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

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Cain, Bigfoot, and Folklore

I enjoyed the article by Matthew Bowman concerning Cain, Bigfoot, and folklore (“A Mormon Bigfoot: David Patten’s Cain and the Concept of Evil in LDS Folklore,” 33, no. 3 [Fall 2007]: 114–51). It is an interesting twist on old legends.

One thing that struck me was the discussion of the Patterson film of Bigfoot (74). The text implies that the film has been accepted as authentic and in some way “proves” the existence of the creature; but in fact, much debate has ensued on this point. Since the mid-1990s, a number of supposed witnesses and/or friends of Patterson have debunked the film. Though accepted by some as authentic on the basis of considerable analysis, it should be noted that it is very controversial and is just as likely a hoax.

Indeed, Bowman quotes John Green, “a prominent Bigfoot researcher,” as asserting that Bigfoot are “not some kind of wild humans” (75–76) but are animals to be studied like any other species. This is a big leap of faith. Generally science cannot study something that has never been observed in the laboratory or in the wild, or for which physical material needed for laboratory study is lacking.

In any event, the assertion regarding the existence of Bigfoot was tangential to the theme of the article, which I found both informative and entertaining. Bowman’s seeming acceptance of Bigfoot’s reality did, however, seem out of place in an otherwise well-reasoned thesis.

In spite of these caveats, I’m not a complete skeptic. Some years ago, I worked with Dr. Clifford Drury on his book Nine Years with the Spokane Indians: The Diary, 1838–1848, of Elkanah Walker (Glendale, Calif.: Arthur H. Clark, 1976). Walker was a Congregational missionary in eastern Washington who reported to one his superiors in Boston in April of 1840 as follows: “They [i.e., the natives] believe in the existence of a race of giants which inhabit a certain mountain, off to the west of us. This mountain is covered with perpetual snow. They inhabit its top . . . . [T]hey hunt & do all their work in the night. They are men stealers. They come to the people’s lodges in the night, when the people are asleep & take them & put them under their skins & take them to their place of abode without their even awakening. When they awake in the morning, they are wholly lost, not knowing in what direction their home is . . . . [T]hey say their track is about a foot & a half long . . . [T]hey frequently come in the night & steal their salmon from their nets, & eat them raw. If the
people are awake, they always know when they are coming very near, by the smell which is most intolerable.”

The aforementioned John Green told Drury in 1975 that he thought Walker’s account “the oldest reference to the creature” that he had heard of (Drury, 123).

Love those scary stories!

Robert A. Clark
Norman, Oklahoma
THOUGHTS FROM THE FARTHER WEST: MORMONS, CALIFORNIA, AND THE CIVIL WAR

William Deverell

It is a professional honor and personal pleasure to be asked to present the 2007 Tanner Lecture. I am grateful to the Mormon History Association for the invitation, and I am delighted to join the company of distinguished Tanner lecturer predecessors. I do feel as if a circle has closed with the invitation to deliver this lecture and essay. It was my very first graduate school paper, written under the direction of Professor Arthur Link at Princeton, that explored the Utah War of 1857, and I think that work had a profound influence upon me. I had gone to graduate school ostensibly to work on the political history of twentieth-century America, with a special interest in race and political development. But after I wrote that paper for Professor Link—and not coincidentally struck up a friendly and very helpful correspondence with William MacKinnon—I pursued the history of the West through the remainder of graduate school. Now, some twenty plus...
years later, the West remains almost the singular object of my research, writing, and teaching.

Western American historians, myself included, often make two errors in their consideration of the mid-nineteenth century. First, they give short shrift to the history of religion, whether described through institutions, leaders, beliefs, practices, or otherwise. This may, in fact, be especially true as regards both Mormonism and Mormons. Western historians, in my view, are generally content to allow colonial or early Republic specialists pride of place, usually on Palmyra or the paramilitarized persecutions at Far West and Nauvoo, and rarely do they—we—seem to do much in front of our students other than briefly accompany the Mormon faithful to the Great Basin in the 1840s or with the later handcart companies. That this is part of a generalized tendency for scholars to avoid religion in their work on the West I don’t doubt. I do think that this situation is changing, but the change is gradual and slow. As historian Ferenc Szasz has written, “A person who reads only recent works might well conclude that the modern American West has evolved into a thoroughly secular society.”

As historian Philip Goff has noted recently, this gap in our collective work and understanding is fairly profound, both in terms of the deliberate ways in which western historians seem to ignore religion and, at least insofar as this talk is concerned, the ways in which they ignore Mormonism save for some “greatest hits” types of recitations that render a long and complex history into a few moments of social upheaval, rupture, or triumph. “The American West,” Goff writes, “remains a secular enigma if one mistakes the dearth of literature on religion to mean there is nothing to study.” And, of course, part of this blind spot has simply to do with the fact that western historians have not been in any particular hurry to read much of what we might call the internal literature related to any particular faith, its followers, leaders, or institutions. “Church history” is alive and well and has long been so, across denominations and faiths; but the insights and findings of those who pursue such work tend generally to sit

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2 Goff, “Religion and the American West,” 287.
within either increasingly dusty books or within the imaginary, though firm, walls separating such discourse from “main-stream” historical scholarship.

In the specific case of the Latter-day Saints, I can provide a number of examples of these roads not taken, perhaps none more glaring than the story of a distinguished historian of the West offering an undergraduate western history thematic seminar several years ago that completely bypassed LDS history, in the Great Basin and elsewhere, as it was simply “too different” than that of the wider West. And though I would be presumptuous to suggest that my own scholarly attention upon Mormonism has been especially focused, this kind of willful skipping over of Mormon history strikes me as so contradictory and wrong as to merit comment. First, Mormon history, while distinct, even eccentric, in obvious and less obvious ways, is nonetheless a part of the history of the nineteenth-century West and merits inclusion in the broader narrative so described. That broader narrative would be rendered incomplete and fragmentary without it. And second, scholarly light shining on western Mormonism helps us understand wider currents in the streams of American historical experience for the same period; opportunities for particularly scholarly prisms or vantages are lost when Mormonism is sidestepped. It simply
does not make sense to intellectually walk by. To do so is to drop altogether an important analytical tool with which to examine the western past.

Lest I be accused of building a straw man here, let me say that the pairing of western historians and Mormonism is hardly a null set or completely empty space of teaching and research. There has, of course, been recognition of Mormon history within wider currents of western American scholarship and western American geography. We know, or we should know, for instance, of the Mormon role in the gold rush. But this is not as widely known nor taught as it should be. A breakthrough has been the recent publication of Kenneth Owens’s book *Gold Rush Saints: California Mormons and the Rush for Riches*, part of the distinguished *Kingdom in the West* series. The mid-century Californian and (for a time at least) Mormon Sam Brannan is a well-known figure. Brannan appears larger than life in most treatments that address him; this approach gives him an antiquarian cast in the scholarship as a boisterous, ambitious, vainglorious fellow from the rough and tumble gold rush era, singing the ditty “We are Going to California” on board a ship loaded with co-religionists. There, they’d perhaps become a pendant in a western necklace stretching at least from Salt Lake to California, if not somewhere in the South Pacific or Pacific Rim. Henry Bigler is here in the literature, as are other members of the Mormon Battalion during the moment of gold’s discovery, of course, noted by Bigler himself, with clarity and admirable economy in his 1848 diary entry. And Mormonism is sprinkled on the named landscape of the mid-century Far West—Mormon Meadows, gold-hunting in the sands and streams alongside this or that Mormon Bar in the frigid Sierra waters, Mormon Island, and the like.

These instances notwithstanding, I stand by my assertion that historians of the American West have fallen down on the job at least partly when it comes to integrating Mormon history into wider narratives of regional, indeed national, dimension. Intentionally bypassing religion—and in my specific focus for this lecture, Mormonism—relates to the second research and teaching error western historians make about the nineteenth century, one having to do with precisely

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contextual dimensions of regionalism or national import. They give
but brief attention to the Civil War: whether to its place on the hori-
zon of the 1850s, to its enactment and execution, or to its innumera-
ble consequences. Occasionally lost in their internal disciplinary de-
bates and beholden to weary regional frameworks of analysis or argu-
ment, western historians can become preoccupied with trees, when
an entire forest stands before them awaiting study and analysis.

The Civil War made the modern American West. Emerging
from the conflagration with a centralized federal authority, the
United States incorporated the West into the nation in the war’s after-
math. That process took no more than a generation. But the Ameri-
can West simultaneously provoked and, in a very real sense, caused
the Civil War. Early nineteenth-century questions over—and uncer-
tainty about—territorial expansion and the future of slavery became
fighting words by the 1840s and 1850s. The rapid escalation of sec-
tional tension headed toward disunion can be drawn from one west-
ern moment to another. From the 1830s and 1840s, sectional turmoil
surrounding expansion and warfare in Texas; through the 1846–48
brutal little war against the Republic of Mexico and subsequent Con-
gressional and Constitutional questions over territorial acquisitions;
on to the Compromise of 1850; thence to the killing plains of Bleed-
ing Kansas; and finally to James Buchanan’s embarrassing sortie in
which he threw one-third of the U.S. Army against the Mormons in
1857 in the hapless, ill-conceived hope that a little war in the West
might unite Southerners, Northerners, Republicans, and Democrats
alike and, not incidentally, take everyone’s mind off the impending
crisis over the question of whether slavery would be allowed to ex-
pand westward. Each of these arenas of rising conflict had much to do
with fundamental disagreements over the meaning of western con-
quest, western territorial governance, and the westward expansion of
slavery or free labor ideology. Taken together, they rehearsed and
then very much helped to cause the Civil War.4

In part because western historians have only recently begun to
insist on it, historians of antebellum America correctly note that the
Far West played a critical role in the eventual capitulation to war.
Scholars know well the ways in which questions over the future of

4For further discussion of these themes, see William Deverell, “Re-
demptive California? Re-Thinking the Post Civil War,” Rethinking History,
March 2007, 61–78.
western territories, before and especially following the Mexican War, provoked political and other antagonisms on the ground and in Washington. The West helped bring about the war in one shattering moment after another, and western politicians proved inept to meet the challenges of sectionalism effectively. At the very least, they were in over their heads, naive and utterly unable to reverse the rush to the precipice that their very own region was initiating. By the time John Brown took what he learned as an abolitionist zealot in Kansas—namely, how to slaughter pro-slavery opponents in cold blood—to the East and the federal armory at Harper’s Ferry, the war was a fait accompli. Abraham Lincoln’s election and the South’s immediate secession were but additional preludes, not causes, of the clash which followed so quickly.

And with the coming of the war in the reality of the 1850s and 1860s, western historians look for it in the wrong places. As just one example, they ignore the Utah War, which as many a scholar present at this meeting of the Mormon History Association has demonstrated, is fundamentally tied to the coming of the Civil War. Rather, western historians look for a skirmish here or there, a real battle in northern New Mexico, and that is supposedly the whole story. But it is not so. The war was everywhere—in rhetoric and politics—and thus the impact of the war was also everywhere. Yes, there were a few Civil War battles of importance in the West. The dramatic engagement at Glorieta Pass, New Mexico, is the most famous and most important; and it did, in fact, blunt a Confederate hope to hold a supply and territorial line in the far Southwest, stretching north even into vocal pockets of pro-slavery sympathies in California. But finding battlefields, digging up spent bullets, or plotting troop movements is not the only, or even most emblematic, way to find the Civil War in the West. The war was fought on battlefields of the East and South, and it was fought there because of the ways in which northern, southern, and western politicians disagreed about the West. As such, the war was everywhere in the West—before, during, and after hostilities.

Scholarly blind spots such as these are curious, if only because our nineteenth-century informants—people, laws, events—so clearly linked religion to the West, to the coming of the war, to the future of the republic. The nineteenth century tells us, in no uncertain terms, that, for example, Mormonism and the coming of the Civil War cataclysm are linked. The voices from the past are loudest and angriest coming from the stalwarts of the infant but fast-growing Republican
Party which, by the mid-1850s, thunders against the threats of the “twin relics of barbarism,” the danger that both might sink roots in the West, and, in so doing, bring down the nation. Rhetoric regarding territorial laws and governance went hand in hand with behavior—Bleeding Kansas, the Utah War, take your pick—and it is hardly more than a hop, skip, and a jump to fratricide from there.

It is easy to find the Republicans on this historical stage. But it is important to note that they do not occupy it all by themselves. We might think so, if we looked quickly and cursorily. But Democrats engaged in anti-Mormon thought, word, and deed as well. One needs look only so far as President Buchanan and the Utah War or the vehement language of Stephen A. Douglas in the latter 1850s to see it. Douglas gets tripped up by his own popular sovereignty insistence regarding Utah. By 1857 he is arguing that Utah and Mormons had so violated the social compact and spirit of republican government and principles that not only should territorial status not be validated by movement towards statehood, but that the territorial framework of Utah should be dissolved and the territory placed entirely back in the hands of the federal government. As close examination of Douglas clearly shows, he painted himself into a corner of irony if not outright contradiction: arguing for popular sovereignty in most, but not all, of the American West.

Stephen A. Douglas is an interesting character, to be sure, and we ought pay him more attention—and not solely as Lincoln’s successful foil in the 1858 Senatorial campaign in Illinois. Here I would refer interested readers to William MacKinnon’s terrific rumination on the naming of Fort Douglas and the waging of the Utah War, which highlights some of the ways in which we might learn more about Douglas, the West, the coming of the Civil War, and Mormonism.5

And much as MacKinnon did implicitly in his essay, I would like to stress that I do not simply mean here that we can take the Mormon issue as a case study of rising sectional difficulties, although such an approach yields great intellectual profit. The issues are more important, I think, than what they offer merely in case-study fashion.

In other words, we would do well to remember just how linked

were the issues of the coming of the Civil War, and the coming of the Utah War, in the eyes of the nation. Those links are all-but-spelled out in the lengthy and terribly smart poem *Mormoniad*, published anonymously in Boston in 1858, which bashes James Buchanan and Brigham Young equally for their various foibles and follies, but warns of an impending cataclysm tied directly to the twin-relics idea. “Fight on,” the author defies the rapidly militarizing North and South, “til all your men be dead, / And Mormon saints your widows wed!”

Oh, that the author of *Mormoniad* had not chosen anonymity! We may yet find out who wrote this remarkable political commentary, but for now, let us turn our attention to another region for somewhat similar political and other arguments of the period. I consider a most profitable approach to be representative words from a Southern pulpit in the 1850s. Our preacher is Benjamin Morgan Palmer, propagandist Presbyterian, who would become a well-known, perhaps the best-known, religious apologist for slavery and ordained supporter of the Confederacy and who would, once the war broke out, preach a fiery brand of holy war to Southern troops.

But that would come later. That would be in the 1860s, given from the vantage of his pulpit perch in New Orleans, at which time he was an already-established fire eater. A decade earlier, in January 1853, on the day after his thirty-fifth birthday, Palmer preached on “Mormonism” before the Mercantile Library Association of Charleston, South Carolina. Palmer started slowly, laying out his main point with an important medical metaphor. “One of the most striking and significant events of the present century,” he asserted, “is the rise and spread of Mormonism.” That phenomenon, he suggested, was a story of fabulous dimensions, infused with drama and romance nearly beyond comprehension. Indeed, he said, “we hold our breath in continual suspense” regarding the expectation of the next revelation of Mormonism’s growth and evolution.

To be sure, the Reverend Palmer was no fan of the new religion, a position in which he had plenty of 1850s company, North, South, East, and West. Mormonism was, he stated flatly, a “singular delusion,” and he expressed great surprise—even disgust—that, in this

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8 Ibid., 3.
modern era, halfway through the nineteenth century, such a thing as
the Mormon religion should germinate, flower, and thrive as it so ob-
vously had done already by the early 1850s.

What was happening in the United States? Palmer wondered. In
no time at all, the Mormon faithful had built a far western civilization
and were now “almost knocking for admission into this family of
States.” What a development! All in, as he put it, “an empire not yet
out of swaddling clothes” and from a “religion not old enough to wear
a beard.”

Out in the Far West, in a region halfway and perfectly posi-
tioned between what Palmer considered the civilized East, or prefera-
tibly the South, and the critically important Pacific Coast region, sat
the rising civilization of Deseret, the locality, as he put it, “precisely
suited” for what he called the “manifest destiny” awaiting the King-
dom of Saints.

Through this geographical reckoning, Palmer was zeroing in on
Utah, and especially Salt Lake, and what he clearly believed to be a cri-
sis moment in American history. He deliberately wandered past slav-
ery, given his predilections, and hit upon the Rocky Mountains and
farther West as the barometer of stormy constitutional and cultural
weather in the young United States. There, within the embrace of the
Wasatch, the Mormon communities had already begun to operate in
linchpin fashion. There, “sufficiently nigh to connect their fortunes
with the States that must eventually skirt either ocean,” history was
being forged.

It is important to remember a couple of things about this geog-
raphy of potential crisis and to let the Reverend Palmer be our guide
for a moment. Despite our twenty-first century automotive- and air-
travel smugness about the compressed nature of far western geogra-
phy—Los Angeles is but an hour and a half from Salt Lake by air—
there was a presumption that the Far West, even in its earliest days of
territorial or statehood status, was a region navigable in time and
space. The railroad drove that point home, of course, but even before
the railroad’s 1869 transcontinental arrival, this was a common per-
ception. So, too (and this is, of course, part of Palmer’s concern that
we would do well to note), was it thought that Utah and the Pacific
Coast, especially California, were aligned in Mormon territorial am-

9Ibid., 4.
10Ibid., 8.
bition and desire, part of the refuge plan of the “Great Western Measure.” Despite Brigham Young’s fears that California might prove just too seductive a place for Saints in the Great Basin, Deseret in Utah was to some but “eastern California” and California was, possibly, eventually but “western Deseret.” This is not to suggest that anyone could overcome the obstacles of distance, salt flats, or desert easily, but I do underscore the point that things were not necessarily so far-flung nor disconnected as we might otherwise assume.

Palmer reminds us, too (especially we western historians who have paid too little attention), of the connective tissue between California and Utah in the gold rush and immediate pre-gold rush era, when adventurers such as Sam Brannan thought themselves at the end of a Mormon emigrant ambition that would use the Great Basin as the staging ground for settler and faith implantations farther to the West—that, in Palmer’s anxious phrasing, Utah settlements of Latter-day Saints were but “stepping stones to the Pacific coast.” This was very much the case through the mid-1850s, not least because Mormons helped so much in developing overland trail routes, at least up until the Church’s 1857 call for Saints to return to Utah. And the same was true, if to a lesser extent, after that Utah War-inspired return to the Great Basin. As historian Kenneth Owens recently noted in his important treatment of the California gold rush, the “Mormon role” in that event has been unaccountably “overlooked, deliberately ignored, misunderstood, or forgotten” by Mormon and non-Mormon historians alike. For the former, what Owens calls a “Zioncentric” point of view dominated official histories; the latter tended, and tend still, to see Mormons as mere curiosities in the gold fields, almost as if they’d gotten unaccountably lost on their way to the Great Basin. Palmer’s anxiety is all about that role and, more importantly, at least in his dark fears, the consequences of it.

What is especially fascinating to me about Palmer’s ideas, his fears, and his rhetoric is that he cast himself as the protective Unionist, lauding the confederation of states that make up the Union as an inviolate set not to be torn asunder by what was then brewing, or supposedly brewing, in the Far West, either in Utah or elsewhere.

Irony of ironies: the state’s rights, slavery-praising fire eater abhors the threat to the Union posed by Utah and the threat to the republic posed by this possible necklace of anti-republican thought, word, and deed stretching from the tops of the Rockies to the sands of the Pacific coast. Palmer must sheathe his own states’ rights veh-
mence in opposition to the most vehement states’ rights position then being advocated in the United States, that of Mormons in Utah.

Would, Palmer wondered aloud, the juggernaut transition from territories to States, so obviously represented by California’s recent arrival into the embrace of the Union, save the nation from Mormonism? Would a strong federal presence and system triumph? The irony is delicious.

But even more intriguing is what Palmer thinks is happening way out west. As we have noted, it is not hard to find anti-Mormon opinion, vehemence, and rhetoric in the 1850s, needless to say, though it is quite interesting to find it so fervently expressed by a southern Democrat this early in the decade. Stephen Douglas would eventually arrive at this position and take his party with him, by way of his own oratory. Douglas’s vehemence is especially telling, if only because the state rights popular sovereignty argument used by Mormons was precisely the position promulgated by Douglas; in consequence, he is forced to backpedal rather furiously. But that’s still several years off in the early 1850s. Douglas’s migration to another position will not occur until after the Utah War.

What is compelling is Palmer’s idea of this necklace west from Salt Lake and the threat it represents. It suggests a level of anxiety in the South to which we historians have perhaps not given sufficient credence in our discussions of the coming of the Civil War and the place and significance of Mormonism and its growth in precisely the same historical moment.

Listen to Palmer’s fears: “We cannot cast our gaze beyond the Rocky Mountains, and scrutinize the face of society collecting upon our extreme western coast, without a measure of anxiety for the unfolding future,” he confided. In other words, the Compromise of 1850, which seemingly staved off war, was but a mere postponement of trouble; and Palmer knew it, though his reasoning is not perhaps what we might expect.

What is the threat? What is the trouble? Palmer’s nothing but a bold thinker: He suggests to his audience assembled at the Mercantile Library that what is brewing out west is the focal point of the deepest crisis the nation had yet had to pass through. “We cannot fail to observe the singular coincidence that while a bold attempt is made by Anglo-Saxons themselves to reproduce the old civilization of Asia,

\[11\] Ibid., 33.
and while a community has been founded upon that basis, a strong and copious tide of really Asiatic population has been pouring into our California territory."\textsuperscript{12}

How’s that?

Palmer’s is a complicated notion. It is fascinating. What Palmer is suggesting is that Mormons and Mormonism in Utah are fostering an Asiatic sensibility among Anglo-Saxon Saints and converts. This is actually an old, very old, tactic by which to offend—it is at once tied to contemporary 1840s and 1850s arguments pairing Joseph Smith with Mohammed and what the era often called American Mohammedism, and it is a much older post-Enlightenment slur by which Asian customs and culture fare poorly in comparison with Western ideas and ideals. And what Palmer’s saying implicitly here, being already an apologist for slavery, is that the Asiatic tendencies of Mormonism are undermining the racial vigor of Anglo Saxonism in Utah, that the natural superiority of Anglo Saxonism is threatened by religious extremism which is weakening racial dominance through cultural means. For someone like Palmer, who in defense of slavery must meld ideas of racial superiority—or white supremacy—with racial noblesse oblige and paternalism, what’s happening in the West is deeply troubling.

That is the first leg of Palmer’s argument. The second leg bespeaks an awareness of the gold fields of California, the rising community of San Francisco, and the presence of Chinese in both, which in early 1853 is probably somewhere in the neighborhood of 15,000 people, almost all of whom were men.\textsuperscript{13} That population was fast rising. And Palmer noted that some 17,000 Chinese had, only in the recent past, left China, most of whom were bound for California.

The argument, or really the worry, is triangulated by the geometry of the West. What if the faux Asians and the real Asians met up? In a wonderfully laden and even Freudian phrase in a pre-Freudian era, Palmer wondered, "What is to be the issue of this commingling of races on this continent? . . . We cannot be insensible to this momen-

\textsuperscript{12}Ibid.

tous crisis which is before us."\(^{14}\)

Of course, what Palmer meant and what Palmer feared was exactly about “the issue” of commingling in a demographic and mixed-race sense. Not only would such a process offend the sensibilities of an America which abhorred miscegenation, but it would further the western population boom. And if a population bridge were to be built between the Far West and the Rocky Mountain West, and if that bridge were Asian, or in the case of Mormondom, Asian-inflected by way of supposedly inferior cultural traits, practices, and governance, the republic was obviously doomed. No matter how powerful, republican institutions themselves would not be vital or elastic enough to overcome the stress; and they would collapse in the face of racial, cultural, and other differences.

Palmer’s linking of Sinophobia with Mormon-phobia, on essentially racial grounds, offers us a remarkably interesting vantage point from which to view the stresses of the period, one that offers a great deal of insight to scholars and students alike.

These linked problems are addressed, in different ways, by the federal government, which, given the pathways of history from the early 1850s forward, might be said to have agreed with Reverend Palmer. The Utah War of 1857–58 was an attempt to corral Mormonism within a militarized restructuring of territorial authority and governance. And the Chinese Exclusion acts of the early 1880s, spawned directly by the actions and lobbying of western political officials and populations, addresses the so-called “Chinese problem” with a crudely restrictive diplomatic cudgel.

It may be true that, having just weathered a rehearsal Civil War on its own turf, Utah more or less sat out the real Civil War. But that hardly divorces Mormonism from the debates surrounding the central traumas of the era, as Reverend Palmer’s fearful prognostications remind us. I think Palmer is probably playing both ends against the middle—he’s indeed frightened of what he thinks is happening in the West, and he’s also trying to sidestep the centrality of the slavery issue while so doing. What results from his odd sermon is both a telling indication of the place of Mormonism in sectional debates leading up to the war and an equally emphatic declaration that race and racial difference stood at the heart of the many linked crises of the 1850s.

\(^{14}\)Ibid.
There are other ways to think through these issues and this period. Some are far more speculative than earlier points I’ve made, but I wonder if we might find a way by which to add an additional theoretical or analytical prism to Mormon scholarship in the period before and after the Civil War? This notion has two speculative points tied together.

One is to make an observation, one not yet backed up by much research on my part: Antebellum America, fraught with the tensions of the coming and very nearly inevitable war, fraught with the very specific tensions of Mormonism and its place within the republic, is a time in which Americans seem particularly obsessed with health and disease. The metaphors are everywhere, and it shouldn’t really surprise us that they are. Many an American viewed the republic as ailing, as having fallen away from the robustness of its infancy and adolescence, threatened as it was by all manner of insults aimed at the body politic. Southerners feared the invasion of northerners and northern ideas, Northerners increasingly viewed the South as a virtually cancerous threat, to the Constitution, to the West, to the future.

And metaphors of disease, contagion, and infection were indiscriminately heaped upon Mormonism and its leaders. Reverend Benjamin Palmer, like legions of his peers, capitulated to this tendency when he looked upon 1850s Salt Lake City, its success, and its demography, and resorted to the language of contagion and infection to reinforce his antagonism.

Nineteenth-century Americans thought of health in ways we do not, they thought of health perhaps more constantly than we do, and they wove ideas about health and disease with their perceptions of landscape, countryside, and environment. Theirs was a world of humors and miasmas; and being a pre-germ theory people, they tried to address its fearful mysteries in about the only ways they could, with fairly primitive medical ideas and, more often, with descriptive language.

As nothing more than a hint of how we might think analytically of this period, I would expect that a prism attentive to health might be a useful method by which to examine Mormonism, the sectional crisis, the coming of the great national, bloody trauma, and the nation’s painfully slow recovery from it.

One of the points I made when I began this address had to do with the ways in which historians of the American West pay scant attention to the Civil War and how very close attention to western Mor-
monism is one avenue by which to return to what I think is the more correct path. Let me move toward a conclusion here by reiterating that point again, and by taking up the post-war period in particular, inflected by ideas and ideals of health, convalescence, and recovery.

What happens after health, the health of individuals and the health of the body politic, is threatened? Is there recovery? Is there redemption?

Just as they were concerned about health, nineteenth-century Americans were fixated on ideas about convalescence. And of course, this only increased in the years of the war and its aftermath, and I think had particular resonance in, and relevance to, the West. Let me give you one important case in point. Abraham Lincoln never came to California. But he wanted to. Only hours before his 1865 assassination, Lincoln spoke of visiting the Far West. Exhausted by the commander-in-chief stresses of leading the Union through four years of indescribable fratricide, the congenitally melancholy president yearned for the rejuvenation and convalescence that California seemed to promise. We know Lincoln’s longing because Schuyler Colfax, speaker of the House of Representatives, met with Lincoln on the day of the assassination. When he told the president that he was soon off to California, Lincoln exclaimed, “How I would rejoice to make that trip!” 15 The California dream of astounding wealth—that profound, instantaneous transition remarked upon by Henry Bigler in his January 1848 diary—was not even twenty years old when Lincoln voiced this poignant wish. On that fateful April day, Lincoln mused about that promise, especially in regards to Civil War soldiers about to be released from their military obligations. He told Colfax that he would try to encourage the former soldiers to migrate westward, where they would find work and open space aplenty.

But that was not exactly the version of the California dream Lincoln pondered for himself. In the afternoon of the day he died, Lincoln went for a carriage ride with his wife. His thoughts again turned to California and the Far West. He proposed to Mary Lincoln that they travel to the Rockies and then go on to California. The trip would be restful and reinvigorating. Lincoln was in an exuberant mood, Mary recalled later, so enthusiastic, in fact, that it startled her. Assassination makes the moment all the more ironic—Lincoln looked west

for healing on the very day he was killed.

What of the West after the war, or after the wars, Utah and Civil? With a few notable exceptions—generally works that trace Reconstruction policies in western settings—historians have too quickly jettisoned the West from the Civil War in their teaching and research devoted to the postwar period. And we’ve certainly done the same with the Utah War, failing, at least until very recently, adequately to study its aftermath through the 1860s and 1870s (or beyond).

This tendency (encapsulated in the usual textbook recitation of postwar western history through formulations such as “the Conquest of the West” or “the Rise of the West”) is profoundly misleading. If one considers, for example, the coming of age of a place such as Los Angeles, where I live, we must recall how proximate the Civil War was to those journeying to southern California from elsewhere in the nation. One could hardly live through the Civil War without knowing someone or being related to someone who was wounded or killed in the war. And I expect that this is nearly as true in Utah, despite its resolute position on the sidelines, as a result of having only recently gone through the Utah War. The nation, North and South, was awash in the wounded following the war; entire chunks of state budgets, especially in the states of the former Confederacy, were earmarked for the treatment of the wounded, the purchase of prosthetic devices, and the like.

