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

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

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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.

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Corrections on Area Supervision


Areas presidencies were created during the administration of Spencer W. Kimball rather than that of Howard W. Hunter as was incorrectly stated in the article (208). There is no evidence that Elder Hunter played a pivotal role in the institution of these presidencies. Gordon B. Hinckley, as the most lucid member of the First Presidency in 1984, was the key person in establishing this new administrative tier of Church government.

Local seventies quorums were terminated in 1986 rather than 1985 (204), during the presidency of Ezra Taft Benson, probably at the initiative of Elder Hinckley.

In Table 3 (201), Australia should not be in the first column but in the fourth column before New Zealand. The comma indicates that they were combined. In the same way, the Scandinavian Area was separate in 1968 but combined with the West European Area in 1971. Consistent spacing would have made the table more readable.

In Table 4 on p. 210, the column totals for number of areas should be 19 for 1975, 32 for 1976, 51 for 1977, and 65 for 1978-1983.

In Table 5 on p. 212, Central America should not have been bolded for 1991 and 1998. Three areas were missing from the last column: Philippines, South America West, and North America East.

Additional information was learned after the article went to press. First, the First Presidency extended calls to some Second Quorum seventies (Elders Lim and Archibald in 1992 and Elders Ladd, Uchtdorf, and Wickman in 1994) without bringing them into full-time Church service. Rather, they continued their employment while serving as general authorities. Elder Ladd, for one, continued to be employed during his six-year term of service. This policy was implemented no further. In 1995 area authority seventies replaced regional representatives, creating a class of seventies whom remained employed during their term of service. Second, at some time after 1997, the First Presidency extended the call of Second Quorum seventies to six years as was already the case with area authority seventies. Elders Ladd and Mason were released in 2000 after six years of service.

There have been recent developments as well. In June 2001, the First Presidency announced the creation of the Idaho Area, increasing the total number of areas to 29.
More significantly for the long term, the First Presidency also announced that area authority seventies would begin to serve as presidents as well as counselors in area presidencies. Effective 15 August 2001, areas presidencies consisting entirely of area authority seventies were installed in Idaho and Central America. This step sets the precedent the Church to create more areas without expanding the core of General Authorities. It also anticipates the possibility of areas becoming a level of service for part-time authorities, leaving full time General Authorities free to fill other, higher-level assignments.

Kahlile Mehr
Centerville, Utah

The William P. Clements Prize

The William P. Clements Center for Southwest Studies at Southern Methodist University offers the William P. Clements Prize for the Best Non-Fiction Book on Southwestern America, to promote and recognize fine writing and original research on the American Southwest. The competition is open to any nonfiction book, including biography, on any aspect of Southwestern life, past or present, with a 2001 copyright. The author need not be a citizen or resident of the United States.

The book need not be published in the United States. The author and publisher will each receive a certificate. In addition, the author will receive $1,000 and an invitation to give the annual Clements Prize Lecture at Southern Methodist University, expenses to be paid by the Clements Center.

There is no fee for participation. Publishers may submit at many titles as they wish but must send copies of each submission to each of the judges. Submissions must be postmarked by 21 January 2002, although earlier submission is preferred. Judges will announce the winner in late June.

For further information, contact David Weber, Director, Clements Center for Southwest Studies, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX 75275-0176; (214) 678-1233; e-mail: dweber@mail.smu.edu; website: http://www2.smu.edu/swcenter.

The judges are: David Farmer, P.O. Box 1106, El Prado, NM 87529; Sylvia Rodríguez, Anthropology Department, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM 87131; Thomas Sheridan, Curator of Ethnohistory, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 85721; and Elliott West, History Department, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR 72701.

Minority Religions Call for Papers

Organized by the University of Utah, the Center for Studies on New Religions (CESNUR), and BYU's International Center for Law and Religion Studies and in cooperation with the Institute for the Study of American Religion, a conference on "Minority Religions, Social Change, and Freedom of Conscience" will be held 20-23 June 2002 at the Marriott University Park Hotel in Salt Lake City.
This international conference will provide an opportunity for scholars from around the world to share their insights and perceptions concerning the reaction and adaptation of individuals, religions, and secular institutions to the growing diversity in many countries.

Speakers are invited from a broad range of disciplines, including sociology, anthropology, social psychology, history of religion, law, religious studies, and theology. Graduate students are welcome, but no scholarships are available.

Those submitting proposals should send three copies of a short CV and a one-page proposal (1) by e-mail to CESNUR cesnurto@tin.it and to Michael W. Homer, m homer@sui tter.com; and to W. Cole Durham, Jr., durhamc@lawgate.byu.edu, or (2) by mail to CESNUR, Via Confienza 19, 10121 Torino, Italy; and to Michael W. Homer, Sui tter Axland, 175 South West Temple, Suite 700, Salt Lake City, UT 84101, USA; and to W. Cole Durham Jr., BYU International Center for Law and Religion Studies, Brigham Young University, 412 JRCB, Provo, UT 84602, USA. Faxes must go to CESNUR at +39-011-541905. Proposals must be received on or before January 31, 2002.

For more information, visit the CESNUR website at www.cesnur.org.
POLYGAMY AND PROSTITUTION: COMPARATIVE MORALITY IN SALT LAKE CITY, 1847-1911

Jeffrey D. Nichols

Conflict between Latter-day Saints (Mormons) and non-Mormons (Gentiles) shaped much of the history of Salt Lake City from its founding through the early twentieth century. This conflict took many forms, but the antagonists wrangled longest and most bitterly over sexual morality, even though Mormons and Gentiles

Jeffrey D. Nichols (<j-nichol@wcslc.edu>) is assistant professor of history at Westminster College, Salt Lake City. This article is adapted from his dissertation, "Prostitution and Polygamy: The Contest Over Morality in Salt Lake City, 1847-1918" (University of Utah, 1998). He delivered an earlier version of it at the Utah State Historical Society annual meeting in August 1998.

shared much of the same moral code. Both emphasized the importance of premarital chastity and marital fidelity. LDS plural marriage, however, so offended many Gentiles that they denied these shared values and accused the Saints of the grossest of sexual sins. Mormons responded by looking for evidence of Gentile hypocrisy and immorality, which they found in prostitution. This study explores the role that prostitution played in the moral contest between Mormon and Gentile, through analysis of newspapers, court records, discourses, and other sources of the period.

Both antagonists publicly condemned prostitution. Women who sold sex for money violated the tenets of "true womanhood" for Gentile and Mormon. Because of this shared antipathy, prostitution could be used as a weapon, rhetorical and otherwise, in the contest over comparative morality. At many significant points of the Mormon-Gentile conflict, one or the other antagonist used prostitution to discredit its opponent. Many Gentiles argued that polygamy and prostitution were comparable violations of acceptable Christian morality. Mormons insisted that a sharp difference existed between sinful prostitution (which they claimed was practiced and patronized largely by Gentiles) and the Saints' divinely sanctioned celestial marriage. Eventually, however, the LDS Church abandoned polygamy; and a campaign to end regulated prostitution brought together


many Mormons and Gentiles, helped defeat an avowedly anti-Mormon political party, and contributed to a relaxation of religious strife.

The moral contest involved fundamental beliefs about the purpose and role of marriage and the home. LDS leaders stressed the blessings of divinely sanctioned, committed marriage and the loving, happy home, within which a pure woman could enjoy the protection of a good man and experience the joy and duty of bearing and raising their children. Most other Americans, including some of the Saints' bitterest enemies, agreed with those basic principles. For instance, the Ladies' Anti-Polygamy Society of Salt Lake City (which included Protestant and apostate LDS women) wrote in 1880 of "the dream which is innate in a woman's breast, to sometime be the central figure in a happy home."3 James W. McKinney, a political candidate from the anti-Mormon American Party, told a group of women supporters in 1908 that "the home, which is the very foundation of all good government, should be kept pure, that no form of defilement should be permitted to penetrate its sanctity. The home should be the most hallowed spot on earth for every child, for every man and woman."4

Mormons further insisted that sexual relations be confined to marriage. Apostle Erastus Snow expressed this typically when he told an audience: "The Latter-day Saints regard the intercourse of the sexes, both in time and in eternity, as regulated by sacred law given by our Father in heaven who has organized us male and female for a wise purpose in Himself, and that purpose is made manifest in the first great command given to our first parents, namely, to multiply and replenish the earth."5 President George Q. Cannon emphasized that chastity applied to male and female alike:

We say to our boys: it is the worst crime you can commit short of murder, to be guilty of illicit intercourse with the other sex. I would rather carry my son to the grave than that he should be guilty of such a thing. We say: "Marry the sisters, marry the daughters of Eve, take to yourselves lawful wives, but you shall not commit adultery, you shall not commit seduction, you shall not commit fornication; if you do God will curse you, and we will sever you from the Church." We say to our daughters that it is one of the worst crimes they can commit to be guilty of unchastity. We want to raise up a righteous seed in these mountains, pure and virtuous, so that a man will be so virtuous that he may be in the company of an unprotected woman alone for any length of time, and she would be as safe as if she were in heaven, or under the guardianship of an angel, safe from pollution, safe from everything that is vile.⁶

Many of the Saints’ avowed opponents agreed that both sexes should practice chastity. The Woman’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), the country’s largest women’s group, insisted upon a single sexual standard of purity for male and female alike, or what WCTU leader Frances Willard called “the white life for two."⁷

Despite the shared reverence for marriage and the woman-centered home, many Gentiles refused to accept Mormons’ protestations of purity. The major difference between Gentile and Mormon moral codes, of course, was Mormon plural marriage. Polygamy deeply offended many Gentiles, who believed it violated accepted Christian practice. Opponents accused Mormon men of practicing polygamy merely to gratify their lust—the same deadly sin that fueled the business of prostitution. In a typical attack, journalist and Western author J. W. Buel claimed: “Joe Smith planted the seed and reaped the first harvest of outraged chastity, for he was the first to teach and practice a subordination of female virtue to the lusts of


himself and constituent priesthood. At his death the mantle of de-
filement fell upon Brigham Young, who was a worthy successor to
propagate the lustful infamies which have ever been the chief cor-
ner-stone of Mormonism.”

Many Gentile women were convinced that it was impossible for
a polygamous home to be a true Christian home. The Ladies’ Anti-
Polygamy Society condemned polygamy because “it desecrates the
home and fireside.” The opponents of plural marriage were con-
vinced that no woman could remain morally pure in a Mormon
home. Angie Newman, a prominent antipolygamy activist and the
force behind the creation of the Industrial Christian Home for the
“rescue” of plural wives, demanded of Congress: “While the ago-
nized wail from thousands and thousands of God’s fair daughters,
degraded and debauched by man’s consuming lust, reaches up to
heaven from the soil of America, is not the nation’s boasted gal-
lantry, aye humanity, to women a burning sarcasm, a stink in the
nostrils of Jehovah?” The national and local branches of the WCTU

8J. W. Buel, Metropolitan Life Unveiled: Sunlight and Shadow of
America’s Great Cities (Philadelphia: West Philadelphia Publishing
Company, 1891), 441-42. For descriptions and analyses of anti-Mormon
literature, see David Brion Davis, “Some Themes of Counter-Subversion:
An Analysis of Anti-Masonic, Anti-Catholic, and Anti-Mormon Literature,”
Mississippi Valley Historical Review 47 (1960): 205-24; and Leonard J.
Arrington and Jon Haupt, “Intolerable Zion: The Image of Mormonism in
Nineteenth-Century American Literature,” Western Humanities Review 22
no. 3 (summer 1968): 243-60.

9“The Ladies’ Anti-Polygamy Society of Utah, Article 2,” Anti-
Polygamy Standard 1 no. 2 (May 1880): 1. See also Iversen, The Antipolygamy
Controversy, 9.

10Congress, Senate, “Memorial of Mrs. Angie F. Newman, remon-
strating against the admission of Utah Territory into the union as a state
so long as the administration of the affairs of that territory continues in the
hands of the Mormon priesthood,” 50th Cong., 1st sess., 21 September
1888, S. Mis. Doc. 201. Copy in Church History Library, Church of Jesus
Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City. On Newman and the Industrial
Christian Home, see Gustive O. Larson, “An Industrial Home for
Polygamous Wives,” Utah Historical Quarterly 38 no. 3 (Summer 1970):
263-75; Peggy Pascoe, Relations of Rescue: The Search for Female Moral
Authority in the American West, 1874-1939 (New York: Oxford University
The Journal of Mormon History

fought hard against polygamy for decades, claiming that it represented nothing more than institutionalized male lust.\(^{11}\) Prostitution entered this long-running debate as soon as Mormons publicly acknowledged the practice of plural marriage. At an LDS Church conference in August 1852, Apostle Orson Pratt defended polygamy with arguments that would be used for the next four decades. His most important position was that God commanded plural marriage, but he also advanced social arguments. The outside world, or “Babylon,” abounded in sins—fornication, adultery, abortion, infanticide, and prostitution—all of which polygamy could prevent:

It matters not to [monogamous Gentiles] how corrupt they are in female prostitution, if they are lawfully married to only one wife; but it would be considered an awful thing by them to raise up a posterity from more than one wife; this would be wrong indeed; but to go into a brothel, and there debauch themselves in the lowest haunts of degradation all the days of their lives, they consider only a trifling thing; nay, they can even license such institutions in Christian nations, and it all passes off very well. . . .

Do you find such haunts of prostitution, degradation, and misery here, in the cities of the mountains? No. Were such things in our midst, we should feel indignant enough to see that such persons be blotted out of the page of existence. . . .

How is this to be prevented? for we have got a fallen nature to grapple with. It is to be prevented in the way the Lord devised in

---

ancient times; that is, by giving to His faithful servants a plurality of wives, by which a numerous and faithful posterity can be raised up, and taught in the principles of righteousness and truth.\textsuperscript{12}

This line of reasoning appeared repeatedly in Mormon sermons in the following years. Mormon leaders contrasted their polygamous world, in which every woman had the possibility to marry and raise a family, with Babylon and its population of "surplus" women. Pratt claimed that the men of Babylon had in effect declared "we are going to make [surplus women] either old maids or prostitutes, and we would a little rather have them prostitutes, then we men would have no need to marry."\textsuperscript{13} Apostle Amasa Lyman claimed that "if all men and all women in a community were honorably married, you can readily understand one thing, that there would be no prostitution of women in that community, there would be an end of the corruption of man in that community, there would be no illegitimacy there."\textsuperscript{14} George Q. Cannon of the First Presidency agreed:

In the Gospel of Jesus Christ there is a remedy for every evil that exists among men. Here is the "social problem," that troubles the minds of all nations to-day. The cities of Christendom are crowded with prostitutes; their young men are destroyed in the dawn of their days by the terrible crime of prostitution. How shall these fearful evils be cured? Has there been sufficient wisdom found among men to do it? No; they have confessed their utter inability to cope with it. . . . What is to correct it? I answer, the Lord, through His people—the Latter-day Saints—is revealing the remedy. . . . If it were universally adopted the "social evil" would be removed, and prostitution would soon cease to exist on the face of the earth.\textsuperscript{15}


\textsuperscript{13}Orson Pratt, 7 October 1869, \textit{Journal of Discourses}, 13:183.

\textsuperscript{14}Amasa Lyman, 5 April 1866, \textit{Journal of Discourses} 11:202-203.

\textsuperscript{15}George Q. Cannon, 6 April 1869, \textit{Journal of Discourses} 13:102.
Apostle John Henry Smith concurred that polygamy could save women from immorality:

God has laid upon every woman the decree placed upon mother Eve—multiply and replenish the earth. In sections of the land in which we live, thousands of women to-day must become the playthings of some vile wretch, if they answer the design of their being. My whole being is convinced of the fact—that it is a decree of God Himself that these women should have a chance to marry, and that He Himself has opened the door.... I want my daughters married as I desired to marry myself; I want them honored wives, whether plural ones or otherwise, .... This principle was given for a purpose, and that purpose is the salvation of the female sex as well as the male sex.16

Gentile opponents of polygamy rejected such reasoning, arguing instead that polygamy and prostitution were two sides of the same immoral coin. Angie Newman reportedly declared that in polygamous Utah “every house is a house of prostitution” (a charge she denied making).17 The Salt Lake Tribune, long the organ of anti-Mormons, claimed to find no difference between polygamy and prostitution:

We will suppose a woman to have a circle of acquaintance, numbering say from two to twenty, with all of whom she may cohabit at stated intervals—would that not constitute her a prostitute? And would not such conduct be “submitting the body to vile purposes [the dictionary definition of prostitution]”? Now, then, suppose a man, under whatever pretext you please, religious or otherwise, indulges in sexuality to the same extent with a like number of women, does he not equally commit the crime of prostitution? If he does not we would like it explained.18

While Mormon men received most of the blame, antipolygamy

17The comment allegedly came in a speech Newman gave in Cincinnati as reported by a correspondent there; it appears in “What They Say,” Woman’s Exponent 12 (15 November 1883): 92. Newman’s denial appeared in “Mrs. Angie F. Newman’s Crusade Against the Mormons,” ibid., 13 (1 August 1884): 36.
activists sometimes compared LDS women to prostitutes or procurers. The *Anti-Polygamy Standard* claimed to quote a Mormon girl concerning prominent LDS women who publicly defended polygamy. The girl reportedly told the *Standard*, “I can only compare these women to those dreadful characters which they say exist in the outside world, and whose business it is to lure young girls to destruction. . . . They are nothing but tools of the priesthood, and while professing to be working for the elevation of women, they are in reality doing nothing but seeking for new victims to gratify the base passions of their infamous masters.”

The *Woman’s Exponent*, the unofficial news organ of the LDS Relief Society, defended Mormon women and plural marriage with the same rhetorical weapons which their enemies employed—the language of “true womanhood” and the defense of the home: “The principle of plural marriage itself tends to the strictest chastity, and children born in this order of marriage, will, from ante-natal influences, be purer in character. . . . [N]o where on the earth exist purer women than right here in Utah, those who have embraced this sacred order of marriage this world is so ready to condemn.”

LDS women evidently shared the prevailing societal view that prostitutes were among the most degraded and debased of women, and feared being associated with that low estate. The so-called “judicial crusade” against polygamy imprisoned their husbands and invalidated their marriages, with potentially dire results for their moral and economic status. Eliza Roxcy Snow railed against the Supreme Court’s decision in *Reynolds v. United States* (1879), which upheld the constitutionality of the 1862 Morrill Anti-Bigamy Act. Snow claimed that the decision assaulted the domestic sphere and would “cause thousands of honorable, loving wives to be stigmatized as prosti-

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21Direct evidence of LDS women’s attitudes toward prostitution is rare; but in 1894, Ellen B. Ferguson, an LDS physician, called for a police matron at the city jail since “it was degrading to all the women of Salt Lake that any woman, no matter how fallen,” should be searched by a policeman. “To Rescue the Fallen,” *Tribune*, 19 December 1894, 8.
tutes, and their offspring as bastards." The Tribune ridiculed Mormon women's claim to purity, referring at one point to "some shameless procuress who writes in the Women's [sic] Exponent" and noting that "Emeline [sic] B. Wells, the sixth concubine of the Pirate [Daniel H. Wells], edits the Procuress, sometimes called the Woman's Exponent."

While these charges flew back and forth, some women in Utah did exchange sex for money. By all accounts, "real" prostitutes were relatively rare before the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869. The Mormons' emphasis on chastity and the oversight of neighbors and church authorities apparently served to keep prostitution to a minimum. Mormon leaders warned both their members and Gentiles against bringing prostitution to the Salt Lake Valley. In

22"Decision of the Supreme Court of the United States in the Reynolds Case," Deseret Evening News, 21 January 1879, 3. For the Reynolds case, see U.S. Reports 98 (Oct. 1878), 145-69; and George Q. Cannon, A Review of the Decision of the Supreme Court of the United States in the Case of George Reynolds vs. the United States (Salt Lake City, 1879).

23"City Jottings," Tribune, 17 June 1877, 4; and "The Old Hen Emeline [sic]," Tribune, 13 November 1878, 4.

24Many visitors noted the good order and lack of crime in Salt Lake City before 1869. Richard Francis Burton, always alert to sexual practices in the places he visited, commented on the absence of prostitution. Richard F. Burton, The City of the Saints, and Across the Rocky Mountains to California (London: Longman, Green, Longman and Roberts, 1861), 426-7, 508, 513, 519-20, 535. For Burton's general interest in prostitutes, see Edward Rice, Captain Sir Richard Francis Burton: The Secret Agent Who Made the Pilgrimage to Mecca, Discovered the Kama Sutra, and Brought the Arabian Nights to the West (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1990), 16-17, 38-39, 83, 130, 144-45, 168, 182, 219, 236. Rice comments on Burton's time in Salt Lake City on pp. 335-37. After an 1861 visit, Mark Twain, Roughing It (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 89, marveled at a city "with no loafers perceptible in it; and no visible drunkards or noisy people." Minutes of LDS Church courts are not available to scholars, but there are reportedly no LDS women charged with prostitution in church courts and only a handful of men accused of patronizing prostitutes, according to Edwin Brown Firmage and Richard Collin Mangrum, who were allowed to view nineteenth-century records. Zion in the Courts: A Legal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830-1900 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 359-60.
1854 Heber C. Kimball, Brigham Young’s counselor in the First Presidency, promised that “if ever [prostitution] is allowed among this people, it will be when righteousness has ceased to dwell in their midst. It never can be allowed in this community in male or female, whether they belong to the Church or not; and we will wipe out such abominations, the Lord being our helper.” Punishment for sexual immorality sometimes went beyond threats. Mormon pioneer Hosea Stout blandly noted in his diary in 1858 that a group of men entered another man’s house “and dragged him out of bed with a whore and castrated him by a square & close amputation.”

One federally appointed official violated the Mormons’ moral code and seemed to confirm the Saints’ beliefs about the wickedness of Babylon. W. W. Drummond, a federal judge, reportedly arrived in Utah in 1855 with a prostitute-mistress. Drummond and other officials later complained in the East of the Saints’ political domination of the territory and their refusal to submit to federal authority. Their accusations helped convince President James Buchanan to send a military force to replace Governor Brigham Young and to deal with the “treason.” To the Saints, these frightening developments proved a linkage between the immorality of the outside world and its desire to persecute violently the Kingdom of God.

The “invasion” by the U.S. Army in 1857-58 ended with a bloodless compromise, but it brought unwanted elements to the Mormon Zion. Along with the troops that built Camp Floyd in 1858 came the usual camp followers, including some prostitutes. A few prostitutes also appeared on the fringes of Camp Douglas after Col. Patrick Edward Connor established that base on the bench east of Salt Lake City in 1862. One soldier in the territorial prison reportedly used prostitution to make a joke at Mormons’ expense:

27Tullidge, History of Salt Lake City, 144-56; Larson, The “Americanization” of Utah, 17; and Norman Furniss, The Mormon Conflict, 1858-1859 (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1960).
A well dressed female visited the Penitentiary with the view of having an interview with her purported husband. . . . The next day . . . Col. Connor, now Gen. Connor, inquired for Mr. McCoy. He was told that he demeaned himself quietly and peaceable, and that his wife had made him a visit. Gen. Connor replied that he had no wife, and asked the warden to describe the lady, which he did. The General replied, "It's that old strumpet, Mrs. Hall, that keeps at the mouth of Dry Canon." Next day the warden approached the prisoner, McCoy, with a view of reproving [him] for suffering him to be deceived. The prisoner replied, "Mr. Warden, you introduced her as my wife, and I understand that you Mormons have a way of marrying by proxy, and I accepted the ceremony." 29

The completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869 brought a substantial influx of railroad workers, miners, and the prostitutes who earned their living from them. 30 Two early madams found themselves the targets of the all-Mormon Salt Lake City government and inadvertently entered the contest over comparative morality. Kate Flint, remembered for years after as "one of the pioneer scarlet women of Salt Lake," 31 ran a brothel in 1870 in Corinne, the railroad town and "Gentile capital" of Utah. 32 Flint and a few other madams and prostitutes, including Cora Conway, moved to Salt Lake City and by 1872 were keeping house on Commercial (now

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29 Albert P. Rockwood, "A Report with Extracts from the Congressional Acts of the United States Congress, the Legislative Journals and Laws of the Territory of Utah and A Concise History of Utah Penitentiary Its Inmates and Officers, From the Year 1855 to 1878," compiled for and by the request of Mr. H. H. Bancroft, Salt Lake City, 4 January 1878, 19-20; photocopy at Utah State Historical Society Library, Salt Lake City, original in Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.


31 The claim appears in an article alleging that the labor activist Mary Harris ("Mother") Jones, in Utah to support a strike, was an old friend of Kate Flint's and a former Denver brothelkeeper. See "The Mottled Record of 'Mother Jones,' Labor Agitator," Deseret Evening News, 30 April 1904, 21.

32 U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1870, Box Elder County, Schedule 1, District 46, MF #0025542. For Corinne, see Brigham D. Madsen, Corinne: The Gentile Capital of Utah (Salt Lake City: Utah State Historical Society, 1980), esp. 11-14.
Regent) Street. The police periodically arrested the madams and their “girls,” but some citizens demanded that brothels be suppressed entirely. In August 1872, police court justice Jeter Clinton responded by ordering police to abate Flint’s and Conway’s brothels as nuisances. Police officers demolished the houses’ furnishings.\(^{33}\) The Mormon press congratulated the authorities, but reported that some bystanders objected:

Already, we are informed, there are those who consider themselves respectable, who exhibited anger yesterday at the abatement of these houses of ill-fame, on the ground that they were ‘necessary,’ they existed elsewhere, and should be permitted here.... We understand, they mentioned the names of young men and others who are old residents here as patrons of these institutions.

No better argument than this, in the opinion of the community generally, can be adduced for declaring them nuisances, and proceeding against them as such. The undivided sentiment here, up to the past few years, was in favor of the marriage of the sexes, in utter opposition to harlotry. That sentiment is still entertained by the very large majority of the people of Utah. They still desire their sons to be husbands, not paramours; their daughters to be wives, not harlots; and while they live they will do all in their power to check such prostitution.\(^{34}\)

The *Tribune* offered another explanation for the abatements.

For a long time past, or so long as Jeter and a few of the police could pocket handsome perquisites, and be sharers in the money—providing there was enough of it—sentimentality and morality were left out of the question and houses of ill fame were unmolested. In

\(^{33}\)The complaint took the form of a petition by Adam Spiers (later a police court justice) and others; see Salt Lake City Council Minutes, 16 July 1872, Book F, p. 383, City Clerk’s Office, Salt Lake City. This petition was entered as evidence in Kate Flint’s subsequent civil suit, although it is unclear by which side; see *Flint v. Clinton et al.*, case no. 554, Third District civil case files, 1877. The raids are described in “Police Court,” *Deseret Evening News*, 29 August 1872, 3; and “Trial of Misses Kate Flint, Cora Conway, Sadie Hulbert and Nellie Hutchinson,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, 30 August 1872, 3. The cases against Hutchinson and Hulbert were dropped.

\(^{34}\)Editorial, *Deseret Evening News*, 30 August 1872, 2. The Salt Lake *Herald* claimed that some individuals threatened “to fire the street and burn it down” and “prompted the frail women to burn the street.” “Abating a Nuisance,” *Herald*, 30 August 1872, 3.
other words, polygamic lascivious cohabitation has not yielded sufficient tithing, and consequently the other and really less objectionable cohabitation is taxed to supply the deficiency, and polygamic policemen at the instance of a polygamic City Council and a polygamic Police Court, are sent to destroy every vestige of property owned by these women, which they do with all the earnestness and zeal characteristic of religious fanatics discharging a command of the Priesthood.\(^{35}\)

Flint and Conway used the Mormon-Gentile animosity to obtain legal redress. They sued Clinton and the police in the federal Third District court before Judge James B. McKean, an avowed enemy of polygamy, and two other justices.\(^{36}\) Flint complained that she could not get a fair trial before a jury of Mormons because she was "known as one who is opposed to the same, and has incurred [their] displeasure and hostility." The madam also claimed that the police had wantonly destroyed her personal property, including her underwear, and had stolen or destroyed $1,000 in cash.\(^{37}\) The court ruled for Flint on grounds that the warrant was defective. The Deseret Evening News quoted a lengthy excerpt from the judges' rationale, which drew an explicit parallel between prostitution and plural marriage:

If Kate Flint kept a house and it was proved that fifty men frequented it for purposes of illicit intercourse, and process could be issued and her furniture and household goods be broken up therefore, the same could be done with say John Smith, who might have in his house twelve women with whom he had illicit sexual intercourse. It would not matter whether or not he claimed that those women were his wives, the law allowed a man but one wife, and, had a justice of the peace the right to act as in the case of Kate Flint it would not alter


\(^{37}\) Flint v. Clinton et al., case no. 554. For Conway's case, see Conway v. Clinton et al., case no. 586, Third District civil case files, 1877, original case files, Utah State Archives. This file contains material from the entire legal proceedings, 1873-77. Conway v. Clinton, 1 Utah 215 (1875) was the original case.
the situation if Kate Flint claimed that the fifty or more men visiting her house were her husbands. Such a claim would not take it outside of the law, and neither would it in the case of a polygamist. 38

The city council eventually appropriated $6,000 to settle the women’s claims. Conway seems not to have reopened her house, but Flint’s brothel remained a fixture for another decade until she retired. 39

The outcome of the Flint and Conway incidents only increased Mormons’ bitterness toward their moral accusers. With some justification, they blamed Gentiles for introducing prostitution to Utah and bristled at the apparent hypocrisy when some Gentiles then attacked Mormon marital practices. Apostle John Taylor fumed:

Ministers and editors preach and write and tell us that when the waves of “civilization” shall roll over Utah, things will be changed, and say they, “The people will become elevated and refined in their feelings and they will be like us.” Some of their waves are not very pleasant, they have brought a lot of scum with them, . . . We do not have any sympathy with gambling, drunkenness and prostitution, for instance, and these are among the waves they have brought. They find fault with us for having more wives and children than they, and for

38 “The Kate Flint Case Given to the Jury,” Deseret Evening News, 15 March 1875, 3. The Tribune agreed broadly with this version, adding that the justice had argued there was “No Difference Between the Celestialism of Flint and Clinton.” “The Rival Systems,” Salt Lake Tribune, 16 March 1875, 4.

39 For the settlement, see Salt Lake City Council Minutes, 18 September 1877, Book H, p. 103; and “Come Down!” Salt Lake Tribune, 21 September 1877, 4. For evidence of Flint’s brothel, see U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1880, Salt Lake County, Schedule 1, District 52 MF #1255337; Historicus [Amos Milton Musser], “Offences in 1882. Percentage in every 1,000 souls,” transcript in the hand of L. Weihe, Utah State Historical Society Library, Salt Lake City, and the following Tribune articles: “The Police Field Day,” 2 June 1886, 4; “City Police Court,” 22 August 1886, 5; “Tithing the Harlots,” 10 October 1886, 5; and “The Church Municipal Court,” 13 October 1886, 5. For the sale of Flint’s brothel property, see Salt Lake County Recorder, “Deed Book 2Q,” warranty deed, 7 February 1888, 252-24. For evidence of continued prostitution on that property, see “The Problems Must Go,” Herald, 22 January 1895, 8; “Rooming House Arrests,” Tribune, 3 July 1899, 8; and “In an Evil Business,” Tribune, 4 July 1899, 6.
preserving purity and chastity in our midst, and they would introduce their infamies amongst us.\(^{40}\)

The *Deseret Evening News* likewise complained that plural marriage was condemned while prostitution was tolerated:

> It is a very curious circumstance in this land of freedom, that while there are a great many persons who would willingly accept severe legislation to prohibit plural marriage, there are not a few persons, some of them the very same persons, who are in favor of licensing prostitution. How people can wish to make marriage illegal and prostitution legal, to have marriage prohibited and punished, and prostitution established and protected by law and still claim the least shadow of consistency, is incomprehensible to us.\(^{41}\)

Since the Saints could not oust the territory’s stubborn prostitutes, they made them a weapon in the struggle to establish moral superiority. Amos Milton Musser of the LDS Church Historian’s Office compiled a table of crime statistics in 1882 to prove that Gentiles were far more prone to immorality. Musser claimed that no Mormon had been arrested during the year as a keeper or inmate of a house of ill fame. He concluded that the Saints, comprising 78 percent of Utah’s population, had committed only 5 crimes against morality, and the “Anti-Mormons” 173, thus proving that Gentiles were 30 times more “base and wicked.” Musser failed to note, however, that the police force making the arrests was all-Mormon.\(^{42}\)

Prostitution also complicated the federal government’s cam-


\(^{41}\)“Licensing Prostitution,” *Deseret Weekly News*, 29 March 1876, 134.

\(^{42}\)Musser, “Offences in 1882.” On the all-Mormon force, see Herbert Lester Gleason, “The Salt Lake City Police Department, 1851-1949: A Social History” (M.S. thesis, University of Utah, 1950), 67. The city police sometimes protected Mormons from arrest. Abraham H. Cannon wrote in his diary that seven Salt Lake City policemen stationed themselves around the farm of his father, George Q. Cannon, on 3 June 1885 “to look out for intruders” while LDS President John Taylor met with George Q. Cannon, and nine of twelve apostles, all “on the underground.” Abraham added with satisfaction: “It would not have been healthy for deputy-marshals to have attempted a raid at the farm this evening.” Abraham Hoagland Cannon, Diaries, 1879-96, Vol. 133, Manuscripts Division, Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City.
campaign against plural marriage. The Edmunds Act of 1882 specified that any male who “cohabits with more than one woman” was guilty of unlawful cohabitation, a misdemeanor. The Utah Commission created by Edmunds crafted a “test oath” and added the phrase “in the marriage relation” to the cohabitation clause, words that appeared nowhere in the original legislation.\(^{43}\) This oath, administered to prospective voters, was used to disqualify polygamous Mormons.\(^{44}\)

Outraged Mormons argued that the Edmunds Act should be applied to all extramarital sexual activity, including fornication, adultery, and prostitution. The act would thus improve Utah’s moral climate (while disfranchising many lascivious Gentiles). Instead, Mormons claimed, the commissioners had inserted the “marriage relation” clause solely to target honorably married Saints. It is true that Congress undoubtedly meant to narrowly target polygamy, not general immorality.\(^{45}\) The law quickly created an LDS martyr. Fera-morz Little, the respected ex-mayor of Salt Lake, was reportedly turned away from the polls by the registrar (his own son) because he had once been married to more than one woman. Next in line came the infamous Kate Flint and her inmates, who voted unmolested. The story became a staple of LDS discourses.\(^{46}\)

The Edmunds Act marked the beginning of the judicial crusade against polygamy that threatened to destroy the LDS Church. By late


\(^{45}\)LDS Apostle Erastus Snow tacitly admitted as much in general conference on 7 October 1882. Snow claimed that Congress voted down an amendment that would make the Edmunds Act apply to adulterers, since “such an amendment, . . . did not express the mind of our American statesmen and that of hireling priests; they needed adulterers, whoremongers, and fornicators, to carry out the vote in Utah over the Mormons.” *Journal of Discourses* 23:301.

1885, the pressure against polygamists had become so intense that most of the top LDS leaders were “on the underground.” City license collector Brigham Young Hampton, a Mormon, devised a plan to turn the moral tables. Hampton had been among the policemen who abated Flint’s brothel in 1872 and had faced charges from that action. Now he decided to punish “the Government Office Holders that are prosecuting and persecuting the Servants of God for keeping his laws of Marriage.” He formed a committee that hired two prostitutes and set them up in houses with apertures in the doors and walls so that police officers could view “the beastile conduct” within.

Hampton reportedly offered a bounty for federal officials, especially the governor, Supreme Court judges, or Utah commissioners. Altogether, he claimed to have detected about a hundred men in lewd and lascivious conduct—the great majority Gentile—including minor officials and one Protestant minister. However, the bigger fish avoided the bait. The police arrested a handful of men who were prosecuted and convicted in the city police court before Justice Adam Spiers, the same Mormon whose petition seems to have inspired the abatement of Kate Flint’s brothel.

But Hampton’s plan backfired. The first few men arrested obtained writs of habeas corpus from the Third District Court, the center of the antipolygamy judicial crusade. Judge Charles S. Zane ruled that the ordinance under which the men were arrested was intended only to punish open or public acts and dismissed the cases. Police

47 Flint v. Clinton et al., case no. 554.
48 Brigham Young Hampton, Autobiography, Hampton Papers, 1870-1901, 167, Ms 2480, fd. 1, Historical Department Archives, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter LDS Church Archives). In the same volume, Hampton wrote a memoir, apparently in 1901, which, without a break, then becomes a daily diary, which in turn is succeeded by a retrospective account describing his arrest in the 1890s.
50 “Valid or Invalid?”, Tribune, 28 November 1885, 4; and “The Law is Mighty,” Tribune, 29 November 1885, 2. For angry Mormon reaction to that ruling, see “The Ruling in Favor of the Lecherous,” Deseret Evening News, 30 November 1885, 2. For Zane’s role in the antipolygamy crusade,
charged them again under territorial statutes, but U.S. attorney Charles S. Varian refused to prosecute. Zane then ordered the grand jury to indict keepers of brothels and made it clear that, like many Gentiles, he believed polygamy and prostitution were comparable moral crimes: “Polygamy and unlawful cohabitation and this class of crimes all tend to lust and lechery and lead men and women astray... When a man that has a wife chooses to go to those houses or to marry and cohabit with other women he is instigated by lust and by lechery.”

The grand jury indicted Hampton and his two women but claimed that it could not get enough information to indict any other keepers. The Tribune insisted that LDS Church authorities must have directed and funded Hampton’s “assignation fiends,” but those involved denied such a connection, and the paper offered no evidence to prove otherwise. The two women disappeared, at least one with help from Hampton’s committee, but he was convicted of keeping a house of ill fame and served a year in jail.


51 “Floored Again,” Salt Lake Tribune, 15 December 1885, 4. See also these Tribune articles: “The Test Case” and “The Conspirators,” 9 December 1885, 4; “Gleeful Fiends,” 12 December 1885, 4; “Sick! Sick! Sick!” 13 December 1885, 4.

52 About six other brothels operated openly in the city in 1885. See Nichols, “Prostitution and Polygamy,” 114 notes 29-30.

53 “Vandercook’s Arrest” and “The Mormon Plot,” Salt Lake Tribune, 24 November 1885, 4; “City and Neighborhood,” ibid., 25 November 1885, 4; “Here’s A Go!” ibid., 4 December 1885, 4; “Pro Bono Publico,” ibid., 24 December 1885, 4; “Brig’s Christmas Gift,” ibid., 25 December 1885, 4; and Hampton, Autobiography, 167.

54 “The Infamous Plot,” Salt Lake Tribune, 8 December 1885, 4; “Another Report,” ibid., 20 December 1885, 4; and “Taken to Jail,” ibid., 31 December 1885, 4. According to Third District Court criminal case files, case nos. 285, 286, 287, and 288, Hampton and Fanny Davenport were indicted by a federal grand jury on 7 December 1885 for conspiring to keep and maintain a house of ill fame between 3 September and 13 November 1885 and stood trial in Third District court. Separate counts were filed because of the doctrine of “segregation,” established in unlawful cohabitation prosecutions (later disallowed), which allowed a defendant to be charged for each discrete period of time spent with a plural wife. These
The "city brothel" scheme immediately entered the arsenal of the Mormon-Gentile moral war. The *Deseret Evening News* complained bitterly of Hampton's jail term: "Mr. Hampton is to be punished for exposing the filthy practices of persons 'in sympathy with the prosecution' against 'Mormons.' The persons exposed, and whose guilt is not denied, are to be exempt from all punishment. And the people of Utah, looking upon such a travesty of justice as this, are expected to fall down on their knees and worship the law and its administrators."\(^55\) A group of LDS women used the Hampton incident and the Kate Flint voting story in an 1886 memorial to the President and Congress protesting the antipolygamy crusade:

> We see good and noble men dragged to jail to linger among felons, while debauched and polluted men, some of them Federal officers who have been detected in the vilest kind of depravity, protected by the same courts and officers that turn all their energies and engines of power towards the ruin of our homes and the destruction of our dearest associations. We see pure women forced to disclose their conjugal relations or go to prison, while the wretched creatures who pander to men's basest passions are left free to ply their horrible trade, and may vote at the polls while legal wives of men with plural families are disenfranchised.\(^56\)

Angie Newman interpreted the Hampton episode very differently in her petition to Congress: "This conspiracy was a carefully..."
constructed Mormon plot to blacken the character of Gentile residents; to arrest and punish victims under assumed municipal (Mormon) authority. For the execution of this dastardly outrage, lewd women were imported, at Mormon expense; their rooms furnished by the Mormons, and arranged so that witnesses could be secreted.  Gentiles did not—indeed, could not—deny that some non-Mormon men had been caught with prostitutes, but they argued that polygamy was the greater evil. Newman, who styled herself a protector of the pure, maternally centered domestic sphere, presumably disapproved of prostitution; but she focused her public ire on the Saints. The Tribune dismissed the scheme as a “Desperate Attempt to Prove Polygamy No Worse than Prostitution.”

Hampton’s plan only served to confirm and exacerbate each side’s stereotypical image of the other. Mormons insisted that Hampton had proved the immorality and hypocrisy of the antipolygamists. Gentiles pointed to the incident as proof that the LDS Church had operated brothels and that even Mormons considered polygamy and prostitution equivalent crimes.

The judicial crusade against polygamy finally ended after LDS President Wilford Woodruff issued his Manifesto in 1890 counseling Mormons not to contract new plural marriages. Salt Lake City’s economy, politics, and social life continued to adjust and accommodate to the larger American society. But Salt Lake City had reached

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57Congress, Senate, Woman Suffrage in Utah, petition of Mrs. Angie F. Newman, 49th Cong., 1st sess., 8 June 1886, S. Mis. Doc. 122; copy in Historical Department Library, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City.


59The Tribune kept the memory of this incident alive for years. See “City and Neighborhood,” Salt Lake Tribune, 3 February 1886, 4; An Old Settler, “The Hampton Petition” (Letter to the Editor), ibid., 30 May 1886, 4; “What They Will Not Do,” ibid., 29 February 1890, 4; and “The News on Vices,” ibid., 10 February 1900, 4. See also “A Case of Late Repentance,” (Salt Lake City) Telegram, 12 December 1908, 12. B. H. Roberts, Comprehensive History, 6:158, admitted that the Hampton incident was a “regrettable thing” perpetrated by “overzealous men.”

60On the Manifesto, see Van Wagoner, Mormon Polygamy, chap. 13. For the process of accommodation, see Larson, The “Americanization” of Utah.
an accommodation with prostitution long before 1890. Like virtually every other U.S. city, Salt Lake's authorities adopted a policy of regulating prostitution by periodic arrests and small fines that amounted to de facto licensing. The policy began with all-Mormon administrations of the 1870s and 1880s, and continued under the mixed governments after 1890.

LDS municipal authorities seemingly gave up on the suppression of vice by the mid-1870s for several reasons. Some Saints undoubtedly concurred in the national consensus that prostitution should be regulated rather than abolished. The influx of young, unattached soldiers, miners, railroad workers, and others who sometimes patronized brothels may also have helped convince authorities that fighting vice was a losing proposition. The expensive failure to abate Flint's and Conway's brothels in 1872 had made city officials wary.

The backgrounds of some municipal officials also changed. The city's mayors were no longer counselors in the First Presidency


62 Brigham Young suggested as much when he noted that the Gentiles demanded and got alcohol in Salt Lake, to his regret: "But we do keep liquor here; we are obliged to do it to accommodate our neighbors who come here; . . . for twelve years not a man or woman in this room has seen me walk down through what I call 'Whisky-street.' My eyes do not wish to see it. I never wish to hear another oath, or to see another evil action performed." 27 August 1871, Journal of Discourses 14:224-25.
like Jedediah M. Grant and Daniel H. Wells; rather, the four mayors who held office from 1876 through 1890 were better known as businessmen than as churchmen. Historians Thomas G. Alexander and James B. Allen suggest that their selection represented the LDS Church’s acknowledgment that bankers and merchants had joined Church officials among the city’s elite. Although they were loyal Saints, the latter four mayors may have viewed the abolition of prostitution as impossible or unwise from a business standpoint. The results of Hampton’s experiment certainly would not encourage mayors to crack down on prostitution. Finally, the intense federal pressures on the LDS Church from the antipolygamy crusade may have understandably relegated concerns about prostitution to the background.

Some businessmen realized they could profit from regulation. An incident that began in 1890 demonstrates the real targets of antiprolitition efforts and helps explain the attraction of regulation to many city officials and businessmen, Mormon and Gentile alike. Brigham Young Hampton, at this point a private businessman, leased a lot on Commercial Street from the Brigham Young Estate, built a three-story building on it, and leased the building to Louis Bamberger, who subleased it to “Elsie St Omer a ladie of easy virtue,” a well-known madam. In 1891, Judge Zane again instructed

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63 Alexander and Allen, Mormons and Gentiles, 91, 132-33. These four mayors were Feramorz Little, William Jennings, James Sharp, and Francis Armstrong.

64 An exception was Francis Armstrong, who admitted contributing $500 to Hampton’s committee in 1885. As mayor a year later, he directed police to conduct mass arrests in an apparent attempt to abolish prostitution. See “Fighting the Social Evil,” Herald, 5 June 1886, 4; and “The Passing of the Soiled Doves,” Salt Lake Tribune, 9 June 1886, 4. The raids disrupted but did not eliminate prostitution; most women arrested paid small fines and went back to work. The failure of Armstrong’s campaign to abolish prostitution provided fodder for the advocates of regulation for years; see “The Vices of Men,” Goodwin’s Weekly (Salt Lake City), 3 January 1903, 1.

65 Hampton, Autobiography, 241-42. This section of Hampton’s diary or memoir, which he apparently wrote in 1901, is entitled “Brigham Young Trust Cos record of their making me their Scape Goat.” He mistakenly wrote that he leased the building to Bamberger on 1 August
the grand jury to seek indictments against brothelkeepers. Hampton claimed that the officers of the Brigham Young Trust Company (now managing part of the estate) decided to sacrifice him to the authorities, leaving him to face prosecution in the same court that had sentenced him to a year in prison for the same crime.

District Attorney Varian, however, dismissed Hampton's case and another against a woman named Emma Whiting because they were not directly managing the brothels located on their property. City statutes allowed the prosecution of owners of property used for prostitution, but the “defense of landlord” provision protected the owner if he could prove that he had “diligently used the power which the law gives him to suppress the improper use of the building or tenement.” Property owners seldom faced legal action if there was a manager—i.e., a madam—to prosecute instead. By limiting legal action to madams—"fallen women" practicing an outlawed profession who could count on little public sympathy—authorities accom-

1890 (240). Rather, Hampton's wife Mary leased the building to Bamberger on 12 July 1890. Salt Lake County Recorder, “Lease and Lien Book O,” indenture, 540-41. Bamberger subleased to Elsie Anderson (alias St. Omar) on the same day. Ibid., “Lease and Lien Book L,” lease, 299-301, filed 14 July 1890. For evidence of Elsie St. Omar's occupation, see “A Raid on the Harlots,” Salt Lake Tribune, 23 August 1890, 5; and Salt Lake City Police Department, Arrest Register, 1891-94, entries of 7 February 1891, 3-4; 30 April 1891, 28; 7 August 1891, 56; 28 October 1891, 79; 21 June 1892, 134. 66Hampton, Autobiography, 241-42; and “Judge Zane Opens Court,” Salt Lake Tribune, 15 September 1891, 8.

67Hampton tried to forestall the legal action by canceling the objectionable leases. Bamberger and St. Omar agreed, even though St. Omar had just spent “several hundred dollars” preparing the house for use as a brothel. Hampton declared that the madam “was a hundred times more Considerate than my Should be friends and I think in the day of Judgment She will out Shine Many of the B.Y.T.Co.” Still, Hampton was indicted. See Hampton, Autobiography, 242; Salt Lake County Recorder, “Liens and Leases, Book O,” lease, 10 November 1891, 540-41; and People et al. v. Brigham Y. Hampton, case no. 830, Third District Court, criminal case files, 1892. See also Brigham Young Trust Company Records, file no. 853, Corporation Files, Salt Lake County Clerk.

68“An Ordinance Relating to Houses of Ill-fame and Prostitution,” Book C, Salt Lake City Council Ordinances (1877), sec. 3.
plished two tasks: They could show the community that they were at least regulating prostitution and simultaneously protect a “respectable” and powerful property owner from an embarrassing prosecution. Another consideration was the city’s reputation. Mormons and Gentiles often accused one another of “knocking” the city; i.e., damaging its business reputation by accusing the other of immoral behavior. Worden P. Noble, a prominent businessman and member of the city’s board of police and fire commissioners, reportedly warned the chief of police in 1897 that attempts to abolish prostitution would ruin the city’s business. 69

Ironically, the “defense of landlord” provision protected Emma Whiting, who as “Emma DeMarr” had been one of the city’s most notorious madams. After marrying Charles Whiting in 1886, she withdrew from active management of her brothel, leasing it to a madam named Minnie Barton. 70 The lease to Barton was evidently enough to shield even Emma Whiting from prosecution.

Though relieved at the dismissal of charges, Hampton remained bitter toward the Brigham Young Trust Company’s officers, who included First Counselor George Q. Cannon as president, Apostle Brigham Young Jr. as vice-president, and Spencer Clawson, alternate member of the Salt Lake Stake high council as treasurer. 71 The company’s ownership of brothels publicly embarrassed its officers and caused contention within the company. In 1894 the company successfully evicted prostitutes from its Commercial Street properties. 72

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70 See Salt Lake County Probate Court, U.T., “Record of Marriage Certificates,” license no. 430, filed 19 June 1888. For the lease to Minnie Barton and the case against Whiting, see People et al. v. Emma Whiting, case no. 832, Third District criminal case files, 1891. For a fuller discussion, see Nichols, “Prostitution and Polygamy,” chap. 2.

71 Hampton, Autobiography, 241-48; and Brigham Young Trust Company Records.

72“Clawson’s Virtuous Spasm,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, 5 January 1895, 8; “A Little Shy on Proof,” *ibid.*, 15 January 1895, 8; “Avenue Vs. Street,” *Deseret Evening News*, 5 January 1895, 1; Editorial, *Deseret Evening News*, 5 January 1895, 1; and “Police Make a Move,” *Herald*, 16 January 1895, 8. Essie Watkins, a madam evicted from the company’s property, testified two
By 1897, however, some of the directors were frustrated at their inability to find legitimate tenants. Over the reported objections of Cannon, Clawson, and Young, the directors struck out the “moral clause” in its leases and rented part of a building to one Ada Wilson, who reportedly spent $15,000 to refurbish it as a brothel, which she named “The Palace.” The brazen Wilson sent invitations to her “opening ball” to hundreds of citizens, including the city attorney who declined indignantly but apparently took no legal action. According to Anthon H. Lund, Heber J. Grant and other high-ranking LDS officials unwittingly accepted the invitation and were “astonished to find that they had been in a regular whore-house.”

The opulent Palace thrived for the next decade, and the Trust Company and its successor, the Clayton Investment Company, owned Commercial Street properties used for prostitution until 1941. Hostile Gentiles sometimes raised that fact during periods of religious antagonism.73

years later that Spencer Clawson, representing the company, had “ordered me to close up my house or he would put me in the penitentiary.” “Hot Trial,” Salt Lake Tribune, 21 August 1897, 5.

73For the policy change, see “Leased for Immoral Use,” Salt Lake Tribune, 4 January 1897, 8; “Police Board Squirms,” ibid., 30 March 1897, 1; and “The City Attorney’s Part,” ibid., 31 March 1897, 8. John Held Jr., The Most of John Held Jr. (Brattleboro, Vt.: Stephen Greene Press, 1972), 99-100, briefly describes Wilson and the Palace. Brigham Hampton, Autobiography, 246, claimed (improbably) in 1900 that the Palace “is known all over the Country by Travling men and Found [?] as the little Paris. Though it is the bigest house of its kind west of New York.” See also Thompson v. Wilson et al., case no. 9432, Third District civil case files, 1908; and R. L. Polk & Co., Salt Lake City Directory, 1898-1908. For the “opening ball,” see “Open Letter to Angus M. Cannon,” Living Issues, 29 December 1899; “Police Board Squirms,” Salt Lake Tribune, 30 March 1897, 1; Anthon H. Lund, Diary, 8 April 1897, LDS Church Archives. The Brigham Young Trust Company changed its name to the Clayton Investment Company in 1905. For its continued ownership of brothel properties, see D. Michael Quinn, Same-Sex Dynamics among Nineteenth-Century Americans: A Mormon Example (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1996), 319-22. For the brothels as an element in the Mormon-Gentile conflict, see “Pages From the History of Zion,” Salt Lake Tribune, 26 September 1908, 14; and “The Mayor and ‘Red Light,’” ibid., 9 December 1908, 6.
The Brigham Young Trust Company’s ownership of brothels was not an unusual business relationship. Some of the city’s most notorious madams carried on mundane business dealings with the community’s best-known merchants and bankers—Mormon, Jew, and Gentile.\textsuperscript{74} Such dealings illustrate the city’s economic transformation. The advent of railroads and large-scale mining enterprises helped integrate Utah’s economy into national markets. Most Mormon businessmen abandoned their cooperative and exclusive business practices for capitalist enterprises, including banking, retail, and real estate speculation.\textsuperscript{75} The shared interest of Mormon and Gentile businessmen in the

\textsuperscript{74}Sadie Noble (Susie M. Free), for example, was a well-known madam from the early 1880s to the early 1890s; see Musser, “Offenses in 1882”; and Salt Lake Police, ”Arrest Register, 1891-1894,” 27 September 1894, 343. She conducted ostensibly legitimate business at various times with William H. King, a Mormon attorney and future U.S. Congressman and Senator; Frederick H. Auerbach, a prominent Jewish merchant; Louis C. Karrick, a Gentile banker and later member of the city council’s police committee; William S. McCornick, the Gentile owner of the largest private bank in the city; and the Deseret Savings Bank, which had Mormon investors. Free sold King a lot in Block 120; see Salt Lake County Recorder, “Deed Book 3T,” warranty deed, p. 585, filed 23 June 1891. For King, see also Polk, Salt Lake City Directory, 1898; and Thomas G. Alexander, Mormonism in Transition: A History of the Latter-day Saints, 1890-1930 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 10, 29, 32, 45, 55, 86. Free borrowed some $1,500 from “F. Auerbach & Bro.”; see Salt Lake County Recorder, “Deed Book 3C,” deed of trust, pp. 90-93, filed 29 June 1891. On Auerbach, see also Alexander and Allen, Mormons and Gentiles, 68. Free sold a lot to Louis C. Karrick in 1889; see Salt Lake County Recorder, “Deed Book 2V,” deed, pp. 203-4, filed 11 June 1889. For Karrick as councilman and police committee member, see Polk, Salt Lake City Directory, 1890; and Utah Gazetteer, 1892-3 (Salt Lake City: Stenhouse & Co, 1892). Free borrowed $9,500 from McCornick; see Salt Lake County Recorder, “Mortgage Book 2W,” marginal release of mortgage, p. 407, 25 September 1891. For McCornick, see also Jonathan Bliss, Merchants and Miners in Utah: The Walker Brothers and Their Bank (Salt Lake City: Western Epics, 1983), 208-9. For the Deseret Savings Bank transaction, see The Deseret Savings Bank v. Susie M. Free, case no. 12972, Third District civil case files, 1894. For other examples, see Nichols, “Prostitution and Polygamy,” chap. 3.

\textsuperscript{75}Arrington, Great Basin Kingdom, parts 3 and 4.
economic progress of the city helps to explain why city authorities decided to regulate prostitution. Regulation made good business sense whatever an individual’s religious or moral principles. A well-regulated district helped keep the city orderly by confining vice within established limits and segregating it from “respectable” businesses. In addition, within the district, brothels and allied businesses—saloons, restaurants, shooting galleries, retail stores, boarding houses—often earned healthy profits. Emma DeMarr, though scarcely typical, built upon her brothel earnings and left an estate worth some $144,000 in securities and real estate in 1919 (approximately $1,500,000 in today’s dollars). Landlords sometimes charged prostitutes much higher rents than respectable tenants. Many businessmen of all creeds or none thus came to favor regulation for practical or self-interested reasons.

As in business, the city’s religious chasm also began to narrow somewhat in the political and social realms in the early 1890s. With the Woodruff Manifesto and the easing of the judicial crusade, antagonisms between Mormons and Gentiles eased, although they reemerged in the late 1890s. When voters elected B. H. Roberts, a polygamous General Authority, to Congress in 1898, antipoly-

76 Estate of Emma Whiting, “Salt Lake County Probate Record Book 78,” 35-44; see also Nichols, “Prostitution and Polygamy,” 119-23 notes 47-63.

77 In 1894 Chief of Police Arthur Pratt cited a “frame rookery that, for legitimate purpose, would not command $10 a month, bringing just ten times that amount.” “Flight of the Doves,” Salt Lake Tribune, 28 November 1894, 6.

78 For the transitions in the Utah economy, see Arrington, Great Basin Kingdom, chap. 13; Arrington, “The Commercialization of Utah’s Economy: Trends and Developments from Statehood to 1910,” in A Dependent Commonwealth: Utah’s Economy from Statehood to the Great Depression, edited by Dean May (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1974); and Alexander, “The Temporal Kingdom,” chap. 5 in his Mormonism in Transition.

79 See Lyman, Political Deliverance, chaps. 6-9; and Carol Cornwall Madsen, “Decade of Détente: The Mormon-Gentile Female Relationship in Nineteenth-Century Utah,” Utah Historical Quarterly 63, no. 4 (Fall 1995): 298-319.
gamists revived their campaign, and Congress denied Roberts his seat. That controversy, however, paled in comparison to the Reed Smoot brouhaha. In 1903 the state legislature elected Smoot, an LDS apostle, to the U.S. Senate. Many Gentiles argued that his election proved that the Church still dominated Utah politics, warned that he would exercise undue influence over LDS constituents, and claimed that his first loyalty would be to the Church. Smoot was allowed to take his seat, but the Senate began a long, wide-ranging investigation that proved embarrassing to the Saints, especially when LDS President Joseph F. Smith testified that some plural marriages had been solemnized since the Woodruff Manifesto and that he personally continued to cohabit with all of his wives.

The resulting negative publicity prompted the LDS Church to vigorous action against polygamy among its membership. President Smith issued the so-called Second Manifesto, explicitly warning Mormons that they would incur disciplinary action if they continued the practice. He also dropped two apostles, John W. Taylor and Marion W. Merrill, from leadership positions. Despite these actions, Smoot’s election and the disclosures in the hearings renewed the battle over comparative morality.

In 1904, a group of prominent Gentiles founded the American Party to fight “Smootism” and to “free people from apostolic


83Alexander, Mormonism in Transition, 64-66.
rule." Like the antipolygamists of the 1850s through 1880s, the "Americans" depicted themselves as the guardians of true womanhood and the Christian home against lustful Mormon "hierarchs." Mormons responded that the Americans were "disgruntled office seekers" and moral hypocrites. They were especially outraged by Frank J. Cannon's participation. Cannon, a Mormon apostate and ex-U.S. Senator, was the son of long-time LDS First Counselor George Q. Cannon and had a troubled history with alcohol and prostitutes that was probably well known in Mormon circles. His prominence in the self-styled reform party, especially his anti-Mormon editorials in the Tribune, renewed Mormon charges of a Gentile double standard on moral issues.86

The American Party won the mayoralty and a majority of the city council in 1905; in 1907 its candidate John S. Bransford became mayor. Bransford, a wealthy mining man and a Gentile, seldom if ever expressed divisive religious rhetoric and was apparently well


respected by most of the city's residents, including Mormons. 87 But when he decided to formalize the city's long-established regulationist policy toward prostitution, he unwittingly tarnished his reputation, helped wreck his party, and inspired a moral reform effort that united Mormons and Gentiles.

Bransford's idea may have originated with the city police. The police had long supported regulating prostitution as a way of controlling and limiting its deleterious effects. 88 In his annual report for 1907, Chief Thomas Pitt suggested the creation of a separate district surrounded by a high fence (quickly nicknamed "the Stockade"), where prostitutes could be confined, licensed, regulated by authorities, and inspected by doctors. Authorities could then "clean up" Commercial Street and open it to legitimate business uses. 89

City officials chose Dora B. Topham ("Belle London"), the leading madam in Ogden's tenderloin for two decades, to manage the district. Incumbent and former city councilmen, including L. D. Martin, who designed buildings in the Stockade, and Martin Mulvey, who negotiated the deal with Topham, played leading roles in the project. 90 The district opened in January 1909 despite opposition from citizens' groups, local clergy of several denominations, and all but one of the city's newspapers. 91 Bransford insisted, "I would pre-

87See "John S. Bransford Now Mayor of Salt Lake City," Herald, 14 August 1907, 1; "Bransford Sweeps City; Plurality 5,500," ibid., 6 November 1907, 1; Alexander and Allen, Mormons and Gentiles, 142-46.
88Police Chief Arthur Pratt favored confining prostitutes to Commercial Street; see "Pratt and the Problems," Salt Lake Tribune, 28 October 1896, 2. For other chiefs' similar views, see "Higher Tax on the Haunts of Vice," ibid., 26 January 1904, 1; and "Chief of Police Favors Clean-Up," Herald, 7 September 1907, 12.
89The Annual Message of the Mayor with the Annual Reports of the Officers of Salt Lake City, Utah, for the year 1907 (Salt Lake City: 1907), 375. See also John S. McCormick, "Red Lights in Zion: Salt Lake City's Stockade, 1908-1911," Utah Historical Quarterly 50, no. 2 (Spring 1982): 168-81; and Nichols, "Prostitution and Polygamy," chap. 6.
91Methodist Daniel M. Helmick, Congregationalists Elmer Goshen
fer to see the city in a condition where there would be no such houses at all. That is, of course, the ideal which, I am sorry to say, is at present unattainable." The mayor hoped that Salt Lake would have "one of the very best regulated districts of its kind in the country." Although prostitution remained illegal, Bransford made it clear that it would receive official protection.92

The Stockade flourished for the next three years despite court orders, county sheriff's raids, and citizen pressure. Bransford used the city police to defend the district; and arrests for prostitution-related offenses, which numbered over one thousand in 1908, dwindled to a handful from 1909 through 1911.93 County sheriff Joseph

and P. A. Simpkin, and Presbyterian William Paden condemned the planned move. See "Clergy Denounces Stockade Strongly From Every Pulpit," Telegram (Salt Lake City), 14 December 1908, 3; "Minister Talks on Social Evil," Herald, 14 December 1908, 2; and "Pastor Scores Mayor's Policy," ibid., 14 December 1908. The city's newspapers opposed the move but not vigorously. The Herald editorialized that "the mayor may be wrong in his solution of the criminal problem," but expressed respect for Bransford's honesty. "A Specimen 'American,'" Herald, 10 December 1908, 4. "Chief Pitt's Removal," Deseret Evening News, 8 December 1908, 4, mildly opposed the new district. "Mayor Bransford Is Wrong," Inter-mountain Republican, 9 December 1908, 4, warned, "John Bransford is wrong. Those women will not be permitted to populate that new stockade. No matter how much money there is in it." "The Mayor and 'Red Light,'" Salt Lake Tribune, 9 December 1908, 6, the American Party's morning paper, disapproved flatly: "Mayor Bransford must bear the whole brunt of the responsibility . . . for which we can see no justification, either personal or official." The American Party's afternoon paper, the Telegram, did not editorialize against the new district. Its editor, C. C. Goodwin, a consistent supporter of regulation, reminded Mormons about Brigham Young Hampton's failed scheme. "A Case of Late Repentance," Telegram, 12 December 1908, 12.

92"Chief Pitt Is Ousted by Mayor Bransford," Herald, 8 December 1908, 1, 3.

93For 1908 figures, see The Annual Message of the Mayor with the Annual Reports of the Officers of Salt Lake City, Utah for the Year 1908 (Salt Lake City: 1908), 485. In 1909, only two persons were convicted for keeping a house of prostitution, eight for prostitution, and ten for resorting to a house of prostitution. In 1910, the figures were three, three, and three respectively. In 1911, when Topham was arrested several times, there were twelve arrests for keeping a house of ill fame (ten for "allowing house of ill
Sharp, a member of Reed Smoot’s rival Republican Party “Federal Bunch,” launched sporadic raids, some suspiciously near election time. Opposition to the district, however, crossed party lines. City attorney Harper J. Dininny, of the American Party, defied the mayor and made a serious but unsuccessful effort to prosecute Belle London and the Stockade prostitutes. In July 1910 Dininny complained that he had issued 430 warrants, or approximately 20 per day, but only 6 arrests resulted. He noted that nearly all efforts to serve the warrants had come between 10:00 and 11:00 P.M. Newspaper reports confirmed that the district ran as normal except for that one-hour period nightly when watchmen, some of them off-duty regular policemen, warned of the impending raid. The district closed then and officers were unable to serve the warrants. “Five minutes after the officer had gone the lights were turned on, pianos started drumming, girls were disporting themselves and the Stockade was again running full blast.”

Finally, a private group, the Civic Betterment League, succeeded in closing the Stockade’s doors in 1911. The League, which included many of the city’s business and political elite, both Mormon and Gentile, had worked for general municipal reform for nearly a decade, and some members were appalled by the city government’s sponsorship of prostitution. Brigham F. Grant headed a League committee focused on closing the Stockade. Grant, a Mormon business man on premises”), eight for prostitution, and two for resorting. In 1912, after the Stockade’s closure, the conviction figures were 79, 18, and 184 respectively. B. F. Grant, chief of police in 1911, followed a general policy of charging prostitutes with vagrancy; 1,680 vagrants were prosecuted that year. See Annual Reports, 1909, 23; 1910, 15-16; 1911, 16-17, 334; 1912, 89.


nessman, was the son of the city's first mayor, Jedediah Morgan Grant, a member of the Salt Lake Stake high council, and the half-brother of Apostle Heber J. Grant. Grant had long been involved in private efforts to close "disorderly" saloons and brothels. When law enforcement proved lax, members of the committee walked the streets of the Stockade and, when women solicited them, filed criminal complaints under prostitution statutes with the city attorney. Those complaints failed to bring convictions, however, and B. F. Grant suspected political interference. At one point Grant accused Utah Governor William Spry, a fellow Mormon and Republican, of blocking a raid on the Stockade. Grant's committee, especially Guardello Brown, also a juvenile probation officer, finally gathered enough evidence to convict Dora Topham of enticing a young woman into prostitution in September 1911. Faced with a possible twenty-year sentence, Topham closed the Stockade.

Mormon and Gentile women united in an attempt to "rescue" unemployed prostitutes. Some long-time opponents of polygamy


joined with former plural wives in the Woman's Welfare League to find jobs and homes for the district's inmates. Elizabeth Cohen, head of the Women's Welfare League, had earlier led the women's auxiliary of the American Party and only three years earlier had publicly charged that most Mormons at the bishop level and above lived in polygamy. A group of Mormon women countered with an open letter that accused Cohen of unwomanly behavior by spreading such slanders. Corinne Allen, another league member, had been an officer of the Industrial Christian Home in the 1890s and a leading opponent of the B. H. Roberts and Reed Smoot elections.

Despite this prickly history, the rescue of Stockade inmates helped some Mormon and Gentile women lay aside their differences. Government-supported and -protected prostitution so egregiously violated the tenets of true and Mormon womanhood that it united old enemies. The committee that visited the Stockade to offer assistance consisted of Corinne Allen and two Mormons: Ruth May Fox, a former plural wife and a stalwart of the [LDS] Young Ladies Mutual Improvement Association, and Emily Tanner Richards, a long-time suffrage activist and the wife of prominent LDS Church attorney Franklin S. Richards. Most of the Stockade's women re-

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101 Ruth May Fox apparently did not consider her trip to the Stockade very important, since she gave it a single line in her diary and did not mention it in her autobiography. Ruth May Fox, Diary, 21 October 1911, Ruth May Fox Papers, Manuscripts Division, Marriott Library, University of Utah. For Emily Tanner Richards, see Lola Van Wagenen, "Sister-Wives and Suffragists: Polygamy and the Politics of Woman Suffrage 1870-1896" (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1994), 404-11, 416, 464, 471-72; Beverly Beeton, "Woman Suffrage in the American West, 1869-1896" (Ph.D. diss.,
fused the activists’ help, complaining that the domestic jobs offered did not pay well enough.102

The municipal political campaign of 1911 also brought Mormons and Gentiles together. The Topham pandering trial could not have come at a worse time for Bransford, who faced reelection in November. Many members and supporters of the mayor’s party expressed disgust for the Americans’ sponsorship of the Stockade and deserted the organization. Presbyterian Reverend William M. Paden, who had opposed Roberts and Smoot and helped found the American Party, condemned the mayor’s lax vice policy.103 On 7 November 1911, voters swept into office a nonpartisan citizens’ reform ticket led by Gentile businessman Samuel Park, who promised to abolish rather than regulate prostitution.104 The Deseret Evening News claimed that the victory had eliminated “religious strife” from local politics (although the Tribune predictably declared “THE CHURCH VICTORIOUS”). The American Party and organized anti-Mormonism were never again a major force in Utah politics.105

University of Utah, 1976), 46, 126-28, 144-45; and Iversen, The Antipolygamy Controversy, 169. Richards and Corinne Allen had both been involved with the Utah Mothers’ Assembly (Mothers’ Congress) in 1898. Minutes of Utah State Mothers’ Congress, 4-11, Utah Historical Society Library. In 1906, Richards and Elizabeth Cohen had served as president and treasurer respectively on the Utah State Council of Women. R. L. Polk & Co., Salt Lake City Directory, 1906 (Salt Lake City: R. L. Polk & Co., 1906).

102“Would Send Women to Former Homes,” Salt Lake Tribune, 2 October 1911, 12; “Women Try to Give Aid,” Herald-Republican, 29 September 1911, 1-2; “Will Aid Erring Sisters in Fight,” ibid., 2 October 1911, 5; “Women Demand Action from City,” ibid., 3 October 1911, 8.


