reader close to the original source, proves confusing and choppy. The text constantly jumps in and out of trial testimony and leaves a heavy air of awful inevitability hanging over Klingensmith’s life. Even his pre-Mountain Meadows days are framed by his words at the trial. Backus’s relatively few attempts to offer personal analysis do not go much beyond her conviction that Klingensmith’s conversation to Mormon and subsequent devotion to its hierarchy were his first steps “toward the destruction of his heart, mind, body and soul” at Mountain Meadows (p. 36).

Klingensmith’s testimony does bring into sharp focus the veneration of leaders that typified many nineteenth-century Saints. Klingensmith claimed that he went to the Meadows in 1857 because he was ordered to do so by Isaac C. Haight, stake president at Cedar City, and that he feared for his own life if he were to resist. Klingensmith claimed that he saw only two choices: obey or die. He chose to obey, leaving Backus to conclude “he was a victim of the times” (p. 153).
Certainly, zealous allegiance to local Church and military command was a key factor in the massacre. However, it is also important to consider that Klingensmith’s testimony was likely self-serving. The prosecution was intent upon implicating as many Mormon leaders as possible. No doubt the local LDS hierarchy was guilty of ordering the death of the Fancher party, but the evidence that militia underlings were also victims who would have suffered death at Haight’s hands had they not complied seems too insubstantial to be persuasive.

Backus also steps onto shaky ground when she speculates that Jacob Hamblin and George A. Smith played roles in the massacre. She writes, “The belief could be argued that perhaps [Jacob Hamblin] was there” (p. 162). Her belief rests upon a story that Rebecca Dunlap, at age seven the massacre’s oldest female survivor, told to her own granddaughter decades later, which places Hamblin at the scene. With only this belated reminiscence, Backus ignores Juanita Brooks’s evidence that Hamblin was in Salt Lake City marrying Priscilla Leavitt on 11 September 1857, the day the massacre took place. Backus also says that it is “questionable that George A. Smith did not attend the meeting that planned the massacre” (p. 173) but offers no evidence that he was present. Smith had certainly helped create a frenzied atmosphere in Southern Utah with his inflammatory sermons concerning the approach of the U.S. Army and the possibility of avenging God of his enemies. He began his tour of southern Utah on 4 August 1857 and, according to James H. Martineau, stake clerk at Parowan, returned north on 24 August (p. 173). Smith delivered a report of his visit at the bowery in Salt Lake City on 13 September, three days after Iron County Militia leaders gave the fateful order to kill.

Klingensmith testified that he discharged his rifle only once. His primary role was gathering and caring for the approximately eighteen children of the slain emigrants. He placed the traumatized children in various homes throughout southern Utah where they remained until, two years later, Dr. Jacob Forney, Utah Territorial Indian Superintendent, returned them to relatives in Arkansas. However, rumors persist that some children remained in Utah and grew up Mormon. Backus speculates in a “Personal Preface” that her maternal grandmother, Priscilla

---

2Smith's report was printed by the Deseret News on 23 September 1857 and can be found in Brooks, The Mountain Meadows Massacre, 38-39.
Klingensmith Urie, was one of these children, reared in the Mormon faith by Klingensmith and his second wife, Betsy Cattle Klingensmith.

The most important contributions of Backus's work lie in the chapters dealing with Klingensmith's life after the massacre. He resigned as bishop in 1859 and, according to his court testimony, "never attended meetings after that" (p. 176). Yet Backus effectively demonstrates that Klingensmith remained loyal to the Church and Brigham Young for several years. In 1863 he served an Indian mission with Jacob Hamblin to Arizona and, in 1864, explored Long Valley as a possible site for Mormon settlement. He baptized his daughter Priscilla in 1865, the last recorded ordinance he performed. In addition, he helped pioneer St. Thomas in eastern Nevada and was appointed a "teacher" in its newly organized LDS branch. Yet even in Nevada he could not escape his reputation as a participant in the massacre. According to his court testimony, he was no longer affiliated with the Church by about 1870; his testimony suggests that he was "cut off," but he does not explain further.

In 1871, possibly out of guilt, pressure from federal investigators, and self-protection, he finally broke his silence and filed an affidavit at the district court in Lincoln County, Nevada. He took this action in Nevada for fear that "I would be assassinated should I attempt to make the same before any court in the Territory of Utah" (p. 220). Following publication of his affidavit, threats to his life forced him into exile. U.S. Deputy Marshal R. Cross located him prospecting and mining in San Bernardino County, California, and asked him to testify at the 1875 trial of John D. Lee.

Following the trial, Klingensmith's solitude deepened. Betsy, his second wife, had died during his California exile, perhaps, Backus suggests, due to the hardship of being abandoned. His third wife, Margaretha Elliker, "was advised to remarry"—why and by whom Backus does not say; she did remarry in May 1871, the month after Klingensmith made his affidavit, but Backus makes no connection between the two events. Hannah Creemer, the first wife, had refused to go with Klingensmith to California and divorced him in 1876, the year after the trial. Backus implies that Klingensmith's participation at Mountain Meadows heavily influenced the breakup of his family, but she provides few specifics and fails to forge a solid link between the events.