It would have been impossible to escape the proximity of the Civil War, in ways personal, temporal, even geographical. The war was simply far too great a rupture in the national fabric to be so easily pushed aside by scholars a century or more later. On the contrary, I would suggest that the post-Civil War West was explicitly tied to the waging and aftermath of the war in ways just as critical as the antebellum West was tied to the coming of the conflagration. We should be more attuned to the ways in which a broken nation and its wounded people sought redemption and convalescence in the postwar West.

Americans, Northerners and Southerners alike, moved West in the postwar era in part because of the Civil War—because they wanted to get away, because they wanted to heal, physically, emotionally, or otherwise. And most of them came on the transcontinental railroad which was, if anything, a device by which the nation was supposed to be drawn together after the war, a gigantic suture tying together the torn-asunder North and South.

If the West caused the Civil War because antagonistic sections of
the Union could no longer peaceably agree about the fate of that region, what did the West do to heal the wounds of that war? And if Mormonism was viewed as a great threat, a contagion, within the West and the body politic of the nation, one that demanded the surgical response called for by Stephen Douglas and others, how do such analogies, allegories, and narratives reflect changes in the post-Civil War and post-Utah War period?

The question was not lost on sharp observers, people, or institutions which understood, if wishfully, that the West had a special role (if not special obligation) in the postwar aftermath when peace ought to reign. Some understood that soon-to-be veterans would find their way west. In early 1865, the *New York Herald* wrote of the restlessness and independence of soldiers, insisting that postwar work—“the dull routine of regular employments”—would hardly satisfy men accustomed to the nomadic adventurousness of soldiering. “There are plenty of fine, strapping fellows who would laugh at the idea of being bound down to a bench or a spade after having enjoyed the liberty of war.” What would come of these men? They would go west. “Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, Montana, and Utah, to say nothing of Mexico, Sonora, Sinaloa, Durango, Chihuahua, Lower California, are yearning for such settlers as those in the armies of the North and the South. . . . They will go there, settle down, populate the country, get rich and double the size of the Union within twenty years.”

What happens in the West after the war? What happens to ideals of nationhood in the calamity of Reconstruction, when North yet mistrusts South, and South mistrusts North—how does the West become a place of national and individual redemption? How does the West help redefine both lives and national meaning?

And how do healing, convalescence, and redemption play out in a place like Utah and within Mormonism writ large? How do the Church and its leadership respond to the national need, even necessity, for lives renewed or made anew in the West? Does Mormonism become in any degree a spiritual or literal home for those whose lives had been shattered by the war? And does the changing relationship between the Church and the nation, between Brigham Young and federal officials, reflect to any degree these larger themes of health, rejuvenation, convalescence? I do not think we know much about these issues, and I think we should know far more.

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16*New York Herald* February 6, 1865.
A final query. We Californians proudly embrace our state’s remarkable landscape as a keystone to our history and culture. But we’ve ignored the ways in which California’s beautiful environments and its national parks played critical roles in this post-war healing project. Yosemite, for example, was hailed as a veritable outdoor hospital, established by God to heal Americans of the psychic and physical insults of the war. Frederick Law Olmsted himself saw the place in this light when he came directly from the Civil War battlefields to protect it in 1864. John Muir picked right up where Olmsted left off. Once Muir arrived in Yosemite, having dodged the Civil War draft because he was appalled by its carnage, he finds himself in a tabernacle—and he called it by that name—equally restorative of body, mind, and spirit. California’s Sierra Nevadas, which framed Yosemite were, Muir wrote famously, “the most divinely beautiful of all the mountain-chains I have seen.”

But what of Utah’s wild spaces? Might they, too, and a late nineteenth-century rising consciousness about their beauty and sublimity, fit into this framework? After the war, Americans embraced the West as wide open, quiet, filled with places of majesty and power, places less of sublime awe than of repose and thought and convalescence. Did they—they must—have spaces in Utah they looked upon similarly? And how did Utah present its natural beauty and meaning to the nation? How did the Utah environment fit into new national dialogues and processes of recovery?

I began this lecture with a scolding that western historians haven’t, with some exceptions, pulled Mormonism into their analyses of broad themes and historical trajectories in the West. That is changing, though I reiterate that I think the change is gradual. What western historians need to do is link Mormonism with wider currents of American historical scholarship, pull Mormonism and its social, cultural, economic, political, and religious expressions into contextual relationship with such events as the coming of the Civil War, with the wrenching national questions provoked by the Compromise of 1850, and with the war’s immensely complicated aftermath, in broad and sensitive ways reminiscent of those employed by legal scholar Sally

Gordon in her superb book on the “Mormon question.”¹⁸ Nineteenth-century observers made these linkages and not always, of course, in the most positive light: but we would do well to remember that they did, and we would do well to analyze what they meant in so doing.

And we haven’t even broached the twentieth century today. I generally feel that western American historians, and especially California historians, are too fixated on the twentieth century when so much work remains to be done on the nineteenth. But in the case of twentieth-century western American Mormonism, I’m more than willing to suggest that we know far, far too little and that thesis after thesis after thesis yet needs to be written: scholarly works that have big arguments to make, that tackle large questions in broad contexts.

Scholars are coming round. There is today more attention being paid to religion, devotion, and faith by western scholars who have not been quick to take such things into scholarly contemplation. Similarly, there is a widening of perception by religious scholars on other currents of experience, culture, and institutions. These trends include Mormonism and the history of Mormonism, and they are broader as well.

The changes are largely incremental. But the sheer scholarly depth and contextual breadth of the work discussed at this conference these past few days is itself an indication, the best indication, that these are exciting times to be considering the historical interplay between region and communities of faith. Just as there is a place and a space for insular dialogues about theology, belief, and practice, there is a concomitant space for historical context and historical comparison. Sub-fields and sub-specialties, and the often profound expertise that accompanies them, are critical to the furtherance of knowledge. But so, too, are bigger picture analyses, tied to the larger questions about the American experience and American identity, about conflict and resolution, and about crisis, redemption, and hope.

I WANT TO BEGIN BY SAYING how much those of us who are officially involved in recording the history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints appreciate and enjoy associating with those of you for whom the Church’s history provides either a professional or private pursuit. Staff members from the Church’s Family and Church History Department serve in the Mormon History Association organization, including this year’s very able president, Ron Esplin, and a fair number are participating in this MHA conference. I think this is a positive and healthy development. I believe the more receptive and open we are to a discussion of the historical conclusion of others, the more our own positions and conclusions will be considered and valued. Thank you for inviting us to add our leaven to the bread of Mormon history.

Now, as many of you know, I was called and sustained in April 2005 as the Church Historian and Recorder. I speak to you today in
that capacity. I speak, not as a professional historian, but as the “Church” historian, as one in a long line of general officers of the Church called for an indefinite period of time to fulfill a calling that was established by a revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith. On the day the Church was organized the Lord commanded the Prophet Joseph: “Behold, there shall be a record kept among you” (D&C 21:1).

In compliance with this command, Joseph called Oliver Cowdery, his closest associate and the Second Elder of the Church, to be the first Church recorder.

Oliver is best remembered for his role as scribe for the Book of Mormon, clerk of the high council, recorder of patriarchal blessings, and as author of eight historical letters in the Messenger and Advocate.

Oliver was followed by John Whitmer, who served from 1831 to 1835. Joseph Smith became closely associated with the Whitmer family during his stay at the Whitmer farm in 1829 and received a revelation for John in June 1829, now canonized as LDS Doctrine and Covenants 15. Whitmer later became one of the Eight Witnesses of the Book of Mormon. A further revelation from the Lord called John Whitmer to his assignment as historian: “It shall be appointed unto him to keep the church record and history continually” (D&C 47:3).

Whitmer’s main contribution was writing a narrative history,

Oliver Cowdery (1806–50), the Church’s historian from April 1830 to March 1831.

John Whitmer (1802–78), Church historian, 1831–38.
the book of John Whitmer, which ended with his excommunication in March 1838. The holograph of this interesting little volume is held in the Community of Christ Archives.

Following John Whitmer came a series of intervening clerks, historians and recorders, including John Corrill, Elias Higbee, Robert B. Thompson, and James Sloan. The office stabilized in 1842 with the call of Willard Richards as Church Historian.

Willard Richards joined the Church in 1836 in Kirtland, Ohio. In the spring of 1837 he served a mission to the eastern United States and, after his return, was immediately called to serve a mission to the British Isles. He remained in Great Britain as a missionary for four years, where he served in a number of capacities and was ordained an apostle in April 1840.

Returning to the United States in 1841, Elder Richards settled in Nauvoo, Illinois, and became a major force behind the compilation of Joseph Smith’s history. He served as a secretary to the Prophet, kept his diary, and compiled the “History of Joseph Smith,” both during Joseph’s lifetime and after his death. He also oversaw the recording of Joseph’s sermons and the recording of ordinances performed in the Nauvoo Temple. He established the Church historian’s office, first in an octagonal cabin at Winter Quarters and later in his own home in Salt Lake City.

Willard Richards was succeeded at his death in 1854 by Joseph Smith’s cousin, George A. Smith.
George A. Smith was eleven years younger than his cousin Joseph. He joined the Church with his family in 1832 and settled with the Saints in Kirtland, Ohio. Elder Smith participated in many of the early events of the Church, including Zion’s Camp, and had a retentive memory for detail that served him well in his later assignment as Church historian. Ordained an apostle in 1839, Smith was impressive both physically and intellectually. He stood out in a crowd. Weighing about 250 pounds and wearing a full wig, false teeth, and spectacles, he once astounded some Native Americans he encountered by slowly removing his appurtenances before them. They thereafter called him “Non-choko-wicher,” which means “man who takes himself apart.” Nevertheless, his work provides evidence that he was quite well put to...
together. He completed the “History of Joseph Smith,” began the compilation of the “History of Brigham Young,” and had a modest building constructed across the street from Brigham Young’s office on South Temple that served as the Historian’s Office from 1856 to 1917.

Albert Carrington came to the office of Church historian as a new member of the Quorum of the Twelve. He had served as the editor of the *Deseret News* and as a secretary to President Brigham Young for several years prior to his call. During his years as Church historian, the office staff continued to work on the “History of Brigham Young.” Elder Carrington served as the European Mission president for a year and a half during his tenure as Church historian.

Orson Pratt was a member of the original Quorum of the Twelve Apostles called in 1835. He served the early Church in many capacities and was a gifted writer and defender of the faith. During his time as Church historian, Pratt edited the Book of Mormon (adding the chapter breaks still present in our current edition) and the Doctrine and Covenants and published new editions of both in Great Britain.

Wilford Woodruff holds a special place in my heart, a place shared, I’m sure, by every student of Mormon history.

He served as Church historian from 1883 to 1889 but made his
Page of Wilford Woodruff’s journal for April 13, 1837. He writes: “Marriage being an institution of heaven & honourable in all. I accordingly accepted the honour; upon this memorial day, by joining hands with Miss. Phebe. W. Carter.”

Wilford Woodruff (1807–98),
Church historian, 1883–89.
greatest contribution to Church history as assistant Church historian from 1856 to 1883. During that time he spearheaded a project to publish a biography of each man who had served in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and was instrumental in preparing the sermons of Joseph Smith for the “History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.” His personal journals, which he diligently kept from the time he joined the Church in 1833 until a few weeks before his death, proved invaluable in compiling the histories of Joseph Smith and Brigham Young.

Franklin D. Richards, who served from 1889 to 1900, was the nephew of his predecessor Church historian Willard Richards. He became a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles at the youthful age of twenty-seven in 1849. Elder Richards served four separate missions to Europe before being called as the president of the Weber Stake in 1869. His Compendium of the Faith and Doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, first published in 1857, reflected his grasp of the gospel and his serious study of the scriptures and other early Church publications. Widely read, Elder Richards became Church historian in 1889 after serving five years as an assistant Church historian. During his tenure as Church historian, Elder Richards worked with Hubert Howe Bancroft to compile the information used in his History of Utah and authorized Andrew Jenson, an assistant Church historian, to travel widely and collect sources of information on the history of the Church. Elder Richards also served as president.
of the Utah Genealogical Society and as president of the Utah State Historical Society.

Anthon H. Lund was historian and recorder from 1900 to 1921. Born in Denmark, he joined the Church in 1856 at age twelve and immigrated to America in 1862 at age eighteen. After serving many years in a number of Church assignments, including several missions to Scandinavia, Elder Lund was ordained an apostle in 1889. Like his predecessor Franklin D. Richards, Elder Lund also served as president of the Genealogical Society of Utah and encouraged the projects of his assistant historians. Elder Lund supported Assistant Historian Andrew Jenson’s work on the “Journal History of the Church,” and chaired the reading committee for Assistant Church Historian B. H. Roberts’s editing of the multi-volume History of the Church. Lund also supervised the move of the Church Historian’s Office in 1917 to the Church Administration Building.

Next the monumental contributions of Joseph Fielding Smith must be noted and appreciated. He established a sixty-nine-year association with the Historian’s Office—a record that remains unbroken—in 1901. As a recently returned missionary, age twenty-five, he found employment as a clerk under the direction of Anthon H. Lund. Within days, Church President Lorenzo Snow passed away and Joseph F. Smith, Joseph Fielding’s father, became Church president. In addition to Joseph Fielding’s work in the Historian’s Office, he served as his father’s personal secretary and confidant. He was called as an
assistant Church historian in 1906 and, four years later, to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

Joseph Fielding Smith served as Church historian from 1921 until he became Church president in 1970. His *Essentials in Church History*, published in 1922, and many other writings have been widely influential within the Church. Active for many years in genealogy, he became president of the Genealogical Society of Utah in 1934.

Elder Smith modernized operations of the Historian’s Office, hired professional librarians and archivists, and helped plan the east-wing facilities in the Church Office Building occupied by the Historical Department from 1973 to the present.

As Church president, he appointed Howard W. Hunter, then an apostle, as Church historian. With a legal background and over a decade of service in the Quorum of the Twelve before his call, Elder Hunter served from 1970 to 1972, during which time he effected a reorganization of the Historian’s Office into a Historical Department with three divisions: a library for published materials, archives for manuscripts, and a division for research and writing, known as the
History Division.

Beginning with the time of Willard Richards in 1842 and continuing to the end of Howard W. Hunter’s term in 1972, each Church historian and recorder had been a member of the Quorum of the Twelve or First Presidency. That long-standing tradition ended in 1972 when Leonard J. Arrington, a prominent professional historian, was sustained as Church historian and appointed to lead the History Division of the Church Historical Department.

Sustained at the same time were Earl E. Olson, long-time employee in the Historian’s Office and an assistant Church historian since 1965 as Church archivist, and Donald T. Schmidt, former assistant director of the Brigham Young University Library as Church librarian. Florence Smith Jacobsen, former president of the Young Women’s Mutual Improvement Association, was soon afterward called and sustained as Church curator. She supervised the Arts and Sites Division which eventually became the Museum of Church History and Art. Sister Jacobsen had been actively involved in the restoration of historic buildings, including several historic homes in Nauvoo and Brigham Young’s Lion House and Beehive House in Salt Lake City.

These directors in the Church Historical Department served from 1972 to 1982 under General Authority managing directors, reflecting the larger departmental structure at Church headquarters. The first was Elder Alvin R. Dyer (1972–75), an Assistant to the Quo-
rum of the Twelve. He had been ordained an apostle and served as a counselor in the First Presidency under President David O. McKay (1968–70).

He was followed by Joseph Anderson (1975–77), a former secretary to five Church presidents: Heber J. Grant, George Albert Smith,
David O. McKay, Joseph Fielding Smith, and Harold B. Lee. Elder Anderson served as an Assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve, and then, when that office was discontinued, as a member of the First Quorum of Seventy.

The third and final managing director under that organizational structure was Elder G. Homer Durham (1977–85), former Ari-
zona State University president and a member of the First Quorum of Seventy. In addition to serving as managing director, Elder Durham was also named Church historian and recorder in 1982 and served until his death in 1985.

During Elder Durham’s service as Church historian, the Peter Whitmer cabin was reconstructed in Fayette, New York. Few who watched will ever forget President Kimball’s April 1980 conference talk broadcast from the cabin’s living area, using as a podium the box in which the Book of Mormon plates had been stored. Under Elder Durham, the Museum of Church History and Art was dedicated. The History Division was discontinued as a part of the Historical Department; and in its stead and with many of the same personnel, the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Latter-day Saint Church History was created at Brigham Young University. At this time, changes in record keeping and the implementation of a centralized computer database resulted in discontinuing the year-end ward membership summaries known as the Ordinance and Action Report. Also discontinued were ward and branch annual historical reports.

I return briefly to Brother Arrington’s decade of service, from 1972 to 1982, which was remarkable in several ways. It was a rich period of research, writing, and publication. “In addition to hundreds of talks in sacrament meetings, firesides, historical occasions, professional societies, and study groups, members of the staff published 20
books; completed 8 book-length manuscripts, most of which have since been published; submitted 364 articles for publication in Church magazines, professional journals, and other periodicals; and wrote about 300 other papers, most of which were later published.”

It was also a period in which Brother Arrington’s talents as an administrator and mentor were put to good use. He was not only the father of the MHA, but also a father and grandfather to several generations of outstanding historians, including James B. Allen and Davis Bitton, who served as assistant Church historians.

Following Elder Durham’s death in 1985, Elder Dean L. Larsen was appointed as managing director of the Church Historical Department and was sustained as Church historian and recorder. Although he actively served in that calling only until 1989, he was not officially released until he was made an emeritus General Authority in 1997. Elder Larsen had served in the First Quorum of Seventy since 1976. Before his call as a General Authority, he worked in the Church Educational System, as the Church’s coordinator of curriculum, and as its director of instructional materials. Elder Larsen’s steady hand helped guide the Historical Department through the confusion occasioned by Mark James B. Allen (1927–), left, and Davis Bitton (1930–2007), assistant Church historians to Leonard J. Arrington.

Hoffman’s pernicious forgeries; and in the wake of the Hofmann bombings, he oversaw new security measures implemented at the LDS Church Archives.

Also during this period, two personnel changes occurred which are noteworthy: Florence Jacobsen was released as director of the museum and was succeeded by Glen M. Leonard. Earl Olson retired and was succeeded by Richard E. Turley Jr. as assistant managing director and later managing director of the department.

After Elder Larsen received other assignments in 1989, he was followed by a series of executive directors of the Church Historical Department who were not called as Church historian and recorder, but whose duties were much the same. The first was Elder John K. Carmack, who served from 1989 to 1991 and again from 1998 to 1999. He brought to this position a legal background and five years as a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy. During his first term of service, the Museum of Church History and Art opened “Covenant Restored,” its permanent exhibit on the history of the Church. He also implemented a program at the Church Archives to facilitate processing and reviewing collections in an effort to make more documents available to the public. The archives also gave renewed emphasis to international collecting.
Elder Loren C. Dunn, who also served twice (1991–93, 1999–2000), was a former business executive who had served as a General Authority since 1968. Elder Dunn’s special interest was in historic sites. During his service as executive director, the restoration of Cove Fort in central Utah as a historic site was begun, providing a living history experience that conveys faith-promoting messages. The St. George Tabernacle was restored, and the groundwork was laid for his-
toric restorations at the Grandin Building and Joseph Smith Farm in Palmyra, New York; the historic district in Kirtland, Ohio; and the Mormon Trail Center in Omaha, Nebraska. A special exhibit on the Salt Lake Temple was installed for the temple’s centennial at the museum, resulting in a record-breaking visitation for 1993 by 100,000 above previous years, surpassed only in 2005 with the Joseph Smith exhibit. Richard Turley’s book, *Victims*, recounting the Mark Hofmann forgeries and murders, was published in 1992.

Elder Stephen D. Nadauld (1993–96), a member of the Second Quorum of Seventy, had a background in business. He had an MBA from Harvard, a Ph.D. in finance from the University of California at Berkeley, and had served as president of Weber State College (1985–90). Elder Nadauld implemented security measures for the Church Archives and began planning for a new library and archives building. He oversaw the completion and dedication of Cove Fort and also helped plan the restoration of the Church’s historic sites in Palmyra. The museum’s art book *Images of Faith*, featuring 282 plates exploring the width and breadth of Latter-day Saint art, was pub-
lished in 1995. In these three years, Church archivists traveled even more extensively—in Europe, Russia, Australia, and New Zealand—collecting records and conducting oral histories.

I followed Elder Nadauld as executive director from 1996 to 1998. During my first term as executive director, the Mormon Trail Center in Omaha, Nebraska, and the Grandin Building and Smith Log Home in Palmyra, New York, were dedicated. Archivists conducted oral histories in Europe and the Far East and also set up records management programs in Central America.

Elder D. Todd Christofferson served as the department’s executive director from 2000 to 2004. In 2000, the Family History Department, of which Elder Christofferson was already executive director, was combined with the Church Historical Department. Elder Christofferson then became executive director of the Family and Church History Department. Several years of planning and work came together under Elder Christofferson with the completion and dedication of the Joseph Smith Farm in New York, the Joseph Smith Frame Home in New York, and the historic district in Kirtland, Ohio. Approvals were obtained and planning began in earnest for the new Church History Library building. Church history offerings on the internet were launched on lds.org. A significant number of early archival materials were made more widely available with the publication of *Selected Collections from the Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. Church archivists were again active in recording oral histories and collecting records worldwide.

I was again called as executive director in 2004, then was sus-
tained a year later as Church historian and recorder after that office had been vacant for seven years.

In addition to highlighting and applauding the efforts of my predecessor Church historians and recorders, I want to pay tribute to some men and women who, through the years, have worked in the Church Historian’s Office as staff members or sometimes as assistant Church historians.

Andrew Jenson was sustained as assistant Church historian in 1897. His legacy includes massive amounts of material collected during extensive travels and the publication of thousands of biographical sketches and historical incidents.

B. H. Roberts of the First Council of the Seventy was appointed assistant Church historian in 1902 with the assignment of editing and republishing the *History of the Church*. He had completed six volumes by 1912 and a seventh in 1932, a year before his death. While editing the *History of the Church*, Roberts also wrote *A Comprehensive History of the Church*, which first appeared in monthly installments in *Americana Magazine* between 1909 and 1915, then was published in six volumes in 1930.

Although our current organizational structure has no officially designated assistant Church historians, I work daily with men and women who on the basis of ability and willingness certainly qualify. Richard E. Turley Jr., the managing director of the Family and Church...
History Department, is a lawyer by training and certainly one of the brightest and best-read scholars in the Church. He has a profound grasp of Church history and is an indispensable part of our work.

Steven L. Olsen is the associate managing director for Church history. He has a Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of Chicago and is a most thoughtful and capable person.

Glenn Rowe has toiled quietly behind the scenes in the Church Historical Department for almost thirty-three years. He possesses great talent and good judgment, and knows our collections as well as anyone.

Grant A. Anderson is Glenn’s close associate in “special projects.” Gifted as a writer and thinker, he has modestly labored without much recognition for thirty-one years.

I hasten to add that our department is graced by several dozen other committed, professionally trained staff, many with advanced degrees from various disciplines, all of whom add skill and value to the work of Church history.
Over the years since the days of Oliver Cowdery, the achievements, much abbreviated here, of those who have guided the work of Church history, have centered primarily on the collection, preservation, and to a lesser extent publication of the records that contain the Church’s compelling history.

During relatively recent times, a more tangible expression of Church history has been made possible by the establishment of the Museum of Church History and Art. The museum’s collection of artifacts, art, and various memorabilia makes possible the construction of exhibits that give visitors a compelling historical experience.

Closely related has been the development of a substantial historic sites program. The work done by Church history staff at Palmyra, Kirtland, and other sites has been of the highest quality. Historic sites help build the faith of LDS members and even attract many not of our faith.

And what of the future? We are certainly in a rapidly changing environment. Most of us would probably enjoy life to a greater extent if Moore’s law\(^2\) weren’t so inexorably at work! The personal computer, the internet’s speed, and the ability to convert analog to digital images have certainly changed how information can be managed and disseminated. Moreover, the Church has become a great international organization with its spiritual center of gravity shifting more and more to the Southern Hemisphere. These and other factors have convinced us we can’t go on doing our historical business as usual.

For several years, we have given thoughtful and prayerful consideration to the question: “What is the essential purpose of Church history?” Our efforts have resulted in the articulation of a purpose statement which when, completely refined, will guide the work of Church history into the future. Our examination of scriptures and the teachings of the living prophets have resulted in this purpose statement:

As defined in the scriptures, the primary purpose of history in the Church of Jesus Christ is to help God’s children make and keep sacred covenants by:

• Assuring remembrance of the great things of God.

• Helping to preserve the revealed order of the kingdom of God.

\(^2\)integrated circuits/\(\text{inch}^2\)/time
• Witnessing to and defending the truth of the Restoration in this dispensation.

This purpose statement defines our work. It identifies our primary audience. It defines a scope of work bigger than we can accomplish on our own—thus the need to collaborate. It moves us from being simply a passive collector to an active organization that will set priorities in collecting, disseminating, and researching and writing.

The statement doesn’t define a strategy—how we will accomplish our purpose—but I can share some implications of this purpose statement for the future: (1) We’ll continue building a department infrastructure of people, processes, and systems to serve a diverse, worldwide church. We’re planning for the retirement of much of our senior staff in the next ten years and will seek to replace them with a mixed workforce of professionals, interns, missionaries, and contractors. (2) We are evolving to place more emphasis on serving the ordinary Church member while still keeping our commitment to assist Church leadership and professional historians. This will require greater sensitivity to audience needs so that our products will be compelling and relevant. (3) The establishment of collaborative relationships with a variety of individuals and institutions will be necessary to help us accomplish our purposes.

While planning for the future, our important work continues, including the book being prepared by Richard E. Turley Jr., Glen M. Leonard, and Ronald W. Walker on the Mountain Meadows Massacre. Another major initiative is the Joseph Smith Papers Project. Several volumes of Joseph’s papers are reaching completion, and we will soon have final plans in place for printing and distribution.

Another significant step forward is the construction of the 250,000-square-foot Church History Library. Ground was broken in October 2006, and construction is on schedule for dedication in mid-2009. The library will house our priceless collections and is designed to be open, inviting, and very functional.

In conclusion, for all we have in common and as much as we rejoice in our association with all of you in the greater community of Mormon history, we feel that the scriptural basis for our existence and the prescribed role of the Church historian distinguish our mission from the work being done by trained scholars in other research institutions, libraries, historical societies, archives, or museums. While aspiring to the highest professional standards and hopefully
exhibiting malice toward none and charity toward all, we who labor in
the Church’s historical enterprise must seek to build faith and bring
souls to Christ. This is a noble and lofty ambition, one not easily
achieved and possibly not always fully appreciated by our professional
colleagues. Nevertheless, we also desire to join with and assist all of
you in exploring, illuminating, and understanding Mormon history
in the most complete and honest way possible. To accomplish these
ends, we pledge our best efforts, and our service and friendship to all
of you, and ask for God’s blessing to be with all of us so engaged.
HANNAH S. JENKINS: 
RLDS MISSIONARY WIFE IN PALESTINE, 1911–20

Carol Freeman Braby

The Biblical land of Palestine was incorporated into the Ottoman Empire and was governed from Constantinople from 1516 to 1918. By 1800, Jerusalem—the ancient city sacred to Christians, Moslems, and Jews—had degenerated into a frowsy city submerged in the dirt and grime of the centuries. According to Martin Gilbert’s definitive history of the city in the nineteenth century: “Within its walls, built by the Ottoman Turkish rulers three hundred years earlier, lay a maze of narrow, dirty streets and broken stones. The walls were massive, pierced by only a few narrow gates, and holding within their compass less than 16,000 people. Of these 16,000, about 6,000 were Jews, 5,000 were Muslim Arabs and 3,000 were Christian Arabs. There were also in the city 100 Europeans and westerners: mostly missionaries and traders.”¹

On January 25, 1911, Gomer T. Griffiths, an apostle of the Reor-

ganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints,\(^2\) had organized a small branch in Palestine; and the general conference assigned Rees and Hannah Jenkins to serve in the Palestine Mission. In June 1911, Seventy Rees Jenkins and Hannah Sophia Edwards Jenkins courageously arrived in this unappealing but holy city to begin their missionary service. The former missionaries on site, Evangelist Frederick G. Pitt and his wife, Rosa, had departed for Australia three weeks earlier on May 11, allowing no opportunity for an orientation and informed transition. The Jenkinses struggled in their ministry for the next six and a half years. Rees Jenkins was arrested as a spy by the Turks in December 1917 and deported to Damascus, Syria, where he died of typhus on May 9, 1918. Hannah Jenkins remained in Jerusalem until 1920. Her nine-year ordeal is a little-known but stirring story of fidelity and commitment in the twentieth-century history of the Reorganized Church. This article, based on primary documents in the Community of Christ Archives and the U.S. State Department, reconstructs her life and extraordinary experiences.

**EARLIER MORMON ATTENTION TO PALESTINE**

In 1923, Joseph Smith Jr. was confronted in vision by a heavenly personage who called him by name and said God was calling him to a work. Quoting from the biblical prophets, the personage told him among other things that the power of the Lord would “assemble the outcasts of Israel and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.”\(^3\)

After studying Bible scriptures such as Ezekiel 36:6-11 and Book of Mormon scriptures, Joseph Smith Jr. considered the children of Israel as still within the love and plan of God. At the dedication of the Kirtland Temple in 1836 he prayed:

> Thou knowest that we have a great love for the children of Jacob who have been scattered upon the mountains; for a long time in a cloudy and dark day.