104“Mayor-Elect Park Off for the Coast,” Herald-Republican, 26 November 1911, 4; “Receive Pointers on Running a City,” ibid., 3 December 1911, 10; and “Korns Impressed by Other Cities,” ibid., 6 December 1911, 4.
Topham’s conviction and the American Party’s defeat marked the end of government-sponsored and -protected prostitution in Salt Lake City. Topham was acquitted on appeal but did not try to reopen the district. Park appointed B. F. Grant chief of police, and his administration pursued vigorous policies that, though failing to eradicate prostitution, did force prostitutes out of established brothels and into rooming houses or onto the streets. Some subsequent governments quietly returned to regulationist policies, but no administration dared to openly plan, build, and protect a district.

In effect, the anti-Stockade forces had succeeded where Brigham Young Hampton had failed: they had successfully painted anti-Mormons as moral hypocrites. But by 1911, the dynamics of the conflict had changed. The antiprostitution alliance demonstrated that a genuine reconciliation and a mutual moral vindication between Mormons and Gentiles were well underway. The American Party had based much of its voter appeal on the supposed Mormon threat to the Christian home and pure womanhood. The party’s sponsorship of the Stockade, however, discredited anti-Mormonism based on claims of Gentile moral superiority. Gentiles like Harper Dininny, Elizabeth Cohen, Corinne Allen, and William Paden, all opponents of polygamy and early supporters of the American Party, had bucked the party and fought hard beside Mormons against regu-


106 State v. Topham, 41 Utah 39 (1912); State v. Topham, case no. 2710; and “Supreme Court Ruling Frees Belle London,” Herald-Republican, 5 May 1912, 1, 4. Topham returned to Ogden but apparently retired from prostitution and does not appear in Utah records after 1916.

107 Mayor W. Mont Ferry, a former American Party member and also member of the Civic Betterment League, fired Grant in 1916 and reverted to a regulationist policy, which sparked another (much quieter) round of antiprostitution reform. Alexander and Allen, Mormons and Gentiles, 164-68; and Nichols, “Prostitution and Polygamy,” chap. 7.
lates prostitution. These Gentiles no longer appeared morally hypocritical and unfair to Mormons. The end of official tolerance for prostitution may also have eased the sting the Saints felt at losing exclusive moral control over the city. By firmly associating an avowedly anti-Mormon party with tolerance for immorality (even though it required conveniently ignoring the long regulationist tradition before 1908), the American Party's opponents could unite across religious lines in a moral reform effort that also served political ends.

This reconciliation became possible largely because polygamy was fading as a point of controversy. The Second Manifesto and the Church's determined public purge of polygamists seemed to prove that the institution was dying. Mormons no longer appeared alien and morally dangerous to most other Americans. Many Gentiles, even former enemies, now recognized that the Saints shared with them the traditional code of civilized morality, which reverenced the committed, monogamous family. The Salt Lake Episcopal newspaper, *Utah Survey*, had often criticized Mormon theology and marital practices. But in 1914, it praised their family values: "This city must present unexcelled opportunities to the man with a family for the proper educational and moral development of his children. In the long run, it is not the saloon or café man who will advance our interests, but the sober and home-loving citizen. In this particular we are indebted to the strict principles of many of our old Mormon families, whose example newcomers may well regard with profit."110

108 Joan Iversen, *The Antipolygamy Controversy*, 222-25, points out the influence of U.S. Theodore Roosevelt and his reborn "primitive masculinity" in also influencing attitudes toward Mormons whom he praised for their large families while criticizing the anti-Smoot forces as misguided zealots.
109 "Civilized morality" is a phrase that historian Mark Thomas Connelly, *The Response to Prostitution in the Progressive Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1980), 8-9, uses to describe the moral code shared by most progressive-era antiprostitution reformers. Civilized morality valued premarital chastity and companionate marriage, abhorred extramarital sexuality (especially prostitution), and respected the pure, selfless wife and mother within the Christian home.
110 "Marvelous Coincidentility [sic]," *Utah Survey* 1, no. 10 (June 1914): 7. The comment about saloons and cafes is probably a veiled reference to prostitution, since they became known as venues for
C. C. Goodwin, editor of the *Tribune* (1883-1901) and a staunch opponent of plural marriage, defended Mormons in 1913 from accusations by an Illinois antipolygamist: “There isn’t enough polygamy to hurt, and... [soon]... it will have passed entirely into history. ... In Illinois there are more men confessing one wife and supporting two than ever have been in Utah.” After 1911, prostitution and polygamy lost much of their rhetorical value as weapons. Mormons and Gentiles had achieved a truce in the war over comparative morality.


“CALLED BY A NEW NAME”: MISSION, IDENTITY, AND THE REORGANIZED CHURCH

Mark A. Scherer

In April 2001, acting on a First Presidency recommendation made in April 1994, and after six years of spirited discussion and contemplation, the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints took the historic step of changing its name to reflect a revitalized sense of identity and a refocus in its mission. This new name is the Community of Christ.

This article reviews the fascinating history of name changes, beginning with Joseph Smith Jr.’s lifetime when there was one church with two names, the period immediately after his death and during the early days of the Reorganization when both churches used the same name, the gradual differentiation in both nomenclature and identity, and—the focus of this article—the decision-making process leading up to the historic name change from “Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints” to “Community of Christ.”

ONE CHURCH, TWO NAMES

Denominational identity was a shifting thing for Joseph Smith Jr. and his followers before the organization of the Church on 6 April

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1830. They gave their allegiance to a new religion, but it was not quite yet a church. So who were they? Members and nonmembers alike used numerous appellations to describe the Church. After the new religious body was incorporated as the Church of Christ, the issue of identity seemed to be resolved.

Apparently the name “Mormon” was already in current use and continued to coexist with the Church’s formal name. When Lucy Mack Smith headed a party of Saints traveling from Fayette, New York, to Kirtland, Ohio, in the spring of 1831, the party aroused the curiosity of a landlady en route:

“What be you?” said she. “Be you Baptists?”
I told her that we were “Mormons.”
“Mormons!” ejaculated she, in a quick, good-natured tone. “What be they? I never heard of them before.”
“I told you that we were ‘Mormons,’” I replied, “because that is what the world call us, but the only name we acknowledge is Latter-Day Saints.”
“Latter-Day Saints!” rejoined she, “I never heard of them either.”

With great expectations, the Lamanite missionaries headed for Missouri, introducing themselves by their new name and explaining their new message. Months later the members who followed the missionaries to their frontier Zion to receive their inheritances hailed from the same early New York church, also identifying themselves with the Church of Christ name. With the passage of time, however, less official names emerged from the Gentile community—some markedly derogatory. One of these names was “Mormonite,” based on the new church’s belief in the Book of Mormon. The initial

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1 In the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, traditional appellations for the early church include “Church of Jesus Christ,” “Church of God,” and “Church of the First Born.” Joseph Smith III et al., The History of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, 8 vols. (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1951), 1:453.
ambiguity of the term is shown when Orson Hyde, a future apostle, used it interchangeably with “Mormon” in a letter to the editor of Boonville, Missouri’s *Herald*, printed 8 November 1833: “On Thursday night, October 31, [1833] some 40 or 50 persons belonging to the *Mob*, assembled above Big Blue, eight or ten miles west of Independence, and in part demolished 12 of the dwelling houses belonging to the Mormons and occupied by them at the time. The *Mob* took two of the Mormonite men and beat them with stones and clubs, leaving barely a breath of life in them.”

To address the identity issue, a conference of elders convened in Kirtland on 3 May 1834. In this meeting, Sidney Rigdon moved and Newel K. Whitney seconded that the Church be known as “Church of the Latter Day Saints.” After several appropriate remarks by conferees, the motion passed the conference unanimously. As a result of this action, the entablature on the House of the Lord in Kirtland reads that it was built by the “Church of the Latter Day Saints.” Also, the “Church of the Latter Day Saints” appears on the front cover of the original 1835 *Doctrine and Covenants*, published in Kirtland.

Those who called Church members “Mormonite”: “Those who have persecuted this church to which we have a privilege of being a member, reproachfully and slanderously called ‘Mormonite,’ are, as has just been said, of their father the devil, and if they ever had communion or fellowship with the Lord they have forsaken his house, left his fold, and like wandering stars, filthy dreamers, or beasts of corruption, [are] abandoned to be taken and destroyed in their own wickedness!”

4Reprinted as “The Outrage in Jackson County, Missouri,” *Evening and Morning Star* 2, no. 15 (December 1833): 118; emphasis his.


6Of particular interest is the role of Sidney Rigdon, who maintained, at least for a time, strong connections to the Campbellite movement (now Disciples of Christ). For an in-depth explanation of Rigdon’s identification with various sects during the early years of his ministry, see Richard S. Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon: A Portrait of Religious Excess* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1994), 39-47. I argue that Ridgon’s strong views on millenialism weighed heavily in his proposal at the May 1834 conference of elders. Although more detailed minutes are not available, his argument must have been persuasive, since Joseph Smith Jr., as well as the other
Perhaps the separate names were appropriate since the Church was geographically split between the Saints in Independence (who identified themselves by the original name, the Church of Christ), and the Saints in Kirtland (who adopted the new name, Church of the Latter Day Saints). Each church had its own newspaper, high council, and bishop but were united by one prophet-president. Although separated by nine hundred miles, the two branches could live with their different names since they were still members of the same church. In the periodic Church conferences different names were used. Even Joseph Smith Jr. frequently used different names.  

See, for example, minutes of a Missouri high council meeting on 30 July 1834 in which Nathan West referred to the “High Council of the Church of Christ” and called himself as an elder in “the Church of Christ.” Donald Q. Cannon and Lyndon W. Cook, eds., *Far West Record: Minutes of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830-1844* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1983), 79.

Joseph Smith Jr., Letter to Lyman Wight, Edward Partridge, John Corrill, Isaac Morley, and others of the High Council, 16 August 1834. In this letter Joseph Smith Jr. uses “Church of the Latter Day Saints” in the salutation, but “Church of Christ” in the last paragraph. Dean C. Jessee, *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Books, 1984), 328-31. Smith’s dictated diary entry for 13 March 1838 referred to the compromise motto of the “Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints,” which seems to indicate some indecision in reference to the church’s name as he was newly arrived from Kirtland. It also foretold the resolution that would come through revelation a few weeks later (ibid., 354). Further, Joseph
Certainly, Missouri Saints anticipated that the Prophet and his family would move to Jackson County, especially after the Temple Lot dedication in early August 1831. No doubt some Kirtland Saints opposed that suggestion. When Smith chose to stay in Kirtland, although with good reason, it had to be disappointing to members of the Missouri church, especially after July 1833 when the tarring and feathering of Edward Partridge made it clear that the Saints could not remain safely in Jackson County.

Church leaders did what they could to allay frustrations and signal their concerns for the plight of the Missouri Saints. For example, Zion’s Camp in the spring and summer of 1834 no doubt renewed hopes for the Missouri Saints that they could regain their inheritances and lost possessions. Also, the editors of the Messenger and Advocate, published in Kirtland wrote letters and articles expressing their concerns for the persecution of the brothers and sisters in Independence. No doubt this sympathy positively impacted relations between the two churches but did little to ease the anguish of persecution felt by the Saints in Independence.

The Elders’ Journal, published in Far West in 1837, continued to identify its publisher as “The Church of the Latter Day Saints.” However, a third name change would occur the next year. The Far West period of Church history, from 1836 to 1838, was crucial to institutional identity. For the first time, the geographically dispersed members came together in one fixed settlement in the newly created Caldwell County. Corporate identity was one of the first issues that Smith addressed when he arrived at Far West on 14 March 1838. Only six weeks later on 26 April 1838, he announced in a revelation:

Verily thus saith the Lord unto my servant Joseph Smith Jr.,

Smith Jr. used informal references to make the distinction between the two churches. For example, from Far West on 29 March 1838, he wrote to the presidency of the “Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in Kirtland,” referring to members of the Independence Church as the “Church of Zion” and to those in Kirtland as the “Church of God” (ibid., 355-57).

9“Deaths,” Latter Day Saint Messenger and Advocate 1, no. 1 (October 1834): 12; photomechanical reproduction by Modern Microfilm, Salt Lake City. This column informed readers that Newel Knight’s wife, Sally, died 21 August 1834: “She was driven, last fall, from Jackson county, by the mob, and was necessarily compelled to endure, with others, further afflictions and privations.”
and also my servant Sidney Rigdon, and also my servant Hyrum Smith and your counsellors, who are, and who shall be hereafter appointed; and also unto my servant Edward Partridge and his Counsellors, and also unto my faithful servants who are of the High Council of my church in Zion (for thus it shall be called) and unto all the Elders and people of my church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints scattered abroad in all the world; for thus shall my church be called in the last days. viz, The church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.  

To use the name “Church of Jesus Christ” must have made the Missouri Saints jubilant since it incorporated the name they had learned in early New York. Adding “the Latter Day Saints” no doubt satisfied the Kirtland Saints because it acknowledged their strong dispensationalism. Today, the Salt Lake City church considers the decision revelatory (LDS D&C 115), but the Independence Community of Church obviously does not and never canonized the document.

### Identity Issues in the Early Reorganization

After the martyrdom of Joseph Smith Jr. at Carthage, Illinois, on 27 June 1844, and the subsequent fragmentation of the Church, Brigham Young, as president of the Quorum of the Twelve, took the largest group of followers and the 1838 church name west to Utah. In 1852, a small group of Saints waiting for the seer’s lineal successor called themselves the New Organization. Their understanding that they were the true remnant of the original church was never a doubt in their minds.

Then, on 6 April 1860, at Amboy, Illinois, the councils, quorums, and orders of the church were “reorganized.” Joseph Smith III, son of Joseph the Martyr, gave this title to his first formal written statement: “The First General Epistle of the President of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, to all the scattered Saints.” Interestingly, the prophet-president signed his statement: “Joseph Smith, PRESIDENT Of C. of J. C. of L. D. S.”

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11Joseph Smith III, “The First General Epistle of the President of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, to all the scattered Saints,” *True Latter Day Saints’ Herald* 2 (August 1861): 121.
then published this statement in the August 1861 issue of the *True Latter Day Saints’ Herald*, the Church’s official publication.

Because Joseph III and his followers considered themselves the true inheritors of the original church, they too embraced the 1838 name, the “Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.” For them, the term “Reorganization” referred only to the reestablishment of the councils, quorums, and orders (First Presidency, Presiding Bishopric, Council of Twelve, Seventy, etc.) of the original church. Frequently during the following years, even in official publications and statements, Church leaders referred to themselves as the “Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints,” not giving in to the LDS for a moment. For example, General Conference Resolution 120, adopted 8 April 1871, explicitly used the name: “Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.”

Inevitably, it became traditional to use “Reorganized” to distinguish between the Independence and Salt Lake churches. However, it was a distinction understood only by members of these respective churches. To the nonaffiliated, the identity has been constantly blurred, no doubt to the frustration of both “Josephite” and “Brighamite” members.

Consistent with Joseph III’s style of pragmatic leadership, he initiated the consistent use of the adjective without fanfare. It first appears as part of the inconspicuous publisher’s statement for the Church’s official periodical, the *True Latter Day Saints’ Herald*, beginning with the 15 October 1869 issue. Almost exactly three years later, Church leaders incorporated the name “Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints” in Illinois on 21 October 1872.

Although the Church’s legal name now included the term “Reorganized,” almost an entire generation passed before the name was commonly accepted. Diaries, letters, and even *Saints’ Herald* articles continued the practice of referring to the name established at Far West in April 1838. Only with the passing of a

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14 Articles of Association, Henry A. Stebbins Papers, P24, f34, Community of Christ Archives, Independence.
generation did the legal name receive general usage. Even the official journal went through a name change process during this era. Without comment, Joseph III simplified the masthead to read *The Saints’ Herald* beginning with the first number of Vol. 24 published on 1 January 1877. This shortened name did not reflect a change in Smith’s belief about being the true successor to his father, but it did signal his desire for his church to mature and to move on to other important issues.

**THE LONG SEARCH FOR A SUITABLE NAME**

Even after the second generation of RLDS members accepted the name of their church and used it easily, the identity issue was not settled. In nearly every generation in the history of the Reorganized Church, members have searched for a name that best describes their beliefs. As early as 1884, a Church jurisdiction proposed an alternative. At the Philadelphia district conference held 19 October 1884, serious discussions focused, not on “Reorganized” but on “Latter Day Saints.” According to the report in the *Saints’ Herald*, the Philadelphia District resolved: “That we question the wisdom of the early Elders in naming this Church the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and we recommend the General Conference to drop the title of Latter Day Saints, as savoring too much of egotism and conceit, and name the Church strictly as commanded on page 328 of the Book of Mormon.”

Although this proposal never reached the General Conference floor, it demonstrates that Church identity discussions occurred in the late nineteenth century. There seems to have been little concern.

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16“Philadelphia District,” *Saints’ Herald* 31 (15 November 1884): 741-42. The Book of Mormon edition that the Philadelphia district most probably used is either the 1874 Lamoni, Iowa, edition or the 1874 Plano, Illinois, edition. Puzzlingly, p. 328 in neither edition makes any reference or allusion to a church name. Thus, there must be a typographical error. Page 471 of both editions, however, include 3 Nephi 12:3’s instructions for the Church to take on the name of Christ: “For by this name shall ye be called in the last day; and whoso taketh upon him my name and endureth to the end, the same shall be saved at the last day.”
about identity for the next fifty years, except for the wrangling among Josephite and Brighamite missionaries as they tried to make denominational distinctions for those they were proselytizing. Sermons from Reorganized Church pulpits kept alive the LDS/RLDS boundary issue, and articles in Church publications reminded readers of the need for demonstrating the differences between Utah and Missouri Latter Day Saints. Dramatic growth in baptismal rates and the other pressing priorities relegated the issue of identity to a lower concern for Reorganized Church members.

However, during the 1950s the issue of identity resurfaced. In his thorough analysis of the issue in 1995, Richard P. Howard, then Church Historian, argued that by mid-century a “major shift...from the church as remnant to the church as mission, stimulated serious reflection on a church name that would honor the implications of such a transition.”

General Church conferences provided an open forum for proposals about more suitable names to identify the Reorganization, while conference minutes provide a running record of thinking from the mission field and at Church headquarters. Legislative proposals on identity arose in the 1956, 1958, and 1960 General Conferences. All expressed dissatisfaction with the


18Richard P. Howard, “The Church’s Name: A Historical Survey of a Missional Church in Quest of a Name,” Saints Herald 142 (February 1995): 65. During the twentieth century, the punctuation in the title of this periodical shifted several times. For convenience, I have standardized the title to the form used in this note.

19By conference action in April 1960, “World” was prefixed to the Church conference because it was “more meaningful and descriptive in our world-wide evangel” than “General.” “Official Minutes of General Conference,” General Conference Bulletin (Independence: Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, 1960), 95, 99. Title varies; hereafter cited by date and page.

“RLDS” abbreviation, but none received majority delegate support. Proponents for change argued that “RLDS” was convenient for media use but did not provide an adequate description of the denomination to the public.

Delegates to the important 1968 World Conference rejected one name change proposal but approved two additional proposals that called for a committee—eventually composed of Apostles C. A. Cole, R. M. Holmes, C. R. Ettinger, and Bishop F. E. Hansen—to study the name-change question. In the form of a progress report, this committee offered six recommendations to the 1970 World Conference that outlined the issues requiring further study. Most importantly, the committee asked three questions that would frame future discussions on the issue. All three questions had to be answered before the successful adoption of a new name:

1. Should a name be definitive of an organization’s past?
2. Should a name be indicative of an organization’s future?
3. Should a name express the essential purpose of an organization?

The committee continued its studies during the next biennium, reporting its concerns to the 1972 World Conference about “psychological and historical factors which make it inadvisable to change

“Restored Church of Jesus Christ,” 114; “Restorationists,” 1958, 101. See also ibid., 1960, 48, a proposal requiring that any new name receive full endorsement by all the leading quorums of the Church.

21"Official Minutes of Business Session," World Conference Bulletin, 31 March 1968, 152-53. The Hunter-Manning District in Australia had proposed “The Restored Church of Jesus Christ” as the new name. The first request for a committee came from the Joint Council of the First Presidency (W. Wallace Smith, Maurice L. Draper, and Duane E. Couey), Council of Twelve (Clifford A. Cole, Reed M. Holmes, Donald O. Chesworth, Cecil R. Ettinger, Donald V. Lents, Charles D. Neff, Russell F. Ralston, William E. Timms, Earl T. Higdon, Alan D. Tyree, and Aleah G. Koury), and Presiding Bishopric (Walter N. Johnson, Francis E. Hansen, and Harold W. Cackler). The second came from the Australia Mission. Ibid., 152-53. The Hunter Manning District, officially disorganized in 1968, was then part of the Australian Church, a national organization.

the official full name of the Church.” They called for the First Presidency to encourage the use of “Saints” as a shortened, one-word designation that would replace “RLDS” in the media. After several attempts to change the recommendation made by the committee, the conference approved the recommendations. “Saints Church” became the official short name while the longer name remained “Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.”

The new nomenclature was not universally popular. Four years later at the 1976 World Conference, the Spokane (Washington) District, tired of the recurring discussions and proposals—and perhaps laced with a tinge of fundamentalist theology—proposed that “Saints Church” be discontinued and that no other name be considered. Although the motion passed, some remote areas of the Church continued to use “Saints Church.”

Recognizing that this resolution handcuffed flexibility in finding appropriate nomenclature in international fields, the First Presidency, then consisting of W. Wallace Smith, Maurice Draper, and Duane Couey, proposed and received approval of a motion that essentially rescinded all previous legislation related to the name-change issue. Their motion allowed the Church “to be identified locally by such terms as may be responsive to the time and place and circumstances” based on the particular need. This legislation later became World Conference Resolution 1144.

Throughout the 1980s, a decade marked by flourishing theological debates and historical reinterpretation, the leaders elevated to a position of primacy the Church’s mission to be a leavening agent in the world. For example, Phillip M. Caswell, a member of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, stated: “As a people we need to emphasize the leaven image of the kingdom instead of the remnant and refuge images. If the former is chosen, the church will move more confidently into God’s world, providing an influence for good in the structures and institutions of society. If the latter is chosen, we will

25For example, the Australian Church, until the 2000 adoption of “Community of Christ” used “Saints Church.”
26“Name of the Church,” Rules and Resolutions, 75.
find it progressively difficult to fulfill our mission and will become ingrown and isolated."²⁷

But issues of Church identity remained just below the surface. In the 1990 World Conference, the Saskatchewan District asked the First Presidency to establish another committee to study a possible name change, citing the new decade as justification for reconsideration. The conference defeated the proposal.²⁸ Two years later in 1992, the Sixth Quorum of Seventy moved that “the First Presidency be authorized to select a name for the Church which reflects our mission in all cultures” and to report their choice to the 1994 conference for action. The resolution failed on a close vote (1,220 for, 1,152 against), the narrow margin signaling interest but no solid consensus.²⁹

The First Presidency, then consisting of Wallace B. Smith, Howard S. Sheehy Jr., and W. Grant McMurray, made its report to the 1994 conference, stating that, although they had sought Church-wide consensus on the matter, they had found none and hence recommended that “no action to change the name be taken at this time.” The presidency did, however, encourage broad-based discussion during the next biennium since they felt that a shorter, simplified name was indeed needed. “Reorganized,” the presidency thought, made the Church sound like a splinter group and “Latter Day Saints” confused the Church with the Mormons. They concluded their report by calling for continued use of the full name, flexibility in the Church name at the direction of the field apostle in all areas, and continued exploration of various alternatives.³⁰

ESTES PARK SUMMIT, 1994

That fall in September 1994, the general officers of the Church met at the YMCA of the Rockies Retreat Center in Estes Park, Colorado, to deliberate on the Church and its mission in the world.³¹ This

A weeklong gathering proved pivotal in the name-change process. Those attending were the First Presidency, the twelve members of the apostolic quorum, the three members of the Presiding Bishopric, the Presiding Evangelist, and Church Secretary. Together they addressed five central issues on the Church's future: programs and ministries, field organization, the "theological task," leadership development, and a mission statement for the Church. The mission statement that emerged during the deliberations read: "We proclaim Jesus Christ and promote communities of joy, hope, love, and peace." Decision-makers searched for a name that best reflected this mission statement. In a Saints Herald interview, A. Alexander Kahtava, president of the Council of Twelve, stated that the proposed new name, Community of Christ, was "a natural outgrowth of the mission statement discussion."

In making the official announcement to the membership on 1 November 1994, the First Presidency summarized their reasons for finding the new name appropriate: "The new name focuses on our primary commitment to Jesus Christ, points to our historic effort to create Christlike communities, gives emphasis to our foundational commitment to congregational life, and embraces the idea of a global community of brothers and sisters from many nations and cultures."

Three important observations must be made about the official presentation of the name to the membership. First, the process did not describe the emergence of the name as a revelatory one. Rather,

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32Estes Park Summit attendees were: First Presidency: Wallace B. Smith, Howard S. Sheehy Jr., and W. Grant McMurray; Council of Twelve: A. Alex Kahtava, Lawrence W. Tyree, Kenneth L. McLaughin, Danny A. Belrose, Phillip M. Caswell, James C. Cable, Kenneth N. Robinson, Steven M. Veazey; David R. Brock, Dale E. Luffman, John P. Kirkpatrick, and Joe A. Serig; Presiding Bishopric: Norman E. Swails, Dennis D. Piepergerdes, and Larry R. Norris; Presiding Evangelist: Everett S. Graffeo; and Church Secretary: A. Bruce Lindgren.
"Community of Christ" emerged through "considerable reflection and discussion," in "openness and collegiality" and through "meaningful dialogue," with those present "experienc[ing] a powerful sense of confirmation."  

Presiding Bishop Larry R. Norris described the tone and spirit of the retreat: "We were keenly aware of the presence of Christ in our midst." The Church leaders wanted to present the proposed new name to the Church membership for open and honest discussion. Suggesting that the proposal was a product of prophetic revelation would have shifted the grounds of the discussion to determining whether the name specifically reflected "the mind and will of God"—the primary criteria the Reorganized Church uses for entering statements into the Book of Doctrine and Covenants. Church leadership did not want the discussion to occur on that level.

Second, the First Presidency took great pains to remind the Church that "Community of Christ" was not a proposal to eliminate the historical name "Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints." Indeed, their proposal was to keep the original name for legal purposes. This clear articulation of purpose may have been meant to reassure the Church members who had, through the years, expressed concern that the leadership was trying to evade or suppress its heritage about many issues. The First Presidency had accurately foreseen the emergence of this concern, which members frequently cited in the six-year open discussion on identity which followed, and made several statements of reaffirmation about the significance of historical identity during that discussion. In his lead article for the 2000 Reunion text to be used Church-wide, President W. Grant McMurray wrote forcefully on how our heritage provides a "basis on which to understand and interpret our mission in the twenty-first century." He concluded:

We know it is time to write our own story, building on the traditions and experiences of the past, but called by God into a new era of human history to an adventure that will take us to new frontiers. In that sense we are uniquely linked to those who preceded us because

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35Ibid., 504; "Joint Council Holds Retreat," 528; Yarrington, "A Short Name," 503.
36Joint Council Holds Retreat," 528.
37Yarrington, "A Short Name," 503.
we share the journey on which they embarked so many years ago. We go forth in gratitude, compelled to do so by the same God who lured them to create the future in their own day. It is a new day and God calls us forth once again to be a community of joy, hope, love, and peace. It was their mission and now it is ours.38

In the January 2001 Saints Herald, President McMurray also reflected on the relationship between the Church's name and its heritage. He acknowledged that the sentiment he heard most frequently among those who had concerns about the name change was that the move was "a retreat from our heritage and a denial of our past." McMurray categorically denied it: "Nothing could be further from the truth. To the contrary, I believe the 'Community of Christ' has an even stronger connection to our heritage than the name we have used for so long." Using his years of study in Church history, he went on to explain the mission of the Church as building the community of Zion. He concluded that the name change "honors our heritage" and declared it to be the continuation of the "great and marvelous work" that has always been at the very heart of the Restoration movement.39 Having professional credentials in the study and interpretation of history heightened McMurray's concern at the misunderstanding of those who saw the new name as a repudiation of the Church's heritage.40

38W. Grant McMurray, "Celebrate Our Story: Heritage as a Resource for the Future," in Heritage and Horizon: Our Story Illuminates a New Century, edited by Louita Clothier (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 2000), 17. Reunions are gatherings, usually a week long in a camping setting during summers, in which members of the Reorganized Church meet for worship, study, and recreation. This tradition dates to the 1880s. Camper activities are coordinated by administrative jurisdictions. World Church leaders endorse and, in some cases, prepare study materials. Since many reunions use these materials, they provide an opportunity for leaders to communicate with members.


40W. Grant McMurray graduated from Graceland College, in Lamoni, Iowa, in 1969 with a B.A. in religion and was employed by the Church as a historical research assistant, 1972-73; church archivist, 1973-76; and assistant commissioner of history, 1976-82. After receiving a Master of Divinity degree from St. Paul School of Theology, Kansas City, Missouri, in
Third, as the First Presidency announced, they intended to make a formal proposal to the 1996 World Conference if they received "a generally positive reaction during the period of discussion." In fact, the proposal was not made until the 2000 World Conference, suggesting that initial responses were mixed at best and that more extensive reflection and discussion were desirable.

As delegates prepared for the 1996 World Conference, the Blackhawk District (eastern Iowa) initiated legislation calling for the preferred institutional name to be "The Church of Jesus Christ (RLDS)." However, no consensus accompanied this motion to the conference floor. Instead, the matter was referred to the First Presidency for consideration. At the 1996 conference, delegates effectively removed the name-change issue from the agenda by approving yet another motion to refer it to the First Presidency.

As I analyze this crucial 1996 World Conference, three dynamics seem to be at play. First, delegates felt a natural reluctance about taking on such a weighty issue. As can be seen on numerous occasions during the life of this issue, conference delegates depended heavily on the First Presidency and other Church leaders for direction. Opinions of Church leaders had not been communicated adequately.

A second dynamic was the matter of timing. With the "new look" in the First Presidency, Church leaders at the highest levels were hesitant to initiate such a dramatic change as Church identity. No one could anticipate accurately what problems, if any, were in store as the Smith family lineage in the Church presidency came to an end with the ordination of W. Grant McMurray. Church leaders did not want the significance of presidential transition to be clouded by the possible acrimony of a protracted debate on the conference floor.

1975, he also completed additional graduate work in archival administration and American history at the University of Denver and the University of Missouri-Kansas City. McMurray is a member of the Board of Trustees of the State Historical Society of Missouri.


Finally, emerging from the Estes Park Summit, leaders knew the importance of gaining consensus. In the minds of some, the name change had the potential for deeply dividing the Church. Many remembered the ordeal of ordaining women to the priesthood a decade earlier. Newly inflicted wounds on the Church body, although rather remote, were still a possibility. The decision on the name change would have to wait.

This parliamentary maneuver gave Church leaders two more years to build consensus for a name change. But for the second time, that consensus was not forthcoming. Another new name proposal—World Church of Jesus Christ—came to the 1998 World Conference but failed. 43 Immediately following the rejection of the proposal, Presiding Evangelist Everett S. Graffeo issued a stirring challenge to encourage further exploration. The language he chose to express his counsel led some to consider it a revelatory statement: “For many years you have sought to find a new name for the church. You have been free to do this, but you have been unable to agree upon such a name. Do not be discouraged! Be assured, my beloved friends and brothers and sisters, there is a name for you. The Spirit of God rests among you and in you as you are transformed as God’s people. A new name is even now emerging out of your midst.” 44

One request to canonize Graffeo’s remarks came from the conference floor the following day. The chair ruled out it of order but agreed to place the statement in the conference bulletin for future reference. 45

THE COMMUNITY OF CHRIST

An atmosphere of excitement surrounded the arrival of dele-

45 Patricia Fowler, Northern Michigan District delegate, Legislative Sessions, 3 April 1998, World Conference Transcript, 1998, 173. Occupying the chair, McMurray ruled Fowler’s proposal “not appropriate” because “the only initiative to put things into the Doctrine and Covenants comes from the President of the church.” Graffeo’s statement was made “in response to his own urgings [as] Presiding Evangelist of the church” (173).
gates to the World Conference of 2000 held in Independence. In the months prior to this Jubilee Conference, the Florida Mission Center had submitted legislation that the Church adopt the name “Community of Christ.” The First Presidency asserted a parliamentary prerogative by superseding the proposal with friendly legislation offering its endorsement but requiring that the measure receive a two-thirds vote of support for enactment. As context, the First Presidency issued a letter to delegates on 5 April that surveyed the long history of discussion on the Church name issue, summarized the wide-ranging debates, and recalled the importance of the 1994 Estes Park retreat. They concluded the letter with a statement of encouragement: “We trust the Holy Spirit will attend us as we confer on this matter, focusing as we must not just on what is comfortable and familiar, but on the needs of the Church for generations to come.”

On Friday morning, 7 April 2000, the anticipated spirited debate ensued with a flurry of motions to completely change the wording of Florida’s proposal, add words, suggest initial alternatives to RLDS, reduce speaker time, and change the rule of alternates in the debate, which required the chair to recognize alter-

465 April 2000, World Conference Bulletin, 365-66. The First Presidency’s parliamentary initiative to supercede legitimately submitted legislation from an authorized jurisdiction was an extraordinary measure since its effect was to change the Rules of Order for the conference. Clearly, the First Presidency understood the implications of this action because they explained, in their 5 April 2000 letter to the World Conference, “Because this resolution would have the same effect of changing the constitutional rules of the church in the same manner as would be the case if the Rules of Order were being changed, it seems appropriate to apply the same procedure to the adoption of this resolution. Therefore, the Chair will rule that in order to be adopted this resolution will require a two-thirds (2/3rds) vote, previous notice having been considered to have been given through the publication of the resolution from the Florida Mission Center.” This statement seemed to satisfy the “parliamentarians” among the delegates who also recognized that altering the Rules of Order would dispose of the Florida Mission Center resolution. “World Conference Business,” Item G-8, ibid., 167.

nating proponents and opponents of any given measure as speak-
ers. Naturally, there was also an energetic debate on the merits
and inadequacies of “Community of Christ” as a name.

Those who spoke in favor saw the new name as empower-
ing the Church to move forward as a Christian denomination.
They felt that the name represented who the Church is today
and hopes to be in the future. One proponent argued that the
present name (Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day
Saints) presented a great barrier to evangelism and missionary
outreach, especially in the international field, and suggested that
the new name would be liberating.

Those who spoke against the proposal for the new name
observed that the present church was not a “community” and
saw the designation as inappropriate. Some expressed concerns
about such unanswered questions as, “How much will the name
change cost?” and “How will it be implemented in the field?”
Another asserted that changing names simply exchanged one set
of identity problems for another. Others thought the new name
would alienate reconciliation efforts with those who have left the
Church and that some members would feel forgotten or ex-
cluded. One delegate preferred the old name because it con-
stantly reminded Church members that these are the “last days”
whereas the new name would cause them to forget the Restora-
tion principle. Carlos Orellana, delegate from El Salvador, stated
his preference that the traditional name be included in parenthe-
ses should the new name be adopted.

These arguments are representative of positions taken dur-
ing the lengthy debate on 7 April 2000. McMurray, who chaired
the business session, took great pains to demonstrate fairness to
both sides of the issue. It is interesting to note, however, that
although delegates from the floor argued effectively in favor of
the new name, Church leaders dominated the proponent argu-
ments from the rostrum. These included members of the Quo-
rum of Twelve Apostles and Presiding Bishopric, and the Presid-
ing Evangelist. From the floor of the conference, speaking as a
member of the delegation from the Dominican Republic Na-
tional Church, President Emeritus Wallace B. Smith told of the
“unity of feeling” the Estes Park participants felt about the new
name. He stated that the experience they had was “truly inspir-
ing.” No church leader argued directly against the new name.
Delegates rejected a proposed alternative name, the World Church of Jesus Christ.

Finally, McMurray, who presided over the debate, called for the vote. The motion passed 1,979 to 561, far exceeding the two-thirds requirement. Thus, the new name became official.

With enthusiasm for a new identity so visible, the First Presidency quickly initiated guidelines on the transition process and stated that no changes would be effected until after 1 January 2001, thus allowing approximately nine months to create an orderly transition. Church leaders also promptly formed an implementation team to guide the process. Apostle Linda Booth, whose earlier profession had been in public relations, headed the committee. Steve Jones, second counselor in the Presiding Bishopric and a former hospital administrator, joined Booth as co-chair of the Church Name

48In the business session following the debate, Matthew Bolton, delegate from Graceland College, voiced objections that so many from the rostrum had spoken in favor of the name change. Bolton felt that this near unanimity among the higher quorums may have hurt those who opposed the name change and asked McMurray to apologize to those who may have felt injured by the chair’s selection of speakers. In the exchange, McMurray assured the delegates of his intent to be “as even-handed and as fair as possible” but also acknowledged the sensitivity of the matter before the delegates, adding, “If anybody was offended by the rulings of the chair or by anything else that was said during the debate we would certainly want to apologize.” Only one leading quorum member expressed concern about the new name. The Senior President of the Council of Presidents of Seventy, Robert R. Kyser II, stated from the rostrum podium: “In my heart I am not yet ready for a new name. . . . I am ready to be engaged in the process . . . and other resolves with the provision for congregational choice. I do not rise this morning to attempt to persuade you to vote on this issue one way or the other. I rise to express a hope that whatever the action taken today on this matter of church name not for one moment cause[s] us to lose sight of our primary calling as disciples to witness of Jesus Christ alive.” Draft, “2000 World Conference transcript.” Church Secretary A. Bruce Lindgren is charged with the responsibility for taking minutes of conference proceedings and transcribing all conference debates. His office had not completed the transcription of the name-change debate. I appreciate his providing me with an unpaginated rough draft transcription of the debate for the purpose of this paper.
Implementation Team. In September 2000, the committee recom-
mended employing Crane MetaMarketing, Ltd., of Alpharetta,
Georgia. With the First Presidency’s approval, this public relations
firm, unaffiliated with the Latter Day Saint movement, guided the
identity transformation process.

Church name implementation was summarized as a five-task
process: identify specific issues to be addressed in all Church areas;
integrate the new name into legal, public relations, communications,
administration, and all other functional areas; work with the First
Presidency to establish the decision-making process to resolve
Church name issues; communicate the overall process with staff and
field personnel and the general public; and coordinate and commu-

Throughout the rest of 2000, Church leaders encouraged the
membership to explore the meaning of this new identity. An im-
portant literary work distributed among the leadership was Gerrit
Scott Dawson’s Called by a New Name: Becoming What God Has
Promised. In this book dealing with spiritual growth, Dawson, a
senior minister of a First Presbyterian congregation in Lenoir,
North Carolina, provided an important link between the new name
and the new Church program called “Paths of the Disciple.” The
program calls for members to become a new people who will live
out Zionic values in community by pursuing ministries of personal
discipleship. President McMurray articulated six paths by which
Community of Christ members can live out their discipleship: to
live in community, to seek reconciliation, to share willingly in
stewardship relationship, to learn and teach, to engage in the
spiritual quest, and to stand for justice.

49“Team Formed to Implement Name Change,” Saints Herald, 147
50Gerrit Scott Dawson, Called by a New Name: Becoming What God
Has Promised (Nashville, Tenn.: Upper Room Books, 1997).
51W. Grant McMurray, “A Transforming Faith: A Call to Dis-
cipleship” (sermon to the World Conference), 3 April 2000, World
Conference Bulletin, 2000, 368-77. McMurray’s sermon is also published in
Anita Mortimer, Walk the Path of the Disciple (Independence: Herald
Publishing House, 2001), 89-107, and as “A Transforming Faith,” Saints
Herald 147 (June 2000): 183-91.
ONE CHURCH, THREE NAMES

As the planning continued for the actual transition, the strategy of new identity became clear. The shift from the old to the new had to be complete. Signage, business cards, stationery, name tags, checking and investment accounts, website address—all had to change. Any reference to Latter Day Saintism, other than in historical and legal references, had to be removed from the identity language of the Church. Even the name of the official Church publication, the *Saints Herald*, without any announcement, changed its name to the *Herald*, starting with the April 2001 issue.

Except for relatively minor issues, such as concrete name inscriptions on congregational building facades, the transition as of this writing appears to be smooth despite the huge challenge of changing institutional identity. The only unresolved problem seemed to be widespread dissatisfaction with a new design for the Church’s traditional seal. Since 1874 when the seal was first adopted, it has been revised at least four times, not including variations on such things as service marks, special commemorations, and stationery headers and watermarks. The basic elements have remained unchanged: a depiction of a child with a lamb and lion (an image from Isaiah) and the “Peace” inscription. Although these primary components remained, the proposed arrangement, color scheme, and overall presentation brought a flurry of protest. In response to this negative reaction, Church leaders initiated a limited survey of selected pastors, stewardship commissioners, transformation ministers, appointees, executive staff, and headquarters office personnel.

Objections to the new church seal focused on the cartoon-like appearance, the crossed paws and large size of the lion, and the lamb’s face, which has been compared to the skull and cross-bones of a pirate flag. Another dissatisfaction grew from the awkwardness of the arrangement of the figures, which showed the child and lamb sitting on the lion’s tail while the lion was facing away from the two figures.52

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52 Research Coordinator Duane G. Graham sent out the survey through electronic means with the intent that pastors would gain a consensus of opinion from their congregation, record the results on the survey, and then return it for tabulation. He anticipated that he would receive back 400-500 responses through e-mail but soon began to receive
At least three other issues have not been addressed publicly as of this writing. Church leaders initially presented the new seal in color using different shades of white, brown, and blue. That they chose not to use the familiar purple and gold calls into question the retention of the traditional Church colors. Second, most congregations in the Church display the Church flag along with their national flag on Church rostrums. With acceptance of the new name, the design of the official Church flag remains to be determined. Color selection will have an obvious impact on the new flag presentation. Third, the cover pages of the three standard scriptures of the Church—the Bible, the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, and the Book of Mormon—retain the former Reorganized Church name. Because Church members are so closely connected to their scriptures and because scriptures play a vital role in proselytizing efforts, the name change will require publishing new editions. Resolution of these issues and others signal that the name-change process will continue into the foreseeable future.

**CONCLUSION**

On 6 April 2001, the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints officially became the Community of Christ. Obviously, the selection of the date was not coincidental. With the festivities of that historic day, this generation of Church members would become only the third generation of Latter Day Saints to encounter the challenges of new identity. The first period of challenge occurred in the 1830s when the name of the Church evolved from Church of Christ to Church of the Latter Day Saints and Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. For the members of the movement headquartered in Independence today, the second was the 1860 Amboy generation who launched the Reorganization. Of hard-copy surveys from around the church. Evidently pastors printed out the survey and distributed them to their congregations. Surveys continued to stream into his office as the deadline for tabulation passed. He tabulated his results from a statistical sample of nearly 11,000 surveys eventually received. “Church Seal Survey Report,” *Herald* 148 (August 2001): 23ff. This experience showed the passionate feelings of members toward their Church seal. As this article went to press, the new seal was released. Reflecting the results of the survey, the seal design much more closely resembles the former one.
course, many participants spanned both generations. Finally, members of the Reorganized Church, now called the Community of Christ, stand at the dawn of a third era where the mission of the Church aligns closely with its identity. Thus, 6 April 2001, 6 April 1860, and 6 April 1830 are dates resonant with the same historic meaning.53

The committee created by the 1968 World Conference name-change legislation posed three questions: "Should a name be definitive of an organization's past? Should a name be indicative of an organization's future? Should a name express the essential purpose of an organization?"54 Clearly, the delegates from the 2000 World Conference, the highest decision-making body within the Church, rendered their opinion that their corporate name should be indicative of their institutional future and purpose. By translating into its modern context the crucial, and sometimes difficult lessons from the Latter Day Saint experience in Kirtland, Independence, Far West, and Nauvoo, the new name—Community of Christ—captures its historic mission of community building. By embracing the centrality of Christ, the movement fits squarely in the ecumenical mainstream with other Christian faith traditions. Embodied in the new name are tradition, mission, and identity. Historians of the future will determine whether the believers of this generation lived up to their new name.

SAMUEL WOOLLEY TAYLOR: MAVERICK MORMON HISTORIAN

Richard H. Cracroft

SAMUEL WOOLLEY TAYLOR (1907-97), lifelong freelance journalist and prolific author of hundreds of articles and short stories, several novels, and numerous film scripts, will probably be remembered by the American public, if at all, as the screenwriter of Walt Disney’s *The Absent-Minded Professor*. Mormon and Western literary critics and historians, however, will long remember Taylor for his other career as a maverick Mormon journalist/historian. Through some nine volumes of Mormon Americana, he simultaneously instructed, entertained, and irritated Mormon and Gentile readers in his eagerness to chronicle, colorfully and sensationally, the aftermath of the fifty-year social and religious adventure that was Mormon polygamy.

Taylor, an irascible ironist about institutional Mormonism with a deep-seated love for the Mormon people, spent the Mormon half of his long career rubbing the noses of Mormon officialdom in the gaps between historical “truth” as he saw and interpreted it and the managed historical revisionism of what he called “the controlled press” of the twentieth-century Mormon church.1 Following the

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In telling the story of his remarkable father and family, Taylor became one of the first Mormon insiders to tell the story of polygamy from the perspective of a believer who was neither a fundamentalist trying to defend the practice's continuation nor a muck-raker in the exposé tradition that had begun with John C. Bennett's flamboyant Nauvoo disclosures. "After all," he reflected years later, in Taylor-Made Tales, "as I was one of the very last to have grown up in [plural marriage], who would tell this story if I didn't?" Heartened by the national success of Family Kingdom and by the fact that the Church had not cut him off, as he had feared it would, Taylor, assisted by his brother, inveterate researcher, and co-maverick Raymond Woolley Taylor, wrote a biographical and historical trilogy: Nightfall at Nauvoo (New York: Avon, 1971), The Kingdom or Nothing: The Life of John Taylor, Militant Mormon (New York: Macmillan, 1976; reprinted as John Taylor: The Last Pioneer [Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1999]), and Rocky Mountain Empire: The Latter-day Saints Today (New York: Macmillan, 1978). In 1984 he and his brother capped their literary collaboration with a two-volume documentary history, The John Taylor Papers: Records of the Last Utah Pioneer, 2 vols. (Redwood City, Calif.: Taylor Trust, 1984). Taylor's last book, Taylor-Made Tales of Literature and Belief. He has published widely in nineteenth-century American literature, Western American literature, and Mormon literature. He has served as president of the Association for Mormon Letters and, in 2000, received its Lifetime Member Award. He and Sam Taylor were correspondents for more than twenty years; he also wrote an introduction for Taylor's autobiography and spoke at his graveside services in Provo.


3Ibid., 196.
The Journal of Mormon History (Murray, Utah: Aspen Books, 1994), is a delightful retrospective memoir in which he reflects upon the complex forces that influenced his life and shaped the content and tone of his Mormon corpus.

By speaking out so zestfully on a practice no longer talked about in Mormon society, however polite, Samuel W. Taylor won the reputation of an in-your-face Mormon maverick. As such, he is often assigned to that group of regional writers—many of whom abandoned Mormonism—whom Edward A. Geary has dubbed “Mormonism’s Lost Generation.” They include novelists Vardis Fisher, who had Mormon parents, Paul Bailey, Maurine Whipple, and Virginia Sorensen, as well as novelist/historian Bernard DeVoto and Pulitzer Prize winning historian Wallace Stegner, both of them Gentiles with Utah roots.

Taylor saw himself, he says, “as an author standing apart.” Rather than being “lost,” as a closer look at his life and works demonstrates, Taylor fits better into those maverick Mormons who are hard to classify succinctly, although perhaps “Jack Mormon” works as well as any. These individuals, to use the metaphor Juanita Brooks’s father employed, identify with the “herd,” or body of mainstream Mormons, but run on its outskirts. They simultaneously participate in and identify with Mormon culture, history, and folkways, while attempting to maintain a critical distance which enables greater objectivity and maneuverability. Dissident Mormons, in contrast, have detached themselves from the herd spiritually, emotionally, doctrinally, socially, and physically—something Taylor could never do. He relished his maverick status. In one review, he identified Mormon novelist Paul Bailey as “a fellow maverick,” and added a telling personal comment: “I wear the badge proudly.” In a letter to me, Taylor asserted: “I’ve never pretended to qualify as anything but a Jack Mormon, defined by my brother Raymond as ‘A Seagull


5Taylor, Taylor-Made Tales, 186.

which won't eat crickets.”\textsuperscript{7} The metaphor is apt. As an innate skeptic, Taylor took pleasure in footnoting the paucity of historical evidence for the miracle of the seagulls,\textsuperscript{8} yet the cumulative evidence of his Mormon books is that he believed miracles occurred and matter-of-factly reported supernatural events in LDS history.

Still, assessing Taylor’s accomplishments as a popular, freelance journalist and fiction writer who made a gradual transition to Mormon biographer, historian, and pundit is complicated by the oxymoronic complexity of the man himself. This complexity not only shaped his worldview and his essential Mormonness, but also his literary style and historiography. He was at once believer and skeptic, orthodox and heterodox, defender and debunker, proud of his Mormonness, yet chronic critic of institutions generally and of the Mormon hierarchy in particular, affirmer and iconoclast, defender of the faith and prolonged whistle-blower, admirer of spiritual greatness and opponent of hypocrisy and lily-gilding. Taylor spent the Mormon half of his literary career tilting at the windmill of his Church’s revisionist and preferred public image and persona. Upstart and from-the-hip historian with a compelling, largely untold, and taboo story to tell, Taylor rendered his colorfully subjective take on the Mormon story with verve and excitement. His style is engaging, laden with rich detail, sparkling anecdotes, and an acerbic sense of irony which made him into a kind of Mormon Mark Twain. Taylor’s nine books about Mormonism have irritated historians and ruffled the feathers of those who prefer the more sedate and respectable Mormon present while enriching Mormon letters, historiography, and culture. Literary historians of the future may find even greater value in Taylor’s iconoclastic, sock-it-to-’em approach to Mormon culture and history for a church which, during most of Taylor’s life, was still struggling to assess the meaning of its divine-and-human history while forging an expanding, mainline, and international present and future, affected but undeterred by that peculiar


past—the past which Samuel W. Taylor, with a mischievous twinkle in his eye, vigorously stirs up from the dark bottom of the barrel.

**GRANDFATHER, FATHER, AND CONTROVERSY**

Samuel Woolley Taylor was born during a whirling tempest of Mormon *Realpolitik* on 5 February 1907. His mother, Janet ("Nettie") Maria Woolley Taylor, was the third of Apostle John Whittaker Taylor’s six wives, and the mother of eight of his thirty-six children. Sam was her seventh. John Whittaker Taylor (1858-1916), son of the third Church President John Taylor, was a dynamic, deeply spiritual, and visionary man often called "the Prophet of the Quorum." Grandfather John, who succeeded Brigham Young in 1877, was a last-ditch defender of "the Principle." At the height of "the Raid," the Mormon name for the draconian U.S. federal assault on Mormonism that saw the confiscation of Mormon property, disenfranchisement, the imprisonment of hundreds of polygamists, male and female, on charges of unlawful cohabitation, and the threatened confiscation of the temples. On 26 September 1886 while John Taylor was in hiding in Centerville, Utah, he purportedly received a revelation in which the Savior assured him: "I have not revoked this law, nor will I, for it is everlasting and those who will enter my glory must obey the conditions thereof." Three months later, he married Josephine

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9Samuel W. Taylor and Raymond W. Taylor, eds., *The John Taylor Papers: Records of the Last Utah Pioneer*, 2 vols. (Redwood City, Calif.: Taylor Trust, 1984), 2:468; Samuel W. Taylor, *Family Kingdom* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1951), 274-76. Shortly before his death, John Taylor also purportedly received a personal visitation from Jesus Christ authorizing him to ordain men to continue to practice plural marriage. Later Church officials took the public position that this revelation, which was not recorded at the time, had not been verified and "was not submitted to a general conference of the saints for approval and was therefore not binding" upon them as revelation. Richard S. Van Wagoner, *Mormon Polygamy: A History* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1986), 194. Especially since the presidency of Heber J. Grant (himself a polygamist though with only one surviving wife by the time he became Church President in 1918), the LDS Church has strongly and consistently opposed and repudiated these offshoot sects, excommunicating known adherents. Far from a monolithic bloc, modern polygamists have a complex history of their own. Sam Taylor became part of that history as a journalist when he chronicled the story.
Roueche, the daughter of Thomas F. Roueche, in whose home he was hiding out, as a symbol of his fervent devotion to the Principle. He died on 25 July 1887, still on “the Underground.”

Three years later in September 1890, Wilford Woodruff, Taylor’s aged successor and fourth president of the Church, bowed to terrific federal pressure and threats of even more stringent punishment. He issued a statement called “The Manifesto,” which officially and publicly withdrew support for new polygamous marriages, declaring that church leaders were not “permitting any person to enter into its practice” and “publicly declar[ing] that my advice to the Latter-day Saints is to refrain from contracting any marriage forbidden by the law of the land” (D&C—Declaration 1). At the general conference which followed a few days later, it was read aloud to the assemblage and accepted as binding upon the Church. The Manifesto, which Woodruff later described as revelation from God, replaced John Taylor’s earlier revelations on the matter.

John Taylor’s apostle-son, John W. Taylor, was deeply troubled by this action. He continued to perform plural marriages and entered into plural marriages of his own. Dissatisfied with a pattern of rumored and actual noncompliance, part of Salt Lake City’s Protestant community organized nationwide protests when monogamist apostle Reed Smoot was elected U.S. senator by the state legislature in 1902, and a senatorial committee launched a lengthy investigation that even drew Church President Joseph F. Smith to the witness stand in Washington, D.C. John W. Taylor prudently removed himself to his ranch in Canada where he could not be served with a subpoena. Until 1904, polygamy continued to flourish officially in the Mormon colonies of northern Mexico and southern Alberta, behind the massive 1954 arrests in Short Creek, Arizona. See his *I Have Six Wives: A True Story of Present-Day Plural Marriage* (New York: Greenberg, 1956). The “I” of the title is “MacRoy Byers,” a pseudonym for Taylor’s fund-amentalist interviewee.


11Ibid., 9-105, examines the evidence for concluding that Taylor was acting in at least some cases with the secret authorization of Church President Joseph F. Smith. Taylor also married three wives and fathered children by all six wives after 1890.
Canada, where it was still tolerated, though illegal. Finally, under intensifying federal scrutiny and public outrage, Joseph F. Smith issued the “Second Manifesto” absolutely forbidding new plural marriages and promising excommunication for those who violated this stricture—a promise which was carried out. (Polygamists in existing marriages who exercised discretion and kept a low profile were allowed to continue living with their families, although many men succumbed to the pressure to select and live with only one “legal” wife. But this was the last gray area.)

John W. Taylor was neither discreet nor low profile. As an apostle with three post-Manifesto wives and strong feelings about the sanctity of the Principle, he was an inevitable target. In October 1905, “faced with intense pressure,” writes Harvard W. Heath in the quasi-official *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, “Church leaders accepted the resignations of apostles Matthias Cowley and John W. Taylor, who were rumored to have performed plural marriages after the Manifesto.” Some say this public repudiation was proof that the Church had sincerely abandoned plural marriage. Others saw the two apostles as the “ram in the thicket,” sacrificed on the altar of hostile public opinion so that Smoot could keep his seat. Unwilling to recant or to renounce his wives, Taylor submitted to excommunication in March 1911. According to Sam, his father was ostracized and forced into “the whipping boy role of an apostate,” with dire social and economic effects. Loyal to his church, even in rejection, John W. Taylor rebuffed overtures from fundamentalist groups. Still, the former apostle remained a steadfast polygamist, unrepentant—and thus unchurched—until his death in 1916.

Sam was only eight when his father died, but John W.’s presence in Sam’s life remained indelible and profound, strongly shaping his attitudes toward Mormonism and his historical and literary stance. Six decades following Woodruff’s Manifesto and much to the discomfiture of twentieth-century Mormon leaders and comfortably monogamous Latter-day Saints, Samuel W. published his grandfather’s repressed revelation in addition to documentation that a core of believers had secretly continued the authorized practice of polygamy for more than two decades after the Manifesto. By opening the

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13Taylor-Made Tales, 201-2.
books on these forbidden topics, Sam and Raymond undertook the seemingly impossible task of placing these events and actions into an objective historical context as part of a larger effort to have John W. Taylor's priesthood, temple blessings, and Church membership posthumously restored as had been done with other individuals. It took time for the Church to reinstate, without appearing to condone the acts of this former apostle; but in 1965, thirty-nine years after John W. Taylor's death, President David O. McKay had him "taken out of the shadows," restored to Church membership, and reinvested with all his former priesthood and temple blessings.\textsuperscript{14}

**SAMUEL W. TAYLOR: A BIOGRAPHICAL OVERVIEW**

Samuel Woolley Taylor grew up in Provo, Utah, with his seven siblings and twenty-six half-siblings, the children of three other Provo wives—Aunt Nellie Todd Taylor, Aunt Roxie Welling Taylor, and Aunt Rhoda Welling Taylor, all of whom lived on adjoining fruit farms just east of the Provo Cemetery. Aunt May Rich Taylor and Aunt Ellen Sandburg Taylor and their children lived in Salt Lake City.

While attending Brigham Young University, young Sam contributed a weekly column, "Taylored Topics," to the semi-weekly student newspaper, *YNews*. He reveled in disconcerting BYU administrators, faculty, and students at the conservative Mormon school with his often startling, "the-emperor-has-no-clothes" approach to sensitive subjects. The last straw was an interview during Sam's senior year with an anonymous student bootlegger. He recalled:

> The ink was hardly dry on the *Y News* before I was on the carpet. When I refused to name the suspected bootleggers, I was suspended. After I was reinstated, the next column picked off the scab, and I was out again. The pattern repeated itself until after the sixth suspension. I had been tied in the closet once too often. I dropped out. After all, I can take a hint.\textsuperscript{15}

By the time he left BYU in 1931, Sam had already determined that "it was going to be sink or swim as a writer."\textsuperscript{16} In 1934, he married Gay Dimick, a fellow writer and Mormon whom he met at

\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., 185-203.
\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., 124.
\textsuperscript{16}Ibid., 125.
BYU. The newlyweds moved to Gay's native California—to allow her to escape, Sam explained, the too-goodly measure of Taylors. They settled in Redwood City, where Sam eventually built their home with his own hands and where Gay, now widowed, still lives.

In a long and successful free-lance writing career, Sam supported Gay and their adopted daughter, Sara, by publishing to a large national readership almost every type of fiction and nonfiction, including detective stories, westerns, sports, adventure, humor, and a play, *The Square Needle*. Hundreds of stories appeared, many of them serially, in most national weeklies or monthlies like *Saturday Evening Post, Collier's, Liberty, American, Country Gentleman, Woman's Home Companion, Esquire, True, Argosy, Bluebook, Country Home, Reader's Digest, Holiday, and Family Circle.* Some of his articles later developed into books and motion pictures. *Family Kingdom* (1951), his first nonfiction book, began as an article in *Holiday.* *I Have Six Wives: A True Story of Present-Day Plural Marriage* (1956) also made its first appearance as a magazine article in *True.* *The Man with My Face* (1962) debuted as a six-part mystery serial in *Liberty* (1948), became a book club selection, and later a motion picture for which Taylor wrote the script. In fact, Taylor's best-known works outside of Mormondom are his movie scripts: *The Man With My Face, The Absent-Minded Professor,* which starred Fred McMurray, and its sequel, *Son of Flubber,* both of which he wrote for Walt Disney after the war. (*The Absent-Minded Professor,* still crediting Taylor, was remade in 1998 as *Flubber,* starring Robin Williams.) Taylor received royalties for *The Flying Car* concept, filmed as *Chitty-Chitty Bang Bang,* with the screenplay by another writer. In 1970, Taylor collaborated with Raymond in parlaying the uranium boom in southeastern Utah into *Uranium Fever; or, No Talk Under $1 Million.* By then, however, his second career—Mormon historical narrative—was well launched. In fact, it had begun during World War II.

In 1943, Sam, age thirty-six, was drafted into the U.S. Army and sent to England where he was assigned to the Army Air Force. He fought the war, he says, "with my own weapon—a typewriter," churning out, on the side, "hundreds of stories and articles in national magazines, but nothing about the Mormon culture." Then Sam barely escaped with his life from a crash landing that killed two.

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17Ibid., 164.
18Ibid., 195.
Sobered, he asked himself, "So I was being led toward what goal?" and "wondered if I had been spared because of my ability to write about my people for readers of the outside world." Canadian Hugh B. Brown, then British Mission president and later an apostle and member of the First Presidency, assured Sam one Sunday evening soon afterward that the Mormon people needed him to tell their story to the world. He pointed out to Sam:

Our internal literature was largely intended for and read by the LDS people. Also, most literature about Mormons in national trade channels was critical or anti-Mormon. With my talent as an author, [Brown] said, I could bring understanding and appreciation for my people to an audience who couldn't be reached by the hard sell of the missionary approach.

Brown's advice struck Sam at a critical moment. He turned immediately to his own heritage, and *Family Kingdom* appeared in 1951—"the first book for the outside world which portrayed plural marriage as a way of life, without apology or condemnation." Beginning in 1967, Taylor also wrote his first article for *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, followed by other articles, notes, and letters in *Dialogue* and also *Sunstone*.

Despite his intellectual independence, Taylor was always, as daughter Sara Taylor Weston told me, "fiercely proud of his membership in the Church." Like most of the Lost Generation, he did not formally participate in his ward (he called himself "strictly an 'eating' Mormon"—meaning that he attended ward dinners) and was psychologically braced for disciplinary action after he published *Family Kingdom*. Three years later, when no court was held, he tentatively began attending ward meetings, ultimately being endowed and sealed to Gay and Sara. He remained active for the rest of his life. The activity was on his own terms. Sara reports that Sam

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19 Ibid., 135, 161.
20 Ibid.
21 Ibid., 164.
22 Ibid., 162.
dodged bishops' invitations to attend sacrament meeting for years, proclaiming, "If I go to sacrament meeting you'll expect more of me than I want to give." On the other hand, Sam faithfully attended high priests quorum, serving for many years as its secretary, even though he was never ordained a high priest. He deeply cherished the Saints, relished the doings of his Redwood City Ward, told several anecdotes about them in *Rocky Mountain Empire: The Latter-day Saints Today* (1978) and *Taylor-Made Tales*, and wrote:

I made the remarkable discovery that the Wasatch Front wasn't confined to Utah. It wasn't a matter of geography, but of people. The Redwood City California Ward was exactly like the Fourth Ward of Provo. The Peculiar People in it were as interchangeable as Ford parts. A member could move from Provo to Redwood City on Monday, be visited by the bishop, assigned a job, and be a functioning part of the intricate mechanism by the following Sunday. And, I realized, like it or lump it, I was one of the Peculiar People, home again.  

Sam's caution about involving himself in his ward matched the uneasiness with which some Mormons regarded him. Even though *Family Kingdom* gentled the image of Mormons among the general readership, some Saints and leaders strongly disapproved of his "turn over the manure pile and let it dry" stance. Like his father and grandfather, Taylor saw himself as fighting a lonely battle for the truth. His staunchness as the decades passed was rewarded. The increasing self-confidence of the Mormon people allowed them to take pride in, rather than umbrage at, this outspoken native son. *Family Kingdom* was reprinted in 1974.

An excellent case study of this phenomenon is the fortunes of his hilarious (and only) novel, *Heaven Knows Why!*, first serialized in *Collier's* as "The Mysterious Way." While he avoids any mention of polygamy, he capitalizes on Mormon idiosyncracies, quaintness, naivete, and such doctrinal peculiarities as personal revelation, temple sealings, and especially the Word of Wisdom. The story is framed by scenes from a Mormon bureaucratic Heaven. Angel Moroni Skinner is so distracted from his work in "the Compiling Office of the Accounting Section of the Current History Division of the Records Department" by his shiftless grandson, World War II veteran Jack-

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25Ibid., 203.
son Skinner Whitetop, that he is passed over for advancement to "Chief Checker of the Compiling Office." Moroni receives permission to make one "visitation" to lazy Jackson in a west Utah valley to straighten him out. The bumbling Moroni accidentally triggers a series of hilarious events which expose hypocrisy, solve old feuds, right old wrongs, strengthen faith, vitalize Jackson, and, in the nick of time, help Jackson wrench the hand of Bishop Jensen's daughter Katie from her father's base and hypocritical counselor.

Although Taylor's tour de farce—still the funniest Mormon novel—doesn't have a mean-spirited sentence in it and could, furthermore, be set in virtually any religious society, Mormons, still in the throes of national accommodation, didn't like it. "The Saints not only didn't see the humor," Sam wrote in his preface to the 1994 reprint, "but some of them didn't realize the story was fiction." Wryly, he summarized: "Mormons are passionately proud of being the Peculiar People, but heaven help the author who points out the peculiarities." In his autobiography, he ruefully recalled, "They scalped me in 'Zion,' saying I was making light of sacred things." While the serialized version was running in Collier's, Sam received "the formal call of my ward bishopric (no doubt on orders from On High), to question the condition of my soul." It was not until a new generation succeeded the old that they could see Heaven Knows Why! as the "sugar-coated sermon on the power of faith" he intended. "The answer seems to be," Taylor sagely wrote me, "to live long enough."

In 1980 Sam added another anecdote to his collection about this novel:

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28Taylor-Made Tales, 167.
30Samuel W. Taylor, Letter to Cracroft, 7 May 1970, Cracroft Collection, Special Collections. See also Taylor-Made Tales, 167, and both introductions to Heaven Knows Why!
Yesterday, . . . the local missionaries called around to collect a copy of “Heaven Knows Why” which I’d promised them. Then they wanted to see my office and library. Well, I have two identical Royal typewriters on adjoining desks, so I explained, “This one is for sacred writing, and that one for profane.” They didn’t crack a smile, and one said, “Well, that’s an awfully nice arrangement.” So I changed the subject. Then we talked about their work, and the fact that it takes 1,000 tracting calls to get a couple of people to listen to the message. “They think we’re selling something,” one said. “Why not give them the pitch right off,” I suggested. “Tell them, ‘All we want is 10% off the top.’” They also considered this seriously. Ah, me. But real nice kids.31

Increasingly, Taylor’s Mormon works have come to be regarded as significant and groundbreaking. In 1996 the Association for Mormon Letters honored him with a Lifetime Membership. He was gratified to read William Mulder and A. Russell Mortensen’s tribute, in introducing a reprint of one of his pieces, that “no talented native son knows Utah better than Samuel W. Taylor, who writes about it so gaily and so aptly.”32 Sam Taylor remained vigorous and feisty until his death at age ninety on 26 September 1997, at his Redwood City home.

At Sam Taylor’s side as indefatigable researcher and aide in producing his works on Mormonism during four decades was his brother, Raymond. While Sam created his narratives in California, Ray haunted the LDS Church Historian’s Office, typed out hundreds of John Taylor letters, and stubbornly faced down General Authorities who wanted the complicated old distresses forgotten. In his Introduction to The Kingdom or Nothing, Sam paid Ray a graceful tribute, saying that the book “really should be [Raymond’s] book,” and would have been, except for Ray’s writing style, which Ray himself called “reformed Egyptian.”33

An anecdote about Ray illustrates his own maverick nature. During the 1970s I was a high councilor, then stake president, in Provo Utah East Stake, Raymond’s stake. We conversed occasionally about Mormon history and became friends. One Sunday morning when I was in official attendance in Ray’s high priests quorum, Ray

announced that the building which housed his office had nearly burned down the evening before. When firemen refused to let him dash in and try to save his years of priceless research on John Taylor, he went across the street to the Trade Winds Cafe, where, he told us high priests, he sat all night, drinking coffee, praying, drinking coffee, and praying. “And,” he concluded triumphantly, “I’ll be damned if the Lord didn’t save the building and my papers.” I recalled this anecdote for Sam some time after Ray’s death in December 1972. Sam responded that it had been a real test of Ray’s faith when

Joseph Fielding Smith became our Prophet, Seer and Revelator. Raymond had clashed with him (as had I) when Brother Joseph was Church Historian. Now he was untouchable. The situation worried Raymond until he said, “I went to the Lord. I told the Lord that if He would take Brother Joseph, I’d quit coffee.” The very next day Joseph died, and, Raymond told me, “I haven’t wanted a cup of coffee since.” Sam concluded wryly, “Which is a testimony to something or other.”

Whatever uneasiness they may have stirred in Saintly circles, Sam and Ray Taylor saw themselves, not as dissidents, but as writers with an eye single to telling the truth, not just a journalist’s truth, but “The Truth”—as they saw it. And what they saw was that the Lord’s “only true and living church” (D&C 1:30) was imperfectly directed by mere mortals. Indeed, “Truth Forever Triumphant” is inscribed on Samuel W. Taylor’s gravestone in Provo City cemetery. He saw himself as someone who brought light to shadowy corners of Mormon history, regardless of the consequences. Nor did the nobility of this cause diminish Sam’s glee when such truths sometimes unsettled institutional self-righteousness and irked complacent members.