Despite the difficulties with his wives, Klingensmith visited his sons and daughters at Cedar City and eastern Nevada after the trial, then, according to Backus, "forsaken by the white people," had nowhere to "turn . . . but to the Indians" (p. 230). No one knows when, where, or how he died. In 1881 rumors spread that Mormon Danites had killed him; but according to Klingensmith family tradition, his sons, searching for
him in Arizona, learned from some Indians that a sickly white man named Klingensmith had come into their camp and died. They buried him. Backus sees his final years as lonely—"the conscience that brought him forward to become a Mountain Meadows witness" was "his only solace" (p. 235).

Backus's extensive research is evident and her sources well documented. Several appendices of letters and affidavits relating to the massacre contribute to the value of the volume as do the extensive bibliography and index. Yet conspicuously missing is any reference to Juanita Brook's *Mountain Meadows Massacre*. Certainly Brooks's work, especially in regard to Hamblin's and Smith's roles, which Backus calls into question, is important to consider. Backus dangles unfounded speculations before her readers and, in the end, adds nothing new to the Mountain Meadows story.

Backus's major contribution is in chronicling the tragic aftermath that participation in the massacre had on Bishop Klingensmith and the further devastation that his decision to talk about it wreaked upon his life. Her experience as a genealogist is also evident, and Klingensmith descendants will value this volume as family history.

The Doctrine and Covenants, A Book of Answers. Features fifteen essays from speakers at the annual Sidney B. Sperry Symposium. Contributors include such leading scholars as Robert Millet, Richard Cowan, and Robert Matthews. Sure to enlighten your personal study or classroom discussion. $16.95

Joseph Smith's Kirtland. By Karl Ricks Anderson. Learn firsthand about Kirtland from eyewitness accounts of more than a hundred people who lived there from 1831 to 1837. Newly reprinted softcover. $13.95

From Apostasy to Restoration. Kent P. Jackson, professor of ancient scripture at BYU, shows simply and concretely why The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is literally the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth. $16.95

Available at Deseret Book or wherever Deseret Book publications are sold, or call 1-800-453-4532. www.deseretbook.com
“A model of critical religious history.”
— *Publishers Weekly*

**SAME-SEX DYNAMICS AMONG NINETEENTH-CENTURY AMERICANS**

*A Mormon Example*

D. MICHAEL QUINN

Named one of the six best religion books of 1996 by *Publishers Weekly*!

“A book that is nothing short of astonishing. Who could have possibly imagined the tolerance with which same-sex relationships were accepted by the Mormon Church, as recently as the 1940s? Quinn carefully sets the theoretical parameters of his work in the first chapters and then demonstrates, with thorough documentation, several examples of long-term relationships among Mormon same-sex couples and the environment in which they flourished. His extraordinary accomplishment is especially notable for the subtlety of his claims and the nuanced interpretation he gives them, all supported by exhaustive documentation.” — David Azzolina, *Library Journal*

What were same-sex relationships like in America’s heartland during the nineteenth century, far from the Bohemian enclaves of New York City and San Francisco?

The extraordinary answer—that same-sex intimacy was widely accepted—is found in D. Michael Quinn’s *Same-Sex Dynamics among Nineteenth-Century Americans*, which traces the incidence of and response to same-sex behaviors in the United States to the mid-twentieth century.

Illus. Cloth, $29.95

800/545-4703

http://www.uiuc.edu/providers/uipress

**Illinois**

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS PRESS • 1325 South Oak Street • Champaign, IL 61820
The hereditary office of Presiding Patriarch of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, first occupied by the father of the Mormon prophet, Joseph Smith, had long seemed the focal point of a struggle for authority between those appointed and those born to leadership positions.

Irene Bates and E. Gary Smith, who conclude that the office’s demise in 1979 was inevitable, chronicle its history and find it to be a classic example of Max Weber’s theory of the “routinization of charisma.” From the creation of the patriarchal office in 1833 to its demise, the authors illuminate the tensions between the leadership circle of the Council of Twelve, headed by Brigham Young, and the potential rival power center of the Patriarch. This struggle is related, in turn, to the one between the Smith family and the rest of the Mormon leadership. Also illuminated are recurrent struggles between the president and the Twelve over the patriarchal issue.

Illus. Cloth, $32.50
Charter for Statehood: Utah’s State Constitution
Jean Bickmore White
Foreword by Justice Christine Durham, Utah Supreme Court

“Charter for Statehood provides an insightful history of the issues and processes surrounding the writing of Utah’s seven state constitutions before finally achieving statehood. It will surprise some that Utah borrowed liberally from other states and followed the mainstream constitution writing of the late nineteenth century. Charter for Statehood also teaches us how Utah’s state constitution has survived for a century and has been able to accommodate change. It is an original and important contribution.”
—David B. Magleby, Professor and Chair, Department of Political Science, Brigham Young University

Cloth, $29.95 40 photographs

Now in paper...

Kidnapped from that Land: The Government Raids on the Short Creek Polygamists
Martha Sonntag Bradley

With insight and compassion, Martha Bradley tells the story of families fragmented by arrests resulting from the 1953 police raid on the polygamist community of Short Creek, Arizona. She also investigates the complex legal issues resulting from the 1953 raid as well as two previous raids in 1935 and 1944.

Paper, $14.95 14 photographs

The University of Utah Press
101 University Services Building
Salt Lake City, UT 84112
(800) 773-6672; FAX (801) 581-3365
info@upress.utah.edu