> We therefore ask thee to have mercy upon the children of Jacob, that Jerusalem, from this hour, may begin to be redeemed; and the yoke of bondage may begin to be broken off from the house of David,

\(^2\)The Church’s name became the Community of Christ in April 2001, but this article uses historic nomenclature.

and the children of Judah may begin to return to the lands which thou
didst give to Abraham, their father, and cause that the remnants of Ja-
cob, who have been cursed and smitten, because of their transgression,
to be converted from their wild and savage condition to the fullness of
the everlasting gospel.⁴

In the spring of 1840, the general conference meeting in
Nauvoo, Illinois, assigned Apostle Orson Hyde to go to Jerusalem.
He traveled as far as England with Elder George J. Adams, who re-
mained in that country by assignment to preach. Hyde continued on
alone. On October 4, 1841, he climbed the Mount of Olives and, in
prophetic prayer, dedicated the land for the restoration of Israel, rais-
ing up Jerusalem as its capital, and constituting its people as a distinct
nation and government.⁵

After 1841, change began in Jerusalem with the arrival of the
British Royal Engineers who were given permission by the sultan to
survey the city’s walls and environs. This project completed, the in-
fuence of the British grew when a Bishop Alexander, a converted
Jew, was appointed supreme Protestant religious authority in Jerusa-
lem after negotiations between the Prussians and British. William
Tanner Young, vice consul for Great Britain in Jerusalem, was to give
the bishop protection, but not to provide political support for his reli-
gious mission of converting the Jews to Christianity. Even with these
limitations, the Anglican Church had become the center for the Lon-
don Jewish Society and Protestant missionary activity in Jerusalem by
1842.⁶

Although George J. Adams fell out of favor with Brigham Young
after Joseph Smith’s death in 1844, he shared Joseph’s vision of a revi-
talized Israel. A colorful and dynamic character, he separated from
those who followed Brigham Young and was excommunicated on
April 10, 1845. Adams then joined with James Jesse Strang, who

⁴Joseph Smith Jr., Kirtland Temple Dedication Prayer, in Joseph
Smith III and Heman Hale Smith, History of the [Reorganized] Church of Jesus
Christ of Latter Day Saints, 1805–1890, 4 vols.; continued by F. Henry Ed-
wards as The History of the [Reorganized] Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day
Saints, Vols. 5–8 (Independence: Herald House, 1897–1903, 1973 print-
ing), 2:38–44; hereafter cited as History of the RLDS Church by volume and
page.
⁵Ibid., 15.
founded his own church (“the Kingdom of God on Earth”) based on the claim that Joseph Smith had designated him as his successor just before his death in June 1844. Adams served in various leadership capacities with Strang until 1850, disaffiliated in 1850 when it became apparent that Strang was secretly practicing plural marriage, and returned to acting, his first profession. He established a group of players that performed in Vermont and Massachusetts. In 1860 he moved to Boston with his second wife, Louisa Isabella, and their son, Clarence, where he resumed preaching. On January 1, 1861, in Springfield, Massachusetts, he established the Church of the Messiah with a covenant document signed by forty-three persons. His church was not accepted in Massachusetts, but he found support in southern Maine and New Hampshire.  

Moving his headquarters to Lebanon, Maine, he began to publish *The Sword of Truth and Harbinger of Peace*, each issue warning of the imminent return of the Jews to Palestine, the establishment of Zion and the coming of the Messiah. He found enough loyal supporters in Indian River, Addison, and Jonesport, Maine, who resonated to this message that he began developing plans to realize the dream of a redeemed Israel. George J. Adams and Abe McKenzie, a Maine businessman, went to Palestine in 1865, selected land for the colony near Jaffa, and negotiated with Herman Lowenthal, a Jewish Christian and businessman in Jaffa, to purchase the tract and provide supplies for the colonists who would arrive the following year. In 1866, Adams established a colony of 157 men, women, and children—all members of the Church of the Messiah—in Jaffa, the first American colony in Palestine. The colonists had high hopes that they could assist the Jews in their return; but their hopes were dashed. The land purchase had fallen through, the sultan had withdrawn permission to establish the colony, and while negotiations dragged on, thirteen died of cholera. Although the land purchase was finally completed and fifteen houses, a store, and a three-story hotel were erected, most of the colonists left in 1867. However, a handful stayed on, some of whom greeted the Jenkinses on their arrival.


In 1892, Charles Biggs, chaplain to the Anglican bishop, reported: “The government is Turkish; most of the inhabitants are Jews; the chief powers of Europe have resident agents; most of the branches of Christendom have some representation; and through its gates stream visitors from all parts of the globe.”

The population had reached 45,000 by this point—28,000 Jews, 8,600 Muslim Arabs, and 8,760 who were Christian Arabs and European Christians. There were approximately nine Christian groups with schools, hospitals, printing offices, orphanages, monasteries, nunneries, hospices for pilgrims, and churches in and outside the old walls of the city. The Christians included Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholics, Armenians, Protestants, Greek Catholics, Egyptian Copts, Abyssinians, Armenian Catholics, and Russian Orthodox.

The laws of their respective countries governed Europeans, Americans, and other non-Turkish citizens. Americans registered with the American consul and looked to him for protection and assistance in accomplishing their work. They usually did not deal directly with the Turkish governor. The consul or one of his staff interacted for them. These arrangements were legalized under the Capitulations, special agreements between the Ottoman government and various foreign governments giving those governments and their citizens specific exemptions from the laws of the Ottoman Empire. Traditional Mormon beliefs benefited from this more open access to Palestine.

**The First RLDS Missionaries**

Paul M. Hanson, an RLDS apostle, shared the vision of Joseph Smith Jr.’s renewed Jerusalem. In 1906 he made the first known journey by an RLDS official to the Holy City, stood on the Mount of Olives like Orson Hyde, and marveled at the panorama of Jerusalem before him. He said that he thought about the Jews’ reactions to Jesus and the disciples, wondering what his own reactions would have been. “And then I thought, when will the Jews return to the Holy Land? I had heard such teachings from my earliest recollections and I believed it. But, I thought how can they return? The Turks are in control. Efforts have been made to buy... with no success. The Jews are scat-

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10 Ibid., 216, 201.
tered throughout the earth, and have their vested interests in home and business. How can they return?”  

According to Reed M. Holmes, Hanson’s visit was apparently brief, including only limited contact with the remaining members of the Adams Colony. It is likely, Holmes believes, that Hanson’s strong belief in the restoration of Israel was a factor in persuading RLDS leaders to be responsive when a letter came from some survivors of the Adams Colony who were working in the tourism industry. According to Minutes of the Joint Council on April 10, 1910, Hugh Wellington Goold of Independence read them a letter from his father, George L. Goold (1850–1910), then in Jerusalem. According to Goold, a number of people had been converted and desired someone to come and baptize them. 

The minutes record only a limited discussion about sending a missionary to Palestine and the assignment of Apostle Gomer T.

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12 Joint Council, Minutes, typescript, April 10, 1910, 102, Community of Christ Archives. The Joint Council consisted of the First Presidency (Joseph Smith III, Frederick M. Smith, and Elbert A. Smith), the president of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles (William H. Kelley), and the Presiding Bishop (Edmund L. Kelley). According to Edna Koehler (a later missionary), Jerusalem, Letter to Edna Small, New Bedford, Mass., April 4, 1914, Community of Christ Archives, the Goold family was living with the Swedish-American Colony in Jerusalem. This hope for missionaries was apparently of long standing. Abigail Norton Alley, her husband, Zebediah, and their son, William (“Willie”) James, age six, had left their home at Indian River, Maine, in 1866 to join the Adams Colony in Palestine. It dissolved the next year, but the Alleys remained in Jaffa along with Abigail’s sister, Anna Norton Watts, her husband, Daniel, and their infant daughter, Ida. Unable to find work, Daniel returned to Maine, followed soon thereafter by Zebediah. Anna died in 1869, and Abigail sent Ida home to her father in Maine but stayed on during the 1880s and early 1890s. She lived in Jaffa, working as a laundress and a farm laborer and writing letters and articles about life in Palestine that were printed in *Autumn Leaves* during the 1880s and 1890s. An unpublished biographical sketch quotes her wistful comment in 1889: “The Utah elders come here every year, but I have never seen one of the Reorganized elders since I have been here twenty-three years and there are people who have been waiting almost two years to be baptized.”
Griffiths, then serving in England, to visit Jerusalem. He arrived November 8, 1910. A week later, Patriarch Frederick G. Pitt and his wife, Rosa Parkes Pitt, joined him. The Pitts planned to remain in Jerusalem for six months, then go on to their assignment in Australia.\(^{13}\)

On November 16, 1910, a group of ten persons went to the Jordan River where Griffiths and Pitt baptized four: Florence Carr (a member of the Goold family), her husband Bertram, and their sons, ten-year-old Harlbert and eight-year-old Paul. The next month, Pitt baptized two more believers: Mary Jane Clark Leighton Floyd, wife of Rolla Floyd and a surviving member of the Adams Colony, and Michael M. Whelan, an Irish resident of Jerusalem, also in the Jordan River. Whelan, an elderly man, was a resident of Floyd House where the missionaries also lived.\(^{14}\) Mary Jane was twenty-five years younger than her husband. They had prospered as owners and operators of one of the earliest tourist businesses in the Holy Land and owned a twenty-room residence, Floyd House, in Jerusalem on the Jaffa Road as well as another residence and hotel in Jaffa itself with the remaining Maine colonists.\(^{15}\)

On January 25, 1911, Pitt reported to the Saints Herald: We had to go to the Jordan again last week to baptize three more, a father and his two grown [children] . . . —pure Arabs, and good, refined peo-

\(^{13}\)Frederick G. Pitt had been born in Montreal, Canada, on December 3, 1848, of English parentage. Joseph III had baptized him in June 1871 in Plano, Illinois. He began a lifetime of service to the Church as an elder, then as a high priest, and in 1910 as a patriarch-evangelist. He served in the continental United States, British Isles, Europe, Australia, New Zealand, and the South Sea Islands in addition to this interim appointment in Palestine. He died in 1940 in a car accident en route to general conference. History of the RLDS Church, 8:309.

\(^{14}\)Rosa Pitt, Letter to Autumn Leaves, 24 (1911), and Frederick G. Pitt, Letter, December 27, 1910, Autumn Leaves 24 (1911), quoted in Holmes, The Church in Israel, 56.

ple.” Holmes identified the father as Solomon Njeim and his daughter as Lulu (a nickname for Olinda), while Hannah Jenkins’s correspondence gives the son’s name as Aziz. Griffiths also officially organized a branch of eleven members: the Pitts, the four Carrs, Mary Floyd, Michael Whelan, and the three Njeims.

This list excludes Mary Floyd’s seventy-four-year-old husband, Rolla, even though he was apparently a member. George J. Adams had baptized him in Maine in the 1860s. Kimball and Pratt had converted, baptized, and ordained Adams in February 1840 in New York City, Floyd believed he had been baptized by authority and needed no other baptism, and he was apparently accepted into the Reorganization on that basis since the RLDS Church did not recognize Brigham Young’s authority in excommunicating Adams in April 1845. Perhaps the problem was his age and ill health. He died October 4, 1911, only four months after the Jenkinses arrived.

Griffiths and Pitt were well aware of the challenges facing this tiny branch. Pitt recorded hopefully: “Griffiths has great faith that [Presiding Bishop] E. L. Kelley will be able to come to our rescue in furnishing means to push the work forward. I hope he is not mistaken, for we cannot do much here without means. I think this mission is different from all others in many respects.” Griffiths, who returned to England in late January 1911, continued on to Independence where he reported to the general conference in March: “We can maintain our work [in Jerusalem] providing we can keep an able minister and his wife there, to look after and continue the work begun. But whoever is sent will have to be patient and long-suffering, as he will have to meet great opposition and persecution. The church will have to heartily support the mission with ample means. The mission will not be self-supporting for some time to come. Conditions in that country

16Pitt, Report to Saints’ Herald Editors, January 25, 1911, no pub.
date. Unless otherwise noted, all correspondence and holograph documents are housed in the Community of Christ Archives.
17Holmes, The Church in Israel, 64.
differ widely from other parts of the world."^{20}

Faithful and loyal, Rees and Hannah Jenkins found this statement all too true.

**HANNAH AND REES JENKINS**

Hannah Sophia Edwards was born in Llanelly, Carmarthen County, Wales, on March 23, 1869, to James and Janette Edwards. Her father was baptized and confirmed on October 28, 1878, in Llanelly, by Thomas Williams and A. N. Bishop. Hannah was baptized the next year on September 2, 1879, by Benjamin Thomas and confirmed by A. N. Bishop. Her brother, Adolphus H. D. Edwards, was baptized and confirmed sixteen days later by James O. Bishop. Bishop also baptized four other siblings: Ann E. and Janet L. (date not known) and Joseph H. Edwards and Laura J. on January 5, 1891. These officiating elders may have been either RLDS missionaries or lay ministers, for Llanelly had an RLDS branch in 1879.\(^{21}\)

Hannah married Rees Jenkins on September 6, 1891, and they made their first home in Tenyrefail, Glamorganshire, Wales. Rees had been born in Cilcenen, Cardigan County, Wales, on August 10, 1869, to John and Jane Jenkins but little is known of his family. Rees was baptized in December 1879 by David Griffiths and confirmed by J. E. Jenkins, possibly his father. According to Hannah’s brief biography of her husband, he was ordained a deacon at fifteen, a priest at seventeen, and an elder at twenty.\(^{22}\)

After their marriage, Rees served as a youthful branch presi-

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\(^{21}\)RLDS Membership Records, Book B, p. 39; Book D, p. 38.

\(^{22}\)Hannah prepared two biographies of Rees and their life together, presumably for Church historian Samuel A. Burgess. I am calling the first “Biography of Rees Jenkins,” n.d., and the second “Biography of Rees Jenkins,” No. 2. It is also not dated, but Hannah’s cover letter to Burgess with this document is dated December 18, 1926. The first document concerned their early lives in Wales, move to America, missionary service in Ohio, Wales, and England, and subsequent assignment in Palestine. Number 2 covers events in their lives in Palestine from 1913 to 1920. Samuel A. Burgess wrote a brief “Biographical Sketch of Rees Jenkins,” *Saints Herald* 71 (1924): 317, which he may have drawn from Hannah’s first manuscript. Both are in the Community of Christ Archives.
dent in Penygeraig, Wales, where, according to Hannah, he did “considerable street preaching” and “defended the Faith” in weekly newspaper columns. They had no children. Following members of the Edwards family who had immigrated to the United States, Hannah and Rees sailed from England on August 6, 1898, reaching Johnstown, Pennsylvania, on August 13. They also lived in Wheeling, West Virginia; then joined Joseph, John, and Adolphus Edwards in Steubenville, Ohio. Here Rees and Hannah helped establish a branch of the RLDS Church. Both became American citizens on September 13, 1903.

Hannah records in her first biography of Rees that he entered the mission field in May 1907, under the direction of U. W. Green, the elder in charge of the Ohio District. Rees labored in southern Ohio with H. A. Koehler for one year. In the spring of 1908, he attended general conference in Independence, Missouri, where he was ordained to the office of Seventy and assigned a mission to his native land of Wales. The couple departed on May 29, 1908. Arriving in Trebanog Forth, Wales, the home of his parents, Rees began his labors. Soon the missionary in charge of his field assigned him to Leeds, England. For several years, he enjoyed his work among this people and felt loath to leave when he received word of his appointment to Palestine on April 25, 1911, accompanied by money orders for £20.10.8 and £10.5.4 from Presiding Bishop Edmund L. Kelley.

By return mail, he responded:

I have made inquiries as to fare and time of sailing, etc and find that I cannot get away until the 23rd of May As I cannot get ready to go on the 9th.

I also find that my fare from Leeds to Jaffa will be £15.16.11 exclusive of the incidentals en route so that I have not enough money to pay my fare. Sr. Jenkins has also had to pay (or find) my board almost exclusively ever since I have been in the land... and oft times paid my fare from place to place. That she has actually deprived herself many things she ought to have. I may add, however, that she has done all this quite cheerfully, but now being called upon to go with me to Palestine she finds herself in an unprepared condition and wished me to ask you if you will kindly let her have, as a refund, as much as you can, in consideration of what she has done to help me my labors here.25

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Rees was referring to the fact that mission assignments were financially supported by the general tithes and offerings of the Church and distributed through the Presiding Bishopric. Wives and families received an allowance of about twenty dollars a month, and the missionary husband was expected to pay his wife for room and board while he was in their home and not in the field.

Rees concluded his letter: I wish I could go in time to meet Bro. Pitt, so I could have an introduction, and also a conversation over matters in Jerusalem, but I find it now impossible.”

Probably before Kelley received this letter, he wrote Frederick G. Pitt in Jerusalem on May 6, 1911, that "at the request of the Order of Twelve Apostles," he had forwarded money to Jenkins, assuming that he would arrive before Pitts left. As matters turned out, Rees had to borrow from the bishop’s agent in Leeds, to pay for their passage to Palestine.

HANNAH AND REES JENKINS BEGIN THEIR WORK

In her husband’s biography, Hannah Jenkins described their first activities in Jerusalem. They first lived in the Floyd House, then began boarding with the Carrs: “We found the few saints cold and indifferent,” Hannah recalled, “no meetings being held as brother and sister Pitt had left for their mission field in Australia some weeks before we arrived. Brother Jenkins visited the few saints in their homes and invited them to come to the meetings, which were to be held in the home of Brother and Sister Carr... Jerusalem was a peculiar mission field as we were not allowed to do any outdoor preaching, neither were we allowed to go from house to house tracting; consequently it was a very hard mission to labor in.”

Rees Jenkins, probably without much information on the political realities of life in Palestine, was optimistic. On September 1, 1911, after three months in Palestine, he wrote Apostle Griffiths, then probably in England: “There are many things the church should do in this mission... with a view of getting a stronghold here... We need a place to hold services in. We should also have a good library estab-

24Jenkins, Letter to Kelley, April 25, 1911.


lished here, also a school. To my mind, the best way to prosecute the work here is to work it more or less on a colonizing plan, and establishing profitable institutions. I am satisfied that if the work is properly attended to along these lines a mighty work will be accomplished here bye and bye.”

A month later on October 4, 1911, Rees officiated at Rolla Floyd’s funeral, held in the Floyd home. “Our hearts were made sad,” Hannah recorded, but they arranged “to rent the Floyd house, and in December we moved in. Brother Carr and family, brother Njeim and family, brother Jenkins and myself; and thus the mission house was es-

Hannah S. Jenkins is the woman in white on the back row, third from the left. The others are unidentified, but the man standing, left, with the white beard, may be Michael Whelan. The presence of the two half-grown boys suggests that they are ten-year-old Harlbert Carr and eight-year-old Paul Carr, so their parents would logically be among the non-elderly adults. The young Arab woman standing third from right may be Olinda (“Lulu”) Njeime, with her brother, Aziz, left of Hannah and their father, Solomon, is seated, far left, wearing a fez. Carr died in July 1912, which would date this photograph to the first year of the Jenkinses’ residence in Jerusalem.

27Rees Jenkins, Jerusalem, Letter to Gomer T. Griffiths, September 1, 1911, P34/f40.
Within the first year, three more people were baptized: Frederick Roos and his wife (name unknown), both German residents of Jerusalem, and Agiz Elias, an Arab houseboy who worked in the Floyd House. Forty-five students were enrolled in night school classes in English and mathematics held in the Floyd House in 1912.

In July 1912, Bertram Carr died after a seven-months’ illness, and Florence Carr took her children back to the United States. Mary Jane Floyd left at the same time to visit a son in Montana and did not return until 1920, after the end of World War I. These departures left Hannah in charge of the large house. “After this we rented some of the rooms in the mission house and with the help of a small boy, Agiz Elias, who knew no English, I took care of these rooms along with my other household duties,” wrote Hannah. “Brother Jenkins and I taught Agiz English and when he was versed enough, we taught him the gospel principles, which he consequently obeyed. Through the renting of these rooms, we got acquainted with several people whom we invited to attend the meetings.” The renters included Church members, expatriates working temporarily as teachers and medical personnel, and also, presumably to tourists, although she does not say so. They often invited these individuals to attend RLDS meetings. This mix of people also helped Rees learn Arabic, Hebrew, and German. The strong ties between Germany and the Ottoman Empire meant that German was one of the European languages most frequently used in Palestine commerce.

Edmund L. Kelley, writing to Rees Jenkins on October 4, 1912, to discuss repairs to the Floyd House—now renamed the Mission House—unknowingly contributed to misunderstandings that developed among the members of the Church: “I look to you for keeping everything right, no difference who the renters are because I let the house to you and did not let it to anybody else. Please let me know by return mail whether everything is in order or not.” From Kelley’s letter, it would appear that the RLDS Church had leased the house from Mary Jane Floyd and was subletting it to Rees Jenkins. However, later events contradicted the information in Kelley’s letter.

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29 Ibid.
30 Ibid., 2.
Rees Jenkins’s 1912 ministerial report was printed in the 1913 General Conference Minutes:

Sermons preached 105; baptized 3. Condition of field; Better than at last report; quite a number are investigating the work. The Christian missionaries are advertising for us, and we have but to show the falsity of their reports and have the Book of Mormon, Voice of Warning and a few tracts translated into Hebrew. Mr. Feingold, the editor of The Truth, has offered to translate Church History and the Book of Mormon and is delighted with them. He said he considered it impossible for Joseph Smith to be a false prophet with such an array of witnesses.

...I believe the time is at hand for the work to go to the Jews. Many peculiar conditions affect the work here. It is a land of poverty and the people are divided into classes. They are tied up in different religions in order to get a living. To turn from them means to turn away from [their] only means of getting a living. If the church could render real help to these people, it would give them a chance to discern between

In this photograph, Hannah is the third woman on the right, wearing a black dress and a dark hat. Standing next to her are, left, a Mrs. Webster and Mary Jane Floyd. The two men are identified as “Joseph Assich and a cousin.” The photograph is dated 1920, between Mary Jane’s return to Palestine in 1919 and before Hannah’s departure in May 1920. Community of Christ Archives D836.82.
Christianity preached and Christianity practiced. This is a field where the church could prove her real worth to the world.32

NEW APOSTOLIC LEADERSHIP IN PALESTINE

At the 1913 general conference, Apostle Ulysses W. Greene was assigned to supervise the missions in Europe and Palestine. Greene resided primarily in Independence with his wife, Eunice A. Robbins Greene, and their three daughters, but letters were often addressed to him in Maine and Massachusetts, states where he had mission assignments.

Ulysses W. Greene was born June 16, 1865, in Medway, Massachusetts, a small town on the Charles River about thirty miles from Boston. His mother, Anna Eliza Barrows Greene, had died when he was seven followed by his father, Asa Alonzo Greene, three years later. After his stepmother abandoned the family and stole their resources, he went to live with an aunt, Sarah Bragg, who encouraged him to study three hours a day to continue his education. In 1880 he began to attend the RLDS Church in North Attleboro, Massachusetts, and was baptized two years later. He was ordained a deacon in 1882, a priest in 1884, and an elder in 1886. He accepted full-time appointment in 1886 and was ordained an evangelist in 1890, laboring in Maine, the Maritime Provinces, Hawaii, and New York. He was ordained an apostle in 1902 with oversight for Ohio, the Eastern States, and Canada, an assignment he retained until he was assigned to Europe and Palestine in 1913. Leaving Palestine in 1914, he returned to Independence, where he served in the Church headquarters, working directly under the First Presidency after 1917. He was assigned to assist Elbert A. Smith while President Frederick M. Smith and Apostle T. W. Williams made an eighteen-month trip to the European and Palestinian missions. Released from the Quorum of Twelve Apostles in 1922, he served as an evangelist until his death on January 16, 1935, in Independence.

At the same 1913 conference where Greene was assigned oversight of Palestine, the conference appointed Elder H. Arthur Koehler and his wife, Edna Wave Howland Koehler, a schoolteacher from New Bedford, Massachusetts, to Maine. They had previously worked in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York and had become well-acquainted

with Greene, their supervisor, who asked them to accompany him to the Holy Land for a two-year mission. The three arrived in Jerusalem on September 14, 1914.\textsuperscript{33}

By this time, Rees and Hannah Jenkins had established a school at the Mission House and were teaching forty-five students in two classes. They also held worship services regularly, which were translated into Arabic and German by Solomon Njeim and Frederick Roos respectively. Attempts were being made to translate tracts and the Book of Mormon into Hebrew and Arabic.

Greene described forty-four-year-old Hannah Jenkins as “the matron of the home, indeed a Mother in Israel.”\textsuperscript{34} Life in Palestine was difficult. Water and food were scarce, warm clothing was expensive and difficult to find, and most other Christian ministers were suspicious and inhospitable to “Mormon” missionaries. The Koehlers assumed teaching responsibilities in the school while Arthur also preached in the rotation of priesthood.\textsuperscript{35}

At the 1914 general conference, Greene proposed plans for purchasing property and developing the school and church. However, the Joint Council of the Presidency, Quorum of Twelve, and Bishop-


\textsuperscript{34}Greene, “Ministerial Report,” \textit{General Conference Minutes, 1914}, p. 1856.

ric declined this request for capital investments in distant Palestine soon after the conference ended. The pattern would become all too familiar. The most frequent topic in letters from Greene and Koehler to Church headquarters in Missouri during these months is money—the lack of it, the length of time it takes to be transmitted when it is sent, and sometimes sheer despair at ever receiving it. On October 4, 1914, with World War I looming on the horizon, Arthur Koehler wrote angrily to Bishop Kelley, "Why don't you send us money so we can act for ourselves. We ought to have our women folks out of here. If any lives are lost because of the church's slowness in sending us funds, I will hold some one personally responsible for it." No doubt part of the problem was administrative changes in Church leadership. Joseph Smith III died in December 1914 and Frederick M. Smith was ordained President in 1915. In 1916, Benjamin R. McGuire replaced E. L. Kelley as Presiding Bishop.

In October 1914, the Turkish army was mobilizing, and the government requisitioned food in Palestine, making supplies scarce for civilians. Only Turkey provided postal services. Foreign banks began to close or discount cash advances severely. Consular rights for foreigners were abolished. When World War I began, citizens of the belligerent nations (England, France, and Belgium) were ordered out of Palestine and, where necessary, forcibly removed.

On October 28, 1914, a telegram from Henry Morgenthau, U.S. ambassador, authorized the American consulate to distribute $500 to Greene, the Koehlers, and the Jenkinses for their departure. Hannah recorded in her second biography of Rees that they were all called to the American consulate and given enough in gold for their transportation home. It is not clear whether these funds were borrowed, transmitted from the Church via the government, or part of a general distribution from the American government to citizens in a potential war zone. Regardless, there was not enough money to bring all of the five Americans back to the United States. Five years later, Hannah wrote to U. W. Greene, then in Independence, recalling a

36History of the RLDS Church, 6:547.
38Henry Morgenthau, telegram to American Consulate, October 28, 1914, RG 59, Department of State Decimal File 1910-19, 367.116/427, Box 4545, National Archives Annex, College Station, Maryland.
wrenching scene. The Koehlers were planning to return to the United States about November 19, 1914, and Greene had offered to let the Jenkinses accompany them:

This has been the greatest trial of my life and when I think of the day you came to me and said, “Sister Jenkins, it is up to you. I know you have the right to go, but if you go, I must stay until spring.” I considered for a moment and said, Bro. Greene, if you stay you will be here alone, but if we stay we will be husband and wife together. “Oh, if I only knew what was coming, if I only thought that I would be the one to be left here alone, it would be very hard for me to say “Yes, we’ll stay” when we were all ready packed to start for home in company with Bro. and Sr. Koehler.39

Hannah’s generous decision meant a long period of distress, as distance and other pressing concerns stranded the Jenkinses far from home and seemingly far from the attention of Church officials. Postal service between Palestine and Missouri was not possible during 1915, 1916, and 1917. Some letters were exchanged in 1918 as the war drew to a close. The Community of Christ Library-Archives includes about twenty letters exchanged among Hannah Jenkins, U. W. Greene, E. L. Kelley, and the Koehlers. Most of them were answered, as shown by retained copies in the Presiding Bishopric files and Greene’s personal papers.

Assuming that Rees and Hannah would soon be following them, Greene took Solomon Njeim and his daughter Olinda to the American consulate and arranged with the consul, Otis A. Glazebrook, to look out for the Mission House while authorizing the Njeim family as resident caretakers. Hannah recorded that they were not informed of this action until Greene wrote them from Jaffa before sailing, telling them to leave as soon as possible and to let his instructions be carried out. The letter has not survived, but she added: “In the conference of 1915, my husband was assigned to the Pittsburgh (Pa. USA) district. We got ready for the journey, packed away all the Church belongings, put things in order as best we could and waited for the arrival of the funds for our homeward journey. Not until December [1915] did the money reach us at which time my husband was convalescing from a severe attack of typhoid fever, and consequently, was unable to

travel.” She concluded, “Hence we continued to labor to the best of our ability under adverse conditions.”

**LIFE IN JERUSALEM DURING WORLD WAR I**

During World War I, life for the expatriate Saints became a hand-to-mouth existence. The Jenkinses were in desperate financial straits. In addition to Rees’s bout with typhoid, Hannah also nursed the widowed Mary Ann Brown, who lived in the Mission House with them, and cared for the Njeims and their boarders. Hannah managed the house, cleaned the guests’ rooms, supervised the cooking, and taught English.

Solomon Njeim concluded that his appointment was operational immediately, not after the Jenkinses’ departure. Open hostilities flared. “Our lives were constantly threatened,” wrote Hannah, “and many a sleepless night did we pass there on account of these false brethren.” Painstakingly she detailed the accusations and conflicts with the Njeims. 

Hannah thought that Solomon and Aziz Njeim wanted to divert the rental income for their own use. She also accused Aziz of complaining to the Turkish police in July 1916 that Jenkins was an English spy, not an American, and that he was dabbling in politics. (Welsh-born, he was a naturalized American.)

This misleading charge is consistent with a report filed with the Division of Near Eastern Affairs, Department of State on December 28, 1918, at the war’s end. The author of the report (identified by initials A.K.S.) was apparently an embassy staff member in Constantinople. He wrote: “In conclusion may I venture a general suggestion? Notwithstanding the sweet expressions which Turkish officials have now and then proffered to some American ministers or educators in Turkey, they have always held them in suspicion and looked upon

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them as British spies."  