**Samuel W. Taylor as Historian**

From Joseph Smith’s days, Mormon leaders and Church historians have told the Mormon story with a heavy emphasis on its providential destiny. Tracing a pattern of divine direction and intervention from its small 1830 beginnings to the rapid international expan-
sion of the present, the institution has smiled with greatest pleasure
on accounts of a spiritually vibrant, monogamous, family-centered,
loyal, law-abiding, and unified people, who share Mormonism's
sense of divine destiny and purpose with 300,000 new converts each
year. To enhance missionary efforts, Mormon leaders and estab-
lishment historians have taken a "put-your-best-foot-forward" and
"don't-step-in-anything-squishy-with-it" stance. They look askance at
secular historians who chronicle petty and not-so-petty squabbles,
probe in-house or national politics, describe other distracting un-
pleasantries, or find human ambitions and frailties a more sufficient
explanation than divine providence. Because the often turbulent
history of the Latter-day Saints provides a voluminous library of
negative images (rebels, fanatics, polygamists, and racists), Church
leaders, focused on the mission of proclaiming the gospel, consist-
tently discourage the potentially divisive scholarly practice of exhum-
ing unmodern practices and events from Mormon history, terming
such efforts wrongheaded and short-sighted misunderstandings and
distortions of Mormonism's divine and inevitable destiny.

Samuel W. Taylor saw it differently. He had been personally
involved in the aftermath of polygamy. His adored father had been
a martyr, as he saw it, to institutional exigencies. He had an innate
distrust of institutions and their motives. The claim of divine inspi-
ration triggered a reflexive search to see who stood to benefit most
materially from such claims. His skepticism frequently crossed the
line to cynicism, and he could assume, perhaps too easily, that be-
hind every effect lurked an ulterior and corrupting cause, regardless
of original and well-meant intentions. This skepticism shaped his
method of exposing and presenting Mormonism's historic incon-
gruities and ironies for maximum impact. In some ways, the mature
Taylor continued to use the pugnacious, anti-establishment stance
toward forbidden topics that he had perfected as a shock-it-to-'em
student journalist. His method was to dust off little-known, over-
looked, dismissed, forgotten, or unpopular historical events, per-
sons, or facts and, through research and skillful handling, reinstate
them—newly assessed, fully developed, and elevated to greater sig-
nificance—in refreshed historical contexts. Most objective readers
would agree that Taylor makes a genuine contribution by shining
light into darkened corners of history, but also that his muckraking
and exposé-driven journalistic propensities put him in a different
camp from those who value evenhanded historical objectivity.
In short, while Taylor’s nine volumes of Mormon history show him as a consummate storyteller with a flair for the dramatic, they also reveal a sensational journalist who delights in upsetting traditional accounts by exposing unperceived historical anomalies and eccentricities, usually at the expense of the establishment, which he takes obvious pleasure in embarrassing. In fact, Taylor’s attempts to tell “The Truth” often make him guilty of distorting the very history he is trying to correct.

Another favorite technique was for Sam to cast himself as David to Mormonism’s monolithic Goliath, an approach that let him deconstruct and redress traditional and hagiographic treatments of sensitive Mormon topics. In fact, Taylor used the same technique in his two non-Mormon histories. In *I Have Six Wives: A True Story of Present-Day Plural Marriage* (1956), the U.S. government and the states of Arizona and Utah become the Goliath while the devoted polygamists of Short Creek, Arizona, become the sympathetic David. In the non-Mormon history, *Uranium Fever* (1978) that he wrote with Raymond, human greed and bungling federal officials provide the Goliath.

Sam Taylor hit his stride from his very first Mormon history: *Family Kingdom*. This family memoir is a bemusing, frequently comical, and breezily respectful account of his much-married and charismatic father and the whirlwind life the family lived. Still in print, the book sold well, was an alternative Book-of-the-Month selection in 1951, and was distributed abroad by the U.S. government as a happy example of Americana. *Family Kingdom* is a son’s glowing account of John W. Taylor’s eccentricity, entrepreneurship, enthusiasm, and faith—presented with polished skill as Mormon literature’s most delightful family saga and most readable biography. A nation of readers was charmed with John W.’s taking four of his five wives and their children on his camping honeymoon in the mountains with his sixth wife. Sam’s mother refused to join the party, but Sam reported brazenly: “And a gala time was had by all.”

This scene, however, sent chills up the collective Mormon spine. In the 1950s, the Latter-day Saints, who had just contributed importantly to the war effort and would become a model religious minority in such periodicals as the *Reader’s Digest*, were eager to

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distance themselves from such peculiarities. Furthermore, Sam Taylor told the story of polygamy's sputtering demise with dismayingly close attention to its politics, intrigues, and compromises, which were often unspiritual and even downright unsavory. During the period when he was doing the research and writing, Sam reported, "a number of people . . . tried, with various degrees of tact, to dissuade me from writing the book," the consensus being that "I was too 'negative' and unspiritual to write the typical 'family' book." He agreed completely. "I had no intention of doing a family mug job. I wanted an honest book." 36

Writing *Family Kingdom* put Taylor, the liberal skeptic, in the uncomfortable position of defending his father's and grandfather's hard-core positions as pre- and post-Manifesto polygamists, defending and thus affirming their visions, their deep spirituality, the unilateral decisions that they took on the basis of what they truly felt was inspiration, and their acts of rebellion against government and/or Church. Simultaneously, Taylor had to maintain his skeptical and ironic distance, to negotiate between a national audience that would probably not understand his acceptance of his forefathers' zealosity and a Mormon audience that would probably not understand his effort at detachment. To both audiences, he asserted and documented his view of the profound hypocrisies engaged in by both the Church and the federal government. In writing *Family Kingdom*, Taylor wrenched ajar some tightly closed barn doors and exposed the dross that had piled up around polygamy. And even though the book is too warmly human, anecdotal, and underdocumented for most historians, it remains the best narrative account of Mormonism's difficult transition into the mainstream of American religions.

Taylor maintains this tightrope walk between history and exposé in his Mormon history trilogy, *Nightfall at Nauvoo* (1971), *The Kingdom or Nothing: The Life of John Taylor, Militant Mormon* (1976), and *Rocky Mountain Empire: The Latter-day Saints Today* (1978). *Nightfall at Nauvoo*, says Taylor, "is the story of the Mormon pioneer city which quickly grew to become the largest city in Illinois—twice the size of Chicago—before being abandoned as the Saints crossed the plains to Utah. Here was an epic story." 37 Epic it is, but *Nightfall* is

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really a history of polygamy and its role in the deaths of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, and the demise of Nauvoo. Eager to correct what he perceived as a pro-Mormon imbalance in existing accounts, Taylor took a position decidedly at odds with official Mormon history:

It is time to take a balanced and objective viewpoint. The Mormon story concerning persecution of a blameless people must be reexamined; certainly the violent history of the Saints prior and subsequent to Nauvoo shows that they couldn't get along with their neighbors anywhere. From the perspective of more than a century, we must accept as a basic concept that both the Mormons and the Gentiles were, by and large, good people, and that each side of the conflict was sincerely motivated. We must examine these motivations, while keeping in mind that the cause of Nauvoo's fall came not only from outside enemies but also from dissension within the gates.  

_Nightfall at Nauvoo_ received mixed reviews from historians. While the book boasts a good bibliography of non-Mormon sources, Taylor included no notes. His narrative, though well-paced, creates imagined conversations packed with historical detail, which he puts into the mouths of his characters. The result is both irritating and entertaining, neither good fiction nor good history. I recall that, while his trilogy was appearing, friends and colleagues interested in Mormon history eagerly read his volumes but disappointedly labeled his writing technique as "faction," a portmanteau combination of "fact" and "fiction." In short, many readers put Sam Taylor's works in a category called: "Tasty fare—to be taken with several grains of salt."

The book begins with a retrospective conversation between Colonel Thomas L. Kane, long-time benefactor of the Mormon people, and Dr. John M. Bernhisel, Mormon spokesman in Washington, D.C. The fact-laden conversation introduces portions of the romantic lecture Kane delivered before the Historical Society of Pennsylvania describing the eerie and deserted village of Nauvoo, rehearses the Mormon story up to the flight from Nauvoo, and establishes polygamy as the principal cause of the city's fall.

census takers in 1845 counted 11,057 residents. Adding growth through late 1845 and including the city's environs boosted the estimate to 15,000 at Nauvoo's peak, almost equal to a faster-growing Chicago.”

Taylor then recounts the history of the city through imaginary conversations between and among a number of historical figures: Joseph and Emma Smith, John C. Bennett, William Law, Thomas Sharp, Sidney Rigdon and his daughter Nancy, Sam Brannan, Porter Rockwell, Orson Pratt, Parley P. Pratt, John Taylor, and Brigham Young. Typical of Taylor's history-as-conversation is this exchange between William Smith, Joseph's only surviving brother after the summer of 1844, and Sam Brannan, about a scheming and power-hungry Brigham Young. It supposedly takes place in Nauvoo in May 1845:

While in seclusion from the deputies, William said, Brigham was correcting Joseph's history. Sam [Brannan] looked at him curiously. Correcting? Yes, William said—taking Rigdon out and putting Brigham in.

Sam saw clearly that William and Brigham would come to a parting of the ways. And Sam didn't want to be backing the wrong horse.

A few moments later, Brannan meets Brigham Young: "Sam [Brannan] was surprised that Brigham was a head shorter than he and William. But Brigham—carpenter, glazier, painter—had burly shoulders, a handclasp that almost made Sam count his fingers afterward."\(^{39}\) The result of the meeting: Young calls Brannan to lead the first party of Mormon settlers to California.

Repeatedly and with critical weighing of his sources, Taylor shifts the anomalous and sensational in Mormon history from obscure and tentative footnotes to page center. For example, he introduces without qualification a number of attacks by such Mormon renegades as John D. Lee and T. B. H. Stenhouse,\(^ {40}\) who confirm Taylor's thesis that, in Lee's words, "much of the trouble that came upon the Church was brought on through the folly and fanaticism of the Saints."\(^ {41}\)

Particularly disturbing is Taylor's piecing together from contemporary and unfriendly accounts a description of the temple endowment, the sacred center of the Mormon religion. The awkward result only vaguely approximates and generally misrepresents the

\(^{39}\)Ibid., 327.

\(^{40}\)Ibid., 12.

\(^{41}\)Ibid., 334.
ceremony, as Taylor knew from his own temple experience, while missing its spiritual significance. In his attempts to balance and correct the traditional Mormon account, he has anti-Mormons and apostates tell their version of the story. He vaguely implicates Brigham Young, his principal Mormon villain, in a murder for which two Mormon brothers, Stephen and William Hodge, were convicted and hanged in Iowa. A third brother, Irvine Hodge, had threatened to reveal mysterious Church secrets unless Young arranged for his brothers’ release. Instead, Hodge was “basely murdered in the streets of Nauvoo”—only a few rods from Brigham’s home.42 While the documentary record is certainly suggestive, Taylor’s typical anti-Mormon polemics and conspiratorial tone weaken his credibility as a historian.

Taylor’s approach to the life of his grandfather in *The Kingdom of God or Nothing,* the second volume in his trilogy, is another attempt to “correct” Mormon history, which he calls “a mixture of doctrine and mythology, only incidentally historical.”43 Taylor retells, this time with footnotes, his grandfather’s epic life as a partial correction of the “official” account B. H. Roberts had related in *The Life of John Taylor* (1892). Here Taylor sets up another David-and-Goliath conflict, casting Brigham Young as John Taylor’s life-long antagonist and focusing on political infighting among the General Authorities. He describes the relationship between Taylor and Brigham Young as “always prickly,” and “worn paper thin” after decades of disagreement, including Young’s public rebuke of Taylor for mishandling the establishment of the sugar refinery industry in Utah Territory. In his opening chapter, “The Strange Death of Brigham Young,”

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42Ibid., 332-33. Although the facts of the murders are themselves correct and although considerable circumstantial evidence suggests that Hosea Stout, Brigham’s police captain, and the Nauvoo police had means, motive, and opportunity to kill Irvine, no direct link between Brigham Young and the murders has been found. See William Shepard, “The Twelve Have to Bear It: William Smith’s Return to Nauvoo in May 1845,” paper delivered at Mormon History Association Conference, 18 May 2001, Cedar City, Utah, and his “Mormon Banditti: The Tragedy of the Hodge Brothers at Nauvoo,” John Whitmer Historical Association annual meeting, 29 September 2001, St. Louis, Mo.

Taylor inserts one of his and Raymond’s pet conspiracy theories—that Brigham was a victim of arsenic poisoning.  

But if John Taylor’s nemesis through the first part of the book is Brigham Young, the villain of Taylor’s last two decades is the ferocious U.S. government. Taylor narrates tellingly the long federal war against polygamy. Indeed, Taylor’s most important contribution to Mormon history, here and in his later books, may well be his retelling of President John Taylor’s spirited defense of “the Princi-

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44Ibid., 3 note 2. Utah State Archivist Jeffery O. Johnson, a scholar of Brigham Young’s families, responded to a paper at the 1986 Mormon History Association meeting in Salt Lake City, at which Taylor presented this thesis. Johnson pointed out three problems with Taylor’s hypothesis: (1) Taylor hypothesized that the poison was delivered in white sugar, since no one but Brigham Young was allowed access to the sugar bowl. In fact, as detailed household accounts make plain, the Young household used large quantities of sugar and literally dozens of people had access to the supply. Thus, any “poisoner” would have had a better chance of killing women and children than Brigham Young. See the Household Account books in the Brigham Young Collection, LDS Church Archives. (2) More than one physician attended Brigham Young during his final illness including several non-Mormon doctors who would feel no need to cover up the cause of his death. He was also attended by his nephew, Seymour B. Young, who had no reason to wish his uncle ill. Seymour B. Young, Diary, entries throughout August 1877. (3) The symptoms of Brigham’s long and painful death correspond to those produced by a ruptured appendix, then not usually diagnosed since abdominal surgery was usually not a possibility. Jeffery O. Johnson, Notes in response to Taylor’s paper, May 1986, Salt Lake City. See Deseret Evening News, August 1877, for daily reports and details on Young’s symptoms; see also Lester E. Bush, Jr. “Brigham Young in Life and Death: A Medical Overview,” Journal of Mormon History 5 (1978): 79-103. It is also worth noting that John Taylor’s nephew, George Q. Cannon, who had lived in his household from boyhood, was very close to Brigham Young, was at Young’s bedside from 4:00 A.M. Tuesday until he died the next day, and recorded intense sorrow at Young’s death. If John Taylor truly had hostile feelings about Young, would not his nephew have known about them and, likely, shared them? See Davis Bitton, George Q. Cannon: A Biography (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1999), 210. Taylor published this claim as “Who Done It? The Nagging Mystery of Brigham Young’s Last Moments,” Restoration, January 1987, 3-7, but did not answer Johnson’s three objections.
ple” in the face of overwhelming odds and certain defeat. Sam Taylor is caught again in a most uncomfortable dilemma for a truth-teller: He must defend his grandfather’s public denial in 1850 that he practiced or that the Church taught polygamy, even though at that point John Taylor was secretly married to ten wives.45 Although Sam exonerates his grandfather from behaving dishonorably, he is less charitable when Mormon leaders reverted to the same duplicitous policy after the Manifesto.

Using his grandfather as focal point, Taylor presents a cogent history of the Gentile attack on Mormon polygamy between the passage of the Morrill Act in 1862 and the Woodruff Manifesto in 1890. Federal power eroded Mormon power, enabled confiscation of Mormon property, and resulted in the imprisonment of Mormon men and women for illegal cohabitation. The climax for Sam Taylor of this eventful story is John Taylor’s dramatic death on “the Underground” at the peak of “the Raid,” a martyr to a divine mandate.

Although Taylor again privileges the startling and iconoclastic, The Kingdom of God or Nothing recreates the spiritual dynamics of a threatened but determined people. A thrilling moment is John Taylor’s unwavering faith on 1 February 1885 when he makes his last official public appearance before going into hiding. Speaking to his shaken followers, he affirms:

God has revealed to us . . . certain principles pertaining to the perpetuity of man and woman. . . . He has told us to obey those laws. The nation tells us, “If you do we will persecute and proscribe you.” Which shall I obey?

Surveying the sea of faces, he asked, “Shall I be recreant to all these noble principles that ought to guide and govern men?” He answered firmly, “No, never!” His deep voice rose, “NO, NEVER!” Then his roar filled the great hall, “NO, NEVER!” and he smacked the Bible on the rostrum. The audience responded with a fervent, “Amen.”46

The touchiest point in John Taylor’s story, an event studiously

45Taylor, The Kingdom of God or Nothing 151-52.
omitted by B. H. Roberts and other Church historians, is John Taylor’s account of his alleged visitation from Jesus Christ and Joseph Smith, who commanded Taylor to keep “the Principle” alive and ordain men to perform marriage ceremonies even after the Church president finally renounced practice of “the Principle.” Samuel W. Taylor accuses succeeding First Presidencies to the present day of duplicity about the “alleged revelation,” which they announced did not exist, even though Raymond found eleven reproductions of the revelation in the Church archives. True, Sam Taylor then clarifies that, after all, “the vital issue of the controversy is not the existence of the alleged revelation, but whether or not it is accepted as church doctrine,” and he quotes the First Presidency “Official Statement” of 18 June 1933, that the revelation, regardless of its origins or authenticity, is contrary to the Manifesto adopted by the Church and thus “could have no validity.”

The third volume of the trilogy, Rocky Mountain Empire: The Latter-day Saints Today (New York: Macmillan, 1978), opens with a fast-paced retelling of the federal attack on polygamy, focused this time on Charles Mostyn Owen, a professional anti-Mormon snoop and bounty hunter who swore out complaints against Mormon men who made new plural marriages and also those who still lived with their plural families. Although most contemporary Saints no longer remember him, Taylor brands him “the most despised villain of the entire history of the Saints” and resurrects his memory only to castigate it.

Subsequent chapters present entertaining and scandalous vignettes to balance the official history, which has been sanitized of one-time controversies and embarrassments: Frank J. Cannon, disappointed politician and later apostate son of George Q. Cannon of the First Presidency; Moses Thatcher, LDS apostle excommunicated “for being out of harmony” by campaigning for the Democrat ticket and separation of Church and state just when Church leaders had worked out an amnesty deal with the Republican Party; and corporate Mormonism’s widespread business dealings, disclosed during

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47 Ibid., 366-68.
48 Ibid., 368-70. He also includes several controversial revelations which he claims were suppressed after John Taylor’s death.
49 Ibid., 370.
50 Ibid., 3-11.
the Smoot hearings and denounced by Western writer Alfred Henry Lewis as “a practical conspiracy against the United States Government.” Taylor developed this theme further in “Latter-day Profits,” a chapter on the wealth of the Church and its manifold business interests and real estate holdings—which discomfited Mormons saw as maverick distortions of Church ways and means. In other chapters he returns to the slow death of polygamy and the concomitant rise of polygamous offshoots of Mormonism under such fundamentalists as Joseph W. Musser.

In the second half of Rocky Mountain Empire, Taylor continues with more contemporary oddities: BYU president Benjamin Cluff and his disastrous South American expedition in 1900 seeking Book of Mormon proofs; Eugene L. Roberts and M. Wilford Poulsen, two closet doubters on the BYU faculty; Bishop John H. Koyle and his fabled Dream Mine; a reverential recapitulation of Bernard DeVoto’s jaundiced article, “The Centennial of Mormonism: A Study in Utopia and Dictatorship,” from American Mercury; and finally, a quaint and curiously out-of-touch but affirmative chapter on Mormon folkways in the 1950s and 1960s—obviously written in exile in Redwood City, outside “the Zion Curtain.”

The final major Mormon history contribution was Samuel and Raymond Taylor’s two-volume documentary edition of The John Taylor Papers: Records of the Last Utah Pioneer, which they published themselves in 1984. Beginning with President Taylor’s career as an apostle, it includes correspondence, sermons, editorials, and other heretofore inaccessible documents. The editorial hand of the Taylor brothers is light, limited mostly to providing introductory paragraphs which place each document in historical contexts.

However, Sam Taylor could not resist adding “Never Friends: Brigham Young and John Taylor,” in which he repeats gossip about their alleged feud. A typical item in this addendum to an otherwise objective book, it reports an interview with an unnamed old man who had been in Young’s office one day when John Taylor, immaculately and fashionably dressed, passed the open door. Young said mockingly, “Little Beau Brummel.” Overhearing the comment, Taylor stiffened, came in, and announced: “President Young, I sustain you in your office as prophet, seer, and revelator. But I despise you

51Quoted in ibid., 77.
as a human being.' Then with a curt, 'Good day, Sir' he turned on his heel and marched out."

This undocumented anecdote owes its preservation to Sam Taylor. Some would say it also owes its existence to him. I don't believe Sam Taylor made up tales, but I also certainly don't believe that he overlooked any possibility for making a good story better either. Still, his nine books of Mormon Americana—dramatic, controversial and usually startling or sensational—comprise a legacy which must be reckoned with, both by historians and by literary critics.

CONCLUSION

Samuel W. Taylor endured to the end as a maverick. Among his last letters to me is a photocopy of the LDS Church's standard visitors' center painting of a noble Adam and lovely Eve in the Garden of Eden. With mock awe, Sam burbled:

[It] fascinated me. I hadn't realized that there must have been a beauty parlor in the Garden of Eden to do Eve's hair or that Adam had mastered the science of metallurgy, for he was freshly shaved (was there also a barber shop?). Equally amazing was evidence that in their brief period on earth, Adam and Eve had mastered the textile-making skills; they had spun and woven cloth, and had sewed it into handsome robes.

At about the same time, he sent me a mock-indignant comment on an article carried by the Mercury News Wire Service claiming, to Sam's exaggerated relief, that "Drinking Coffee Doesn't Increase Heart Attack Risk." The article quotes a cardiologist: "I would not advise [patients] to stop drinking coffee," and points to studies claiming that decaffeinated coffee drinkers had a "slightly higher incidence of heart attacks." In the margin, Sam pretended bemusement: "Coffee is okay, but Sanka is evil. Now, wait just one minute here! By golly, Satan never sleeps. How can scientists be so easily bought off by the forces of evil? I sure do hope that Salt Lake doesn't take this lying down. We've got scientists, also. I can't wait for the withering rebuttal."54

52Ibid., 521-22.
Samuel W. Taylor, prickly Mormon maverick and big-game incongruity hunter, spent five decades of his busy professional lifetime exposing gaps between LDS spiritual and social ideals and Mormon nitty-gritty reality. Even when his exposés wrenched history, he did it with such candor, enthusiasm, and zest that he frequently charmed his readers while tweaking their faithful noses.

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Papers, 1940-70. Eight boxes (40 linear inches). Correspondence, research materials, and drafts of Taylor's histories, novels, articles, plays, and motion picture scripts. L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. [Sara Taylor Weston reports that the bulk of the Taylor papers will be housed in the Utah State Historical Society.]


Fish and the Famine of 1855-56

D. Robert Carter

In 1851 the appearance in South Cottonwood and Ogden of that insidious insect, the locust, commonly called the grasshopper, foreshadowed the calamitous famine that the people of Utah eventually faced in 1855-56. A series of natural catastrophes climaxed in those two years, leaving the settlers to experience hunger and malnutrition that were perhaps more intense than the suffering of 1848 when early frosts and crickets severely damaged crops.

FISH AND THE FAMINE OF 1855-56

D. ROBERT CARTER received his M.A. in western U.S. history from Brigham Young University and taught history in the Alpine (Utah) School District for thirty years. In 1984, KSL-Radio honored him as Educator of the Week, and the Utah State Historical Society selected him as Utah history teacher of the year. The Orem Council of the PTA presented him with the Outstanding Educator Golden Apple Award in 1992. His “S.S. Sho-Boat: Queen of Utah Lake” received the Morris Rosenblatt Award from the Utah State Historical Society for the best general interest article appearing in the 1997 Utah Historical Quarterly. Since his retirement in 1992, his and his wife, Lyndia, have focused on historical research and writing. He is currently working on a detailed history of Provo’s first five years.

The insect that tested Mormon endurance in 1855-56 is the Rocky Mountain locust (Caloptenus spretus), commonly called a grasshopper. It belongs to the family Locustidae, is usually green or tan, and develops wings after four or five moltings. It should not be confused with the Mormon cricket (Anabrus simplex, which belongs to the family Gryllidae). Dark brown and wingless, it plagued settlers in the Salt Lake Valley in 1848. Both insects periodically infest western gardens and fields.
siduous labor, perseverance, cooperation, unselfishness, austerity, and the frugal use of all possible food resources—including the hitherto unheralded use of fish from Utah Lake—helped the settlers survive.

During the first several years after the initial settlement in Salt Lake Valley, grasshoppers caused very little damage. Their presence in the valley before 1851 was considered so unimportant that neither the Journal History nor the Deseret News mention their presence.\(^2\) In June 1851, grasshoppers appeared in Ogden and South Cottonwood. In the latter location, they swarmed in large numbers, causing considerable damage. The Deseret News reported mid-month: "Already in many places through the wheat fields, there are two locusts to one stalk of wheat."\(^3\) The following year, grasshoppers were spotted on the northern plains of Utah where they had little impact because there were few settlers in that region.

By May 1853 these voracious insects appeared in such large numbers that they could no longer be ignored. Apostle George A. Smith, then living in Salt Lake City, complained, "The Grasshoppers are very troublesome in the big field much grain destroyed near Cottonwood."\(^4\) A month later William Appleby of Salt Lake City commented on the growing shortage of wheat and flour: "Crops and gardens looks well except in some parts of the Valley the Grass Hoppers have done considerable of damage, having nearly destroyed whole acres of the wheat, wheat and flour are scarce in the Valley the present year. the Emigrants last year having taken out such quantities of grain and flour."\(^5\)

William Henry Adams, who grew up in Pleasant Grove, remem-

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\(^2\) Davis Bitton and Linda P. Wilcox, "Pestiferous Ironclads": The Grasshopper Problem in Pioneer Utah," Utah Historical Quarterly, 46 (Fall 1978): 345. Bitton and Wilcox discuss the frequency and territory of grasshopper infestations in Utah, make tentative judgments about their economic impact, and describe the reaction of the Mormon people to the grasshoppers.

\(^3\) [No headline], Deseret News, 14 June 1851, 276.

\(^4\) Historian's Office Journal, 14 May 1853, typescript, Historical Department Archives, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter LDS Church Archives).

\(^5\) William I. Appleby, Autobiography and Journal, 6 April-4 June 1853, typescript, LDS Church Archives.
bered the hardships caused by the grasshoppers in 1853 when he was eight or nine:

During this time we went for months with out bread altho some famileys had a plenty, and so we may have had in case our mother had have lived, but it was toughf for me to go to a house with a Boy and see him go in and git some Bread to eat and I would stay out side and look on and when I went Home would have to eat some Boiled thistles or mushrooms, or any kind of roots or segoes as I have spent many Days and weeks gathering.6

The following year, the grasshoppers returned in even greater numbers. Harvey H. Cluff, who was eighteen in 1854, remembered:

The grasshopers [sic] swarmed into Utah in billion lots, the density of their flight between you and the sun, darkened that lumary as though dense clouds obscured it almost as a totele eclip and when those winged visitors settled down upon a field of grain, everything green would suddenly disappear. Wheat, oats, barley . . . were striped entierly of leaves.7

In Salt Lake City and vicinity the grasshoppers invaded in hordes. On 18 July, they were flying north toward Davis County where they descended the next day and began to sweep away the crops. Then a cloud of grasshoppers so dense that it resembled a snowstorm whirred over Salt Lake City, dropped to the ground, and swarmed on everything. These gluttonous insects nearly destroyed the gardens in Salt Lake City and also did much damage in the surrounding countryside.8 Elias Smith, a probate judge in the city, summarized: “The grasshoppers have been very thick in the city for a few days and are doing much damage to the gardens fruit trees & etc and if they do not soon leave will make near a clean sweep of such things as they can devour.”9

The plague stretched as far south as Juab County. In mid-July the people of Provo had felt optimistic about their bounteous har-
vest. In a letter to his friend Albert Carrington, George A. Smith, who also had farmland in Utah County, jubilantly reported that “more than double the grain being now on the ground than has ever been before in this neighborhood, and within a week a considerable portion will be ready for cutting; some of the fields of wheat are as high as my head.” Fortunately, much of the wheat had been harvested by mid-August when swarms of grasshoppers descended ravenously on later maturing crops like oats and corn. According to Springville’s Luke Gallup, the grasshoppers in that village during August were eating the corn and native vegetation and “getting rather troublesome.” When Gallup went up Hobble Creek Canyon to pick serviceberries, “we got barly enough berries to eat for the Millions of Grasshoppers had eaten them & the leaves too, leaving nothing but the bare brush at the main picking ground.”

Andrew Love of Mona glumly described the situation further south in Juab County: “come home at noon met a perfect cloud of grasshoppers corn oats Beens & potatoes literally covered eat as they go travelling to the west.” The next week after cutting his oats, Love recorded in his diary, “Oats scarcely worth cutting so perfectly eat up.”

George A. Smith estimated that grasshoppers destroyed 20 percent of Utah’s crops in 1854. To complicate the situation, emigration had been heavy that year, and the animals of the U.S. troops stationed in Utah under Colonel Edward Steptoe had been grain fed, cutting into the territory’s surplus. Commercial herds of California-bound cattle wintering in the territory in 1854-55 also consumed forage that could have otherwise sustained Utah’s cattle. In spite of these problems, he optimistically stated that there would “be sufficient to comfortably support the inhabitants until another harvest.”

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11Luke Gallup, Reminiscences and Diary, 5 and 16 August 1854, holograph, LDS Church Archives.
12Andrew Love, Diary, 17-18, 25 August 1854, typescript, LDS Church Archives.
13George A. Smith, Letter to Charles H. Smith, 7 February 1855,
The winter of 1854-55 was exceedingly dry and quite mild. According to Elias Smith, who faithfully recorded the weather daily in his journal, Salt Lake City experienced only one rainstorm in October, one in November, and one heavy snowstorm in December. During those three months Smith referred to the weather as “beautiful” and “delightful” and very warm and “fine for the season.”

The first three months of 1855 continued mild. January saw two storms, one heavy enough to leave a foot of snow on the valley floor. On 1 February Smith recorded, “The weather continues beautiful; the roads and streets are getting dry, and all seems life and animation about the City.” Business remained lively, building continued, and additional land was plowed and fenced. Despite appreciation for the fine weather, George A. Smith could not suppress a nagging dread. In early February, he wrote to a correspondent: “Unless we have some heavy snowstorms the latter part of winter, the farmers will be scant of water for irrigation the coming summer.” Those heavy storms did not materialize. February had two light rains and six light snowstorms with only an inch accumulating from the heaviest snowfall. Elias Smith wrote that March began “beautiful and Spring like.” Six light showers and two heavy rains had fallen by the end of the month, and a great deal of wheat had already been sown.

A heavy thundershower accompanied by some hail opened April, but only a few light showers fell for the rest of the month. The ground became so dry that many seeds did not germinate; those that sprouted were stunted in their growth. In addition to increasing aridity, this mild dry winter and spring provided ideal hatching conditions for grasshoppers.

Historian’s Office Letterbook. See also George A. Smith, Letter to the Editor, The Mormon, 7 February 1855; George A. Smith, Letter to Cyrus H. Wheelock (then in the British Mission presidency), 28 March 1855, typescripts, LDS Church Archives.

14Elias Smith, Journal, October, November, December 1854.
15Ibid., January and February 1855.
16Historian’s Office Letterbook, George A. Smith, Letter to Charles H. Smith, 7 February 1855.
18Elias Smith, Journal, April 1855.
The worst grasshopper infestation of the century began in April. On 21 April, Andrew Love in Juab County lamented, “Grasshoppers are hatching out by the 1,000 what the result will be we know not.” Four days later the Deseret News reported, “THE GRASSHOPPERS—are coming out very numerous, threatening to destroy all vegetation as fast as it appears.” Charles Fletcher of Salt Lake City wrote, “In our garden everthing was taken even the onions they eat the onion right down to bottom of the onion all they left was a hole in the ground. We had a few Peach tree on the lot that had Just began to bear they striped all the leaves off then eat meat of the peaches Just the Stones were left on the trees.” John Fell Squires of Salt Lake City remembered some days when the sky was so dense with grasshoppers that “one could scarcely see the sun.” They were so voracious that they ate everything green “down to window blinds and green paint.” According to Squires, “If a male or female appeared out doors dressed in green they would be driven to cover or uncover in less than no time.” Because the grasshoppers ate everything green, he added wittily, the land turned brown and the settlers were left feeling blue.

The Deseret News ran an editorial late in May that offered advice on combatting the grasshoppers and drought. Farmers should keep planting and resowing until at least June 10, since then crops would still have ample time to mature before the growing season ended. The article particularly recommended peas and potatoes, since the insects seemed to bother them less than other crops. Farmers were instructed to moisten the soil before planting to insure germination but, because of lack of water, it was wise to cultivate smaller plots and work them more carefully. The editorial concluded that grasshoppers were easier to cope with than “mobs and other abominations of, so called, Christian civilization.” If the settlers couldn’t overcome the insects “how can they ever expect to overcome the world, death, hell, and the grave?”

20Deseret News, 25 April 1855, 53.
21Charles E. Fletcher, Life Sketch, holograph, 142, Perry Special Collections.
22John Fell Squires, Brief Sketch of Early Life and Experiences, 11 December 1919, Logan, Utah, 6-7, typescript, LDS Church Archives.
23Editorial [Albert Carrington], “The Crops and the Grasshoppers,”
This jaunty tone did not conceal grave concerns. After returning from Sanpete County, Heber C. Kimball summarized the gloomy situation at the end of May:

From this place South, as far as we went, the grasshoppers have cut down the grain, and there is not fifty acres of any kind of grain now standing in Salt Lake Valley, and what is now standing, they are cutting down, as fast as possible. In Utah county the fields are pretty much desolate. In Juab valley, not a green spear of grain to be seen; neither in San Pete, nor in Fillmore. In the North, as far as Box Elder, the scenery is the same: where they cut down the wheat, it seems to kill it - there does not seem to be any chance for recovery.24

The settlers regained hope when the grasshoppers began to leave in early June. By 13 June, the pests had vacated Salt Lake Valley. However, hopes plummeted two days later when another cloud of the insects came into sight.25 A week later “grasshoppers filled the sky for three miles deep or as far as they could be seen without the aid of Telescopes, and somewhat resembling a snow storm.”26 Finally in early July the grasshoppers began to leave Salt Lake Valley again, and Brigham Young rejoiced, “The Grasshoppers r going to vacate the valleys - the Salt Lake is destroying millions - they have flown away before hatching - there will not be over one eighth next year.” A phenomenal number of grasshoppers perished in the Great Salt Lake. Wilford Woodruff estimated that over a million and a half bushels of the dead insects lay heaped on the lake shore, forming a belt “several rods wide, and varying from six to eighteen inches deep.”27

By Independence Day, the locusts were “rather receding” from Utah Valley; and by the middle of the month, according to Love,

Deseret News, 23 May 1855, 85.


27General Church Minutes, Thomas Bullock, clerk, 1 July 1855, typescript, LDS Church Archives; Historian’s Office Letterbook, Wilford Woodruff, Letter to Dr. Asa Fitch, 31 July 1856.
who was visiting in Springville, they were almost gone. At this point many farmers had resown some of their crops five times.

In summing up the situation at the end of July, George A. Smith wrote, "All the crops of Millard, San Pete, and Juab Counties were destroyed, and two thirds of the wheat in Utah, Great Salt Lake, and Tooele Counties shared the same fate. The Northern counties have suffered less from grasshoppers than from the extreme drouth; their crops, however, will be about one half the general average." Nor were assaults by grasshoppers the only problems afflicting Utah farmers. Their potatoes, somewhat spared by the grasshoppers, fell prey to "blue bug" in Davis County. A large number of cattle in Utah County died, "in consequence," it was thought, "of their drinking from stagnant pools, the excessive drouth having dried up the smaller streams."

The drought was relentless. A few raindrops fell in early June. A second storm later "was not rain enough to wet the ground much." There was no precipitation during July, and the dust was suffocating. Elias Smith recorded gravely, "The drought is becoming severe, gardens in the City are suffering from want of water, and in the country the fields of grain that escaped the ravages of the grasshoppers are dieing for want of that moisture necessary to support the vegetable kingdom."

Finally after more than a month without rain, 3 August saw "a light shower of rain, hardly enough to lay the dust." Three days later "a splendid shower of rain . . . completely watered the ground in the City and vicinity." Three more light showers fell on Salt Lake City that month, but rain came only twice in September. Even the late-maturing crops that the grasshoppers had missed were stunted. Furthermore, fires raged in the tinder-dry canyons—City Creek, Cot-

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28 Andrew Love, Diary, 4, 15 July 1855.
30 George A. Smith, Letter to his cousin [apparently Gen. C. C. Waller], 31 July 1855, Historian's Office Letterbook.
31 Historian's Office Journal, 15 June 1855.
32 George A. Smith, Letter to the Editor, The Mormon, 30 September 1855, Historian's Office Letterbook.
33 Elias Smith, Journal, 5, 14 July 1855.
34 Ibid., August and September 1855.
tonwood, Mill Creek, Provo, Pole, Rock, Slate, Hobble Creek, Spanish Fork, and Peteetneet. These fires consumed not only potential lumber, but valuable forage for the cattle. The hungry horses and cattle broke down flimsy fences to get to gardens or marauded through unfenced farmland.

Famine stared the Mormons in the face. As early as June, Parley P. Pratt’s family began rationing themselves to one half pound of flour each per day. George A. Smith made the suggestion, only partly in jest, that if many goldseekers passed through the territory that year, they would have to “make up their mind to live on grasshopper or cricket soup.” As the year drew to an end, William Knox of Salt Lake recorded in his journal: “This morning about one o'clock I got up very sick. Took two doses of salt. I think the reason is we live so poor. The grasshopper have eating most of the Crops in this velly. We are only allowed half Pound of Bread stuff per day, a little meet and squash, some times a few Potatoes. I have hard to work [sic] but still I feel thankful for what I do git.”

The settlers expressed faith that it was the Lord’s “business to provide for his saints” but also knew that they had to use every available resource wisely if they were to survive until the next harvest. One of these resources, usually overlooked by scholars of this period, was fish from Utah Lake. They were a significant factor in alleviating the famine caused by the drought and grasshopper plague of 1855-56 that produced the “starving time.”

Plans for a fishery on Utah Lake had began even before the pioneers started west in April 1847. By studying John C. Fremont’s report, Mormon leaders knew that Utah Lake was abundant in fish. Three men in the pioneer company—John S. Higbee, his brother Isaac Higbee, and William S. Wordsworth—had been professional

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35Historian’s Office Letterbook, George A. Smith, Letter to the Editor, Millennial Star, 31 July 1855.
36George A. Smith, Letter to the Editor, Deseret News, 1 August 1855, 168.
37Historian’s Office Journal, 15 June 1855.
38Historian’s Office Letterbook, George A. Smith, Letter to the Editor, The Mormon, 31 May 1855.
39William Knox, Journal, 27 November 1855, holograph, LDS Church Archives.
40“Editorial” [Albert Carrington], Deseret News, 2 May 1855, 61.
fishers and brought a seine. On 26 July, just two days after reaching the valley, Brigham Young ordered that a fishing boat be built and launched on Utah Lake. The craftsmen finished the boat 11 August. The next day Albert Carrington and a few others made an unsuccessful attempt to take the vessel over the Point of the Mountain to the lake. The craft was then launched in the Jordan River and drifted with the current back to Salt Lake City. Parley P. Pratt, John S. Higbee, and several others succeeded in launching the boat on Utah Lake in early December 1847. They saw fish but were unsuccessful in catching many. At least one fishing company seined on the lake before Fort Utah was established in April 1849, and by 1855 several fishing companies operated on Utah Lake and the Provo River.

Long before the advent of the Mormons, Native Americans had been fishing in Utah Valley. The Ute gathered along the Provo River and other streams flowing into Utah Lake each spring for the spawning runs of trout, chub, sucker, and mullett. In addition to eating them fresh, the Utes also dried enough to last them several months. When the white settlers arrived, the lower Provo River was “the chief rendezvous for fishing purposes for all the Utah Indians within 150 miles.” Fort Utah and the accompanying fenced fields were constructed near the Indian fishing grounds.

The Indians not only suffered from the effects of the drought and grasshoppers in 1854-55 but also found themselves in competition with the settlers for what resources remained. The Utes especially needed fish during this famine year. A clash between the two cultures in Utah Valley was almost inevitable.

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41Horace Kimball Whitney, Journal, 2 June 1847, 67, typescript, LDS Church Archives.
A group of Utes arrived at the Provo River late in May. They found their favorite camping place fenced in, much of it planted in wheat, corn, and potatoes. They took down a section of the fence, pitched forty lodges in the traditional area, and let their horses browse on the four hundred acres of crop and pasture land. To make the situation worse, this was one of the few areas that the grasshoppers had left relatively untouched. On 21 May 1855, the Utes claimed that Chester Snyder, a Provo resident, killed a mare and a colt belonging to Tintic, a Ute chief. In retaliation the Indians killed five head of Mormon cattle and a horse. On 24 May, before the argument escalated into open warfare, Dimick B. Huntington, Brigham Young's brother-in-law, and George W. Armstrong, U.S. Indian subagent for Utah Territory, traveled to Provo from Salt Lake City in hopes of negotiating an agreement.

The Indians "manifested a very bad feeling towards the settlers," and Armstrong, as he reported in a letter to Brigham Young, was worried that another conflict like the Walker War was imminent. He promised the Indians that he would pay them for the killed animals if "they would immediately move their Camp out of the enclosed fields and would not encroach upon the property of the Settlers for the future." The Utes agreed and made a request of their own: Because they "had now no place of Safety where their animals could feed ... in consequence of so much of the land having been improved and fenced in by the settlers, [they] requested that a pasture should be made for them boarding on the Provo river near their fishing grounds." Armstrong agreed and paid them in food and money.

The Indians then presented another complaint—that they "Could not catch their usual supply of fish" because of the Mormons' more efficient nets and seines. Armstrong told the fishing companies to "cease their operations during the stay of the Indians." The companies immediately suspended their activities. When the Indian traps and bow-and-arrow fishing was less effective than usual, Armstrong asked one of the companies to fish for the Indians. On 9 June

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45Historian's Office Journal, 8 June 1855.
46George W. Armstrong, Letter to Brigham Young, 30 June 1855, U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs Letters, holograph, Utah Valley Regional Family History Center, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.
1855, Dimick B. Huntington, Armstrong himself, and Anson P. Windsor spent the day fishing at the river’s mouth with a 300-foot-long net. By day’s end, they had caught a thousand suckers, “any one of which would make a white man a good meal.” The Utes took half the catch, a full load for four horses; and there were no other major problems with the Utes that season.

The white settlers along what we now call the Wasatch Front also relied heavily on fish for food in 1855. Although autobiographies, diaries, and other primary sources seldom mention eating fish in other years, it was different in 1855-56, especially those from Utah Valley. The frequency with which the diarists mention fish shows that fish were more important as a dietary staple during the crisis years of 1855 and 1856. Historical records, in fact, document that, as the food supply decreased during each of those two years, the amount of fishing on Utah Lake and its streams increased proportionately. And the intensified fishing in 1855 was merely a prelude to the intensive fish harvest of the following year.

As early as February 1855 men were selling fish on the streets of Salt Lake City for five cents a pound. That month a company of Salt Lake men prepared nets and left the city to fish in Utah Lake. Salt Lake Valley men also fished in the Jordan River, which is part of the Utah Lake fishery. Apparently too many fishermen were using the Sabbath for their expeditions, for in a Presiding Bishop’s meeting June 1855, Bishop Abraham Hoagland of Salt Lake City’s Fourteenth Ward lamented, “I am sorry to see the boys of this city going to fish in the Jordan on Sundays in considerable numbers, and I thought I would mention this at this meeting so that the bishop might see to it.” Was this Sabbath fishing recreational or dietary? It is difficult to know. It was common in the nineteenth century to call adult men “the boys,” especially in an egalitarian context; but it seems more likely in this meeting that Bishop Hoagland would have referred to “the brethren” if he were

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47George A. Smith, Letter to the Editor, Deseret News, 27 June 1855, 122. See also Historian’s Office Journal, 9 June 1855.
48Historian’s Office Letterbook, George A. Smith, Letter to Franklin D. Richards, 28 February 1855.
49Minutes of Bishops and Lesser Priesthood Meetings, 19 June 1855, typescript, LDS Church Archives. By “the bishop,” he meant Presiding Bishop Edward Hunter.
talking about heads of household. Whatever follow-up action was taken, if any, is unknown.

William Henry Adams, whose family had endured grasshopper incursions in Pleasant Grove in 1853, had moved to the West Jordan area in 1855. He was ten or eleven at the time and remembers fish as an important staple in the family diet:

We had bread and our cows made lots of milk and butter, and every evening I would take my hook and line, and as I run through the grass could soon catch a small tin box of grasshoppers and would go to the Jordan River that was scarcely half a mile a way: and suckers and chubs would grab a hook almost as fast as you could throw it in. So I could soon ketch a nice string of fish so we would have fresh fish all the time, and our poor old and blind grandmother would do the work in the house mix and bake bread and fry the fish in butter. So they went down in grease quite different to eating roots.50

At least three companies had been granted the right to fish near the mouth of Peteetneet (Payson) Creek, in the Provo River, and in Utah Lake near the mouth of the Provo River.51 During the spring spawning season, they were busy hauling in fish. They probably sold some of the fish fresh but likely cured the rest to sell or barter later in the season. Fish were preserved either by salting and drying them or by salting them and putting them in barrels.

During 1855 individuals frequently visited Utah Valley to get a supply of fish to take home. The diary of Eunice P. Stewart of Provo reports that William R. Terry and his wife came to Utah Valley from Willow Creek (now Draper) to get a load of fish. The couple stayed in the Stewart household and visited while Terry caught the fish. That same month Eunice herself bought 225 fish from a Brother Eastman for a penny each plus a cravat worth two dollars.52 Luke Gallup of Springville noted in his diary that on 22 June “some of the brethren went to Provo river, fishing excursion.”53

50Adams, Autobiography, 28.
51Journal of the Proceedings of Utah County Court, 4 February, 19 August 1854, holograph, Utah County Archives, Provo, Utah; Letter from Evan M. Greene, Letter to George A. Smith, 22 August 1854, holograph, George A. Smith Papers, LDS Church Archives.
52Eunice P. Stewart, Diary, 17 and 25 June 1855, typescript, Perry Special Collections.
Wilford Woodruff, who had fished with artificial flies as he traversed the plains, visited Provo with Brigham Young's company in July 1855. Woodruff arrived early so he could do some fishing at the mouth of Provo River. He helped catch "some 2 bushels of fish with a net." He does not say what he did with them, but he returned to the river early the next morning and caught enough trout with hook and line that "the Presidency supped at G.A.S.'s on trout."\(^{54}\)

In September 1855, Woodruff returned to the Provo River specifically "to get some fish & take my family out to a ride." He "caught some 15 fine trout with a brook. Some of them 3 or 4 lb weight." The commercial fishermen working at the mouth of the river drew their net every day but "ownly caught about what they wanted to eat daily."\(^{55}\) Still, they packed a barrel of suckers for Woodruff to take home. The average barrel of suckers weighed about 200 pounds.

In addition to the many individual families who benefited from the fish, Utah Lake's harvest played an important role in feeding the public workmen in Salt Lake City during the fall and winter of 1855-56. As a result of the diminished harvest, people paid less tithing. In Lehi, for instance, approximately 900 bushels of wheat were donated in 1854 compared to 150 bushels in 1855.\(^{56}\) As early as June 1855, the Presidency warned that a scant harvest that year would force them to reduce the number of workers employed by the public works and asked Elias H. Blackburn, bishop of Provo Ward, for more tithing fish. Blackburn promptly passed on the appeal in the next Sunday meeting: "He said that it was his business to hear to those that were over him. he said that many fish had been caught of late & but 13 lbs had been paid on tithing the Lord requires one tenth of those fish. the hands on the temple wants some fish & it is your duty to hand them over." The response was such that, at the next Sunday meeting, Blackburn reported he had taken two hundred pounds of tithing fish to Salt Lake City that week. Commenting on the parched Salt Lake Valley, he mentioned how blessed Utah Valley

\(^{53}\)Luke Gallup, Reminiscences and Diary, 22 June 1855.


\(^{55}\)Woodruff, 5-8 September 1855, 4:336.

\(^{56}\)Historian's Office Journal, 12 September 1855.
was to have a better supply and again admonished the people to “be careful to see that we do our duty. . . . he says he wants Fish on Tithing See to it that Temple hands may be furnish[ed].”

The people answered this second plea by donating even larger amounts of fish. The existing Provo tithing yard records are far from complete; hence, the donations were almost certainly greater than the record shows. However, even these incomplete documents help establish how heavily Provo River and Utah Lake were being fished. From June 1855 through the year’s end, at least 1,373 pounds of fish were turned in as tithing at the Provo tithing yard alone, suggesting that no less than 13,730 pounds of fish had been harvested by Provo residents alone. Likely thousands of additional pounds of fish went untithed into family frying pans and more tithing went to Salt Lake City by way of Utah Valley wards that did not have complete records.

The Salt Lake Public Works Daybooks for 1855 are much more complete than the Provo tithing yard books with records missing only for January and February. That year 585 men drew supplies from the public works store. Fifty-three percent (311) received 2,301 pounds of fish that had been turned in as tithing. If this total represents a true 10 percent, then 23,010 pounds had been harvested. June is not only near the zenith of the spawning season on Utah Lake and Provo River but is also the critical month in the farming calendar before spring produce is ready to eat. In June alone, clerks dispensed 1,256 pounds of fish to the public workmen. The same 311 men also drew 4,204 pounds of beef that year, roughly double the pounds of fish they received.

As the people could see their hopes for harvest dwindling in the fall of 1855, some began pilfering from more fortunate neigh-

57 Minutes of Utah Stake General Meetings, 1855-60, 17, 24 June 1855, holograph, LDS Church Archives.
58 Provo Tithing Office Daybooks, 1855, holograph, LDS Church Archives. These daybooks are internally incomplete with many missing volumes. They are also very difficult to read. They were microfilmed on sixteen millimeter film before microfilming was perfected. The originals were then destroyed.
59 Salt Lake Tithing Office Public Works Daybooks, 1855, holograph, LDS Church Archives. These daybooks are fairly legible, much easier to read than the Provo office tithing records.
bors' gardens and standing crops. In Provo, James C. Snow, president of Utah Stake, strongly warned the congregation, "I hope that all that do not quit it will have a Bile on their nose as large as his fist so you had better let these things alone if you know what is for your good." He then made the motion, "If any Man, Woman boy or Girl who shall be catch'd in a Turnip patch Corn field or any other mischief taking any thing unlawfully that they shall be whip'd for so doing & all that is in favor of it will signify it by holding up his hand All hands up."  

After the mild, dry winter of 1854-55, that of 1855-56 was very harsh. Although it broke the drought, which would have continued the suffering, it was also the worst weather experienced by the pioneers since their arrival in the valley. After a dry October, snow began to fall early in November. Elias Smith recorded four snowstorms that month in Salt Lake City and seven more in December. Cold and storms continued through February, resulting in enormous snowpacks in the mountains. Fort Ephraim in Sanpete County saw the temperature go as low as 36 degrees below zero. For several days running, it did not rise above twenty-five degrees below zero. North of Salt Lake City near Ogden, a young man froze to death in February while hunting horses in the Weber River bottoms.

The combination of snow and cold ravaged Utah's cattle. Because grasshoppers and drought had depleted the forage, cattle-owners had been forced higher into the mountains in search of better pasturage during the summer and fall of 1855. Snowfall trapped them in these frigid, remote areas, and half of the stock north of Salt Lake City died. James Holt, who lived in North Ogden, reported that, of his animals, only two oxen, a heifer, and a horse had survived the winter. "That winter has been known as the 'hard winter,'" he lamented, "and it deserves the name, for it was hard for both man

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60 Minutes of Utah Stake General Meetings, 30 September 1855.
61 Elias Smith, Journal, October through April 1855; Historian's Office Journal, 6 January 1856.
62 "A Resident of Fort Ephraim," Correspondence column, 9 July [sic] 1856, Deseret News, printed 27 February 1856, 408. "July" is a typographical error, since the letter reports temperatures recorded during February 1856.
and beast.” An estimated four thousand cattle died throughout the territory. John Bennion of Taylorsville lost four cows, six calves, and seventy-five sheep that were being pastured in Rush Valley southwest of Salt Lake Valley. George A. Smith reported seeing the carcasses of hundreds of cattle east of the city just beyond Big Mountain, and even in the city many cattle and horses died.64

In communities throughout the territory, people suffered from the cold and lack of food. Because residents of Salt Lake City raised less of their own food than those in smaller towns and because firewood was more difficult to obtain, they likely suffered more keenly than people in rural areas. During a January 1856 Presiding Bishop’s meeting in Salt Lake, local bishops reported conditions in their wards. They told Bishop Edward Hunter the number of families in their wards who were receiving some aid and the number of families who were being almost sustained by ward assistance. They reported that at least twenty-eight families were being almost completely supported by the wards, and another fifty-eight families were receiving some aid. Assuming that the average family consisted of five people, there were about 142 individuals being sustained by the wards and about 288 more who were being helped with provisions.65

Contemporary journal entries also report the serious situation. William Knox, a forty-one-year-old block teacher who was employed by Salt Lake City’s public works, agonized about the conditions in his neighborhood:

I have asertained the amount of provisions that is in my destrect. If it were devided it would not serve the people one month. Besides, we are one thousand miles from aney other Countery and, with that, Bound in by Snow. There is a very poor prospect before us as a people. The amounts that I have at present is Seven pound of flour, 16 pound of Beaf one bushel of Potatoes. No work and don’t know where the nixt wil com from. Out of fire wood. Very cold.66

65Minutes of Presiding Bishop’s Meetings, 29 January 1856, holograph, LDS Church Archives.
66William Knox, Journal, 8 February 1856.
This level of destitution does not appear to have been uncommon. Morris Phelps of Alpine, in Utah County, recorded:

The snow is deep it is doubtful whether my cattle will live through the winter it is the hardest time to get Bread that I ever experienced there is none sarsely in the Valley.... I fear not enough to prevent starvation.... cattle dying very fast and I have provisions only to last my family five days my family consists of eight grown persons and five children.67

In a long-range effort to help increase the amount of food the people would harvest during the upcoming season, the First Presidency published a circular in February 1856 in the Deseret News. They recommended that farmers build new fences and strengthen old ones and that farmers use cultivated land more intensively rather than opening up new land that they couldn’t effectively cultivate and irrigate. Workmen, regardless of profession, should raise some of their own food on small plots. Everyone over age eight should work in the fields. Meanwhile, as a public works project, seed drills were being manufactured which would decrease the amount of seed used in planting.68 Despite the common sense in these recommendations, they would not help with the immediate shortages.

Church leaders initiated several voluntary programs to help the needy. In March they designated one day a month as a fast day; the last official fast day had been in November 1856. Bishops urged their ward members to donate a portion of the food they saved by fasting to help feed the destitute. James C. Snow, president of Utah Stake, used a hard-line approach as he addressed the Sunday afternoon meeting on 9 March 1856 in Provo. He warned the congregation: “Rather than any should starve to Death I will be one to break open your granaries & burst your Barrels, if you do let any starve to Death a curse will rest on you & your posterity to the latest generation.”69 Bishop Lorenzo Young of Salt Lake Eighteenth Ward used the opposite strategem. He “noticed to the

67Morris Phelps, Diary, 2 February 1856, holograph, LDS Church Archives.
69Minutes of Utah Stake General Meetings, 9 March 1856.
saints that next Thursday is our fast day & for as many as can conveniently to attend & bring their food with them for to distribute to the poor.”

Frederick Kesler, bishop of Sixteenth Ward, called for two fast days a month. Bishops asked ward teachers to canvas each block and compile a list of all foodstuffs each family had on hand—as William Knox had done. Many heads of households voluntarily put their families on rations. By late February 1856, Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and others were allowing half a pint of flour per person per day. As hard-pressed as he was, Kimball cheerfully joked from the pulpit, “if any of you gent[s] want any of my women & they want you come on quick for we r on half rations.”

James Farmer, a thirty-one-year-old resident of Salt Lake City who was lucky enough to find employment with the Burr territorial survey of Utah and Salt Lake counties, estimated by June that one half the city had to go on half rations “and many had less than that through the famine and drought.”

Another policy designed to save wheat for local use was to refrain from selling it to Gentiles. In Provo, James C. Snow advised:

I do not want you to sell a single pound of bread stuff that will go into the hands of the Gentiles I tell you do not let your grain go to Bro Houtz Mill for the toll all goes to the Gentiles at S L City if you will take your grain to our mills it will be of more service to this community—Bishop Johnson has proffered to give all of the toll of his mill shall go for the benifit of the poor untill after harvest.

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70Salt Lake Eighteenth Ward, Historical Records and Minutes, 9 March 1855, typescript, 166, LDS Church Archives.
71Salt Lake City Eighteenth Ward, Historical Records and Minutes, 6 March 1856, holograph, LDS Church Archives; Patty Sessions, Journal, 6 March 1856, typescript, LDS Church Archives; see also Donna Toland Smart, ed., Mormon Midwife: The 1846-1888 Diaries of Patty Bartlett Sessions (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1997), 229. Frederick Kesler, First Bishop’s Book, Salt Lake City Sixteenth Ward, holograph, 215.
73Minutes of Salt Lake Tabernacle meeting, 30 March 1856, typescript, LDS Church Archives.
74James Farmer, Journal, 9 June 1856, typescript, LDS Church Archives.
Dominicus Carter, a counselor in the Utah Stake presidency and a probate judge on the county court, told the congregation in Provo, "I hope to God [wheat sold to Gentiles] will rot and stink in 2 days at wich a unanimus loud, Amen, echoed from the Congregation."75

At the February meeting of Salt Lake City's bishops, Seth Taft, bishop of the Salt Lake Ninth Ward, reported hearing that Bear Lake abounded with fish. Taft "said that a man told him the other day the Bear Lake abounded with fish, and thought it would be a good thing to go there with a seine and catch some." A large portion of the fish caught could be sent back to the Salt Lake wards as a substitute for beef. Phinehas Richards, father of Franklin D. Richards and a member of the Salt Lake Stake's first high council, supported Taft's proposal. He remembered that in Winter Quarters during the winter of 1846-47 a company of fishermen had made a net and caught 7,500 pounds of fish in less than three weeks. The fishermen donated many of the fish to the needy. He recommended that such a company now be formed in Salt Lake for the same purpose. Bishop Edward Hunter moved that Seth Taft be appointed to form a fishing company, and the motion carried unanimously.76 At the next bishops' meeting two weeks later, Bishop Taft reported that many nets were being made and that plans for fishing were progressing. However, he also reported that Utah Lake was more promising than Bear Lake.77 Although his reasons were not recorded, Utah Lake must have been more accessible, since it was closer and lower in elevation, and it would be easier to transport the catch to Salt Lake City.

In March, the bishops reported unnerving destitution. Some of their ward members were digging roots and gathering wild plants. Still others were begging on the streets. The begging seemed particularly shocking, and Bishop Edwin D. Woolley of Salt Lake's Thirteenth Ward recommended:

that none should be allowed to go out of the ward to beg unless the bishops can't supply them, in which case let the bishop give them a writing for a certain number of days, stating they are destitute and

75Minutes of Utah Stake General Meetings, 10 February 1856, 22 March 1856. Dominicus Carter is not my relative.
76Minutes of Presiding Bishop's Meetings, 12 February 1856.
77Ibid., 26 February 1856.
worthy to be relieved. As it is at present the beggars have more provisions from day to day than those have who give unto them.

Bishop Isaac Hill of Salt Lake’s Second Ward had instructed his ward members not to beg but rather “to work at digging roots of which he could dig a bushel a day.”

The good news in the same meeting, however, was that the bishops of Twelfth, Fifth, and Ninth Wards reported that their ward companies had already delivered fish back to Salt Lake City and that the supply was very helpful in relieving want. At least two other bishops, Edwin D. Woolley, and Thomas Callister of Seventeenth Ward, later established ward fishing companies as well. Bishop Callister’s company went to Utah Lake in April. Hannah Cornaby, whose husband, Samuel, was one of the fishermen, thought the company “proved a success, and was a great help to me as well as to the people generally.” Another ward member remembered: “When Mother would get her portion she would dry the fish and save the heads to make soup. Now the hard tack came in handy. We would take a hammer and break it up and mother would thicken the soup with it. Then we would have a treat.”

In March Nathaniel V. Jones, bishop of the Salt Lake Fifteenth Ward, unsuccessfully attempted to establish a fish trap on the Jordan River to feed the poor of his ward. Because of an unexpectedly strong current, he had to abandon the plan but asked the Salt Lake County Court for permission to erect a fish trap on Cottonwood Creek. The Big Cottonwood community, alarmed at the prospect of

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78Ibid., 11 March 1856. The principal root dug by the pioneers was the yampa (*anethum graveolens*). It was much sought after by the local Indians as a source of food. The settlers also ate sego bulbs and thistle roots.

79Ibid. Positive reports were still coming in the next month when Thomas W. Winter, bishop of Salt Lake Fifth Ward, “reported favorably of the fishing in Utah Lake and Provo River.” Minutes of Presiding Bishop’s Meetings, 22 April 1856.


losing a source of food for themselves, threatened to “rais in arms & demolish the concern law or no law, they Just would not Stand it.” The court itself was divided. Jones wrote to Brigham Young, appealing for his intervention. His entreaty was unsuccessful. At the bottom of the letter, a clerk penned: “BY can do nothing about it.”

At the bishops’ meeting in Salt Lake City in late March, Bishop Edward Hunter mentioned that some men had been reduced to theft, and “Bishop Pettigrew spoke of a gang of men in his ward who were thieves.” In early April, thieves stole 159 pounds of flour from Golightly’s Bakery. Thirty-five pounds belonged to Wilford Woodruff who beneficently commented, “I will not rise in judgment against him if he was hungry & will ask a blessing on the bread & return me the sack for it was a borrowed one.” Passersby found the empty sack hung on a fence and returned it to Woodruff. In May the bakery was broken into again and one hundred pounds of flour was stolen. That same night, thieves stole a thousand pounds of flour from Heber C. Kimball’s mill. This thief was apparently caught and sentenced to prison for seven years. In Provo, Dominicus Carter threatened violence against thieves. In one church meeting, he warned: “The day is nigh when those that steal will have their Dam throats cut.” In a later meeting he suggested the same penalty more poetically: “If any one steals let him suffer the penalty thereof which is circumcision below the Ears.”

Henry Emery of Salt Lake City wrote that in “1856 about April Conference our provisions began to give out and we subsisted on roots, pig weed, fish and what we could get.” Evidence of the increased amount of fish available in the Salt Lake City wards appears

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83 Letter from Nathaniel V. Jones, Letter to Brigham Young, 1 April 1856, Brigham Young Papers, holograph, LDS Church Archives.
84 Minutes of Presiding Bishop’s Meetings, 25 March 1856.
85 General Church Minutes, 13 April, 11 May 1856; Wilford Woodruff, Papers, Edyth Romney typescript, p. 81, Fall 1856, MS 2737, Box 35, fd. 1, 81, LDS Church Archives; Historian’s Office Journal, 2 May 1856; Alonzo Hazelton Raleigh, Journal, 2 May 1856, holograph, LDS Church Archives.
86 Minutes of Utah Stake General Meetings, 11 April, 1 June 1856.
87 Henry Emery, Autobiography, [n.p.], holograph, LDS Church Archives.
The Journal of Mormon History

Peter Madsen Sr. (died 1911) and Wilhelmina Jørgensen Madsen, fourth of his fifth wives. Madsen reached Utah from Denmark in 1854, farmed, and fished with nets he made from wild flax growing in Utah Valley. He fished day and night in 1856 to feed the hungry. Courtesy Boyd Adams.

in tithing records. Bishop Kesler asked those of his ward members who still had food to donate two-thirds of their daily allowance as a fast day offering. In April ward members turned in two pounds of fish. In May they donated forty-one pounds.88

From March through early harvest time in July, the usually quiet Provo River bottoms and shores of Utah Lake were gradually transformed into a priesthood version of a trapper rendezvous. The usual fishers were joined by the ward companies and also by hungry individuals from neighboring valleys. Out of necessity the people of Provo formed a cooperative agreement with the ward fishing companies and other groups of fishermen. In 1853 the Territorial Legislature had passed “An Act to Prevent the Needless Destruction of Fish” giving the Utah County Court jurisdiction over the Utah Lake fisheries,89 while Provo City’s charter gave it control over fishing in the Provo River. Commercial fishermen had to petition either the city or the county for a charter authorizing their businesses. Existing records show that there were several fishing companies working

88Bishop’s Minutes, 18 April 1856, 1 May 1856, Salt Lake Sixteenth Ward, LDS Church Archives.
89“AN ACT, TO PREVENT THE NEEDLESS DESTRUCTION OF FISH,” Deseret News, 22 January 1853, 2.
near the mouth of Provo River in 1856. When individuals and ward fishing companies began arriving during the spring of 1856, the most promising areas were already occupied by fishermen who had the sole legal right to fish there.

Provo's ecclesiastic leaders tried to minimize the conflict between the newcomers and the legal fishermen and townspeople. In mid-April at a meeting held Sunday afternoon, the stake president, James C. Snow acknowledged that there was "a good Deal of bickering" over fishing rights, then added, "if i where [sic] a prophet i would say there will be no fish in 5 years unless we stop Quarreling." He asked the new arrivals not to leave fences down or drive over plowed fields. He recognized the existence of the fishing charters, including one issued just the day before, but "I wish the Charters where All repealed And let All have a Equal Chance." His motives were clearly humanitarian: "I whant none of

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the Brothers [to] stick out their elbows And say to any other Citizen you have no business here no let all have free access to the fish for many have not the first Dime to Buy fish with nor Anything Else.” He recommended—and the congregation voted unanimously in the affirmative—that the seines across the Provo River should be removed each night and on Sundays to allow some of the fish to swim upriver to spawn.91

For the next few days as the crowd of fishermen grew, the local leaders continued to discuss the issue and took unprecedented action to further reduce conflict. At the following Sunday meeting, Dominicus Carter announced that “all should have a chance to Fish it is thought best for all . . . [fishing] Charters to be suspended untill after harvest & then to continue as they were before Therefore let us be one let us help one another as their is a scarcity of provisions the fish must be allowed to run nights & Sundays & we want people to go to meeting Sundays & rest nights.”92

In the meeting on Sunday, 11 May, however, President Snow

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91Minutes of Utah Stake General Meetings, 13 April 1856.
92Ibid., 20 April 1856.
complained that some visiting fishermen on the way to the fishing grounds “turn their horses on our grain & ride & drive over it not regarding our interest.” Such irresponsible behavior seemed particularly reprehensible after the fisheries had been opened for the benefit of all. Snow, clearly exasperated, threatened: “Let all such men (if there be any here) take everything that belongs to them & let them go to hell where he belongs.”  

Dominicus Carter mentioned in the next week’s meeting that wheat was still being trampled by a few fishermen and again instructed the people to suspend Sunday fishing. At this point, a Brother Robbins called from the congregation that it was one of the bishops who had started the Sunday fishing. Elias H. Blackburn, bishop of Provo’s Third Ward, rose and explained that some fishermen had sent word to him one Sunday that they had extra fish they wished to donate to the poor of Provo. He went down to the fishery in his buggy, picked up the fish, and distributed them to the needy.

93Minutes of Utah Stake General Meetings, 11 May 1856.
The Journal of Mormon History

Clouds of California gulls attracted by crew cleaning fish at the mouth of the Provo River, 1911-12 Fish and Game Biennial Report. Note anchors and racks for drying nets (left). Courtesy Utah State Archives.

The bishop claimed that was the extent of his Sunday fishing. This explanation was apparently satisfactory. 94

Until the end of July, the lake shore and river mouth were crowded with camping fishermen. On 30 May Wilford Woodruff described the scene, “The shores of Utah Lake are crowded like a fair with wagons - there are so many catching and drying fish.” 95 Peter Madsen, who arrived in Provo in 1854 and spent the balance of his life commercially fishing on Utah Lake, described the events of 1856:

From Sevier on the south to Salt Lake on the north, they came with wagons and barrels and salt, prepared to take fish home with them for food during the winter. ... They all camped along the river ... and we made preparations to supply them with mullet and trout which were quite plentiful at that time. ... I will always remember the scene along the river’s bank after the first day’s catch had been

94Ibid., 18 May 1856. Blackburn was also the presiding, or temporal, bishop of the Provo region.
95Historian’s Office Journal, 30 May 1856.
distributed. The campers were in little groups around the camp fires, where they were broiling fish on the hot coals, and eating them with a relish that only those who have been through experiences of this kind can appreciate. . . . For weeks the work went on. Nobody ever asked who did the work, or who received the fish.

In early May, Lorenzo Brown and a group of missionaries, who were headed south to help reinforce the settlement near the lead mines at Las Vegas, stopped at Utah Lake to fish. Some had left Salt Lake County with insufficient provisions. They hoped fish would help make up their deficiency. Brown and Jacob L. Workman, another of the missionaries, arrived at the fishery on 1 May and were greeted by Israel Ivins, a member of a fishing party using a large seine, who invited them to come and help fish for a share of what was caught. By dark, they had caught 400 pounds. That evening Brown wrote in his journal: “Had some fish for supper which relished exceeding well.” Others were less successful since rain was threatening. In fact, Brown could not fish the next day because of wind and rain, but the weather was fine on 3 May. Some of the other Las Vegas missionaries fished with Rubin W. Allred, a fellow Salt Laker who was seining on the lake, and some of them fished with Tobias Dallin, a veteran Utah Lake fisherman living in Springville, who had a seine two hundred yards long. Their share of the catch that day was a hundred pounds. Although 4 May was Sunday, they still made a few trout hauls at the mouth of the Provo River. A man named Thompson and his company made several successful hauls especially for the benefit of Brown and his party. On Monday Brown and his fellow travelers left Provo, but not before they had made two draws of the seine with Tobias Dallin. They dressed and salted down two barrels of fish, or about four hundred pounds. Brown and Samuel Turnbow sent one barrel of fish home to be shared by their families in Salt Lake Valley. Brown acknowledged the help of the fishermen in a letter to the Deseret News: “Of those who have done us good and blessed us, not with words alone but with means to prosecute our journey, I would mention the fishermen of Provo and

97Lorenzo Brown, Journal, 1-5 May 1856, holograph, LDS Church Archives.
the citizens of Parowan, who were kind indeed. Some of us on leaving home were rather scant of provisions, etc., and small favors were always received with truly grateful hearts.” George Mayer, who was in Brown’s company, also expressed his gratitude: “Stopt at the Mouth of the provo and Lade in a Lot of fish the fisherman ware very kinde in Doneting fish to the misheners.”

Morris Phelps of Alpine, whose fears about losing his cattle were fully realized, had little to feed his family besides potatoes and whatever he could buy in the surrounding towns or borrow from neighbors. Late in March his three-year-old son died of measles. On 3 May, this destitute father wrote: “I have not eat any thing but wild unions for 3 days and worked hard.” Two days later the grasshoppers invaded his wheat fields. On Sunday, 11 May, he went to Provo where he worked for a week at the fishery and helping plant corn. He returned to Alpine on Saturday with a half barrel of fish. For the rest of the summer, his family lacked bread but survived on fish, greens, milk, and wild berries. Phelps was too sick to work in late July and early August but somehow survived until harvest later that month.

Phineas Wolcott Cook, an unemployed craftsman from Salt Lake City, also faced near starvation by May 1856. Cook bought some cotton yarn in Salt Lake City and made his own seine, hoping “to get fish if nothing else to live on.” After little success in the Jordan River, he went to the Provo River, arriving on 13 May. He found he could do nothing without a boat. When a man offered to buy Cook’s net for four barrels of fish, dressed, packed and salted, Cook agreed. The man then demanded Cook’s butcher knife, bed cord, and hatchet also. Cook reluctantly gave up his knife and bed cord, but said the hatchet was his neighbor’s. The fisherman stole the hatchet anyway and, when Cook confronted him, said it had fallen into the river. Furthermore, Cook had to dress and salt the fish himself.

Cook started home on 19 May, hoping to peddle his fish for butter, flour, and other provisions. “That night I dreamed whare I could sell my fish for flour or at least a portion of them,” he recorded. “It was a place whare I never had been but I saw how the country

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98Lorenzo Brown, “Rio Virgin” (Letter to Daniel McIntosh), 4 June 1856, printed in the Deseret News, 23 July 1856, 155; George Mayer, Reminiscence and Diary, 29 April 1856, 255, holograph, LDS Church Archives.

99Morris Phelps, Diary, March through August 1856.
looked so that I could tell the place if I ever saw it.” He took two of
the barrels “but sold none until I got to Kays ward [Kayville in Davis
County] where I found the place I had seen in my dream I got about
100 lbs of flour I paid three lbs of fish for two lbs of flour then I
could sell no more and thinking that it would be time thrown away
I returned home.” Cook, who had only eaten one meal while he was
on the road, “eat 1/4 of lb of butter which I had bought for fish. I
had no apetite for fish and my flour I felt was more presious than
gold.”

As the wheat harvest commenced in mid-July, the need for fish
lessened. On 27 July, Dominicus Carter in the Sunday meeting, “felt
to restore the Fishery back to those who had been so Kind as [to]
give the privilige to all to go & fish.” The vote was unanimous in the
affirmative. Hannah Last Cornaby recorded Samuel’s return from
Utah Lake in July, “well and hearty, after nearly three month’s ab-
sence.” Although these fishermen had had sufficient food, it had
been monotonous:

He had . . . lived almost entirely on fish; the standing dish for
the camp being fish soup (mostly suckers) made in a large iron pot,
to which a little bran or sometimes shorts was added, the latter quite
sparingly. . . . As this compound settled to the bottom, each one would
take a dipper and give it a vigorous stir to enable him to obtain his
share of the floating particles. To this would sometimes be added a
mess of boiled greens, gathered from the banks of the river. Very
rarely, however, a few pounds of flour or corn meal were obtained
and added to the repast.

During the summer, some grain was brought in from Iron and
Millard counties to the worst-stricken counties of Salt Lake, Utah,
and Davis, but many people relied on fish and greens as they waited
anxiously for the harvest. William Frederick Rigby of Lehi claimed
that he and his wife “ate so many weeds during the summer that our
skin became tainted with green.” Rigby’s neighbors, a family of
seven, raised an enormous garden of several hundred squash and
pumpkins, upon which they subsisted almost exclusively. James C.

100Phineas Wolcott Cook, The Diary of Phineas Wolcott Cook (Brigham
101Minutes of Utah Stake General Meetings, 27 July 1856.
Snow wryly commented that the people of Utah Stake had eaten so much bran and greens that he expected “before long that some of these persons will begin to squeal like a pig. Niegh like a horse or low like an Ox. or Bray like a Jack Ass unless they get bread soon.”

Farming conditions during 1856, though much better than the devastating year of 1855, were still not perfect. An untimely frost at the end of June withered some of the crops in the lowlands near Salt Lake City. The drought, though less severe, continued; grasshoppers, though less plentiful, still attacked crops, destroying almost all of the grain in Brigham City and Alpine. Cutworms infested the wheat and corn. Tobacco worms ravaged the potato vines, but the pests were “turned to some advantage, for the people gather them in buckets &c. and feed them to the chickens and pigs.”

Despite these problems, the harvest of 1856 was, in most localities, much better than the harvest of 1855. Juab and Millard counties raised double the amount of wheat they had harvested in any previous year, Weber County’s harvest was larger than average, and the crops in Utah and Davis Counties were good. However, Salt Lake County’s crops were light, Tooele and Box Elder lost about half their crops, and Cache County harvested next to nothing. Even with these deficiencies, by the end of August, Wilford Woodruff optimistically claimed: “Altogether we shall reap a much more abundant harvest than the drought could have allowed us to anticipate.” By the end of the season, the settlers had reason to hope for enough food to last until the next harvest.

There can be no doubt that the fish lessened the suffering of the people. Although no accurate record exists of the pounds caught, information from newspapers, journals, and reminiscences suggest that the number was huge. Joseph W. Bates, who fished for Salt Lake’s First Ward, “spent about 6 weeks at the Lake and caught

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103 Kate B. Carter, *Story of William Frederick Rigby* (Salt Lake City: n.pub., 1961), 15; Minutes of Utah Stake General Meetings, 13 July 1856.
104 Historian’s Office Letterbook, Wilford Woodruff, Letter to the Editor, Luminary, 30 June 1856.
105 Wilford Woodruff, Letter to George A. Smith, 29 July 1856, Historian’s Office Letterbook; Wilford Woodruff, Letter to Orson Pratt, 31 July 1856; Wilford Woodruff, Letter to the Editor of the Luminary, 30 August 1856.
Some 8 tons of fish.\textsuperscript{106} Such precision is rare. However, at least six companies came from Salt Lake City wards. If each ward caught a similar amount of fish, the total would reach 96,000 pounds caught by these fishing companies alone.

The 1856 Provo tithing records, though incomplete, are more comprehensive than those for 1855. These records show that 6,975 pounds of fish were turned in as tithing, over half being donated in June and July. This represents a tithe on 69,750 pounds of fish.\textsuperscript{107} The Salt Lake City public works daybook for 1856 shows a sharp increase in the amount of fish disbursed that year compared to 1855. Five hundred eleven men drew supplies from the store in 1856; of that number, 221 (41 percent) used 6,365 pounds of fish. Ninety fewer men received nearly three times as much fish as the amount dispensed in 1855. The same 221 men drew 6,728 pounds of beef during the year. This figure would be roughly equal to the pounds of fish they received.\textsuperscript{108}

Fish and beef apparently compensated for the lack of flour. On 2 July 1856, the last of the flour in the tithing office was “dealt out to the hands only 1 lb per head for the week.” Eleventh Ward had only five pounds of flour among the families on three blocks. During the critical pre-harvest months of June and July, 4,380 pounds of fish and 3,587 pounds of beef were drawn from the tithing store.\textsuperscript{109}

Each of the 221 men took an average of 29 pounds of fish for the year, nearly four times the amount per man for 1855. Although 59 percent received no fish, an unknown number may have been supplied by the ward fishing companies. Again, most of these fish supplied to the public works came from the Utah Lake fishery. If the families of these 221 used that much fish, the total population of Salt Lake and Utah Valleys must have used a tremendous amount.

In conclusion, this seldom-told saga of fish and famine deserves a more prominent place in the annals of Utah’s history than it has received. Fish from Utah Lake significantly assuaged the effects of the catastrophic grasshopper infestation, drought, and famine of

\textsuperscript{107}Provo Tithing Records, 1856.
\textsuperscript{108}Salt Lake Public Works Daybook, 1856.
\textsuperscript{109}Ibid.; Historian’s Office Journal, 2 July 1856; Minutes of Presiding Bishop’s Meetings, 1 July 1856.
1855-56. Though complete statistics on how many fish were taken from Provo River and Utah Lake during these years will never be available, there is enough evidence to indicate that the amount was colossal. Through the selfless work and cooperation of many individuals in Utah and Salt Lake Counties, a possible tragedy was averted. Ironically, 145 years after suckers and other fish from Utah Lake and Provo River saved Wasatch Front settlers from starvation, it is now the June sucker that is endangered. If Utah residents are successful in efforts to preserve that fish, then the debt left unsettled since 1855-56 will finally be repaid.
"AS UGLY AS EVIL" AND "AS WICKED AS HELL": GADIANTON ROBBERS AND THE LEGEND PROCESS AMONG THE MORMONS

W. Paul Reeve

ON A SPRING DAY IN 1874, carpenter Charles Pulsipher busied himself putting the finishing touches on a new home in the southwestern Utah town of Hebron. Things were likely calm and pleasant as Pulsipher went about his work in this small Mormon ranching community, rooted in the south end of the Escalante Desert in Washington County. Suddenly William McElprang, the young...
man under Pulsipher's charge, changed all that. McElprang "started in an instant run across the lot, jumped the fence and went up the mountain like a wild man." Pulsipher sprinted after him, "but it was not in the power of mortals to catch him." When McElprang's strength finally failed, Pulsipher brought him back to town, but only "by faith in the Lord and the power of the priesthood."

Apparently McElprang had been afflicted by "evil spirits" for about two weeks. When these demons overpowered him they caused "terrible pain most of the time" and occasionally "tried to run him wild into the mountains." John Pulsipher, Charles's brother, stood guard over the young man one night and described the principal spirit that possessed him as "a very stubborn dumb sort of a fellow." However, on this particular night, "a very raving noisy spirit got possession of him which when ordered to tell his name said it was 'Suzi Borem'." Upon learning this John promptly rebuked Suzi and cast her out and she "returned no more"; but the "old stubborn fellow" continued to plague McElprang until finally the townspeople gave up. They took him to Cedar City, over forty-five miles northeast, to live with his father.1 Three other young people at Hebron—Orson Welcome Huntsman, James Wilkins, and Adelia Terry—experienced similar demons on different occasions.

Evil spirits were not the only problem Hebronites faced as they struggled to tame a small corner of Brigham Young's kingdom. Located on the rim of the Great Basin at an altitude of 5,400 feet, the town's cool climate seemed to weaken some settlers' resolve. Juanita Brooks, for example, recalled hearing her father remark that his boyhood home at Hebron "wasn't exactly a paradise," adding that "it was so cold, too cold to raise fruit and garden stuff." Concurring, Brooks's grandmother added, "That place was not intended to be for human beings, only cattle and sheep."2 Perched on a piece of high ground where the two branches of Shoal Creek merge and the main stream curves in a big bend, Hebron settlers suffered most,

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2Juanita Brooks, Quicksand and Cactus: A Memoir of the Southern Mormon Frontier (Salt Lake City: Howe Brothers, 1982; 2d ed., Logan: Utah State University Press, 1992), 43. Brooks's father was Dudley Henry Leavitt; the grandmother referred to was Mary Huntsman Leavitt.
perhaps, from a lack of water. When Erastus Snow, apostle and leader of the Cotton Mission, looked over the selected townsite, he prophetically warned that it would be too difficult to get water there; and it was. Over the years, residents built flumes, ditches, canals, and dams, none of which proved successful at keeping Hebron irrigated. Economically Hebron was a ranching outpost; and for any but the core families who relied upon livestock for their living, it offered little inducement to stay.

Battles over land, death by neglect, the enticements of non-Mormon mining towns, power conflicts, family feuds, fires, and floods also conspired against Hebronites. Despite this overwhelming string of hardships, residents clung to their tiny community, refusing to accept failure until an earthquake in 1902 shook them to their senses. The quake rendered most homes unsafe, and talk in town centered on moving elsewhere. Still most Hebronites stubbornly persisted until June 1903 when St. George ecclesiastical authorities visited the beleaguered town and "honorably released" its residents, thereby facilitating its abandonment by around 1905.3

Given the level of challenges settlers faced, their reluctance to move is perplexing. On the surface, many residents were holding out for a monetary settlement with the Enterprise Reservoir and Canal Company over their water rights. But beyond this consideration, their tenacity masked an underlying anxiety about the fog of disunity that had blanketed the town almost from its founding in 1868. The religious nature of Mormon settlement efforts equated success with piety and failure with a lack of devotion to God and the cause of Zion. Perhaps in an effort to make sense of their defeat, some settlers turned to explanations which suggested that the situation was beyond their control. While the earthquake, floods, a cold climate, lack of water and disunity best account for Hebron's demise, an intriguing folk legend developed which likely helped settlers cope with the anxiety brought on by that demise. The legend involved Gadianton robbers, a nefarious band of thieves described in the Book of Mormon. Carrie E. L. Hunt, who spent much of her youth at Hebron, recalled it this way: "As a child I remember of hearing the older folks talking about how evil spirits seem to hover about

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3For a more detailed analysis of the factors leading to Hebron's abandonment, see Reeve, "Cattle, Cotton, and Conflict" and A Century of Enterprise, 3-26, 53-59.
that part of the country. It was the people’s belief that way back in history, that strip of country had once been the hideout of the notorious Gadianton Robbers that were so much talked about in history. They felt their spirits still haunted the country.”

This legend’s connection to the demonic possession of McElprang and other town youth seems evident; but this and other Gadianton legends, when immersed in an extensive historical context, assume significance beyond the sagebrush streets of this present-day ghost town. The spiritual battle between the forces of good and evil that tormented Hebron encapsulated, on a popular level, the broader war between those same forces manifest in nineteenth-century Mormon theology. Joseph Smith, speaking to the Relief Society sisters of Nauvoo in 1842, called it “warring the Christian warfare” and warned that “wicked men and angels of devils, and all the infernal powers of darkness” would be continually arrayed against anyone willing to enter the fray.

Gadianton robbers and the meaning they came to embody did not emerge independently from the minds of Hebronites. Events from early Mormon history, mingled with official pronouncements from Brigham Young and other Church leaders, created a Gadianton robber persona—a cultural discourse—that Hebronites applied to their troubled attempt at community building. Furthermore, the transmutation of those robbers from doctrine to legend offers an intriguing case study in what folklorists Linda Degh and Andrew Vazsonyi term the legend process—“the procedure by which legends are being generated, formulated, transmuted, and crystallized by means of communication through the legend conduit.” In nineteenth-century Utah, it seems apparent that Gadianton robber conduits (the process of legend transmission through a “sequence of individuals who qualify as legend receivers and transmitters”) originated as sermons from the pulpit which were then carried home by

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Mormon folk and adapted to suit local circumstances. Confined as it was to Mormonism and geographical locales within the Great Basin, that process sent Gadianton narratives spiraling along a variety of conduits, most of which came to rest in southwestern Utah.

Using Hebron as a lens, this study not only explores the possibilities of the legend process in territorial Utah but also posits a plausible community-building function for Gadianton robber legends. As folklorist William A. Wilson suggests, “Narratives shared by members of a like-minded group serve as a mirror for culture” and as a barometer of a group’s “principal concerns at any given time.” Wilson believes, for example, that good-versus-evil stories told by present-day Mormons function to affirm the validity of the Mormon cause by proving that God is on Mormonism’s side. “Thus,” Wilson notes, “Mormon tradition is replete with accounts of God fighting Zion’s battles,” thereby implying that “the church must be true because God protects it and its emissaries from harm.”

In general, Gadianton narratives are certainly about good versus evil—but with an intriguing characteristic specific to nineteenth-century Mormons struggling to colonize Zion. In the Gadianton stories that follow, God does not fight Zion’s battles; rather, the vile robbers reign supreme and successfully thwart the cause of Zion in a few specific locales. These legends thereby offered anxiety-ridden colonizers an otherworldly scapegoat for their failures to coax blooming roses from the stingy dust of a desert Zion.

The devil and his cohorts have been around from the Garden of Eden. Their typical role has been to menace God’s chosen people and attempt to frustrate the divine plan. Jesus himself was not spared Satan’s taunts. During his earthly ministry, Jesus not only resisted the temptations of Satan, but cast out devils and taught his disciples to do likewise. As one student of demonology put it, “The whole of Jesus’ public ministry in fact revolved around foiling Satan, Beelzebub, Azaziel, or whatever other name the Devil went by.”

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As Christianity spread throughout Europe, Satan and his legions did too. “A fear of the devil,” according to historian John L. Brooke, “pervaded medieval Christianity and intensified in the later Middle Ages with mounting demographic, social, and political stresses.” As Christianity intermixed with paganism, a “host of lay practitioners of magic” claimed power, among other things, to “protect against the devil and his minions.” Such folk beliefs and practices were carried from the Old World to the New and pervaded seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and nineteenth-century America.

These folk beliefs both shaped and were shaped by the religious traditions of the New World. As historian David D. Hall described it, “The people of seventeenth-century New England lived in an enchanted universe.” Their “world of wonders” included ghosts, phantom ships, voices from heaven and from children’s cradles, trumpets blaring with no trumpeters, and the sky on a clear day filled with companies of armed men. While New Englanders usually interpreted such manifestations as demonstrations of God’s power, they attributed some supernatural events to Satan, including demonic possession. The Salem witch trials of 1692—the most conspicuous example—required that witches confess the power that the devil had over them.

Such beliefs flickered persistently in the hearts of New England folk into the early nineteenth century, then burst into flame during the Second Great Awakening, a particularly fervent religious revival that engulfed America from ca. 1800 to 1830. The religious fires of this awakening burned nowhere brighter than in upstate New York, a region labeled the “burned-over district” for

11Ibid., 145.
the intensity with which hell-fire revivals spread back and forth across it. According to one historian, during this ferment "subterranean folk beliefs and fetishes emerged into the open and blended with traditional Christian practices to create a wildly spreading evangelical enthusiasm."\(^{12}\) Joseph Smith Jr., the future founder of Mormonism, lived in the middle of this religious excitement and was heavily immersed in the popular religious beliefs of the time. The Smith home, as his brother Hyrum acknowledged, was "a visionary house," in which both parents experienced dreams filled with religious symbolism. Furthermore, Smith and his family, as well as other early Mormon converts, were embedded in a culture that drew upon popular tales of both devils and angels.\(^{13}\) As D. Michael Quinn asserts, "The first generation of Mormons . . . shared a magic world view that predated Mormonism."\(^{14}\)

Much has been written concerning the cultural context of the emergence of Mormonism, with particular focus upon treasure hunting, alchemy, revivalism, and heavenly manifestations.\(^{15}\) It seems evident that the devil also factored into Smith's cultural milieu.\(^{16}\) In the spring of 1820, immediately preceding the epiphany


\(^{16}\) Quinn, *Early Mormonism*, 101-2, 165-67, 183, 201-2, 205-6, 215, 219, 223, includes belief in devils as a part of Mormonism's magic worldview. For a medical perspective on demons in early Mormonism, see Lester E.
that set in motion the establishment of his new religion, Smith reported being “seized upon” by “the power of some actual being from the unseen world” which bound his tongue and attempted to destroy him.\(^{17}\)

The devil continued to dog Smith and other early Mormons as they preached of a new book of scripture and a restored gospel. In 1830, for example, in an event recorded as “the first miracle in the church,” Smith exorcized a demon that twisted and distorted the face and limbs of his friend Newel Knight and tossed him about “most fearfully.”\(^{18}\) Apostle Heber C. Kimball reported hearing from Joseph Smith that, during the Church’s troubled days at Far West, Missouri, in 1838, Smith “saw the devil in person” in “an open vision” and contended with him “face to face, for sometime.”\(^{19}\)

Kimball had had a similar experience himself in 1837 in Preston, England. While attempting to rebuke a devil in Elder Isaac Russell, Kimball’s “voice faltered, and his mouth was shut, and he began to tremble and real [sic] to and fro, and fell on the floor like a dead man, and uttered a deep groan.” Orson Hyde joined Russell, now freed from the spirits, and they successfully exorcized the demons from Kimball. The three missionaries then “distinctly saw the evil spirits who foamed and gnashed upon them with their teeth.” Hyde concluded: “The devils are determined to destroy us, and prevent the truth from being declared in England.”\(^{20}\) While preaching in Toronto, Canada, Parley P. Pratt, another of the original apostles, encountered a woman afflicted with evil spirits. At times she “would be drawn and twisted in every limb and joint” and would occasionally “groan, scream, [and] froth at the mouth.” In such a state “she often cried out that she could see two devils in human form, who were thus operating upon her, and that she could hear

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17\textit{History of the Church}, 1:5.
18Ibid., 1:82-83.
20\textit{History of the Church}, 2:503; \textit{Elders’ Journal of the Church of Latter Day Saints} (Kirtland, Ohio) 1, no. 1 (October 1837): 4-5.
them talk.” When Pratt laid hands upon the woman and rebuked the devils, she “remained well from that time forth.”

Zera (or Zerah) Pulsipher, an early convert to Mormonism and later a resident of Hebron, first encountered the devil in upstate New York. Shortly after his conversion, Pulsipher became acquainted with a fellow believer, Dr. Samuel Newcomb, whose brother-in-law Joseph Hunting (or Hunton), was “possessed with the devil.” Hunting’s family generally kept him “chained in a tight room” but he occasionally broke free and physically threatened family members. Pulsipher apparently developed a knack for handling the vexed man and continued to help the family control him, even after they all moved to Kirtland, Ohio. On one occasion, following instructions given by Joseph Smith Sr., Pulsipher gathered seven Mormon elders to cast the devil out of Hunting, resulting in six months of freedom from the “raving spell[s].” Then “the devil entered him again.” Perplexed, Pulsipher appealed to Father Smith for advice who warned that if the possessed man’s family “would not keep the covenants,” they could “all go to Hell together.”

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22 Quinn, Early Mormonism, 94, links Zera’s wife, Mary Brown Pulsipher, to a possible “Winchell-Walter association.” Justus Winchell and Luman Walter were two men whom Quinn documents as involved in folk magic and possible occult mentors to the Joseph Smith Sr. family and other early Mormon leaders. Ibid., chap. 4.

23 Zera Pulsipher, “History of Zera Pulsipher as Written by Himself,” 17-19, typescript, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. Three other reports of this incident appear in the Juvenile Instructor: (1) Ruth W. Tyler, “A Manifestation of God’s Power through Fasting and Prayer,” 19 (15 March 1884): 91; (2) Daniel Tyler, “Covenant-Breaking,” 19 (1 April 1884): 102-3; (3) “An Incident Related by Lafayette Granger,” 29 (15 September 1894): 577. While none of these versions mentions Pulsipher, enough details match to corroborate that it is the same incident. The name is given in one version as Hunton, as Joseph Hunting in the other two. The “covenant” the family was breaking was apparently the Word of Wisdom (“Sister Hunting smoked tobacco and drank tea”), according to two versions. One account reports that the entire family eventually “became indifferent to their holy
Collectively these experiences document a belief in evil spirits and demonic possessions among early Mormons. They also illustrate a worldview that included an underlying struggle between the forces of good and evil that openly manifested itself on several occasions. Good, in all these scenarios except the last, triumphed over evil, proving to believers and unbelievers alike the power of God among the adherents of this new American religion. Zera Pulsipher, however, learned from his encounter that the power to cast out devils had its limitations (much like the experience of Jesus' disciples recorded in Matt. 17:20-21) and that the ability to do so was linked to levels of religious devotion, not necessarily in the possessed person, but in his or her community of care givers. For Pulsipher this lesson would prove important, especially as it found application at Hebron decades later.

Clearly, the early history of the Church and the attendant forces of evil marshaled against it laid a solid foundation for the emergence of a doctrine of evil spirits that in turn bred a closely related array of legends. A few official pronouncements concerning the nature of disembodied spirits and their link to Gadianton robbers likely generated an interplay between doctrine and legend that sent conduits extending in many directions. One of them came to rest at Hebron.

In 1843, Joseph Smith officially explained demonic possession as Satan’s vengeance for being cast from heaven without receiving a body: “The punishment of the devil was that he should not have a habitation like men. The devil’s retaliation is, he comes into this world, binds up men’s bodies, and occupies them himself. When the authorities come along, they eject him from a stolen habitation.”

In 1856, Brigham Young expanded this concept in a sermon delivered at Temple Square in Salt Lake City:

24 Because the successful exorcism of demons in the Knight and Pratt incidents convinced unbelievers of the validity of Mormonism and advanced missionary work, these two instances of demonic possessions were seen as means to a greater good. History of the Church, 1:5 and Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt, 131.

25 History of the Church, 5:403.
Here the inquiry will naturally arise, when our spirits leave our bodies where do they go to?

I will tell you. . . . They do not pass out of the organization of this earth on which we live. . . . If the Lord would permit it, and it was His will that it should be done, you could see the spirits that have departed from this world, as plainly as you now see bodies with your natural eyes; as plainly as brothers Kimball and Hyde saw those wicked disembodied spirits in Preston, England. They saw devils there, as we see one another; they could hear them speak, and knew what they said. . . .

We may enquire where the spirits dwell, that the devil has power over? They dwell anywhere, in Preston, as well as in other places in England. Do they dwell anywhere else? Yes, on this continent; it is full of them. If you could see, and would walk over many parts of North America, you would see millions on millions of the spirits of those who have been slain upon this continent.25

Young repeated and localized this point a year later in another speech delivered from the Old Tabernacle in Salt Lake City: “There are myriads of disembodied evil spirits—those who have long ago laid down their bodies here and in the regions round about, among and around us; and they are trying to make us and our children sick, and are trying to destroy us and tempt us to evil. They will try every possible means they are masters of to draw us aside from the path of righteousness.”27 Apostle George Q. Cannon, speaking at Kaysville, Utah, in 1864, attributed a similar doctrine to Joseph Smith:

I have no doubt that many of my brethren and sisters have sensibly felt in various places and at various times evil influences around them. Brother Joseph Smith gave an explanation of this. There are places in the Mississippi Valley where the influence or the presence of invisible spirits are very perceptibly felt. He said that numbers had been slain there in war, and that there were evil influences or spirits which affect the spirits of those who have tabernacles on the earth. . . . I have come to the conclusion that if our eyes were open to see the spirit world around us, we should feel differently on this subject


than we do; we would not be so unguarded and careless, and so indifferent whether we had the spirit and power of God with us or not.\textsuperscript{28}

Cannon's version of this concept links it to specific locales, much as Brigham Young had done. The Saints readily became aware that Preston (and all of England, America, and specifically the Mississippi Valley) were locations inhabited by evil spirits. But Young also positioned these demons in the midst of his Great Basin Kingdom, saying that they were "here and in the regions round about, among and around us," that they had the power to make the Saints ill, and that their purpose was to tempt and destroy them. The battle between good and evil was therefore being waged in the very heart of Zion with an unseen and malignant host. Such a concept almost certainly hardened the resolve of settlers struggling to colonize inhospitable regions but also provided a reasonable explanation for the difficulties they encountered.

At some point the idea of evil entities inhabiting Zion became entwined with Gadianton robbers. From this foundation, the doctrine could begin transmission outside of official channels, by means of a legend conduit. Linking the evil spirits of the Great Basin to the Gadianton robbers of the Book of Mormon added a scriptural foundation to the emerging doctrine but also endowed the spirits with intense meaning that included the powerful demonic nature of the robbers and their eventual triumph over God's Book of Mormon people.

The Book of Mormon narrative chronicles God's dealings with a branch of Israelites on the American continent from the time of the biblical confounding of the languages to about A.D. 400. The two principal groups in the story are the Nephites (initially more righteous) and the generally wicked Lamanites. The Nephites eventually forsake their belief in Christ and sink to a level of depravity worse than the Lamanites, at which point God permits their extermination at the hands of the Lamanites. These Lamanites are, according to LDS teachings, the ancestors of the American Indians. The Gadianton robbers were a greed-motivated group of murderers who arose among the Christ-worshipping Nephites

around 50 B.C. They formed a secret oath-bound society, which eventually became so powerful that it challenged the legitimate government.

To prevent detection and annihilation, Gadianton, the leader of the band, removed his followers from the Nephite capital city and fled “into the wilderness” (Hel. 2:11). Tempted by power and riches, other Nephite dissenters joined this band almost daily. From their hiding places the robbers infiltrated Nephite cities to “commit murder and plunder.” They then retreated “back into the mountains, and into the wilderness and secret places, hiding themselves that they could not be discovered” (Hel. 11:25).

As the robbers increased in strength, they threatened the very existence of the Nephites and the righteous Lamanites. As a result, by about A.D. 18 the God-fearing Nephites abandoned their lands and gathered at the Nephite capital city to withstand the Gadianton siege. The robbers promptly “began to come down and to sally forth from the hills, and out of the mountains, and the wilderness, and their strongholds, and their secret places . . . and began to take possession of all the lands which had been deserted by the Nephites, and the cities which had been left desolate” (3 Ne. 4:1). In this case, the Nephites triumphed and eradicated the robbers, but only after three years of warfare.

About three hundred years later, Gadianton robbers reemerged and resumed the conflict. This time their satanic activities brought a curse upon the land: “And these Gadianton robbers . . . did infest the land, insomuch that the inhabitants thereof began to hide up their treasure in the earth; and they became slippery, because the Lord had cursed the land, that they could not hold them, nor retain them again” (Morm. 1:18). Ultimately, “this Gadianton did prove the overthrow, yea, almost the entire destruction of the people of Nephi” (Hel. 2:13). To nineteenth-century Mormons, then, this group of robbers must have represented most things evil, including murder, theft, secret combinations, cursed land, the dispossession of cities, and even potential annihilation. Nineteenth-century Saints also learned that mountains and wilderness locales served as “strongholds” for such satanic activities—a lesson that the physical environment of Utah Territory no doubt imaged at almost every turn.

It would not be until the Mormons found refuge in the semi-barren expanses of the Great Basin that a traceable Gadianton leg-
end process could begin in earnest. Nonetheless, as early as the Mormons’ troubled stay in Missouri, Gadianton robbers, as a cultural discourse, began to accrue meaning. Parley P. Pratt, for example, while imprisoned at Richmond, Missouri, during the height of Mormon persecution, described his captors as “‘Gadianton robbers’ and murderers, who could drive out and murder women and children.’”29 After a horrific expulsion from Missouri, Mormons settled on the banks of the Mississippi River at Nauvoo, Illinois. There, for a time, they built a flourishing city, Joseph Smith announced new doctrine, and additional context for Gadianton robber legends emerged.

In an article titled “Evidences in Proof of the Book of Mormon,” the Nauvoo newspaper printed excerpts from a book of the same name. The book’s writer, Charles Thompson, a Mormon elder, based his “proof” upon comparisons between archeological findings published in Josiah Priest’s *American Antiquities* and Book of Mormon verses describing the topography of the land inhabited by Nephites, Lamanites, and Gadianton robbers. Thompson identified one particular archeological site directly with the Gadianton robbers. The site lay in the Allegheny Mountains between the Tennessee and Coos rivers. *American Antiquities* described it as a place of “esteemed fortifications,” consisting of a stone wall built on the brow of a tremendous ledge. Nearby, excavators had uncovered five interconnected rooms carved from the mountain, reportedly constructed during “some dreadful war.” After making a detailed argument, Thompson concluded: “This again, is evidence that the Book of Mormon is true, and that this band of robbers were the constructors of this strong hold and these secret rooms.”30 While

29 Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt, 204.

30 “Evidences in Proof of the Book of Mormon,” *Times and Seasons* 3 (1 January 1842): 640-44. The portion of this article concerning Gadianton robbers is an exact quotation of Charles Thompson, *Evidences in Proof of the Book of Mormon, Being a Divinely Inspired Record, Written by the Forefathers of the Natives Whom We Call Indians, (Who Are a Remnant of the Tribe of Joseph,) and Hid Up in the Earth, But Come Forth in Fulfilment of Prophecy for the Gathering of Israel and the Re-establishing of the Kingdom of God Upon the Earth. Together with All the Objections Commonly Urged Against It, Answered and Refuted—To Which Is Added a Proclamation and Warning to the Gentiles Who Inhabit America* (Batavia, N.Y: D. D. Waite, 1841), 101-5. Thompson’s source
Thompson's purpose was to offer physical evidence for Book of Mormon settings, it simultaneously introduced Gadianton robbers to Nauvoo Mormons as former inhabitants of areas within the United States.  

However, it was in Utah Territory that the robbers from Mormon scripture took on their greatest significance. While touring southern settlements in 1851, Brigham Young commented to Saints at Parowan that the local Paiute Indians were “descendants of the old Gadianton Robers [sic] who infested these Mountains for more than a thousand years.” Two years later on 6 April 1853, Presiding for the five secret rooms comes, almost verbatim, from Josiah Priest, American Antiquities and Discoveries in the West: Being an Exhibition of the Evidence That an Ancient Population of Partially Civilized Nations Differing Entirely from Those of the Present Indians Peopled America Many Centuries before Its Discovery by Columbus, and Inquiries into Their Origin, with a Copious Description of Many of Their Stupendous Works, Now in Ruins, with Conjectures Concerning What May Have Become of Them. Compiled from Travels, Authentic Sources, and the Researches of Antiquarian Societies, 4th ed. (Albany, N.Y.: Hoffman & White, 1834), 169-70. Priest, however, offers a very different conclusion from Thompson’s about the occupants of the five ancient rooms: “The reader can indulge his own conjectures, whether, in the construction of this inaccessible fortress, he does not perceive the remnant of a tribe or nation, acquainted with the arts of excavation and defense; making a last struggle against the invasion of an overwhelming foe; where, it is likely, they were reduced by famine, and perished amid the yells of their enemies” (170).

This would not have been the first time that some of the early Saints were introduced to the idea of North America as a possible setting for Book of Mormon happenings. During the march of Zion’s Camp, some members of the camp unearthed a human skeleton from a large mound in Illinois that Joseph Smith, through revelation, identified as a “white” Lamanite named Zelph. Kenneth W. Godfrey, “The Zelph Story [1834],” BYU Studies 29, no. 2 (1989): 31-56. Both Heber C. Kimball and Brigham Young participated in Zion’s Camp, and Kimball published a version of the Zelph story in the Times and Seasons in 1845 (Godfrey, 38). The Zelph incident perhaps influenced both Kimball and Young in their views that Gadianton hideouts had existed in Utah Territory.

Bishop Edward Hunter stood atop the newly positioned southwest cornerstone of the Salt Lake Temple and rhetorically demanded:

Do you remember the history of the Gadiantons as told in the Book of Mormon? We are surrounded by their descendants; those loathsome, effeminate specimens of humanity, which we daily see in our midst, are their children; low, degraded, sunken to the lowest depths of human existence. We have our location amid their strong holds; where the ruins of their cities, towns, and fortifications are yet to be seen; they continue unto this day. 33

This concept was also understood at a local level. A resident of Harmony, in Washington County, informed the congregation that “these Indians in these mountains are the descendants of the Gadianton robbers, and . . . the curse of God is upon them, and we had better let them alone.” 34

As time progressed, the robber motif accrued meaning beyond reference to local Native Americans. In 1860, Heber C. Kimball declared in the Old Tabernacle: “We read in the Book of Mormon that the Gadianton robbers came down from the mountains—they robbed, plundered, and in many instances slew the Saints. I can tell you, brethren and sisters, that we have similar characters in these mountains, who are making pretty rapid progress in preparing to destroy this people. This I know to my sorrow.” 35 The following year from the same pulpit Young pronounced, “There are scores of evil spirits here—spirits of the old Gadianton robbers, some of whom inhabited these mountains, and used to go into the South and afflict the Nephites. There are millions of those spirits in the mountains, and they are ready to make us covetous, if they can; they are ready to lead astray every man and woman that wishes to be a Latter-day Saint.” 36

Latter-day Saints (chronology of typed entries and newspaper clippings, 1830-present), 16 May 1851, 1, LDS Church Archives.
33Journal History, 6 April 1853, 3.
3516 December 1860, Journal of Discourses, 8:258.
3620 January 1861, Journal of Discourses, 8:344.
In 1865, Kimball touched on the same theme at Centerville, Utah: “There are thousands of evil spirits that are just as ugly as evil can make them. The wicked die, and their spirits remain not far from where their tabernacles are. . . . The atmosphere of many parts of these mountains is doubtless the abode of the spirits of Gadianton robbers, whose spirits are as wicked as hell, and who would kill Jesus Christ and every Apostle and righteous person that ever lived if they had the power.” About fifteen years later in 1881, John Taylor, Brigham Young’s successor, officially connected the robbers to southern Utah. “If we had not possessed these narrow valleys and defiles,” he announced in the St. George Tabernacle, “they would have been in the possession of bands of Gadianton robbers, who would have preyed upon the people and their property.”

Clearly, then, there was a doctrinal basis for Gadianton legends spreading throughout Utah. Church leaders in official pronouncements from Temple Square and other religious locales created a Gadianton persona that was “as ugly as evil” and “as wicked as hell,” and whose sinister purpose it was to prey upon the Saints, make them covetous, lead them astray, and ultimately destroy them. The numbers were daunting: scores, thousands, even millions. Against such odds the Saints must have felt outnumbered and overwhelmed. Robber doctrine likely caused apprehension among some Mormon settlers but also seems to have offered a valid explanation for abandoning a too-difficult site.

Gadianton robbers, in essence, grew into a cultural discourse among Mormons. In it, the robbers represented Satan, or at least were on his side. The folk legends about the robbers also cast them as other-worldly opponents to Mormon kingdom building. One version, collected in 1945, not only describes this role but also attributes supernatural powers to the vile horde:

The Gadianton robbers were evil spirits of Satan who tried to prevent the establishing of the Mormon church. In an early community, tools would disappear, women would set their bread out to raise and it would be turned upside down. If they turned their backs while they

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389 November 1881, Journal of Discourses, 23:17. Taylor’s description sounds more like a veiled reference to Paiute Indians, but his intent would become irrelevant at the point where his words passed into oral circulation and began the legend process.
were ironing, their irons would disappear. The sawmill would start running at night and would cease if the men came out. These episodes went on for several months and then stopped as quickly as they had started. They were all blamed on the Gadianton robbers.39

In general the robbers became scapegoats for unexplainable events, but at Hebron and other locales they served a purpose beyond that. This 1945 version is the only incident out of a collection of thirty-nine robber stories that is not place specific.40 All others mention particular locations as robber haunts. An overwhelming majority, 77 percent, place the robbers in southern Utah; and of those, 90 percent specify locations near St. George. This sampling is by no means scientific, but informants from as far away as Ashton, Idaho, linked the robbers to the southwestern corner of the Beehive State.41 It seems plausible that the legends followed Mormon settlement southward and came to rest in the trying Cotton Mission, of which St. George was the capital.

Young personally guided settlement within the Great Basin, often issuing "calls" to faithful Saints to relocate their families to extend the frontiers of Zion. Mormon belief that Young acted as God's spokesman added weight to these calls, and those who answered often did so with a conviction that they were under divine obligation. In 1861 Young sent over 300 families to establish the Cotton Mission in southern Utah, as part of his overall effort to achieve economic self-sufficiency. Young hoped cotton missionaries would produce enough cotton and other warm-climate crops to allow the Saints to stop depending on eastern suppliers.

Yet southern Utah's harsh desert environment, including the unruly Virgin River, proved too difficult a challenge for some. Many gave up and moved elsewhere. Turn-over rates among several Cotton Mission settlements ran as high as 70 percent in a ten-year period 39Wayland D. Hand and Jeannine E. Talley, eds., Popular Beliefs and Superstitions from Utah: Collected by Anthon S. Cannon (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1984), 323, #10269.

40I collected thirty-nine folk narratives with a Gadianton robber theme from which I draw the generalizations presented here.

41Suzanne Lyon, story No. 1.1.4.4.1., 1969, "Gadianton Robbers," Folklore Archives, Lee Library, Brigham Young University.
and, by the turn of the century, averaged around 50 percent, the highest of any area in Utah.  

Official admonitions to endure the hardships of southern Utah's scorching environment added anxiety to an already burdensome mission. Hebronite Orson Welcome Huntsman, for example, after attending a church conference in St. George in 1879, recorded feeling "quite troubled" over the instruction given to the Saints "to stay where they were already located, not move off, not move to and fro, not go before they were called by proper authority." For Huntsman this advice "struck hard" because he had just sold his property at Hebron and was in the midst of preparing to find "some place where I could make a comfortable home." The physical uncertainties of the Cotton Mission were intensified by the settlers' strong sense of duty and the explicit connection between success and piety.

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43 Orson Welcome Huntsman, "Diary," typescript, 127, Perry Special Collections. A similar and more forceful example of the type of injunction that accompanied calls to colonize is recorded by Wilford Woodruff in 1851: Brigham Young rebuked thirty of the 100 men then struggling to establish the Iron Mission near Parowan fort. After three months, some had had enough. Fifteen asked to bring their families to the settlement, while fifteen others wanted to return to Salt Lake City and stay there. As Wilford Woodruff (4:24) recorded it, Young responded: "If you were now on a mission to France England or any other part of the Earth preaching the gospel you would not sit down & council together about going to get your families or go home untill your mission was ended. This is of quite as much importance as preaching the gospel for the time has now Come when it is required of us to make the wilderness blossom as the rose. Our mission now is build up stakes of Zion & fill these mountains with cities & when your mission is Ended you are at Liberty to go & be free & ownly do right. When I go on A mission I leave my affairs in the Hands of God. If my House, fields, flocks, wife or children die in my absence I say Amen to it. If they live & prosper I feel to say Amen to it & thank the Lord."
Together, this dynamic created an atmosphere ripe for the legend process.

A familiar theme in Gadianton folk legends connects the presence of the heinous robbers to unsuccessful settlement at particular locations. In northern Utah, the robbers reportedly lived in the mouth of Weber Canyon, "so now it is cursed and that is why nothing grows there."44 Similarly, in a legend about Spanish Fork Canyon, the settlers "complain[ed] of certain weird happenings" such as missing persons and death. The perplexed colonizers consulted Brigham Young who explained that the canyon was "one of the major hideouts for the Gadianton Robbers." As a result the people "began building their homes further west."45 At Harrisburg, a ghost town about ten miles east of St. George, the legend claims that "nothing would grow" there. Brigham Young advised the Saints "to move out," explaining that "this is the last stronghold of the Gadianton Robbers" and that the "area has been cursed."46

Similar dispossession versions are linked to sawmills in Big and Little Cottonwood canyons, Millcreek Canyon, and Pine Valley Mountain in southern Utah. Some mill legends include credibility-building details such as the sawmill owner's name and the intervention of a higher authority, usually Brigham Young. In general a sawmill is plagued by strange occurrences, such as the disappearance of tools and the mill starting up at night. Finally, an exasperated owner appeals to Young for help, who then investigates and advises the luckless owner that he has built his mill on ancient Gadianton robber territory. The owner promptly moves his mill and the troubles cease.47

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45 Erin Sloan, as recorded by Michael Ringwood, legend No. 1.1.4.4.6.1, 1980, "Gadianton Robbers," Folklore Archives, Lee Library, Brigham Young University.

46 Mueller, story No. F-14, "Harrisburg and the Gadianton Robbers."

47 James H. Gardner, "Incidents in Early Utah History: Some May Call it Folklore," in *Heart Throbs of the West*, edited by Kate B. Carter, 12 vols. (Salt Lake City: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1939-51), 5:185-86; Andrew Karl Larson, "Ithamar Sprague and His Big Shoes," in *Lore of Faith*
Clearly these narratives carry an underlying assumption that former Gadianton robber territory is uninhabitable. If the Saints were unfortunate enough to settle on old robber land, the solution was to move. In only one version of the sawmill legend do the Saints triumph over the robbers: Young "dispatched some of the general authorities to go to the mill and rebuke the evil spirits in the name of the Lord and commanded them to cease operations and to depart. This was done and no more trouble was encountered." In other versions, the fact that the Mormons had to leave to solve the difficulty suggests that the robbers of legend, like those of Mormon scripture, represented a powerful force that was better left alone, even if it meant abandoning a particular spot to do so.

Given Hebron residents' troublesome colonizing attempt, it seems natural that a Gadianton robber legend took root there. Hebron, in fact, offers an ideal case study in legend-making among nineteenth-century Mormons. Hebron's remote location, over forty-five miles northwest of St. George, made it difficult for all residents to journey to church conferences, either in southern Utah or Salt Lake City. In an effort to not miss important instruction from Young and other leaders, at least one member of the Hebron Ward generally attended conferences and then returned the following Sunday to rehearse the proceedings to the entire congregation. An entry in the ward record describes the usual pattern: "The St. Geo Conference was held on the first sat & sund of Nov [1876].... Some of our folks, and Folly, edited by Thomas E. Cheney (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1971), 31-35.

48 Mildred Malmstrom, as recorded by Lisa Malmstrom, story No. 1.1.4.4.5.1, 1981, "Ghost Story," Folklore Archives, Lee Library, Brigham Young University.

49 One interesting twist on this theme is a version that must have developed after the turn of the century and the Mormon abandonment of polygamy. It concerns the large polygamous settlement of Short Creek (now Colorado City) that straddles the Utah-Arizona border, founded by dissident Mormons who continue to practice polygamy. According to this version, Indians and Brigham Young both shunned the site because it was Gadianton robber territory, but the polygamists thrived because they are in harmony with these ancient evil spirits. As the teller put it: "They picked up where the Gadianton Robbers left off." Mueller, story No. F-1, "Why Polygamous Groups So Bad."
Bro. Terry, J. W. Hunt, Bro Jones etc. were present and reported the doings to us in our meeting. In recounting a whole conference worth of talks, the reporters became information filters, repeating only the items which most impressed them. Folk legends by nature are anonymous; nevertheless, a returning conference attender seems a likely candidate in linking pronouncements from the pulpit to the troubles tormenting Hebron, thereby bringing the robbers home to roost. Once Gadianton doctrine passed into oral circulation, the legend process would shape and form a story suitable to Hebron's circumstances.

By the 1890s, the Hebron congregation was certainly ripe for that process. Demonic possessions and bouts with a deadly scourge had already plagued residents, creating an underlying anxiety over town disunity, which seemed to be the true illness afflicting Hebron.

During Utah's Black Hawk War in August 1866, Cotton Mission leaders ordered settlers from Clover Valley, about thirty miles southwest of Hebron, to abandon their village and join the Pulsiphers and others at a fort on Shoal Creek for mutual protection. Simultaneously, a virulent illness of some sort ran rampant among Clover Valley children. John Pulsipher, the ward clerk, noted that "the Clover people have lost nearly all their small children. The Devil was determined to kill the babies and when it had passed through that place, the scourge commenced here." According to Pulsipher, the youngest daughter of a Brother Callaway fell ill and only "got worse" after being doctor and administered to. Soon the elders gathered to take action. Zera Pulsipher, the group's ecclesiastical head, gave instructions that echoed his Kirtland experience: "We must exercise more than common faith to stop the destroyer—we must humble ourselves before God and covenant to keep all his commandments." The Hebron men united their faith in making such a covenant and as John Pulsipher recounted it, "the child was restored to health."

The town responded in similar fashion the following fall and

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50Hebron Ward Record, 3:87-8.
51Hebron Ward Historical Record, 1867-72, Vol. 2:41, 78, microfilm, LDS Church Archives; and Hebron Ward Record, 3:81.
52Hebron Ward Historical Record, 1862-67, 1:83-5.
winter when evil spirits possessed Orson Welcome Huntsman and the other town youth described in the introduction. John Pulsipher recounted Huntsman's exorcism: "We have had to unite in the strongest manner to get power over them [the demons]. Have prayed, anointed with oil and administered one after another, sometimes for several hours with all the faith and power we could command before the young man could be relieved." 53

If the problem was demonic possession, then the solution was unity "in the strongest manner." These sicknesses offered opportunities for the residents to unite and to cast out not only devils, but also the perplexing degree of strife that disrupted their community-building efforts. The town failed miserably in its United Order attempt in 1874. Family feuds erupted on occasion, such as when William Pulsipher struck Jefferson Hunt with a rock in 1879, causing "a gash one-and-a-half inches long on his head, besides some bruises." 54 The Huntsmans and Callaways had disputes, as did the Laubs and Barnums. Power conflicts also caused contention: St. George authorities stripped Zera Pulsipher of his influence as presiding elder after he tangled with the school board; Bishop George Crosby moved away after being "burned out" by "an outlaw"; and Bishop Thomas S. Terry resigned after ward "busy bodies" began to "complain and ask for another Bishop." When Terry's replacement, George A. Holt selected his counselors, one refused to serve and the congregation voted not to sustain the other. In 1893 Zera P. Terry summarized the problem: God allowed "self willed men to direct [the town] and the people have had to suffer. Our place and people have become the subject of the scoffs and jeers of their outside brethren & sisters." Battles over land, death by neglect, and the enticements of non-Mormon mining towns also exposed rifts. 55

In the spring of 1868, John Pulsipher lamented the "stubbornness" and "stiff will" that characterized a "few" townsmen as they quarreled over land and community improvements. Pulsipher prophetically warned the settlers: "Without union we can't do business acceptable to the Lord and unless we are united the Devil will have power over us, we will be broken up and have to leave our homes." 56

54 Huntsman, Diary, 122.
In Pulsipher’s mind, settling Hebron was cast as a literal battle between the forces of good and evil. The demonic possession of some residents was merely symptomatic of the deeper malady tormenting the town. If the settlers would unite, they could bring God’s might to bear in their behalf; otherwise, the devil and his minions would triumph, an outcome Pulsipher believed would bring about the disintegration and abandonment of the town.

Hebron, then, had a long history of turmoil from which a Gadianton legend might emerge. It is easy to envision Hebronites hearing Gadianton stories from the pulpit or as tales already in circulation among the Mormon folk and suddenly recognizing in them the answer to their perplexing failure at community building. Young, Kimball, and other Church leaders created an “ugly as evil” Gadianton persona that Hebron residents could readily link to the devils that possessed town youth.

It is interesting to note, however, that the legend applied to Hebron, not to the people. Normand D. Laub, a descendent of Hebron residents, remembered hearing Gadianton stories as a youth: “Supposedly someone had predicted that this had been one of the areas that the Gadianton robbers had operated out of, back in their days. This would have been some of their territory, and that was why it was plagued with evil spirits.” According to legend, then, the ground, the town site, and the surrounding territory were possessed, but not the town youth. It was not individuals who were demonized, but the town as a whole, thereby leaving Hebronites with no option but to collectively cast themselves out. Laub heard these stories as a child; but as he recalled, “You don’t hear them anymore.” For Hebron the tension and anxiety of abandonment is long gone and with it the purpose for repeating Gadianton narratives.

Cases of demonic possession among nineteenth-century Mormons were not unique to Hebron—or even to Mormons. The devil and his cohorts have had a long history of warfare against Christian believers. Mormonism grew out of that context and, through new scripture and doctrinal pronouncement, added its own twist to evil-spirit narratives. Mormon scripture tells of a ferocious and greedy

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56Hebron Ward Record, 2:18-19.
57Normand D. Laub, interviewed by Reeve at Beryl, Utah, 31 October 1998; audiocassette in Reeve’s possession.
band of robbers that annihilated God's people in the Americas. For nineteenth-century Mormons, those robbers grew to embody a cultural discourse saturated with intense meaning. Mormon leaders cautioned Utah congregations that local Indians were descendants of the ancient robbers. They further warned that the spirits of the original robbers still haunted the territory, intent upon leading astray or killing "every Apostle and righteous person that ever lived." 58 Clearly, folk legends that developed at Hebron about Gadianton robbers emerged from a well-developed tradition filled with demons, exorcisms, and prophetic warnings against millions of vile spirits haunting Zion. Southern Utah's unyielding physical environment must have lent credibility to the legends, conjuring up images of robber strongholds like those described in the Book of Mormon.

Hebronites, therefore, might have reasoned that the forces of evil arrayed against them were simply too powerful. Mormon scripture, and possibly other legends already in circulation, suggested abandonment as the best solution available to luckless inhabitants of cursed Gadianton lands. An earthquake in 1902, floods, a cold climate, and a lack of water best explain Hebron's demise. But in coping with that demise, I believe the powerfully destructive robbers offered Hebronites an anxiety-relieving solution to a community-building disappointment. The town's demonic possessions were merely surface manifestations of a broader community illness. When residents failed to eradicate disunity from among themselves, they turned to Mormonism's short history and found ample context to justify Hebron as a Gadianton hideout. In "warring the Christian warfare," as Joseph Smith put it, Hebronites fought a good fight; but as in Mormon scripture, the robbers eventually prevailed. It was a minor victory for evil in a much broader war that raged on.

Map of East India Mission
BETWEEN 1851 AND 1856, missionaries of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints carried their message to many of the major cities of India, Burma, and Siam (Thailand). Britain’s Indian empire included not only India, but also modern Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Ceylon (Sri Lanka), and the southern half of Burma (Myanmar). The seventeen missionaries who were called to serve in the East India Mission and Siam were mature, seasoned Latter-day Saints, most of them married, from England, Scotland, and Utah. They worked with incredible energy, determination, and dedication under extremely demanding conditions. The opposition they faced came from two enormous and enduring entities, the British governmental, economic, social, and military establishment known as “the Raj,” and the Indian religious and cultural milieu.

The British almost uniformly rejected Mormonism, especially the doctrine of plural marriage, while simultaneously intervening to “protect” the sepoys (native Indian troops) from exposure to any Christian beliefs other than the Anglican. The elders were disheartened with their lack of converts, especially in comparison with their co-workers in Britain and Scandinavia. En route home in March 1855, Nathaniel Vary Jones, president of the short-lived mission, drew comfort from the fact that “the Spirit has witnessed to me for the last year that they would not receive our testimony.” Then he added, “The circumstances that have hindered the progress of the Gospel in this land cannot fully be told, they can only be understood by those that have had to grapple with them.”

Another missionary, Robert Skelton, was even blunter: “I will, through the blessing of God, give you a correct statement of our united exertions to spread the Gospel in this land, which, to say in a few words, has proved a failure throughout this whole nation.”

This essay attempts to reconstruct those circumstances that Jones felt no one else could understand: who the missionaries were, the Indian cultural and religious environment, the scope of the missionaries’ service, the Mormon perception of Europeans in India, religious policies governing the Indian army, and the meanings these missionaries drew from their mission. Within these sections, I have introduced the major challenges and deterrents to Latter-day Saint missionary success in the 1850s mission.

THE MISSIONARIES AND THEIR FIELDS OF LABOR

Responding to requests for further information about Church doctrines and practices, mission authorities in Liverpool, England, asked Joseph Richards to go teach a small group of interested persons in Calcutta. Comparatively little is known about Richards. He was born around 1801, was ordained an elder, and worked as a sailmaker on a merchant ship that serviced Calcutta for the British East India Company, which made it convenient for him to accept

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1 Nathaniel V. Jones, “Hindostan” (letter to Franklin D. Richards, editor, datelined 30 March 1855 from Singapore), Millennial Star 17 (7 July 1855): 428-29.
2 Robert Skelton, “Hindostan” (letter to Richards, datelined 20 April 1855, Calcutta), ibid., 430.
the calling. Arriving at Calcutta in June 1851, he inaugurated a truly remarkable missionary epoch in a Church known for its missionary sagas. B. H. Roberts concluded that, in the history of the Latter-day Saints, there was “nothing more heroic . . . than the labors and sufferings” of the missionaries to India.

During his two-week stay, Richards baptized four: James Patrick Meik and his wife, Mary Ann Francis Matthew McCune, and Maurice White, organizing them into the “Wanderers Branch,” a name that may have reflected its members’ feeling that they were sojourners in India. They were the first Mormon converts baptized in Asia. Hearing of this small but promising beginning, Lorenzo Snow, then presiding over missionary work in Italy, Switzerland, and Malta, decided to include India and, during the fall of 1851 when he was in England, called two more missionaries to serve in India.

The first was William Willes, an English school teacher who had lost his job when he joined the Church in 1848. He willingly accepted his call to Calcutta, where he hoped he could serve the Lord in “a more extensive sphere of usefulness.” Behind him, he left four children and his wife, Ann Kibby Willes, who was very upset by the call but finally reconciled herself to it. He reached Calcutta on Christmas day, 1851. The second was Hugh Findlay, bereft of wife and children by an epidemic. He was then serving as president of the Hull Conference. Born in New Milns, Scotland, in 1822, he was an effective speaker and a good writer. Courageous and tenacious, he baptized about seventy, which, by my calculations, is probably more permanent converts than those of any other LDS missionary to India. Called a few weeks after Willes, he had reached Bombay by April 1852.

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3His baptismal date is not known. He never emigrated to Utah and died, probably around 1890, at Staten Island, New York.


5William Willes, Journal and Reminiscences, 1851-85, Historical Department Archives, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter LDS Church Archives). For a brief biography based on discussions with family members and miscellaneous family papers, see Nothing More Heroic, 293-94.

6Ross Findlay and Linnie Findlay, comps., Missionary Journals of Hugh
Willes's initial successes among Europeans and Indians in Calcutta led him to expect numerous baptisms and his reports to Snow prompted recommendations to expand the mission. On 28 August 1852, in the same special conference which made public the doctrine of plural marriage, the First Presidency called 108 missionaries to the United States and many foreign nations. Among them were nine elders called to India and four to Siam. They left Utah in late October with those called to China and the Pacific, and headed by wagon train to San Pedro, California. Here they embarked for San Francisco, then sailed directly to Calcutta. The eighty-six-day voyage was a rapid trip at the time.

These thirteen missionaries arrived in Calcutta on 27 April 1853, only to find that Willes and Joseph Richards, who had returned to India on 22 July 1852 as a full-time missionary, were traveling in the Ganges River basin. Fortunately, Richards's early convert, James Patrick Meik (now ordained an elder), had constructed a little meeting house near his home on Jaun Bazaar Street near the heart of Calcutta. He also provided housing for the elders and mission headquarters. From this center, the thirteen missionaries fanned out into the vast subcontinent. Some became better known for later activities, but it is probably safe to say that none of them performed a more arduous labor.

Thirty-year-old Nathaniel V. Jones, elected mission president by the other India elders, was not the oldest, but he was seasoned by service as a missionary in Ohio and as first sergeant of Company D in the Mormon Battalion. He had left behind his wife, Rebecca Maria Burton Jones, and four children. A fifth child was born a week after his departure. Jones served most of his mission in and around Calcutta except for a short trip to Rangoon, Burma, where Levi Savage was proselytizing.


Musser, the mission secretary, single, and the youngest by several years. Although his family had joined the Church in 1842-43, he had delayed his baptism until March 1851. The next month, he joined a company of pioneers and walked to Salt Lake City, where, a skilled clerk, he worked at the Tithing Office until his mission call.\(^8\)

The next three elders—Richard Ballantyne, Robert Skelton, and Robert Owens—went south to Madras. Ballantyne, renowned for founding the Church’s Sunday Schools, was born in 1817 in Scotland to devout parents. The family emigrated to Nauvoo, Illinois, in 1843.\(^9\) Ballantyne married Huldah Clark in 1847 at Winter Quarters and their first son was born the next summer while they were crossing the plains. In Madras Ballantyne wrote and published a number of pamphlets explaining Mormon doctrine and defending the Church.

Robert Skelton, born in 1824 in England, was orphaned with his five siblings at a young age and was on his own by thirteen. Ten years later he emigrated to St. Louis, where he was baptized in 1849. That same year Skelton joined Ezra T. Benson’s company of pioneers, driving Benson’s team to Utah and helping the Bensons settle Tooele, Utah. Skelton nursed Ballantyne through smallpox en route to India and malaria in Madras. The two became close friends.\(^10\)

Robert Owens was the sole India missionary who was not completely faithful to his calling. Born in Maryland in 1818, he joined the Church in 1844. He and his first wife, Catherine Ann Williams Owens, were endowed and sealed in the Nauvoo Temple on 7 February 1846, the last day ordinances were performed there. He served as a private in Company B of the Mormon Battalion. In 1850, Owens married an additional wife, Martha Evins Allen Owens, and left both

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\(^{10}\)David J. Whittaker, *Register to the Robert H. Skelton Collection*, MSS 1597, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.
women pregnant when he departed for India. After disagreements with his fellow missionaries, he was released from the mission field early.11

The next team, William F. Carter and William Fotheringham, sailed up the Ganges to Dinapore, having the memorable experience of seeing a man eaten alive by an alligator en route. Forty-two-year-old Carter, originally from Newry, Maine, was next oldest in the group. He and his wife, Sarah York Carter, joined the Church in 1834, and followed the Church to Kirtland, Far West, Nauvoo, and Council Bluffs, Iowa. In 1851, they came to Utah and settled in Provo the next year. India afflicted him with sunstroke and other debilities so serious that Jones gave him an honorable release after only three months.12

Sixteen years Carter's junior, William Fotheringham adapted to the Indian climate with relative ease. Born in Scotland in 1826, he and sixty members of his branch and family emigrated to America in 1848, reached the Salt Lake Valley in September 1850, but soon moved on to Lehi, Utah, where they were among the first settlers.13 He went unmarried into the mission field.

Jones assigned the next team—Truman Leonard and Samuel Amos Woolley—to Chinsura, thirty miles north of Calcutta, and to the Calcutta area. Before long their labors took them far beyond their initial assignments. After Carter's release, Woolley and Fotheringham traveled by bullock cart and by foot to Agra, Delhi, and beyond—one of the longest and most discouraging excursions of the mission. Following Willes's and Richards's route, they covered thou-

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13Jenson, LDS Biographical Encyclopedia, 2:190. Fotheringham's biographical series, “Travels in India,” ran in the Juvenile Instructor, 1877-84.
sands of miles and visited many cities and military cantonments\textsuperscript{14} but baptized no one. Jones offered Woolley a release. Undaunted, he refused to return home until he had baptized at least a few converts. He had been born in Pennsylvania in 1826, was orphaned young, joined the Church in 1840, and settled in Nauvoo, where he quarried stone for the temple. He was ordained a seventy in October 1845 and, seven months later, married Catherine Elizabeth Mehring. In 1848 they emigrated to the Salt Lake Valley, where, with the exception of a period in Parowan and Woolley’s three missions, including India, they lived for the remainder of their lives.\textsuperscript{15}

Truman Leonard, after working with Woolley in Calcutta and Chinsura, teamed up with Musser in December 1853 and sailed to Bombay and then to Karachi. They hoped to find converts in Sind, India’s western desert. Leonard, born in New York State in 1820, joined the Church in March 1843 and married Ortentia White in the Nauvoo Temple on 1 January 1846, the first marriage performed there. During his year in Sind, he and Musser separated, with Musser staying in Karachi and Leonard going up the Indus River to Kotri and Hyderabad. Their labors produced the baptisms of only two soldiers, but not for want of effort. Despite recurring malaria, Leonard continued working until he was released.\textsuperscript{16}

The four Siam-bound elders, Chauncey Walker West (president), Benjamin F. Dewey, Elam Luddington, and Levi Savage, learned that the second Anglo-Burmese War barred travel to Bangkok while dense jungles and precipitous mountains made overland travel treacherous. So they conceived alternate plans. On 15 May 1853, only nineteen days after reaching Calcutta, West and Dewey sailed for Ceylon where they hoped to teach the restored gospel until the monsoon winds shifted and they could take passage east to Singapore. Greeted with suspicion and disdain at Galle and Colombo in Ceylon, they sailed on to Bombay two weeks later. For six months

\textsuperscript{14}Cantonments were permanent military stations that included lodgings for troops and families, organizational headquarters, bazaars, churches, mess halls, and other facilities. Generally cantonments were situated near existing towns and often grew as large as towns.

\textsuperscript{15}Jenson, \textit{LDS Biographical Encyclopedia}, 1:781-82.

\textsuperscript{16}Glen M. Leonard, “Truman Leonard: Pioneer Mormon Farmer,” \textit{Utah Historical Quarterly} 44 (Summer 1976): 240-60; see also Leonard's journals, Perry Special Collections, Lee Library, Brigham Young University.
they assisted Hugh Findlay and his brother, Allan, who had recently arrived as a missionary, then took passage on a ship to Hong Kong. The voyage was so arduous that the captain died in Hong Kong, and Dewey was dangerously ill. The elders prudently decided to sail on to San Francisco and return home.\(^\text{\textsuperscript{17}}\)

Despite the truncated mission, Dewey and West were both dedicated elders. Dewey, a carpenter, was born in Massachusetts in 1829, joined the Church at Winter Quarters, Nebraska, in April 1847, and accompanied Brigham Young's pioneer company to the Salt Lake Valley in July 1847.\(^\text{\textsuperscript{18}}\) He was single until after his mission. West, born in Pennsylvania in 1827, joined the Church at sixteen and was ordained a seventy the next year. He married Mary Hoagland in 1846, settled in the Salt Lake Valley in the fall of 1847 and had fathered three children by the time of his call. After his return to Utah, he served as bishop, as presiding bishop of Weber County, and as acting president of the European Mission with headquarters in England.\(^\text{\textsuperscript{19}}\)

Of the remaining two Siam-bound elders, only Elam Luddington actually spent time there. He and Levi Savage began preaching in Burma while they waited to find passage to Siam. After a few months, Luddington took ship for Singapore and, from there, to Bangkok, while Savage spent over a year as a lone missionary at Moulmein, Burma. In Bangkok, Roman Catholics, Protestants, and Buddhists combined against Luddington, driving him out after only a few months. His only success was baptizing the ship captain and his wife who took him to and from Siam.\(^\text{\textsuperscript{20}}\) At forty-seven, Luddington was the eldest of all the missionaries. He had joined the Church in 1840 and been ordained a high priest by Joseph Smith Sr. He was also a Mormon Battalion veteran, the first lieutenant in Company B. He and his wife, Mary Eliza, settled in Utah with their two children.\(^\text{\textsuperscript{21}}\)

Levi Savage, the thirteenth elder, is well known for his efforts as he returned from this mission, first to dissuade the Willie Hand-

\(^\text{\textsuperscript{17}}\)Britsch, *Nothing More Heroic*, 100-120.

\(^\text{\textsuperscript{18}}\)Jenson, *LDS Biographical Encyclopedia*, 4:698.

\(^\text{\textsuperscript{19}}\)Ibid., 1:749-54.

\(^\text{\textsuperscript{20}}\)Britsch, *Nothing More Heroic*, 114-19. This couple were James Trail and his wife (name not known).

\(^\text{\textsuperscript{21}}\)See Black, *Membership of the Church.*
cart Company from setting out so late in the season, and second, for suffering with them as they met those hardships.\textsuperscript{22} Taken together with trying to establish the Church in Burma, it is hard to imagine a more prolonged season of difficulties for one man, but they seem not to have shortened his life. He was born in Ohio in 1820 and died ninety years later in Toquerville, Utah. He joined the Church in 1846, was a member of the Mormon Battalion, and reached the Salt Lake Valley in October 1847. He married Jane Mathers, who gave birth to one son and died in December 1851, about eight months before Levi’s call. He could hardly have put grief behind him when he left his little son with his sister and departed for Asia.\textsuperscript{23}

These were the thirteen missionaries, freshly arrived from the United States, who attended the historic Calcutta conference on 29 April 1853. However, three more men also played vital roles in the mission: the already-mentioned Allan M. Findlay, James Patrick Meik, and Matthew McCune. Born at New Milns, Scotland in 1830, Findlay was baptized in November 1846 and accepted his brother’s urgent request for help in the Bombay and Poona areas—in effect, calling himself on a mission. He arrived in India on 7 September 1853, labored at Poona, and also spent a long time inland in Hyderabad and Belgaum. In late 1855, he sailed for Liverpool, then emigrated to the United States the next spring. On 4 May 1856, one day out of Liverpool aboard the \textit{Thornton}, he married Jessie Ireland. The 764 emigrants included Allan’s mother and Elizabeth Xavier Tait, an Indian baptized in Bombay whose Irish husband, William Tait, had already emigrated with their children by way of Hong Kong and the Pacific with Hugh Findlay. Elizabeth stayed behind to bear a child who died either at sea or while crossing the plains. Leader of the emigrants was James G. Willie, whose name is inseparably connected with the best-known of the handcart companies.\textsuperscript{24}

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James Patrick Meik and Matthew McCune were among the first four converts in India. Meik was born of English parents near Benares, India, on 9 December 1807. He was ordained an elder in early 1852 by William Willes. Meik, a civil architect, provided the meeting house and living quarters for the missionaries in Calcutta. If it had not been for his financial support, likely the mission would have closed earlier. At the close of his mission, Robert Skelton said he had “borne the burthen of the whole.”

From about 1854 on, Meik experienced financial difficulties that forced him to pursue undertakings away from Calcutta. When Skelton left India as the last missionary in May 1856, he appointed Meik to lead the Church there. Mary Ann Meik died in 1857 of complications during her eleventh pregnancy. James Patrick Meik emigrated alone to Salt Lake City in 1869, where he died in September 1876, age sixty-eight.