Another reference to the reported charge against the Njeims is in a letter from Joseph Stephan printed in the Saints’ Herald, April 2, 1924. Obviously a friend of the Jenkinses, Stephan wrote:

During World War I, I visited Elder Jenkins frequently in spite of the unbearable stress of those bad days; maltreatments of the cruel and atrocious Turks, and vain troubles given to him by some of his false brethren. He was patient, never murmured, but trusted his God with an unwavering faith. On one occasion, when certain natives who brought groundless imputations against him persecuted him, he treated them manfully, showing to them the spirit of his Master, who prayed for his enemies while he was on the cross.

The last time I met Elder Jenkins was a short while prior to his deportation by the Turks from Jerusalem to Damascus, where he slept in the Lord. I found him undisturbed and enjoying a peace which nobody but a true Christian can enjoy.

In November 1917, the Turkish police arrested Rees, handcuffed him, and put him in the sariyah (jail) where he slept for six nights upon cold stones. With other British and Americans, he was removed by open lorry to Damascus, Syria, on December 1, 1917. Hannah never saw him again. During six months of illegal detention, he suffered from loneliness, illness, and lack of care and adequate food. Rev. Archibald Forder, a prominent missionary for the Boston-based Christian Missionary Alliance, had been taken prisoner in Jerusalem in 1914, served a prison sentence for a letter containing disparaging remarks about Turkey that was intercepted, and was then under house arrest. Forder rescued Jenkins from prison, gave him a room in his own quarters, shared his food, and nursed him during his illnesses.

In May 1918, Rees fell ill with typhus and was moved by the Turks to a hospital two miles out of the city. He died there during the night on May 9, 1918. His body was sent off with others to be buried. The next day Forder found Rees’s body thrown into a mass grave with other corpses and left to decompose. With a group of helpers, Forder

42 A.K.S., “Report,” Department of State, Division of Near Eastern Affairs, RG 59, State Department Decimal File 362.116/690, Box 4545, National Archives Annex, College Park, Maryland.

43 Joseph Stephan, Letter to Elbert A. Smith, Saints’ Herald, April 24, 1924, 320.
recovered the body, had a coffin made, and buried Jenkins’s remains in the Protestant cemetery in Damascus.\textsuperscript{44}

Meanwhile, Church funds had reached Hannah on April 10, 1918, by the Syrian-Palestine Relief Committee in Cairo, Egypt. On May 5, she wrote Frederick M. Smith: “Please accept thanks, it being the first money received since December, 1915. . . . At times I feel the burden very heavy, as I am quite alone and have had very poor health all winter. I am somewhat better now. I ask the prayers of the Saints in our behalf.” She explained, “I am glad to inform you that on Friday I received word from my husband through the Spanish Consulate. He is in Damascus, is well, and lives with a Christian gentleman [Forder], formerly of Jerusalem, and they are very kind to him.”\textsuperscript{45} Naturally, she was hoping to be reunited with him soon.

However, the news was delayed in reaching President Smith, who requested information about Rees Jenkins from the U.S. State Department on July 15, 1918. He mentioned that the receipt for the $700 transmitted through the relief fund in Cairo was dated March 28, 1918. He added: “Previously to your efforts to get money to Mrs. Jenkins through the Spanish Embassy, we had made several attempts through various channels. The Standard Oil Company among others. We are glad some has finally reached her. You will also note that she has received word from Mr. Jenkins from Damascus. This information may simplify your efforts to ascertain his status with the Turkish Army.”\textsuperscript{46}

Adolphus H. D. Edwards, Hannah’s brother in Martins Ferry, Ohio, seems to have been the first person to be officially notified of Rees’s death via a State Department telegram on July 16, 1918.\textsuperscript{47} Frederick M. Smith received separate notification by telegram on Au


\textsuperscript{45}Hannah Jenkins, Jerusalem, Letter to Frederick M. Smith, Independence, May 5, 1918, \textit{Zion’s Ensign} 65 (July 25, 1918): 777.

\textsuperscript{46}Frederick M. Smith, Independence, Mo., Letter to Breckenridge Long, Department of State, Washington, D.C., July 15, 1918, RG Department of State Decimal File, 1910–29, 367.116/426, Box 4544, National Archives Annex, College Park, Maryland.

\textsuperscript{47}Frank L. Polk, Acting Secretary of State (Signed by William Philips), Telegram to A.H.D. Edwards, Martins Ferry, Ohio, July 16, 1918, Department of State, RG 59, Decimal File 1910–29, 367.116/653a, Box
It was not until August 4, 1918, that the Military Governor of Jerusalem informed Hannah that her husband had died in Damascus almost three months earlier. She wrote, “Words are inadequate to describe my feelings at this time, as I had hoped and prayed that the Lord would safely deliver him and that he would return home as did many of the others of the ones that were deported with him, but alas! It proved to be that I was left alone and I felt to exclaim as did our blessed Master, My God, why hast thou forsaken me, but it was not so, for verily in this hour of extremity, He, through the sweet and gentle influence of His Spirit, truly comforted me.”

**Life in Jerusalem under British Occupation**

In December 1917, the British Army took possession of Jerusalem, and aid became immediately available from the American Red Cross. Hannah and Mary Ann Brown received money and two cans of milk each week from the Joint Distribution Committee of American Funds for Jewish War Sufferers in Damascus. As Hannah’s health deteriorated, the American consul moved Sister Brown into a hospital where she died on June 21, 1918. Her husband had apparently died several years earlier.

Fearing for her safety, Hannah arranged to sublet part of the house to the American Friends Mission of Ramallah. The Mission House was next door to the former Sister Charlotta’s School where the American Friends Mission planned to open an English high school in the fall of 1918. Hannah reserved three rooms for her own use and assigned the other rooms for students, evicting the Njeim family.
Representatives of the British Army in charge of the city accused the Njeims of selling liquor illegally to British soldiers and entertaining them in the Mission House. The rental arrangements were complicated since Mary Jane Floyd technically owned the house. Bishop Benjamin W. McGuire (who, unbeknownst to Hannah Jenkins, had replaced Bishop Kelley in 1916) arranged for the American consulate to authorize the Spanish consul, then representing the American consulate, to sign the lease. The consul forwarded this lease to Greene on August 21, 1918. On the same day, Kelsey wrote directly to Greene, saying he had rented the house for ten months. Hannah retained three rooms for her own use. Kelsey was to pay her seven Egyptian pounds ($35) a month and the American Friends Mission responsible for repairs. Kelsey commented that it was difficult to get Solomon Njeim out. “He thinks he owns the place. The family has questionable reputation and has given Mrs. Jenkins no end of trouble. The day before September when they move, they are to receive 10 [pounds] 1 [shilling] and 5 [pence] more from the rental money if you decide. Mrs. Jenkins pays [£] 6 and I pay [£] 4 of the [£] 10.”

Writing U. W. Greene the next day, August 22, 1918, Hannah listed the funds received from Kelley or Greene during the previous three years: September 1915, $100; December 1915, $315; and April 10, 1918, $700. She also presented her rationale for renting the mission house: “I have been in serious difficulty, chiefly on account of the cruel conduct of Solomon [Njeim] and family and under the present pressing conditions, after having been applied to [by the American Friends Society] several times I thought it not only advisable, but safer to accede to the request and let the house to them.”

In October 1918, Hannah received a letter of sympathy from U. W. Greene acknowledging Rees’s death. It was her first communication from Greene in two years. He wrote: “If you leave Jerusalem under present conditions, leave the property in care of the Consul with sister Olinda [Njeim] as caretaker, as agreed on while I was there. Please see that they either have employment or leave with them a sufficient sum of money until we can reach them with funds from this

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52 Hannah Jenkins, Jerusalem, Letter to U. W. Greene, Jonesport, Maine, August 22, 1918, P30/f104.
country.” Obviously, he was unaware of the difficulties with the Njeim family.

On October 24, 1918, Bishop McGuire sent an authoritative letter to Jerusalem’s military governor in the British Expeditionary Force for Jerusalem, with a copy to the Spanish consul in Jerusalem. The salient points were:

- Solomon Njeim could continue to occupy his previous rooms.
- Hannah Jenkins must leave.
- Floyd House would be in the American consul’s care. If Hannah left before American representatives were back in the country, Njeim was to become its caretaker.

Perhaps most pointedly, “Mrs. Jenkins has no right or authority to make such a rental agreement or to lease the property in any manner whatsoever. Property is leased from the owner who is now and has been a resident of the U.S. for nearly five years to the Presiding Bishop of the Church which I represent.”

On October 25, 1918, U. W. Greene wrote to Kelsey of the American Friends Mission that the lease was not approved, although he verified that the Church would rent the property to them from September 1, 1918, to July 1, 1919. The Njeim family and Mrs. Jenkins were to be “reinstated” (Hannah had never been displaced) in their rooms and could use recovered water for domestic and sanitary purposes. He sent Hannah a letter to the same effect the same day, instructing her to leave immediately:

You will have little difficulty in getting into Egypt and securing passage from there to your home. The German U boats are no longer attacking merchant passenger vessels so you can travel as safely now as before the war, unless it be a government vessel which we advise you to avoid. When you reach Alexandria go at once to the Consul General and follow his advice as to roads over which to travel. It is just

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53 U. W. Greene, Letter to Hannah S. Jenkins, September 16, 1918, Presiding Bishopric Files, P30/f104.
54 Benjamin R. McGuire, Letter to Military Governor, Jerusalem, Palestine, October 24, 1918, Presiding Bishopric Files, P30/f104.
possible that the Consul in Jerusalem can arrange this for you. We expect by another summer to send missionaries into Jerusalem and shall want the house for that purpose. Give Books of Mormon and tracts to Solomon Njeim.\textsuperscript{56}

In her husband’s “Biography,” the beleaguered Hannah described her reaction to these instructions: “When I got word from the officials of the Church, it was, of course, ‘Get ready to leave for your home.’ No one knew what get ready to leave for your home meant then. Day after day I walked to Government House, and from there to one consulate after another to get permission to leave Palestine, get a new passport and so forth.”\textsuperscript{57}

Hannah was not able to leave Jerusalem immediately for a variety of reasons. Little transportation was available for civilians. Exit permits had to be authorized by the military governor of the British Expeditionary Force in Jerusalem. She required a new passport, and she felt obligated to repay the American consulate for its loans to Rees. Her last task was to prepare the Mission House for the next missionaries. These arrangements dragged on through the winter of 1918–19.

On March 12, 1919, Greene wrote that he was working on passports to go to the United States, but that travel was dangerous. He explained, “We have done all we can to arrange for transportation and to reach you with funds for your necessities. You can not understand the difficulties that have hedged the way.”\textsuperscript{58} This letter had not reached Hannah when she wrote on March 18 that she was expecting the Koehlers to return and that Mr. Kelsey would leave the property in June. ‘I am willing,” she stated, “to remain until their [the Koehlers’] return if you desire.”\textsuperscript{59} She had properly stored and protected the furniture and belongings that Mary Floyd had left in the house in 1912, explaining that Mary wanted to lease the house to American Red Cross for two years.

U. W. Greene reported to the Presiding Bishop on April 25, 1919...
1919, that he had instructed Sarah Moose Jacob, apparently a tenant at Flood House, that she and Hannah “should have the best rooms and every comfort accorded to them. We have tried in every way to keep Sister Jenkins supplied with funds. I trust she has sufficient for every need.”

The complicated and frustrating preparations for leaving Palestine had finally advanced far enough that, on May 30, 1919, she repaid the American consular services the $193.60 which Glazebrook, the American consul, had loaned Rees Jenkins in 1916. But in June, when the new passport finally arrived, she was ill with malaria. During her recuperation, she wrote to Glazebrook, the American consul, on July 21, 1919, expressing sorrow and anger at the injustices she and Rees had suffered. Describing the false accusations leading to Rees’s death, she asked Glazebrook to notify the American government of the incident. “I point out,” she wrote, “the injustice and cruelty to a man who has been entirely innocent of any crime or offence whatever, who by being removed from his home, caused much suffering, afterward death, thus bringing widowhood and life-long suffering to his wife.”

Glazebrook forwarded her letter to the Secretary of State and received a response dated September 8, 1919:

The Department of State is in receipt of your dispatch No. 334 of July 25, 1919, with which you enclosed a communication addressed to you by Mrs. Hannah S. Jenkins, regarding the death in Damascus of her husband, who, it appears, was deported from Jerusalem to Damascus in November 1917.

It is not clear from Mrs. Jenkins’ letter what action if any she desires the Department to take regarding the matter. If it is her desire to present a claim against the Turkish government and she considers that she has legal grounds for such a claim, by reason of acts of that Government or its agents, the claim should be prepared in accordance with application forms which will be sent to her upon request.

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60U. W. Greene, Letter to Sarah Moose Jacob, April 25, 1919, Presiding Bishopric Files, P30/f105.
61Hannah Jenkins, Letter to Dr. Otis A. Glazebrook, Jerusalem, July 7, 1919, Department of State Decimal File RG 59, 367.116/713, National Archives Annex, College Park, Maryland. Dr. Otis A. Glazebrook had returned to his post on February 26, 1919, at the request of General Sir Edmund Allenby, the British military governor of Palestine. Braby, Letters from Jerusalem, 1913–1914, 175.
These forms will contain full instructions in connection with the preparation of such claims against foreign government.

It should be stated, in this relation, however, that the Department cannot at this time undertake to advise Mrs. Jenkins as to the means that may be finally accepted with a view to the settlement of claims of this character, but the Department will give attention to such claims at the earliest moment possible, consistent with existing international relations.  

Hannah obviously wanted an advocate—possibly no more than someone who would agree that she had been dealt with wrongly, but there are no follow-up documents in the Department of State files to indicate further action.

Meanwhile, on August 18, 1919, she had recuperated enough to whitewash the living rooms, have the beds “made over,” and have things in order for the missionaries’ arrival.

HANNAH JENKINS LEAVES PALESTINE

In an ironic replay of her own arrival, Hannah Jenkins’s long-delayed departure from Palestine occurred before the next missionaries, Harry and Lill Passman, arrived. Passman, who was Jewish and spoke Yiddish, was a businessman from Chicago, who accepted a three-year appointment. In May 1920 she traveled by train to Cairo, Egypt, and perhaps sailed to France via Italy.

At Le Havre, she embarked on the S.S. Rochambeau on July 3, reaching Ellis Island in New York City on July 12, 1920. A day later, she was at Steubenville, Ohio, where she settled down with Janetta Edwards Matthews, a sister. Here she remained except for visits to other siblings in the United States, until her death at age eighty-five on May 11, 1954. She was buried in Steubenville’s Union Cemetery, and her obituary appeared in the Steubenville newspaper but not in the Saints’ Herald. Presiding Bishopric pension records are currently closed to researchers, and I have found no records of her participation in the Steubenville RLDS branch. A history of the Steubenville

62 Herbert C. Hengstler, signing for the Secretary of State, Washington, D.C., Letter to Dr. Otis A. Glazebrook, Jerusalem, September 8, 1919, Department of State, Decimal File RG 59, 367.116/713, National Archives Annex, College Park, Maryland.

63 Hannah S. Jenkins, Letter to U. W. Greene, August 18, 1919, Presiding Bishopric Files, P30/f105.
Congregation mentions only that Rees Jenkins, one of its founders, died as a missionary in Damascus.

President Frederick M. Smith visited Palestine, arriving February 25, 1921. While there he received a brief account by Reverend Archibald Forder about Rees Jenkins’s death, transmitted by Mrs. Mousa Jacobs, a friend of the Church. Because marauding Bedouins threatened his own travel to Damascus, Smith could not visit Jenkins’s grave but had Harry Passman erect a tombstone for Jenkins in the Protestant Cemetery when travel was safer.⁶⁴ Rees Jenkins’s obituary

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⁶⁴Frederick M. Smith, Jerusalem, Letter to Elbert A. Smith, March 18, 1921, and Archibald Forder, both in Saints’ Herald 68 (November 1918): 401–2.
was published in the *Saints Herald* on April 27, 1921. Smith and Apostle T. W. Williams, his traveling companion, surveyed the Palestine Mission with Harry Passman, bought land, and began erecting a large stone building to house apartments, a school for missionary work, and the Church headquarters. This building was completed in 1922–23 under Passman’s leadership.

Dan and Gladys Sorden succeeded Harry and Lill Passman in 1923, continued the school, and ministered to the members in Jerusalem until they were replaced in turn, by Harry A. Doty in 1928. With the advent of the Great Depression in 1929, financial conditions worsened steadily for the Church. Appointee ministers were released, and the work in Palestine, Scandinavia, and the British Mission was restricted. Doty leased the church building to an unidentified person before he left Palestine about 1930. It was sold in 1934 for $15,000.

**CONCLUSION**

It would be interesting to know how Hannah Jenkins received this news—whether she wondered if her sufferings and her husband’s death had been in vain, or whether her faith continued to sustain her. In retrospect, it seems clear that the hope and optimism that launched so ambitious an effort as establishing a Church presence in Palestine in the early 1900s outstripped realistic knowledge about culture and conditions in the Holy Land. Despite Gomer T. Griffiths’s well-reasoned and specific report at the 1911 General Conference, headquarters officials did not adequately consider the resources, time, and distances that must be accommodated. Not only the mission’s goals, but also the procedures to be followed by the missionaries were left undefined, and the financial basis for establishing a Palestinian Mission was unrealistic.

In 1918, Hannah’s fate was probably affected by the near-disastrous conflict between Presiding Bishop Benjamin McGuire, the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, and Church President Frederick M. Smith. President Smith was a man of vision with many plans for future of the church. He sought for “supreme directional control” of the Church, its objectives, program and finances. Some of his colleagues

strenuously resisted this leadership style, and McGuire eventually resigned in 1925. U. W. Greene’s apostolic ministry was redefined at about the same time, resulting in confusion about whether he continued to have direct responsibilities of his missionaries.

Hannah S. Jenkins, a widow with no priesthood authority, almost completely isolated from the Church headquarters and enmeshed in a struggle to survive, was the only semi-official Church representative during World War I in Jerusalem. Her circumstances seem to have been overlooked for the most part. However, Hannah’s love for her husband and her religious faith enabled her to confront the harsh reality of her life in Jerusalem.

Her achievement in maintaining a viable Church presence merited thanks, not official support for a family implicated in Rees’s arrest and the countermanding of her practical arrangements to rent the Floyd House to the Friends. Obviously, it was only because she remained at her post despite all obstacles until the Passmans arrived in 1920 that the RLDS Church had physical resources and continuity to help with the Mormon dream of helping the Jews return to Jerusalem.

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Ezra Taft Benson’s
1946 Mission to Europe

Gary James Bergera

It is difficult for those who did not see it to appreciate how terrible conditions were at the end of the war in much of Europe. . . . [T]he suffering, the pain, the sickness, the hunger, the hopelessness. —Ezra Taft Benson

I

Following the surrenders of Germany and Japan to Allied forces in May and September 1945, George Albert Smith, newly installed president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, moved quickly to address the needs of his Church’s suffering European members. Word of the privations, predicted to worsen with winter’s arrival, was heart-rending. “The economic situation is very acute,” wrote Josef Roubicek, acting president of the Church’s Czechoslovakian Mission. “[A] person cannot adequately live on the . . . rationed foodstuff.” “We will never know Germany again as we once knew it,” an LDS soldier added. “It is hard to conceive the change without seeing it. It is a land of utter ruin and desola-
It appalls one who has been here before.”

In all, some 62 million men, women, and children (2.5 percent of the world’s population) died during World War II. Among the hardest-hit European countries were Austria (110,000 dead), Czechoslovakia (365,000), Finland (79,000), Germany (7.5 million), the Netherlands (205,900), Poland (5.6 million), and Soviet Russia (23.2 million). At the war’s end, Germany was divided into zones each occupied by one of the four major Allies (United States, England, France, Russia). Berlin and, for a time, Vienna were similarly partitioned. German populations in Soviet states and territories were expelled. By mid-1945, some 10–40 million refugees were scattered across the Continent. Most “displaced persons” relocated to


TABLE 1

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<td>1,500*</td>
<td>1,348</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>1,731</td>
</tr>
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</table>

* Estimate.

Source: Gladys H. Noyce, “Church Membership, 1850–1946,” Vol. 1, Archives, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, hereafter LDS Church Archives; and Howard C. Nielson, Membership of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints by Areas (N.p., December 1971), Table V.
Germany. In Berlin alone, 17,500 refugees arrived daily during August 1945. Among LDS casualties in Germany, deaths reached 600 (5 percent of all German members), while 2,500 were missing and 80 percent (9,600) were homeless. (These figures are estimates only; many branches did not function, and numbers are unavailable for many areas.) See Table 1.

This essay chronicles the LDS Church’s response to such realities and especially the experiences of Ezra Taft Benson, who at age forty-six was assigned the seemingly impossible tasks of helping to feed the Church’s starving European members, reinvigorating the Church’s European missions and branches, and bringing new hope to people with virtually none left.

Compassionate and tender-hearted, seventy-five-year-old George Albert Smith feared greatly for the physical and spiritual welfare of his European Church members; and on October 18, 1945, ranking LDS General Authorities adopted an ambitious program—the first large-scale humanitarian outreach in Mormon history—to initiate overseas shipments of desperately needed food and clothing. They assigned Elders John A. Widtsoe, the Church’s only living Europe-born apostle, and Thomas E. McKay, former European Mission president, to “make contact with all European missions” and to find “ways and means to send food and clothing

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7 Gilbert W. Scharffs, Mormonism in Germany: A History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Germany between 1840 and 1970 (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1970), 116; and “Latter-day Saint Involvement in World War II (1939–1945),” http://webpub.byu.edu/rcf/WORLD_WAR_II.pdf (retrieved October 29, 2006). The first of these sources reports 12,000 German Saints surviving the war; the second “nearly” 15,000 (less likely).


9 Ibid., 321; and Alan K. Parrish, John A. Widtsoe: A Biography (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2003), 642. Initially LDS shipments were based on an estimate of how much food the Saints in each country would require until
to those [Saints] in need.”

Some Latter-day Saints had already begun shipping goods abroad, and Widtsoe and McKay were to help consolidate such localized efforts, while mobilizing the full resources of the Church’s own Welfare Program. Clothing and food drives spread throughout the Church’s wards, stakes, and missions; by December 1945, 11,000 quilts and blankets had been collected for distribution overseas.

LDS officials soon learned, however, that U.S. government reg-

the next harvest. L. Brent Goates, *Harold B. Lee: Prophet and Seer* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1985), 199. The LDS Church was not alone in rallying to Europe’s aid after the war. In 1945, twenty-two American organizations combined to form the Cooperative for American Remittances to Europe (later Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere, or CARE). On May 11, 1946, the first of 20,000 CARE food packages began arriving in France (www.care.org/about/history.asp; accessed September 30, 2006). Other relief organizations included the American Friends Service Committee; Catholic Relief Services; Lutheran World Federation; and the International Red Cross Committee, the League of Red Cross Societies, and the various national Red Cross societies. Moorehead, *Dunant’s Dream*, 505. Most dominant was the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration with a staff of 15,000 and 35,000 volunteers. Ibid., 510.

“Church Sends Aid to Europe,” *Church News*, October 20, 1945, 1, 5. See also “Mission Presidents Assigned to Three European Countries,” *Church News*, October 27, 1945; and “Ezra Taft Benson Called to European Mission,” *Improvement Era*, February 1946, 67.

See “Church Sends Aid to Europe,” 5. The LDS Welfare Plan was established during the early 1930s to coordinate Church resources to aid the Church’s neediest members. See Garth Mangum and Bruce Blumell, *The Mormons’ War on Poverty: A History of LDS Welfare, 1830–1990* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1993), 130–47.

ulations—intended to prevent looting and black-market profiteering—limited the amount of provisions that could be sent abroad: single packages of up to eleven pounds per person per week.13 (By April 1946, 15,045 such packages, containing used clothing and bedding valued at $80,000, had been shipped abroad by individual Saints at a cost of $23,000.)14 Hoping to secure an exemption, President Smith, Elders Widtsoe and McKay, and First Presidency’s secretary Joseph Anderson left Utah on October 30 for Washington, D.C. They met with several high-ranking federal officials, including President Harry S. Truman, as well as the embassies of several European countries.15 After voicing some surprise, Truman vowed: “We will help you all we can.”16 By the time Smith left for New York on November 8, the War Relief board had agreed to classify the Church as an official “relief agency.”17"}

Publicly, Widtsoe was optimistic; privately, he worried about McKay’s health and his own.18 McKay, at seventy, suffered from heart problems; Widtsoe, approaching seventy-four, battled high blood pressure. A month after returning from Washington, D.C., Widtsoe

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13“Clothing Sent to European Saints,” Church News, October 27, 1945, 1, 4. “You couldn’t even store in Germany with safety, there was so much pilfering and stealing,” Ezra Taft Benson recalled. “People were starving to death, and you could hardly blame a man for stealing to save his family.” Ezra Taft Benson, Oral History, Interviewed by Raymond Henle, November 15, 1967, 14; photocopy, LDS Church Archives.


16George Albert Smith, Sermon, October 3, 1947, in Conference Report of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, October 1947), 6 (hereafter cited as Conference Report by date); and Pusey, Builders of the Kingdom, 321.


18Parrish, John A. Widtsoe, 645–46.
told Smith that he felt “too shaky to go.” Immediately, Smith convened a meeting of the First Presidency and Twelve, released Widtsoe and McKay, and, much to the brethren’s surprise, instead called Elder Ezra Taft Benson. “While I feel just as peppy as ever,” Widtsoe confided afterwards, “… I realize that the years do take their toll, and that there is no use defying nature.”

II

For Benson, and others, the new assignment was a shock. He was not only one of the most junior members of the Twelve, but the father of a growing family. (He and his wife, Flora Amussen Benson, were the parents of six children, ages one to seventeen.) “I began quickly to look around the table,” Elder Harold B. Lee remembered, “speculating as to who would be called. One of the first men I eliminated was Elder Benson, who had the largest family as well as the youngest.” Benson was not informed how long he would be gone—though he suspected it would be for at least a year—and was told to be ready to depart “very, very soon.” That evening, fighting back tears, Flora “expressed loving gratitude and assured me of her wholehearted support.”

The decision to send Benson reflected an appreciation of the challenges facing the Church’s representative in post-war Europe. Benson’s relative youth was a decided advantage. Also valuable was his background in agriculture and navigating commercial and governmental bureaucracies. Prior to his calling as apostle in 1943, he had spent four years in Washington, D.C., as executive secretary of the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives, and was perhaps “in the best position of any of the Brethren to expedite the issuance of the documents necessary to clear his travel to Europe. And he knew the key executives in the Department of Agriculture whose coopera-

19Quoted in Gibbons, George Albert Smith, 302.
20Parrish, John A. Widtsoe, 647.
21Mark E. Petersen, forty-five, was the youngest member of the Twelve; Matthew Cowley, ordained October 11, 1945, was its most junior.
tion would facilitate the smooth flow of commodities.”24 In addition to supervising the distribution of Church aid, he was also to attend to the spiritual needs of Europe’s Saints.25 The eyewitness experience of human suffering would leave him a changed man forever after.

Benson was fiercely loyal to the LDS Church, a zealous advocate of hard work, intensely committed and self-confident, and a strong believer in personal prayer. “Throughout my life,” he would tell Europe’s Mormons, “I have received through prayer an answer to many perplexing problems. I have made it a practice never to attend an important meeting or to approach difficult problems and situations without kneeling in prayer.”26 Obedience and prayer, coupled with physical labor, were, for Benson, both a major key to happiness and a personal creed. With God’s help, and his own hard work, he believed he could not fail.

Benson quickly determined that he needed an assistant and translator. After the first handful of candidates—including some former European mission presidents—declined, he contacted thirty-year-old Frederick W. Babbel. (The two had met once briefly before; Benson had to be reminded of the encounter.) Born in Salt Lake City to German-born LDS immigrants, Babbel had served a mission to Germany from 1936 to 1939, then worked to support a brother on a mission and another in college, after which he enlisted in the U.S. Army. At the time of his calling in late December 1945, Babbel was stationed in San Francisco, where he had charge of a 400-man ROTC unit. Though his German was “limited,” Babbel told Benson, “I would be glad to go with you anywhere.” Immediately he applied for, and received, a three-months’ early release. (His wife and new baby daughter relocated to Nampa, Idaho.)27

“We did not engage in a lot of conversation,” Babbel recalled.

24 Gibbons, George Albert Smith, 302.
27 A Labor of Love, 9; and Frederick W. Babbel, Oral History, interviewed by Maclyn P. Burg, November 12, 1974, and February 5, 1975, 3, 8, 12, 18, 23; photocopy courtesy of David F. Babbel. After this mission with Benson, Babbel served as a secretary to various LDS priesthood committees and wrote for the Church News and Improvement Era. With his family, he relocated in 1953 to Washington, D.C., subsequently helped to found
I could tell that he had many thoughts on his mind. He was concerned about many things. I never interrupted him at all. I was told before I left that I should never counsel him in any way unless he asked for it. Later on I found out why, because he would consider every matter very seriously. He is an extremely intense individual. I found him to have such a dynamic faith that if a difficult situation arose he believed not in leaving it in the hands of the Lord but in doing everything within his power to help bring it about and then trust that whatever his deficiencies were they would be made up.28

Benson spent the first half of January 1946 in Washington, D.C., securing visas and meeting other travel requirements. Told the process could take weeks, he was pleased to report that “within twenty-four hours [after arriving] . . . he had received visas for eight countries including permission to enter occupied Germany.”29 He also obtained permission to begin sending train carloads of relief supplies to all countries except Germany. Representatives from Holland and Norway said they would pay the shipping costs from New York City to ports in their home countries, then deliver the goods directly to the Church’s agents.30 By mid-February 1946, four forty-ton carloads of supplies—two to Norway, two to Holland—each containing approximately 150 large wooden crates of canned fruits, vegetables, cracked wheat, milk, and clothing were in transit. The supplies, mostly undamaged, reached Norway on April 5. Additional carloads followed.31 (Distribution in Holland would prove to be more challenging.)