Matthew McCune, born 27 July 1811 on the Isle of Man, was a sergeant major in the Indian Army. He and his wife, Sarah Elizabeth Caroline Scott McCune, of London, had been sent to India some years earlier. Sent to Burma during the second Anglo-Burmese War in the summer of 1852, he traveled widely with his unit, preaching the gospel along the way. Having been ordained an elder by William Willes and J. P. Meik on 11 April 1852, he baptized ten or fifteen British military men and organized a branch in Rangoon. Because of his isolation from most of the missionaries, he could not support the mission to the same degree as Meik; but within the limits of his assignment, he worked just as hard. Skelton left him in charge of the Church in Burma when the mission closed. Matthew, Sarah, and

Ancestral File, Family History Department, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah; and Conway B. Sonne, Ships, Saints, and Mariners: A Maritime Encyclopedia of Mormon Migration, 1830-1890 (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987), 186; Sonne, Saints on the Seas: A Maritime History of Mormon Migration, 1830-1890 (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1983), Appendix 1, 151. Elizabeth and William, the eventual parents of ten children, were reunited in Utah and lived in Cedar City.

Robert Skelton, “Hindostan” (Letter to Franklin D. Richards, 3 November 1855, written from Cuttack), published Millennial Star 18 (1 March 1856): 143.

For a brief biography, see Nothing More Heroic, 287-88.
their four children left India in December 1856 and arrived in Utah in September 1857.27

THE CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT OF INDIA

India, Burma, Ceylon, and Siam confronted the missionaries with major differences in almost every aspect of culture and environment: climate and seasons (while the monsoon seems to dominate popular fears about India's weather, the hot months between late February until the June monsoon are more miserable); races and languages (the modern states of India define quite clearly the eighteen to twenty-four major languages); flora and fauna (few countries offer more natural abundance and variety); geography (India has enormous rivers, towering mountains, baked deserts, undulating plateaus, fertile plains, and almost every other physical feature); religions (Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Jains, and tribal religions present a spiritual smorgasbord); governments (in contrast to modern unified states, India in the 1850s was primarily under British control—specifically, the East India Company with close support from officials appointed by the British government—but many local rulers such as maharajahs, rajahs, ranas, and nizams also controlled significant parts of the country with the acquiescence of the East India Company); social organization (the caste system was and is the primary social, economic, and religious determinant in India); and architecture (Hindu, Jain, and Buddhist architectures influenced religious structures, homes, and shops, with a generous sprinkling of Indo-Persian fortresses and monuments such as the Taj Mahal).

The contrasts go on and on. The elders found a population that was not only racially, linguistically, and religiously varied but also enormous. India’s first somewhat-reliable census was completed in 1871, only fifteen years after the mission closed. It concluded that greater India had 255 million people, about the same number as the United States in 1990. The elders spoke frequently of the masses of villagers and townspeople, and the multitudes of persons in the

bazaars and streets of the great cities. Although they had read encyclopedia articles, the few books available in Utah on India, and some reports published in the _Millennial Star_, the missionaries clearly were staggered by culture shock.

Indian religions, then, as now, were extremely complicated for the missionaries, who had all come from predominantly Christian countries. Most Indians in the 1850s were Hindus, but Muslims made up roughly one-third of the Indian populace, with smaller communities of Sikhs, Christians, and Jains. 28

Hinduism alone includes an extraordinary diversity of gods, philosophies, folk traditions, doctrines, practices, stories, scriptures, and beliefs. Worship varies from town to town, temple to temple, caste to caste, and home to home. Certain ideas and beliefs are common throughout the country, but doctrinal unity is neither possible nor expected. The major unifying principle is caste, which holds that every soul is born in exactly the right place. Karma—the inexorable law of cause and effect—determines present and future births, whether human, animal, plant, or inanimate. Tradition and the _astras_ (sacred texts) spell out appropriate behavior for each caste and among the untouchables. The LDS missionaries could not escape the ever-present influence of caste—still the dominant social problem of the twenty-first century. 29 Whether they were bargaining with a bearer or a wagon driver, a cook or a cleaning person, there were absolute limits in time, distance, weight, contents, and every other conceivable measure or limitation beyond which persons of any particular caste would not go. One example was Skelton's failure to convince a group of cart drivers to move some furniture beyond a certain point. He was forced to hire new drivers and carts to complete his journey.

Most of the missionaries described such Hindu practices as child marriage, rules against widows remarrying, festivals, pilgrimages, food preparation, and so forth. Woolley described the festive

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28Especially useful in surveying Indian history and religions are Stanley Wolpert, _A New History of India_, 6th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), and Wolpert, _India_ (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).
symbolic burning of the demon Ravana, while Hugh Findlay commented on the "superstition" that a particular god-image was acquiring greater influence because it was growing larger when the real explanation is that it was absorbing ghee (clarified butter) poured over it in ceremonial ablutions.\(^{30}\) William Fotheringham recorded:

> I thoughtlessly touched with a bamboo cane the hurriah (earthen pot) containing the cooked rice of one of the Gharawans [drivers]. He informed me that the vessel and rice were polluted, and that I must pay him one anna (about three cents), and take the hurriah with its contents, he having no further use for it, as it was defiled by the touch of a Ferrenge (Christian). . . . We had no desire to trifle with their peculiar religious notions, which were dear to them, as ours are to us. I paid him the anna, after which he and his friends toned down.\(^{31}\)

Jones, Fotheringham, and Skelton were sickened by the Churuk Puja or swinging ceremony, conducted at the end of each Bengali year in and around Calcutta in celebration of the god Shiva. Sunnyasis (holy mendicants) hung from large hooks in their backs, swinging in a circle from a beam twenty feet high. Skelton described in detail the great temple of Juggernaut at Puri, 250 miles southwest of Calcutta, with thousands of pilgrims abandoning family responsibilities and casually risking their lives to complete their pilgrimage to the temple of Krishna.\(^{32}\) He also described thousands of pilgrims clamoring to get aboard small craft to cross the Mahanadi River on their way to Puri. Some were lost in the raging current; but according to Fotheringham, who witnessed a similar scene, no one seemed disturbed.

Most of the elders read what they could about Hinduism, the Muslim prophet Muhammad, and other religious topics or figures. Although they uniformly rejected and criticized Indian religious beliefs, they did their best to learn all that they considered useful regarding the other faiths.

The elders were troubled with what they considered the degenerate dishonesty of Indians, whether Brahmin priests or outcaste

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\(^{30}\)Hugh Findlay, [untitled notice], *Millennial Star* 16 (4 November 1854): 702.


\(^{32}\)Skelton, *Journal and Papers*, 179, 189-95.
sweepers, and whether Hindu, Muslim, or Christian. The missionaries' opinions were shaped by direct contact with Indians but also by the general contempt of foreigners in India, especially Protestant missionaries. Hollis Read, an American Protestant missionary in India during the same period, wrote scornfully:

Idleness is the mother of vice everywhere; but I shall not attempt to describe the progeny in so fertile a soil as India.

Nor are dishonesty, falsehood, dissimulation and subtlety less prominent traits of native character. It may be said of them . . . they are always liars! They justify falsehood, and deem it comely if the end be good. Expediency seems their only standard of right and wrong.  

For many generations, Indians had been taught the virtue of wit, the ability to outthink or be cleverer in a transaction than another. What Christians would consider dishonest, most Indians considered clever or smart and, therefore, legitimate. Several of the elders, notably Skelton, wrote of the Indians’ “avarice for money and . . . meanness in defrauding” them. Pice, pice, pice, an infinitesimally small monetary amount, seemed to be the only focus of the natives’ lives. Whatever the dishonest practices or their rationale, the elders did not appreciate the deception they frequently endured.

The elders were also deeply disturbed by the Indian Christian community. They probably overreacted out of disappointment when Willes's numerous converts quickly disappeared, but as a result they tended to stigmatize Indian Christians as less reliable and more dishonest than the general populace. Most of the converts had been Baptists, a denomination that helped mitigate their desperate poverty with direct contributions. Willes's converts fell away when they found that he would not pay them for being Mormons and were bought back by the Baptists.

The LDS missionaries probably did not fully understand the circumstances of Indian Christians. When they became Christian, they also became outcaste, literally losing their place in society. They had no social network, no occupation, no means of financial support, no place to live, no community, and no political rights. They

33 Hollis Read, *India and Its People: Ancient and Modern* (Columbus, Ohio: J. & H. Miller, 1859), 94.

formed, in effect, a Christian quasi-caste, and their occupation was now to be Christians. That was what they did for a living. When they went from denomination to denomination or from mission to mission seeking higher compensation, they were behaving reasonably within their cultural context. To add to the cultural complexity, the elders criticized the Indians for desiring financial support while the elders themselves were living off the generosity of the local people. In their minds, as ministers of the gospel, they had a right to ask for support just as, when they became members, they expected to provide support. But this was not a distinction the Indians could be expected to understand.

Historically, Christianity had appeared in India with the Apostle Thomas about A.D. 50. Since about A.D. 250, India has had a Christian community. Jesuit missionaries reached India in the 1500s, followed by Protestant missionaries in the early eighteenth century. By 1851, India had many Christians and three distinct Christian congregational approaches to caste. First, the Thomas Christians were fully integrated into Indian society with caste roles like those of any other Indian religious, social, or occupational group. The Mormon missionaries had least to do with this group. Second, the Catholic communities generally accepted caste as a reality of life in India but hoped that, as Christianity permeated their converts’ lives, they would see the injustice of the system and reject it. This did not happen. Third, most Protestant denominations rejected caste as a major social ill and condemned the Catholics for continuing an un-Christian practice. These approaches had implications for so basic a question as translating the scriptures. Catholics took the position that using vernacular language would provide ammunition for Hindu critics’ accusations that Christians were lower caste and would defile upper-caste Hindus. This position was articulated in 1823 by Abbé Dubois who suggested an abridged translation, “avoiding all mention of Jesus having been a carpenter, for instance, or of his having surrounded himself with fishermen or others of low caste.” Vernacular translations would “only excite contempt.”

35 Britsch, Nothing More Heroic, 274.
By 1851, Catholic and Protestant missions were well established in most parts of the country, with general "understandings" about areas of influence, even though complaints of "sheep-stealing" were not uncommon. Typically, mission societies established stations or compounds, consisting of a church or chapel (that often doubled as a schoolhouse), missionary quarters, houses or huts for catechists, servants, and attendants, and dwellings for members of the congregation. For both Catholics and Protestants, being a missionary was generally considered to be a lifetime vocation. These missionaries, who were administrators as well as proselytizers, traveled on horseback or by bullock cart from village to village, always attended by retinues of catechists and servants. Both Catholic and Protestant missionaries were generally well supported by home mission societies. Protestant missionaries often had families; some single women also served missions.  

Another cultural complication was the highly charged religious environment in India in the 1850s. Since the eighteenth century, East India Company officers, military leaders, and government officials saw religious proselyting as a threat to peace and social stability. They strongly discouraged missionaries from entering British India until 1813 and then forbade them to baptize sepoys (native Indian soldiers). For the most part, the Catholic and Protestant missions had worked out an accommodation with the Raj, and official suspicions focused, for the most part, on evangelical missionaries who seemed to care more for Indians' souls than for social and religious harmony.

The Mormon missionaries—newcomers without these shared understandings—naturally fell under official suspicion. The missionaries must have seemed like vagabonds without the stability of compounds or financial support from their home church. Except for three small chapels in Calcutta, Poona, and Karachi, and a few rented halls, the Church had no physical presence in India. The missionaries themselves either stayed with generous hosts or rented rooms for a month or two before traveling on to another city. They carried their own baggage, something no other European would consider doing. Even though they translated or commissioned translations of tracts into at least four Indian languages (and the Book of

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38Ibid., 79-80.
Mormon into Bengali—never published), they probably never even knew about the Sanskrit/vernacular translation argument.

Furthermore, the elders had a ready explanation for these difficulties. Already accustomed to being “persecuted” for their beliefs, they easily read official disapproval as just another manifestation of Satan’s efforts to curtail their important work.

**The Scope of Missionary Service**

Although the missionaries exchanged their woollen clothing for cotton and linen, they did not change the nature of their message or adapt it much for a different culture. The basics were faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repentance, baptism, and the gift of the Holy Ghost. They also bore testimony of Joseph Smith, whom many of the elders knew personally, of the Book of Mormon, the immanence of the Lord’s second coming, and the day of judgement. The missionaries freely used tracts and pamphlets such as Lorenzo Snow’s *The Only Way to Be Saved*, and Parley P. Pratt’s *Voice of Warning*. In Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, Karachi, and Moulmein, they translated their pamphlets into the local Bengali, Tamil, Marathi, or Hindustani and also wrote new tracts especially for local consumption. Thus, even though they worked most easily with English speakers, they also made great exertions to communicate their message to the Indians.

The elders relished opportunities to read Church publications, especially the *Millennial Star*, the *Deseret News*, the *Seer*, the *Journal of Discourses*, and other books and pamphlets. As their diaries record, when the “home mail” arrived, the elders spent most of their time for the next few days reading every word from the Church or family. Although India was half a world from Utah and England, the elders thus remained in reasonably close contact.

The most difficult doctrinal point of the gospel message for European contacts was polygamy. Hindus were generally monogamous but were familiar enough with the Muslim doctrine that allowed polygamy (most Muslims were monogamous) that they were undisturbed by the concept. Three weeks before the Utah missionaries had arrived in Calcutta, the mail steamer brought newspapers that included the announcement made at the conference where they

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39 Whittaker, “Richard Ballantyne and the Defense of Mormonism in India in the 1850s”; and Whittaker, “Early Mormon Pamphleteering” (Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, 1982), 243-64, and Appendix D.
had been called. More to the point, it also announced that Mormon elders would arrive soon in India. Even before they landed, the Anglican Bishop of Calcutta had met with other Protestant ministers to plan their united response. They chose cold indifference rather than open hostility and shunned contact as much as possible. Even in the tiniest villages, the elders found tracts attacking Mormonism, especially polygamy. As their diaries record, Europeans at even the smallest military outposts, in rice fields, or on indigo plantations seemed to know and be shocked by Mormonism and polygamy.40

Such antagonism made traveling without purse or scrip difficult. Five elders (Willes, Savage, Musser, Leonard, and Hugh Findlay) found employment as clerks or English teachers to survive. Some lived for an extended time on only bread and water. Amazingly, though nearly all of them suffered from illness, especially malaria, none died. This record is remarkable given the high mortality among British soldiers in India from malaria, cholera, dysentery, other environmentally supported diseases, alcoholism, syphilis, and other socially transmitted diseases.

Significantly, none of the elders expressed doubts about the policy of traveling without purse or scrip. Skelton admitted that he went hungry but only because he did not want to ask for food. They believed that relying on providence for their needs tested their faith as missionaries and also tested the people's worthiness to receive the gospel. Their zeal in building chapels (Poona and Karachi) and publishing tracts, pamphlets, and even an Indian version of the Millennial Star sometimes stretched them into debt. Nevertheless, when they were all home, six of them had traveled around the world without purse or scrip.

Given India's diverse racial makeup and the few missionaries, where did they choose to concentrate their efforts? The record is quite clear that they saw the gospel message as being for all, rather than being limited by race. By the time William Willes arrived in December 1851, Maurice White had baptized Anna, an Indian woman, and Willes baptized almost two hundred Indians in late 1851 and early 1852. However, only two remained active. One was Elizabeth Xavier Tait of Poona; but it is only from other sources, not from Hugh Findlay's journal, that we know she was Indian. Further, Find-

40For example, see Skelton, Journal and Papers, 172.
lay also baptized Douglas Davies; the Bombay newspapers call him Eurasian, but Findlay does not mention it. Although the missionaries criticized the Indians for various perceived faults, they did not base their criticisms on race. More than a hundred Europeans were baptized, but only about twenty emigrated to Zion. The history of the sixty-one Saints who remained in India when the mission closed in 1856 is, with one or two exceptions, unknown. Joseph Richards ordained Maurice White, one of the first four converts, an elder and put him in charge of the branch.

**THE MORMON PERCEPTION OF EUROPEANS IN INDIA**

The LDS missionaries were also frequently shocked by the Europeans they met in India. Soldiers had earned the worst reputation through their loose behavior with Indian prostitutes, (*bibis* in Bengal, *bubus* in Bombay). The East India Company, which had taken control of Bengal after the Battle of Plassey in 1757, had an official policy that discouraged English women, considered too frail for India’s insalubrious climate, from accompanying their husbands. By company policy, single officers were encouraged to take Indian brides or mistresses. The Eurasian children born of these unions were out of place in both societies. Then in the early nineteenth century, influenced by what came to be called Victorian mores, morals veered again to discourage British civil servants and soldiers in India from taking Indian wives, although a more liberal policy about allowing English families to be posted with their men did not flourish until the 1830s. As a result, British officers continued to live with Indian mistresses and common soldiers continued to visit *bibis.*

In addition to the continued birth of Eurasian children, “venereal diseases . . . incapacitated nearly a third of the British troops.” Even though proselyting soldiers and other Europeans did not pose a language barrier for the elders, they were disgusted by the sexual

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immorality, compounded by the drinking and gambling endemic in the cantonments.

They might have found common ground with the evangelical missionaries, who had a presence in the country that dated from Baptist William Carey's 1793 arrival in Serampore, near Calcutta. They had established themselves as a force for higher morality, despite the Anglican and official mistrust of them. However, the evangelical missionaries were outraged by Mormon polygamy, considering them as immoral—or worse—than the *bibi*-patronizing soldiers.

In short, the elders experienced almost universal social isolation, considering the Indians dishonest, the soldiers immoral, and most other British officers, civil servants, and missionaries hypocritical. The missionaries harshly judged British India as “the dark satanic colonial empire.” They observed that Indians in the cantonment towns were markedly more immoral than those beyond British influence. Skelton contrasted the shy modesty of Indian women in remoter towns with those who brazenly offered their sexual favors in broad daylight near cantonments.

Furthermore, the missionaries, knowing that their missions would last only two or three years, were driven by an urgency foreign to the professional Catholic and Protestant missionaries who could afford to establish long-term relations. This urgency was also fueled by Mormon millenarian beliefs that the Lord was pouring out a wrathful judgement that would be fulfilled at his second coming. In April 1854, Truman Leonard lamented the “impending storms not far distant, for *I feel that India will be dreadfully scourged before she will appreciate the blessings of the Almighty.*” Twelve months later, toward the close of the mission, Skelton penned scornfully:

> The state of society renders our efforts inutile [futile], for as a general thing, they [the Europeans] live in palaces, and cannot be approached without a card to introduce us. . . . They never go out unless they are slung in a carriage, which is the usual custom for the gentry in the evenings, when they turn out by thousands, lounging in a reclining position, like so many helpless epicures, which indeed they

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44Truman Leonard, Letter to N. V. Jones, 23 April 1853, Karachi, India, Leonard Letter Collection, photocopy in my possession; emphasis mine.
are to all intents and purposes, for their hearts are set upon the gross luxuries, such as wine and beer, &c., until the spirit of the Lord has ceased striving with them, and they are left to glut their carnal propensities without restraint, and are willingly lulled to sleep by a hireling priesthood. They are fast ripening for destruction, for the servants of the Lord have washed their feet as a testimony against them, and left them in the hands of God, to do with them according to the attributes of His justice.45

Ironically, despite the elders’ condemnation of the British Raj, if it had not been functioning so widely and so well in India, they could not have traveled over even a small part of the subcontinent with the safety they enjoyed. It was the British presence that provided relative peace and limited liberty.

**INDIAN ARMY RELIGIOUS POLICIES**

From the East India Company’s earliest days of control, it struggled to manage religious issues in India. Almost to a man, the British rulers of India professed the Anglican communion and sustained the importance of public Christian adherence among the European troops, whatever their private beliefs or behaviors. Most cantonments provided chaplains and chapels, and attendance at Sunday services was compulsory. Civil servants, too, were expected to subscribe publicly to Christianity. Although the East India Company’s military was originally composed of units and officers deployed directly from the British Isles, the policy of recruiting and training native troops had increased steadily until, in 1857, the ratio was 40,000 Europeans to 232,000 sepoys.46 Usually entire units were made up of a single religion or caste—Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Sikhs, or Muslims. This practice made sense given religious law about food and personal interactions. By policy, Indians were allowed to practice their own religions. As Penelope Carson wrote, “The result was a pragmatic policy of ‘toleration’ for all religions in India which was elevated into a principle.”47 By policy, “no scriptures were to be read

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46Wolpert, *A New History of India*, 233-34.

47Penelope Carson, “Missionaries, Bureaucrats and the People of India 1793-1833,” in *Orientalism, Evangelicalism and the Military Cantonment*
in government-funded schools. No help was to be given to charitable institutions suspected of having any intention to proselytize. Religious tracts were not to contain anything offensive to Hindus or Muslims. There was to be no proselytisation among the sepoys.”

Because Mormon elders were treated with the same official suspicion as other evangelical missionaries, their record contains many unhappy encounters between the missionaries and regimental commanders. At every cantonment up the Ganges plain—Chinsura, Dinapore, Chunar, Mirzapore, Allahabad, Cawnpore, Agra, and Delhi—the elders were forbidden to preach in cantonments and severely restricted in their movements and interactions with the European troops. In Bombay, Poona, Ahmadnagar, and Jalna, in Madras, in Karachi, Kotri, and Hyderabad in Sind, the situation was the same. The missionaries were convinced that they had as much right to preach in cantonments as anywhere else. After all, they were either British or American citizens who thought they had the right to practice and preach their religion without restraint. They believed they were fully within the bounds of the law and were suffering from base prejudice.

Almost certainly the commanders were influenced by the anti-Mormon bias of the chaplains and ministers with whom they already had comfortable relationships. They probably exceeded their technical authority by preventing the elders from proselytizing among troops off the base or preventing Mormon soldiers from attending church meetings, which happened in Poona, Belgaum, Karachi, and Madras.

However, it is clear that the Mormons were not being singled out when they were excluded from teaching in cantonments. Furthermore, British law was not applied uniformly in India. The limits and rights of military commanders was vague, although the necessity of order and discipline were preeminent. India did not become part of the British Empire until 1858. When Hugh Findlay asked if British law applied at the Bombay cantonment, he received the accurate but unsatisfying answer, “Not exactly.” The extended debate in the Bom-


bay papers triggered by his presence focused on the rights of British soldiers to worship as they chose, and most writers sided with the soldiers' primacy of conscience. 49

Not until 1864 did the government of India, then under direct Crown control, carefully evaluate cantonment administrative practices and create uniform policies. Until that point, cantonment commanders relied on their English military training, shared understandings among themselves, and directions from the British governors of the three presidencies: Bengal, Madras, and Bombay. When commanders shared word of their decisions to exclude Mormon missionaries, the rejection of the elders became almost universal.

THE MEANING OF THE MISSION

In my studies of the expansion of the Church into Asia and the Pacific from 1843 to the present, I have not found an experience that demanded more sacrifice than the mission to India. 50 Even though more than seventy years have passed since B. H. Roberts found “nothing more heroic” among the Church’s missions, even the remarkable and challenging missions undertaken since then have not surpassed it. The mission was heroic, but was it a wise decision to open it in the first place? Do devotion, dedication to principles and purposes, faithfulness, faith, and human courage justify undertaking such a demanding task? Should it have been attempted at that time? What meanings can ultimately be drawn from it?

When I was defending my master’s thesis in 1964, a senior history professor at BYU asked me if Brigham Young made a mistake by sending missionaries to India. At the time I was not sure and said so. But as I have steeped myself in the history of the Church’s missions over the past forty years, I have become convinced that the undertaking was not misguided, even though matters did not work out as the missionaries themselves wished. Certainly it may have been poorly timed, given the Church’s limited resources and the policy of sending missionaries out without support from home. But

49Findlay and Findlay, Missionary Journals of Hugh Findlay, 48, 104.
Church leaders did not know at the beginning what the elders had learned by the end. It is doubtful whether the mission would have done much better with regular financing, but it is possible.

The mission to India was part of the expansive vision of the early Church. Driven by apocalyptic urgency, Latter-day Saints believed that the gospel needed to be preached in every nation. “Prove the world” (D&C 84:79), quoted the elders. “Gather the wheat from the tares.” (Matt. 13:24-30.) “Gather mine elect. . . . Reap with all your might” (D&C 33:6-7.) The journals and writings of the India elders contain no murmurings about their hard lot. Not one elder questioned the rightness of opening the mission. True, they considered most of the Europeans and Indians they encountered too deeply entrenched in sin to be redeemed and longed to leave the “benighted and evil place,” but they did not question that someone needed to be there.

What can realistically be called the fruits of this mission? First, it was the first true encounter between Mormons and followers of two other world religions, Hinduism and Islam.

Second, it gave the elders themselves experiences that were virtually unheard of in the nineteenth century. Most of them had already crossed the American continent by wagon train or on foot in the Mormon Battalion. Now they traveled by ship to India and back, surviving tremendous hardships and storms at sea.51 Within India, they traveled thousands of miles by foot and bullock cart, encountering wild animals, heat, humidity, torrential rain, wind, dust, and other discomforts. The missionaries survived by the kindness and generosity of the people of India, sometimes no more than the rice and fruit that widows, the poor, and others who had little to share could offer. All of the elders contracted malaria, cholera, fevers of unknown origins, or dysentery. Sometimes they were so ill that those around them feared for their lives. They continued their efforts to the limits of their strength, however, until they were released, either for health reasons or by Brigham Young. (Robert Owens was released by Jones.)

51I have already mentioned Levi Savage’s experiences in recrossing the Great Plains with the Willie Handcart Company. Richard Ballantyne sailed from Madras to London, a 140-day voyage; then two weeks later, he led a company of more than four hundred Saints from Liverpool to New Orleans.
Following their missions, most of them lived eventful lives, fathered large families, and died in old age. All of them died in the faith. Most were seventies and high priests. Several served as bishops and high counselors. One was a traveling bishop for the Church. Many served additional missions. Chauncey Walker West was acting president of the European Mission. William Fotheringham presided in South Africa. William Willes even attempted a second opening of the East India Mission in the 1880s.

Third, although the number of converts was relatively small, several small bands of emigrants gathered to Zion from India. The LDS descendants of James Patrick Meik (through a second wife in Utah), Matthew and Sarah McCune, the Booths, the Davies, the Hefferans, the Taits, and others proudly trace their heritage to these Indian conversion experiences. Elizabeth Tait was the only native Indian convert to reach Utah from India. She and her husband, William, settled in Cedar City, Utah, and raised eight of their ten children to maturity. One of those children had ten children. If numbers of Church members can be used for evaluation, the large posterity of the Taits and McCunes may be sufficient justification for the mission. It certainly would be considered as such by their descendants.

Fourth, if religion means anything, it means changing lives for the better. The elders to India and Siam followed their religious commitments and obediently served where they were called. They did not want the sins of India on their heads, so they stayed. N. V. Jones wrote: “Surely the Lord is proving His servants as well as the people.”

Fifth, through this mission, the Church itself manifested obedience to the Lord’s command to take the restored gospel to the nations of the world before the second coming of the Lord. The Doctrine and Covenants echoed the Savior’s “great commission”: “And the voice of warning shall be unto all people, by the mouths of my disciples, whom I have chosen in these last days. And they shall go forth and none shall stay them, for I the Lord have commanded them” (D&C 1:45). The gospel was to go “unto the uttermost parts of the earth” (D&C 58:64). That included India. In dedicating the Hong Kong Temple, President Gordon B. Hinckley mentioned the

52Nathaniel V. Jones, “The East India Mission” (written in Calcutta, April 1854), Millennial Star 16 (17 June 1854): 382.
faithfulness of three elders who were called at the same time as the India elders and traveled as far as San Francisco with them. He prayed:

We are grateful for the faith of those who, nearly a century and a half ago, first came to Hong Kong as missionaries of Thy Church. Their labors were difficult and largely without reward. But their coming was an evidence of the outreach of our people to all nations of the earth in harmony with the commandments of Thy Beloved Son that the gospel should be preached to every nation, kindred, tongue and people.53

Similarly, the sacrifices of the India missionaries were also “evidence of the outreach of our people” to the nations of the world.

53“May Thy Watch Care Be Over It” (dedicatory prayer of the Hong Kong Temple), Church News, 1 June 1996, 4.
The Latter-day Saints and the railroads each played key roles in settling the West, roles that intersected at several significant points. For example, a map drawn by members of the Mormon Battalion became the basis for proposals to build a southern transcontinental railroad. These, in turn, led to the Gadsden Purchase of 1853.\(^1\) Perhaps nowhere was this interaction between the Mormons and the railroads more significant than in Brigham Young’s Utah.

A popular misconception is that the Mormons in Utah opposed or even feared the railroad’s coming because it would end the security of their isolation. On the contrary, the Saints were actively interested almost from the beginning in railway links with the outside world. Once the rails entered Deseret, the Church as an institution

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participated in extending the tracks to the most remote corners of the Great Basin kingdom.

EARLY INTEREST IN A TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILROAD

The United States’s annexation of territory from Mexico in 1848 stimulated great interest in a Pacific railroad. Various cities along the Mississippi River vied with each other for the anticipated economic benefits of being the jumping-off point. Even though the Mormons were located far to the west, their interest in railroads came early. Historian Edward Tullidge probably overstated the case when he claimed, “It is a singular fact, yet one well-substantiated in the history of the West, that the pioneers of Utah were the first projectors and the first proposers to the American nation of a transcontinental railroad.” Yet Brigham Young later reflected:

I do not suppose that we traveled but one day from the Missouri River here, but what we looked for a track where the rails could be laid with success, for a railroad through this Territory to go to the Pacific Ocean. This was long before the gold was found, when this Territory belonged to Mexico. We never went through a canyon, or worked our way over the dividing ridges without marking where the rails could be laid; and I really did think that the railway would have been here long before this. . . .

When we came here over the hills and plains in 1847 we made our calculations for a railroad across the country, and were satisfied that merchants in those eastern cities, or in Europe, instead of doubling Cape Horn for the west, would take the cars and on arriving at San Francisco would take steamer and run to China or Japan and make their purchases, and with their goods could be back again in London and other European cities, in eighty or eighty-five days. All these calculations we made on our way here.

Young’s far-sighted idea of combined sea and land shipments would finally be realized when containerized freighting became common during the later twentieth century.

While conventions in the Midwest were held to promote one location or another as the starting point for the future railroad, the Mormons met in Salt Lake City to assure the railroad’s passage

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2 Quoted in “Utah Railroads” (pamphlet), compiled by Kate B. Carter (Salt Lake City: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1966), 137.
3 Deseret News, 11 June 1868, in Journal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 10 June 1868, LDS Church Archives.
through Utah. Utah’s first territorial legislative assembly on 3 March 1852 memorialized Congress, urging the construction through Utah of “a national central railroad from some eligible point on the Mississippi or Missouri Rivers to San Diego, San Francisco, Sacramento, or Astoria.”

As various sections of the country lobbied to have the “Pacific Railroad,” as it was then known, begin in their area, Jefferson Davis, U.S. Secretary of War, authorized scientific surveys in 1853 to analyze the relative merits of the five leading routes then being proposed. Captain John W. Gunnison, who led the exploration of the route along the 38th parallel, entered Utah from Colorado and followed the Sevier River to the lake bearing the same name. Here on 26 October 1853, he and seven others of his group were ambushed and killed by Indians.

His death constitutes an unfortunate chapter in the intertwining of railroad and Mormon history. Many Gentiles were quick to blame the Mormons. But his biographer insisted that Gunnison enjoyed the “goodwill” of the Mormons, and he found “no evidence” of any Mormon “displeasure” roused by a book Gunnison had recently published about the Mormons. B. H. Roberts claimed that Judge W. W. Drummond, who had bitter feelings toward the Latter-day Saints, was the first to accuse the Mormons of the crime. However, Lieutenant E. G. Beckwith, Gunnison’s assistant, declared that the Mormons had not incited the Indians and that such charges were “not only entirely false, but there is no accidental circumstance connected with it affording the slightest foundation for such a charge.”

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4Acts, Resolutions, and Memorials (Great Salt Lake City: Legislative Assembly, 1852), 225.


6 Ibid., 139-41. See also John Williams Gunnison, The Mormons, or, Latter-day Saints, in the Valley of the Great Salt Lake: A history of their rise and progress, peculiar doctrines, present condition, and prospects derived from personal observations, during a residence among them (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo & Co., 1852).

7B. H. Roberts, A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1957 printing), 4:46.

8Quoted in ibid., 4:46.
Noted historian Hubert H. Bancroft, writing not long afterward, also concluded that there was “no valid proof” against the Mormons—indeed, that “there are many circumstances pointing in the opposite direction,” such as the fact that one of the victims was a Mormon.9 A more recent historian affirmed that “the massacre was carried out as revenge for the murder of an old and respected Pahvant Indian by members of a passing wagon train” three weeks earlier; this tragedy grew out of the tensions aroused by the Walker Indian War.10

Even though Gunnison had been personally skeptical about the practicability of the route he was investigating,11 news of his explorations and tragic death probably helped focus attention on the concept of a railroad’s passing through the area. On 14 January 1854, the Utah Territorial Legislature drafted yet another memorial to Congress recommending that a railroad be built from Council Bluffs, across southern Wyoming, and then down the Provo River to Utah Valley where the railroad could continue either to Oregon or to San Diego.12

The audience attending a “railroad meeting” in the old adobe Salt Lake Tabernacle only two weeks later enthusiastically endorsed this recommendation. Five days later, George A. Smith reported that “Pacific railroad fever is raging” in Provo, the people anticipating an increase in employment as well as more economical shipping.13

In the spring of 1854, Beckwith reappeared on the Utah scene when he was assigned to explore the 41st parallel route west from Fort Bridger. He concluded that a feasible route for the railroad could pass through either Weber Canyon or Provo Canyon, skirt the south end of the Great Salt Lake, and then continue toward the Pacific Coast.14

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9Quoted in ibid., 4:46.
13Journal History, 31 January and 5 February 1854.
ROUTE INTO THE GREAT BASIN

The secession of the Southern states and formation of the Confederacy in 1861 left the Northern states alone to compete over the transcontinental route. On 1 July 1862 Congress passed legislation authorizing the construction of the new railroad. Significantly, it was to be called the Union Pacific. Brigham Young immediately invested $5,000 in stock and three years later became one of the road's directors.

In early 1864 the Union Pacific appointed Samuel B. Reed, an experienced railroad surveyor, to identify a possible route from the Green River into the Great Basin. By late May, he was in Salt Lake City where he was amazed at what he saw: “I have never been in a town of this size in the United States where everything is kept in such perfect order,” he wrote. “No hogs or cattle [are] allowed to run at large in the streets and every available nook of ground is made to bring forth fruit, vegetables or flowers for man’s use.”

Brigham Young provided Reed with teams, tents, and other gear plus fifteen men. This party first explored Weber Canyon, where Reed discovered the topographical profile to be “much more favorable than I expected to find.” Following Young's instructions, Mormon settlers along the way supplied the surveyors with food. Reed continued his explorations east to the Green River before returning to Salt Lake City in mid-August where he “pitched his tent in Brigham Young’s yard.” The next day he received a telegram from Union Pacific headquarters instructing him to explore a second route through Provo Canyon. After completing this assignment, a task which occupied another two months, he concluded that Weber Canyon was still the “best line that can be found through the Wasatch range.”

15 Quoted in Maury Klein, Union Pacific: Birth of a Railroad 1862-1893 (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1987), 53.
16 Samuel B. Reed, Report of Samuel B. Reed of Surveys and Explorations from Green River to Great Salt Lake City (New York: Union Pacific Railroad Company, 1865), 4.
17 Klein, Union Pacific, 54.
18 Reed, Report, 9-11.
War ended in 1865, construction finally began on the transcontinental railway.

**MORMON VIEWS ON THE APPROACHING RAILROAD**

In 1862, when Congress was debating the value of launching the transcontinental railroad, Brigham Young extolled its merits to an audience in the Old Tabernacle: "The Overland Mail company brings our letters, books, magazines, &c., and is as great an accommodation as can well be until we have a railroad through here, which I hope we shall have ere long, if it is right."  

During 1867 and 1868, as Union Pacific construction crews were racing across the Wyoming plains and penetrating the Rocky Mountains, Brigham Young and other Church leaders publicly shared their views on the railroad with increasing frequency. "Speaking of the completion of this railroad," Brigham Young declared in May of 1867, "I am anxious to see it. . . . Hurry up, hasten the work! We want to hear the iron horse puffing through this valley. What for? To bring our brethren and sisters here. It opens to us the market, and we are at the door of New York, right at the threshold of the emporium of the United States. We can send our butter, eggs, cheese, and fruits, and receive in return oysters, clams, cod fish, mackarel [sic], oranges, and lemons."  

A month later, Brigham Young defused concerns about the approaching railway:

> By and bye we shall hear the locomotive whistle, screaming through our valleys, dragging in its train our brethren and sisters, and taking away the apostates. "Will not our enemies overslaugh [sic] us when we get the railroad?" No, ladies and gentlemen. Do you want to know what will take every apostate and corrupt hearted man and woman from our midst? Live so that the fire of God may be in you and around about you and burn them out.

At the October 1868 general conference, Apostle George Q. Cannon expressed a rather pessimistic view when he described the railroad as "a power that menaces us with utter destruction and overthrow. We are told—openly and without disguise, that when the

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20Young, 26 May 1867, ibid., 12:54.
21Young, 16 June 1867, ibid., 12:63.
railroad is completed there will be such a flood of so-called ‘civilization’ brought in here that every vestige of us, our church and institutions shall be completely obliterated.”

The next day, however, President Young seemed to rebut this pessimistic attitude:

We want to associate with men who aspire after pure knowledge, wisdom and advancement, and who are for introducing every improvement in the midst of the people, like the company who are building this railroad. We thank them and the government for it. Every time I think of it I feel God bless them, hallelujah! Do they want to skin us? I hope not. Do they want to destroy us? I think not. ... Do we believe in trade and commerce? Yes. And by and by we will send our products to the east and to the west.

Although Brigham Young obviously looked forward to the railroad’s benefits, he also recognized its liabilities and moved determinedly to neutralize them. Ever since coming to the Great Basin, Young had stressed the importance of a self-sufficient economy—mostly out of necessity, but also as a means for the Saints to maintain their independence. To this end he had created “home industries” and encouraged the faithful to patronize them rather than import goods from outside. Mining was discouraged because it would compromise self-sufficiency. The coming of the railroad, however, would facilitate the importation of outside goods, make mining more profitable, and bring in Gentiles as well as immigrant converts.

He charged Eliza R. Snow with seeing that the Relief Society was organized in every settlement to encourage women to support home manufactures. Zion’s Cooperative Mercantile Institution and ZCMI branches throughout the territory were organized to buy and sell commodities, spread profits throughout the communities, and make it unnecessary for the Saints to deal with Gentile merchants. Schools of the Prophets were established in Salt Lake City and other settlements to set and coordinate economic policies and to strengthen fraternal priesthood ties.

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22Cannon, 7 October 1864, ibid., 12:290-91.
23Young, 8 October 1868, ibid., 12:288.
COMPLETING THE RAILROAD

Once the Union Pacific accepted Reed’s recommendation that the rails enter Utah Territory by Weber Canyon, rather than Provo Canyon, the route around the Great Salt Lake became the next issue. Mormon leaders joined the residents of Salt Lake City in seeking to persuade railroad officials to run the line through Utah’s capital city and around the south shore of the lake. On 10 June 1868 “a very large and enthusiastic audience” of three thousand people convened in the new, domed Tabernacle, which had been completed the previous year.

Addressing this audience, Brigham Young stated:

Whether it is the province of this community to dictate in this affair will be better understood when the track is laid. We are willing to do our share of the work provided we get well paid for it. . . . I know what my wishes are, and I understand what would be for our benefit in building the railroad. We have undertaken to do a certain section as far as the grading is concerned. Whether we shall have the privilege of the iron horse with every train of cars that passes from the west to the east I do not know. Still I would like to hear the whistle, and the puffing of the iron horse every evening and through the night, in the morning and through the day. If the Company which first arrives should deem it to their advantage to leave us out in the cold, we will not be so far off but we can have a branch line for the advantage of this city.

“I want this railroad to come through this city,” Young insisted:

and to pass on the south shore of the Lake. We want the benefits of this railroad for our emigrants, so that after they land in New York they may get on board the cars and never leave them again until they reach this city.

When this work is done if the tariff is not too high we shall see the people going east to see their friends and they will come and see us, and when we are better known to the world I trust we shall be better liked. 25

Despite these efforts, Union Pacific officials elected to run the route north of the lake. Irked, Brigham Young lamented: “We want it in this city where it belongs. And that is not all, the attempt to carry it in that direction is an insult to the people of this city, for in so doing they have tried to shun us. . . . We do not care about it; we are

25Deseret News, 11 June 1868, in Journal History, 10 June 1868.
in the habit of being insulted and imposed upon. Far from wishing not to have a railroad, it ought to have been built years ago.” 26

Although genuine anti-Mormonism took many forms in the nineteenth century, most historians have agreed that economic considerations, rather than a desire to snub the Mormons, dictated the route. The northern route was shorter. Furthermore, the timber and water, which were crucial for construction, were more readily available in the Promontory Mountains than in the arid regions south of the lake. 27

Even though the Mormons lost the battle to have the railroad pass through Salt Lake City, they nevertheless played a key role in constructing final portions of both the Central Pacific and Union Pacific. Under the general direction of Brigham Young and the School of the Prophets, local wards formed construction companies and became subcontractors for building the railroads. This maneuver not only promised to spur Utah’s cash-poor economy with railroad wages but also lessened the need for Gentile workmen. At a meeting in Provo in May 1868, for example, Bishop Abraham O. Smoot encouraged men to sign up for work on the railroad. “We will do our part,” he exhorted, “but must not neglect our fields.” He instructed the men to consult with their bishops who would organize them into companies before they left. 28

The Church-owned Deseret Evening News stressed the public relations value of the Saints’ participation in railroad construction:

Our citizens expect to do all in their power this Summer to grade the road for the rails between the head of Echo Canyon and this valley! It is gratifying to think that we have such an opportunity offered to us. No number of words would have such an effect, as the grading of this road according to contract will have, in disabusing the public mind respecting us and our views. Our protestations die upon the air; but our works live. . . . It may be that the world will believe after awhile that we are not afraid of our principles and system being fairly tested in the broad light of day, and that we have no disposition to

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26Young, 16 August 1868, Journal of Discourses, 12:271.
28J. Marinus Jensen, History of Provo, Utah (N.p.: Marinus Jensen, 1924), 230; see also Arrington, Great Basin Kingdom, 261-63.
seclude ourselves or to run into a corner to hide ourselves from scrutiny. 29

In January 1873, Apostle George Q. Cannon quoted an epitaph attributed to Brigham Young: "It was a very poor religion that would not stand one railroad." Cannon then added, "I do not know whether he ever did make the remark, but whether he did or not, it is true. It is a poor religion that will not stand one, two, three, or half a dozen railroads." 30

The completion of the transcontinental railroad was marked by the celebrated driving of the gold spike on 10 May 1869 at Promontory Summit. 31 Although the governors of California and Utah were among the dignitaries present for this "wedding of the rails," Brigham Young was conspicuous by his absence. According to economic historian Leonard Arrington, Young had been "piqued at the railroads' decision to bypass Salt Lake City" and expressed it with his pointed absence. 32 For several weeks, Young had been touring the southern settlements and had scheduled his return to Salt Lake City for 11 May, the day after the ceremony. Furthermore, as Craig Foster notes, the railroads still owed Young approximately one million dollars that he had not yet been able to collect. 33

Despite private indignation, public comments by Mormon leaders generally reflected euphoria at the accomplishment of such a great undertaking. George Q. Cannon, who earlier had pessimistically viewed the railroad's coming, now appreciatively acknowledged:

The completion of the railroad has brought us immediately in contact with the outside world, and it has also brought us prominently before the nations—not only our own nation, but other nations; and many people who have heretofore felt little or no interest in regard to the

31 A common error is to locate this event at Promontory Point, twelve miles away on the lake shore.
32 Arrington, Great Basin Kingdom, 485 note 22.
33 See Craig L. Foster, "That Canny Scotsman: John Sharp's Negotiations with the Union Pacific, 1869-1872," this volume.
people called Latter-day Saints are now, through travel, being brought in contact with them, and are disposed to investigate and to inquire concerning their faith and the nature of their organization.\textsuperscript{34}

Brigham Young made the same point, also in a public discourse: “It was said in my office, a few days ago, by a party of railroad men, while conversing with me about us as a people, ‘President Young, you are not known, your people are not known; we shall know you better hereafter, and they need not publish about you as they have, or, if they do, we shall know better than to believe them. Why do they publish such things? We are glad to become acquainted with you.’”\textsuperscript{35}

Apostle Orson Pratt believed that the railroad even fulfilled the prophecy in Isaiah 62:10: “Go through . . . the gates: prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people.” Asked Pratt:

> How was the great highway that crosses this continent constructed? . . . Did you gather out the stones? Did you prepare the level places for this great highway that the Prophet had predicted? Did you cast it up where there were hollows? . . . I don’t suppose that the ancient Prophet knew what a tunnel was. No doubt he saw in vision how the railroad looked, saw the carriages driving along with almost lightning speed, darting into the mountains on one side, and by and by saw them coming out on the other side; and he did not know how to represent it any better than to speak of it as a gate—“go through, go through the gates.”\textsuperscript{36}

George A. Smith, one of Brigham Young’s counselors, was particularly vocal in his commendation. In April 1872 he lauded how the train had transformed the problem of Mormon immigration: “We have got a railroad now and do not have to send the wagons; the business assumes another shape. The emigration is brought here with less labor and in less time.”\textsuperscript{37} The following month he recalled how the 1852 memorial to Congress, which Brigham Young had signed as territorial governor, pointed out that “the mineral resources of these mountains could never be developed without a railroad; and that if they would build a railroad, or make the neces-

\textsuperscript{34}Cannon, 15 August 1869, \textit{Journal of Discourses}, 14:46.
\textsuperscript{35}Young, 26 May 1872, ibid., 15:42-43.
\textsuperscript{36}Pratt, 18 December 1870, ibid., 15:59-60.
\textsuperscript{37}George A. Smith, 7 April 1872, ibid., 15:15-16.
sary arrangement for one, the trade of China and the East Indies would pass through the heart of the American States. We have lived to see these predictions fulfilled.\textsuperscript{38}

Meanwhile the remote ridge at Promontory was proving to be an unsatisfactory junction point between the Union Pacific and the Central Pacific. Corinne, a center of Gentile influence in Utah located about sixty miles north of Salt Lake City and twenty-five miles from Ogden, was considered as an alternative site. The Church, however, purchased 135 acres on the west bank of the Weber River and offered to give this property to the railroads if they would make Ogden their official meeting point. The offer was accepted and Ogden became known as the "Junction City."

The railroad thus became a dominant factor in shaping Ogden's character. Alma Hansen, who studied the railroad's impact on Ogden, pointed out that, despite the official enthusiasm of Church leaders for the railroad, ordinary Mormons, particularly "the older members of the Church," still had vivid memories of Gentile persecution in Illinois and Missouri. As a result, they "were quick to resent any intruders."\textsuperscript{39} Gentiles, for their part, had traditionally reciprocated with what Joseph Smith had colorfully described as "the whole concatenation of diabolical rascality and nefarious and murderous impositions" (D&C 123:5). "Under the circumstances," Hansen acknowledges, "neither Mormon nor Gentile expected much of the other, and conflict was inevitable." But as both groups pursued common commercial interests, the "antagonism rather quickly disappeared." The value-laden designations of "Gentile" or "Mormon" were used less than "the more sensible idea of citizens of Ogden.\textsuperscript{40}

**THE UTAH CENTRAL RAILROAD**

Mormon leaders had not given up on their desire to have a rail connection into Salt Lake City. Again, with exquisitely calculated obliviousness, Brigham Young and other Church leaders boycotted the general celebrations on 8 March 1869 when the Union Pacific reached Ogden in favor of holding their own meeting. Here they

\textsuperscript{38}George A. Smith, 19 May 1872, ibid., 15:31-33.
\textsuperscript{39}Alma W. Hansen, "A Historical Study of the Influence of the Railroad upon Ogden, Utah, 1868-1875" (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1953), 64.
\textsuperscript{40}Ibid., 65, 79.
chartered the Utah Central, a rail company that would build a thirty-seven-mile line to Utah’s capital. Brigham Young was elected president of the new company, and the other officers were also prominent Mormons. A few weeks later, these officers spent two days meeting with bishops, other leaders, and citizens of Davis County, discussing with them exactly where they would like the railroad to be located. “Probably their course is unexampled in the history of railroad building,” editorialized the Church’s Deseret News, “but the Utah Central Railroad is not being built by a company solely to make money, or for its own benefits; but for the good of the people and the country.”

Because of the cash shortage in the Utah Territory, this line could probably not have been built so soon had the two transcontinental railroads not settled the employment contracts they had defaulted on by transferring $600,000 worth of equipment and supplies to the new company. With this boost, construction started in Ogden on 17 May. The rails reached Kaysville by 19 November 1869 and Farmington ten days later. On a cold and foggy Monday, 10 January 1870, the tracks entered Salt Lake City. Despite the raw weather, 15,000 people celebrated the Utah Central’s completion.

Brigham Young drove the final spike. Forged of Utah iron, it was engraved with a beehive and the slogan “Holiness to the Lord.” Speaking on this occasion, one Colonel Carr, an official of the Union Pacific, declared that the Utah Central was perhaps the only railroad west of the Missouri River that has been built entirely without Government subsidies; it has been built solely with money wrung from the soil which, a few years ago, we used to consider a desert, by the strong arms of the men and women who stand before me. And almost everything used in its construction, but especially the last spike, is the product of the country. All I have to say further is that I cannot imagine how any man, whether Mormon, Gentile, saint or sinner, can do other than feel happy at the completion of this road.

Just one year after the driving of this iron spike at Salt Lake City, Church leaders took the next crucial step of extending the railroad further south.

41Deseret News, 16 June 1869.
42Quoted in Carter, “Utah Railroads,” 142.
THE UTAH SOUTHERN RAILROAD

On 17 January 1871, essentially the same group of leaders who had promoted the Utah Central organized the Utah Southern. A major objective of the new line was to provide a more effective way to transport the huge blocks of granite from the Church's quarry in Little Cottonwood Canyon to Temple Square. Canals and other schemes had been proposed, but none had proved to be a practical solution. Even before ground had been broken for the Salt Lake Temple two decades earlier, Brigham Young had foreseen this need: "We cannot get the stone for the foundation without the railroad from this place to the quarry." The Utah Southern would also provide communication with the Latter-day Saint settlements to the south and would make the newly opened mining districts in that region profitable.

Track laying started 1 May 1871. The line headed south through the Salt Lake Valley for about ten miles, then veered to the southeast where, on 6 September, it reached what became Sandy Station. (This same right-of-way would be used by Trax, Salt Lake Valley's light-rail system, over a century and a quarter later.) The site for this station, around which the town of Sandy grew up, was chosen because it was the "highest point [on a standard-gauge line] from which a branch road could be built to the mouth of Little Cottonwood Canyon." This branch line was named the Wasatch and Jordan Valley Railroad.

Speaking at the April 1872 general conference, George A. Smith referred with gratitude to the railroad's contribution to the temple. "Our brethren can observe that a very handsome addition has been made to the foundation of the Temple here since the last Annual Conference," he commented, "and they can now begin to form some idea of how the work is going to look. When you realize that all the granite that is in that immense foundation has been hauled some seventeen miles with oxen, mules and horses, you must realize that a very great job has been accomplished. But at the present time we have a railroad almost into the quarry, and the result is that the labor has been greatly lessened, and the rock and the sand

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43Young, 14 February 1853, Journal of Discourses, 1:279.
and other building material can be brought here at vastly less expense than formerly, and consequently we will be able to push the work forward more rapidly." The rails reached the quarry 4 April 1873 and were then extended to the Alta mining district deeper in the canyon three years later.

From its junction with the branch to the quarry, the Utah Southern was pushed south along the eastern bench and around the Point of the Mountain into Utah Valley. Its promotion reflected the close relationship it had with Church interests, for thirteen local bishops formed a committee, headed by Abraham O. Smoot, presiding bishop of Utah County, to supervise stock sales and actual construction. This line reached Provo on 24 November 1873 where a celebration was held. Nearly a century later, the existence of this line was influential in determining the site of the Geneva branch of U.S. Steel in Utah County.

In addition to this distinctive Utah style of constructing a railroad, Utah also supplied a unique solution to the common problem of establishing right-of-way precedence. When two trains from opposite directions reached the Point of the Mountain at the same time, the two engineers waged a lively argument about who would back his train down to the nearest siding. Brigham Young, a passenger on one of the trains, was sent for. He asked the two engineers if they had paid their tithing. One triumphantly produced a receipt while the other hung his head and conceded that his train must give way.

**THE UTAH NORTHERN RAILROAD COMPANY**

Some of the objectives of the Utah Southern Railroad were similar to those which led Mormon leaders to become involved in building a rail line to the north. Since the 1860s, the northern Utah agricultural areas had traded with Montana's mining districts, Mormon farmers becoming the main produce suppliers to the Butte area. Following the completion of the transcontinental railroad, the Gentile community of Corinne increasingly threatened to di-

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46 At that time, bishops not only presided over wards; but some were also called to coordinate temporal affairs in a broader geographical area.
48 Ibid., 278.
vert this lucrative trade from the Saints. According to Arrington, "In order to be certain that the economic position of their own settlements was protected, church officials left no stone unturned in their effort to overthrow Corinne." They concluded that a northern railroad "would consolidate the northern Mormon settlements, provide an outlet for their agricultural produce, and divert the Montana traffic from Corinne." John W. Young, Moses Thatcher, and William B. Preston therefore, organized the Utah Northern Railroad Company on 23 August 1871. Preston, then presiding bishop of Cache Valley, reported that "the people feel considerably spirited in taking stock to grade and tie, expecting to have a prominent voice" in the new railroad; "but to let foreign capitalists iron and stock it," the bishop worried, "will give them control." Still, local Church leaders promoted the project and people responded. "In the month of November," commented Goudy Hogan of Cache Valley, "the Bishop [probably Preston] called upon me to take a half mile of grading to cross a wet piece of hay land. He gave me 22 names for me to call on to help me on this job as every body was required to labor on the railroad. . . . It was a very disagreeable job but I obeyed the call and went at it with all my strength." Through such efforts the line was completed. The first train entering Logan on 31 January 1873 brought the people "great pleasure. They observed the event with speeches, music, feasting and dancing."52

In Corinne, on the other hand, residents regarded the "Mormon menace," as they termed the Utah Northern, then under construction, as a "threat to their very existence." Dennis Toohy, editor of the Corinne Reporter, lambasted the new line as pure "bosh," being "designed to monopolize the trade in skunk hides and carrots." He described the narrow-gauge roads rolling stock as "toy vehicles, half velocipede and half wheelbarrow," and asserted that locomotive boilers were "heated by wrapping mustard plasters around them." He was convinced that Montana trade would not ultimately be diverted from Corinne because the route

49 Ibid., 283.
51 Quoted in Arrington, Great Basin Kingdom, 286.
52 Beal, Intermountain Railroads, 17.
through Mormon country was "too 'saintly' for the boys in the mountains."^53

The pro-Mormon *Salt Lake Herald* scoffed at such detractors as "small-souled, carping, jealous beings [who] have been venting their spleen against the Utah Northern." Triumphantly, it reported on 2 June 1872, "While they snarl and spit out filthy venom, the line is being built."^54 As the rails pushed north through Franklin and other towns in eastern Idaho, Latter-day Saint settlements followed, giving that region its predominantly Mormon character.

**THE END OF AN ERA**

Because outside interests had purchased these local lines by 1879, this year marked "the end of the era of 'Mormon railroads,'" according to Arrington. "In that year, Utah citizens were so thoroughly disillusioned with the financial manipulations of railroad magnates that a Provo newspaper remarked that people should go to general conference in Salt Lake City with their wagons before they rode on the Utah Southern and gave their money to Jay Gould."^55 Despite this disillusionment, however, any development of such expensive infrastructure as a railroad continued to be viewed in relationship to the Mormon Church, the largest economic actor in Utah.

In 1883, for example, as the narrow-gauge Denver & Rio Grande was completing a new link with Denver and other points in Colorado, the *Salt Lake Tribune* jadedly editorialized that it did not expect that this new line would "revolutionize business or religion." The *Denver Times* on the other hand, took a strong editorial position that "the Rio Grande was a knight in shining armor, come to save the Mormons from Union Pacific perfidy," that it could not have been built without the help of the Saints, and that it would do business with the Mormons rather than with the Gentiles. The *Salt Lake Tribune* responded by denouncing the *Times* editorial as a "piece of journalism 'trash'" and countering that the Union Pacific actually favored the Mormons. Furthermore, the *Salt Lake Herald* claimed

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^54 Ibid., 173.

^55Territorial Enquirer, 8 March 1879, quoted in ibid., 282.

^56Salt Lake Tribune, 29 March and 18 April 1883; quoted in Robert G. Athearn, "Utah and the Coming of the Denver and Rio Grande
that the [Mormon] people believed the Rio Grande represented “a boost for home industry and lower coal prices.”

The Mormon Church continued its interest in railroads into the twentieth century. Such developments as the construction of new depots in Salt Lake City and completion of the Lucin Cutoff across the Great Salt Lake were reported in the Church’s Improvement Era as significant news items. When the Salt Lake and Utah electric interurban reached Provo, the Church donated a portion of its tabernacle block for a depot. It likewise had offered property for a depot in Salt Lake City if Senator William A. Clark would build a separate line from southern California. Interested in assuring adequate transportation for leaders and missionaries, the Church maintained its investment in the Union Pacific and had representatives on Union Pacific’s board directors for decades. Harold B. Lee, for example, was a member of this board from 1957 until his death in 1973.

The perspective of time confirms that the railroad did indeed bring the benefits that Brigham Young and the Utah Saints anticipated, although such benefits had their ambiguities. The isolation of the Mormon commonwealth quickly vanished. An increasing number of Gentiles came to do business and reside in Utah. The Latter-day Saints found themselves part of the larger national economy and society. This very integration, however, provided the opportunity for the Mormons to reach out and share their faith with others—an increasingly important emphasis during the twentieth century.

Part of evaluating the impact of the railroads on Utah is comparing the history of Ogden and Provo. Provo might have become a rail hub exceeding even Ogden in importance if various schemes to link Utah Valley with the outside world had materialized. In 1880 the Sevier Valley Railway was organized to open a line from Salt Lake City through Provo to Arizona and ultimately Mexico. The Utah, Nevada, and California railroad, organized in 1889, planned a line that would connect Salt Lake City to southern California by Provo. As late as 1907, Colorado’s Moffat Road was exploring routes for a

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57Salt Lake Herald, 22 April and 26 October 1881, in Journal History.
58Improvement Era 7 (November 1903; January 1904): 72-73, 235-36.
new line from Denver to Salt Lake City through Utah Valley; and a
decade later, the nearly defunct Colorado Midland was planning its
own line through Provo Canyon. However, none of these lines was
ever built.

The Utah Southern line, which by then had been purchased by
Union Pacific, did form a connection with southern California; but
by the time the line was opened to Los Angeles in 1905, a shortcut
to Salt Lake City, completed in 1903 had by-passed Utah Valley. The
Denver and Rio Grande, which had reached Provo in 1883 and had
been standard gauged six years later, became a link in a new trans-
continental route with the completion of the Western Pacific be-
tween Salt Lake City and the San Francisco Bay in 1910; but most
trains sped through Utah Valley without stopping. Thus Provo’s
possible future as a rail center remained only a dream.

As a result, Utah Valley developed as a largely agricultural and
predominantly Mormon area—about 95 percent Latter-day Saint to
this day in contrast to Weber County’s 65 percent. In this environ-
ment, such institutions as Brigham Young University and the asso-
ciated Missionary Training Center, which opened in 1961, have
flourished. Apostle Dallin H. Oaks, a native of Provo and a past
president of BYU, asserted that by 1990 Utah County was “one of
the most important centers of the Mormon Church in the world.”59
One can only speculate on the changed character of Provo and its
valley if it had become a rail crossroads like Ogden.

59Quoted in Richard N. Holzapfel, A History of Utah County (Salt Lake
City: Utah State Historical Society, 1999), 376 note 38.
"THAT CANNY SCOTSMAN": 
JOHN SHARP AND THE UNION PACIFIC NEGOTIATIONS, 1869-72 

Craig L. Foster 

THE TENTH OF JANUARY 1870 started cold and overcast. By the early afternoon, the sun’s light burst through the clouds and shone, almost symbolically, upon the driving of the last spike of the Utah Central Railroad. Brigham Young had broken ground for the railroad in May 1869, and serious work on the road had commenced in late September. Thus, just under thirty-seven miles of railroad had been completed in a little over three months. What is more, it was, at that time, the only railroad completed in the United States to be wholly community-owned and not subsidized by the government.¹

¹Janet Burton Seegmiller, “Be Kind to the Poor”: The Life Story of Robert Taylor Burton (n.p.: Robert Taylor Burton Family Organization, 1988), 249. She also states that the construction of the Utah Central Railroad was planned in the School of the Prophets which met in Salt Lake City. This scenario is extremely probable, given the ecclesiastical control over its construction and management. See also Wilford Woodruff, Wilford
Over fifteen thousand people gathered in the cold to watch the spike driven, to witness the thirty-seven-gun salute (one for each mile of track), to enjoy the music of several bands, and to listen to Wilford Woodruff's dedicatory prayer. Then followed speeches by Brigham Young (read by George Q. Cannon), William Jennings, and Joseph A. Young, as well as representatives of the Union Pacific and Central Pacific Railroads.2

Noticeably absent from public participation in the ceremonies was John Sharp, a member of the Utah Central's company's board of directors. Like other directors, Sharp was relegated to a silent, supporting role.3 What made Sharp's nonpublic role so ironic on this occasion were his previous (and future) activities in behalf of Brigham Young, the state of Utah, the Utah Central, and other Mormon railroads. Indeed, without John Sharp, the Utah Central Railroad could not have been completed so early and so successfully. What is more, without John Sharp, the railroad ventures of the LDS Church and state of Utah during the latter half of the nineteenth century would have been significantly diminished.

John Sharp was born in 1820 into a poor coal-mining family in Clackmannan, Scotland. By age eight he, too, was toiling underground in a coal mine, still his profession at age twenty-seven when he was converted to Mormonism in November 1847. Sharp, in turn, converted a large number of his immediate and extended family. In


2Ibid.

3The Utah Central Railroad was organized by Brigham Young, Joseph A. Young, George Q. Cannon, Daniel H. Wells, Christopher Layton, Briant Stringham, David P. Kimball, Isaac Groo, David O. Calder, George A. Smith, John Sharp, Brigham Young Jr., John W. Young, William Jennings, Feramorz Little, and James T. Little. The first officers of the company were Brigham Young, president; William Jennings, vice-president; Joseph A. Young, superintendent, and directors Daniel H. Wells, Christopher Layton, John Sharp, and Feramorz Little.
1848, he, his wife and children, parents, brothers, and other members of his family, immigrated to America.⁴

Because of the family's poverty, the Sharps stayed in St. Louis, working in the coal mines in nearby Gravois. Here Sharp's mother died during a cholera epidemic in 1849, which spread devastatingly throughout the St. Louis area. After a year and a half, the Sharps were able to outfit themselves and reached Utah in the fall of 1850.⁵ Within a short time of their arrival, Brigham Young apparently took a personal interest in the Sharps and, more particularly, in John Sharp. Young's mentoring of Sharp resulted from personal contact. In late 1851 John and his two brothers, Adam and Joseph, contracted to quarry and haul stone from Red Butte Canyon for public works projects. Young, recognizing Sharp's pragmatism and business acumen, began to add to his responsibilities. Furthermore, Sharp was apparently willing to drop whatever personal projects he had in hand to serve the needs of Young and the Church. Brigham Young, himself pragmatic and driven, appreciated and rewarded the same characteristics in Sharp.⁶

By the mid-1850s, Sharp had become a respected business entrepreneur with the reputation of being a hard-working, no-nonsense Scotsman who got the job done. When the Salt Lake Twentieth Ward was organized in 1856, he became its first bishop, a post he would fill for almost thirty years. During the 1860s Sharp ex-

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⁴Craig L. Foster, "A Biographical Sketch of John Sharp," 1992, unpublished mss., 1, and (no author), "Workers," Improvement Era 12 (February 1904): 280-82. At this point, Sharp and his wife, Jane Patterson, were the parents of three of their nine children.


⁶Foster, "A Biographical Sketch," 3-4, and Sharp, "The Sharp Family," 12. Examples of Sharp's willing accommodation of Young's requests are suggested by numerous occasions on which Sharp, who could not be called a gentleman of leisure, traveled and socialized with Brigham Young. See, for example, Journal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (chronology of typed entries and newspaper clippings, 1830-present), 27 January 1865, 1, and 10 August 1865, 1, LDS Church Archives. In 1861 Sharp was part of a large party accompanying Young to southern Utah. Leonard J. Arrington, From Quaker to Latter-Day Saint: Bishop Edwin D. Woolley (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976), 394.
tended his business operations, as well as his political and ecclesiastical power. He was an incorporator in a number of Church-owned business ventures including the Utah Produce Company, Deseret Telegraph (he contracted, along with his brothers and Joseph A. Young, to construct a portion of the line), and ZCMI.

It was because of Sharp's previous work on the Deseret Telegraph and his association with Joseph A. Young, Brigham Young's eldest son and heir-apparent, that Sharp became involved in the construction of the Union Pacific Railroad. For years Brigham Young had pushed for a faster, safer way of transporting immigrating Saints to Utah. Therefore, he shrewdly recognized the promised arrival of a transcontinental railroad as a great potential for success rather than a problem and decided to use it to the Saints' advantage.

Founded in 1862, the Union Pacific Railroad had begun the quick-paced construction of a railroad west from Omaha in 1866. From the west, the Central Pacific began laying tracks east across the Sierra Nevada Mountains—covering 1,775 miles in three years. The intense competition between the two companies for miles of track built and owned—and, hence, profit-producing—resulted in remarkably rapid progress on the project. It was during this time of increased competition, in May 1868, that Union Pacific officials approached Brigham Young, offering him a contract to grade fifty-four miles of road through Echo Canyon toward the Great Salt Lake. Since the offer had the potential of earning him and members of the Church $2.25 million dollars, Young promptly accepted.7 Furthermore, on 9 November 1868 Brigham Young and the LDS Church also signed construction contracts with the Central Pacific

Railroad for the stretch west from Ogden to Monument Point, north of the Great Salt Lake. The major subcontractors for the Central Pacific were Chauncey W. West, Lorin Farr, Ezra T. Benson, and Christopher Layton; but that is another story.

Brigham Young organized several of his most trusted associates and leaders of various northern Utah communities to subcontract the construction of the road bed. Ultimately, the project produced work for thousands of men; but the largest subcontract, at $1 million, fell to the company of Sharp & Young, organized by Sharp and Joseph Young to construct the Deseret Telegraph.8

Sharp & Young's subcontract covered all grading, tunneling, and masonry from the head of Echo Canyon to Ogden, a distance of sixty to seventy miles through jagged, narrow canyons. The forty-eight-year-old Sharp personally supervised this extremely difficult and dangerous project, working right alongside his men and setting a high standard for speed and quality. His partner, Joseph A. Young, seldom visited the construction site. Sharp gained a reputation among his men as a good supervisor and among the non-Mormon railway officials as an honest and effective businessman. From this reputation grew the position of respect and prominence Sharp held among key railroad officials upon which the rest of the story depends.9


9Charles Edgar Ames, Pioneering the Union Pacific: A Reappraisal of the Builders of the Railroad (New York: Appleton, Century, Crofts, 1969), 279; and H. Bissell, “Reminiscences,” typescript, 96, Reel 55-3-83, 96, Wyoming State Archives, Cheyenne. According to Athearn, Union Pacific Country, by the end of 1868, Sharp & Young were employing 1,400 men in Echo Canyon. Indeed, “Sharpsburg,” Deseret News, 20 January 1869, 397, reported the existence of Sharpsburg, a large community constructed at the mouth of Weber Canyon—a “lively place, not after the meaning of the term as applied to railroad towns; but there are lots of good things and
The Union Pacific and Central Pacific Railroads met at Promontory Summit, Utah, on 10 May 1869 in the historic Golden Spike ceremony. Among the numerous dignitaries and rail workers present were a handful of Mormons, including John Sharp as Brigham Young’s official representative. After the Rev. Dr. John Todd’s offered prayer, Sharp proceeded to give a second prayer before the actual driving of the spike. Even though Leland Stanford, governor of California, who was doing the honors, missed his first swing at the spike, the nation sprang into celebration: “In New York they fired a hundred-gun salute; in Philadelphia they rang the Liberty Bell; and in San Francisco, one of the newspapers cheekily announced the ‘annexation of the United States.’”

Significantly, Brigham Young had chosen to absent himself from the ceremonies and had pointedly gone to southern Utah where he was holding church meetings. Young’s snubbing of the ceremonies was in part a protest against the Union Pacific Railroad’s decision to build its tracks north of the Great Salt Lake, thus bypassing Salt Lake City. Young did more than avert his eyes from the official ceremonies. He decided that the Church should enter the railroad business on its own with the Utah Central. Five days after the driving of the golden spike, the survey was run, and the ground-breaking followed only two days later.

However, Young’s refusal to attend the ceremonies also reflected a far more serious problem than the rejection of Salt Lake City as the rail head. By the time of the golden spike ceremony, Brigham Young and his associates were embroiled in disputes with both the Union Pacific and the Central Pacific, both of whom had reneged on their contractual payment. This situation stranded thousands of Utahns economically.

The Mormons were not alone in their plight. Across the coun-

good feelings around.”


try, both companies reneged on their contracts. Indeed, numerous businessmen and even communities went bankrupt because of contracts never fulfilled by these two companies. By the summer of 1869, it appeared that the same fate would befall Brigham Young and the Church.

Indeed, as early as the summer of 1868 Brigham Young had advanced sizeable sums of money, probably a combination of personal and Church funds, to his subcontractors to meet payroll demands. He, in turn, anxiously demanded payment from the Union Pacific but received only a portion of what was owed. Young complained bitterly but was rebuffed by Union Pacific officials claiming that the company was broke.\(^\text{12}\) This game of attempting to extract blood from a turnip pretending to be a stone continued without yielding much satisfaction until Brigham Young turned to John Sharp. In a letter of instructions on 21 July, Young told Sharp:

> You will receive to day a “power of attorney” to act as my agent in the collection of the debt due me by the U.P.R.R. company.

> Feeling very desirous that the Men that have laboured faithfully on the Railroad should receive their just dues, we have concluded to take this course to accomplish it, and, relying on your experience in, and acquaintance with the work, you have been selected to attend to this important business.

> I wish you to proceed to the Company’s headquarters, and with the least possible delay bring the claims directly before the Board of Directors. In the collection of this debt I would like you to obtain, first, as much money as you possibly can, then Railroad Iron, Locomotives, Cars, Steam Shovel & all kinds of Materials necessary for the building & equipment of the “Utah Central” not only from Ogden to this city, but even for 80 or 100 miles.\(^\text{13}\)

The pragmatic Sharp realized that he had a difficult mission ahead of him. In a letter a few weeks later to Albert Carrington, his son-in-law and later an apostle, Sharp stated matter-of-factly, “The U.P.R.R. is finished, but . . . the worst part of it is to be done yet, that is getting our pay.”\(^\text{14}\) John Sharp’s mission to the Union Pacific

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\(^{12}\)Athearn, *Union Pacific Country*, 95, 102.

\(^{13}\)Brigham Young, Letter to John Sharp, 21 July 1869, Brigham Young Collection, Historical Department Archives, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City.

\(^{14}\)Sharp, Letter to Carrington, 3 August 1869, quoted in Athearn,
headquarters in Boston proved to be one of the most difficult, yet successful, experiences of his life. During the years between 1869 and 1872, Sharp made repeated and extended visits to the eastern United States as advocate and champion of the railroad interests of Brigham Young and the LDS Church. Railroad historian Robert G. Athearn described the long and often tedious negotiation process between the Mormons and the railroad:

Both Brigham Young and his attorney, John Sharp, were persistent in their efforts to gain a settlement satisfactory to them, but in the lengthy negotiations that developed they conducted themselves well, never antagonizing the Bostonians unduly, yet pursuing their quest with a doggedness that generated more admiration than annoyance among railroad executives.\(^{15}\)

In retrospect, Sharp’s negotiations with the Union Pacific can rightfully be deemed a success. However, his day-to-day experiences and those of others who assisted him in his negotiations with the Union Pacific officials were frustrating; and Sharp had to fight off disappointment and self-doubt over his arduous task. After negotiations had been going on for almost a year, Young strongly encouraged Sharp, “Whilst I wish you to pursue the object of your appointment with all due diligence, you need not be alarmed about their not paying, nor must you stoop to any compromise that may deprive us of our just dues, for they will pay us. . . . You have the faith and prayer of your brother, Brigham Young.”\(^{16}\) A year later, Sharp confided to Brigham Young his irritation at the slow pace of the negotiations, “No doubt you are out of patience . . . this time I not hearing from me, but I can assure you I am almost out of patience in not having anything to write.”\(^{17}\)

Sharp’s strategy was to wear down the railroad executives with a continued, friendly presence. When company officials refused to grant him appointments, made appointments but did not keep them, or responded to his pleas for payment with protestations of

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\(^{15}\)Ibid., 112. Sharp was not a trained attorney; Athearn is here referring to Sharp’s power of attorney from Brigham Young.

\(^{16}\)Brigham Young, Letter to John Sharp, 14 August 1869, Brigham Young Collection.

\(^{17}\)John Sharp, Letter to Brigham Young, 1 June 1870, Brigham Young Collection.
poverty, Sharp simply accepted the situation imperturbably. He would go daily to the Union Pacific headquarters and wait in the outer office to catch a glimpse of Sidney Dillon, Oliver Ames, Thomas C. Durant, John Duff, and other officers. He would then respectfully ask for a conference with them and other members of the board. He never seemed to tire of the continuous wait, be affronted when he was put off, or approach them wheedlingly. Indeed, his demeanor was one of a jovial yet hard-headed strategist—a man who understood their predicament and demanded that they understand his.

Sharp’s mission for payment was marked by an early but illusory success. Before the first year of negotiations were completed, on 31 August 1869 he signed an agreement with Union Pacific for $940,138 of the $1,139,081 which they owed the Mormons. Although Brigham Young had instructed Sharp to get as much of the sum as possible in cash, Sharp actually negotiated only $50,000 in cash, with an additional $115,000-plus in promissory notes, $60,000 for immigrant and freight transportation, and another $599,460 in materials: 4,000 tons of rails, plus spikes, splices, bolts, frogs and other iron materials. The final $599,460 was rolling stock: four first-class passenger cars, four second-class cars, three mail and express cars, ten flatcars, twenty boxcars, and seven handcars. Brigham Young accepted the materials and stock, but only after Joseph A. Young inspected them first.

This negotiated settlement led to further conflict. Sharp and Young viewed it as an up-front payment with the remaining $200,000, owed the Saints for extra work beyond the original contract, to follow when the Union Pacific could pay it. The Union

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18According to Stephen E. Ambrose, Nothing Like It in the World: The Men Who built the Transcontinental Railroad, 1863-1869 (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000), 29, 35-36, 91-92, 191, 216, all four men were members of the Union Pacific Board of Directors. Sidney Dillon was also its vice president and head of the Crédit Mobilier construction company; Oliver Ames was U.P. president; Thomas C. Durrant was a founder of the Union Pacific and Crédit Mobilier and a Wall Street financier.

19Stevens, “The Union Pacific Railroad and the Mormon Church,” 4748, 69. Brigham Young estimated that the Union Pacific charged $182,000 over market price for iron and other materials. Some Union Pacific bonds were added in the deal.
Pacific officials, for their part, viewed the up-front payment as the settlement, and their behavior shows that they had no intention of paying the Church more. That money and other problems with the original settlement—the materials were delivered only piecemeal—would cause Sharp to make numerous additional visits to Boston, New York City, and Omaha.\textsuperscript{20} Indeed, the lack of promised Union Pacific supplies delayed completion of the Utah Central Railroad until January 1870. At one point, Brigham Young bitterly complained that Union Pacific's delay in providing the agreed-upon materials was costing the Utah Central Railroad $1,000 a day to pay 255 idle men.\textsuperscript{21} Even after the Utah Central Railroad was completed with its great celebration in early 1870, the gamesmanship between the Church and Union Pacific continued.

Fresh from the apparent victory over the Union Pacific, John Sharp was next assigned by Brigham Young to negotiate a settlement with the Central Pacific Railroad over its defaulted payments. The principal contractors with the Central Pacific Railroad had been Ezra T. Benson, Lorin Farr, and Chauncey West. West had died in January 1870, and Benson was in poor health. Sharp and Lorin Farr traveled to California in late January 1870 where they met with Governor Leland Stanford and board members of Central Pacific Railroad. By March, Sharp's persistence had again achieved a settlement—an agreement that the Central Pacific would pay $100,000. Although this sum was less than its legal contract, it was far more than the Church had hoped to receive.\textsuperscript{22}

Sharp was free to turn his attention back to the foot-dragging Union Pacific which, by May, had still not fulfilled Sharp's agreement. He again traveled east to confront the Union Pacific officers about the unfulfilled portion of the agreement, as well as the outstanding $200,000 owed the Church. He reported, in a letter of 5 May to Brigham Young, that Oliver Ames, Thomas C. Durant, and Cornelius Bushnell greeted him warmly. After some small talk,

\textsuperscript{20}Memorandum Agreement, 31 August 1869, as quoted in Athearn, \textit{Union Pacific Country}, 104, 412.


Sharp announced that he was back in Boston to obtain a satisfactory settlement, at which the men laughed heartily at the idea of me coming here for more money, and after some considerable talk, Mr. Bushnell offered me ten thousand dollars and call it even and I might turn around and go home tonight, but I told him I would stay over night, and perhaps he would be more liberal in a day or two. Doctor Durant said that they had allowed all that they considered right in the first place and did not expect to hear from us again. He wanted a proposition from me . . . and I made one for $198,942.68 which was another grand laugh, and after a great deal of talk and gass [Durant] wanted to act as referee for the Co. and myself for Brigham Young. . . . I took him up and he backed down which was rather amusing, it being his own proposition.

After that first meeting, Durant left for New York City and Sharp met with Ames, who promised that the directors would be called together shortly to consider Sharp’s demands. Sharp wrote Young, “I feel first rate but need your prayers in faith and the Spirit of God to guide me. Your prayers I know I have and I will live to enjoy the Spirit of God.” 24

Despite Sharp’s initial optimism, he was again forced to play the waiting game. When he wrote Young on 1 June, it was to report that the Union Pacific had not called another board meeting. Furthermore, he had not even seen Durant since the first meeting. In fact, even though Ames had telegraphed Durant telling him it was of the “utmost importance that he should come” to Boston and that Sharp had been waiting for a month to see him, even traveling to New York City to hunt for him there, it was apparent that Durant was deliberately avoiding Sharp. 25

Durant’s power stemmed from his control of Crédit Mobilier, the financier of Union Pacific. Durant served as vice-president of Union Pacific, but his questionable business activities and general unpopularity had reached the point that President U.S. Grant made it clear to other Union Pacific board members that he should go. He

23 John Sharp, Letter to Brigham Young, 5 May 1870, Brigham Young Collection.
24 Ibid.
25 John Sharp, Letter to Brigham Young, 1 June 1870, Brigham Young Collection; and Athearn, Union Pacific Country, 111.
had been forced off the board in 1869; even so, he continued to exert an enormous amount of influence over the company until 1874 when Jay Gould gained control of Union Pacific and appointed Sidney Dillon president. With this and other moves, Gould was able to end Durant's control of the company.26

With growing frustration, Sharp wrote Young, “I am ashamed of being here so long and very uneasy on my own account besides the great perplexity to yourself.” However, given the difficulty of contacting Durant, Sharp concluded his letter to Young: “I dare not stir from here until he comes for fear I should miss him.” Sharp then reported that Ames and the other officers did not want to do anything until Durant returned. Sharp commented, “So you see that although [Durant] holds no office of the Co. he holds a mighty influence over them, so will have to wait patiently until he returns.”27

Not only was Sharp frustrated by the lack of progress with the negotiations, but he was also lonely. Except for brief passages through Salt Lake City on his way to either the east or the west coast, he had been away from his home for almost two years. Several of his letters to Brigham Young include salutations to fellow friends and acquaintances. Unfortunately, no correspondence with his family is known—in fact, no other letters besides those to Brigham Young or journals are known to be extant—so that it is next to impossible to form any detailed picture of Sharp’s relations with his large family. At this point, John Sharp was the husband of three wives and father of twenty-two children, nine of whom did not live to adulthood. There was a significant age difference between Sharp’s first family and the families of his two plural wives,28 and although Sharp ap-

27Sharp, Letter to Brigham Young, 1 June 1870.
28First wife Jane Patterson (1819-1882) was the mother of nine: John Jr. (1841-1915), James (1843-1904), Margaret, Katherine (1852-1901), Adam (infant), Agnes (1857-1921), Cecellia (1860-72), and Elizabeth Alice (1863-1923). Second wife Anna Wright Gibson Sharp, married 30 April 1854, bore six children: William Gibson (1857-1919), Joseph R. (b. 1859), Jeanette (b. 1860), David John (1868-1912), Cora Ann (b. and d. 1872), Edith (1870-175). Third wife Sophia Smith, married 5 January 1861, bore eight children: Sarah (b. 1865), Emily (1870-1946), Mary (1881-1942), Charles Smith (b. and d. 1868), Josephine (1876-77), Sophia Louise (1874-78),
pears to have been a dutiful father financially, he was not as close emotionally to the children of his plural wives as he was to those of his first wife. John Jr. and James, the twenty-nine-year-old and twenty-seven-year-old sons of Jane Patterson Sharp, sometimes accompanied him to Boston. William Gibson Sharp, the eldest son born to Annie Gibson, was thirteen in 1869 when negotiations began. Between 1869 and 1872, Sharp had thirteen children under the age of fourteen. Having so frequently absent a father no doubt affected the dynamics of all three families.²⁹

After waiting in vain for Durant’s arrival, Sharp finally returned to Utah for a few weeks but returned to Boston in early July, more determined than ever to achieve a settlement of the contract. After difficult negotiations, Sharp received $35,000 with the promise of $35,000 more in three months, leaving $130,000 of the disputed $200,000 still to be paid. Although it was much less than Brigham Young and John Sharp had wanted, it was still more than the Union Pacific had planned to pay.³⁰

Ultimately, over several years, the Latter-day Saints received from the Union Pacific approximately $1 million in cash, stocks and bonds, and materials. Though far less than originally promised, it was, nevertheless, a much-needed trickle of funds that benefited numerous individuals and, more importantly, supported a railroading program which changed communication and transportation in Utah.

Meanwhile, the LDS Church had begun the next phase of its railroading experience. While the Utah Central Railroad was still being completed, planning began for another, longer railroad further south. One year later the Utah Southern Railroad Company was organized with William Jennings as president and John Sharp as vice-president. This railroad was, in reality, a continuation of the stillborn baby (1879), and Sidney Smith (1872-79).

²⁹Salt Lake City Twentieth Ward Membership Records, and U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1870, Salt Lake City Twentieth Ward, 717, FHL microfilm # 26751. Sharp refers to the presence of his son James in Boston in a letter to Brigham Young, 7 July 1871, Brigham Young Collection. In 1875, John took William Gibson Sharp to New York where he studied at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute with Brigham Young’s son, Don Carlos Smith Young.

Utah Central Railroad. By 1880, the Utah Southern Railroad and its step-child, the Utah Southern Extension, reached over 240 miles south of Salt Lake City into Juab County to the mining community of Frisco.

While the LDS Church’s railroad ventures were certainly beneficial to the community, they were also extremely expensive. In fact, none of the Church’s railroad ventures ever turned a profit. However, the Church’s goal was primarily to use community and private railroads to link together the parts of its intermountain empire, bringing “civilization” to even the most isolated communities.

With this goal in mind, Brigham Young quickly saw that the LDS Church and Union Pacific must create a mutually beneficial relationship. Naturally, some questioned whether Utah really benefitted in the relationship. For the most part, the Utah Central railroad had been built without borrowing outside money. However, that was not the case with the Utah Southern nor the Utah Southern Extension railroads. The Church had helped finance these extensions by selling Utah Central shares and bonds to the Union Pacific over an eight-year period. Thus, the Union Pacific, after reneging on a significant portion of its contract, eventually gained controlling interest in the Mormon railroads. Even so, Brigham Young achieved his main goal of improving transportation and communication throughout Mormon country, despite the enormous cost in money and materials.

To achieve this end, Brigham Young in March 1872 again sent his trustworthy representative, John Sharp, to Boston to negotiate

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31 Orson F. Whitney, History of Utah, 4 vols. (Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon & Sons, 1893), 2:268; and Edward L. Sloan, ed., Gazetteer of Utah and Salt Lake City Directory, 1874 (Salt Lake City: Salt Lake Herald Publishing Company, 1874), 44-45. By 1874, William Jennings had twice served as president of the company and Brigham Young had also served as president. John Sharp had relinquished his position as vice-president in favor of his son, thirty-one-year-old James. James Sharp had a significant business and political career, serving as Speaker of the House of the territorial legislature, as mayor of Salt Lake City, and as president and/or director of numerous companies including the Utah Central Railroad, Utah Southern Railroad, Deseret National Bank, ZCMI, among others. “Former Mayor of Salt Lake Dead,” Deseret Evening News, 7 May 1904, 1.
with the Union Pacific for financial support. Preparations for building the Utah Southern Railroad were hanging on needed money and material, and Young’s instructions were calculated to move things along by simultaneously appealing to the U.P.’s greed and threatening to open negotiations with the Central Pacific:

Don’t misunderstand me with regard to other parties joining with us in our road building. If the U. P. People do not come up with their contract, we will just leave things as they are, organize a new company and start afresh with other parties. We are driven to urge this matter being pressed on every hand by business men, in consequence of the rapid development of the mining interest & the great increase of business along the road.32

Once again, John Sharp settled down to lengthy negotiations. In April 1872, construction of the Utah Southern Railroad was moving at a steady pace. However, the Church was in dire need of money and materials. Sharp informed the Union Pacific board that he was authorized to pay for materials in the form of mortgage bonds at 80 percent of their value plus one-third of the capital stock, thus giving the Union Pacific a significant fraction of ownership in the company.33 The first twenty miles of track had already been contracted and the roadbed constructed through Union Pacific for basically the same agreement Sharp was proposing for the construction of the rest of the Utah Southern line. By threatening the formation of other railroad lines to service the mining communities of Juab County, he played on Union Pacific’s greed and fears.

Union Pacific’s board members responded by arguing they had never put up more than half the money and materials without receiving a controlling interest in the railroad. However, Sharp, living up to his nickname of the “canny Scotsman,” refused to change his proposal.34 He explained to Young, “I think it will pay us to go sure if not so fast.” He also joked that he was “tempted to play [the Union Pacific] a little Sharp, but I cannot do it. A square transaction always wins.”35

32Brigham Young, Letter to John Sharp, 28 March 1872, Brigham Young Collection.
33Athearn, Union Pacific Country, 272.
34Athearn, ibid., 272, uses this nickname admiringly, but he did not originate it.
35John Sharp, Letter to Brigham Young, 21 April 1872, quoted in
Ultimately, John Sharp was able to negotiate a deal which proved not only satisfactory to Brigham Young and the Church, but which also, like the previous negotiations with the Union Pacific, left both parties in a position to continue a mutually beneficial relationship. In 1881, the Utah Central Railroad, the Utah Southern Railroad, and the Utah Southern Extension were consolidated into the Utah Central Railway Company with a capital stock of $4,225,000, owned by the Union Pacific, the LDS Church, and shareholders like Sharp.\(^{36}\) By 1889, the debts and operation costs of the Utah Central Railway became too great for the little railroad to remain semi-independent. In August 1889, the Union Pacific purchased the rest of the stock and merged into it its subsidiary, the Oregon Short Line and Utah Northern Railroad, of which John Sharp was a vice-president. Although the Church had lost ownership of its railroad, Brigham Young and the Mormons had achieved what they had desired—a network of rail lines.\(^{37}\)

Sharp's business foresight cannot be overstated. In the 1880s he pushed for a rail line to be extended through southern Utah and Nevada to Los Angeles because he recognized southern California's agricultural and economic potential.\(^{38}\) This was the Los Angeles and Salt Lake Railroad Company, a subsidiary of the Union Pacific. In addition to the negotiations over the Union Pacific contracts, Sharp exhibited a shrewd business sense and an open honesty in later projects which the eastern businessmen admired. According to Ahearn, "John Sharp, whose rustic ways often amused officials of the larger road, became a trusted friend, and his relationship with the company lasted for years."\(^{39}\) Indeed, Union Pacific's president

\(^{36}\)Ibid., 272-73.

\(^{37}\)John Sharp was vice president and general superintendent, while his son James was assistant superintendent. The other officers were President Sydney Dillon (also president of the Union Pacific); George Swan, secretary; and L. S. Hills, treasurer.

\(^{38}\)Ibid., 280, 286-88.

\(^{39}\)Edward Leo Lyman, "From the City of Angels to the City of Saints: The Struggle to Build a Railroad from Los Angeles to Salt Lake City," California History 70 (Spring 1991): 77-80; and John R. Signor, The Los Angeles and Salt Lake Railroad Company: Union Pacific's Historic Salt Lake Route (San Marino, Calif.: Golden West Books, 1988), 11-16.

\(^{39}\)Ahearn, Union Pacific Country, 112.
Sidney Dillon became Sharp's lifelong friend and admirer. So great was the Union Pacific's respect for John Sharp that he was elected in 1874 to the Union Pacific board of directors, a seat he held until his death in 1891 at seventy-one.

John Sharp's later years were darkened by accusations of faltering faith and his community standing was placed in jeopardy. In September 1885, Sharp, a polygamist, pled guilty to unlawful cohabitation and promised Judge Charles Zane that he would not cohabit with his plural wives nor would he encourage cohabitation by others. Sharp, who had previously been arrested and who was in ill health, pled guilty to avoid a prison term. Thus, he became the first ecclesiastical official and prominent member of the LDS Church to agree not to practice nor preach plural marriage. Although he was temporarily ostracized by the Mormon community, his decision to conform strictly to the law simply outlined the course that the Church as a whole would, reluctantly and piecemeal, be forced to follow over the next two decades until Joseph F. Smith's "Second Manifesto" of 1904.

Sharp did not live to see this final resolution; however, by the time of his death the year after Wilford Woodruff's first manifesto, he had regained some of his prominence and was honored by both non-Mormons and Mormons alike at his death. One Utah newspaper acclaimed him as one of the five most important business entrepreneurs in the history of Utah to that date.

It is not surprising that some people and events pass from historical memory; yet John Sharp and his contributions deserve better. It was John Sharp who was able to mitigate financial hardship for thousands of Utah families by successfully negotiating a settlement with the reluctant Union Pacific. In large measure, the growing network of rail lines in nineteenth-century Utah is a result of John Sharp's business sense and personal tenacity in continuing to press

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41 "Bishop John Sharp," *Salt Lake Herald*, 26 December 1891, 1. The other four most prominent men listed in the article were Horace S. Eldredge, William H. Hooper, William Jennings, and Feramorz Little.
the Union Pacific for money and materials. Nineteenth- and even twentieth-century Utah would have been different without his contribution.
FOR THE MOST PART, historians have paid little attention to the role of children and teenagers in the history of the American West. One exception is Elliott West's fine Growing Up with the Country which focuses on the experiences of children as pioneers. Susan Arrington Madsen has edited three volumes of reminiscences and diaries recalling the experiences of young Mormon pioneers, while Davis Bitton has visited the topic three times.

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2Susan Arrington Madsen's three books are published by Deseret Book of Salt Lake City: I Walked To Zion (1994) Growing Up In Zion (1996), and with Fred E. Woods, I Sailed to Zion (2000).

These scholars believe that the records kept by young people can provide much that is new about the past. Their lives were often significantly different from those of their parents, particularly if they grew up in settled communities that their parents had pioneered. As young Mormons, they fought their own demons, struggling to find faith and purpose in life. Despite the particular cultural, social, and physical demands of their time and place, they also shared universal traits. A flirtatious remark or gesture from an admired girl or boy could catalyze a surge of joy that, though short-lived, brought rays of sunshine bursting through an otherwise cloudy sky.

Although Chauncey West of Brigham City, the nineteen-year-old subject of one of Bitton's studies, "was no typical young man" because he attempted to develop "all sides of his personality—intellectual, physical, social and spiritual," his 1895 activities do reflect those of a faithful young Mormon who was trying to respond to parental instruction and the counsel of his leaders. In contrast, Bitton's article about "Zion's Rowdies" detailed petty crimes, acts of annoyance, and the destructive activities of mostly young Mormon males who missed church meetings, disobeyed parents, and broke the commandments. Taken together, Bitton's pioneering work focuses on two widely different nineteenth-century Mormon youth—the devout and zealous vs. the less committed or openly rebellious.

Most Mormon youth, however, lived out their adolescence between these two extremes. Charles Spaulding Whitney was such a person, and his life's story brings that more typical group into focus. Because Whitney lived most of his life in Salt Lake City, he also provides a different experience than the rural young people of Elliott West's study. The very fact that he kept a diary, however, sets him apart from most nineteenth-century American youth. And finally, that he ended his life, either in an accident with a gun as his mother believed or, as seems more probable, by suicide at age twenty-one makes him part of a small and tragic group of youth who, by their own choice, never go forward to meet the challenges and expand the opportunities of adulthood.


^4^Bitton, "Six Months in the Life," 49.
CHARLES'S ENVIRONMENT

Whitney's earliest extant diary begins on 26 August 1881 when he was ten months past his seventeenth birthday. He had just begun working in G. W. Davis's Salt Lake City store. However, there are only three entries for the year 1881, one of which reads, "Left & went to school just after New Years." The next entry occurs on 13 May 1882: "G. W. Davis's boy left him, he engaged me to work for him to day very busy with the wagon." Charles delivered goods to other merchants in Salt Lake City. From that date until 21 August 1884, he faithfully kept a record of his activities. His last entry was written just as he went to work for Orin Merrill who had come to Utah looking for "hay." His diaries cover thirty-six months and detail his experiences while he also worked as a part-time clerk at Dinwoody's furniture and dry goods store in Salt Lake City and attended the University of Deseret. He was living in the family home with his mother, Helen Mar Kimball Whitney, and unmarried sisters. His father, Horace K. Whitney, spent most of his time with a plural wife.

After an emotionally stormy and unsatisfying summer of 1883, Charles left Salt Lake City on 26 October 1883 and traveled to Arizona where he lived for two years in Mesa and St. David working on a haying crew, as a freighter, and as a logger. Charles made at least one trip into Mexico where he worked on a haying crew. His father died 22 November 1884, but Charles did not learn of his father's demise until after the funeral services were over. The date of his return to Salt Lake City is not known, but he again moved into the family home with his mother and sisters where he was living at the time of his death in August 1886.

This article focuses on his activities in Salt Lake City. He was not satisfied with his employment, nor was he a particularly good student. Of far more interest to Charles than either his work or his school were his many interactions with his male friends, his cautious.

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5Most of the seven diaries of Charles S. Whitney are bound in brown leather and measure 6 by 4 inches. A few entries are in pencil, but most are in blue or black ink. The diaries are part of the Helen Mar Kimball Whitney Collection, Special Collections, Merrill Library, Utah State University, Logan, Utah, Mss. 179. There are five boxes of materials in the collection. Charles's diaries are found in Box 3. Quotations from these diaries are not footnoted if their date appears in the text.
experiments in striking the right note with girls, and his genuine pleasure in being involved in the Salt Lake theater scene.

It is not exaggerating to say Charles was born into one of Mormonism’s royal families. His maternal grandparents were Heber C. Kimball and Vilate Murray Kimball, intimates of Joseph Smith from Kirtland on; Heber had been one of the first apostles and was serving as Brigham Young’s first counselor at the time of his death. Helen Mar, Heber’s and Vilate’s daughter, became Joseph Smith’s plural wife at age fourteen. After Smith’s death, she married Horace Whitney, her childhood sweetheart, on 4 February 1846 in the Nauvoo Temple. Horace was the son of Newel K. Whitney and Elizabeth Ann Smith Whitney. His father was one of the first presiding bishops. Horace, an 1847 pioneer, began working as clerk in the general tithing office at church headquarters while he and Helen Mar raised their family.6

Horace also married two plural wives, Lucy Amelia Bloxham on 9 October 1850,7 and Mary Cravath on 1 December 1856. Mary

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6 Helen Mar and Horace became the parents of eleven children. The first four—Helen Rosabell, William Howard, Horace Kimball and Vilate Murray—all died before reaching adulthood. The first child to survive was Orson Ferguson, born 1 July 1855. When Charles began his diary, Orson, age twenty-six, was serving a mission in England. Previous to this time he had been a missionary in the eastern states and had, upon his return, been called as bishop of Salt Lake City’s Eighteenth Ward though he was just twenty-three and still unmarried. A year later, he married Zina Smoot, the daughter of Abraham O. Smoot, previously mayor of Salt Lake City, and a Provo stake president. Orson was bishop for twenty-eight years. In 1906 at age fifty-one he was called as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve. See Davis Bitton and Leonard J. Arrington, Mormons and Their Historians (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1988), 56-68. To Helen Mar’s enormous pleasure, Orson was a gifted poet, writer, historian, and actor on the Salt Lake stage. Orson was followed by Elizabeth Ann who was born 27 November 1857, Genevieve born 13 March 1860, and Helen Kimball born 24 March 1862. Charles, the next-born, grew up with one older brother and three older sisters. Two younger sisters followed Charles: Florence Marian born 4 April 1867 and Phebe Isabel born 24 September 1869. In the summer of 1881, only Orson was married. However, on 30 October 1883 Helen married Edward Lee Talbot.

7 According to Jeni Broberg Holzapfel and Richard Neitzel Holzapfel,
had a large family, and Horace spent most of his time in her home, which was not far from Helen Mar’s, near the mouth of City Creek Canyon. The families seemed to live harmoniously with each other. During the period of time covered in the diaries, Horace spent most of his time with Mary and their younger children. The Whitneys were not considered wealthy and were required to carefully manage their resources.

Salt Lake City, with 20,800 residents in 1881, was the most populous city in the territory. The largest newspaper, the church-owned Deseret News, carried ads for Simmonds’s “Kentucky Nabob Bourbon” and whiskey, both of which were sold by William S. Godbe, Pitts and Company. The University of Deseret had been founded on 28 February 1850, fourteen years before Charles’s birth, and would become the University of Utah in 1892. When Charles attended the university, it claimed 220 students and a particularly fine “chemical” department. The famous Keeley Institute, which guaranteed that it could cure addictions to liquor, opium, and tobacco, operated in the city under the direction of Dr. Arthur I. Grover and F. K. Morris. The city was growing, and there were at least two new schools under construction, one operated by the Congregationalist Church and the other sponsored by the LDS Seventh Ward.

Available for sale was a new-style Bissel carpet sweeper which, if it performed as promised, extracted the back ache from broom work, while H. Dinwoody Furniture Company, where Whitney sometimes worked, featured fine feather bedding, white hair mattresses, down quilts, and pillows at competitive prices. W. C. Dunbar, a Mormon, sang at reunions in his “happiest style” a popular song of the day entitled “My Old Wife and I.” People usually walked about town but could catch mule-powered streetcars, installed in 1872, if they were tired or if foul weather threatened.

Politically, Salt Lake City was plagued with tensions. Brigham Young had died five years before, and John Taylor succeeded him as president of the Quorum of the Twelve until the First Presidency

A Woman’s View: Helen Mar Whitney’s Reminiscences of Early Church History (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center Brigham Young University 1997), xxv, Lucy “later seems to fade away mysteriously from the story.”

8Ibid.

was reconstituted in 1879. The Edmunds Act, passed in 1882, disfranchised all polygamists and made it easier to prosecute plural marriage by defining unlawful cohabitation as well as polygamy. The Edmunds-Tucker Act passed in 1887 disfranchised Utah’s female population and led to the possibility of the Liberal (non-Mormon) Party winning future elections—which it did in Salt Lake City in the early 1890s.

The Mormon Church was doggedly determined to claim its constitutional right to practice plural marriage. Charles’s mother frequently wrote articles in its defense which were published in the Woman’s Exponent and the juvenile Instructor. She also sometimes met with reporters and visitors desiring to learn all they could regarding Mormonism’s beginnings.

The University of Deseret was located at Union Square (where West High school stands today), on Second West and First North streets. In addition to taking classes there, Charles also acted in Salt Lake theaters, or helped usher and keep order. Home chores were maintaining his mother’s yard and garden, but he spent most of his time socializing with a plethora of friends often only identified by their nicknames. His best friends—those mentioned most frequently in his diary—were Ed Calder, Ken Dinwoody, Will Richards, and Dolf (last name unknown). His friends called him “Charl” or Charlie, as did some members of his family.

Charlie’s diary is a reflective, honest record in which he admitted his doubts, frustrations, depressions, and disappointments without equivocation, as well as his hopes, dreams, triumphs, and successes. He often found it difficult to forgive himself for his follies, yet he had many carefree moments as he mingled with other young adults in Salt Lake society. He returned again and again in his writings to the challenge (not always successfully met) of keeping the Word of Wisdom, and his constant frustration at not having enough money to do as he wished. Conscientiously he tried to support himself, since he was keenly aware that his parents were barely able to pay their own bills and taxes.

Like many young people, Charles struggled with insecurity. He loved his mother and father dearly and wanted them to be proud of him, but he sometimes compared himself to friends and family and nearly always came up short. Such brooding precipitated and fueled his feelings of inferiority. At such times he sometimes recklessly turned to the city’s saloons.
Genuinely talented as an actor, Charles experienced frustration at the double-bind he found himself in. He could not make a living on the Salt Lake stage, and his mother would not give her blessing for him to tour with a traveling company, fearing that he would forsake his faith in that environment. He could not persuade her differently but also was not willing to leave without her permission. His diary ends on 16 August 1884, so his struggles with the demons that sometimes afflicted him were not recorded in the days and weeks before 4 August 1886 when he took his own life. However, no one seems to have anticipated this tragic ending to his promising life.

**Trying to Live the Word of Wisdom**

On 27 February 1833 in Kirtland, Ohio, Joseph Smith received the revelation called the Word of Wisdom which warned his followers against the use of “strong drinks” (alcohol), tobacco and “hot drinks” (tea and coffee), but which encouraged them to use wholesome herbs, fruits in season, and the flesh of beasts and fowls sparingly. This revelation, he said, showed “the order and will of God in the temporal salvation of all Saints in the last days” (D&C 89). Although individuals who violated this health code during the 1880s were not usually subject to Church discipline and were even allowed to attend temple dedications if they had intentions of keeping the Word of Wisdom, there was no question that it was not praiseworthy conduct. The *Juvenile Instructor* editorialized against it, and frequent sermons left no doubt of its status.¹⁰ Charles often smoked cigarettes

¹⁰See, for example, W. J. “Bad Company,” *Juvenile Instructor*, 15 May 1885, 154-55: “Bad Habits are introduced by bad company. Smoking is among them. And what a wonderful accomplishment it is, to be able to draw smoke into the mouth and puff it out again or to force a little of it through the nostrils! The young man who can do this, performs a wonderful feat! And what good can it do the operator to simply draw in his breath, thus forming a vacuum into which the smoke can pass by the pressure of the atmosphere, and puffing it out again? No good whatever. But, does it do him harm? Yes, it poisons his blood and super-induces disease. The disease in General [Ulysses S.] Grant’s tongue has been attributed to the pernicious habit of smoking. . . . And the testimony of smokers and scientists proves that tobacco, whether smoked or chewed, injures the human system. . . . Drunkenness is another fearful evil—fearful and terrible
and drank (usually beer, sometimes whiskey) although he often felt miserable afterward about his weakness. He violated the Mormon health code in spite of the fact that Church leaders often spoke out on the evils of drink and tobacco.

On 29 November 1882, eighteen-year-old Charles recorded that he had found a dime in his mother's bedroom and used it to purchase “a package of cigarettes.” After being introduced to a young returned missionary he went “up to the Mutual Ass[ociation]” where he “gave a report of [his] visit to the 1st ward.” On 1 December he “went downtown . . . to the saloon and took a drink” and then went home and “played a few games.” Two days later, 3 December 1882, in the company of friends he purchased “a box of cigars which we tried to lite but failed on account of the strength.” He records buying cigarettes twice more that month and again on New Year's Eve. However, on 3 January 1883 he wrote, “Went to school to day. Ed. Calder and I swore off smoking. He gave me a note saying that he would give me 50 cents the first time he smoked. I gave him one . . . that I would give him the same amount the first time I did.” Two weeks later on 14 January, a Sunday, after listening to talks by “bros. John Taylor and Jos. F. Smith,” Whitney threw away the cigarette he had in his pocket and “resolved to try and quit smoking.” That same evening, in code, he penned the following in his diary, “God helping me, I will be a better boy in the future—amen.”

in its results—which is introduced by bad company. . . . Shun the appearance of evil.” D. M. McAllister, “Philosophy of the Word of Wisdom,” Juvenile Instructor, 1 July 1886, 198, quoted passages from the Word of Wisdom and told his readers that the Holy Spirit would abide with Latter-day Saints only if they endeavored “to have our bodies always clean, outwardly and inwardly, free from disease and impurity of every kind, for ‘the Spirit of God will not dwell in unholy temples.’” In 1883 began a movement which Paul Peterson, “An Historical Analysis of the Word of Wisdom” (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1972), 69-81, calls the “Second Reformation.” Church leaders, especially President John Taylor, began to stress obedience to the Word of Wisdom and encouraged all Church leaders to set the proper example for members. See also Thomas G. Alexander, Mormonism in Transition: A History of the Latter-day Saints, 1890-1930 (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1986), 258-72, 307.

11Charles S. Whitney, Diary, 14 January 1883. His code is discussed
His resolve remained firm throughout the 1883 February. Then on 2 March he visited a saloon, took a drink, and wrote, “this being about the first time I had been in a saloon for about two months.” By the middle of March his resolve to quit smoking seems to have evaporated in the spring sunshine. On 15 March he records, “I went down town. I bought two cigars and a package of cigarettes. We smoked the cigars.” Again on St. Patrick’s Day he recorded, “I smoked a great deal with the boys!!!!!” Even though he had not arrived home until 2:20 that morning, he got up and went to Sunday School, which indicates that smoking did not undercut his commitment to his church.

“Bought a bottle of Brown’s Iron Bitters for $1.00 and a package of cigarettes for 25 cents,” Charles wrote on 21 March. The next day by the council house in the company of a friend, he again smoked. Six days later on 27 March, with Ed Calder, Charles “took a smoke.” About ten days later on 7 April, with Ed Calder and Will Richards, Charles went to the saloon opposite a theater and “had a glass of beer at Calder’s expense.”

Charles did not regularly violate the Mormon health code. For example on 27 April he wrote, “I smoked for the first time for over a week. I had the blues that was the reason.” A week later he suffered with depression that was not wholly related to his inability to quit smoking. He believed he was too “tall and lanky” and felt uncomfortable in the presence of girls his age. After a long talk with a friend, Williams Evans Jr., and working all day he wrote, “Felt blue and despondent. I went upstairs this evening and had a cry then prayed earnestly to the Lord and felt much better.”

Charles was not alone in violating the Mormon health code. On 4 May 1884, his mother, Helen Mar, wrote in her diary:

Fasted this fore noon, that I may gain faith, [and] be able to keep the commandments and control my family—or lead them to the Lord. That the Word of Wisdom [emphasis hers] may not be lost on us. I took no stimulants to day and my head has been nearly distracted with pain, till I hardly knew what course to take. I prayed the Lord that my head might get better if I was doing my duty, or if I was not required to leave off my cup of coffee for breakfast, that he would give me a testimony of the same, that I might act wisely this time, and

later in this article.

12Ibid., 4 May 1883.
not bring bodily suffering upon myself, as I did two years ago, by going without tea or coffee for 5 or 6 weeks, which came very near ending my life.\textsuperscript{13}

Two of Charles's uncles, John Whitney and David Kimball, sometimes drank to excess. In October 1883, Charles traveled to California and Arizona with his Uncle David. When they reached Los Angeles, David left Charles alone in the Southern Hotel and went on a drinking spree that led to his arrest and being ordered to leave town.\textsuperscript{14} Charles thus had vivid examples about the evils of drinking. Furthermore, Aunt Zulie Kimball, who lived in Arizona, wrote him on 15 September 1884: "Live your religion and aim high. I would rather see anyone dead than a drunkard."\textsuperscript{15} In short, Charles had evidence that some in his family did not like or respect drinking, even if they did not always succeed in abstaining from it.

Furthermore, an increasing fraction of Mormon young people had grown up hearing injunctions to keep the Word of Wisdom. Thus, some of his peers, especially young women he admired, strongly disapproved of drinking or smoking. On 20 June 1883 Charles wrote, "I had had a little beer the girls felt bad about it." Sometimes they displayed their displeasure by shunning his company, making him feel remorseful and miserable.

Despite feeling “better” after praying about his violations of the Word of Wisdom in early May 1883, only a few days later Charles was at it again. On 8 May he drank with friends behind a livery stable. On 13 May he dutifully attended Sunday School, then went with friends to a brewery at the mouth of Emigration Canyon and drank beer with his bread-and-cheese picnic lunch. His drinking episodes got more prolonged and serious as spring melted into summer. After playing pool on 19 June with several male friends, he got drunk. He started to throw up "six or seven times" before he got home, taking a bottle with him. He fell asleep, fully clothed in his upstairs room until 2:00 A.M. when a burning thirst awoke

\textsuperscript{13}Helen Mar Kimball Whitney, Diary, 4 May 1884, Helen Mar Kimball Whitney Collection. Violent headaches are a frequent side effect of withdrawal from caffeine.

\textsuperscript{14}Charles S. Whitney, Diary, 24-27 October 1883.

\textsuperscript{15}Zulie Kimball, Letter to Charles S. Whitney, 15 September 1884, Helen Mar Whitney Kimball Collection, Mss. 179, Box 1.
him. Rather than go to the kitchen he went out of the house, walked to the creek which ran near his house, and slaked his thirst, then returned to his room. The next day, some of his friends told him they "felt bad about" his being drunk. However, the worst was yet to come.

On 27 May 1883 Charles worked all day. Then he, Will Richards, Ed Calder, and other unnamed friends bought a bottle of brandy at Godbe's drugstore, took the streetcar to a "half way house" at the mouth of Parley's Canyon, drank beer while they ate "a few crackers and cheese," and at dusk walked up the canyon about "ten miles" and slept "till we were too cold." The next morning when they returned to the tavern, the proprietor refused to serve them. They caught a ride part-way to the city with an unnamed young man who thought they were tramps. Then a "good hearted teamster" gave them a further lift. Charles, lying in the bottom of the wagon in the hot sun, became very ill.

They still had some way to go when the driver let them out, and Charles records that they ate wild strawberries, drank creek water, and became nauseated from the combination of berries mixed with the alcohol. Everyone vomited. Charles records that he himself "threw up about a pint of strawberries and water" with such violence that it made his throat sore. Will Richards, who also continued to vomit, asked drolly, "Well Charl, are you glad you came?" "I was just getting sick again," Charles wrote, "and answered in a feeble tone yes, at the same time throwing up." Charles wrote that he saw Will, "his fingers run down his throat trying to vomit," then "it would be my turn." In an odd tone of self-congratulation, he added, "I had better luck than Richards it was with very little effort for me to vomit." He reached home before noon on 28 May. The next morning Charles felt well enough to eat breakfast, even though he found it hard to swallow because his throat was so sore from vomiting. He recorded this adventure in detail, and he and his friends talked and laughed about it for weeks, although its humor is not readily apparent to an outsider.

On 28 July, Charles and nine of his friends, including Fred Thomas, Ed Calder, Will Richards, Lon Sanders, Oscar Bairne (?) and George Taylor,16 set out for a week-long escapade in the canyon.

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16Two names are unreadable.
some in a borrowed wagon while others rode horses. Rain overtook them as they reached a Caledonian saloon. After a short stop there, they went on until they were close to Coalville, Utah, where they unhitched the horses and took shelter near the wagon. Charles wrote, “We had a good time, singing, playing cards etc. then went to bed. Nearly froze we were all in one long bed ten of us what with fully clothed, cold weather we didn’t sleep very well.”

The next day, 29 July, as they started for the summit, one of the boys who was behind the wagon, “caught a lamb and cut its throat and put it in the wagon.” Reaching the summit, the boys visited with two of Charles’s uncles, William and John H. Kimball, who ranched there. Then they went on to the head of the Weber River and camped. The following morning, Charles reports, “We arose quite early . . . and I got breakfast of lamb chops, fish, boiled eggs, pickles, coffee etc.” Taking four cans of fruit with him, Charles rode to Peoa and traded the fruit for some molasses. On the way back to camp, he met several acquaintances from Salt Lake City, including Apostle Brigham Young Jr. That evening he and his friends “got the guitars and went up on the high bridge and sang and played to [some pretty girls]. They were kind. They didn’t show the slightest displeasure at our racket—the boys played ‘Seven Up’ I fell asleep when they stopped we made our beds. I went to bed.” After doing some fishing the next day, 1 August, one of the boys went to Wanship and procured a ball and a pound of butter. Then “the boys went into a field near at hand and stole some hay, then some straw. I can truly say I felt bad to see them do it but I knew it would do no good to say anything to such a course [sic] set.” The following day the unnamed owner of the hay confronted the boys and made them pay a dollar for the stolen feed.

As they returned home the campers stopped at a saloon, and Charles wrote, “I bought some beer . . . We put up for quite a while talking on religious matters and went to bed.” That night about “fifty pigs from the HWH came around our tent, eating everything that they could lay their snouts on, I got one by the tail and it nearly pulled me out of bed.” The travelers arrived back home on Sunday, 5 August.

Two and a half months later on 17 October 1883, Charles

17Ibid., 28 July 1883.
18Ibid., 4 August 1883.
recorded in his diary, “I started for Uncle Heber’s [Kimball] to see if Uncle David was there. Met him as he was coming out of there. I walked downtown with him talking of my going to Arizona.” Seven days later, “Uncle Dave came here and startled me with the announcement that we would start for Arizona tomorrow afternoon.”19 That evening Charles called on most of his friends, played some games with them, had a drink, and then came home expecting “to go by way of San Francisco.” When Charles arrived at the home of his Uncle Charlie Kimball, he discovered that he had omitted to pick up Uncle David’s bedding “which was at our house.” They went by wagon to his home and Charles wrote, “Ma came out—Mother’s eyes were filled with tears she kissed me again. God bless her.”20

By leaving Salt Lake City, Charles hoped to find a better job and also hoped that being on his own might bring him more happiness than he was experiencing with the checks to his acting career and his social life, both discussed in greater detail below. In Mesa and St. David where he lived for the next two years, he worked as a farmhand, acquired a little property, participated in church and community social events, and continued to keep a diary. But his old demons followed him south, and he records periodically smoking and drinking.

A letter from Will Richards dated 21 November 1884 reached Charles in Mexico, where he was working on a haying crew. Nostalgically, Will wrote: “Charl, I would give my right leg to be where I could step into your yard and shake hands and have a big talk with you. Our old crowd is all broken up. . . . When shall we meet again? It may be in this world and it may be in the next, let us hope, however, it will be in this.” Will gossiped about some girls they both knew and signed off: “I remain your old pard in the water mellon patch behind your house.”21

The diary Charles kept between ages seventeen and twenty-one shows that he had an ambiguous relationship with tobacco and alcohol. Although he wanted to keep the Word of Wisdom, knew that it was a commandment, and felt miserable when he failed, he also seems to have been fascinated by liquor and tobacco. He consoled

19Ibid., 24 October 1883.
20Ibid., 25 October 1883.
21Will Richards, Letter to Charles S. Whitney, 21 November 1884, Helen Mar Kimball Whitney Collection, Box 3, fd. 16.
himself for disappointments with self-indulgence as this entry shows: “I smoked for the first time for over a week. I had the blues that was the reason.” 22 He also seems to have been easily influenced by friends. Even though he did not want to drink or smoke, he continually spent time with friends who did—and thus repeatedly found himself engaged in both activities. The day before Charles left Salt Lake City, for instance, he met Al Sloan, Ed Calder, and Will Richards who “made me get a drink they were pretty full. . . . The boys made me play pool. . . . We then went to the theatre” after which “Ed made me take oysters.” 23 It is interesting that, in a single entry, Charles three times said he was “made” to do something by his friends.

Feelings of depression often shadowed Charles as he measured himself against the values that permeated the society in which he struggled to find his manhood. The guilt, blending with his depression, often drove him to saloons and friends that only exacerbated his problem. He records occasional expressions of concern from his mother and sisters about his drinking, smoking, and spending time with friends. Charles, it appears, did not smoke or drink in the presence of his parents or siblings. There is no evidence that he discussed these Word of Wisdom violations with his father or any ecclesiastical leader. It appears that he attempted to alter his behavior sporadically, mostly alone, only occasionally with the assistance of a friend. That he sometimes violated the Word of Wisdom seems to have had no impact on his church activity or eligibility for callings.

### Charles as a Student

Seventeen-year-old Charles was enrolled as a student at the University of Deseret in 1882. Among his papers are a number of short stories which he composed while taking a writing class from John R. Park, university president. Some of the titles of these tales are “The Lost Crew,” “The Little Matchmaker,” “Contentment,” “The Pampas,” “The Lion and the Fox,” “The Crab,” and an essay on air. 24 His stories were all written in pencil. One critic, fellow stu-

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22 Charles S. Whitney, Diary, 27 April 1883.
23 Ibid., 24 October 1883.
24 Helen Mar Kimball Whitney Collection, Mss. 179, Box 2, fd. 2.
dent A. W. Nebeker, commented, “They look as if they had been hurriedly written,” then continued, “The author seems to possess some originality in the construction of his story, but in most cases does not deviate from the one read to us for our guidance.” Then he concludes his evaluation generously by writing, “I see nothing to hinder the gentleman from becoming a good writer.”

Charles’s story “The Lost Crew” tells of a youth who lived in Scotland with his widowed mother. He longed to go to sea but his mother “would not hear of her only child leaving her to follow that occupation by which so many had met their death.” When the young man reached age twenty-one, he boarded a ship bound for China. After experiencing three days “in high spirits,” the boy thought of “his dear old mother waiting in sorrow for his return” and “his mind grew sad.” Chinese pirates captured the boat and took him prisoner. After twenty years, he escaped and made his way back home where he lived out his days with his mother, keeping her in comfort. An argument could be made that this story represents just the sort of life Charles wanted to live and that, in some ways, it may be autobiographical.

His papers also include a poem written in April 1883 after some disheartening experiences as a student and an unpleasant encounter with his employer, probably G. W. Davis. This creation “Call Me That Again!” is a parody in four parts, dedicated “to those who are inclined to lose their temper”:

**Passion**

He said I lied, the awful word was spoken,
I’ll leave it to you, if he’s not in the wrong.
He left the house nor stopped to ask my pardon;
It would serve him right if it burned out his tongue.

**Passion and Love Combined**

Oh but for you my love, I would not be here
I’d follow him until he took it back
I’d leave the store and make the man repent of it
But Oh I am so ’fraid I’d get the sack.

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25A. W. Nebeker, Letter to Dr. J. R. Park, 13 February 1883, Helen Mar Kimball Whitney Collection, Mss. 179, Box 2, fd. 10.
Lapse of 6 Months Blood

The men have met, one sleeps beneath the covers
The other chased him with a guilded quill
The Curtain fell the view is now all over
The man and wife are sleeping by the rill.

Moral

Be careful how your passions gets the better
And angry thoughts upon your bosom ride
Take wrong from the man who held the pistol
And who in anguish lived his life and died.

Although his creative works are quite derivative, Charles shows some promise and, with more training, could probably have produced some memorable works, participating in the home literature movement in which Orson F. Whitney distinguished himself. But it is his diary that contains some of his best writing and remains his most lasting literary contribution.

The assignment book from an 1881 art class survives among Charles’s papers, containing a dozen or so sketches. He displays some skill and, had he lived longer, might have left behind some work of lasting value. According to Noel Carmack, a fine artist and a Special Collections librarian at Utah State University’s Merrill Library, Charles shows considerable artistic promise for a teenager. One of his early water colors—a nature scene—reveals competent proportions and a nice sense of color. The blues of the lake in his picture blend well with the pinks in the sky. In pencil, he sketched buildings, snowflakes, leaves and flowers. A sketch on sandpaper shows a young boy in a small boat on a large river (perhaps the Mississippi). One of his largest and perhaps best pencil sketches is of Nauvoo, Illinois, before the temple was finished.26 Crayon drawings that carry the titles, “A Grizzly in the Camp,” “The First German in Paris,” and “The Ruins of Pheinfels,” were probably drawn from illustrations Charles saw in magazines or newspapers. The collection also includes drawings of a gorilla, a cow, an ancient bridge at old Panama, a butterfly, Joseph Smith, the Carthage Jail, and a sort of

26In Winslow Farr Smith Collection, POO-34, Box 5, fd. 16, Special Collections, Merrill Library, Utah State University.
Two art projects by Charles S. Whitney. The first is captioned: “H. K. Whitney’s house, the back part from the wood pile.” Courtesy Merrill Library Special Collections.

comic strip titled “Professor Prog’s Entomological Experiences.” A number of pages in Charles’s sketchbooks are adorned with crosses or gravestones that look like crosses. Crosses appear, too, on the backs of many sketches. Perhaps they are a sort of monogram, or perhaps they indicate a preoccupation with death that foreshadow his probable suicide.

Along with creative writing and art, Whitney also took a grammar class in 1883. He says little about it. In fact, judging from his journal, its most memorable moment was the professor’s lecture delivered against passing notes and his walk home after class with several girls.27

This lack of focus extended to other subjects as well. Instead

27Charles S. Whitney, Diary, 29 November 1883.
of studying for the final examination in his geography class, Charles played baseball. He doesn’t say how he did on the test, but the ball hit him in the mouth, knocking out three front teeth. As he continued his schooling the next academic year, 1883, however, his study habits improved and he proudly recorded on 8 January 1883, “Examination started today. . . . I believe I answered all questions right.”

During winter term 1882-83, he took courses in grammar, arithmetic, diction and punctuation, rhetoric, and geography; but when final exams drew near, he decided to take only his diction and punctuation final. Reading his diary entries shows that Charles commented more extensively about the girls with whom he strolled than about his teachers and their subjects. He sometimes skipped class: “I did not go to Geography today, but sat in the museum.” But the same day he walked home with Professor Joseph Toronto (who turned down an appointment to West Point to teach at the university) and “gave him a deal about giving us such long lessons in arithmetic.” He does not record Toronto’s answer. This comment shows considerable self-confidence. As a student, Whitney was apparently unafraid of his teachers and not hesitant to give them negative feedback. Whitney so disliked his geography course that, after six weeks and missing many of the lectures, he dropped it and took orthography instead. Apparently there were fewer restrictions regarding changing courses then than there are today.

One day he visited the school’s singing class so he could be close to a Miss Fotheringham whom he much admired. He sat in the back of the room where she could not see him; but when he glanced her way, she had gone. Leaping to put the worst possible construction on this event, Whitney decided that she had departed “because she had seen me enter the room.” Clearly there was more going on at school than classwork, which shows no great difference between teenagers a century apart.

On 18 March 1883, Whitney wrote that Joe Swenson had told him that Rose Derie, one of his classmates, said she thought he “was

28 Ibid., 22 May 1882.
29 Ibid., 15 January 1883.
30 Ibid., 1 February 1883.
31 Ibid., 2 February 1883.
32 Ibid., 8 February 1883.
the only nice fellow in school." Rather ungallantly he added, "She always takes particular pains to speak to me, which makes me rather tired, being stuck after her." Whitney preferred the company of Meg Sloan and was happy to accept her invitation that same day to a surprise party she "was getting up on Saturday night for Jennie Calder." Perhaps he had his mind too much on girls and parties because the next day, when Professor Park asked Charles to read his critique of fellow student William L. Rich's essay, he was so frightened that "my hands shook so I could hardly hold the paper."33 (He was also ill with a cold, which may have intensified his overreaction.)

When school ended in the spring of 1883, he did not return for more than two years. Yet his diary discloses considerable mastery of his mother tongue. When he was writing only for himself and presenting himself honestly, his prose is interesting and engaging. He must have learned more at school than his transcript would admit.

**SOCIAL LIFE**

Whitney's diaries open a brief but fascinating window on teenage social life in Salt Lake City in 1882 and 1883 among young people of his class and neighborhood. Whitney's diary reveals that for many of Salt Lake City's older teenagers, social life revolved around the theater, pool halls, ward chapels, and homes. Home parties were an important staple of social life, hosted more frequently by girls than by boys. The young people played ball, pool, cards, and cribbage, practiced gymnastics, went ice skating, attended parties, lectures, and Mutual Improvement Association (MIA) meetings, and simply spent time together, talking away the evenings. Some young people dated, but Whitney and most of his male friends were involved primarily in group activities, circulating within these groups to attract the notice, sometimes by clowning, of a favorite girl.

Emotionally, Charles's social life was a roller coaster. There was no way of knowing ahead of time if he would enjoy himself or not. He covered up feelings of shyness and inferiority by "cutting up," which sometimes brought him positive attention; but he could be plunged into gloom just as easily. On 13 September 1882, he brooded, "Alice [Dinwoody, eighteen-year-old daughter of his employer] did not treat me very well, I was as usual the wall flower

33Ibid., 19 March 1883.
of the crowd." On 8 February 1883, Charles attended a party hosted by a Miss Greeves, whom he does not further identify, whom he had never before met. Unnamed friends accused him of "looking blue because Miss Fotheringham was not there." When "they gathered up some forf[e]its," he gave a girl [name unclear] a brass ring. She wanted him "to redeem it," probably by giving her a kiss. But he "could not see it, that way," so put on his hat and coat, declaring that he had to leave, and spent the remainder of the evening on Brigham Street visiting with a few friends after their return from the theater.

In 1882 on Halloween, Fred Lamborne, Sol Clawson, Charles, and three other friends went to Clawson's home. About nine o'clock they "took some white cloth made eyes in it [and] bleached it." Then they went to the Jennings's home and "when the doors were opened . . . we six boys all dressed in white, walked in its dining room where at the table sat Misses Mary Vrises (?) Jane Jennings, and Mag Dwyler." The boys each took a seat by one of the ladies. "I setting by Miss Jennings the superstition being that a girl a gent sets by is to be his future wife." After the meal they retired to the parlor and sang until 1:30, then went home.

On another occasion friends Lila Lewis and Em Whitney asked him to sing songs from the musical Mascot. He performed "Wise Men and Learned Sages" and "When I See Thee," one a comical selection and the other a love song. Then as he walked toward the post office he saw Miss Fotheringham who first smiled at him but then passed him "looking bold, stern and dark," refusing to speak. He spent the rest of the evening eating jelly cake at the Excelsior Bakery with Misses Currie and Best, and N. Needham.

One evening in February he attended a lecture delivered by William Fotheringham, Miss Fotheringham's father. He had served a mission in India and spoke on that topic, which Charles found "very interesting." On Valentine's day, Charles purchased a new coat for $1.00 and attended the crowded "Unity Calico Ball" at the Salt Lake Theatre. He danced seven or eight times with Alice Dinwoody who "treated me quite well tonight and asked me to come and see her." After the dance he attended a supper upstairs and didn't get home until 2:10 A.M. "very tired."

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This cumbersome but uncomplicated cipher assigns a symbol to each letter of the alphabet. Charles’s first permanent message using it (I have added / to indicate line breaks and standardized capitalization) reads: “C. S. Whitney / Wens. Nov. 15 1882 / Private / Composed for my own privacy.”

A week later, Charles played poker all evening at the Lila Lewis home with Lila, her mother, and Alice Dinwoody, for treats. Returning home, he wrote in code in his diary “did it though not on purpose.” The next sentence, not in code, is, “Being first time for nearly a week.” Possibly “it” was masturbation.36

At other times when Charles wrote in code, he was referring to his feelings about girls. Because he lived with his mother and sisters, he may have been afraid that they would read his diary and tease him. For example, on 16 November 1882, he wrote in code “Maime Dinwoody [Alice’s sister] hurt my feelings by taking no notice of me!” Six months later, he

35Ibid., 14 February 1883.
36Ibid., 21 February 1883. Charles preserved the key to his code, which I found in the Helen Mar Kimball Whitney Collection, Box 2, fd. 2.
declared, “Since I met Miss Dee [it is not clear whether he is talking about Maime or Alice here] I have liked her very much but she's matched on Dolf.” Then he confessed that he was “drunk over Miss Fotheringham, but they are all hopeless.”

When Maime Dinwoody invited Charles to call on her, he was plunged into disappointment because she told him to bring Dolf along. “This,” he wrote, “made me feel blue.” Still he went to find Dolf who was at practice. He also found out that same evening that Alice Dinwoody was angry with him because he had “kissed her in Ogden.” Attempting to make amends, he visited her, but she ran into another room. Disappointed, he walked home.

Two weeks later, he spent the evening of 7 March 1883 attending a party at the Dinwoody home with many of his college friends. They played cards and ate oranges while Alice Dinwoody “didn’t speak to him,” but he was not certain whether she even saw him. Disappointed, he left early and went to the Lion House, retrieved his mother’s shawl, and then went home. The next day he met Alice and “asked her why she didn’t come into the parlor and speak to me. She said she didn’t know I was there.” That same day he told his sister “that he believed the only reason girls [he meant Alice] talked to him was because he looked like Orson.” Later through his friend and cousin Gene Kimball, Alice asked that he call on her again. As this example show, Whitney’s self-image was fragile. His mood soared or sank, depending on how girls treated him.

In contrast to this emotional volatility, Charles felt consistently confident in theatrical roles, indicating that he had considerable competence as an actor. After talking with Em Whitney on 9 March 1883, Whitney went to the opera house and was delighted when producers Fred Waller and David Dunn asked him to play the part of “old Mother Goose.” He was asked to get someone to play the part of the old woman who lived in a shoe for an opera house party they were “getting up.” Charles asked Fred Clawson, who consented, and the producer said “that he would get [the] costumes and pay us what we asked.” At the first rehearsal, the

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37Ibid., 25 April 1883.
38Ibid., 22 February 1883.
39Ibid., 8 March 1887.
same day, his fellow actors, both girls and boys, applauded the way he played his part and delivered his lines. After the practice he attended a party at a friend's home.

On Friday, 6 April 1883, the day after Charles had played the part of a Frenchman in Larry Stitch, Maude Adams, the famous actress, called him “a clever fellow.” Proudly he recorded that she continued: he was “the feature of the play. I liked it better than anything.” A few moments later, Maude added a third compliment: “Mr. Whitney allow me to congratulate you.” Other actors, including Heber (“Hebe”) M. Wells, said about his performance, “That was way up!”

When the Mother Goose play opened, Charles donned his costume, which included a false nose and chin. All the actors were dressed like characters from Mother Goose rhymes. The curtain rose, the orchestra struck up the march, and Charlie and his “children” strutted before a huge audience, then formed a quadrille and danced. The show was a hit.

Like many other stagestruck youth, Charles dreamed of becoming a professional actor. In fact, when a troupe of professional actors whom he identifies as “the Lindsey Crowd” (the Lindsey Drama Club), asked him to join their tour of Idaho and Montana, he immediately proposed the scheme to his mother. She said “she couldn’t think of it and made many objections.” He had not smoked for more than a week; but three days later, he smoked again because he “had the blues.”

On Sunday, 8 April 1883, Charles went to general conference and slept during the meeting, visited friends, did chores, talked with friends on Main Street, and then played cards at the home of a Miss

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40 Ibid., 6 April 1883. Maude Adams (1872-1953) was a very popular stage actress in the early twentieth century. She was a leading lady in the stock company which played in the local Social Hall. Ann W. Engar, "Maude Adams," Utah History Encyclopedia, edited by Allan Kent Powell (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1994), 1.

41 Heber M. Wells was the son of Daniel H. Wells and Martha Gene Harris. His father had been a counselor to Brigham Young. Heber later became Utah’s first governor when it achieved statehood in 1896.

42 Charles S. Whitney, Diary, 15 March 1883.

43 Ibid., 24 April 1883.

44 Ibid., 27 April 1883.
Cahoon, before he finally went home. As this schedule implies, Charles spent few evenings at home. For example, in a run of twenty-three consecutive diary entries, he spent only one evening at home. On 21 April 1883, he worked on a pathway “in the front-yard” made from lumber, did the chores, which included milking the family cow, took a bath “and went down town” where he played “a game or two of billiards.” Then he paid 75 cents to see the play *Friend and Foe* performed by “Scanlon, the Irish comedian.” It was “pretty good,” he evaluated critically. He returned home at 11:15 P.M.

Like many, if not most teenage boys, Whitney spent much of his time thinking about and attempting to develop relationships with young women. He was pleased when a girl who had moved to Logan, Jean (“Jennie”) Caine, frequently wrote to him. He kept her letters but he was a slothful correspondent. “Next time you write,” she scolded, as she began a letter to him on 24 April 1883, “please don’t go to sleep over it.” Her own letter was short and not particularly exciting, containing only a description of the weather. “It is very pleasant here today,” she wrote, and then concluded her fourteen-line missive with the words, “Give my kind regards to all, and except [sic] love from your friend, J. Caine.”

Eighteen-year-old Will Richards wrote Charles an energetic and gossipy missive on 24 April 1883 from Brigham Young Academy where he was going to school. He and an unnamed friend had followed a girl, apparently offensively, for her friends had almost “thumped” them. He had, however, “held his ground.” Then Richards wrote, “Dam the wind, a person can’t think, let alone write.” He added, perhaps half-apologetically, perhaps half-defiantly, “I am a good boy.” When Will came home for the summer, as noted earlier, he joined Charles and other friends in the unpleasant but memorable drinking bout involving strawberries.

Whitney’s social activities continued. He spent May Day 1883 in the canyon picnicking with Lee Dowden, Nell Lindsey, Gene Kimball, and others. They ate basket lunches that the girls had prepared and then played games. He spent the next day driving the team of

46Jennie Caine, Letter to Charles S. Whitney, 24 April 1883, Helen Mar Kimball Whitney Collection, Mss. 179, Box 2, fd. 16.
47Will Richards, Letter to Charles S. Whitney, 24 April 1883, Helen Mar Kimball Whitney Collection, Mss. 179, Box 2, fd. 16.
his Uncle Erastus to look at a farm he (Erastus) was “thinking of buying.” They got caught in a “hail storm,” met a friend, Miss Brown, from Salt Lake Seventeenth Ward, and reached home at dusk where he found that “a cow got loose and ran over my vegetable garden.” He wrote, “I was mad.”

Charles sometimes played pool in saloons and poker for money and treats, although he probably never had enough money to get involved in gambling. He and his friends sometimes engaged in rather insensitive practical jokes. Once at the opera house, he, George Romney, and Fred Clawson focused their opera glasses on “quite a pretty girl.” He did not know who she was nor did he know her escort. The first one who spotted her looking at them would “exclaim, there,” and they would “all throw” their glasses to their eyes and say “butts.” Then they turned the glasses and looked through the large end and said, “There.” They “kept this up all night,” he wrote, “to the embarrassment of the girl and the rage of her fellow. When the show was over we all got by the door and stared at her as she went out she looked at us and laughed.”

Five days later, Charles, in a very black mood, wrote a lengthy introspective entry in which he hinted at suicide:

Feeling very despondent . . . and sick at heart. . . . The girls treat me so damn mean, I got with several yesterday but as soon as other fellows would come around they would sack me for them, I also caught several boys and girls at different times looking at me and laughing. . . . God only knows what makes them make fun of me, I don’t. I never felt so much like running away from home or getting rid of myself in my life tis only the love I bear my family and my God that prevents me from doing something desperate.

He then unsparingly listed his imperfections which included an “accursed temper.” He went on, “Why under God’s heaven was I made so different from the rest of our family with the exception of myself every one of the family are good looking were it not for a resemblance I bear to Orson, I should think some time that I didn’t belong to a Whitney family I am so different from the rest—I heard that some of the folks at Provo said I was the finest looking fellow there at the time I was down with a tabernacle choir.” Then he added

48Charles S. Whitney, Diary, 2 May 1883.
49Ibid., 24 April 1883.
50Ibid., 31 May 1883.
with agonizing self-consciousness: “All my companions are about the same size while I’m so much taller and so lanky that I am ashamed to walk with them. The night that Flo came from Provo I walked downtown with her and Gen[e] Kimball my God the agony I was in I could hear snickering of the men and boys as I passed along and looking back I saw them looking at me still laughing till I believe if I would have had a pistol I would have shot one of them.”

With dark feelings, he continued this entry:

I am so indolent with no ambition for any thing I surely don’t know what I’ll do for a living. I have some talent as an actor and of an artist—the first I dare not follow as I have been warned against it by Ma who says the Lord will scourge me if I do; and the second I have not the ambition to study and had I the ambition I have not the money, my heaven why didn’t pa take up land when he had a chance then we might have been rich instead of crawling along in this way no body knows what I have on my mind the way I cut up at times no one would think I had ears by heaven if I do say it there aren’t many fellows who would stay at home had they such a desire to get away as I have and had such troubles to contend with. . . . I feel that if I could only go to some country where I was not known for a few years I would be happy.

In this context, his studies, canyon parties, drinking and smoking with friends, and camping expeditions can be seen as casting about for a new direction in life. He even considered leaving home. Unfortunately Whitney’s depression continued and some of his best friends said they “didn’t know what was the matter with” him. He refused for a time to walk girls home, telling them he was ill. On 3 June 1883, while walking with one young lady, Fran, she remarked that she really liked one of the Clawson boys “when he does not cut up so much.” Whitney took her remark personally and said, “That was one on me.” She protested that she found Charles “funny.” Unconvinced, Charles sulkily went home.

The following day, 4 June 1883, when he arrived at the “coop” (ZCMI) he learned through John Rutledge that the three girls “were mad at me for running off.” Returning home he wrote, “I felt mean and sleepy all day till about 3 p.m. when I went upstairs and went to sleep till nearly 5:30.”

Adding to Charles’s woes, on 7 June his mother gave him a “lecture about staying up late and getting up late.” Charles “got mad and unsuccessfully tried to get a job with a surveying party so he could leave home. Then his theater boss, Dick Whitmore, gave him
"a racket about seating two people wrong" the previous evening. In reality the mistake had been made by another usher. Mortified, Whitney wrote: "I was used to be[ing] blamed for the faults of others. O the Agony!!" Even his sleep was troubled and he wrote, "I dreamed most all night—some pretty tough things, too." To console himself for these distressing events, he purchased chewing tobacco at a drugstore and then spent an afternoon with a friend he identifies only as Roberts and another unidentified "fellow" playing billiards.

On 17 June 1883, when he returned home after visiting his father at the tithing office, accompanied by Charles Castle, John Snell and Roberts, he found his friend Dolf and Zina Woods there. He wrote, "As I was laying on the sofa today when all the crowd was there she [Zina] laid her head on my shoulder. I felt sick enough to throw up, I yelled out for an excuse to get her off, 'look at that wild cow in the street,' there was a cow there but it was quite gentle, she got off Ah!!" The group, after looking at the cow, went to Carl Young's home so Carl could pick up his guitar. Then they went on to serenade Hen Calder. Then Charles, Fran, and Ed Calder sat on the porch of the Whitney home and talked: "Beautiful moonlight night and cool."