Evelyn Wood Reading Dynamics, and was a management consultant. He died in 2001 in Utah at age eighty-five.

30“Church Soon to Send Carloads of Food, Clothing to Europe.”
31“Carloads of Food, Clothing Shipped to European Saints,” Church News, February 16, 1946, 5; and “Two Carloads of Welfare Supplies Reach Norwegians,” Church News, May 25, 1946, 1, 5. The crates had previously stored ammunition and, once emptied, could be burned as fuel. By the end of March 1946, the Church had shipped sixteen carloads of clothing and
On January 14, 1946, Benson’s mission was announced publicly.\textsuperscript{32} The next week, he attended a farewell party where he joined Elders Mark E. Petersen, Matthew Cowley, and Spencer W. Kimball as a singing quartet.\textsuperscript{33} Toward the end of the month, he met one last time with his family and blessed each from youngest to oldest.\textsuperscript{34} The next day, he was formally set apart as president of the Church’s European Mission.\textsuperscript{35} His hands resting on Benson’s head, flanked by Counselors J. Reuben Clark and David O. McKay, George Albert Smith pronounced, in part: “Do not expose yourself unnecessarily to the assaults of the adversary, because he will be anxious to prevent you from doing the work that you are going to do. But remember that if it is necessary to appeal to the Lord and the circumstances justify, you can go to him with full confidence because you will be acting under his direction and under the inspiration of his Spirit and will be given strength to accomplish everything that is necessary to be done.”\textsuperscript{36}

The next evening, January 29, after a day at work, Benson said his final good-byes to family members. “When our daddy kissed . . . five of his children,” wife Flora recorded, “they all cried and clung to him because of

\begin{itemize}


\item See \textit{A Labor of Love}, 10; and “Apostles Form Quartette,” \textit{Church News}, January 26, 1946, 1.

\item \textit{A Labor of Love}, 10. Benson was especially close to his oldest son, Reed. After the family meeting, Benson and Flora drove Reed back to Provo, Utah, where he was a freshman at Brigham Young University. “My eyes were filled with tears,” Benson recorded, “as were his, and we embraced each other in fond farewell. He is all I could ask for in a son. God bless him forever.” Ezra Taft Benson, Diary, January 27, 1946; photocopy of original courtesy of the Smith-Pettit Foundation.

\item David O. McKay, Diary, January 28, 1946, photocopy of original, Special Collections, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City.

\item \textit{A Labor of Love}, 237–39.
\end{itemize}
**Table 2**

**PRINCIPAL EUROPEAN CITIES EZRA TAFT BENSON VISITED, 1946**

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<th>Date</th>
<th>City, Country</th>
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<td>May 14</td>
<td>Malmo, Sweden</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Copenhagen, Denmark</td>
<td>May 15</td>
<td>Copenhagen, Denmark</td>
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## Table 2

**Principal European Cities Ezra Taft Benson Visited, 1946**

(cont.)

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Ezra Taft Benson’s Europe, 1946
the great love they have for him.” At close to 10:00 P.M., Benson and Flora were chauffeured to the Salt Lake City airport. Snow fell as Babbel and Benson crossed the tarmac, climbed the airplane stairs, waved farewell, and entered. “It was a peaceful feeling which came over me when I fondly kissed and said good-bye to my devoted and loving husband,” Flora wrote. “I don’t know of a man that lives closer to the Lord.”

Benson and Babbel landed in Nebraska, where snow grounded their plane. Instead of waiting for the weather to clear, they caught a train to Chicago, then a plane to New York City, where they learned that their flight to London was delayed two days. They spent Friday meeting with foreign consuls, finalizing visas and relief shipments. On Sunday morning, February 3, they boarded a four-propeller clipper, skirted north to Newfoundland, continued across the Atlantic to Ireland, and finally landed outside Christchurch, England, on the 4th. They traveled through several bombed-out neighborhoods before reaching the Church’s British Mission headquarters in London, where they were greeted by Mission President Hugh B. Brown and wife, Zina. “People generally are quite downcast and apprehensive of the future,” Benson later wrote. “. . . Many people have become quite discouraged. Helpless indifference has replaced the usually cheerful disposition of some. . . . England has truly felt the effects of this terrible war.”

Over the next two to three days, Benson and Babbel looked for an apartment, eventually settling on 6, Horse Shoe Yard, Brook Street, a block away from the American embassy. “Our flat consists of two bedrooms, a bath, and a sitting room,” Benson wrote. “Prices are exorbitant. To the average Britisher the word American is synonymous with wealth. We are, however, learning a few safeguards and ways to economize.” They also visited representatives of the international Boy Scout Association (with which the Church had already enjoyed a

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37 Ibid., 13.
38 Ibid., 13, 14.
39 Ibid., 17, 18. See also “Report on the European Mission #1,” January 26, 1946–February 11, 1946, typed copy in J. Reuben Clark Papers, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. Copies of these numbered reports (others cited below) are in Clark’s papers; most were published in the *Church News*.
40 *A Labor of Love*, 20. The new headquarters was part of the former residence of noted composer George Frederic Handel.
long relationship), and worked to secure reliable distribution of the Church’s welfare shipments. The challenge was not shipping from the States, but transportation within Europe, especially those areas under military control. “I sincerely hope,” he wrote, “that we will be able to bend every effort to bring material relief and spiritual strength to the loyal members of the Church in the various missions.”

III

Early on the morning of February 11, Benson left London for France, setting a hectic pace that he would maintain with only minimal respite for the next ten months. Babbel stayed behind to book passage to Scandinavia, rejoining Benson in Holland. In Paris, Benson learned that French authorities were charging small duties on goods received from America. He hoped to get an exemption. He also inspected several military surplus half-ton trucks for the Church’s purchase but delayed finalizing payment when only one was as described. He met with embassy officials to discuss visas and the resumption of missionary work; consulted with members and American service personnel; and toured sites for a new French Mission home. LDS Chaplain Howard C. Badger, en route to London, was allowed to accompany Benson for the next two and a half months. Benson believed Badger, a veteran of the Battle of Bulge, could facilitate contact with both LDS servicemen’s units and U.S. military officials. (Badger, thirty-one, had previously filled an LDS mission to South Africa.)

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41See, for example, “75 Years of Scouting,” *Church News*, February 3, 1985, 8.
44For LDS servicemen’s units, see “Servicemen’s Groups Help Combat Loneliness of War,” *Church News*, August 19, 1995, 8–9, 10.
45Richard Maher, ed., *For God and Country: Memorable Stories from the Lives of Mormon Chaplains* (Bountiful, Utah: Horizon Publishers, 1976), 152–56. Badger viewed his time with Benson as “the highlight of my chaplaincy” (152). He later became a prominent Salt Lake City real estate broker and developer, a member of Utah’s House of Representatives, a member of the Young Men’s Mutual Improvement Association General Board, and
From Paris, Benson and Badger took a train to Antwerp. ⁴⁶ They had wanted to commandeer the Church’s new truck but found it “unfit.” The next day, after collecting Babbel, they learned that several local LDS buildings had been destroyed or severely damaged. Shortly before nightfall, they left by plane for Denmark, a flight of nearly three hours. In Copenhagen, Benson was pleased to find that food was “more plentiful now than probably [in] any other country in Europe . . . [and] the Saints are in excellent physical and spiritual health.” “The general condition of the Saints is good,” he informed the First Presidency. “. . . There are a few German refugee Saints still in Denmark. They are given sufficient freedom to permit them to attend our services regularly.”⁴⁷

Benson held two well-attended meetings with local members, was interviewed live on radio, and briefly toured the birthplace (Koge) of Flora’s father en route to Oslo. “The people of Norway,” he reported, “are quite run down physically because of the rigors of long enemy occupation of their land. Much of the need has been relieved through the assistance received from the Saints in the Danish and Swedish missions.”⁴⁸ With the arrival of foodstuffs from America, he continued, “some of the [Norwegian] Saints commented on


⁴⁶Frederick W. Babbel, On Wings of Faith (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1972), 7–8.

⁴⁷The challenges some European Saints faced during the war were particularly vexing. One member discovered that “some of the presiding brethren in the Western German mission . . . tried to preach national Socialism instead of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. . . . The Saints were asked to pray for the ‘Fuehrer’ in their meetings and in their homes and regard him as a divinely called man.” “Reports Tell of Saints in Europe,” 5. For a sympathetic view of National Socialism, see “Mormonism in the New Germany,” Church News, December 9, 1933, 3, 7. Perhaps the best-known pro-Nazi expression exhibited by some German Saints was the posthumous excommunication of seventeen-year-old anti-Nazi agitator Helmuth Hubener, who was beheaded for treason. After the war, just before Benson returned home, Hubener’s excommunication was rescinded as a “mistake.” Alan F. Keele and Douglas F. Tobler, “The Fuhrer’s New Clothes: Helmuth Hubener and the Mormons in the Third Reich,” Sunstone, November–December 1980, 20–29.

⁴⁸During the war, Sweden’s Saints provided some assistance to Nor-
seeing the dried corn, that the General Authorities were most thoughtful in sending grain for the birds! They have, however, learned how to use corn in the diet.” The three men left for London on February 22. “Our ride was the coldest I ever expect to make,” Benson wrote. “There was no heat in the plane, and at 6,000 feet with ice, snow, and water below, it was a cold ride.” “Each foot felt like a large block of ice,” Babbel remembered, “and there was virtually no feeling in our legs.”

As winter storms raged, Benson, Babbel, and Badger returned to France on March 3. “Our first class sleeping accommodations consisted of double-deck bunks placed end to end in groups of forty in what used to be lounging rooms,” Benson wrote. “. . . After all passengers were placed we were able to secure very meager accommodations in a makeshift stateroom and crossed the [English] Channel in comparative comfort.” Reaching Dieppe, they boarded a train for Paris, where fourteen-inch snowfalls had broken eighty-year-old records. The next day, they looked for more dependable cars and trucks, finally received permission to enter Germany and Czechoslovakia, and revisited sites for a French Mission home. Despite the seeming cooperation, Benson noted that “we had to content ourselves with the fact that on every hand were conditions that made progress painfully slow.”

The next morning, Babbel and Badger left for Belgium. Reaching Antwerp a day later, they delivered the serviceable truck to Cornelius Zappey, president of the Church’s Netherlands Mission, and explored storage warehouses before returning to Paris. During their absence, Benson had settled on a new French Mission home for a monthly rent of $100. He also investigated two new Citroen sedans, one of which he appropriated for the remainder of his tour. He also decided not to buy any additional trucks, “at least not from the Western Base at Paris.” “After three long days in dealing with French gov-
ernmental officials and business representatives,” he told the First Presidency, “we finally concluded that the American Army knows very little about red-tape.”

Benson, Babbel, and Badger departed for Switzerland on March 9, venturing briefly into Germany. Benson and Babbel reportedly were among the first American civilians allowed into Germany after the war. “Along the way were scenes of horrible destruction,” Benson wrote. “... Many of the children fled in terror at the approach of a car or at the sound of the horn.” Some 260 German Saints and others had gathered in Karlsruhe in a bombed-out assembly hall for a district-wide meeting. “We wondered just how they would receive us,” Benson recalled. “Would their hearts be filled with bitterness? Would there be hatred there?” Walking to the podium, he “saw almost the entire audience in tears... I could see the light of faith in their eyes as they bore testimony to the divinity of this great latter-day work.”

The experience was shattering; and during meetings in Bern with international relief agencies, Benson pushed hard for increased cooperation. The Red Cross agreed to supervise the transportation of some of the Church’s supplies (for a fee of 1.5 percent of the value of the items) and to spend 10,000 Swiss francs (about $2,330)—which the Church would repay—to purchase food, clothing, and bedding for immediate delivery to Berlin.

At the end of nearly a week in Switzerland, the three men re-


53 “Elder Benson... has been going like a man who didn’t know what it was to rest after a day’s work,” Badger wrote. Quoted in Howard C. Badger, European Experiences with a Latter-day Saint Prophet (Privately circulated, n.d.), 16.

54 Scharffs, Mormonism in Germany, 125.


56 “Report of the European Mission #4,” March 13, 1946; Benson, Letter to the First Presidency, March 13, 1946; Scharffs, Mormonism in Germany, 136; Benson, “Special Mission to Europe,” Improvement Era, May 1947, 293; and A Labor of Love, 46. The supplies reached Berlin three months later. Don C. Corbett, an LDS serviceman, remembered that he and the East German Mission president “saw them after their arrival... As we
turned to Germany. Nearing Heidelberg, they saw “men, women and children at the city dump grounds frantically searching through refuse and garbage being unloaded from army trucks. . . . [T]his scavenger process is being repeated in all parts of the country due to the destitute condition of so many of the people.” In Frankfurt on March 15, Benson met with LDS service personnel, then conferred with the commanding general of U.S. forces in Europe, Joseph T. McNarney. At first, Benson was told that McNarney was too busy to meet. But after a brief prayer, Benson returned to find he could have fifteen minutes with the general. “Under no conditions can you have permission to distribute your own supplies to your own people,” McNarney announced. “They must come through the military.” Gradually, however, as Benson countered, McNarney mellowed: “Mr. Benson, there’s something about you that I like,” he said. “I want to help you in every way that I can!” “And before we left him,” Benson recalled, “we had written authorization to make our own distribution to our own people through our own channels, and from that moment on we had wonderful cooperation.”

When Benson learned that 100 pounds of potato peelings sold for $25 or a package of American cigarettes, he mandated immediate financial assistance and organized local LDS welfare committees to coordinate future activities.

On March 19, Benson and party reached Hannover, he recorded, of the “worst [destruction] we have seen. . . . My heart grows heavy and my eyes fill with tears as I picture in my mind’s eyes these scenes of horror and destruction. . . . Truly war is hell in all its

stood looking at the treasures, we wept. We knew the meaning of this precious food and how it would lift the hearts of the Saints.” Corbett, “Disaster Relief in Germany,” 1966, 23–24, LDS Church Archives.

They were accompanied by Max Zimmer, acting president of the Swiss-Austria Mission. For Zimmer’s biography, see “‘Salt of the Earth . . . ,’” Church News, November 15, 1947, 5.

As Benson recalled in his God, Family, Country: Our Three Great Loyalties (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1974), 74.

Ibid.

Babbel, On Wings of Faith, 67–68, reports that they occasionally used cigarettes as a medium of exchange.

fury.” The next morning they entered Berlin—scene of yet more “shocking desolation.” During the week, Benson talked with the U.S. Deputy Governor of Germany. Repeatedly, he was told to be patient as the various foreign governments tried to resolve jurisdictional conflicts. On the 23rd and 24th, Benson met again with members. The tragedy seemed unrelenting, “The worst destruction I have witnessed was seen today,” he wrote. “. . . I smelled the odor of decaying human bodies, saw half-starved women paying exorbitant prices anxiously for potato peelings.” “The sisters have been ravished . . .,” he continued. “Some have been beaten and flogged to insensibility, others murdered and still others deported . . .” “Words cannot begin to describe the ruin that has been heaped upon this once proud city,” he told the First Presidency. “Traveling amid such surroundings leaves one with a feeling so appalling that it must be experienced to be understood.” “The job of taking care of our Saints . . . is overwhelming,” he admitted, “and as we contemplate their rehabilitation, it becomes staggering.”

Early on March 25, Benson’s party left for Nuremberg. Well after dark, they reached an old schoolhouse where close to 200 members greeted them. The next morning, they headed for Czechoslovakia, passing the Palace of Justice where the first of the International War Crimes Tribunals was underway. In Prague, Benson met with the city’s mayor and U.S. ambassador, and received permission to resume Church-related activities. On the 27th, the men headed for Austria, Munich, and Stuttgart, stopping briefly in Dachau, site of the infamous Nazi concentration camp. “We visited the human crematories, saw the gallows, the trenches in which innocent victims were machine-gunned and the kennels in which prisoners were thrown to be

62 *A Labor of Love*, 54, 55, 60. “Often the scenes were so touching that they brought tears to the eyes of Elder Benson,” recalled Badger. Quoted in Maher, *For God and Country*, 155.
63 “Everywhere we saw confusion, lack of organization,” Benson observed. “The military government seems to be making very little headway, possibly less in the French and Russian zones than in the American and British, which are more friendly and cooperative.” Benson, Letter to the First Presidency, March 13, 1946.
torn to pieces by the ferocious dogs kept there,” Benson wrote. “The brutalit

y and bestiality [sic] that was there related to us made us sick at heart.” In Stuttgart, the men entertained 275 appreciative members as the K-Ration Quartette.65 The next day, they returned to Basel. By the end of his first two months in Europe, Benson had visited all of the Church’s European missions and further helped to coordinate—aided by the Red Cross and other agencies—the receipt, storage, and eventual distribution of the Church’s relief supplies.66

IV

Arriving in Basel on March 31, Benson had planned to dedicate a new LDS branch chapel that same afternoon. However, while reading mail forwarded from London, he was horrified to learn that, back home, his baby, Beth, was critically ill with pneumonia. Fearing the worst, he immediately dropped to his knees in prayer, then telephoned Flora, and prayed again. While overseas calls usually required as many as several days to complete, his connection took only thirty minutes. Flora quickly assured him that Beth had survived the most difficult period of her illness and was gradually recovering. “You can never know how happy and thrilled and soul-satisfying it made me feel,” he afterwards wrote to Flora, “when I heard your sweet and loving voice over the telephone.”67 (He dedicated Basel’s new meetinghouse three weeks later.)68

During her husband’s absence, Flora Benson, forty-five, had kept up a regular correspondence. She almost never discussed the health problems (abdominal pain, bleeding, etc.) that had surfaced after Beth’s birth a year and a half earlier and would eventually require a hysterection.69 “I am watching the finances extremely carefully, and everything is all right,” she wrote to Benson on March 10. “We miss you greatly, but it shall bring its blessings.” However, the separation was dif-

65 K-rations were packaged meals supplied by the U.S. Army. Asked if he liked them, Benson quipped: “They are nutritious, but monotonous!” Quoted in Babbel, On Wings of Faith, 55.
67 A Labor of Love, 74–76.
68 “President Benson Dedicates Swiss Chapel,” Church News, May 18, 1946, 8.
69 The most details Flora ever gave of her condition was the comment: “The operation has been brought on because of conditions developing
difficult, especially in mid-March, when Beth had first started coughing. Flora assumed it was a cold, but the family doctor determined that Beth had pneumonia. Fearing that Beth might need to be hospitalized, Flora asked President George Albert Smith for a blessing. “The Lord has surely given me added strength to carry on,” she recorded, “I have been up with her [Beth] constantly for nights giving her sulfa drug and mustard plasters. I don’t like anyone else to do it.” Fortunately, by month’s end, the worst had passed: “I feel so much better today,” Flora recorded. “I can now carry on in ‘full blast.’”

Benson drafted a statement regarding the faith of Europe’s Saints to be read at the Church’s upcoming general conference, then the three men left for France on April 2. In Neuchatel, Benson addressed members from throughout the region. The next day, the men reached Paris. His assignment at an end, Badger caught a plane home to the States, while Benson finalized purchase of another Citroen, oversaw the signing of the lease for the French Mission home, and secured additional visas. Then, on April 4, he and Babbel left for Liège. While 600 of the Church’s welfare containers had arrived safely, nearly a third of local children still suffered from malnutrition and tuberculosis.

That same evening, Benson met with Belgium’s Saints and the next day made additional arrangements for the

from giving birth to the most lovely & perfect children in all the world (at least to me).” She later added: “It was a minor operation . . . but now it has developed into a major operation.” Flora Benson, in Ezra Taft Benson, Diary, October 14 and December 11, 1946. During this period, Flora continued her husband’s diary through December 12, 1946, while Benson maintained a separate diary that covers January 29 to December 31, 1946. Benson was more forthcoming: “Largely due to overwork and excessive strain her uterus has seriously fallen. There was some evidence of this before I left home. . . . Now the doctor says the operation should be taken care of promptly and there can be no more family because it will be necessary to remove the uterus.” Benson, Diary, October 24, 1946.

70J. Reuben Clark told Flora that she “was the most independent woman he ever knew.” A Labor of Love, 21.
72“Greetings from Europe,” Church News, April 13, 1946, 4.
74A year later, the new president of the West German Mission re-
distribution of Church welfare in Germany and Austria. The two men then drove to Holland, where Benson again toured Church buildings, including the badly damaged mission headquarters, rented more storage space, and secured the resumption of Boy Scout programs. He listened to Church officials describe strained relations with local governments and urged that missions become producers of welfare as well as consumers. When he and Babbel returned to London on the 10th, they brought the new Citroen with them.

Benson spent much of the next week and a half on correspondence, dining with out-going British Mission President Hugh Brown, attending Church meetings, and preparing the first issues of *Euro-

ported: “Severe malnutrition among the members is well nigh universal.” Jean Wunderlich, quoted in “West German Mission Head Reports,” *Church News*, September 20, 1947, 10.

George Albert Smith, J. Reuben Clark, and David O. McKay as the First Presidency subsequently advised: “In the past Americans abroad have been twitted about their cocksureness, their sense of superiority, and we should try to be very sure that we do not hamper our approaches with exhibition of these unlovable qualities.” Letter to Benson, July 15, 1946, Clark Papers. See also *European Mission Bulletin*, August 4, 1946, 2.

The Holland Mission took Benson’s counsel to heart. Over the next few years, Holland’s Saints grew some 240 tons of potatoes and also purchased (or received in donation) 60 tons of herring, for eventual distribution in Germany. The project helped to ease the German Saints’ hunger and to heal some of the wounds resulting from Nazi atrocities committed during the war. Seven years later, following a flood that ravaged portions of Holland, German Saints sent five truckloads of clothing to the Netherlands. See “Dutch Mission Head Tells Story of Welfare Potatoes for Germany,” *Church News*, December 6, 1947, 1, 6–7; “Dutch Potatoes Planted by German Saints,” *Church News*, July 25, 1948, 3; “Dutch Send 90 Tons Potatoes, 9 of Herring to Germany,” *Church News*, December 15, 1948, 12-13; William G. Hartley, “War and Peace and Dutch Potatoes,” *Ensign*, July 1978, 19–23; Scharffs, *Mormonism in Germany*, 143; Babbel, *On Wings of Faith*, 76–77; and “Feeding Starving Germans Changes Enmity to Charity,” *Church News*, August 19, 1995, 13.

“Report on the European Mission #9,” April 12, 1946; and *A Labor of Love*, 79. Neither man records their source of gasoline during these extensive travels, though presumably it came from military installations.
pean Mission Bulletin, a newsletter for mission presidents.78 (He also contemplated tours of the Church’s South African and Palestine-Syrian missions but, on instructions from the First Presidency, abandoned the project.)79 On April 20, he went to Basel to attend the Swiss Mission’s first missionwide conference since 1939. Following a series of meetings, he departed for Paris to explore the purchase of new cars for some additional missions, then returned to London.

Three days later, he and Babbel left with Hugh and Zina Brown for Birmingham and Sunderland (100 and 240 miles north). More than twenty years earlier, Benson had spent his LDS proselytizing mission in the region. He publicly recalled the widespread persecution, then commented on the warm reception he now received. “My feelings have been so tender,” he recorded afterwards, “it has been difficult to speak.” On April 30, he and Babbel arrived in nearby Newcastle and, taking their Citroen, boarded a steamer for Norway. Arriving in Stavanger, Benson met with A. Richard Peterson, the Norwegian Mission president, and was interviewed by several local newspapers. The first two train carloads of LDS relief had arrived several weeks earlier, but adequate housing was still in short supply.80

After two days, the men left for Bergen, a hundred miles north. As much of the road was impassable, they took a boat. Following several meetings with Bergen’s members, they visited a nearby fjord. “The rugged beauty of this land,” Benson wrote, “was spread before us in an indescribable panorama of majesty and color.” Returning to Stavanger on May 6, they retrieved their car, and, with the Petersons, drove to Oslo, nearly 190 miles south, stopping overnight in a summer resort. In Oslo, Benson reviewed plans for a new meeting hall, inspected the recently arrived welfare goods, and on the 8th left with Babbel and a member of the Swedish Mission for Goteborg (also Gothenburg), Swe-

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78 Benson published seven issues of the European Mission Bulletin: April 17, April 20, June 3, July 8, August 14, October 4, and November 11, 1946.

79 “I hope,” Benson recorded in his diary, August 24, 1946, “the Pres’y have not, as I fear, been influenced in their decision by their fear I am over doing.” According to Babbel, On Wings of Faith, 156: “This cancellation was the biggest single disappointment we experienced during our entire time in Europe.”

den, some 160 miles to the southeast. That evening, members sere-
aded their visitors with a medley of American songs. Over the next
week, Eben R. T. Bloomquist, the Swedish Mission president, escorted
Benson to meetings with six additional small congregations.81

Impressed with the members’ faith, Benson was nonetheless
concerned that several innovations had entered into Church practice.
“What we have seen in the last two weeks,” he wrote, “only emphasizes
the inspiration of the First Presidency in warning the priesthood of
the Church regarding the dangers of world [sic] doctrines and prac-
tices creeping into the Church and the importance of keeping our
practices and procedures simple and plain as the Lord intended. . . .
[T]hank the Lord the war did not extend for a ten-year period! Other-
wise I fear we would have found crosses and crowns on every pulpit.”
Benson was also disappointed to learn that many European govern-
ments, facing food and housing shortages, were disinclined to permit
the entrance or long-term residence of non-nationals, including LDS
missionaries.82

From Sweden, Benson and Babbel left on May 15 for Denmark
and Holland. After more than two days in Copenhagen and environs,
they flew to Amsterdam. The mission home was under repair and
welfare shipments had arrived. However, due to waterfront strikes,
the majority had not been unloaded.83 On the 19th, Benson walked
into Rotterdam’s standing-room-only district conference. Tears
sprang to his eyes “as the vast audience stood as I entered. I know it
was not me but the office I represent that they honored, and how
humble it makes me feel as I witness the love and loyalty they show a
representative of the General Authorities.” The next day, he and
Babbel returned to London, arriving in time for Benson to attend,
with the First Presidency’s permission, the first of ten days’ meetings

European Mission #12,” May 15, 1946; A Labor of Love, 90–101; and “War-
82 Benson, Letter to the First Presidency, May 13, 1946, Clark Papers;
and A Labor of Love, 99–101. See also Benson, Diary, July 2, 1946.
83 The crates remained on the docks for four months before the
strikes ended. Mission officials counted 489 boxes of canned meat, 9,924 of
food and canned fruit, and 721 of clothing—a total of 11,134 boxes weighing
more than 320 tons. “Saints in Holland Express Gratitude for Clothing,
Food,” Church News, October 5, 1946, 9, 12.
of the International Conference of Agriculture Producers convened to forecast worldwide food trends and needs.\(^{84}\)

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On May 26, Benson arranged for a second telephone call home. For five minutes he spoke with Flora and other family members. The separation had not become any less painful.\(^{85}\) “This home is just like four walls since you left,” Flora had written toward the end of April. “It just isn’t home without you.” When son Mark invited her to a play, she decided: “I am not going out again for a long time. I don’t like to leave home even for two or three hours. When my husband comes home from Europe, then I will enjoy going out.” She later wrote to Benson, “There is no one that could take your place, dearest,” The brief phone call touched both deeply. “How I thank the Lord . . . especially for my true companion, who is all a man could ask for in a wife and mother,” Benson recorded afterwards. “It was so good to hear you laugh over the phone,” Flora agreed, “and it was so soul-satisfying to hear your sweet dear voice again.”\(^{86}\)

Following the London-based agriculture conference, Benson considered flying to Frankfurt, but stormy weather intervened. Disappointed but not discouraged, he headed 170 miles north to Rochdale for the British Mission’s first missionwide conference since the war. The three-day meeting attracted more than 500 Saints and friends. During the inaugural Green and Gold Ball, Benson personally crowned the dance queen, then addressed a series of leadership, special interest, and general sessions. The mission’s Boy Scouts organization—including a camp-out in drenching rain—and young women’s auxiliary associations figured prominently. A special testimony meeting


\(^{86}\)\textit{A Labor of Love}, 80, 86, 88, 95, 96, 101, 108–9, 110, 111, 220.
concluded the conference. “I longed for you many times,” Benson wrote to Flora, “especially during the dance. Of course, missionaries don’t dance, but how I would have loved to dance with you, darling.”

On June 7, Benson bade Hugh and Zina Brown farewell as they departed for home. Six days later, Benson and Babbel left for Denmark and Germany. In Hamburg, they found 500 Saints assembled for meetings. Many “were thin, weak and hungry, their clothes threadbare and hanging loosely from their starved bodies.” “How I wish I could have had baskets full of things—especially food—to give them,” Benson wrote. “If I could have for each of these families the food wasted in the average American home, it would be much more than their total food supply at present.” He telegraphed the Red Cross to redirect some of the Church shipments to Kiel and Hamburg.

In Hannover, the two men attended services in another bombed-out school building. Meanwhile, the mission conference in Leipzig, which they had not attended, had enjoyed an “amazing” attendance.

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88 At Brown’s departure, Benson, Diary, May (sic, June) 7, 1946, wrote: “Pres. Brown has done a good work in England and the people love him. However he is tired and has lost much of his earlier enthusiasm and initiative. The mission is not in good condition. The attitude of the people is one of [illegible] and lack of spirit. They seem to be looking for the easy way and think the Church should see that they get to Zion. It will take much hard and patient work to stir them from their lethargy.” Compare A Labor of Love, 114–15. Several weeks earlier, Benson, Diary, April 26, 1946, had noted: “The needs of the [British] mission are tremendous and challenging. In fact the condition generally leaves more to be desired than in any mission yet visited.” He was specifically concerned about “the matter of amalgamating branches and selling chapels.” Ibid., August 24, 1946.

89 Packages of clothing were distributed in Bremen six weeks later; food shipments followed. Supplies arrived in Hamburg in mid-October 1946. Initially, slightly more supplies were given to practicing Church members than to nonpracticing members; but this policy soon changed. By May 1947, the Church was donating 25 percent of welfare shipments to the German government for distribution throughout the country. “Clothes Make Saints Happy,” Church News, August 24, 1946, 9; and Scharffs, Mormonism in Germany, 136.
of nearly 1,200—aided, in part, by the Russian government’s support.\footnote{See “Europe’s Valiant Saints Forge Ahead,” Improvement Era, October 1946, 665. While Soviet-imposed regulations restricted certain kinds of activities in East Germany beginning in 1945, “the first years following the war proved productive and beneficial for religion in East Germany as churches conducted their activities with almost complete autonomy.” This situation changed after 1948. See Bruce W. Hall, “Gemeindegeschichte als Vergleichende Geschichte: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in East Germany, 1945–1989” (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1998), 13, 14.} After more meetings with members, military leaders, and government officials, they left on the 21st for Bielefeld, Dusseldorf, Herne, and Frankfurt.\footnote{“European Mission Report #16,” June 20, 1946; “Elder Benson Tells Story of Church Welfare in Germany,” Church News, July 6, 1946, 1, 5; and A Labor of Love, 117–29.}

In Langen, Germany, the two men found themselves facing “the most heart-rending scene thus far”: some 90 destitute Polish LDS refugees meeting as a new branch.\footnote{A year later, the number of LDS refugees in Germany reached over a thousand. “West German Mission Head Reports.”} The “saddest moment” came when the visitors toured “the rough barracks where these people are living. There in the rudest of shelters, without any sanitary facilities whatever, we saw from one to four families living in a single room.”\footnote{“Sadness filled President Benson’s heart,” Babbel reported, in “Europe’s Valiant Saints Forge Ahead,” 665.} “I gave them everything edible we could find in the car,” Benson recorded, “and took some of the little children for a short ride.” Benson was consistently moved by the gut-wrenching plight of Europe’s children. The next day, they arrived in Frankfurt and attended crowded Church meetings at Goethe University.\footnote{In Frankfurt, Babbel alerted members to “individuals (members of the Church) who . . . were either active in the Nazi regime or very sympathetic toward its aims. . . . For their own protection they were seeking mission leadership who would not only sympathize with them but would hide them under the guise of their being missionaries or Church workers.” On Wings of Faith, 118.} Reaching Switzerland, Babbel left for London, while Benson flew to Prague. On June 30, surrounded by a small group of Saints, he dedicated a stone monu-
ment, erected in 1944, that commemorated the dedication of Czechoslovakia for LDS missionary work seventeen years earlier. He spent the next evening in Brno, arrived in Paris on July 2, and was back in London two days later.\(^{95}\)

While the suffering Benson witnessed did not shake his faith, it tapped deep wells of compassion and helplessness. “I shall ever remember the scene of these sweet, innocent victims of the ravages of war . . .,” he wrote after Hamburg. “Surely when the Lord chooses the most faithful, these, His suffering children, will be among those most blessed.” “I have tried to spare you at home most of the heartrending scenes in Europe today,” he told Flora. “But somehow I just couldn’t hold it this morning. It’s terrible to contemplate. I know that the Lord permits the righteous to suffer as He pours out His judgments on the wicked. And I know that even amid the suffering the true Latter-day Saints are sustained by His Spirit.” “There is nothing I wouldn’t do for these poor, suffering Saints,” he vowed, and once even urged that the Church pay for the immigration to Utah of the most distressed Saints. “Insofar as . . . the Church is concerned,” the First Presidency replied, “there are many, many persons in this country [i.e., the United States] who have been equally devoted and equally loyal, though of course not under the trying circumstances that were incident to the loyalty and devotion of these brethren in Europe, but nevertheless if we help the European Saints, we should find it difficult to explain why we should not help them here.”\(^{96}\)

Benson understood the limitations of the Church’s reach and

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96A Labor of Love, 120–21, 123–24, 125; and First Presidency, Letter to Benson, July 15, 1946, Clark Papers. The Presidency continued: “Europe brewed her own mess of bitter pottage; America did not brew it. This does not mean that we should not have full sympathy for the sufferings endured by the people in Europe, nor that we should not do our utmost to alleviate them, but it does mean, as it seems to us, that we should not approach this problem from the point of view that it is our responsibility, except beyond the broad lines of human and Church brotherhood.” See also Benson, Conference Report, October 1952, 118.
insisted he was never “downhearted or discouraged.”

But the horrors he confronted and the unrelenting demands he made on himself took a toll. Benson believed—naively—that he had approached his assignment as well prepared as anyone. But he had never before directly experienced misery of such magnitude. He had enlisted during World War I but too late to have seen active service. Now he was realizing that nothing could have prepared him for the trauma he was forced to witness. His faith sustained him and he put on a brave face with colleagues and in letters to his wife and family, but the brutal effects of stress and anxiety were having physical manifestations. He struggled with insomnia and diminished appetite. He began to lose weight and was increasingly fatigued. His response was to exert even greater effort.

After less than a week in London, Benson returned to The Hague. He met with LDS officials and inspected Church buildings, then toured Rotterdam, Amsterdam, and Groningen. On July 11, he arrived in Stockholm. After rejecting a proposed new mission home (too small), he and Swedish Mission President Bloomquist left for Finland. Told that Finland had never been dedicated to the preaching of the gospel, they located a small rise outside of Larsma; and on July 16, Benson pronounced a dedication blessing. Early the next morning, the men left for Helsinki. “It was a long hot [train] ride,” Benson wrote, “with practically no food, much dirt, crying babies, and overcrowded cars filled with

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97 Babbel, A Labor of Love, 208.
99 Babbel lost fifty pounds. “When you go without meals three or four days at a time, including water,” he explained, “... you can lose weight.” Babbel, Oral History, 8.
100 Finland had been dedicated in August 1903 by Apostle Francis M. Lyman. “President Benson Dedicates Finland for Preaching Gospel,” Church News, August 10, 1946, 1, 9, 12; “Finland Dedicated,” Millennial Star 108 (October 1946): 289; and A Labor of Love, 140, 143–46, 150–51.
poorly clothed but good people.” That night, he addressed a congregation of 245, and the next day met with local officials. Back in Stockholm on the 19th, Benson participated in the mission’s first conference since the war. He returned to London on July 23.101

When Benson and Babbel left a few days later for Berlin, they hoped Polish visas would be waiting for them. Informed upon arrival that the process could take weeks, Benson refused to despair. For three days, he alternately prayed and argued with government bureaucrats. Finally, on July 29, the chief of Poland’s Military Mission intervened, and the visas were issued.102 Francis R. Gasser, a former LDS missionary to Germany and lawyer-turned-economist for the U.S. Office of Political Affairs in Berlin, accompanied the two visitors. Arriving in Warsaw—landing not on a runway but a “rough field”—they took a room outfitted with cots in the city’s only habitable hotel. As he toured “the most devastated city in Europe,” Benson recorded, “the most sickening odors meet you from debris, dead bodies in the ruins, and filth. The sidewalks and streets are torn up in many places, and because of the lack of sanitary facilities, the people generally are filthy. . . . The feeling becomes so depressing on the streets, and one feels so helpless amidst it all that you find yourself wanting to leave or shut yourself from it in your room, poor though it be.”103

Benson’s party was allowed to enter Wroclaw (Breslau), where a branch of nearly 100 members managed to cultivate a small patch of potatoes. Meeting with members on August 1, Benson learned of some of the atrocities—beatings, murders, gang rapes—they had endured.104 “Never in my life,” he wrote, “have I heard of such terrors.” The next day, he and Babbel continued to Katowice, Gliwice

102Babbel, “And None Shall Stay Them,” Instructor, August 1969, 368–71; and his On Wings of Faith, 131–54.
103A Labor of Love, 155. Four months later, another Latter-day Saint observed: “Berlin still presents a scene of desolation. . . . It looks like a great civilization has been wiped out.” Quoted in “United States Delegate Describes Post-War Scenes in Germany and Russia,” Church News, December 14, 1946, 5.
104Since the hostilities,” Benson told the First Presidency, “our Saints have become a despised, persecuted and unwanted people because of their nationality. . . . One of the faithful brethren was shot down in cold blood by the invading [Soviet] troops from the East because he could not
(Gleiwitz), and Zelbak (Selbongen), then returned to Warsaw. They toured what remained of the city’s Jewish ghetto before returning to Berlin on August 6. Two days earlier, Benson had turned forty-seven, and upon his arrival in Berlin, LDS servicemen feted him with cake and lemonade. Benson subsequently learned that U.S. military leaders, fearing for his safety, had been “dismayed” he had traveled so freely throughout Poland.

VI

When, in late July, the First Presidency decided to replace him, Benson was still in Berlin. Reading of the change in a newspaper clipping before receiving official notification, he recorded, “Although it is a surprise, if true—and I had expected to continue for at least another four to six months— . . . I’m sure all will work out for the best as the First Presidency may direct.” Privately, however, Benson worried that he had somehow failed his file leaders. “Last night, in dream,” he wrote, “I was privileged to spend what seemed about an hour with President George Albert Smith in Salt Lake. . . . The last day or so I

produce the cigarettes for which they had asked him. His mother, who ran to lift up his lifeless body from the pool of blood in which it lay, was driven away at the point of bayonets and threatened with death. As this forlorn mother comforted his grief-stricken wife—the mother of two lovely children—these soldiers whipped and flogged them so severely they were unable to lie down for two weeks. Since that day women and girls, some of whom were just approaching adolescence, have been repeatedly ravished. One of the mothers was forced at the point of a gun to remain in the room and watch her daughter being ravished by a group of ten soldiers.” “European Mission Report #19,” August 7, 1946. Of the branch’s twenty-five men, only two had survived the war.

Approximately 97 percent of Poland’s Jews were lost during the war. Moorehead, *Dunant’s Dream*, 501.


*A Labor of Love*, 189–90.
have been wondering if my labors in Europe have been acceptable to the First Presidency and the Brethren at home and especially to my Heavenly Father. This sweet experience has tended to put my mind completely at ease, for which I am deeply grateful."\textsuperscript{108}

Benson’s successor, Alma Sonne, longtime Utah banker and Assistant to the Twelve Apostles since 1941, was just as stunned at the development.\textsuperscript{109} Born to Danish immigrants, Sonne, at sixty-two, was some seventy pounds heavier and nearly fifteen years older than Benson. He was the father of five, the youngest of whom was in the military; also unlike Benson, he was being sent to Europe with his wife, Leona. The appointment was announced August 3, effective October 1.\textsuperscript{110}

From Berlin, Benson and Babbel made their way to Frankfurt. Bad weather forced a detour to Paris where they arrived on August 10. Reaching London the next day, Benson immediately cabled the First Presidency: “Just received wire regarding successor. Surprised but it’s all right. Believe it important I remain at least until Sonne arrives and complete September schedule and another visit to Poland.” (Due to a variety of roadblocks, the Sonnes did not reach England until mid-November.) Benson also telephoned Flora. He spent the next day at work but in the evening joined the British Mission staff at baseball. (“This was the first relaxation we had had in a long time,” Babbel remembered.) Before leaving for Geneva, Switzerland, on the 15th, Benson sent the First Presidency his recommendations. His principal suggestion: Shutter the European Mission and instead assign LDS authorities to spend a period of time each year visiting the various European missions. Annual visits, he believed, will “bring the problems of these missions closer to the First Presidency and the Twelve, than can be done through extended sojourns of one representative in Europe.”\textsuperscript{111}

After conferring with Cornelius Zappey, president of the Netherlands Mission, Benson went to Geneva on August 15. Frustrated by

\textsuperscript{108}Ibid., 170, 173–74.


\textsuperscript{111}\textit{A Labor of Love}, 174, 175; Benson, Letter to the First Presidency,
the delays in distributing commodities, he and Max Zimmer, the acting president of the West German Mission, met with Red Cross officials to hammer out a more efficient method. Both sides agreed that the Red Cross would accept “the responsibility, under the direction of the European Mission, of receiving, storing and forwarding all welfare supplies bound for these countries,” allowing the Church to by-pass much of the jurisdictional red tape. A first shipment—100 boxes of clothing, 310 of food—arrived in Berlin in mid-September; a second a month later.  

On August 19–20, Benson worked with the presidents of the Swiss-Austria and West German missions to resolve some problems, largely personality-driven, that had apparently festered for some time.  

Back in London, Benson believed that conditions had improved since his arrival but worried about LDS refugees across western Europe. “Perhaps,” he reasoned, “the many benefits of the great Church Welfare Program to these and our other Saints in

August 15, 1946, Clark Papers; and Babbel, On Wings of Faith, 155. The next presidents, and David O. McKay, agreed about the value of such travel and made several mission tours, both in the United States and abroad.

112“First Church Welfare Supplies Reach Members in Berlin Area,” Church News, October 26, 1946, 1; “Elder Benson Reports Second Berlin Shipment,” Church News, November 2, 1946, 1, 6; and “The Church in Europe,” Millennial Star 108 (December 1946): 371. Benson inspected the crates with a local member: “As we opened the first one, I noticed it was filled with the commonest of common food, cracked wheat. . . . As that good man ran his hands, almost incredulously through the wheat, he broke down and cried like a child.” Reed A. Benson, comp., “So Shall Ye Reap” (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1960), 83; see also Ezra Taft Benson, Cross Fire, 265–66. See also Wolfgang Helmut Lothar Kelm, “Personal History,” ca. 2000, 23, LDS Church Archives. The final issue of European Mission Bulletin (November 11, 1946) included recipes using the kinds of food received from the States.

113“There seems to be error on both sides,” Benson explained, in his diary, November 28, 1946, “and a tendency on the part of the new president of the Swiss mission to magnify some apparent mistakes that were made during the serious, emergency war years. Jealousy is a terrible monster. Oh that men could center their entire energies, thoughts and talents on the work of the Lord and be willing to go more than half way to make amends and come to a sweet and humble understanding based on love & confidence. Unless the brethren are willing to heed more fully the counsel given them drastic action may be necessary.”
Europe shall never be known, but many lives have undoubtedly been spared and the faith and courage of many of our devoted members greatly strengthened.”

Benson remained in London throughout the remainder of the unseasonably cold August. On the 31st, he left for a conference of the United Nations’ Food and Agriculture Organization in Copenhagen. He enjoyed the sessions (though admitted that his mind sometimes wandered during the French-language portions), renewed acquaintances made earlier during the Agriculture Producers’ conference in London, and addressed the American delegation regarding his experiences in Europe. At the end of the four-day meeting, he returned to Stockholm, and on September 6 lectured on the return of Jews to Palestine: “No matter what nations or individuals say or do, the Jews will return to Palestine.” On a brief trip to Oslo, he conferred with mission officials, advised against the purchase of a too-small chapel, and met with members. Back in London on the 9th, he found himself having to address "many difficult problems . . . which I pray the Lord will direct me in meeting.”

The next day, September 10, Benson, alone in his small office-apartment, quietly celebrated Flora’s and his twentieth wedding anniversary. “I love you with all my heart,” he wrote to her, “and ever miss you and long for you. Sometimes I wonder what people do who are separated from their wives and not engaged in the work of the Lord. It must be terrible, or else they don’t love their wives like I do mine.” He arranged to send her a dozen American Beauty roses. She kept the card, which read: “Since the day I first saw you, I have loved you.”

He was also able to put through a telephone call.

At the week’s end, Benson was again on his way to Berlin. Overnighting in Frankfurt, he walked alone “through streets lined with rubble and bombed and burned buildings . . . silently shedding tears of sorrow.” “Ruin is everywhere,” he recorded. “. . . My heart has seldom been so heavy as tonight as I contemplate the conditions of

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116 A Labor of Love, 185–86.
these war-torn countries and, in fact, the world as a whole.” “I'm so grateful,” he added to Flora, “you and the children can be spared the views of the terrible ravages of war. I fear I'll never be able to erase them from my memory.” In Berlin he met with government, Red Cross, and LDS officials to make sure that Church relief was being distributed as quickly as possible, reluctantly took their advice not to revisit Poland, flew back to London, and was in Geneva five days later for more Red Cross meetings. He was relieved that more rail cars had become available, promising to solve the problem of delays in transporting shipments. In the next three days, he was in Basel, Zurich, Prague, and London. Clearly, he was driven by a remorseless sense of urgency, although he expressed primarily hope that “the few remaining obstacles to permit unhampered distribution of sorely-needed welfare supplies are slowly but surely being overcome.”

Benson had hoped to visit Paris on October 3, but again stormy weather cancelled his plans. On October 6, he and Babbel went to Birmingham, a hundred miles northwest of London, for the British Mission conference. He met with reporters, attended the day’s three sessions, and signed autographs until he developed writer’s cramp. To a crowd of 600, he delivered his farewell address. “As I contemplate leaving the shores of Europe,” he said, “I can truthfully say that never in all my experience have I appreciated more deeply a period of service in the Church than the period of the last ten months.”

Although it was his last mission conference, he was still working urgently. Trips to the Netherlands to inspect building sites and to Frankfurt and Berlin to personally inspect relief supplies punctuated office work. It was rare for him to spend more than a week in one place. On October 24, he was concerned to learn that Flora’s physical problems had worsened. He telephoned her, and Flora


119 Much American-made clothing was too small for German women, and had to be either remade or rendered into thread, yarn, pieces of cloth, etc.
begged, “Don’t tell the Brethren but stay and fill your mission.” Benson fasted and prayed, then felt certain that “Flora will be all right whether the operation is performed now in my absence or later on my return.” When a letter on the 28th reported that the doctor had advised immediate surgery, he cabled Flora to do what she thought best and asked Elder Harold B. Lee to administer a priesthood blessing. Afterward, Flora decided to wait “until my husband came home.” Half a world away, Benson wrote: “I know that the Lord will overrule all things for our good and that He will speak peace to our souls and preserve her during this crisis.”

He was elated to learn that Flora had decided to postpone the operation until his return.

VII

Benson spent much of the rest of October in meetings. On November 2, he and Babbel left for a special two-day conference in Holland that drew more than 1,000—the largest ever. “The people were loath to leave for their various overnight quarters and remained for nearly two hours after the evening program ended.” The two men lodged in a “small dirty, cold room—the only space available,” Benson noted. The next morning, he instructed priesthood members, stressing that “true leaders do the best they can, where they are, with what they have.” Meeting Monday with mission leaders, Benson and Babbel returned to London later that same day. “I am so anxious to reach home as soon as possible for Flora’s sake,” Benson recorded. After four days in London, the two departed on brief tours of Sweden and Denmark. When they returned on November 13, Benson began to prepare for his release.

The Sonnes arrived in England on November 15, after seven “rough” days at sea, but did not disembark until the 16th. (Sonne had shared a “room with 15 other men, while Sister Sonne was one of ten

When men’s shoes could not be matched in pairs, they were sometimes donated to hospitals treating amputees. James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976), 552–53.

*120* *A Labor of Love*, 201–10. Flora had hoped to meet her husband in London or New York, but her on-going health problems prevented this.

women in a small stateroom.”) Benson, and Selvoy J. Boyer, the new president of the British Mission, escorted the couple to Babbel’s and his “humble flat.” “We must get a larger car,” Benson decided when Sonne, at 250-plus pounds, had difficulty entering the mission’s sedan. Over the next two days, Benson and Sonne attended meetings as Benson began to introduce him to his new responsibilities. Sonne expressed surprise at Benson’s accomplishments. Benson attributed his success to “the manner in which the Lord has opened the way before us in this glorious mission.”

Benson and Sonne left on November 19 for quick visits to the Church’s nine continental missions. In Copenhagen, Benson recorded: “Never have I felt my feelings more tender and had my heart go out to the people more than here.” Oslo, Stockholm, Prague, Zurich, Basel, Geneva, Paris, Frankfurt, and Berlin followed in quick succession. After addressing Saints in Frankfurt, Benson wrote: “How I wish I had the power to lift them from their distress and suffering. Gladly would I give every material thing in life to ease their discomfort and pain.” Sonne soberly observed: “Any one who believes in war as a solution of human problems should witness the present plight of Germany and her people.” The two men returned to London on December 8. “When my head stops swimming,” Sonne quipped to Babbel, “you tell me what happened.”

As Benson’s departure neared, he thought increasingly of Flora. “I love you so very much,” he wrote on December 9, “more than when I left you, if such a thing is possible.” He believed he had “done everything possible to help [Sonne] get started,” and could not “think of one single thing left undone which should have received my attention.” Two days later, Babbel escorted him to London’s Heathrow Airport where, on the departure platform, Benson said: “Oh, by the way, Fred, I have never taken the time out to tell you how

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much I appreciate the work that you have done. But I do sincerely appreciate it and I want you to know it.” “Of all of the people I’ve ever known in my life,” Babbel recalled, “I consider [Benson], next to my father, the greatest man I’ve ever know.” As he flew west across the Atlantic, for the first time in ten and a half months, Benson was free to think only of his family, not of compelling bureaucratic and ecclesiastical responsibilities. “I can hardly wait for my adorable husband to arrive,” Flora wrote the night his plane reached New York. “I don’t believe I can sleep at all tonight.”

On December 14, the day after his touchdown in Salt Lake City, Benson separately met with two members of the First Presidency and was interviewed by the Church-owned Deseret News. “No one who has not seen it can comprehend the devastation,” he reported. He and Flora then spent the next several days in southern Idaho with relatives. Flora’s operation followed on December 30; and Benson observed from the gallery until told that his presence there violated hospital rules. As Flora recuperated, the First Presidency and Twelve hosted a welcome-home party on January 9, 1947. Three months later, during the concluding session of April general conference, Benson reported on his mission before a “well-fed (almost too well-fed in many cases), audience.” (The criticism was as intentional as the humor.) All told, during his ten months in Europe, Benson had traveled 61,236 miles—counting both transatlantic flights—and helped to coordinate the delivery of the equivalent of fifty-one train carloads, weighing some 2,000 tons, of relief supplies.

For the next three years, Alma Sonne supervised the continued distribution of LDS relief, coordinated the work of the missions, and oversaw the construction of new buildings. As most missions and branches gradually resumed full operations, and the number of missionaries and convert baptisms increased, relief from the States

125A Labor of Love, 226–31; and Babbel, On Wings of Faith, 169.
126A Labor of Love, 232–36, 247–53; McKay, Diary, January 9, 1947; Benson, “Special Mission to Europe”; and Babbel, On Wings of Faith, 168. Benson gave the figure fifty-one in “Special Mission to Europe.”
127By 1949, the LDS Church, along with most other churches, had
Church officials then decided to close the European Mission and, as Benson had suggested, instead assign the Church’s authorities to visit each of missions on a regular basis.

From 1946 to 1950, the LDS Church sent the following aid to Europe: 2,342,000 pounds of wheat and wheat products; 1,114,000 pounds of clothing and bedding; 2,600,000 pounds of canned fruit, vegetables, and milk; 400,000 pounds of canned meat and meat products; and 200,000 pounds of dried beans. These amounts equaled 133 train carloads, weighing 5,320 tons. The value of these items, as well as that of seven carloads of the smaller welfare packages, totaled $1,232,391. Benson’s role, along with the work of Sonne and others, helped to set the stage for the Church’s present humanitarian-re-

been expelled from Soviet-controlled Eastern bloc countries.


Glen L. Rudd, Pure Religion: The Story of Church Welfare since 1930 (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1995), 249–50. According to Scharffs, Mormonism in Germany, 139–40 note 46, Germany alone received the following from 1946 to 1950 (not including items purchased from the Red Cross in March 1946): 745,416 cans of vegetables; 584,258 cans of fruit; 8,496 containers of powdered milk; 477,865 cans of milk; 30,404 cans of honey, jelly, and syrup; 290,801 pounds of flour; 3,808 containers of powdered juice; 170,523 pounds of beans; 23,184 cans of baby food; 278,039 cans of meat; 5,063 containers of oatmeal; 70,000 pounds of sugar; and 30,642 cans of pork and beans; as well as 4,414 blankets; 885,486 pounds of clothing; and 63,700 bars of soap.

Responding to statements regarding the Church’s contributions, J.
lated activities. Benson returned to Salt Lake City a transformed man. Exposed to humanity at both its best and worst, he found his commitment to the Church and its teachings strengthened. He was convinced that to anyone "with a testimony of the divinity of this work it is possible to endure anything." The LDS gospel, he added, "is a great brotherhood . . . that is stronger than death, that reaches across borders, between nations." Confronting the horrors of National Socialism and Stalinist Communism, he developed a deep, abiding hatred of fascism, socialism, and especially communism. For Benson, individual liberty lay at the heart of God’s plan for his children. The many lessons of that “never-to-be-forgotten year” would remain with Benson throughout the rest of his life.

Reuben Clark recorded in September 1947: “I told him [George Albert Smith] that according to a report from Bro. Babbel, the Quakers had made perhaps 100 times more shipments to Europe than we had, with half the church membership; . . . thought we might wish to be a bit careful about our statements as to the great work we were doing for the Saints in Europe.” Diary, September 22, 1947, Clark Papers.

See, for example, the summary from 1985 to 2005 in Welfare Service Fact Sheet—2005 (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2006).

Harold B. Lee commented: “I think the most signal thing he [Benson] has done in his present career is his mission to Europe.” Quoted in Dew, Ezra Taft Benson, 227. Dew, Benson’s authorized biographer, observed: “Ezra’s ten months in Europe was the most growing period of life for him and his family. Never before had his faith, endurance, and energy been so greatly put to the test.” Ibid., 228.


Elder Benson’s experience in Europe seems to have magnified his intense loyalty to the United States and his determination to combat any influence threatening its freedoms.” Gibbons, Ezra Taft Benson, 157.

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Elder Benson’s experience in Europe seems to have magnified his intense loyalty to the United States and his determination to combat any influence threatening its freedoms.” Gibbons, Ezra Taft Benson, 157.

Benson, Conference Report, October 1952, 118. Some two decades later, Benson commented that he relived 1946 “over and over again in memory, with tear-dimmed eyes.” Benson, “Memories—Faith—Warning.” Stockholm Area Conference, August 18, 1974, not paginated, photocopy courtesy of the Smith-Pettit Foundation.
THE ST. GEORGE TEMPLE TOWER: EVOLUTION OF A DESIGN

Darrell E. Jones

AMONG THE MANY BEAUTIFUL sights in southern Utah, one of the finest is the gleaming white St. George Temple against its backdrop of red rocks. A well-relished folktale, however, is that the temple’s initial appearance irked LDS Church President Brigham Young. The temple was near completion, according to one print account by journalist Paul Roberts, but “when Brigham Young looked at the building, he said he didn’t like it. The tower was too squatty and looked funny. He insisted the tower be built again. The people, irritated at Brother Brigham’s demands, refused to comply with his wishes. The temple was complete and ready for dedication. They were not going to tear the tower down and rebuild it.” The temple was dedicated in April 1877, with Second Counselor Daniel H. Wells reading the dedicatory prayer of the ailing President Young. Brigham died that August and, the next year, lightning struck the tower. At that point, “The Saints finally [ac]ceded to Brother Brigham’s wishes and built a higher temple tower.”

1 According to a similar account by an anonymous writer, “Brigham Young was blatantly disappointed with the...
Truman O. Angell’s 1871 drawing of the east elevation of the temple showing the tall spire originally envisioned. LDS Church Archives.
original tower placed on the structure.” The lightning struck, the tower was replaced, and “Brother Brigham was to have the last word in the matter, or so it would seem.”

This sortie provides evidence of Brigham Young’s popularity and his people’s amused recognition of the lengths to which he was willing to go to get his own way. But the fact of the matter is that the story is mostly folklore.

In January 1871, while visiting St. George, then a settlement of about 1,200, Brigham Young asked local Church leaders in a meeting what they thought of building a temple in St. George. According to the record of James Godson Bleak, long the community’s chronicler, “The bare mention of such a blessing from the Lord was greeted with ‘Glory! Hallelujah!’ from President Erastus Snow, and all present appeared to share the joy.”

The first temple to be completed in the West would be theirs.

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2Author unknown, “Brigham Gets His Way,” St. George Magazine 1, no. 1 (1983–84): 58. For a third, similar account, see Linda Sappington, “Replacing the Dome,” St. George Magazine 12, no. 6 (November-December 1994): 97. The story has also made its way into fiction. Annette Lyon, At the Journey’s End (American Fork, Utah: Covenant Communications, 2006), 151–52, has local residents Clara and Charles explaining it to a new arrival Miriam. In this version, “The original dome and tower were much shorter. . . . Brother Brigham took one look at it and declared they were ugly and made the whole temple look short and squatty.” However, he “didn’t have the heart to make them change it after all their sacrifices, though he made no bones about hating the short, ugly thing.” After the lightning strike in 1878, the Saints built a replacement dome and tower. A similar account appears on pp. 262–63. In unnumbered historical notes, Lyon states: “The story behind the St. George Temple dome and tower is accurate, including the lightning strike and the rebuilding of the dome and tower, much taller, like Brigham Young originally wanted them. The renovation was completed in May 1883” (338). Lyon is correct about the fact of the lightning strike and the date of the completion, but the rest of the tale is fiction.