Two days later he played the guitar with Will Richards, Zina Woods, and Flo, then they all went by buggy to the beer hall where Charles beat them in pool. Then he went to the Eighth Ward square to watch a ball game. Charles had been drinking; and when he arrived at the game, he laid down "in a corner and was just going to sleep when Ed [Calder and] Will [Richards] yanked me up and made me come with them. We walked half asleep up to Lorenzo Youngs. I got in a corner of the hay... and was going to sleep when the boys pulled me out and sat me on a stool by the cow and made me milk her. I nearly went to sleep over it—I finished and started to throw up 6 or seven times. Then I went to the water closet and did the same there. Will tried to pull me out and said 'Hell Whitney don't give me a [word unclear] by throwing up on the seat.'" Charles's friends then took him home to bed.

The following morning some of the girls—Miss Jones and Miss

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51 Ibid., 9 June 1883.
52 Ibid.
53 Ibid., 19 June 1883.
Johns—told him that they thought he and Will were drunk the previous evening. When he confessed to having had a little beer, “the girls felt bad about it.”

At the end of the 1883 summer, most notable for his spectacular drinking expeditions with his friends, Charles obviously felt at loose ends. He had not found a satisfactory full-time job. His mother had quashed his hopes of traveling with an acting company, and he had decided not to go back to school. He was doing some work as a stage hand, usher, and keeper of order at the opera house. Thus, during the first week of October 1883, he was casting about for change and leaped at the invitation of his Uncle David Kimball to go to Arizona. His friends—Ed Calder, Al Sloan, Hen Calder, Dolf, and Will Richards—talked of organizing a dance to raise money for the trip. Nothing came of this plan, and Charles ultimately got the needed money from his brother Orson. Davis also paid him six dollars for three days’ work at the opera house.

**CHURCH ACTIVITIES**

Charles’s family had clear expectations for his religious activity, and his diary shows how Church activities were woven into the fabric of his daily life. Despite his late-night drinking and partying, he “got up tired, went to Sunday School” (28 May 1882). In the more than eighty Sundays covered by the diary, he missed Sunday School about half the time; although on sixteen Sundays when he was absent from Sunday School, he attended sacrament meeting in the ward or attended the Tabernacle’s afternoon service. On 21 January 1883, he wrote, “Went to Sunday School for the first time in a long time.” In the eighteen Sundays previous to his departure for Arizona, he attended Sunday meetings only three times. He does not record who his teachers were, what they taught, or how Sunday Schools were conducted. MIA, held on either Tuesday or Wednesday nights during the winters and suspended for the summer, was both a social occasion and a teaching organization.

After Sunday School, Charles often rehearsed plays at the opera house, attended song practice, or played his guitar. It was rare when he did not spend Sunday evening with friends. At other times he visited Temple Square, took buggy rides, made ice cream, did his

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54Ibid., 20 June 1883.
55Ibid., 17 and 19 October 1883.
chores, and met girls and friends on City Creek Bridge—all on the Sabbath. One of his most unusual Sabbath entries appears on 4 February 1883: "Started for Sunday School," he wrote, "collar did not fit right. Went home in a rage. Put another on. It wasn't ironed good. I tore it off in a rage took up a ruler in order to break some [word unclear] threw down broke a frame of glass in my bedroom window." Other unconventional Sabbath activities included "purchasing cigarettes" (31 December 1882), "visited Brigham Young's grave" (4 March 1883), "played cards" (8 April 1883), "boxed for awhile" (15 April 1883), "saw a skeleton of a man's leg from the knee" (13 May 1883), "took bath at walker house twenty five cents" (31 December 1882), "ate currants" (22 July 1883), "visited a Catholic Church much amused by an Irishman who when he entered was on his knees in the aisle his hands clasped, eyes rolled up and suffering tremendously" (28 October 1882), and "went to restaurant ate oysters" (22 April 1883).

Sometimes, though not often, he skipped his meetings and went up the canyon with friends to stay overnight. 56 This activity angered his mother who believed that such actions violated the Sabbath day. On other Sundays he pleased his mother by attending the afternoon meeting in the tabernacle. At least ten diary entries mention his attendance at these meetings. 57

He never mentions attending church meetings with members of his family. On 22 October 1882, he went to Sunday School and then spent the rest of the morning playing guitars and banjos with Fred Clawson, Jim Campbell, Frank Taylor, and Washington Young. In the afternoon he took a walk on Temple Square, then went to a rehearsal. He even attended a meeting at the tabernacle. Later in the evening he and the friends mentioned above played their guitars once more as they walked to the Eagle Gate and then up to Rowland Hall. He spent the rest of the evening at Jennie Caine's home and did not reach his own home until ten in the evening.

On 26 November he got up late so he skipped Sunday School and visited the tithing office, then walked up Brigham Street and back. After doing his chores he went to "our meeting Bro. T. B. Lewis spoke," and finished off the day with Ort Pratt Jr. (Apostle Orson Pratt's son), Gene Kimball, and other friends. On 5 November 1882,

56Ibid., 29 July 1883.
57Ibid., 1 October 1882, 3 December 1882, 25 February 1883.
Will Richards and Charles attended a “Josephite meeting” and listened to Alexander Hale Smith (Joseph Smith Jr.’s son) speak. Charles wrote, “He had a very shrill and unpleasant voice, we came out before he was through.” He and Will then walked to the Fourteenth Ward meetinghouse and then up to the Kimball and Lawrence corner where they said their goodbyes and Charles went home.

On Wednesday evening, 22 November 1882, after a day at school, Charles attended Mutual and was appointed with Carl (perhaps Earl) Young to go to the First Ward Mutual “as a visitor also on the program for a recitation.” Tuesday, 28 November, came, and Charles accompanied Carl in his buggy to the First Ward. Charles wrote, “We got there a little early Bro. Neils Rasmussen was present. Carl spoke I didn’t there were also two missionaries from the Central Stake, Bros. Eardly and Romney. The moon was just rising as we drove home.”

The next evening Charles attended his own ward’s Mutual and wrote, “I read my piece as I didn’t know it well enough to recite. I then gave a report of our visit to the 1st ward and was very blunt in my remarks. Johnny Spencer, who was sitting by me said ‘you’re a blunt cuss Charl.’” Dolf, John Evans, John Toronto, Olof Thompson, and Charles then went serenading around the ward before they retired for the night.

This visiting assignment was not repeated. The next significant assignment Charles received was on 11 March 1883, when he was called as second counselor in the deacons’ quorum presidency. Robert Patrick and Edward Sloan were president and first counselor respectively. His duties included collecting fast offerings but not much else.

Charles’s diary contains no record of his feelings about Mormonism except that he loves God. He writes nothing about Church doctrine nor does he mention his parents talking about the Church. However, his father’s death prompted some religious introspection. Charles, who was on a haying crew in Mexico in November 1884 when Horace died, learned the news from his friends Dolf, Will Richards, and others. It was Christmas 1884 before he communicated with his mother because his earlier letters were found unstamped at the St. David, Arizona, post office. Char-

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58Ibid., 18 October 1883.
les wrote, “I've felt cast down terribly since hearing of Pa's death. How I have looked forward to my return home to be welcomed by him and the rest of the family, but I try to see the hand of God in it all and not to murmur nor complain and I strive every day to over come the faults and failings I have.”

Even though for him and his friends the Sabbath was more social than sacred, the fact that he meticulously records days when he missed Sunday School suggests that he felt some guilt about his absences. He records few priesthood duties except the occasional MIA assignment and does not, in fact, ever mention attending a priesthood meeting. Although he was seventeen when his diary opened and he turned eighteen on 21 November 1882, he was still only a deacon. True, it was not until 1908 that Aaronic Priesthood ordinations were coordinated with age for worthy Mormon males. During Whitney's youth, many worthy adult men held only the Aaronic Priesthood. But the quorum also seems to have had only vaguely defined duties. Charles records no presidency meetings, no duties except collecting fast offerings, and no special activity associated with his calling. Despite sporadic attendance and Word of Wisdom violations, he apparently considered himself—and was accepted as—a member in good standing. Church life in the 1880s, at least for teenagers, seems to have had looser expectations of activity and standards than in our own day.

**FAMILY LIFE**

Although Charles Whitney's diary during these twenty months shows a young man growing toward maturity, struggling with sometimes extreme mood swings, absorbed with his friends, and pulling away from his family, there is still considerable evidence that his family life was affectionate and nurturing. Although Charles obviously spent far more time with his friends than with his family, still his diary records times when he, his mother, and his sisters sang together, talked as they ate bread and milk for supper, attended the theater, and rejoiced when Helen's articles were published in the *Woman's Exponent*.

Helen was the primary influence on his life. Charles mentions Horace fewer than a dozen times in these months and mentions

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59Charles S. Whitney, Letter to Helen Mar Kimball Whitney, Christmas 1884, Mss. 179, Box 1, fd. 11.
visiting him about half a dozen times, all at the tithing office where his father worked. Yet he seems to have had strong feelings for his father. When he learned of his father’s serious illness, Charles wrote soberly to his mother: “I felt fearfully blue at reading your letters pertaining to pa and other things. I feel a responsibility resting on my shoulders that of taking care of the family. It may seem to some that I’m wasting my time by being here but I don’t see it. I’m working harder and saving more than I ever could in Salt Lake. I dress plain and rough, get better wages, and have no foolishness to spend my money on.” Will Richards, Charles’s irreverent chum, wrote an uncharacteristically subdued letter of condolence which may, with a friend’s sympathy, have reflected Charles’s own feelings for Horace: “I know that this letter will find you filled with grief at the loss of your dear father, you have perhaps, suffered by this time a great affliction. A more faithful father never lived, and few boys, I venture to say, enjoyed more happiness, while home, than yourself. . . . If you will live so that you can die as good a man as your father, I predict to you that you will build a brilliant future for an exaltation with God your father.”

Although Helen does not appear to have been a smothering or fussy mother, she wanted her children to be good Latter-day Saints. On 23 May 1886 after Charles had returned to Salt Lake City and was again living at home, she wrote in her diary:

I fasted and prayed that my children might come to feel as I do concerning things pertaining to the gospel and the necessity of doing as commanded. Florence gone to Jennings farm with Helen. . . . I opposed it last night, and this morning, told them I washed my hands of it, and could not give my consent to her going contrary from what we are commanded. That I was grieved to think my words were treated so lightly when I’d spoken so plainly about such things. She said she would not do so again, but had promised the folks, etc. Before leaving she came back to my room stating that Henry [Dinwoody] told her they would go to meeting to Farmington, a mile and a half from the farm. Also promised she’d read, do nothing to break the Sabbath. I have fasted, prayed, read the Bible and wept with a broken heart before the Lord that we might find favor in his

60 Charles S. Whitney, Letter to Helen Mar Whitney, December 1884, Mss. 179, Box 1, fd. 11.
61 Will Richards, Letter to Charles S. Whitney, 25 November 1884, Mss. 179, Box 1, fd. 16.
eyes and grace to enable us to keep the Word of Wisdom in its true meaning.

The next day, she again “fasted this fore noon, that I may gain faith, to be able to keep the commandments and control my family or lead them to the Lord. That the Word of Wisdom may not be lost on us.”

Helen thus took seriously her spiritual responsibilities to her children, and Charles seems to have been aware of it, even in his youthful turmoil. Helen not only prayed for and instructed her children but also enjoyed their company and sponsored parties in their honor. For example, on 21 November 1885, she and the girls planned a surprise party for Charles. With money from Orson she bought Charles a knife, his sisters gave him a box of handkerchiefs, and the “party passed off nicely.” On Christmas Day 1885, she gave Charles “his pa’s pocket dictionary and Bible also Shakespeare and another old story book sent to Horace from England by R. Anderson which Charley prized.” She also made him clothes, including a flannel undershirt, appreciated his help in the home (“Charley is cleaning things around the house. Has set out several nice shade trees on the east side of the house and lawn”), and was thankful when Charles found a professional position at Dinwoody’s as a bookkeeper that showed some promise as a career direction.

For his part, Charles saw some things differently once he had moved to Arizona. After he had been gone more than a year he wrote Helen that he “prayed, read the scriptures, blessed his food and desired to be a good young man.” He confessed contritely that he had sometimes spoken “cross and angry words” to Helen, his father, and his siblings, but now that he was away from home they had come back to him “like arrows.” “God knows,” he wrote, “that I’m sorry for any thing I’ve ever done to wound your feelings and hope He will spare our lives to meet again so I can redeem myself.”

His family all expected good things from Charles and were

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62Helen Mar Kimball Whitney, Diary, 23 May 1886, Mss. 179, Box 3, vol. 9.
63Ibid., 24 March 1886.
64Ibid., 21 November 1885; 25 December 1885; 2, 4 January 1886, and 24 March 1886.
65Charles S. Whitney, Letter to Helen Mar Kimball Whitney, November 1884, Mss. 179, Box 2, fd. 3.
disappointed when he failed to meet their expectations; yet the family documents show that, for the most part, Charles’s family life was filled with more joy than pain, more peace than contention, and more love than disagreement.

A TRAGIC ENDING

The precise date of Charles’s return to Salt Lake City is not known. The last letter he wrote to his mother from Arizona that has survived is dated December 1884 when he had just learned of Horace’s death and funeral. It seems natural that he would return quickly, but the first time Helen Mar mentions his being in the house was 1 October 1885, almost ten months later. Once more he worked for Henry Dinwoody as a bookkeeper and participated in dramatic productions, but no diary for this period seems to have survived.

On 4 August 1886, Charles worked at Dinwoody’s during the morning and part of the afternoon, but left work early because he was ill and in pain. His mother was vacationing in Idaho with relatives and only his sister Genevieve was home with some friends. At about three o’clock in the afternoon they heard a pistol shot, ran upstairs, and found Charles lying dead on the floor of his room “with a large wound in the right side of his head.”

At the coroner’s inquest on 5 August 1886, witnesses testified that for several months Charles had been afflicted with a “severe attack of catarrh” which caused excruciating head pain. He had returned from Dinwoody’s that day holding his head in great agony. Charles’s employees told investigators that the headaches sometimes made him suffer memory lapses and his actions were at times “very strange.” Because there was no autopsy, it is impossible to determine the medical cause, if any, of this condition. The jury concluded that he took his life while “suffering from a temporary aberration.” The pistol he used belonged to his friend Florence Musser. In fact, they would have married had it not been for a serious disagreement regarding plural marriage. The whole city was shocked at this “horrible tragedy” and grieved at the loss of twenty-one-year-old Charles, eulogized as “the possessor of more than ordinary talent.”

Because of the ruling of suicide, funeral services were held 7 August 1886 in Helen’s home, not at the ward. So many people came

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67Ibid.
that a number had to stand outside. Patriarch John Smith offered the invocation. John Nicholson and C. W. Stayner, prominent Latter-day Saints and friends of the family, spoke; and President George Q. Cannon dedicated the grave. Stunned with grief, Helen struggled to accept Charles’s death:

Oh it was a bitter reality, and in silent agony I wondered what I have done, or what I had left undone, or if I was doomed to suffer this that I could know how to feel for others under like trials whose suffering I could not know in any other way. How I cried to the Lord to help me bear it if needful and acknowledge His hand in C’s taking his own life. I could not weep but Oh the agonizing thought—how a boy like him could have given way—what could have brought him to commit such an act? Had all my prayers for his eternal salvation fallen to the ground unheeded?68

The situation was made more difficult for her and Charles’s sisters and brother by the general lack of understanding of depression and emotional illness. Suicide, or self-murder, as the Juvenile Instructor called it, was considered a crime and a sin, a failure of will. President George Q. Cannon, in an editorial, declared on 15 September 1886 only six weeks later, that suicide “is becoming an event of startling frequency in our country.” There had been four suicides (including Whitney’s) in Utah alone the previous month. “The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,” Cannon wrote, “sets its seal of reprobation and condemnation upon this dreadful act.” Instead of honoring those who commit it “by making their funerals distinguished, and treating them as though they were dead heroes or heroines, and making no distinction between them and those who have worn themselves out in the service of their God, let them be buried in secret and without display, and in ground far removed from the burial places of those who have lived lives of honor and purity.”69

Nine months after this family tragedy, on 20 May 1887, Charles appeared to his mother in a dream. He looked “healthy,” she re-

68Helen Mar Whitney, Diary, 11 August 1886.
69George Q. Cannon, “Topics of the Times,” Juvenile Instructor 21 (15 September 1886): 274-75. Church leaders have somewhat modified the position stated in this editorial and authorize church services and burials in family plots. In terms of the status of souls of the deceased, the Church leaves them to the justice and mercy of God.
corded, “and fleshy enough to make him handsome.” This nocturnal experience gave her some comfort. Then on 12 June 1887, she recorded another consolation:

Lu Musser came to see me. While talking told me things concerning Charley’s death that convinced me that he shot himself purely by accident. She said Brig Young had invited him to go to Kamas, and he was going. Charlie was feeling too sick to work, thought he would be better for it. Ten minutes before his death he left Brig and Mary Whitney’s yard, saying he’d go Pack up his duds, B. telling him he had better lay down awhile. As Lu says, I believe he was intending to take along the pistol, had it in his hand, and was either sitting on the old bedstead which broke down. He threw up his hands or he was standing, one of his faint dizzy spells took him. He fell on the bedstead, naturally threw up his arms to save himself the pistol went off in the fall, into the upper part of the plastered wall. She said Charley Burton, Dr. Bennidict and many more to whom sh’d explained this matter were convinced that it was an accident. Nothing more. The fact that he was talking—ten minutes before—in a cheerful tone, which I’d never understood till tonight, came up to pack his things with the expectation of going with Brig for an out[ing] to benefit his health, is enough to prove that no other idea was in his head. That has satisfied me, saying nothing of other strong proofs that such an act as self destruction was never committed intentionally, his nature, his education, religion forbade him doing it.70

For the first time since losing him, Helen knew some peace.

CONCLUSION

Charles S. Whitney had a rich Mormon heritage. A child of polygamy, he and his parents struggled to make a living in Salt Lake City. While he desired wealth, he longed, too, for social acceptance. Supposed slights, especially from young women, caused him anxiety and despair. When he believed that his associates were using him for their own ends or making fun of him, he plunged into depression. Fighting—and often losing—battles with his own demons, tobacco and liquor, he at times despised himself for lacking self-mastery. However, more of his days were happy than were sad. He enjoyed people and, though he sometimes would not believe it, had many friends. Unable to find work that would bring him wealth, he went from job to job, longing for a

70Helen Mar Whitney, Diary, 12 June 1887.
life on the stage. The acting he did in Arizona and Salt Lake City kept his aspirations alive, but he never found a way to become a professional actor.

We see in Whitney's life a youth struggling to find manhood, self-mastery, social acceptance, a measure of wealth, security, and a companion. His life ended when he was only twenty-one, and none of his dreams became realities. Yet through his wonderful diary, he has allowed us a glimpse into a Utah teenager's mind as he groped his way toward adulthood, tied to family and friends, never fully aware of his potential or cognizant of the reservoir of his talent.

In many respects Whitney seems like many Mormon teenagers today. He struggled with the Word of Wisdom in large part because of peer pressure. He obsessed about his interactions with young women. He suffered black depression because he perceived himself as rejected. Although over a hundred years have passed, teenagers still struggle with the same issues. Very few teenage boys kept diaries and even fewer preserved them, but Charles Whitney even left behind a key so that the parts written in code could be deciphered. It appears that he wanted his words read by generations yet unborn, and his diaries will one day perhaps bring him the recognition he failed to achieve while alive. They are extraordinarily candid, a resource for social historians who want to unlock the Mormon past.

Reviewed by Boyd Petersen

John Rex Winder was at the very heart of Mormonism at the time when it changed most radically. He served as the second counselor in the Presiding Bishopric from 1887 until 1901, when he was called as first counselor to Joseph F. Smith. He served in the First Presidency until his death in 1910. A deeply spiritual man, he was also involved in the completion and administration of the Salt Lake Temple, serving as the superintendent in charge of completing the temple, then as the first assistant to Lorenzo Snow in charge of the temple, and finally as President of the Salt Lake Temple, a position he held concurrently with his service in the First Presidency until his death. Thomas Alexander has observed that this period—the 1890s through the turn of the century—was a time of deep structural and doctrinal changes for Mormonism as it “began groping for a new paradigm that would save essential characteristics of their religious tradition, provide sufficient political stability to preserve the interests of the church, and allow them to live in peace with other Americans” (*Mormonism in Transition* [Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986], 14). Thus, a biography of a man who was both involved in and witness to these changes is significant.

Michael K. Winder, a great-great-grandson of his subject, certainly has his work cut out for him in taking on this important task. And the difficulty is compounded by the dearth of first-hand sources available to him. Michael was able to uncover only five letters written by Winder and one short journal, “Kept While On Expedition to Sanpete with Lieutenant General Daniel H. Wells in the Year 1866” (286). By not keeping a journal, Winder was not indolent; rather he was generally critical of all journal keeping among the Brethren. He felt that keeping records of Church council meetings should be the task of official clerks, not individual members, and he worried that “many things were written in them which, if they were to fall into the hands of the enemy, might bring trouble on the Church” (222). Considering these obstacles, Michael Winder has done a good job of assembling contemporary sources—writings of friends and associates, reminiscences of relatives, Winder’s conference addresses, etc.—and fusing them with secondary sources written about this period.

With these sources, Michael Winder paints a portrait of a man who, while consistent in his devotion to the Church, was divided in his application of
gospel charity. Loved and revered by members of the Church for his charity and kindness, Winder showed his own family old-world sternness and patriarchal severity. For example, Winder gave his son Will no salary for managing the Winder dairy farm but filled a jar with money for Will's family's expenses. When it was empty, Will would “take the jar to his formidable father and ask meekly for a refill” (224). His grandsons remember that Winder would “administer a short flick of his horsewhip,” if they were within striking distance when he drove by in his buggy (223). Another grandson recalled that, when he and a friend once encountered his grandfather, Winder was “warm as he could be” toward the friend but mostly ignored his own grandson. When the friend asked about Winder’s “stoic reception,” the grandson humbly replied, “I guess I haven’t proven myself yet” (223).

An incident that illustrates not only Winder’s severity but also his lack of balance toward his family occurred when a hired hand began telling (untrue) stories about having slept with Winder’s second wife, Hannah. Winder never sought to learn the truth but was so angry that he never spoke to Hannah again. For over four years, Winder “never returned to [Hannah’s] room” (117), and Hannah eventually had a nervous breakdown and sought a divorce. Michael Winder does a fine job in addressing this family “scandal,” pointing out that the only source for the narrative is Hannah’s diary, recreating the historical context demanding irreproachable behavior of women (Hannah had allowed the farmhand to sleep in the warm house rather than the winter-cold bunkhouse), but also acknowledging Winder’s overreaction. “The incident with Hannah was certainly not the Winder family’s finest hour, and John R. deeply regretted the divorce for the rest of his life,” summarizes his great-great-grandson (118).

The most problematic element of this biography, however, is Michael Winder’s use of his sources. A recent graduate in history and an MBA candidate from the University of Utah, he undertook this biography of his great-great-grandfather above all as a project of love. It is easy, therefore, to forgive many of the problems in the book. However, correctly quoting, paraphrasing, and citing sources is a basic requirement, a process that should certainly be learned in any undergraduate education, and one which a press in business as long as Horizon should have certainly been able to provide more guidance with.

First, Michael quotes some language which does not add flavor or content to his book and could have been just as easily paraphrased. For example, it is perplexing to find quoted a 1910 *Young Woman’s Journal* article: “it was here that he met Ellen Walters” (40). Another over-meticulous quotation is from B. H. Roberts’s *Comprehensive History*—that a “wealthy boot and shoe manufacturer” offered Winder a job. Although borrowed language should, of course, be quoted, there was no need to borrow these particular phrases.

A more serious problem is that, in several places, Michael Winder does not place quotation marks around material that he borrows verbatim from
other authors. For example, Michael attributes to— but does not quote—the following statement from James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard’s *The Story of the Latter-day Saints*, 2d ed. (Salt Lake: Deseret Book, 1992): “Mormon emigrants were noted for their heavy luggage, having been encouraged to take their tools and equipment with them, and some captains were heard to complain that their ships were an inch lower in the water than usual” (Winder, 55). However, this is not a paraphrase. What Allen and Leonard actually wrote was: “The emigrants were noted for their heavy luggage, having been encouraged to take tools and equipment with them, and some captains were heard to complain that their ships were an inch lower in the water than usual” (Allen and Leonard, 291). In the cursory footnote checking that I did, I found instances where Michael Winder borrows the words verbatim from the writings of Thomas Alexander, Davis Bitton, and D. Michael Quinn. What called my attention to Michael Winder’s sloppy use of sources was the fact that I found my own words in his book, sans quotation marks, lifted directly from my essay “Youth and Beauty: The Correspondence of Hugh Nibley” (*BYU Studies* 37, no. 2 [1997-98]: 6-31). Furthermore, the details in the citations are sloppy. He spells my name incorrectly, calls me an editor, and refers to the article as an “Oral History of Hugh Nibley,” something that my essay never claims to be.

Obviously, Michael is not maliciously plagiarizing. In all of these cases, he does cite his sources; however, it is a basic tenet of research writing that when you borrow someone’s words, you put quotation marks around them and provide a citation; when you borrow someone’s thoughts, you use your own words and provide a citation. A related problem is the fact that *ibid.* and *op. cit.* (now obsolete, even in scholarly writing) are not used correctly. For example, in Chapter 3, note 9 reads “Bangerter, William, *ibid.*” But note 8 is “Biddenden Parochial Church Council, *op. cit.*, 6.” The scholarly convention of providing a complete first reference in each chapter is ignored, so my pursuit of William Bangerter led me back into Chapter 2 notes where I found note 23 reading “Bangerter, William, *ibid.*,” with note 22 confusingly citing the *Millennial Star*. Was William Bangerter the author of an article in the *Star*? And what was his connection to the Biddenden Church Council? There was no earlier reference to William Bangerter in either Chapter 2 or Chapter 1. Another researcher trying to follow this lead would have been thoroughly baffled, as was I. Even more confusing, *opere citato* will sometimes precede the first citation of a work. Although this left-over Latin apparatus may intimidate a young scholar, the rule involving *ibid.* (which means that this citation is exactly the same as the single-source note immediately above it except possibly for the page number) is really the only one the writer needs to navigate. Any style guide will explain how to cite sources clearly, consistently, and completely; and any reputable publishing house should be able to steer an author aright with a minimum of fuss.

John R. Winder certainly deserves a good biography. The lack of first-hand sources, for which Winder himself is responsible, makes such a project a difficult task at best. Michael Winder should be commended for
his desire to honor his heritage by producing this book. We hope that his next historical project will show his mastery of the basic skills of correct quotation and citation.

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Reviewed by Richard D. Ouellette

Since the Mormon succession crisis following the murder of Joseph Smith, the most tumultuous period for Latter-day Saint leaders probably occurred at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries. During that time, Mormonism transformed itself from a heretical movement isolated in the Great Basin into an outward-looking, somewhat mainstream, and increasingly respectable Church. Among Church leaders, that shift was painful, uncertain, and uneven. Mormon leaders often found themselves clashing bitterly over clandestine plural marriages and the Church’s political role. When the discrepancies between their public statements and some of their private actions came to light, public humiliation and further internal discord often resulted. The expulsion of Apostle Moses Thatcher, the reprimand of Seventy B. H. Roberts, the Reed Smoot Senate hearings, the excommunication of Apostle John W. Taylor, and the disfellowshipment of Apostle Matthias Cowley—these were traumatic years indeed.

James Henry Moyle is not one of the first names that comes to mind when thinking about this period of Mormon history. He was not a General Authority. He never won a major political campaign in Utah. He was never at the center of the various controversies that flared up from time to time. And yet he shaped and witnessed this turbulent period from a relatively unusual, and instructive, vantage point—as both an ardent, nationally known Democrat and as a faithful Latter-day Saint intimate with, but never a part of, the Church hierarchy.

Moyle wrote his memoirs in the 1940s while in his eighties. The Moyle family later donated his personal papers to the LDS Church Archives. With the permission of the family, historian Gene A. Sessions edited these
memos into a coherent narrative in the early 1970s, supplementing them with other Moyle sources when necessary. In 1975 he published the memoirs in a limited edition for the family titled *Mormon Democrat*. Over the past twenty-five years, however, many a scholar has felt that these memoirs were too important to be so hard to find. Thankfully, Signature Books and Smith Research Associates have now decided to republish them in a limited edition of 350 copies for their Significant Mormon Diaries Series.

The new edition is virtually unchanged from the older one. Aside from a short preface and updated footnotes, the narrative is unrevised. The bibliographical appendix is superb and quite a helpful resource. I do wish that Sessions had updated and included more explanatory information in the footnotes, but this is a minor quibble. The text reads quite well as it is. Gene Sessions, the Moyle family, and Signature Books all deserve credit for making Moyle’s passionate, insightful voice more accessible.

The memoirs cover virtually all but the final two years of Moyle’s long, vigorous life. The attention given to each period of his life is impressively balanced, a quality that is not always found in the memoirs of public figures. We thus learn as much about Moyle’s mission, for instance, as we do about his federal service, a credit either to Moyle, Sessions, or both. Moyle’s writing is like the man—honest both about himself and others, at times biting, and yet usually always charitable. Speaking of political rival Reed Smoot, for instance, Moyle fumes: “Again, here was an Apostle who never demonstrated the first sign of love or even cordiality for me, a brother in the Gospel. I regret to say that I was not much better” (212).

Moyle was born in 1858 in Brigham Young’s fledgling theocracy of Salt Lake City. As a boy, he witnessed his father take a second wife, and as a teenager he cut stone on the Temple Block. He then served a mission to post-Reconstruction North Carolina when it was quite dangerous to do so: Joseph Standing, a contemporary of Moyle’s, was killed on a mission in Georgia in 1879. But even as Mormonism indelibly shaped Moyle’s relatively happy world, he felt like something of an outsider. His family lived on the western, poorer edge of Salt Lake City. They weren’t related to any of the prominent LDS families. His father never received a significant Church calling until later in life. But somehow Moyle found the will and desire to succeed; and as he demonstrates in his memoirs, he spent his life lifting himself up by his own bootstraps.

Yet in seeking success and the esteem of those around him, Moyle rarely conformed to their expectations; rather, he usually followed his own independent path. At a time when Mormons considered the law one of the lowliest “professions” imaginable—President John Taylor warned Moyle in a
blessing that the law is "a dangerous profession" full of "chicanery" and "fraud" (110)—Moyle completed a law degree at the University of Michigan in 1885. When he later became involved in politics in an increasingly Republican Utah, he did so as a Democrat. He ran for governor in 1900 and 1904, losing both times. In 1914, when Senator Reed Smoot looked virtually unbeatable, Moyle contested Smoot's seat and only narrowly lost. But in 1917 Moyle's persistence paid off when President Woodrow Wilson, a Democrat, appointed him Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, the highest executive position a Utahn or Mormon had ever held up to that time.

Upon his release in the early 1920s, Moyle had spent the better part of thirty years as an embattled but faithful Mormon Democrat in a Republican-led state and Church. Much to Moyle's chagrin, he had never been called to any greater ecclesiastical responsibility than that of a high councilman. His faithfulness was rewarded in 1928, however, when President Heber J. Grant called Moyle to serve as president of the Eastern States Mission, the most important mission in the Church at the time. And then, in 1933, Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed the seventy-five-year-old Moyle as Commissioner of Customs. Moyle held the position until 1939 when he was appointed special assistant to the Treasury Secretary. Finally, in 1940, at the age of eighty-one, he retired. He died in 1946.

The memoirs say surprisingly little, if anything, about certain subjects we would expect to hear more of, such as the death throes of authorized plural marriage, discouragement over political defeats, the Depression in Utah, the impact of the New Deal, personal financial matters, or even Moyle's family life. Moyle also does not say much about subjects modern readers might want to know more about, such as race relations in North Carolina or Moyle's feelings on white supremacy in his beloved Democratic Party.

But what Moyle overlooks, he makes up for with his insightful observations on two particular topics. Appropriately enough for a book entitled Mormon Democrat, these two themes are Mormonism and the Democratic Party. Why aren't Mormons Democrats? This question haunted Moyle throughout his career. The Republican Party, he never tired of reminding people, had denounced polygamy in its very first platform. For decades the Republicans had fought Utah statehood efforts. Recalling evangelical/Republican efforts in Utah, he fulminated:

There was no fundamentally American political principle that they would not have sacrificed to achieve their ambition and determination to secure the political control of the Utah Territory and the destruction of Mormonism. . . . Not a few of them placed no limit on the executive and judicial action they would take to secure for the minority control of the majority and to deprive the majority of its most fundamental political rights. (155)

In contrast, the Democratic Party, Moyle contended, had always defended states' rights and the right of Utahns to govern themselves. Democrats like President Grover Cleveland had fought Republican efforts to disfranchise Mormons and disincorporate the LDS Church.
Before the Saints disbanded their own exclusively Mormon Peoples Party in 1891, most clearly sympathized with the Democrats; and yet once they actually began affiliating with the national parties, within a few years the majority of them had lined up with the Republicans! Moyle couldn't fathom it: “What was the justification for such stultification, ingratitude, and deception in the face of gratitude that should be due the Democrats?” (157).

He had some answers to his question, though none were very pleasing. First of all, he suspected that LDS and Republican leaders had agreed upon a quid pro quo to the effect that Mormon leaders would persuade more Saints to vote Republican—certainly enough to give the party a chance—in exchange for statehood. Moyle agreed upon the necessity of dividing the Saints politically. Otherwise the bitter Mormon/non-Mormon political divide would simply continue under the rubric of the Democrats and Republicans. What troubled him was that, once LDS leaders achieved Republican parity with the Democrats, they did not stop: They kept pushing Republicanism. For years, Moyle snorted, partisan Republican LDS leaders like Joseph F. Smith, Francis M. Lyman, and John Henry Smith openly counseled members of the Church to follow their “file leaders” and vote Republican, while Democratic LDS figures such as Moses Thatcher and B.áH. Roberts were reprimanded for being equally partisan. Most Mormon Democrats, Moyle groaned, “simply kept quiet through all of this because they wanted to avoid displeasing the Brethren” (159). The result was that many Saints came to believe that a vote cast for a Republican was a vote for the Almighty.

But perhaps even more crucial in making Mormons Republicans, Moyle conceded, were tariff policies. Democratic free trade policies hurt Utah's fledgling industries, while Republican high tariff policies protected them and echoed Brigham Young's doctrine of home industry. The 1913 Underwood Tariff, signed by Woodrow Wilson, protected eastern-manufactured products but covered few of the products made in Utah. Naturally, Utahns voted for their pocketbooks, perhaps even more so than for their religion. “In my opinion,” Moyle wrote Franklin Roosevelt, “we would probably have held Utah notwithstanding the Mormon leadership but for the tariff” (261-62). Moyle tried for years to change the tariff policies of the Democratic Party, but to little avail.

Moyle's political interaction with LDS leaders also caused him to reflect deeply upon the nature of inspiration in Mormonism generally. A firm believer in the separation of Church and state, Moyle believed that LDS supervision and inspiration should pertain only to ecclesiastical matters. When ecclesiastical oversight had historically extended into other realms, as in Brigham Young's Utah, Moyle considered such arrangements good for the time, but now outdated. He insisted that Church leaders must today live up to their own, much more recent, public assertions of political noninvolvement, and that when they ventured out into the temporal realm of politics, they were as subject to criticism as anyone else. As Moyle wrote his
memoirs in the midst of World War II, for example, the *Deseret News* ran editorials critical of Franklin Roosevelt, calling for the election of his unknown Republican opponent. “What a pitiful sight it presents,” Moyle lamented, “for men claiming to be guided by divine light in a matter of such importance” (28).

But Moyle had misgivings about the inspiration of Mormon leaders on even nonpolitical matters. “[They] are so much like other men,” he observed, “that it is hard to determine whether they are inspired of God on a particular issue or by their own mortal, fallible views” (26). He thought that the New Deal, for example, had as much, and probably more, to do with inspiring the Church Welfare Program than anything divine. He worried about the impact of wealth on LDS inspiration: “The President of the Church has long been a director of the Union Pacific Railroad and enjoys the privileges and advantages of that office such as an occasional private car, travel privileges, director’s compensations, etc. His point of view is therefore naturally altered by that human experience” (29).

The memoirs also contain a rather substantial concluding essay on the apostolic appointments of men such as Brigham Young Jr., Owen Woodruff, and Abraham H. Cannon—all children of previous LDS apostles and presidents. Moyle argues that these appointments were the result of nepotism rather than inspiration. His misgivings on LDS inspiration even extended to early Mormonism. The theocratic structure of pioneer Utah, he wrote, “though exercised with much wisdom did develop dictatorial power” (308). And had Joseph Smith lived to preside in the Rocky Mountains, he concluded, power probably would have gone to his head even more than it did to Brigham Young’s.

Yet despite his doubts, Moyle’s testimony of Mormonism was very solid at its center. Unlike most early LDS lawyers who had gone back east for schooling, Moyle adhered to the faith. And like everything else he did, he did not do so sheepishly. He defended Mormonism so eloquently at Michigan that he was elected president of his law school club. In Washington, D.C., he pressed to have an LDS chapel built despite the wishes of Reed Smoot, who preferred the less conspicuous practice of holding services in his home. Moyle finally got his wish in 1933 when he dedicated the statue of Moroni standing atop the impressive Washington Chapel. And as mission president, Moyle introduced a number of mass communication technologies that would have wide-ranging impact on missionary work, including extensive radio programming and the first film about Mesoamerican archaeology and the Book of Mormon. Indeed, the president of the Church thought quite highly of Moyle: “President Grant said to me later that he had suggested to the council [of the Twelve] the consideration of my name for Apostle and that the objection raised against it was my age” (240). Even Moyle’s qualms about Church leaders could have a faithful lining: He interpreted the early removal of almost all of the so-called nepotistic apostles (either through death or expulsion) as evidence “that the Lord is at the helm, piloting the ship to its destined port” (297).
Indeed, Moyle seemed remarkably adept at balancing opposing forces within himself. To sustain Mormon leaders in their religious callings while opposing them politically during a period of such intense partisanship—and to do so for so many years—was a rather exceptional balancing act. Yet despite his doubts and questions, Moyle did not seem to undergo much of the inner turmoil of cognitive dissonance that so many other dissenters in authoritarian religions experience. He almost seemed to be at home when out-of-place. He was a Mormon missionary in a violent, Protestant South, a lawyer in a community hostile to lawyers, a Democrat in a Republican society, a rural Mormon in East Coast cities, an independent in a religion of obedience, a straight-talker in a period of ambiguity and dissimulation, and a nobody who made it in a nepotistic culture (but whose son, Henry D. Moyle, would be appointed to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in 1947 and later serve as First Counselor to President David O. McKay). The competing pressures of these dichotomies must have been immense, yet Moyle bore them all well.

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the wilderness with agriculture and, in doing so, free themselves from the vagaries of irregular rainfall. They expected to trade native plants, mammals, birds, and insects for cash crops. Instead, they traded one ecosystem and one set of problems for another. The introduction of alfalfa and potatoes, for instance, brought an increase in bugs, weeds, and viruses that fed on the crops. These, in turn, led farmers to apply pesticides and herbicides and to plant resistant crops.

The resulting system operated in a dynamic "tension between order and risk" (170). The persistence of "unwanted living things," as Fiege argues, "could be counted among life's few certainties" (77). In commenting on the efforts to eliminate weeds, one farmer lamented that "It's getting worse—not better.... We've pretty well controlled the white top and morning glory but not Canadian thistle. I spend more time on treating weeds than I do on taxes" (77).

If Fiege's argument is correct, and I believe it is, the irrigators were not engaged in the Conquest of Paradise, as Kirkpatrick Sale called it. Instead of an idyllic and benignly static Eden, the Euro-American settlers moved into an ecosystem in which American Indians had already interacted with a succession of native plants and animals. In practice, then, irrigation created an alternative ecosystem rather than an ecological disaster.

Since the farmers chose to operate within the capitalistic system, they also faced challenges generated by the market. In order to market their crops, farmers and wholesalers cooperated in developing systems of grading and advertising. As the ecosystem and market systems became more complex, some farmers began to specialize in growing disease- and insect-resistant crops for seeds.

In addition to considering the market and environmental consequences of Snake River irrigation development, Fiege analyzes the allocation of water. Although Idaho, like most western states, adopted prior appropriation to distribute its water, in the absence of clear records and general agreements the system generated controversy rather than certainty.

In an attempt to husband the available water, irrigators and the federal government constructed a number of dams on the Snake River. Instead of simplifying the water's distribution, the dams themselves generated conflicts over water rights. For instance, the federal government built storage facilities on Jackson Lake on the upper Snake River to serve users in the Twin Falls-Minidoka area of south-central Idaho. Far from satisfying everyone, however, in times of drought irrigators with primary rights on the upper Snake from Rexburg to Blackfoot could not understand why the Bureau of Reclamation insisted that water had to flow past their farms to users with junior rights farther down the river near Twin Falls.

In an effort to solve such disputes with a reasonable expectation of general acceptance and without resort to expensive litigation, water users set up extralegal associations with extraordinary powers. One, the Committee of Nine, offered solutions to the distribution of water that did not accord with a strict interpretation either of prior appropriation or of ownership of
water stored behind the dams. Nevertheless, the committee's solutions managed to satisfy the water users as the insistence on a strict interpretation of the legal system probably would not have.

Beyond the controversies over water distribution, the development of irrigated farming within market capitalism influenced the concurrent development of systems of labor. Some farmers chose to run their farms with family labor. Others initiated industrial operations with large acreages and wage laborers. In both systems, evolving labor systems changed the industrial and ethnic makeup of the region. In some cases the family farmers worked in beet-sugar factories during the winter, and the demands of industrial farmers influenced the waves of immigrants into Idaho and the United States.

Labor systems like marketing mechanisms constituted aspects of the capitalist economy that came to dominate the region. In spite of the rhetoric, even the family farmers were not Jeffersonian yeoman. Reliant upon fluctuating markets, family farmers and industrial farmers alike constructed storage facilities which allowed them to keep crops off the market in the anticipation of better prices. Many of the farmers developed marketing cooperatives, while some industrial farmers like J. R. Simplot amassed fortunes by developing systems for raising, manufacturing, storing, and marketing their crops.

As with all peoples, Snake River Valley farmers developed metaphors to understand their situation. The metaphors they adopted included contradictory images such as the garden and the factory, the organic and the mechanical, the masculine and the feminine, and success and failure.

On the whole I found Fiege's analysis refreshing. Instead of interpreting "any human activity . . . [as] just another story of ecological degradation," he takes the perspective that "we need to acknowledge that the story of the ruined Eden is another of the many masks that prevent us from realistically viewing the world as it is" (208). Change, Fiege argues, brings about unintended consequences; and even with agriculture, the farmers had to work hard to keep up with they dynamic ecosystem. Like the Red Queen in Alice's Wonderland, it took "all the running you can do to keep in the same place." Nevertheless, the landscape developed by human alterations may, in fact, be as ecologically viable as the mythic Eden that in the eyes of some observers supposedly existed before Euro-Americans destroyed it.

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Reviewed by Lavina Fielding Anderson

Sojourner in the Promised Land, which was honored with the Mormon History Association’s best book award for 2000, is part memoir, part history, part historiography, and all pleasure. A professor emeritus of history and religious studies at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis and a past president of MHA, Jan Shipps has been an indispensable observer and interpreter of Mormonism since 1960 when an academic year in Logan, Utah, with her husband and son introduced her to the “peculiar people” whom she warmly embraced and who have, in turn, embraced her.

Among the many felicities of this book is Shipps’s fluid movement between personal experience shared in the tone of a born raconteur and the serious presentation of carefully documented and skillfully framed analysis. She moves easily from yarn-spinning, such as her memories as a grade-schooler in Alabama to whom history happened Monday through Thursday but current events occurred on Friday (161) or her reflections on her “callings” in MHA (279-81), to weaving the fabric of her argument. The tone is generous and generative simultaneously, sympathetic and scholarly, insightful and incisive.

The essays, some of which are presented here for the first time, are organized in five parts. A prologue sets the broad context of Mormonism, long the hole in the doughnut of Western history, then moves to an analysis of why Western historians have avoided dealing with Utah and Mormonism. Shipps describes her personal trajectory from “Gentile” (which indicated Mormons’ largely unconscious perception of themselves as an ethnic group) to “non-Mormon” and thence to “nonmember” (which signalled a new self-perception of themselves as a denomination). She astutely noted that “even that restrictive designation is sometimes questioned because it seems too exclusive” (40), a statement that seems positively prophetic in light of instructions at LDS general conference in October 2001 from two apostles (Dallin H. Oaks and M. Russell Ballard) and the presiding bishop (David H. Burton) to stop calling people nonmembers and non-Mormons.


Thatcher Ulrich and Her Mormon Sisters,” and “Thoughts about the Academic Community’s Response to John Brooke’s Refiner’s Fire.”

Part 3 focuses on “Putting Religion at the Heart of Mormon History and History at the Heart of Mormonism.” Its three essays are sterling examples of history writing: “The Reality of the Restoration in LDS Theology and Mormon Experience,” “Brigham Young and His Times: A Continuing Force in Mormonism,” and “The Scattering of the Gathering and the Gathering of the Scattered: The Mid-Twentieth-Century Mormon Diaspora.” Each presents important data, set in an interpretative context, and shaped by a thesis of significant explanatory power.

In Part 4, Shipps explores “Deciphering, Explicating, Clarifying: Exercising an Insider- Outsider’s Informal Calling.” Its two essays—“Joseph Smith and the Creation of LDS Theology” and “Difference and Otherness: Mormonism and the American Religious Mainstream”—are perhaps the best examples in the book of her expert blending of memoir and analysis and could serve as textbook examples of personal positioning. She continues what may well become a model of intellectual and spiritual autobiography in the final two essays (“Is Mormonism Christian? Reflections on a Complicated Question” and “Knowledge and Understanding”) that comprise Part 5 (“How My Mind Was Changed and My Understanding Amplified”). I find it stirring that a scholar of Jan Shipps’s seasoning and experience should end her book with an affirmation of openness to new understandings. It is an example we could all follow.

I commend to the particular attention of MHA members the essays in Part 2 and the introduction to Part 3. Mormon history differs from the practice of many other forms of history in that so many of its practitioners come from other disciplines or from none. Their love of the many histories of Mormonism is their invitation to join the dialogue, and their work itself is the only credential they need. Although much of Shipps’s lucid exposition of the trends of history writing in the United States since the nineteenth century and especially since World War II will not be new to academic historians, it is important context for the doers of Mormon history who will find in it a gentle but unsparing analysis of the strengths and limitations of writing both “confessional” and “critical” history (182-88). Her useful X-Y-Z schema (221-25), differentiating between history as the raw event, history as the account left in documents of the period, and history as the interpretation of the historian, if universally absorbed, would do much to eliminate the problems that emerge from an uncritical use of sources and the blurring of boundaries between the historian’s personal beliefs and what the documents say.

Mormon history is a topic that runs on passion, which is both its strength and its weakness. I have always believed that Mormonism suffers as much from its uncritical lovers as it does from its unloving critics, and that the most compelling voices are those of its critical lovers. Those who use Mormon history primarily as ritual are meeting their own need for the consolation and order. Those who use Mormon history primarily as intellec-
tual activity are meeting their own need for insight and meaning. All of these needs are legitimate, but it is not possible to meet them all equally well simultaneously. Shipps, in explaining how "Mormonism, unlike other modern religions, is a faith cast in the form of history" (165) makes an invaluable contribution toward putting better tools in the hands of builders of Mormon history—and sets a sterling example of how to do it.

As is fitting for a book so intensely absorbed in the dynamics of identity, Jan Shipps's own identity emerges in various designations throughout this book. The text begins with Apostle Dallin H. Oaks's appellation of her as "that celebrated Mormon-watcher" (1). Peggy Fletcher Stack has called her "the den mother of Mormonism." Jan calls herself "a non-Mormon communicator of information about Mormonism to the general public" (281) and "a birthright Methodist who has continued to maintain that denominational connection while devoting nearly four decades . . . as a professional historian to a study of the Latter-day Saints" (192 note 33); but I like best a third self-definition: "a partner in the learning process" (155).

individual readers accept Joseph Smith’s prophetic claims, it seems like a mistake to eliminate them, given that they play such a large role in Mormon beliefs today.

The dictionary itself is fascinating and generally very good. It is arranged in alphabetical order by topic and is encyclopedic in nature. Some entries are no more than a few lines, while others run for several pages. More than once I found myself turning to look up a topic only to be distracted by another. Although titled a “Historical Dictionary,” there are numerous entries on more modern topics, such as the Internet and birth control. It covers such standard topics as Joseph Smith, the Book of Mormon, tithing, apostles, missionaries, and priesthood and also less-discussed topics such as Samuel Brannan, homosexuality, James Strang, international magazines, and Bonneville International. The dictionary serves as an excellent reference work for Mormons and non-Mormons alike.

The entry on “Politics” is a typical example of Bitton’s writing and treatment: “In the U.S. setting, while not endorsing candidates and scrupulously keeping meetinghouses out of bounds for political campaigning, the Church has felt free to make pronouncements in the area of morals. Election returns clearly show that all Mormons do not fall into line behind a Church position. For example, despite the recommendation of President Heber J. Grant a number of Church members voted with non-Mormons to repeal the prohibition amendment” (146).

A natural question is how this work compares to the Encyclopedia of Mormonism in four oversized volumes. The Historical Dictionary of Mormonism actually contains entries not found in the Encyclopedia and particularly outshines it in Bitton’s extensive coverage of individuals. While the Encyclopedia neglects influential counselors J. Reuben Clark and George Q. Cannon, the Historical Dictionary has exemplary entries on both. Other examples include entries on Eugene England, Karl G. Maeser, and “jack-Mormons.” Furthermore, the Historical Dictionary of Mormonism is far fairer and more balanced than the semi-official Encyclopedia of Mormonism.

Occasionally, however, it feels as if Bitton is aware that he is writing to a primarily non-Mormon audience and comes across as overly apologetic about Mormonism. For example, the entry on the Mountain Meadows Massacre seems to ignore the tragic brutality of the event and instead focuses on acquitting the Church of wrongdoing: “Mormon leaders have denounced the act ever since it occurred,” he states but ignores the attempts of Church leaders over the years to distance the Church from any involvement in the massacre. However, such entries are the exception. Overall, the topics are superbly written and well researched. It would have been convenient to see bibliographic entries after each topic instead of at the end of the book, but this is a minor complaint.

Following the dictionary itself are five appendices. The first is a one-page listing of LDS Church presidents and their years of service. The second lists all LDS temples from Kirtland (1836) to Vera Cruz, Mexico, (June 2000). Appendix 3 is “The Family: A Proclamation to the World” (1995), Appendix
4 is the “Relief Society Declaration” (1999), and Appendix 5 is a collection of thirty-nine quotations by or about Mormons. They add greatly to the book by revealing insights into Mormonism’s past, culture, and doctrine—a great taste of what Mormonism really is. While the large dictionary may serve as the body and structure of the Church, these few pages give that body and structure life. Bitton has selected quotations from such diverse individuals as Abraham Lincoln, George Albert Smith, and Ardeth Kapp.

The fifty-seven-page topical bibliography is an invaluable contribution, since it offers readers the opportunity to study many aspects of Mormonism in much greater detail. It includes books and articles from many sources, ranging from Francis Gibbons’s extremely sympathetic biographies of Church presidents to more critical works such as Fawn Brodie’s No Man Knows My History. This excellent catalogue of works is as comprehensive as possible without diminishing the encyclopedic portion of the book.

Although not an entirely new or groundbreaking addition to Mormon history, Bitton’s work will no doubt be an excellent reference for those looking for a brief summary on a wide variety of topics.

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Reviewed by Gary James Bergera

Myrtle Stevens Hyde’s new biography of founding LDS apostle Orson Hyde—the first since Howard H. Barron’s Orson Hyde: Missionary, Apostle, Colonizer (Bountiful, Utah: Horizon Publishers, 1977)—is a worthy successor to, and in some ways surpasses, such predecessors as George Q. Cannon’s biography of Joseph Smith, Matthias Cowley’s biography of Wilford Woodruff, and Orson F. Whitney’s biography of Heber C. Kimball. The writing is clear, the organization straightforward, the scope comprehensive, the tone reverential, the analysis charitable, and the illustrations helpful. What we are left with at the end of the author’s massive devotional study is a portrait of a strong-willed, deeply spiritual man who sacrificed greatly for the building of God’s new kingdom, yet who remained haunted throughout his life by his “betrayal” of the Saints during the darkest years of their sojourn in Missouri in the late 1830s.

The author, a professional genealogist and Hyde family historian, is clearly intent on portraying Orson as one of the Church’s remarkable men.
Her goal in the biography, which she received “spiritual promptings” to undertake (xi), is not only to rehabilitate a reputation soiled by accusations of rebellion, dissension, and nonconformity (509), but to reclaim the honor and respect to which she believes he is entitled. Thus while “all effort has been toward depicting his life accurately,” she admits that “I have tried to err on the side of compassion rather than on the side of condemnation” (510). Though the two are not mutually exclusive, the author has little tolerance for contrary interpretations which, she worries, can be “disparaging or seem to lack faith in God.” Orson, she explains, “an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, had implicit faith in God, and reason implores that his book reflects this same attribute” (509). From this general thesis, the author constructs a largely believable narrative that carefully emphasizes the positive and minimizes what the author sees as the potentially negative.


Not surprisingly, the author favors apologetic explanations of controversial past events, including, for example, the tarring of Joseph Smith at the Johnson homestead in 1832 (32) and receipt of the revelation commonly known as the Word of Wisdom (35-36). She omits accusations that the Prophet may have been overly attentive to seventeen-year-old Marinda Johnson and that angry neighbors and even some Johnson brothers may have assaulted him as a consequence. Instead, she concludes that the sad incident was the result of entirely unprovoked anti-Mormon sentiment. Yet as the author herself points out some twenty-four pages later, Smith reportedly told Orson at this same time, “God has given that woman [i.e.,
Marinda Johnson] to me. Do not marry her” (56). If the Prophet, married to Emma Hale since 1827, said the same thing to Marinda’s father or to her brothers, it may help to explain the assault. Ten years later in 1842, Smith secretly wed Marinda as a plural wife while her husband, Orson Hyde (who had married her despite the Prophet’s admonition), was serving a mission (159-61). The author similarly does not mention local, regional, or national temperance movements which provide important context for the Word of Wisdom’s proscriptions against hot drinks, distilled drinks, and tobacco.

Her assertions that eligible women in Nauvoo, Illinois, in the early 1840s outnumbered eligible men (153), and that “more women than men seemed devoted to the gospel” (157), also seem inadequate as an explanation for polygamy. As James E. Smith wrote in 1979: “Hancock County stood out among frontier counties for its relatively equal number of males and females in the young adult age group (115 males per 100 females). The city of Nauvoo was even more unique, having almost precisely equal numbers of males and females at each age” (“Frontier Nauvoo: Building a Picture from Statistics,” Ensign, Sept. 1979, 18).

The author’s cautious approach to controversy is perhaps best illustrated in her treatment of Orson’s 1838 apostasy (95-110). Both Orson and his fellow apostle Thomas B. Marsh (whom the author describes as “compulsive” [98]), were knowledgeable insiders (though perhaps not as much as some may have supposed) and their charges of Mormon violence in Missouri should be taken seriously. While not denying the excesses of some zealous Saints, the author feels that their sworn statements are seriously compromised by Marsh’s anger at Joseph Smith’s criticisms of his wife and by Orson’s poor health, which she suggests adversely affected his ability to think and evaluate rationally. Yet Orson sounds both lucid and thoughtful when he wrote on 25 October 1838, “I have left the Church called Latter Day Saints for conscience sake, fully believing that God is not with them, and is not the mover of their schemes and projects” (101).

For me, it is less critical (though still important) to determine whether Orson’s charges are true than it is to learn whether Orson sincerely believed them to be true. I find it easier to respect the courage of his actions if he acted on them honestly than if they were the result of a mind befuddled by illness and fatigue. By blaming Orson’s actions on his health, we risk absolving him of both personal responsibility and the possibility that at least some of his concerns about the Saints’, including Joseph’s, behavior in Missouri were accurate. I think the author is correct in suspecting that Orson lived with the heavy burden of his dissent throughout the remainder of a guilt-ridden life, but I would go even farther. I wonder if Orson’s embarking on a mission to Jerusalem, his acceding to Joseph Smith’s plural marriage to his beloved Marinda, his tolerating Brigham Young’s periodic public (and, the author insists, largely unfounded) rebukes, and his lack of response to his eventual demotion in seniority in the Twelve could be partially explained by his continuous hope of proving his “worthiness” to his brethren. (Of his own state of mind, Orson wrote in an account published...
thirteen years before his death in 1877: “In the month of October, 1838, with me it was a day of affliction and darkness. I sinned against God and my brethren; I acted foolishly. I will not allude to any causes for so doing save one, which was, that I did not possess the light of the Holy Ghost. I lost not my standing in the Church, however; yet, not because I was worthy to retain it, but because God and his servants were merciful” [“History of Orson Hyde,” Latter-day Saints’ Millennial Star 26 (1864): 792]. One wonders what the other “causes” of his having “acted foolishly” were.

The author also tends to downplay Marinda Hyde’s secret polygamous marriage to Joseph Smith, rumors of Marinda’s polygamous relationship with Apostle Willard Richards (which the author obliquely refers to but dismisses in a note [529 note 29]), and Marinda’s later divorce from Orson. The author writes that Marinda, age fifty-four, decided in early 1870 to divorce Orson because “her sealing to Joseph Smith for eternity had caused her to think increasingly of him” (454). Thus the break-up of the Hydes’ thirty-five-year-old marriage is ennobled by the love both partners felt for the departed Joseph Smith. Yet the author also supplies evidence that Marinda was suffering from depression brought on, or exacerbated, by Orson’s devoting most of his available time to his other, notably younger, wives. Marinda’s last child was born in April 1858; but after 1857, Orson married four additional women ranging in age from sixteen to twenty-four. Orson’s preference for younger wives is apparent in a letter he wrote to one of his wives less than a year before Marinda’s divorce: “The old wine is said to be best, except when a man takes a new wife, you know. But after all, the faithful old wife is the anchor; the new, the sail” (447). Perhaps Marinda, weary of being the “anchor,” looked hopefully to a deceased prophet for the love that Orson no longer offered.

The author also hastens to explain that Orson’s clearly disastrous marriage to Martha Rebecca Browett, which ended in divorce in 1850, was caused by Martha’s “exactness” and her “difficulty accepting hardships” (498). Married to Orson in early 1843, by 1850 Martha was “downcast” (273) about concealing her plural marriage and apparently threatened to expose Orson’s polygyny. Orson took the course of finding Martha another husband with whom she could live openly. Unfortunately, this relationship did not last long, and Martha continued to blame Orson for her difficulties. On this point, the author’s sympathies clearly lie with long-suffering Orson. However, it is also possible, using Orson’s own words, to posit a more complex relationship, one pitting a wife’s desire to be treated as a full partner in her marriage against a husband’s need to maintain order in his family. “This requirement to acknowledge you as a wife while there [Council Bluffs, Iowa],” Orson angrily wrote to Martha on 28 February 1859, “I then considered, and now consider, far outweighed, in criminality, by an hundred fold all the causes of complaint that you ever had while connected with my family. But this I can forgive,—Nay, I have forgiven it, and wish never to name it more.” “The former troubles and difficulties of which you complain,” he also wrote, “must not be named to me, nor to any of my present
family; not yet, to any other person in or out of my house, by way of murmuring or complaint; ... I must be at full liberty to make any distinction in my family that I think proper—may speak or say anything that I please to any one of them, at any time, without being held responsible to tell and explain it to another, unless I choose to do so.—In short, my will must be the law of my family” (383-84).

The author’s treatment of Orson’s interactions with Native Americans seems credible and generally fair-minded (see 408). However, her occasional and unqualified use of squaw and characterizations such as “cleanliness was alien to their culture” (408) may disturb some readers. Of equal, if not greater, concern is the author’s argument that Orson’s 1841 prediction of impending desolation in Europe—“destruction is coming from the north to lay their [Gentile] cities waste”—was fulfilled a hundred years later in the Holocaust. I am certain the author does not mean to suggest that, by not following Orson’s plea to gather to Jerusalem, Europe’s Jews bear some responsibility for their near-annihilation. Thus, it seems particularly unfortunate that she concluded: “Had the Jews, particularly in Germany, heeded the 1841 warning they would have fled the Gentile cities north of Jerusalem and averted appalling extermination” (123).

I much appreciated the author’s willingness to address such issues as Orson’s father’s alcoholism (5), Orson’s own addiction to tobacco (403), his periodic run-ins with Brigham Young (throughout the book), and Orson’s humor. In 1858, for instance, Orson publicly commented on his own spirited speaking style: “When I have spoken too loudly, I have done injustice to myself and probably to the congregation. I shall endeavour, the Lord being my helper, to modulate my voice. ... At the same time, I do not want my mind so trammelled as brother Parley P. Pratt’s once was, when dancing was first introduced into Nauvoo among the Saints. I observed brother Parley standing in the figure, and he was making no motion particularly, only up and down. Says I, ‘Brother Parley, why don’t you move forward?’ Says he, ‘When I think which way I am going, I forget the step; and when I think of the step, I forget which way to go’” (377). I benefitted as well from her reasoned negative response to questions regarding Orson’s supposed Jewish ancestry (489-91). Such touches greatly enhanced my understanding of Orson. At the same time, I wish the author had addressed the issue of Orson’s racism (Arabs, 129-30, and Jews, 145). I also wish the author had discussed in greater detail Orson’s theology, especially his controversial views on the so-called “baby resurrection.”

The author’s endnotes, instead of referencing each quotation or source, typically combine references from several paragraphs. For example, for ten paragraphs covering pages 474-76, the author includes only one endnote number, leaving the reader to determine which references in the endnote relate to which items in the ten paragraphs. The author explains that this approach is intended to save space (515). I am certain this is true. Still, it is not as reader-friendly as one might hope.

In quoting from published and unpublished sources, the author peri-
odically alters the originals to better accommodate the stylistic and editorial flow of her narrative. Thus the reader will find scattered throughout the author’s endnotes (515-72) parenthetical comments such as: “dialogue condensed,” “modified to dialogue,” “quote rearranged,” “order of quotes changed,” “condensed, order changed, and punctuation modified slightly,” “changed to present tense,” “parts modified to dialogue and augmented for clarity,” “hypothetical statements based on [the following sources],” “speeches reconstructed from the hurried journal notes,” “order rearranged somewhat,” “Orson’s comments adjusted to dialogue,” and “the paragraph quoting Orson is a composite.” While readers may hope that the author has not changed the substance of these edited sources, such an approach makes it difficult to rely on them with total confidence.

Consider, for example, her account of a visit of Brigham Young to Sanpete County in June 1875. While there, Brigham publicly criticized Orson and even members of Orson’s family:

Then, disturbed, he [Brigham] turned his forceful remarks into an apparent attack on Orson Hyde. “Brother Orson Hyde is not fit to be an apostle, no more than David Candland, and he [Candland] is not more fit than a mule.” . . .

Thundering on, President Young referred to the realignment in the Quorum of the Twelve [which had been announced at April conference]. Perception came to Orson that Brigham Young thought Elder Hyde wanted to be president of the Church, that Orson was upset about the change in seniority made two-and-a-half months before. With effort, Orson continued to sit quietly. Then shock touched him as President Young scoffed: “Why even Elder Hyde’s oldest son has come pussying around me, and saying that his father had been misrepresented.” After the meeting Brigham Young and Orson Hyde “had a long talk.” Orson truly understood why the President warned him to be careful. (474)

The next day, Orson took the podium and responded indirectly to Brigham’s rebuke:

Orson admitted that he had been “very unwise to have said anything” against the United Order. “I don’t want to refer to my chastisement yesterday,” he added. Then he continued, in substance saying, “Brothers and Sisters, I have been here for all these years, have labored with you, and you have had knowledge of my everyday walk and conversation, . . . As for myself, and in reply to President Young, I have nothing to say, but inasmuch as the President has made reference to my son in particular, having come pussying, as the President says, in favor of his father about action concerning the Twelve apostles at Conference, all I have to say is [and raising his voice and his hand upwards], in the name of Jesus Christ, God bless that boy!” Then he sat down. (474-75)

If, from the author’s only endnote reference for these and other paragraphs on these pages, the reader were to assume that the first direct quotation comes from Brigham Young Jr.’s journal (LDS Church Archives), he would be correct. However, the second direct quotation, attributed to Brigham Young, comes not from Brigham Jr.’s journal but from the ca. 1931
biography of Orson by his son Joseph S. Hyde (1863-1944), who would have been about twelve at the time, and reads: “Why even Elder Hyde’s children [not son] have come pussying around me, and saying that their father had been misrepresented” (70-71, LDS Church Archives). The author then returns to Brigham Jr.’s journal for the next direct quotation.

Again, the first and second direct quotations attributed to Orson in his response to Brigham the following day come from Brigham Jr.’s journal. But the next (and more lengthy) direct quotation comes from Joseph Hyde’s biography, except for the phrases “about action concerning the Twelve apostles at Conference,” which is from Brigham Jr.’s journal, and “in the name of Jesus Christ,” which comes from Eli A. Day’s (1856-1943) reminiscent “Autobiography,” ca. 1936 (39, LDS Church Archives). (The bracketed material appears in Joseph’s biography in parentheses.) By blending these three sources, the author has in effect created a fourth source which did not exist previously. The most contemporary source, Brigham Jr.’s journal, is the briefest and probably most reliable: “[Orson Hyde speaking:] Very unwise to have said anything I don’t want to refer to chastisement yesterday but God bless my family who took so much interest in me at Salt Lake as to go to the president about action concerning the Twelve Apostles at conference” (23 June 1875). Unfortunately, any primary documentary sources, other than their own memories, for Joseph Hyde’s and Eli Day’s expanded accounts are unknown and may not exist.

The author concludes her description of this event: “Spontaneously the people rose to their feet. As a unit they shouted, ‘Amen!’ Brigham Young’s ‘Amen’ seemed louder than anyone else’s. The desired effect had been gained. Whether or not President Young had planned it this way, the course of events at the Mount Pleasant meetings had rallied the whole congregation in unity” (475). Her sources here are Joseph Hyde’s biography and Eli Day’s “Autobiography.” But only Eli’s autobiography has Brigham saying “Amen”:

I heard êhimô [sic] Brigham say that Orson Hyde’s oldest son came came [sic] to him in Salt Lake City and demanded to know why his father had been demoted in the apostleship. “What right,” said Brigham, [“]has he to criticize my actions.” Orson Hyde got up and blessed his son for taking an interest in his fathers [sic] affairs in the name of Jesus Christ, and said he would be blessed of God for it. “Amen,” said Brigham Young. (39)

Day seems to date this incident to 1873, not 1875, and it is not entirely clear if it immediately followed Young’s criticisms of Hyde and Candland, although in Brigham Jr.’s and Joseph Hyde’s accounts it did. Day, who would have been about nineteen, does not report that Brigham’s “Amen” seemed “louder than any one else’s,” nor that the crowd reacted in any way to Orson. Only in Joseph Hyde’s biography, which says nothing about Brigham saying “Amen,” does the congregation respond with “Amen,” which Joseph interprets as a “rebuking testimonial” of Brigham Young’s “falsity” (70-71). In fact, Joseph’s narrative is decidedly critical of Brigham:
To the disinterested observer, to the fair minded, to him whose mind has not been befogged by ecclesiastical or usurped authority, it will appear as though there was a personal animus in citing such unusual remarks, which in effect was so unbecoming any gentleman, or any man, for that matter. Continuing on, the President remarked, in order to sustain this, certainly an angered position, immediately and without due process of Church order, discipline or otherwise, then and there by force of his own position as president, placed John Taylor and Wilford Woodruff ahead of father in the order of the quorum, disregarding the order of the Priesthood and the rules and discipline of the Church. . . . President Young simple [sic] by force of arms, as it were, took the reins in his own hands regardless of all rules of the Church, and then and there demoted him, who had for forty years unflinchingly and with power and spiritual warmth from on high, stood at the head of his quorum, yea, even the twelve apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Joseph is mistaken in asserting that Young demoted Orson at this time; the change, as Myrtle Stevens Hyde correctly notes, occurred ten weeks earlier. But his anger over Young’s treatment of his father is still palpable. I wish the author had both pointed out Joseph Hyde’s bias to her readers and not edited her sources so freely.

As may already be apparent, the author’s approach to narrative is novelistic, frequently reconstructing her characters’ emotional and mental responses. While readers may be willing to afford her the benefit of the doubt, given her familiarity with the sources, still one wonders if what she really tells us is her own response, not necessarily that of her characters.

Much of this review reflects an approach to biography that differs in subtle ways from that of the author. I wish, for example, that she had been more willing to consider alternate interpretations, especially when, to my mind, they would have offered a more satisfying explanation for a particular event or behavior, but I realize that she is entitled to her own analysis independent of my preferences. I cannot help seeing limitations in her decision to reflect in every instance Orson’s—and her own—implicit faith in God. While I certainly want to know about Orson’s faith, I would have appreciated a more thorough, dispassionate evaluation of that faith, its boundaries and limits, and its repercussions.

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Susan Arrington Madsen. *Growing Up in Zion*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book,
I have long suspected that pioneer children didn’t sing *all* the time as they walked and walked and walked. But I never found them more human—or charming—than when I read the words of thirteen-year-old Ruth May (later Fox) who, in 1867, arrived in the Great Salt Lake Valley, got her “first glimpse of the little city of Salt Lake,” and exclaimed, “Oh, have we come all this way for that?” (Walked, 33).