3James Godson Bleak, “Annals of the Southern Utah Mission,” January 31, 1871, 89–90, microfilm of typescript, Archives, Family and Church History Department, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter LDS Church Archives). Bleak was part of the large group selected in 1861 to settle in southern Utah’s “Cotton Mission.” He was the mission’s clerk and later the temple recorder. On April 15, 1871, at a meeting of
Truman O. Angell, the Church architect, soon began drawing plans, following Young’s instructions to use the Nauvoo Temple as the model. The only surviving original Angell drawing of the outside of the temple is the front elevation. It shows the tower topped by a tall spire which scales out to about forty-eight feet tall by eight feet wide at the base. The drawing contains “1871” in an inscription panel near the top of the facade, probably the date of the announcement and the drawing. Records of discussions between Young and Angell are sketchy; but at some point, the spire was replaced by a short eight-sided base topped by a round dome. This feature appears in photographs shortly before and after the temple’s completion and dedication in 1877. Whether the source of the change was Young or Angell (or someone else) is unknown. At the temple’s completion, the top of the weather vane was 135 feet above ground level.

During annual winter journeys to St. George, Brigham Young frequently visited the temple site. George A. Smith, Young’s first counselor, wrote to a missionary son in January 1875: Young “is able

the School of the Prophets, Bleak records: “A letter, dated April 5, 1871, from Brigham Young . . . to President Erastus Snow at St. George, was read giving the dimensions and description of the contemplated temple to be erected in St. George.”

Mary Ann Angell, Truman’s older sister, was Brigham Young’s wife. Truman had worked on both the Kirtland and Nauvoo temples and was also the architect of the Salt Lake Temple, then under construction but not finished until 1893.


Truman O. Angell, Letter to John Taylor, November 27, 1880, notes: “When Bro. Folsom was here to make a miniature drawing for topping out the St. George Temple tower, I stood by and counseled him until it suited my eye. How it took with the presidency I did not learn.”


Brigham Young first visited southern Utah in 1854. In 1861, he de-
to ride out nearly every day. He goes to the Temple and instructs the workmen.” Miles Romney, superintendent of construction, was recuperating from a broken leg, and William Folsom, who had been sent to St. George to direct the work, left because he suffered so severely from the climate. As a result, “President Young is our only architect.”9 A contemporary newspaper article noted: “The walls [of the temple]
will be finished and the roof on by the 10th of May, 1875. President Young may be seen daily watching its progress.”

There is no evidence of discussions about the tower during any of Young’s visits. Young did not make his usual journey to St. George in the winter of 1875–76, coming instead for May and June 1876. His large party included Angell and Brigham Young Jr., his counselor Daniel H. Wells, Levi W. Hancock of the First Council of the Seventy, and Erastus Snow, president of the Cotton Mission. On May 10, the day of their arrival, Brigham Jr. recorded visiting the temple twice. In the first, “In company with some of the brethren drove down and around the St. George Temple—a noble structure.” He does not indicate that they entered the building. He continued, “Later in the day accompanied father to the temple.” After a glowing description of the baptismal font and the lower rooms, followed by sharp criticism of the stairs leading to the upper levels, he commented, “The tower is wooden and a very unsatisfactory piece of work. Father remarked he would keep the tower locked, that he was ashamed of the framing and design. It is some 12 to 18 feet too low to look well. Prest says they will have that remedied some these days. How mechanics can do such work and call it right is a mystery to me.”

Brigham Young’s comment seems like a strange reaction if he had reviewed Angell’s drawings, observed construction during his visits over the previous five years, and was the “only architect” just sixteen months prior to this visit. When Young left St. George in February 1875, the walls of the temple were not quite to the roof line; thus,

\[\text{lennial Star 38, no. 5 (February 2, 1875): 75.}\]

\[10\text{“From St. George,” Salt Lake Daily Herald, January 9, 1875, 2.}\]

\[11\text{Bleak, “Annals of the Southern Utah Mission,” May 10, 1876.}\]

\[12\text{Brigham Young Jr., Journal, May 10, 1876, 83, microfilm of holograph, LDS Church Archives. I appreciate Paul L. Anderson of Brigham Young University who pointed out this reference to me.}\]

\[13\text{The only other men in the party who had the title of “President” were Erastus Snow, mission president, and Daniel H. Wells of the First Presidency. St. George had neither a temple president nor a stake president until early 1877, when Wilford Woodruff was called as temple president and John D. T. McAllister as stake president.}\]
tower construction had not begun and perhaps he had not noticed shortcomings in the tower’s dimensions.

Brigham Jr. records several visits to the temple site with his father over the next two months but never again mentions the tower, nor did Brigham Young express any public dissatisfaction. On the contrary, Bleak recorded on May 12: “[Young] expressed his satisfaction with the progress made in building the St. George Temple,” and resident Charles Walker likewise recorded: “Brigham Jr. was much pleased with the Temple and its near completion.”

John D. T. McAllister, who also kept a detailed 1876 journal, “went with Prst young, Bro Woodruff & Brigham Jr to the Temple and all through it then returned home.” He recorded no comments from Young about the tower. Back in Salt Lake City, Young wrote to Albert Carrington, then president of the European Mission, reporting on the temple’s construction. He does not indicate displeasure with the tower or any other aspect of the building. Instead, he notes that “the Temple building has a magnificent appearance.”

Brigham Young returned to St. George in November 1876 to spend the winter and dedicate the temple. Wilford Woodruff recorded, “In company with President Young, G. Q. Cannon, Brigham Young Jr., I visited the Temple and went through every depart[ment]

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15 John Daniel Thompson McAllister, Journal, holograph, May 10, 1876, LDS Church Archives. McAllister immigrated to Utah in 1851, captained one of the 1856 handcart companies (he wrote the spritely “Handcart Song”), and was called by Brigham Young in 1876 to be a carpenter on the St. George Temple. He became assistant temple president to Wilford Woodruff in January 1877, St. George Stake president in April 1877, and temple president in 1884. Although McAllister, Bleak, and Walker are the most consistent and thorough diarists for this period, I also consulted the diaries and reminiscences of many others but have found no record of Brigham Young expressing dissatisfaction with the tower.

16 Brigham Young, Letter to Albert Carrington, July 14, 1876, Millennial Star 38, no. 33 (August 14, 1876): 523.
of it from baptismal font in the basement to the top of the roof and it was a glorious sight.”

Brigham Young made frequent visits to the temple, then in the stages of final completion; but there is no evidence of dissatisfaction with the tower in either public or private records.¹⁸

Lightning struck the tower on August 16, 1878, fourteen months after Young’s death. McAllister immediately telegraphed President John Taylor and Wilford Woodruff:

Shortly after three o’clock this morning the Temple was struck by lightning. The bolt first struck the dome on the east face, near the top, breaking it in and shattering the wood of all the section of the east front, then down to the first rise above the square of the octagon of


¹⁸Several portions of the temple were dedicated as they were completed, beginning in January 1877, and temple ordinance work had already begun prior to the formal dedication on April 6.
the dome, then followed down to the foot of top flight of steps and ran quartering north east to floor, then divided running north and south through the lath and plastering above the square of the rock foundation of the tower, striking both of the circle window frames on the south east corner marring the plastering on the outside, and laying the smoky black mark of fire in its course. No damage done to any other part of the Temple below the timbers of the roof.  

A follow-up letter gave more detail of the damage and enclosed a photograph with red ink tracing the damage. McAllister summarized:

You will perceive that the damage is to Dome and Tower, consisting of woodwork and lath and plaster work. The main building is all right, except the two upper circular window frames on the S. side of the tower. These are shattered and blackened, though but one light of glass is fractured. . . . Shall we repair the damage done or not? Until we hear from you, we shall use a wagon cover etc, to prevent damage by rain. . . . We gratefully recognize the providence of the Almighty in the comparatively slight damage done, in consideration of the severity of the shock. It has not in the least interfered with our ordinance work.  

Bleak noted in his diary the same day: “It is miraculous that the building was not set on fire.” He also recorded that he wrote the letter to Taylor and Woodruff that McAllister signed and that he also sent a letter to Taylor and Woodruff enclosing a “sketch of inside appearance of Dome where damaged, also including shreds of roof’s canvas and melted nails, signed by myself.”  

The photograph, canvas, and nails were not preserved, nor was the reply to McAllister. Neither McAllister nor Bleak mentions receiving instructions about repairs. Six days after the lightning strike, L. John Nuttall visited McAllister and comments: “We examined the effects of the lightening stroke on the tower of the Temple, which had done some damage to repair which would cost some $200.”  

Temporary repairs must have been made at the time; however, none of these journal keepers mentions

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19Journal History, August 16, 1878, 4–5.
20John D. McAllister, Letter to Presidents John Taylor and Wilford Woodruff, August 16, 1878, John Taylor Presidential Papers, 1877–87, LDS Church Archives.
22Leonard John Nuttall, Diary, Typescript, August 22, 1878, 201,
any further repair work on the tower. Nothing concerning the lightning strike or repairs is reported in the infrequently published *St. George Union*; however, the McAllister telegram is quoted verbatim in the *Deseret Evening News*.\(^{23}\)

The journals continue their silence on the tower for the next twenty-one months. The first indication that the tower was to be replaced appears in Wilford Woodruff’s journal. On May 4, 1880, he recorded, “I wrote a letter to Br McAllister. I herd a letter read from Br G Q Cannon. I am appointed Chairman of a Committee to decide upon putting up Tower and Roof of St George Temple.”\(^{24}\) On May 27, Woodruff noted: “Wm H Fulsome asked for the plan of the tower to St. George Temple.”\(^{25}\) On June 26, Woodruff “received a letter from Wm H. Folsome concerning the Temple.”\(^{26}\) The journals of McAllister and Bleak add very little detail about what work was done on the temple in 1880. In April McAllister recorded, “Received letter from Prest Woodruff concerning Temple roof etc.”\(^{27}\) Two months later he recorded, “Found repairs and renovating progressing nicely. With Bro James G. Bleak examining bills of timber and lumber for Temple


\(^{25}\) Ibid., 7:576. William Harrison Folsom was a carpenter during the construction of the Nauvoo Temple, was Church architect from 1861 to 1867 after Truman O. Angell’s health failed, directed work on the Salt Lake Temple for five years, and for a short time was superintendent of work on the St. George Temple in 1874. Under Angell’s direction, he designed the revised tower and also assisted in designing the Manti and Logan temples. His daughter, Amelia, was married to Brigham Young. Paul L. Anderson, “William Harrison Folsom: Pioneer Architect,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 43 (Summer 1975): 240–59.

\(^{26}\) Ibid., 7:581.

McAllister records nothing further on the tower for more than two years. Bleak noted in July 1880: “Sent out bill for timbers and lumber to Nixon mill [on Mount Trumbull in northern Arizona] for Temple Tower.” He later noted, “Went to Temple this morning with Prest McAllister—went round and saw the work going on very nicely.” None of these brief statements describes the scope of this work; however, it must not have included making the tower taller, as this task was not accomplished until 1882–83.

An August 1880 article in the *Juvenile Instructor* described the temple, adding, “This tower will be remodeled and made much

28Ibid., July 29, 1880.
30Ibid., August 11, 1880.
higher during the ensuing winter.” It seems probable the author was aware of the taller design Truman O. Angell mentioned in a November 1880 letter to President John Taylor: “Note. When Bro Folsom was here to make a miniature drawing for topping out the St. George Temple tower, I stood by and counseled him until it suited my eye. How it took with the Presidency I did not learn.” Although Angell does not date this meeting with Folsom, it evidently occurred as a result of the 1880 Folsom-Woodruff correspondence and refers to the new tower, completed in 1883.

If the actual reconstruction of the temple tower was scheduled for the winter of 1880–81 (or anytime during 1881), I have found no explanation for the two-year delay. Both McAllister’s and Bleak’s journals are silent on the tower between 1880 and 1882. Perhaps additions made to the temple in 1881 preempted efforts on the tower. Remodeling finally commenced in late 1882. Bleak recorded on December 7: “Long timber of the lower octagon of the Tower put in its place today.” Samuel Roskelly wrote to the editor of the Deseret News, also in December: “The new tower on the Temple is approaching completion.” In January 1883, McAllister

32Truman O. Angell, Letter to President John Taylor, November 27, 1880, John Taylor Presidential Papers, 1877–87, LDS Church Archives.
33Anderson, “William Harrison Folsom, 255: “In 1878, after lightning struck the tower of the St. George Temple splitting the wooden cupola in half, Folsom designed the new cupola under the supervision of Truman O. Angell, the original architect of the building.” This design is at the Huntington Library, in San Marino, California.
34During the fall of 1881, both Bleak and McAllister mention work on an addition to the temple. McAllister, Journal, October 29, 1881, records: “Laying out the foundation for the Temple addition.” On the same day, Bleak recorded, “With Prst McAllister, Bp D. H. Cannon and Bro Wm H. Thompson laid out the site for the Dining Room, Kitchen, Pantry and Engine House as per plan furnished by Architct Folsom.” These additions must have taken priority over increasing the height of the tower.
“went to the upper deck of the Tower inspecting the work.”

In February 1883, the *Deseret News* reported, “The dome on the St. George Temple is undergoing a remodeling, but yet it is hardly large enough, considering the size of the building, but is so far ahead of the former dome that it looks very well as it nears completion.”

A few days later another St. George correspondent, enthusiastically reported: “[The Temple’s] appearance is much improved since the completion of the new tower, as it is more in accord with the dimensions of the structure it stands upon than the old one.”

The *Salt Lake Daily Tribune* correspondent agreed: “A new tower is being put on the temple. It is much larger than the old one, and more in harmony with the architectural design of the temple.” With the new tower in place, the top of the weather vane was forty feet higher (175 feet) than its original height of 135 feet above the ground.

Work on the roof disclosed further damage from the lightning strike. James Bleak wrote to Wilford Woodruff: “We find in repairing the roof that the hand of the Lord and nothing else, must have saved the building from being burnt at the time the tower was struck by lightning.” One of the workmen broke through the temple roof twenty-four feet from the tower and found that a roof board was burned completely away.

So what can we make of the charming stories about Brigham

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38 *Deseret News*, February 13, 1883, 3.
42 James G. Bleak, Letter to Wilford Woodruff, July 30, 1883, quoted in Kirk H. Curtis, “History of the St. George Temple” (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1964). I searched for but did not find the original letter in the LDS Church Archives. Bleak comments three times on this work during the summer of 1883 (July 25, 27, and August 6) but never with specific details. McAllister does not mention the topic.
Young’s posthumous disappointment with the temple tower?\(^{43}\) First, it seems unlikely that, had he expressed his discontent publicly, the St. George Saints would have refused to change the tower.\(^{44}\) Second, how then did the story of Brigham Young’s wrath at the short tower get started? Although these stories may have circulated in the St. George area for years, there is no evidence that the story appeared in print prior to the *Color Country Spectrum* article of April 13, 1977.\(^{45}\) Perhaps the source was a joking reference to friends and colleagues in St. George and Salt Lake City by architectural historian Paul L. Anderson after he read Brigham Young Jr.’s journal entry. Anderson, who was working in the Church Historical Department with responsibility for historic sites in the late 1970s, does not remember having heard the story before he read Brigham Jr.’s diary. Given Brigham Sr.’s penchant for having his own way, the juxtaposition of his comment recorded in the diary and the lightning bolt, has an irresistible comic appeal that no one who heard it could resist repeating. From there, it

\(^{43}\)“Brigham Gets His Way,” 58.

\(^{44}\)John Codman, an 1874 visitor to Utah, described Brigham Young: “He is a priest and king, bishop and farmer, minister and manufacturer— theoretical in religion and practical in all the affairs of life. When he has a revelation of a new doctrine, the people believe it. When he counsels a new mode of irrigation, they dig the ditch. When he preaches morality, they practice it, and when he wants woolen-mills and railroads, they build them.” Codman, *The Mormon Country: A Summer with the “Latter Day Saints”* (New York City: United States Publishing Company, 1874), 142.

A helicopter installs the 1994 fiberglass replica of the St. George Temple dome. Photograph by Lynn Clark. Used by permission.
rapidly made its way into print.\textsuperscript{46}

The story is a wonderful piece of Mormon folklore; but in the interests of historical accuracy, let the record show that Brigham Young never publicly expressed displeasure nor did the contemporary Saints believe that Brigham Young sent a lightning bolt to destroy a tower he disliked. Rather, as Bleak reported to Wilford Woodruff, they firmly believed that the “hand of the Lord” preserved the temple when the tower was struck. Rebuilding the tower in better proportion for the temple’s size was a correct aesthetic response.

A 1992 inspection revealed severe dry rot in the timber supports. In October 1994, a new fiberglass dome, which exactly replicates the 1883 structure, was installed, and other repairs to the tower were made. This modern technological advancement thus preserves the beautiful symmetry of the temple, but also protects the dome from further deterioration caused by water or insects.\textsuperscript{47}

\textsuperscript{46}Paul L. Anderson, telephone conversation, May 26, 2004.
THE CONCEPT OF A “REJECTED GOSPEL” IN MORMON HISTORY, PART 1

William Shepard

ONE OF THE SURPRISINGLY INFLUENTIAL doctrines of nineteenth-century Mormonism, though now little known, was the concept of the “rejected” gospel. This version of sacred history postulated that the Jews of Jesus’s time had, as a people, rejected the gospel that he brought. Hence, Paul’s call to take the gospel to the Gentiles was partly prompted by the Jewish rejection as well as by the gospel’s universality. The Book of Mormon reinforces this view of history. “Gentiles” are individuals who do not belong to one of the twelve tribes of Israel or have not been adopted into the house of Israel.¹ The Gentiles would be offered the gospel but would, in turn, reject it. During the period immediately preceding Christ’s second coming—which many early Mormons confidently expected within their own lifetimes—the day of the Gentiles would end, the Lamanites would rise in triumph and power, and the gospel would revert to the house of Israel in full strength. The house of Israel

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would consist of (1) the Mormons who had become Israelites by adoption, if not through actual lineage,\(^2\) (2) Lamanites of the Book of Mormon (who would become a “white and delightsome” people), (3) the Jews, who would convert en masse, and (4) the lost ten tribes who would return from “the north.”\(^3\)

While this outline seems relatively straightforward, actual nine-

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\(^2\)For a cogent analysis of historic Mormon beliefs that they are “literal descendants of one of the twelve tribes of ancient Israel, usually that of Ephraim” and that “this designation is, furthermore, part of an implied hierarchy . . . ranging from most favored to least favored,” see Armand L. Mauss, “In Search of Ephraim: Traditional Mormon Concepts of Lineage and Race,” *Journal of Mormon History* 25 (Spring 1999): 133–74.

\(^3\)The removal of the eastern tribes of Indians farther west in the early 1830s had hearty Mormon approval, since they interpreted this activity as the beginning of the process which would end in their conversion. “Indian Treaties,” *The Evening and the Morning Star* 1 (January 1833): 6, praised it: “The United States continue to buy the land of Joseph and become nursing fathers unto his children. . . . What a beauty it is to see the prophecies fulfilling so exactly.” W. W. Phelps, commenting on this “gathering” added that the Indians would become civilized and that he rejoiced “to see the great work prosper.” “Letter No. 11,” *Latter Day Saints’ Messenger and Advocate* 2 (October 1835): 193. Many articles in Mormon newspapers anticipated the Jews’ imminent return to Jerusalem. Sidney Rigdon, “The Saints and the World,” *Messenger and Advocate* 3 (December 1836): 419, saw Mormons playing the biblical role of “the hunters and fishers.” See also *Evening and the Morning Star*: “Remarkable Fulfillment of Indian Prophecy,” 1 (September 1832): 8; “The Jews,” 1 (December 1832): 3–4; “The Last Days,” 1 (February 1833): 1; “Israel Will Be Gathered,” 2 (June 1833): 101. From the *Messenger and Advocate* see: “Millenium. [sic] No IX,” 1 (November 1834): 17–19; “Letter VI [Cowdery] to W. W. Phelps, Esq.” 1 (April 1835): 108–12; “The Indians,” 2 (January 1836): 245–48; “Communications,” 2 (September 1836): 369–72. Grant Underwood, *The Millenarian World of Early Mormonism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 82, stated: “The concurrent U. S. government policy of relocating the Indians just west of the revealed Missouri site for Zion, therefore, struck the Saints as too coincidental not to be providential. For those that could read the handwriting on the wall, it was clear that Jehovah was using Andrew Jackson just as he had earlier used Cyrus the Great to facilitate the gathering of his people.”
teenth-century interpretations were much more complex, influencing virtually every group that recognized Joseph Smith as a prophet. The view that the Gentiles had rejected the gospel transformed itself rapidly into a more internecine conflict. In the battles between Mormon factions, it was standard procedure for the challengers to charge that the Brighamites were usurpers whom God had rejected, for the Brighamites to claim that the other Mormons had likewise been divinely rejected because they were apostates, and for all factions to claim that only their leaders were authorized to head the Church. This article traces the development of some manifestations of the concept of “rejection” among historically significant branches of Mormonism.

For most of the nineteenth century, Brigham Young and the Twelve saw in the murders of Joseph and Hyrum Smith the final proof that the Gentile nation of the United States had reached the fullness of iniquity, had rejected the gospel, and would soon be cut off from salvation except for the few who, hearing the “warning voice” of the zealous missionaries, would abandon Babylon and gather to Zion. The contemporary LDS Church, however, sees the Gentile field as still awaiting reaping by missionaries, while the rejection of the Gentiles has been postponed to the immediate pre-Advent future. In contrast, James J. Strang, who flourished in the immediate post-Nauvoo period, and his lieutenants denied that the Gentiles had rejected the gospel, insisting instead that the Gentiles were still accepting conversion. Yet ironically, contemporary Strangites believe and teach that the Gentiles did reject the gospel and anticipate that God will reestablish the Church in its fullness with a prophet from the tribe of Judah who will complete the gathering of the Jews to Palestine. In a ministry like that of Moses, this individual will fulfill great prophetic events and his ministry will be

God. The “lost tribes” would receive knowledge of Jesus Christ and would be redeemed when the Lamanites or Indians received knowledge of their identity and heritage. See, for example, 1 Ne. 22:4; 2 Ne. 10:22, 29:12–13; 3 Ne. 15:15, ch. 16; 17:4, 21:26; Ether 13:11. All Book of Mormon references are from the 1981 LDS edition.

I use the nineteenth-century designations of Strangite, Brighamite, Rigdonite, Josephite, etc., for their clarity in identification and because they are the historic terms used by the participants; no pejorative connotation is attached to their use.
followed by the Two Witnesses and Christ’s Second Coming.\(^5\)

Although the contest over authority in the post-martyrdom Church was complex and multifaceted, the Brighamite interpretation of rejection provided a backdrop against which challengers to their supremacy developed alternate and opposing concepts of rejection. Although the challengers disliked each other as much as they did the Brighamites, they generally agreed that the Brighamites, not the Gentiles, were the ones who had been rejected. Further, as rejection implied that a restoration was necessary, different challengers declared that they alone had been authorized by God to set his house “in order.”

**Gentile Status during Joseph Smith’s Ministry**

The complicated relationship between the Gentiles and the house of Israel was drawn largely from the Book of Mormon. The future acceptance or rejection of the gospel by the Gentiles would take place when the gospel was restored (1 Ne. 13:34–35). The parameters for acceptance or rejection required that the Gentiles “endure to the end,” hearken “to the Lamb of God,” harden “not their hearts,” and “repent and fight not against Zion” (1 Ne. 13:37, 14:1–2; 2 Ne. 6:12).

The scenario of a rejected gospel emerges from the earliest episodes in the Book of Mormon. During Nephi’s replication of his father’s vision, the angel explains that there are two alternatives for the Gentiles. They can repent and be rewarded or harden their hearts and be punished: “For the time cometh, saith the Lamb of God, that I will work a great and a marvelous work among the children of men; a work which shall be everlasting, either on the one hand or on the other—either to the convincing of them unto peace and life eternal, or unto the deliverance of them to the hardness of their hearts and the blindness of their minds unto their being brought down into captivity, and also into destruction, both temporally and spiritually, according to the captivity of the devil, of which I have spoken” (1 Ne. 14:7).

This passage was frequently teamed with 1 Nephi 13:42: “And the time cometh that he [Christ] shall manifest himself unto all nations, both unto the Jews and also unto the Gentiles; and after he has 

\(^5\)Strangites believe that the Jews and Gentiles consecutively rejected the gospel in the dispensation of the meridian of times and that the Gentiles have rejected the gospel in the dispensation of the fullness of times. Moreover, they see themselves as a remnant in an interregnum period until God calls and sends angels to ordain a prophet of the tribe of Judah.
manifested himself unto the Jews and also unto the Gentiles, then he shall manifest himself unto the Gentiles and also unto the Jews, and the last shall be first, and the first shall be last.”

The usual interpretation of this passage was that, after the Jews rejected the gospel presented to them by Jesus Christ in the meridian of times, God presented the gospel to the Gentiles, as described in the New Testament. In the dispensation of the fullness of times ushered in by Joseph Smith, many Mormons in the 1830–44 period believed that anyone who failed to accept the missionary message was rejecting the gospel and was, by definition, a Gentile since those of “believing blood” (the house of Israel) would understand and accept the gospel.6 At a certain point, God would deem that the Gentiles had had sufficient opportunity, the gospel would be removed from the Gentiles, and it would again be presented to the Jews.

Despite these alternatives, the Gentiles seemed predestined to sin and ultimately reject the gospel. Jesus Christ, speaking to the Nephites in his post-resurrection mission to the Americas, specified:

And thus commandeth the Father that I should say unto you: At that day when the Gentiles shall sin against my gospel, and shall be lifted up in the pride of their hearts above all nations, and above all people of the whole earth, and shall be filled with all manner of lyings, and of deceits, and of mischiefs, and all manner of hypocrisy, and murders, and priestcrafts, and whoredoms, and of secret abominations; and if they shall do all those things, and shall reject the fulness of my gospel, behold, saith the Father, I will bring the fulness of my gospel from among them.

And then will I remember my covenant which I have made unto my people, O house of Israel, and I will bring my gospel unto them.

And I will show unto thee, O house of Israel, that the Gentiles shall not have power over you; but I will remember my covenant unto you, O house of Israel, and ye shall come unto the knowledge of the fulness of my gospel. (3 Ne. 16:10–12)

In short, from the time prospective Mormons first read the Book of Mormon, they had a view of sacred history that included the Gentile rejection of the gospel; and for many of them, it was already a part of their understanding of the Bible. Two additional revelations given during the formative period of the Church had a major impact in convincing the Mormons that the Gentiles as a whole would reject the gospel. The first, given in March 1829 to Joseph Smith and pub-

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6Mauss, “In Search of Ephraim,” 147–49.
lished in the Book of Commandments, explicitly emphasized the Gentiles’ precarious status:

And thus, if the people of this generation harden not their hearts, I will work a reformation among them. . . .

And now if this generation do harden their hearts against my work, behold I will deliver them up unto satan [sic], for he reigneth and hath much power at this time, for he hath got great hold upon the hearts of the people of this generation: and not far from the iniquities of Sodom and Gomorrah, do they come at this time; and behold the sword of justice hangeth over their heads, and if they persist in the hardness of their hearts, the time cometh that it must fall upon them. 7

The second, which Joseph Smith received on March 7, 1831, in Kirtland, Ohio, said:

And when the times of the Gentiles is come in, a light shall break forth among them that sit in darkness, and it shall be the fulness of my gospel.

But they receive it not, for they perceive not the light, and they turn their hearts from me because of the precepts of men.

And in that generation shall the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. (D&C 45:28–30; see also D&C 10:53, 39:16–18. All Doctrine and Covenants quotations are from the 1981 LDS edition.)

In addition to these scriptural injunctions, Joseph Smith added the weight of prophetic pronouncement to the jeopardy of the Gentiles, and other Mormon expounders and missionaries took up the theme energetically during the mid-1830s. On January 8 or 10, 1832, he preached “that the day of vengeance was coming upon this nation like a thief in the night; that prejudice, blindness and darkness filled the minds of many, and caused them to persecute the true Church, and reject the true light.” 8

Less than two weeks after receiving the revelation known as the Civil War Prophecy (D&C 87), Smith wrote N. C. Saxton, the editor of a Rochester, New York, newspaper on January 4, 1833, describing “the manifest withdrawal of God’s Holy Spirit, and the vail [sic] of stupidity which seems to be drawn over the hearts of the people.” He added: “I am prepared to say by the authority of Jesus

Christ, that not many years shall pass away before the United States shall present such a scene of bloodshed as has not a parallel in the history of our nation pestilence, hail, famine, and earthquake will sweep the wicked off this generation from off the face of this Land to open and prepare the way for the return of the lost tribes of Israel from the north country—

Although the Mormons seemed unclear about how and when the gospel might be taken to the Jews, they seemed much more certain that the Gentiles were already being cut off. Sidney Rigdon addressed the Saints in November 1834: “That the Gentiles have fallen from their high standing before God, and incurred his displeasure, cannot be doubted by any man acquainted with the scriptures: All the grand distinguished characteristics of the kingdom of heaven have disappeared among them.” He returned repeatedly to this theme in a fourteen-part series called “Millenium” [sic] published in 1834 and 1835:

The apostasy of the Gentiles is a subject, that I believe, is no where disputed in all the professing world—It is acknowledged by all, that the present generation of religious Gentiles is in a state of confusion and distraction: . . . and that, when the time came (I mean the time to prepare for the cutting off of the Gentiles,) that the Lord would set his hand again to recover his people. 

. . . The Gentiles have ceased to bring forth the fruit which they brought forth when the kingdom of heaven was first given unto them, and that the gospel which the apostles preached is considered heresy among them. . . . The apostasy of the Gentiles is so great, that they know not the doctrine of Christ when they hear it.