No stereotype has been so overworked among Mormons as that of the “pioneer.” Good folks that they surely were, they have been stripped of humanity. These early Saints who settled the Great Basin deserve the respect they receive, but isn’t the lesson more powerful when modern kids learn that nineteenth-century children struggled with the same challenges they do? The three books in the “Zion series,” edited by Susan Arrington Madsen (with co-author Fred E. Woods, in the third volume) are excellent resources to illustrate that point. They are not retold, cleaned-up versions of the experiences of “pioneer children,” but accounts, in all their variety, written by the young people who walked or sailed to Zion, or lived there in the early years of settlement.

These three collections are full of historical detail of a kind that only participants could relate—and full of the quirkiness of individual experience and interpretation. What Madsen and Woods have collected are almost six hundred pages of “artifacts.” As editors, they do not try to explain everything with endless footnotes. A word like “steerage,” in the *I Sailed to Zion* volume, is never defined for the reader, but over time and repetition, it becomes clear. The powerful awareness that comes to a reader is that no two “pioneers” had exactly the same experience. One young person loves the sea, or finds the trek west great fun, while another suffers seasickness nigh unto death, or must deal with the loss of parents or siblings on the plains. What the reader must do is assimilate, compare, develop a sense of the complexity of the pioneer experience. That’s learning history.

*Growing Up in Zion* contains an especially rich collection of memoirs. Georgina Spencer, for example, is a sixteen-year-old Salt Lake City girl. It’s 1876, but what’s her problem? Love. She’s in love with several boys, and she tends to love the one she’s with: “The moon was shining on him and his eyes sparkled so I think he is beautiful. We stood there quite a while and then we kissed goodnight” (131). But he’s not the only one she kisses. She writes and receives love notes, gives two boys locks of her hair, is “cool” to one of them at times, and goes to bed thinking of one or the other almost every night. A
modern young woman will find her charmingly naive, yet not very different from sixteen-year-old girls in Salt Lake City today.

These are also beautifully designed books, with attractive period photographs for covers, filled with interesting pictures and small decorative drawings on excellent paper. The second and third volumes incorporate sidebar stories that add additional details to the subjects of the longer accounts. These give the books an “eye-witness” feel that young readers are familiar with these days. The photographs and drawings add information to the texts, as good illustrations should. At times, especially in Growing Up in Zion, captions would help to explain some of the pictures, but I Sailed to Zion does a better job in that regard.

The books do raise a question. Who should be the audience? Clearly, anyone who has so much as a passing interest in Mormon history will find them fascinating. The covers, design, and even marketing techniques suggest that the books are intended for young readers. The fact is that adults may actually be the most appreciative audience.

It's possible that the editors have not done enough to reach the young audiences that the books were apparently meant for. It’s true that the spelling has been regularized and some slight editing has been done to clarify sentences, but many of these texts are written in a language and vocabulary that will not be accessible to modern young readers. The initial entry in the first book is written by B. H. Roberts. He wrote it as an adult, recalling his trek west, and the content is first-rate—just the right material to attract young readers. His vocabulary, however, is challenging and his expressions sometimes quaint. Unless young readers are quite sophisticated, they may give up early on the books.

One solution might be to introduce the texts with engaging hints about what is coming to “hook” young readers into searching for certain stories. Young “Harry” Roberts, for instance, is swimming in a river with a friend one day when Indians stampede the company’s cattle. The two boys run, stark naked, all the way to camp to warn their fellow travelers. Now that’s a hook! Madsen does use introductions, but she does so in language that sounds almost scholarly, as though she is introducing adults, not children, to her books.

The books, of course, were not intended for beginning readers. They seem aimed at the “middle grader”—children eight to twelve. But I doubt that many eight-year-olds could manage the material. By twelve, most children would be able to read the books, but that’s about the age when kids are reading a lot of sensational material. Can a book written by “pioneers,” in a century-old style, compete with Harry Potter?

In its own way this series is as fun and exciting as the fiction that kids read, but it is not the sort of material young people are used to, so they may need some help to get started. What a great experience for families to read the books together! Adults will enjoy them, and the texts open important discussions. Why did B. H. Roberts call Indians “savages”? Why did so many people die on sailing ships? Are we really so different from the pioneers?
These books have sold well, but they make beautiful gifts, and I fear that many copies have only sat on shelves. I really think everyone, of every age, should experience them, but for that to happen, parents may need to get involved.

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Reviewed by Henri P. P. Gooren

John Forres O'Donnal is a man with a mission. His autobiography makes good reading, although it might have been improved with the aid of a good editor and by a careful downsizing of the text.

In the wake of the 1910 Mexican Revolution, O'Donnal's family was forced out of the Mormon colonies in northern Mexico. On 1 April 1917, O'Donnal was born in a log cabin in La Madera, New Mexico, where they had taken shelter. When he was four, the family, by then numbering fourteen children, returned to Colonia Garchibá near Chihuahua. O'Donnal had what he calls "a typical pioneer childhood," walking barefoot most of the time and seeing his first automobile and earphone radio at age ten. Less typical, however, were suggestions of destiny. His life was spared several times despite potentially fatal accidents, including being struck twice by lightning. To young O'Donnal, these events meant that "surely, the Lord had a work for me to perform and the adversary did not want me to live to fulfill it" (3).

After graduating in agriculture from the University of Arizona, O'Donnal received an deferment of military service to investigate the possibility of starting rubber plantations in Central America for the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Conditions for growing rubber on the Pacific coastal plain of Guatemala were, he soon discovered, perfect; and he was soon launched his career. He also met "my lovely wife Carmen [Galvez]" on one of his first visits to Retalhuleu, in the Pacific coastal plain. She became the first
Guatemalan LDS member (66). They married in 1942 and had two daughters, Jeanette and Patsy.

During the 1940s and 1950s, Guatemala was experiencing prolonged political turmoil. The democratically elected reformist governments of Arbévalo and Arbenz were followed by a conservative coup d'Êstâet under CIA direction in 1954. O'Donnal writes little about these political events, however, nor does he describe much of the thirty years of increasingly corrupt and violent military governments which followed. Chapter 4, "Guatemala's Political History," is told from a highly personal perspective. O'Donnal's sincere nostalgia for the dictatorship of Jorge Ubico (1931-44), who received a daily list (doubtless a very short one) of all people leaving or entering the country, is almost touching: "Under Ubico, Guatemala was a lovely place to live: there was little or no corruption in the government, people felt secure, except perhaps those who opposed General Ubico. There was little crime and the cities and towns were very clean" (45).

The democratic reformers ruined this idyll. President Arbenz even became a communist. The Lord intervened numerous times to save O'Donnal's life, both during traffic or railway accidents and from bloodthirsty peasant leaders who sympathized with Arbenz. For their own safety, the O'Donnals were evacuated from their isolated rubber station to Guatemala City at the start of the coup in June 1954. Here they were housed at the brand-new Engel apartment building. A 50 mm machine gun on the roof terrace fired on rebel fighter planes as they passed overhead to bomb military installations. O'Donnal and his wife "were unaware at the time that our daughters, Jeanette and Patsy, went up on the roof to talk and take food to the soldiers, and to collect empty shells" (p. 50). Such vignettes make vivid, even dramatic reading.

How did O'Donnal define his mission? It was a highly personal application of Doctrine and Covenants 30:6: "... for I have given unto him power to build up my church among the Lamanites" (vii). O'Donnal racked up an impressive list of "firsts": first LDS elder in Guatemala, first branch president, first mission president, and first temple president. Though skimpy on political description and analysis, the book describes in detail visits from numerous General Authorities and important area leaders, who almost always become good friends. Elder Boyd K. Packer appears frequently, even doing unexpected things like praying for the priesthood to be opened to blacks. This happened on 14 November 1977 when Elder Packer went on a trip through the Guatemalan highlands with the O'Donnals:

We walked up the side of the mountain, to a beautiful meadow, where we sat at the feet of Elder Packer and listened as he taught us out of the scriptures. What a marvelous experience to sit at the feet of a prophet of God and to be taught by him, especially in this beautiful setting! . . . He blessed the land, he pleaded with the Lord that the way be opened for those whom the priesthood is withheld (at that time the temple in Brazil, where there is a large percentage of Negro blood, was being completed). He gave a beautiful blessing to each of us
accompanying him and through us to our families. At that time we had a very special, spiritual experience, which touched our very souls. What a glorious moment! (223-24)

O'Donnal has considerably less appreciation for the often-anonymous Church bureaucrats in Salt Lake City, who lacked sympathy for O'Donnal's unique pioneer talents and strong vision. O'Donnal recounts repeated struggles with these people, which often resulted in wasted time or money. He usually solved such problems by directly contacting friends like Elder Packer or President Spencer W. Kimball. For outsider analysts, it's fascinating to read how O'Donnal's early freedom to organize the LDS Church in Guatemala was gradually restrained by an ever-increasing formal church organization and bureaucracy. The very success of his individualistic efforts thus hampered his future autonomy.

The book has a very personal style, which is generally agreeable to read, but sometimes the sentences are a bit longer and fuzzier than is really necessary. Good editing could have prevented that and weeded out the annoying typos, too. Sometimes the book wants to be too complete: there are many long lists of office holders, members, missionaries, and long quotations of entire letters by missionaries or others. Many chapters go on far too long; too many anecdotes and lists can become exhausting.

A more important problem I found is the almost certainly unconscious racism underlying O'Donnal's outspoken opinions and sincere feelings. For example, although Carmen's family is "white" and upper-class, she has great trouble accepting that "the blood of Lehi flows in her veins" (p. v, 315)—meaning that she is part-Indian. O'Donnal's relationship to the Guatemalan Indians is also ambiguous. He praises their rich history (chap. 10) and humility, denounces their "false traditions" (247), and attributes to these traditions the fact, according to Patsy, that they "had suffered greatly and lived in poverty and ignorance for generations" (392). But he simultaneously calls them a marvelous people, "blessed descendants of Father Lehi" (256), and stresses how important it is that they can be baptized vicariously for their dead ancestors (372). Impressed by the humble members, he writes: "Never in my life have I interviewed people as pure as this people" (319). Despite O'Donnal's obvious sincerity, he seems to see Indians only as the object of either missionary or development efforts. They do not appear as subjects in their own right. In fact, we see Guatemalans in general only from a distance, while North American General Authorities become close friends. The narrative faithfully reflects O'Donnal's personal relations and social universe.

The book contains valuable inside information on the operation of the LDS Church in Latin America, a proselytizing field so fruitful that over one-third of its current membership is located there. But this growth came at a price: the Mormon Church was often seen as a representative, or even an agent, of U.S. imperialism. Mormon meeting houses have been bombed in Chile and missionaries assassinated in Bolivia and Peru. Seventy-four-
The situation was very bad: a cholera epidemic was killing thousands, garbage was piling up in the streets, and "assassinations, [and] bombings of businesses and embassies" made it virtually impossible to carry on (347). In late 1991, the LDS Area Presidency learned that the Shining Path guerrillas had targeted high-ranking Mormon North Americans in the country—whether for assassination or kidnapping O'Donnal doesn't say—and evacuated them all. Within a few months, the young North American missionaries were also moved out, while Peruvians took over all these positions, high and low. O'Donnal concludes that local leaders were ready to assume responsibility now.

O'Donnal concludes Chapter 20 with glowing hopefulness about the Church's bright future in Peru, but he doesn't analyze why the Mormon Church was targeted in the first place—let alone whether the fact that all mission presidents, area presidents, and some stake presidents were North Americans might have something to do with the hostility toward them.

Pioneer in Guatemala is a fascinating book for its vivid descriptions, its inside information on the LDS Church in Latin America, and the insights on the tensions between an increasingly effective Church bureaucracy and headstrong though devoted pioneer spirits like O'Donnal's. But it is not really an autobiography or even a memoir. It is above all a testimony.

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Reviewed by Brian S. Stuy

The Encyclopedia of Latter-day Saint History is an ambitious and largely successful attempt to organize into small, easily readable essays both the major and minor events and personalities of the Church's 170-year history. In the preface, the editors offer helpful hints about how to use this large volume. They point out that there are over 1,400 entries, alerting the readers immediately that the average entry will only be about one page in length. This is both the biggest positive and the largest negative of this book:
REVIEWS

It covers nearly every conceivable historical or important biographical subject but frequently does so in a shallow and superficial manner. Depth has been sacrificed for breadth.

One major accomplishment of the encyclopedia is that the articles on nearly every significant event or historical figure are written by published scholars in the subject. For instance, the entry for the First Vision is written by Milton V. Backman Jr., whose *Joseph Smith's First Vision: Confirming Evidences and Contemporary Accounts* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1980) is a landmark study on this subject.

No doubt the editors of this publication struggled with the trials of brevity when compiling this encyclopedia. Part of the problem is resolved by the inclusion of references to publications dealing with the topic. Unfortunately, too often these entries reveal the editors' bias. I find it difficult to understand how D. Michael Quinn's study *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1998) could be omitted from an essay on "Treasure Hunting and Magic." A survey of the lists of sources reveals very few articles or books that are controversial or present a view contrary to the official stand of the Church. While a work as broad-based as an encyclopedia must be should not necessarily seek out the controversial and is often constrained by space considerations from even being comprehensive, such omissions distort. Would there have even been an article on treasure-seeking in this encyclopedia if Quinn's work had not created general awareness of the degree to which Joseph Smith's cultural milieu contained such elements?

It is in these editorial biases that the biggest weakness of the encyclopedia is apparent. My expectation of an encyclopedia is that it will provide me with brief, unbiased essays on topics of interest. Therefore, when important information is omitted or downplayed in significance, problems occur. It is apparent that the editors and publisher of this volume seek to avoid any controversy, but in doing so they often raise more questions then they answer. For instance, the entry on Helmuth G. Hüssbner lauds him as a youth of "moral courage" and "keen intellect" in his fight against Hitler's threat yet fails to mention his well-known excommunication from the Church following his execution (Joseph M. Dixon, *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 7 [Spring 1972]: 75).

The item on Orson Pratt fails to mention problems he had with Joseph Smith over polygamy, a disagreement that led to his temporary suspension from the Quorum of the Twelve. This would not be necessary information except that it leaves unexplained the reasons for his "demotion" in the Quorum of the Twelve in 1875 that ultimately prevented Pratt from succeeding Brigham Young. Interestingly, the essay on Pratt's compatriot in the reorganization, Orson Hyde, *does* include information on this event. This reorganization of the Quorum of the Twelve in 1875, and the resulting change in succession that resulted therefrom, are of enough historical and doctrinal import that the topic, in my mind, warrants its own entry. Another important historical event that receives no treatment is the transfiguration
of Brigham Young at the August 1844 conference. Although it is alluded to in the biographical essays of Brigham Young and Sidney Rigdon, I feel the subject should have been treated more fully in an individual essay.

The subject of Church-sanctioned post-Manifesto plural marriages is mentioned glancingly in the essay on the Second Manifesto by noting that it was issued after "a number of Church members entered into plural marriages with the approval of general and local authorities" (702). This bland summary downplays the significant body of evidence that members of the highest authorities of the Church, including members of the First Presidency, were approving these unions. This is also a case where one would expect to see Quinn's *Dialogue* essay on post-Manifesto plural marriages to be cited. It isn't.

In other entries, one finds common Church history myths perpetuated, including the idea that Sidney Rigdon was in Pittsburgh at the time of the martyrdom due to his desire "to distance himself from Joseph and the Church" (1032). Richard S. Van Wagoner in his biography of Rigdon, which is listed in the sources section, has shown that Rigdon was sent to Pittsburgh by Joseph Smith to campaign for Smith's U.S. presidency, and was not estranged from Joseph Smith at the time of the martyrdom (*Sidney Rigdon: A Portrait of Religious Excess* [Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1994], 335-39). Parley P. Pratt's assassin is identified as "the former husband of one of his plural wives" (942). This wording obscures the fact that Eleanor McLean, although she may have felt otherwise, was still legally married to Hector McLean, a point made in Steven Pratt's article, "Eleanor McLean and the Murder of Parley P. Pratt," *BYU Studies* 15 (1975): 225-56, which is listed in the sources section.

I found many articles that were informative and enlightening. Paul H. Peterson's article on the Word of Wisdom is one example, and so is Kenneth Driggs's essay on the anti-polygamy movement. I would have preferred a biographical essay on Curtis Bolton, translator of the Book of Mormon into French, rather than one on Steve Young, whose historical importance has yet to be determined.

In short, to someone well read in Church history, some of the essays in this encyclopedia will be frustrating, not so much by what is said, but by what is left out. I commend the editors for bringing together a large body of scholars and other contributors who provide the reader with a Church-friendly, moderately priced, and broad treatment of Church history and the personalities that played a role in that history. But I am disappointed that this publication fails to rise above the Church-sanctioned sanitization of that history typical of the 1960s. This approach should not still be plaguing the field in the twenty-first century.

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1986-91), and is preparing a doctrinal index to the *Journal of Discourses*. He has a daughter, Meikina.


Reviewed by Val E. Limburg

Do you remember the first time you saw television? For me, it was in the furniture department of ZCMI. What a wonder it seemed to me, to be able to watch what I had only been able to hear on radio! I had come to Salt Lake City and seen a miracle!

If you grew up having no clear memory of the event of seeing TV for the first time, you would probably be too young to remember the name Farnsworth on your radio or television set, or having seen television for the first time from a demonstration in your local area brought to you by “Farnsworth—the greatest name in television, the newest value in radio.”

Godfrey traces the reasons that much of Philo T. Farnsworth’s invention and development of television were obscured by more prominent companies in this detailed account of Farnsworth, the man and the company. This is the story of a successful and inspired inventor and his struggling company. But it is also a story that is part LDS history. Philo Farnsworth was born to a Mormon family and spent his childhood and youth in Utah and Rigby, Idaho. As a boy Philo showed genius in his ability to understand electrical and mechanical devices. In high school, he engaged intellectually with his chemistry teacher who indicated, “I do not think a day ever passed that he did not come to me with from one to a dozen questions on science” (13). It was for this teacher, Justin Tolman, that Farnsworth drew his schematic for electronic television in 1922.

Godfrey acknowledges that “much of the mystique encircling Philo Farnsworth emanates from the folklore and stories surrounding his youthful genius and his Utah heritage” (180). Yet this biography is an effort to separate the actual events from the folklore, assiduously examining records, interviews, and even diagrams of patents that Godfrey uncovered in this detailed story.

When scientists first took note of Farnsworth’s achievements, it was in such articles as “Mormon Youth Aims to Simplify Television,” a 1930 article in *Science and Invention*. For much of his adult life, Farnsworth did not participate in the LDS Church, though he seems never to have wavered in his faith. When he was an impressionable youth of sixteen, his father died, a catastrophe to young Philo. “When tragedy struck,” comments Godfrey, “it
evoked a spectrum of emotions and unanswered questions—why would God take a father when he was needed most? Philo did not understand, and he would not return to the church of his heritage until the final years of his life" (15). Perhaps it was the shock of his father's death that turned Philo into a driven worker, "a man with a mind so full of ideas that he had trouble letting go" (141).

Godfrey describes the modest beginnings of Farnsworth's work, his struggle to maintain a job while he experimented and developed many projects, his frustrations in acquiring financing and trying to work within the framework of a business, and his attempts to protect his electronic inventions by patenting them. While much of the detail of the story is perhaps best appreciated by those with some basic understanding of electronics, Godfrey does an admirable job of making complex engineering ideas seem an understandable part of the Farnsworth story. The book, explains Godfrey, "is not intended to argue technology or to trace Farnsworth's technological developments in television, although . . . one cannot totally avoid these topics" (xv).

By 1927, Farnsworth had demonstrated his first electrical television system and applied for a patent. He worked out the electrical scanning system that became the basis of television today and did it while the other acclaimed "father" of television, Vladimir Zworykin, was developing an opto-mechanical system. But it was Zworykin who developed the picture tube, and it was he who worked for the Westinghouse Corporation, backed by money and public relations know-how. In subsequent patent wars between Farnsworth and RCA, Farnsworth eventually won most of the important battles over patent rights, but it was RCA that held Zworkin's patents and publicized him as the "father of television." Farnsworth became the "forgotten father of television," as a writer in the Media History Digest describes him. It seems to be part of Godfrey's mission to "rescue a television pioneer"—the title to the Foreword by Christopher Sterling.

For some historians, the story is of interest because it considers "firsts." Who is the real inventor of television? Depending on a large number of factors, it was probably Farnsworth. The development of television took many inventions and much work to integrate those efforts into a system. Farnsworth brought some "firsts" to the system; his patents are used today in modern television receivers. But as Godfrey points out, "Farnsworth would have cared little for the argument of who was first" (178). He was willing to share the credit with others. But the fact remains that much of this relatively recent history has "ignored growing evidence giving Farnsworth the credit where credit is due" (178).

Much of Godfrey's story revolves around Farnsworth's business dealings: his attempts to obtain financing, his fights to protect his inventions, his patent war with RCA, his successes, and his fatal strategies to push the Farnsworth name to the forefront of the technology. It is a story that weaves the business dealings into a complex fabric. Godfrey seems to realize how easily a reader could get lost in such detail and offers a side-by-side
chronology of Farnsworth’s achievements with other electronic media developments for the period each chapter covers. If one wanted only to chronicle the developments of television in its early days, a brief glance at each chapter’s chronology would do the job. But, as with other histories, the genius of the story is in its detail. We learn from the trials, the personal interactions, the successes, and the failures about Farnsworth’s character and about such values as dedication and determination.

A Mormon reader might wonder, “Why not more descriptions of Farnsworth’s spirituality?” It may be simply that for much of his life his work was his religion. Much of Farnsworth’s thinking was visionary. He saw what television would do in our culture. And he envisioned the advent of other scientific advances with which he was working, including nuclear fusion. As a matter of fact, “Farnsworth disagreed with the idea that television was his most important work; he placed ‘fusion’ as his most significant contribution” (187). In his later years Farnsworth returned to Salt Lake City because “it felt like home” (169). Godfrey also quotes Farnsworth’s comment to a graduate student in 1970 shortly before his death: “I am a deeply religious man, I know that God exists. I know that I have never invented anything. I have been a medium by which these things were given to the culture as fast as [the] culture could earn them. I give credit to God” (181).

Some readers may conclude that Farnsworth’s seemingly continuous health problems and death at sixty-four could be attributed to drinking. Godfrey reports that engineers and others who worked with Farnsworth, interviewed for this book, expressed only the highest admiration. “The criticism for [Farnsworth’s] being alcoholic seems to come from those who really did not know the man. There was no hidden story here. As one of the interview subjects put it, ‘He was like the rest of us in the engineering world—he drank too much’” (263). In short, his drinking was an occupational hazard, Godfrey suggests, not a personality flaw.

Godfrey draws much information—personal, business, and experimental—from Farnsworth’s widow, Elma (“Pern”) Gardner Farnsworth, whom he obviously respects greatly. Elma Farnsworth did much to further her husband’s career, even helping him make small tubes as his company was being established. After Philo’s death, Pern struggled tirelessly to remind the world of her husband’s contributions. (Godfrey wrote a short biography of her in *Journalism History* in 1994.)

Godfrey’s book is a true work of historical scholarship. Each fact, each story, and each quotation is thoroughly documented. Each chapter has numerous notes and further explanation of information mentioned in the narrative. (Frustratingly, they are endnotes—more than sixty pages of them—rather than footnotes.) This treasure trove of information about television’s development also contains eight appendices which are, by themselves, important resources: (1) U.S. Patents (130) Issued to Farnsworth, (2) The Chronology of “Firsts,” (3) Farnsworth Television and Radio Corporation Transactions on the New York Stock Exchange, (4) The History of Farnsworth Wood Products, (5) A History of Farnsworth Televi-
The Journal of Mormon History invites contributions to this department, particularly of privately published family histories, local histories, biographies, other publications of limited circulation, or those in which Mormonism is dealt with as a part or minor theme.


Building on the success of Worth Their Salt (1996), this second compilation offers essays about sixteen Utah women spanning the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Of particular interest to Journal readers are the thirteen essays focusing on a Mormon woman. These include Patricia L. Scott's essay on Sarah Ann Sutton Cooke (1808-85), a Mormon convert and widow who ended up in a successful legal battle with Brigham Young for possession of the home he had earlier given her; Shana Montgomery's essay on Esther Romania Bunnell Pratt Penrose (1839-1932), a redoubtable early Utah physician; Catherine Britsch Frantz's essay on Camilla Clara Mieth Cobb, daughter of an educator and sister-in-law of Karl G. Maeser, who founded the kindergarten movement in Utah; Jeffery Ogden Johnson's essay on Lucretia Heywood Kimball (1856-1920), who grew up in a Mormon polygamous family and became a pioneer in Utah's Christian Science move-
ment; Marianne Harding Burgoyne’s essay on her short-lived grandmother, Ora Bailey Harding (1893-1939), who was a gifted musician and who worked tirelessly to improve culture in Carbon County; Carol C. John’s essay on her mother, Marion Davis Clegg (1898-1991), who was an early environmentalist thanks to thirty-nine summers managing Trial Lake Lodge at the head of the Provo River; a charming autobiographical sketch by Alta Miller (1904- ), who grew up in Bingham Canyon; Susan Mumford’s sketch of Ella Gilmer Smyth Peacock (1905-1999), a convert from Pennsylvania who, in 1970, moved to Spring City and launched a productive art career; Judy Dykman’s article about Verla Jean Miller FarmanFarmaian, a Mormon schoolteacher who met her Persian prince-husband from a polygamous household when she was a governess in New York; and Cynthia Lampropoulos’s sketch of Emma Lou Warner Thayne (1924- ), poet and essayist who always comes down “on the side of life.”

Three essays on Eggertsen women constitute a sort of family portrait of a strong trio. Georganne B. Arrington and Marion McCardell’s “Algie Eggertsen Ballif” (1896-1984) depicts Georganne’s grandmother, a political and intellectual spark-plug in Utah Valley; Esther Eggertsen Peterson (1906-1997) by Carma Wadley captures the life of a highly honored consumer advocate in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations whom the Advertising Federation of America called “the most dangerous thing since Genghis Khan”; while Mary Lythgoe Bradford has written about Virginia Eggertsen Sorensen Waugh (1912-1991), possibly the best-known and best Utah woman writer. Algie and Esther are sisters, but the writers do not explain how Virginia was related to them.

Other essays in the book feature equally interesting Utah women: Methodist deacon and social activist Ada Duhigg of Bingham Canyon (1904-92) by Floralie Millsaps, Lola Atiya of the Egyptian Coptic community by Kristen Rogers, and Alberta Mae Hill Gooch Henry, one of the stalwarts of Utah’s African American community, by Colleen Whitley.


Gladys Knight became Mormonism’s newest celebrity convert in 1997, the same year this book was published. She does not mention an interest in Mormonism, although she includes many anecdotes of singing in the choir of the Baptist Church in her hometown of Atlanta, Georgia (she was a soloist from age six on) and also includes photographs of two of her “spiritual mentors”: Bishop Blake of the West Angeles Church of God and Christ in Los Angeles, a man, and Rev. Coleman of Christ Universal Temple in Chicago, a woman.

Born in 1944, Gladys first sang with the group that became the Pips (consisting of her sister Brenda, brother “Bubba,” and cousins) when she was nine. In a lively anecdotal style, she summarizes her life:
"I sang through kindergarten and grade school and then The Pips had to drag me away from javelin-toss practice in high school to get me to sign our first recording contract. . . . I sang through two marriages and two divorces. I sang through three pregnancies and one terrifying miscarriage. I sang through love affairs and abusive relationships, through addiction and recovery, . . . through bare-floored poverty and marble-tiled affluence. Carrying my dolls, my homework, or my babies, I sang in country churches and national cathedrals. I sang in gospel choirs, honky-tonks, juke joints, gay bars, city stadiums, concert halls, recording studios, and the White House" (4).


This collection of essays is drawn from the proceedings of a Mormon Studies conference at the University of Nottingham in April 1995, organized and chaired by Douglas J. Davies. Davies, a professor of theology at the University of Nottingham, also contributed an introduction ("Scholars, Saints, and Mormonism," exploring "the relationship between knowledge and spirituality") and some concluding observations, "Views of an International Religion."


Other essays deal with Mormon identity and theology: "Modernity, History and Latter-day Saint Faith" by Louis C. Midgley, "The Book of Mormon Wars: A Non-Mormon Perspective" by Massimo Introvigne, "Coffee, Tea, and the Ultra-Protestant and Jewish Nature of the Boundaries of Mormonism" by Christie Davies, British romantic
writers as "forerunners" of the restoration by Gordon K. Thomas, Book of Mormon war/peace themes by Andrew Bolton, death and rebirth in the Book of Mormon by Seth D. Kunin, and whether God is incorporeal by David L. Paulsen.


The foreword sets the context of this collection of twenty-two biographical essays. The women's lives are "crucibles of human suffering," as interpreted by "the Church's premier women writers" (xi, xiii). They are arranged in roughly chronological order, and each essay, in addition to its historical subject, includes the author's personal reflections and responses.

Authors and subjects are Elaine Cannon on Lucy Mack Smith and Emmeline B. Wells, Wendy C. Top on Emma Hale Smith, Susan Easton Black on Patty Bartlett Sessions, Beppie Harrison on Mary Fielding Smith, Marilyn Arnold on Eliza Roxcy Snow, Lita Little Giddins on Jane Manning James, Ardeth Greene Kapp on Susan Kent Greene, Ann Whiting Orton on Maria Jackson Normington Parker, Blythe Darlyn Thatcher on Sarah Melissa Granger Kimball, Shirley W. Thomas on Zina D. H. Young, Heidi Swinton on Bathsheba W. Smith, Jeni Broberg Holzapfel on Elizabeth Stowe Higgs, Barbara B. Smith on Caroline R. Smoot, Emma Lou Thayne on Emma Turner Stayner, Michaelene P. Grassli with Dwan J. Young on Aurelia Spencer Rogers (rather confusingly, this coauthored essay is written in first person singular, e.g., "My admiration for Sister Rogers . . .", p. 181), Carol L. Clark on Mary Goble Pay, Marie W. Mackey on Romania Pratt Penrose, Susan Arrington Madsen on Jenette Eveline Evans McKay, Susan Evans McCloud on Susa Young Gates, Janath Cannon on Martha Hughes Cannon, and Maureen Ursenbach Beecher on Mildred Cluff Harvey.

Ardeth Greene Kapp wrote about her great-grandmother, Susan Kent Greene (1816-88), whose mother, Nancy Young Kent, was Brigham Young's sister. Susan bore thirteen children, of whom seven survived. One of them was Lula Greene Richards, first editor of the *Woman's Exponent*, for which Susan wrote a poignant testimony: "The winter after we left Nauvoo when we were stopped at Council Bluffs and were destitute, often of even daily bread, when our men had to go to Missouri and work for a little corn and bacon to keep their families alive, while the women would stay at home and pray and fast—the latter they were sometimes obligated to do, I can speak for one at least—then we trusted in the Lord. We had nothing else to trust in" (85).

This book consists of eighteen essays about apostles or other General Authorities ordained before 1844—in short, during the presidency of Joseph Smith, although there is no introduction explaining this focus. All of the authors are themselves General Authorities (First Presidency, apostles, and seventies), even though there are no biographical notes providing background on the authors. They are Gordon B. Hinckley writing on Joseph Smith, Robert D. Hales on Oliver Cowdery, Marlin K. Jensen on Martin Harris, Russell M. Nelson on Orson Hyde, Jeffrey R. Holland on Heber C. Kimball, James E. Faust on Edward Partridge, Cecil O. Samuelson on David W. Patten, Carlos E. Asay on Orson Pratt, John H. Groberg on Parley P. Pratt, Merrill J. Bateman on Willard Richards, John K. Carmack on George A. Smith, M. Russell Ballard on Hyrum Smith, Joe J. Christensen on Samuel Harrison Smith, Spencer J. Condie on Lorenzo Snow, L. Tom Perry on John Taylor, Joseph B. Wirthlin on Newel K. Whitney, Thomas S. Monson on Wilford Woodruff, and Neal A. Maxwell on Brigham Young.

These essays focus on retelling the dramatic story of faith and service embodied in each individual. Elder Holland summarizes Heber C. Kimball’s early years, including his anguished parting from his sick wife and children in Nauvoo as he left for his mission to England in 1837 but his “determination to go at all hazards” because “I felt the cause of truth, the Gospel of Christ, outweighed every other consideration” (62). As their ship approached the Liverpool dock, Heber, “eager to be the first to set foot on British soil... leaped the six or seven feet from the deck of the Garrick to the pier.” Adds Holland: “The rest is of course history—Church history” (63). This essay, like the others, draws on already published sources, in this case, primarily grandson Orson F. Whitney’s *Life of Heber C. Kimball*, but does not cite either Stanley B. Kimball’s biography of Heber nor his edition of Heber’s diaries: *Heber C. Kimball: Mormon Patriarch and Pioneer* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981), and *On the Potter’s Wheel: The Diaries of Heber C. Kimball* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books in association with Smith Research Associates, 1987).

Unlike its companion volume, *Heroines of the Restoration*, the authors have not cast these essays in personal terms. (Exceptions are Elder Jensen’s reminiscence about a family trip to New York Church history sites, Elder Christensen’s memories of his own mission difficulties as a nineteen-year-old and later as president of the Provo MTC, and President Monson’s comments when Owen Woodruff, son of Wilford, and Owen’s wife Helen, who had died of smallpox in Mexico in 1904, were reburied in Salt Lake City Cemetery in 1993.) Nor have they written about relatives, with the exception of Elder Ballard’s essay on his great-great-grandfather, Hyrum Smith. Although fourteen of these subjects practiced plural marriage, many of them beginning in Nauvoo, it is not discussed except in Groberg’s essay on Parley P. Pratt, which does not mention that he was killed by the angry husband of Pratt’s last plural wife (116), and
Condie's essay on Lorenzo Snow, which mentions only the four women he married simultaneously in Nauvoo but not his later marriages.


This book contains an editor’s introduction, fifteen essays, and excerpts from Joseph Smith’s King Follett discourse. Eleven of the essays were first published in the Journal of Mormon History, John Whitmer Historical Association Journal, Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought, or Gnosis Magazine, some slightly modified from their original publication.


Literary critic Bryan Waterman writes in his introduction: “The essays in this volume take up Smith’s legacy of enigma. Using tools from disciplines as diverse as history, psychology, literary studies, sociology, and theology, the selections here represent thirty years of writing about Joseph Smith. Many of the contributions contain arguments that have become familiar to those working in Mormon studies; others point to new directions, such as exercises in textual criticism and gender studies. The collection’s purpose is to make a variety of interpretations of Joseph Smith, both previously published and new, accessible to a larger audience. They serve as reminders that the interpretive process, like Smith’s own retelling of his life story, is always ongoing, always incomplete, always historically bound. . . . For believing Mormons, Smith’s revelations and translations are best understood literally,
and are not typically treated as windows into his own mind. Many of the essays collected here, however, illustrate ways in which such readings may be useful” (ix, xi).


For readers interested in a well-written, colorful, easy-to-read, general introduction to the first century of Euro-American activity in the Great Basin, Michael S. Durham’s Desert Between the Mountains is a worthwhile choice. Painting with broad-brush strokes on a 220,000 square-mile Great Basin canvas, Durham sketches a host of well-known individuals with lines that do outline their character and accomplishments. Beginning with the Juan Bautista de Anza expedition which crossed the southern tip of the Great Basin en route from Sonora to the San Gabriel Mission in California in 1770 and the Dominguez-Escalante expedition into the heart of the Great Basin in 1776, a parade of fur trappers, government explorers, emigrants, Mormon pioneers, carpet-bag appointees, soldiers, Pony Express riders, miners, businessmen, and promoters, march and ride across the stage to the book’s conclusion—the completion of the transcontinental railroad at Promontory Summit on May 10, 1869.

Part 1 summarizes the travels of the Spanish explorers, fur trappers, John C. Fremont, and early immigrant groups en route elsewhere. Part 2, “Land of the Latter-day Saint,” reviews the background of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the arrival in Utah, early settlement, the state of Deseret, Brigham Young, polygamy, the gathering, and the Utah War including the Mountain Meadows Massacre. Part 3 shifts to the themes of transportation, communication, and mining; it outlines the government’s role in surveying wagon and railroad routes into and across the Great Basin, the Pony Express, the transcontinental telegraph, and mining in the Comstock Lode area of western Nevada, concluding with the completion of the transcontinental railroad.

While the author is a gifted writer and a quick learner—telling us up front that until a decade or so ago he had never set foot in the Great Basin—his writing fails to meet the two standards of traditional western historians: research based on original sources and extensive on-the-ground experience. Such common mistakes as referring to Promontory Point rather than Promontory Summit as the railroad’s completion site, or locating the first fur trapper rendezvous in 1825 “at Green River” will grate on informed readers.

The book was researched in college libraries in south-central New York and the author relies exclusively on the works of others in distilling this synthesis of Great Basin history. The writings of well-known western and Mormon historians including Leonard Arrington, Herbert Bolton, Juanita Brooks, Eu-
gene Campbell, Hiram Chittenden, Gloria Griffith Cline, Bernard DeVoto, Eugene England, LeRoy Hafen, Dale Morgan, Harold Schindler, Richard Van Wagoner, Ted Warner, and others are noted in the text and Durham's few explanatory notes. However, the lack of footnotes or endnotes, especially for the numerous direct quotations, weakens its value for scholars.

A ten-page bibliography indicates the sources used, but pinning a quotation to a specific work is very difficult, especially when there are multiple entries under an author's name. It is even more difficult to locate the sources of quotations by historical figures like Brigham Young, William Clayton, Wilford Woodruff, Heber C. Kimball, Parley P. Pratt, Peter Skene Ogden, Jedediah Smith, and others for whom no footnote reference or bibliographic citation is given.

The book is illustrated with a number of well-known historic photographs, and a selection of photographs by the author of historic buildings and monuments in Utah adds a nice personal touch.


One of Utah's most persistent folk beliefs is that a mine of fabulous wealth lies in the mountains east of Spanish Fork, Utah, placed there by divine mandate to rescue the LDS Church from temporal bondage at a time of economic crisis and accessible only upon principles of righteousness and revelation. It is popularly known as the Dream Mine. Work on the mine first began in 1894, at a site identified in a dream by a Mormon bishop, John Koyle, a mild-mannered believer who kept the dream alive despite a lack of assayable ore and despite active discouragement and public pronouncements by LDS Church officials that did not stop short of his excommunication.

After first publishing these books in the 1970s, Ogden Kraut has now reissued his first volume in a gold-colored cover with the second volume in a matching copper-colored cover. The first volume sets a context of scriptures on righteous treasure seeking and such "acceptable" analogues as Jesse Knight's dream that led him to find the rich Humbug Mine (1896). It also presents a biography of Koyle himself (although the sequence of events is generally clear, Kraut does not always provide dates), including official opposition to the mine that resulted in Koyle's excommunication. Kraut, who knew Koyle personally, also publishes undocumented accounts of support from General Authorities George Teasdale, Matthias F. Cowley, Anthony W. Ivins, and J. Golden Kimball. (Koyle had served in the Southern States Mission when Kimball was mission president there, and Kimball later bought stock in the mine.) Chapter 13 lists a number of prophecies by Koyle that were later fulfilled, including his prediction when Mark E. Petersen was named to the Quorum of the Twelve in 1944, that he
"would be the worst enemy the mine ever had." Kraut continues: "Mark Petersen soon began a constant tirade, with both verbal and written statements against the mine. He also wrote up a denial of the spiritual nature of the mine and forced Bishop Koyle to sign it. He then instigated a trial to have John excommunicated from the Church" (John H. Koyle's Relief Mine, 190).

The second volume collects published and unpublished accounts written by others explaining the mine, including a 1944 magazine story written by Samuel W. Taylor, other persons’ views of the position taken by General Authorities, and another chapter of fulfilled prophecies that Koyle made about the day-to-day work at the mine and other events. Kraut writes: "The Dream Mine has been no rich man’s folly. Koyle started digging a poor man and he died a poor man [in 1949 at age eighty-four]. He went through many years of persecution and ridicule for a dream that for him never came true." Koyle’s supportive and long-suffering wife, Emily Arvilla Holt Koyle, when asked whether the whole thing had not been an ordeal for her, had the following to say: "I have wished many times, and so have the children, that John had never had a dream about the mountain and the ore. For years now, we have had people coming to our house at all hours, eager to learn all about the latest details. Some believe while others ridicule. It’s been no fun, I can tell you. The children have been laughed at in school. The state is trying to close the mine. The authorities of the Church are preaching against it. They have released John twice from Church offices he held; and altogether we have had about all we can stand. Still we don’t hold any feelings against anyone, for it does look ridiculous and unbelievable all right. I guess I wouldn’t believe it either if I didn’t see so many things coming true that John predicts" (Relief Mine II, 96-97).


This edition has a white glossy soft cover. It consists of a reprint of twenty numbers of the monthly newspaper of the same name originally published in Washington, D.C. (eighteen numbers) and Liverpool, England (two numbers) 1853-54. Each issue runs sixteen pages. The publication was condemned by Brigham Young, due to its controversial content.

On 29 August 1852 at a conference in the Old Tabernacle in Salt Lake City, by direction of President Brigham Young, Orson Pratt made the first public announcement that the Church was practicing plural marriage under commandment of God and gave a sermon on the subject. Expecting stout public outcry and a rash of negative publicity, Church leaders sent four of its most faithful and articulate leaders to key population centers to launch newspapers to explain "the principle" and other restored gospel doctrines. Orson Pratt edited The Seer in the nation's capital; John Taylor, The Mormon in New York City; Eras-
tus Snow, the Saint Louis Luminary in St. Louis; and George Q. Cannon, the Western Standard in San Francisco.

Pratt was president of the Church in the area and later in the British Isles. He discusses celestial marriage—calling it “The Patriarchal Order of Matrimony” (7)—in a continued series of twelve articles and adds “Christian Polygamy in the Sixteenth Century” in the last one. He treats the preexistence in a series of nine articles, and begins a string of pieces on the first principles and ordinances of the gospel. Pratt speculated on the type of fluid flowing in the veins of gods and argues that Christ was not only married, but a polygamist. Further, he mused on the incubation period of pregnant gods and what the gods eat—“Celestial Vegetables.” There is a question and answer section on doctrine in the first two numbers of the second volume. Some numbers advertise other publications available for sale to the public from Pratt’s shop.

Very useful to the student is the publisher’s contribution of a table of contents, a comprehensive index, and five pages of photographs of Pratt.

Orson Pratt humbly encouraged: “Every family of Saints should take the SEER. And those who have means should take one copy for each of their children, for they will be greatly sought after in years to come, when they cannot be obtained without the expense of reprinting” (160).


Mary Bywater Cross’s Quilts and Women of the Mormon Migrations is organized chronologically into four periods which she identifies as: (1) “1830-1848: Seeking the Place,” (2) “1849-1855: Gathering in Zion,” (3) “1856-1869: Welcoming the Faithful,” and (4) “1870-1900: Settling the Intermountain West.” Four appendices round out the presentation: quilt analysis, fabric preservation, a chronology of Mormon history, and lists of pioneer migration companies. The 7-by-10 inch pages with three-column format allow design flexibility, and the heavy glossy paper presents the full-color maps, photographs of quilts, and other illustrations beautifully. Each section begins with an essay on the historical background of the period, complete with maps, an overview of “the women,” and then the core of each section, “the quilts.”

The complete quilts are each featured on a double spread with the quilt on the right-hand page and an analysis of the quilt, its provenance, and a biography of its maker on the left-hand page, finishing at the bottom of the right-hand page. Each presentation begins with a précis that is the same for all of the quilts,
even though information is not uniformly available. The categories are: category (pieced and appliquéd are most common), size, date, maker’s name and vital dates, migration, place joined the Church, year crossed the ocean, name of ship, year crossed the plains, with which company, date of arrival, whether alone or with relatives, and counties of settlement.

Sixty-three quilts are featured: twenty-one from the first period, including unusual “stenciled” quilts; seventeen from 1849-55; seventeen from 1856-69, and eight from 1870-1900. Each double-spread is also lavishly illustrated with historic paintings and photographs, quotations in display type, individual patches, fragments, or details of many quilts, portraits of the quilts’ makers, and sidebars of historic documents.

Among the many stories of the quilts is a star pattern set into pink blocks against a green background made by Betsy Williamson Smith, who as a three-year-old, survived the trek of the ill-fated Willie and Martin handcart companies. This quilt consists of “3,980 1" lozenges,” prompting Cross to call it, in something of an understatement, “a labor-intensive quilt” (120).

The second book, Gathered in Time: Utah Quilts and Their Makers, Settlement to 1950, is broader in the time period covered and narrower—and deeper—in its purpose. According to the preface by Eunice Young, past president of both the Utah Quilt Guild and its Heritage Corporation, the Utah Quilt Guild was organized in 1977 as the only statewide organization of its type in the United States. As part of its purpose “to encourage, promote, and preserve the art of quilt making in Utah,” it sponsored “Documentation Days” in twenty-six locations throughout the state from 1899 to 1994, documenting 2,200 quilts with photographs of the quilts and written descriptions of the quilts and their makers (ix-x). This book presents seventy-two quilts in chronological order, beginning with a woven wool coverlet made for Eunice Reasor Brown in 1830, later a laundress with the Mormon Battalion, and ends with a 1946-50 “Dresden Plate Flower” made by Pauline Waddoups Jensen Lucky of Corrine, in Box Elder County.

The generous format (8 3/4-by-12 inch) means that the quilt photographs are large and vivid. Although the title specifies “Utah” quilts, all but a handful were made by Mormon women, as the biographical sketches occupying the left-hand page of each double-spread reveal. A black-and-white portrait of the maker is included along with information about the quilt’s pattern name, dates of creation, size, material, name and vital dates of maker, place of creation, and current owner. Many of the quilts are classics such as “Log Cabin” with many variations, “Flower Garden,” “Diamonds,” and “Bear Patch.” Others are unique, including the crazy quilts, several types of friendship quilts, and Emma Jean Shirts Linston’s unusual 1913 creation from the fronts of men’s vests (64).

Many of these quilts led adventurous lives of their own. Julia Ann Gilbert Clausen of Magna created an exquisite double wedding ring quilt for her own wedding in 1918. “The dainty rings measure only nine inches in diameter, 132 of them hand pieced from pastel floral
fabrics and quilted with ten very tiny, very even stitches to the inch.” Julia died childless in 1966 leaving the quilt to her friend, Ella Cole. When Ella was moved into a nursing home years later, the quilt was set out for the trash pick-up, a decision that so bothered Cally Cole, wife of Ella’s oldest son, who remembered “Aunt Julia,” that she persuaded him to go back that night and rescue the quilt (68). A black and scarlet 1900 Shoo Fly quilt by Minnie Colgrove Ashby survived until 1988 because it was used as the batting for a Depression-era quilt that Minnie’s great-granddaughter Janine Speakman Rees rescued when it was doing duty to keep ice from forming on the windshield of her parents’ car one winter (52).

The stories of making some of these quilts are equally impressive. In 1900, Elizabeth Jackson Reid of Orangeville in Emery County produced a Courthouse Steps quilt, “made primarily from the inside seams of old clothing. Most of the pieces vary in width and length, with some of the smaller pieces measuring only three eighths of an inch in size” (50). In 1944-45, seventeen-year-old Irene Mangelson reproduced a Postage Stamp quilt made by her great-grandmother in England between 1840 and 1890. The project took fifteen months and 11,605 pieces (132).

Given the meticulous biographical information and anecdotes on often-hard-to-document Mormon women, it is regrettable that the book includes no index to the makers and owners of these quilts, although the makers are identified in the contents. (A cross check of these names against the quilt-makers featured in Quilts and Women of the Mormon Migration reveals some overlaps.) The book’s title comes from a Protestant hymn, “What Shall the Harvest Be?”: “Gathered in time or eternity / Sure, ah, sure, will the harvest be.” Also included are a historical introduction by Dean L. May, an essay by Jeana Kimball analyzing quilt-making processes and techniques, Covington’s “Notes on the Writing,” and acknowledgements.


George Quayle Cannon (1827-1901) was an apostle for forty years and counselor to four presidents of the Church. This book, however, focuses on his fifteen years as a missionary from 1849 to 1864 before his thirty-eighth birthday. During this time he served five missions, each one of which is chronicled in a chapter: a brief “gold mission” in California in 1849-50; his mission to the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii) in 1850-54, which was a continuation of his California mission; and his return to California in May 1855 after only six months in Utah to publish his Hawaiian translation of the Book of Mormon and to edit the Western Standard, which was the Church’s West Coast newspaper like Orson Pratt’s The Seer in Washington, D.C., and The Mormon in New York, then being edited by Cannon’s uncle, John Taylor. This assignment, which lasted from 1856 until Brigham Young recalled the
outlying colonies in preparation for the Utah War in 1857, also included service as president of the Pacific Mission, which included "northern California, Oregon and Washington territories, and the British and Russian and American possessions in the North" (96).

After briefly publishing the *Deseret News* in Fillmore, Cannon was called to a "semi-political" fourth mission in the East where, mentored by Thomas L. Kane, he made contact with several important publishers. He remained in the East from late 1858 until 1860 where he also supervised proselyting, organized emigrant companies, and was called as an apostle in October 1859. This calling, he said, made him "tremble...with fear and dread, and yet I was filled with joy" (153). He also confided: "The Lord revealed to me when I was quite young that I at some time would be an Apostle. I never told it to any human being; but on more than one occasion I have gone out and besought the Lord to choose some one else and relieve me of that responsibility. I have besought Him earnestly, time and again, that if I could only get my salvation and exaltation without being called to that high and holy responsibility, I would much rather He would choose some other person" (154).

He returned to Salt Lake City in August 1860 and, one month later, was sent on the fifth mission chronicled in this book. He presided over the mission in European Mission, headquartered in Liverpool, England, with Apostles Amasa M. Lyman and Charles C. Rich. Their assignment included "Europe, Asia, Africa, [and] the islands of the sea" (158). Cannon concentrated on publishing the *Millennial Star* and other works, supervising missionary work, and organizing emigration. When Brigham Young called him back to Salt Lake City in 1864, Cannon, who had two wives, had yet to build a house there.

In addition to other primary and secondary sources, Flake cites Cannon's diaries held in the LDS Church Archives.

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Drawing explicit parallels between stories of nineteenth-century pioneer qualities and those same qualities manifest in twentieth-century members, Heidi Swinton has grouped fifty stories in four categories: (1) faith and hope, (2) courage and diligence, (3) patience and charity, and (4) humility and obedience. Each section begins with an introductory pioneer account. Each sketch ends with a scriptural quotation identifying a characteristic of the person being featured. About twenty of the stories are based on unpublished accounts or interviews conducted by Swinton or someone else; the rest are retold from already published accounts. Some of the accounts date back as far as World War II, but most have occurred within the last decade or so.

The stories include Mormons from Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Czechoslovakia, England, France, French Polynesia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala,
Hong Kong, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Japan, Korea, Lithuania, Mongolia, Pakistan, Paraguay, the Philippines, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tahiti, Tanzania, Thailand, Tonga, the United States, Vietnam, and Wales.

After the break-up of the former Soviet Union, Marek Vasilkov of Lithuania could find no goal in life except to concentrate on making money and agreed to a second discussion from the missionaries in 1993 only because he was studying English. When they talked to him about the Spirit, he did not understand. However, “I was standing in a line in a store, and I noticed an old lady. She pointed to a loaf of bread and asked the clerk how much it cost. It was obvious she couldn’t afford to buy it. I thought to myself that I could help her; she needed fifty cents. I gave her the money, and right then something happened. It was like tingles. My skin became loose, and I felt a brilliance inside me I had never felt before. I thought of the missionaries and what they had said about the Spirit. I thought, This is the Spirit. I wanted to jump up high right there in the store. I realized that it was true. It was all true. Everything they said was true. And I had felt the Spirit” (27).


Taking as their charter President Gordon B. Hinckley’s 1993 statement that “each time the gospel is introduced into a country, there are pioneers who participate in the opening of this work” (1), the editors have compiled thirteen essays of both historic and contemporary figures as part of the 1997 celebration of the Church’s sesquicentennial.

These pioneers include Pornchai Juntratip of Thailand by Nathan C. Draper, Kresimir Cosic of Yugoslavia by Kahlile Mehr, Charles O. Card of Canada by Dennis A. Wright, Rhee Honam of Korea by Spencer J. Palmer, early members in the Stuttgart area of southern Germany, including the family of the author, Herman Mössner, Milton and Irene Soares of Northeastern Brazil by Mark L. Grover, Arwell L. Pierce and his contributions to the Church in Mexico by LaMond Tulis, Giuseppe Efisio Taranto of Sicily by James A. Toronto; Wolfgang Zander’s experiences “in divided Germany,” Anthon H. Lund of Denmark by Bruce Van Orden, Masao and Hisako Watabe of Japan by Masakazu Watabe, Ketan Patel of Uganda (a Hindu who found the gospel in England); and Emanuel Abu Kissi of Ghana by E. Dale LeBaron.

Their experiences also demonstrate that sacrifice did not end with the handcart pioneers. Herman Mössner’s mother devotedly raised her five children as Latter-day Saints despite “Father’s curses and unfriendly gestures” each time they left for or returned from a meeting. When eight-year-old Herman was baptized in 1930, they returned at 10:00 P.M. to find that his father had bolted the door from the inside. When they finally roused him, “we
heard Father cursing and stomping angrily toward the door.” He swung it open and attacked them with the carpet beater. Herman remembered, “Blood trickled down my checks—what an experience for an eight-year-old” (76). As a prisoner of war interned near Leeds at the end of World War II, he was greatly comforted by a blessing from Hugh B. Brown and willingly marched with a group of other Mormon German prisoners five kilometers to Sunday meetings, enduring the “public mockery and derision” of those they passed. He and his fellow prisoners spent weeks “constructing small wooden toys for the forty children of the Bradford Branch” so that they would have Christmas presents. “Twenty-five years later, when I picked up my son Jurgen from the Leeds England Mission, I was able to speak to the Saints, who were still meeting in the old wooden chapel in Bradford. . . . Some of the adults in attendance told me that they still had those toys” (82-83).

Linda Allred Steele. _James and Elizabeth Allred_. Salt Lake City: Privately printed, 1995. Photographs, descendancy chart, maps, family group sheets, bibliography. Copies are $24 apiece (includes shipping and handling) from the author at P.O. Box 1585, Vernal, UT 84078-5585 (801) 789-3462.

Linda Allred Steele is a great-great-great-granddaughter of James Allred (1784-1876) and Elizabeth Warren Allred (1786-1879), the parents of twelve children, all of whom lived to adulthood. They joined the Church in Missouri in 1832. “Allred’s Settlement” was a stopover for Zion’s Camp. The family later lived in Illinois, first in Pike County and then in Hancock County. Three sons, two nephews, and a nephew by marriage were officers in the Nauvoo Legion (77-78). According to an Allred family story, Joseph Smith asked Elizabeth, a seamstress, to help him make the first temple garments. In the account left by her daughter, Eliza Maria Allred Munson, “They spread unbleached muslin out on the table and he [Joseph] told her how to cut it out. She had to cut the third pair, however, before he said it was satisfactory. . . . The first garments were made of unbleached muslin and bound with turkey red and were without collars. Later on the Prophet decided he would rather have them bound with white” (84).

James Allred was sealed to his brother’s widow for time and to another widow in Nauvoo in 1846 when he was sixty-two (94) but apparently did not live with either. A son and grandson (both accompanied by their wives), and two nephews enlisted in the Mormon Battalion (115). James served on the Pottawatamie High Council and as a bishop where he had the reputation of being rather “severe.” The family, almost sufficiently numerous to comprise their own company, came to Utah in 1851 where Allreds settled Spring City (originally named Allred’s Settlement), Ephraim, (153), and many other towns. James and Elizabeth were both ninety-two when they died.

Although neither James nor Elizabeth left any personal writings, Linda Steele has been resourceful in using the _Mormon Redress Peti-
tions, the History of the Church, memoirs by associates and descendants, parallel accounts by fellow travelers and townspeople, land records, minutes, and tax records.


In 1993 a friend of attorney Thomas Stuart Ferguson anonymously donated to the Marriott Library at the University of Utah research files that Ferguson had amassed during the 1970s and 1980s on his most absorbing research project—an effort to “verify the authenticity of the Book of Mormon through archaeology.” Ferguson’s widow had given these files to the friend (xi). In editing documents, Larson has modernized “capitalization, punctuation, and spelling” (xiii).

In 1977 Larson, then employed by LDS Translation Services, heard from a fellow employee “that Ferguson no longer believed in the historicity of the Book of Mormon.” His reaction was incredulity; but when he telephoned Ferguson from his office and identified himself as a Translation Services employee, “Ferguson spoke freely to me. . . . With no bitterness but with a touch of disappointment, Ferguson . . . openly discussed with me his present skepticism about the historicity of the Book of Mormon, the lack of any Book of Mormon geography that relates to the real world, and the absence of the long-hoped-for archaeological confirmation of the Book of Mormon.” As a result, “I feel confident that Ferguson would want his intriguing story” (which Larson also identifies as a “tortuous odyssey”) “to be recounted as honestly and sympathetically as possible” (xiii-xiv).

Larson finds that “the truth” about Ferguson lies between two extremes, a very positive 1987 posthumous revision of *One Fold and One Shepherd* titled *The Messiah in Ancient America*, “coauthored” by Ferguson and Bruce W. Warren, and a negative counter view by Jerald and Sandra Tanner, career anti-Mormons, published in 1988, quoting seven letters that the disillusioned Ferguson allegedly wrote from 1968 to 1979 (3-4). Larson proposes that “Ferguson may have resolved his problems by finding positive values within the framework of Mormon culture” (6).

The book is organized into five chapters:

1. “Early Book of Mormon Studies” provides an overview of Ferguson’s Meso-American trips and publications.

2. “The New World Archaeological Foundation” describes the non-profit foundation Ferguson organized in California in October 1952. He served as its unpaid president until 1961. This foundation received some funding from the LDS First Presidency on condition of the strictest secrecy, but they “demoted” him to secretary in 1961, naming Howard W. Hunter, the newest apostle, as chair.

3. “Book of Abraham Papyri Rediscovered” confirmed Ferguson’s “quiet skepticism” about the exclu-
sion of black men from the priesthood (70) and also undermined his faith in Mormon claims about scripture.

4. "The Letter-Writing Closet Doubter" covers Ferguson's life from 1967 when his correspondence in the BYU Library stops and 1971 when the files in possession of the California friend begin. Larson hypothesizes, based on the recollections of others, that Ferguson spent 1969 and 1970 in agonized "soul-searching and reflection" (136) as his "childlike faith" collapsed. Larson bases his view of "a very different Tom Ferguson" who "emerged at the end of this two-year struggle" on the letters now available at the Marriott Library, covering 1971 to 1983 and including a 1975 study (136). The remainder of this chapter quotes from this correspondence. There is considerable evidence that Ferguson prepared a book-length manuscript reflecting his revised views of the Book of Mormon, but he did not publish it before his death and it has not surfaced since then.

5. "Book of Mormon Archaeological Tests" is "a twenty-nine page analysis" of what Ferguson saw as the Book of Mormon's "most important archaeological problems" (175). This chapter quotes from the 1975 document and includes commentary and other sources. Ferguson's list of problem includes Book of Mormon plants, animals, metallurgy, scripts (writing systems and glyphs), etc.

Larson concludes, based on Ferguson's final letters, that he was "theologically shipwrecked less by the failure to find persuasive archaeological support for the Book of Mormon than by his encounter with independent translations of the Joseph Smith Egyptian papyri. Though his ship ran aground, it did not sink, and he managed to salvage what he felt were its essentials so that he could, in his own words, "stay aboard the good ship, Mormonism—for various reasons that I think valid" (215).

The book also includes two appendices. The first reproduces Ferguson's 1975 critique of various attempts to find Book of Mormon correlations in New World archaeology. The second is an examination of Ferguson's purported coauthorship of the posthumous The Messiah in Ancient America.


This book had its origins in the boredom of Lynda Cory Robison's Targeteer B class (nine- and ten-year-olds) with the lessons "about the prophets." Stories about the LDS Church presidents as boys filled a real need, she found.

Each sketch includes a line drawing illustrating a vivid incident (a Yellowstone bear sticks his head into the car window where six-year-old Gordon B. Hinckley and his younger brother are sleeping, six-year-old Wilford Woodruff drops a pumpkin while running away from a threatening bull, etc.), a formal portrait of each individual as Church president, date of birth, anecdotes about his childhood and
youth (Wilford Woodruff’s extends into his mid-twenties), and a concluding paragraph or two reporting his activities as president.

Robison understandably relies heavily on secondary sources which, at least in some sketches, leads to minor inaccuracies. For example, she cites the Preston Nibley edition of Lucy Mack Smith’s History of Joseph Smith by His Mother (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1958), but says that Joseph Smith screamed only once during the unaesthetized surgery on his leg at about age seven (2). According to Lucy’s own account, she was drawn back to the scene of the operation twice, and the implication is clear that it was by her child’s repeated cries. Robison also says that members of the Smith family joined two churches, but Lucy’s account specifies that she and three children joined the Presbyterian Church. No other church is specified.

The juxtaposition of anecdotes also produces this odd combination. When a schoolmate played a prank on Heber J. Grant, Grant “wanted revenge” because he had been caught when he retaliated, even though he was not punished. So for the next five days, he and a group of friends repeatedly told the prankster that he looked ill; the boy finally left school, feeling genuinely ill. In the next paragraph, we learn that “one of Heber’s treasured prizes . . . was an award from the teacher . . . with the word ‘TRUTHFUL’ printed in blue ink” (44).

Robison reports that, among her motivations to find out more about the childhood and youth of the Church presidents was the question from the girls in her Primary class, “Where do we girls fit in?” She does not say how she answered that question, although some sketches include accounts of supportive sisters (Eliza R. Snow mended the coat of her brother, Lorenzo, without being asked, 30) and even aggressive sisters (Dorothy Hunter threatened some boys who repeatedly took Howard’s cap, “If you don’t lay off, I’ll beat you up!” 81). In some sketches, mothers (never named) play an important role. In Harold B. Lee’s, in fact, there are no anecdotes involving his father, but his mother saved his life by pushing him to the floor just as ball lightning flashed down the chimney and out the door, neutralized lye spilled on him with pickled beet juice, gave him relief from pneumonia with an onion poultice and prayer, stopped the bleeding from a cut artery, later healed an infection in the wound with ashes from a black stocking, and felt inspired to tell his father to go find him when his horse had thrown him into the creek (62-63).


The text for this account of the First Vision is the 1842 version, canonized in the LDS Pearl of Great Price. It begins with a foreword explaining that Joseph Smith was long foretold as the prophet of the Restoration, accompanied by an illustration of Joseph, son of Jacob, in Egypt, giving the prophecy recorded in 2
Nephi 3:6-16. It concludes with a brief afterword summarizing the establishment of the Church and Joseph Smith’s death.

The two illustrators have, between them, won awards from the Society of Illustrators and the Society of Illustrators and Communication Arts. Drawn in a simplified, ultra-realistic style, the illustrations draw considerable drama from the angle and perspective selected for each. A moon throws dramatic shadows on a night view of Manchester, New York, with steeples jutting aggressively into the foreground. In the scene in which young Joseph is attacked by the powers of darkness, a scarlet vine writhes along the ground by his tensed thigh and his panicked eye rolls white above the arm uplifted to protect his face. In the appearance of the Father and the Son, Joseph is seen over their shoulders, their flowing white robes soft and liquid against an angular tree branch between the artist’s eye and their figures.

A detail from each painting is dropped in at the head of the text on each page. A third illustrator, Wendy Winegar Bagley, is listed with Austin and Newbold on the copyright page but not on the title page.


Daggett County, tucked into Utah’s farthest northeastern corner, is a departure from the Mormon-directed settlement of other portions of the state. Linked geographically to Wyoming by the barrier of the Uintah Mountains, it had a lively history with fur trappers and their rendezvous, with government explorers like John Wesley Powell, with outlaws like Butch Cassidy’s Wild Bunch, and with Texas cattleman and their range wars.

Chapter 6, “Violence and Values,” is a particularly insightful narrative and analysis of the 1870s to 1910s. A flicker of criminality—or at least of an individualistic approach to the law—revived during Prohibition when juries refused to convict bootleggers caught redhanded (167-68), and continuing to a prickly present with the federal government. Asked what Oscar Sweet of Greendale thought of the Forest Service, his daughter answered cheerfully, “He cussed them all the time” (149).

The colorful history continued with the energetically disputed building of Flaming Gorge Dam and the county’s gradual shift from a ranching to a recreational economy.

The Mormon thread in this tapestry is muted. Most of the settlers “drifted down from Wyoming and were not Latter-day Saints” (103). It
was not until 1896, the year of statehood, that a solid colony of twenty-four Mormons from Beaver moved into the county (128), and they had to find ways to fit in with the settlers who were already there. A Mormon Sunday School began in Manila in May 1898. The first ward was organized in August 1898 by Apostle Abraham O. Woodruff and Seventy Joseph W. McMurrin, who were so appalled by the people’s poverty that they “camped out in a yard rather than impose, and they gave away all the canned food they could spare” (135).

A few statistics document Daggett County’s isolation and smallness: Between 1940 and 1950, the population declined from 546 to 350. In 1990, it was still only 666. Until Manila was incorporated in 1958, Daggett County was the last county in the United States to have no incorporated towns (185, 261, 214).

This narrative contains some brightly written sketches of the county’s women: Heber Bennion’s (unnamed) wife was, according to her sympathetic daughter, Virginia Bennion Buchanan, “in a strange no-man’s land between the past and the future. . . . Besides the exhaustive household drudgery with no conveniences, the battle against gummy clay mud, washing on a board—in winter, melting snow water first—she suffered pioneer loneliness and isolation, being ‘stuck over there for months without seeing a soul but the family and the hired man’” (172).

Ranch wife Marie Allen, driving across a hazardous suspension bridge from Rock Springs to Brown’s Park, stopped at a point where missing planks made a gaps hole, crawled (the bridge had no sides) behind the car on her hands and knees, jerked three boards away from their moorings, “dragged them to the front of the car, crawled to the hole, and laid the boards across it,” then successfully maneuvered across the bridge to the other side (238).

When Elinore Pruitt Stewart was driving a mower in 1927, the horses shied at an owl, threw her, and backed the eight-hundred-pound mower over her, breaking three ribs, cracking a shoulder blade, and spreading her thorax. When the doctor said she could not work for a year, Stewart commented, “All of this is foolishness. I cannot possibly lay off for a year” (173).

But perhaps Minnie Rasmussen captures best the spirit of Daggett County. When the Bureau of Reclamation, clearing the way for the Flaming Gorge Reservoir, “tore down and burned the old mercantile” that Minnie and her husband George had run for years in Linwood, George died, reportedly brokenhearted. When government officials “informed Minnie that she must abandon her house, she genteelly invited the men in for tea. As the officials drove away, Minnie put a torch to her home rather than turn it over” to them (216).

Bookended by detailed and interesting examinations of Wayne County’s prehistoric Native Americans and the long-desired but ambiguous achievement of national parks and forests (Capitol Reef, Fishlake, Dixie, Canyonlands, and Glen Canyon), Miriam Murphy tells the story of a ranching and sheep-raising county, different in its geography and destiny from the largely agricultural histories of most Utah counties. Signs of successful contemporary adaptation are that today’s shepherders are primarily Navajos and Peruvians instead of local men, “sheep-shearing crews come from New Zealand or from polygamous groups in Sanpete County, and . . . llamas roam with the herds, protecting them from predators (163).

The county was organized from Paiute County because the distances were too great to provide governmental services. Its towns, only five of which are incorporated, were all founded within a decade of 1877, the date of the first settlement (100), and the county seat, Loa, always “the county’s most populous town” had only 444 residents in 1990 (109).

Some indication of the county’s remoteness can be glimpsed in these figures: county roads increased from 150 in 1952 to 525 in 1977, but only thirty-seven miles “were paved or oiled” (257). The first electricity came from a homemade generator in 1930 in Loa (273). Until the early 1960s, there was no telephone for Capitol Reef closer than Torrey (279). Torrey, incidentally, did not settle on its name until 1898—after a Spanish-American War hero—and earlier went by Youngtown, after John W. Young, Central, Poplar, Poverty Flat, and Bonita (120). And Thurber changed its name to Bicknell in April 1916 to take advantage of wealthy writer/publisher Thomas W. Bicknell’s offer to give a thousand books “to any Utah town willing to rename itself after him” (115).

Mormonism took on a distinctive Wayne County flavor. The “notorious Blue Dugway,” which preceded Utah Highway 24 crossed a stretch of blue bentonite clay which became “a slick yet sticky gumbo” whenever wet. According to resident Dwight King, Sunday School and Primary children frequently heard the story of how Satan would appear on this road and challenge a teamster to “a fight to the death” but disappear in a “cloud of smoke” with “a scream of rage” when the teamster waved the Book of Mormon at him. The children developed so many nightmares that Church leaders “banned the story,” says King (248-49). As late as 1976, no other denominations had organized congregations in the county (257). And Wayne County has yet to elect its first woman to the county commission (95).

Here are some notable characters of Wayne County. Samuel Chidester, high school music teacher at Torrey, organized an orchestra that played “for a record 9,050 dances” (299); Sarah Gardener Meeks, installed as president of Thurber Ward Relief Society in 1897, had the same calling for forty years (114). Phylotte Brown took her canning equipment by horse and covered wagon to Fruita annually in the 1910s to bottle fruit there “because fresh fruit did not travel well by wagon” over the county’s poor roads.
The official journal of the Brigham Young pioneer company was made available for the first time in this book. The arrival of Latter-day Saints in the Valley of the Great Salt Lake is one of the major events in the history of the LDS church and the West. Thomas Bullock, the author of this account, was the official journal keeper of that party of pioneers.

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Journals of
Thomas Bullock
Edited by Will Bagley

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