Grant Underwood, an expert on Mormon millennial thought, summarized Rigdon’s repeated announcement of Gentile rejection:


“His logic was simple. Gentile Christendom had had its chance. The end times were to be Israel’s great day, and what triggered it in the divine economy was the fullness of Gentile apostasy. Examples of this mindset are numerous. In February 1835, Joseph Smith instructed the newly ordained Twelve Apostles “to preach among the Gentiles until the Lord shall command them to go to the Jews.” Warren A. Cowdery, Oliver Cowdery’s brother and presiding elder over the Mormon churches in and around Freedom, New York, wrote an unidentified individual in March 1833 about the religious deficiencies of his “Christian community” and God’s impending punishment of the United States: “We notice as before remarked the literal fulfillment of every promise and every threatening, and think it not wresting the Scriptures, or a mark of credulity in us to believe and say to our fellow clay, beware of those who cry peace and safety when God has said, in substance, tribulation, wrath and anguish abide you. He is about to bring this dispensation to a close.” In June 1836, Apostle Orson Hyde, in a “prophetic warning,” informed the Gentiles: “The Gospel was committed to the Gentiles for the express purpose of preparing them for the second coming of Christ. . . . But the Gentiles have made void the gospel through the tradition of their Elders.” According to Hyde, “The Gentiles have not continued in the goodness of God; but have departed from the faith and purity of the gospel.” He then described the future plight of this nation in lurid terms: “God will soon begin to manifest his sore displeasure to this generation and to our country by vexation and desolating wars; bloody! bloody in the extreme! . . . Pestilence and famine will soon show to this generation that the hour of God’s judgment hath come. . . . A sort of flies shall go forth among the people and bite them, and cause worms to come in their flesh, and their flesh shall fall from their bones, and their eyes shall fall out of their sockets; and they shall desire to die.” After the scourging of the Gentiles, Hyde reasoned “the Jews will be grafted back into their own olive tree.”

The theme of Gentile rejection persisted into the 1840s as well. Joseph Smith declared on March 4, 1840, during his first spring in

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14 “Instructions to the Twelve,” History of the Church 2:200; see also D&C 20:9; 21:12; 90:9; 107:33–35, 97; 112:4; 133:8.
16 Orson Hyde, “A Prophetic Warning: To All the Churches, of Every
Nauvoo: “I see, by the visions of the Almighty, the end of this nation, if she continues to disregard the cries and petitions of her virtuous citizens, as she has done, and is now doing.”17 Four months later on July 3, Smith, disillusioned by U.S. President Martin Van Buren’s rejection of the Mormon plea for redress in Missouri, pronounced: “Since Congress has decided against us, the Lord has begun to vex this nation, and He will continue to do so except they repent.”18

An article written by a person using the pseudonym “B,” published in the April 1841 issue of the Times and Seasons, then being edited by Don Carlos Smith, drew an unflattering comparison between Jews and Gentiles: “When the Jewish church were in a state of apostasy, and were about to be broken off because of their unbelief; (as is the condition of the Gentiles) . . .”19 On October 15, 1843, Joseph Smith prophesied “in the name of the Lord God [that] anguish and wrath and tremulity [sic] and tribulation and the withdrawing of the spirit of God await this generation until they are visited with utter destruction. This generation is as corrupt as the generation of the Jews that crucified Christ and if he were here to day and should preach the same doctrine he did then, they would crucify him.”20

Mormon missionary Charles B. Thompson, preaching in Batavia, New York, in the early 1840s, informed the Gentiles in his polemic A Proclamation and Warning to the Gentiles Who Inhabit America that the end was near: “It is the hour of God’s judgment; and the generation in which the Lord will come with ten thousand of his saints to execute judgment upon all.”21 Freeman Nickerson, then proselytizing in Boston in April 1842, warned the inhabitants that “wickedness will soon be swept from the earth, and that the day of universal righteousness will set in during this generation, when our offices shall all become

Sect and Denomination, and to Every Individual into Whose Hands It May Fall,” Messenger and Advocate 2 (July 1836): 342–46.
17“March 4, 1840,” History of the Church, 4:89.
18“July 3, 1840, ibid, 4:145.
peace, and our exactions righteousness."\(^{22}\)

On December 16, 1843, while discussing a petition for redress of grievances\(^{23}\) in Missouri that he planned to present to Congress, Joseph Smith spoke of his hopes for the petition and was moved to prophesy “by virtue of the holy Priesthood vested in me, and in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that, if Congress will not hear our petition and grant us protection, they shall be broken up as a government, and God shall damn them, and there shall nothing be left of them—not even a grease spot.”\(^{24}\)

**THE BRIGHAMITE DOCTRINE OF THE GENTILE “REJECTION”**

*Reactions in the 1844–47 Period*

The Gentiles provided ample evidence of their depravity by plundering the Mormon settlers in Missouri and driving them from the state. Additional proof was the federal government’s indifference to Mormon pleas for justice, and, as the capstone, the assassinations of Joseph and Hyrum Smith. It is likely that a majority of the Nauvoo Mormons both expected and fervently desired God’s vengeance on the Gentiles. For example, John Lowe Butler, a Southern convert who figured prominently in the election day fight in Gallatin County that set off the 1838 Mormon War in Missouri, recorded in his autobiography that “the Saints . . . prayed the Lord would avenge the blood of his servants.”\(^{25}\) William Hyde, who endured Missouri persecutions, served several important missions, and was later a member of the Mormon Battalion, learned of the Smiths’ martyrdom on a mission in Vermont in early July 1844. His retrospective journal entry predicted:

\(^{22}\)“From the Dollar Weekly Bostonian,” republished in *Times and Seasons* 3 (May 16, 1842): 797.

\(^{23}\)This is apparently the “Memorial of the City Council [of Nauvoo] to Congress.” See *History of the Church*, 6:116,125.


"For that blood the nation will be obliged to atone.”

William Clayton, Joseph Smith’s scribe and recorder of Mormon history, wrote a prayer of vengeance after Orrin Porter Rockwell awoke him early on June 28, 1844, and told him of the murders:

And now O God wilt thou not come out of thy hiding place and avenge the blood of thy servants.—that blood which thou hast so long watched over with a fatherly care—that blood so noble—so generous—so dignified, so heavenly you O Lord will thou not avenge it [the murders] speedily and bring down vengeance upon the murderers of thy servants that they may be rid from off the earth and that the earth may be cleansed from these scenes, even so O Lord thy will be done.

We look to thee for justice. Hear thy people O God of Jacob even so Amen.

Clayton then described the mood of the Saints at Nauvoo: “Few expressions were heard save the mourns for the loss of our friends. All seem to hang on the mercy of God and wait further events. Some few can scarce refrain from expressing aloud their indignation at the Governor and a few words would raise the City in arms & massacre the Cities of Carthage & Warsaw & lay them in ashes but it is wisdom to be quiet.”

Wilford Woodruff recorded a similar prayer for vengeance in his journal: “I asked my heavenly father in the name of Jesus Christ and by virtue of the Holy Priesthood and the Keys of the kingdom of God that he would speedily avenge the blood of Joseph the Prophet Seer and Revelator, and Hiram the Patriarch, which had been shed by the hands of the American gentile nation, upon all the heads of the Nation and State that have aided, abetted or perpetrated the horrid


27Quoted in James B. Allen, Trials of Discipleship: The Story of William Clayton, a Mormon (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 141–42. Allen also quoted Clayton’s journal entry from June 28: “The blood of these men, and the prayers of the widows and orphans and a suffering community will raise up to the Lord of Sabaoth for vengeance upon those murderers” and also quoted from Clayton’s History of the Nauvoo Temple, 80, 81, describing the acquittal of the accused assassins: “Thus the whole State of Illinois have made themselves guilty of shedding the blood of the prophets by acquitting those who committed the horrid deed, and it is now left to God and his saints to take vengeance in his own way, and in his own time” (142).
deed, of shedding the blood of those righteous men even the Lords anointed.”

“How long oh God . . . will thy judgments slumber and suffer thy Saints to be prevailed against by their enemies,” cried Abraham O. Smoot, when he learned of the murders while on a mission in the southern states on July 12, 1844; he then implored God to avenge the “blood of the innocent.”

At least some Mormons were not inclined to leave vengeance strictly in God’s hands. Allen Stout, brother of the redoubtable Danite Hosea Stout, viewed the bodies and then took a personal oath of vengeance against the Gentiles:

Their dead bodies [Joseph and Hyrum Smith] were brought to Nauvoo, where I saw their beloved forms reposing in the arms of death. . . . But I there and then resolved in my mind that I would never let an opportunity slip unimproved of avenging their blood upon the head of the enemies of the church of Jesus Christ. I felt as though I could not live I knew not how to contain myself, and when I see one of the men who persuaded them to give up to be tried, I feel like cutting their throats. And I hope to live to avenge their blood; but if I do not I will teach my children to never cease to try to avenge their blood and then their children and childrens children to the fourth generation as long as there is one descendant of the murderers upon the earth.

Kirtland convert and ardent missionary Levi Hancock obviously shared Stout’s feelings. He took his ten-year-old son, Mosiah, to

29 Abraham O. Smoot, Journal, July 12, 1844, 208, holograph, Perry Special Collections.
30 Allen Joseph Stout, Journal, June 28, 1844, typescript, 19, Perry Special Collections. Stout probably received some encouragement for this view from Brigham Young, whose intemperate comments Allen’s brother Hosea recorded in his journal. On September 26, 1845, Young, speaking to a group of Mormons at Nauvoo about the Mormon intent to leave Nauvoo, proclaimed that he would not winter again in “such a Hell of a Hole”—meaning the United States—and, since the Gentiles accused the Mormons of stealing their horses and cattle, “I wish some of the brethren would steal & kill them.” Quoted in Juanita Brooks, ed., On the Mormon Frontier: The Diary of Hosea Stout, 1844–1861, 2 vols. (1964; rpt., Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1982), 1:73.
view the bodies of Joseph and Hyrum Smith as they lay in the Mansion House, choosing a time “after the people had gone home.” Here he “told me to place one hand on Joseph’s breast and to raise my other arm and swear with hand uplifted that I would never make a compromise with any of the sons of hell, which vow I took with a determination to fulfill to the very letter. I took the same vow with Hyrum.”

Although this pledge may be interpreted as a renewal of devotion to the Mormon cause, it does not necessarily exclude vengeance.

The position that the Gentiles rejected the gospel became doctrine by a conference vote on Tuesday, April 8, 1845, at Nauvoo. Heber C. Kimball recommended that all Mormons gather quickly to Nauvoo, concentrating their efforts on building the temple and Nauvoo House. He added, significantly that they should

bring their firelocks, and learn to use them, and keep them well cleaned and loaded, and primed, so that they will go off the first shot, that every man may be in readiness, and prepared, that is, every man shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; [a parody of Ephesians 6:15] (holding up his cane as a sample;) that is the way. . . . We have had our women insulted many times by men in Warsaw, (who are the meanest people that ever God suffered to live.) . . . You would think they were the finest men in the world, but they do this for the purpose of destroying the [our] females. I saw this myself, (and I wished I had the preparation of the gospel.) . . .

After this tirade, Kimball “proposed to withdraw fellowship from the Gentiles eniquity, [sic] which was done by an unanimous vote.” The clerk concluded: “Now they are disfellowshipt.”

Brigham Young, who followed Kimball as a speaker, spelled out the implications of this disfellowshipping and “declared in sub-

31 Mosiah L. Hancock, Autobiography, in They Knew the Prophet, compiled by Hyrum L. Andrus and Helen Mae Andrus (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1972), 104.

32 “Speech Delivered by Heber C. Kimball,” April 8, 1845, Times and Seasons 6 (July 15, 1845): 971–73. Lusannah E. Goodridge Hovey, who heard Kimball’s address, spelled out the implications in her biographical sketch: “Brother Kimball spoke on general principles concerning our building up ourselves. . . . We have cut the Gentiles off from the church for they have killed the prophets and this nation will not redress our wrongs for they have repealed our charter. . . . All we ask is that they wipe up the blood
stance,” according to the reporter, “that, by martyring the Prophet and Patriarch, the Gentiles have rejected the gospel. We have traveled and preached to them enough. If they want salvation let them come to us. As it was with the Jews . . . when they rejected the gospel in the days of the old apostles; Lo! They turned to the Gentiles: so, now, as they have rejected the gospel by killing the prophet of the last days, we turn to the Jews and the house of Israel.”

D. Michael Quinn’s analysis of the succession crisis following Joseph Smith’s death documents that “on 27 June 1845, the first anniversary of Joseph Smith’s murder the Quorum of the Twelve’s Prayer circle presented a formal prayer for God’s vengeance on those who had shed the blood of the prophets. Six months later, this ‘prayer of vengeance’ (often called an ‘oath’) became part of the endowment ceremony at the Nauvoo Temple.”

In other public speeches, Church leaders spoke from this understanding of the Gentile rejection, expressing deep anger at the Smith
murders. Orson Hyde told a large audience at Nauvoo on June 15, 1845, that “Carthage jail presents a scene of blood, and that blood has not been avenged; and when the time can come, and when it can be ordered in wisdom in the heavenly council, the scourge shall come. And when you see these things come to pass, then rejoice and be exceeding glad.”

On September 1, 1845, Sidney Rigdon, an avowed enemy of the Brighamites, published a nine-page article, “The Plan of Salvation,” in his newspaper at Pittsburgh. It included a pointed attack on Parley P. Pratt and his church: “Parley P. Pratt has but a short time since, called upon the elders of that church to cease preaching to the Gentiles, assuring them that if they do baptize and build churches among them, that the spiritual gifts will not follow. Hence that people had no sooner set aside the true order of the government of the church, than one of their principal leaders, has to come out and declared that the spiritual gifts had ceased, and would cease to follow their ministration.”

Heber C. Kimball returned to the same theme a month later at the October 1845 general conference: “At the last conference, a vote was passed that the Gentiles were cut off . . . Inasmuch as the Gentiles reject us, lo! we turn to the Jews.” Orson Pratt presided over the eastern churches from August through December 1845. As editor of the New York Messenger, he articulated what became the definitive argument for the Gentile rejection in October 1845:

> The wholesale banishment of the Saints . . . seems to be a direct and literal fulfilment of many prophecies both ancient and modern. Jesus has expressly told us (see Book of Mormon 474 p. stereotyped edition) that if the Gentiles shall reject the fulness of my gospel, be-
hold saith the Father, “I will bring the fulness of my gospel from among them.” Now what could the Gentiles further do to reject the “fulness of the Gospel”—“the Book of Mormon?” Is there one crime that they are not guilty of? . . .

Are they not guilty of shedding innocent blood by suffering thousands of murderers to roam at large, who conspired to kill the Saints, and did actually murder scores of them? And do they not still pursue us with the same relentless persecution? Are they not now about to drive us into the Rocky Mountains? Is it not the nation—the government (and not individuals alone), who are guilty of these crimes? They are the most guilty, because they have power to protect us, but will not.

If then, all these crimes do not amount to a National rejection of the “fulness of the gospel,” I know not what more they can do, to fully ripen them in crime and iniquity. Therefore is not the time at hand for the Lord to bring the fulness of the gospel from among the Gentiles of this nation? If we are banished to the western wilds among the remnants of Joseph [Native Americans], is it not to ripen the wicked, and save the righteous? Is it not to save us from the impending judgments which modern revelations have denounced against this nation? How could the gospel be brought from among the Gentiles while the priesthood and the saints tarried in their midst? After a banishment of the gospel from the Gentiles, says the Book of Mormon, “Then will I remember my covenant which I have made unto my people, O house of Israel, and I will bring my gospel unto them, and ye shall come to the knowledge of the fulness of my gospel” [3 Ne. 16:10–12].

Two weeks later, Orson Pratt again castigated the Gentiles, calling them “blood-thirsty Christians” and declaring: “It is with the greatest of joy that I forsake this Republic: and all the saints have abundant reasons to rejoice that they are counted worthy to be cast out as exiles from this wicked nation; for we have received nothing but one continual scene of the most horrid and unrelenting persecutions at their hands for the last sixteen years.”

This new doctrine was also actively present in Wilford Woodruff was then the editor. Three issues later, the new editor, Thomas Ward, cited 3 Nephi 16:10–12 in an editorial, “Fulfillment of Prophecy,” Millennial Star 7 (January 15, 1846): 25–26, explaining that the fullness of the gospel would soon go to the house of Israel.


40“Farewell Message of Orson Pratt,” November 8, 1845, Times and
ruff’s mind. On December 14–15, 1845, in Manchester, England, Woodruff told the British Saints that moving out of the United States was necessary so that “the judgments of God might be poured out on that guilty nation that is already drunk with the blood of the Saints” and “we look upon these things as the fulfilment of the word of God.”

William Clayton recorded Brigham Young’s address to a group of Mormons in the Nauvoo Temple on January 2, 1846: “We will leave this wicked nation to themselves, for they have rejected the gospel, and I hope and pray that the wicked will kill one another and save us the trouble of doing it.”

An editorial in the February 15, 1846, issue of the Millennial Star, then edited by Thomas Ward, emphasized the Gentile rejection: “The people of the United States, as a nation, have rejected the offers of mercy, they have imbrued their hands in the blood of the innocent, which cries aloud for vengeance, . . . yet the wrath of an avenging God must fall upon the nation, and it is necessary for this people to be gathered away that they be not partakers of the plagues that will assuredly come upon this guilty land.”

Only four months later Ward repeated his earlier sentiments: “and they [the Mormons] will go forth shaking off the dust of their feet upon her [United States], and leaving their curse upon the doomed and fated people and rulers of the United States.”

When Woodruff reviewed his journal for 1846 at Winter Quar-
ters, he singled out the Gentile “rejection” as a landmark event: “According to the prophesies [sic] of the Prophet Lehi we have been rejected by the gentiles . . . and thereby [they] have rejected the Kingdom of God with the keys, oracles, & revelations.”

The Gentile “rejection” of the gospel continued to factor into encouragements to migrate to Utah. On August 15, 1847, Young, speaking to a group of Mormons, reiterated that the Church had, in turn, rejected the Gentiles: “While in the Temple at Nauvoo we voted to cut off the gentiles who had rejected the gospel & killed the prophets.”

His brother Joseph, one of the First Council of Seventy, likewise spoke to this theme at the December 24–27, 1847, conference at Winter Quarters where the LDS First Presidency, with Brigham as president, was reconstituted: “He said the Gentiles had been rejected and cut off.”

Orson Pratt articulated a fuller position two years later in an 1849 pamphlet: He quoted 3 Nephi 16:10–12 and announced that it been fulfilled: “It shall be recollected that this prediction was in print in the Book of Mormon before the church of the Saints was organized, and about sixteen years afterwards it began to be fulfilled. The Lord began to bring the fulness of his Gospel from among that persecuting nation of Gentiles, in the year 1846.”

*Developments during the 1850s*

With the Brighamite relocation in the West, some of their doctrinal priorities changed. They managed to outlast, ignore, or overwhelm Sidney Rigdon, Charles B. Thompson, James J. Strang, Alpheus Cutler, James C. Brewster, William Smith, Lyman Wight, and others. Brigham Young’s doctrine of the Gentile rejection broad-

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Hyde Statement at Dedication of the Seventies Hall,” *Times and Seasons* 6 (February 1, 1845): 795–96.


47 Brigham Young, quoted in ibid., August 15, 1847, 3:260.


ened, becoming less a doctrinal pronouncement than a social and political stance of mistrust and animosity.

On April 2, 1854, Jedediah M. Grant, Brigham Young’s fiery counselor, addressed the Mormons in the Salt Lake City Tabernacle: “The people of the United States have shed the blood of the Prophets, driven out the Saints of God, rejected the Priesthood, and set at naught the holy Gospel.” On April 7, 1855, in general conference, Orson Pratt took a position very like the initial description of the doctrine ten years earlier. He taught that Doctrine and Covenants 45:28–30 had been fulfilled. The prophecy that “a light shall break forth among them that sit in darkness” referred to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. “In that generation the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled.” He announced that the generation named had expired and that it was time to preach the gospel to the house of Israel:

In a revelation, given in March, 1831 (twenty-four years ago,) . . . and the light shall begin to break forth among them that sit in darkness, when the fullness of my Gospel shall begin to break forth, that is the period when “the time of the Gentiles shall come in.” Mark the expression; when the light shall begin to break forth, then at that period the time of the Gentiles shall have come in, and in that generation “the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled.”

Here then, we perceive the two distinctions, when the light begins to break forth; that is, when the Book of Mormon is translated, when the Church is organized, these events bring in the time of the Gentiles, and in the generation that the light breaks forth the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled.

They [the Jews] are to remain scattered, said the Lord until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled, . . . or when the light of the fulness of the Gospel begins to break forth. . . . and the voice of the Spirit to the servants of God now is, “Go forth to the house of Israel; for lo, the Gentiles count themselves unworthy of eternal life, go to the house of Israel, to the seed of Jacob, call upon them, hunt them out from the holes, the rocks, and from the dens of the earth.”

In about 1856, Orson Hyde taught that when the “times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled and they [Gentiles] abandoned to the judgments and wrath of Almighty God, and showing also when the cove-

nants of the Father with the house of Israel shall be fulfilled in this important declaration—‘I will take the fulness of my Gospel from among the Gentiles,’ &c.” In early 1857, Wilford Woodruff gave a glimpse of how he perceived the future. To a congregation at the Bowery in Salt Lake City, he explained that they had preached to the Gentiles for twenty-five years. Generally, the Gentiles rejected it; and in consequence, it would be taken from the Gentile nations. In contrast, “Here are the ten tribes of Israel. . . . There are Prophets among them, and by and by they will come along, and they will smite the rocks, and the mountains of ice will flow down at their presence, and a highway will be cast up before them, and they will come to Zion, receive their endowments, and be crowned under the hands of the children of Ephraim, and there are persons before me in this assembly to-day, who will assist to give them their endowments.”

Sociologist and historian Armand L. Mauss examined the Brighamite belief of being a chosen people, descended from Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, and Ephraim. This lineage translated to a concept that became a major underpinning of the Brighamite missionary effort until the early twentieth century: that the descendants of the house of Israel, particularly the dispersed ten tribes, had been scattered among the Gentile nations and that this “believing blood” would manifest itself by receptivity to the missionary message. Mauss explained that this “racialist lineage theology” belief dominated Mormon expectations through the nineteenth century and then was gradually replaced by what he labeled as “universalism:”

In the simpler contemporary scenario, Israel must still be gathered before the millennium, but the gathering now includes all who come unto Christ and will occur in many places. The covenant between God and Abraham is continued in the gospel covenant in

52Orson Hyde, ca. 1856, Journal of Discourses, 6:16. Wilford Woodruff recorded Hyde’s prayer at a meeting of the Twelve on February 21, 1859, which included: “The gospel had been beging [sic] among the Gentiles for 30 years & he believed the time was over. He believed the time [was] at hand when the Gentiles would beg for the Gospel.” Wilford Woodruff’s Journal, February 21, 1859, 5:291.

which “all are alike unto God” (2 Ne. 26:33), and all who accept the gospel become Abraham’s descendants. Operationally speaking, the search for Ephraim is now only the search for the Lord’s disciples. Whatever residue of racialist and racist teachings may still linger, whether glorifying some lineages or denigrating others, can only blur the more universalistic message with which the worldwide church strides into the twenty-first century.  

Parley P. Pratt, speaking in the Bowery in Salt Lake City on September 7, 1856, reported some of his experiences in the Church and emphasized Gentile resistance to the faith. After declaring that the “blood of innocence cries for vengeance, because its enemies have not administered justice,” Pratt commented that he had been reading the Book of Mormon predictions that “the Lord would take the fullness of his Gospel from among them [Gentiles]” and would send it “into the midst of the remnant of Israel.” According to him, “the very prophecy” was fulfilled after years of persecution by the Gentiles.  

In December 1856, Wilford Woodruff protested when Abraham Hoagland, bishop of Salt Lake City’s Fourteenth Ward, assigned ward teachers to present the gospel to local Gentiles:

But the spirit said to me it was not wisdom to send men to preach the gospel to them. I considered they were wicked & Corrupt & it was like casting pearls before swine. When I closed [Apostle] F. D. Richards Backed me up & bore testimony that [what] I said was true.

Then Bishop Hoagland arose & opposed me vary strongly & said He presided over the 14 ward [&?] had Sent the Teachers to preach to the Gentiles & he wished them to go & do it. I at once saw the devil had ensnared him.

When He sat down the Teacher arose & said what shall I do? Brother Woodruff says do not go to those Gentiles Bishop Hoagland says go. I arose & said to the teachers obey your Bishop for He says he will take the responsibility upon himself in sending teachers to them.  

Although Woodruff’s distaste for and harsh judgment about the resident Gentiles are obvious, it is not clear whether he was taking the position that all Gentiles were corrupt or just those in Fourteenth Ward. Nor did he buttress his position by asserting that the effort was

54 Mauss, “In Search of Ephraim,” 173.
56 Kenney, Wilford Woodruff’s Journal, December 6, 1856, 4:500.
futile because the Gentiles had already rejected the gospel and, hence, that God would not allow them to be converted. At this point in 1856, Brighamite missionaries were making converts throughout the United States, Canada, and much of Europe. Obviously, withdrawing missionaries from the Gentiles would have vitiated the Church’s long-term success and created difficulties in the theological interpretation of other doctrines; but in the summer of 1857, John Taylor told a Bowery audience not to expect important missionary success: “In most of these places [in the United States] they have rejected the Gospel, and they listen not to the voice of the charmer [Mormon missionaries], charm he ever so wisely.”

His disillusion may have been influenced by the Utah Expedition, even then advancing toward the “rebellious” Mormons. Not surprisingly, pronouncements against the Gentiles were more strident and frequent when the Brighamites felt threatened.

**Developments during the 1860s and 1870s**

During the 1860s, Brigham Young did not preach a formal sermon on the rejected gospel, but casual references make clear how solidly he believed in it. He remarked in the Bowery in September 1860 that the Gentiles “have had the Gospel preached to them year after year, and have rejected it.” On August 17, 1867, he told the Saints at Tooele City that, ten years earlier, he had warned Thomas L. Kane that the U.S. Government would be “shivered to pieces” for sending an army to Utah.

He was more explicit when he wrote to his missionary son Heber in Switzerland in February 1870: “The gospel door was opened on this land [United States], prophets and apostles have traversed it preaching the divine message, temples have been erected upon it where the sacred ordinances of the priesthood have been ad-

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57John Taylor, August 9, 1857, *Journal of Discourses*, 5:121. Taylor is quoting Psalm 58 from the Anglican *Book of Common Prayer*: “They are as venomous as the poison of a serpent, even like the deaf adder, that stoppeth her ears; Which refuseth to hear the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely.” [http://www.episcopalnet.org/1928bcp/Psalter/Day11.html](http://www.episcopalnet.org/1928bcp/Psalter/Day11.html) (accessed January 2, 2008). The King James version is slightly different: “They are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear; which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely” (Ps. 58:4–5).


ministered, but these ordinances have been held in derision, the truth has been rejected [by the Gentiles]."

With the exception of Orson Pratt and Brigham Young, I have been unable to find any references to the Gentile “rejection” later than the 1860s. However, Pratt, though shifting his emphasis to 3 Nephi 16 as a fulfillment of prophecy, continued to describe the Gentile rejection in much the same terms he had used in the 1840s. Speaking at Twentieth Ward on February 7, 1875, he quoted 3 Nephi 16:10 and said that, when the Mormons were forced from Nauvoo, the prophecy “was fulfilled to the very letter.” In general conference two months later, he reminded his listeners: “It [3 Nephi 16] was delivered in print before there was any Latter-day Saint Church in existence” and had since been fulfilled. He explained: “The only hope that we Gentiles have” is to be “numbered with these poor, degraded, despised, outcast, dark, and benighted Indians . . . in the inheritance of this great continent, which was given to them by promise, the same as Palestine was given to Abraham and Isaac.”

In 1879 when Pratt divided the Book of Mormon into chapters and verses, he “canonized” the doctrine of Gentile rejection by adding a footnote to 3 Nephi 16:10. Appended to the text, “I will bring the fulness of my gospel from among them,” he added this note: “Fulfilled, when the Saints left the States and came to Utah.” This reference remained in Utah editions of the Book of Mormon until 1920.

Orson Pratt’s on-going expectations that his church would dramatically convert large numbers of the Jews, the ten tribes, and the Indians reflected a fundamental Mormon belief. According to Grant Underwood, the Mormons perceived themselves as “spiritual Israel,” a position captured as early as 1845 in the “Proclamation of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.” They confidently expected to usher in the redemption and restoration of the twelve tribes, beginning with the Jews. The “remnant of Israel on this continent” [American Indians] would be addressed by “gathering, instructing, relieving, civilizing, educating, and administering salvation.” The Gentiles would be gathered “into the same cov-

60 Dean C. Jesse, ed., Letters of Brigham Young to His Sons (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1974), 138.
enant and organization” with Israel. “The Lord’s work would involve ‘building Jerusalem in Palestine and . . . Zion in America.’” Underwood tied these themes together by summarizing: “The end result was that ‘the whole Church of the Saints, both Gentile, Jew and Israel [here meaning Indians], may be prepared as a bride for the coming of the Lord.’ As for the ten tribes, they will ‘be revealed in the north country, together with their oracles and records, preparatory to their return, and to their union with Judah.’ Thus, in the last days, Gentile and Indian Saints would be planted in their American inheritance, Zion, while the Jews and eventually the ‘lost tribes’ of Israel were to be relocated in the renovated land of Canaan with Jerusalem reconstructed as their capital.”

After the deaths of Brigham Young in 1877 and Orson Pratt in 1881, the doctrine of Gentile rejection was rarely mentioned. Reasons for its decline include the Church’s distancing itself from doctrines which antagonized non-Mormons, a transition away from teaching that the millennium was imminent, and the fact that the doctrine impeded the missionary program. Another important reason was that the Church was beginning its slow transition from a posture of confrontation with the United States to an attitude that supporting the nation in times of crisis was a patriotic and religious duty.

The last public expression of the Brighamite position on Gentile “rejection” may have been in July 1915 when a letter in Liahona: The Elder’s Journal, presumably written by the editor Joseph E. Cardon, comforted missionaries who were experiencing little proselyting success: “The Gospel of Jesus Christ was rejected in His day by the masses, why should it not be so today?” It is difficult to see such statements, however, as expressions of a distinct doctrinal position.

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64 Ibid., 141; Thomas G. Alexander, Mormonism in Transition: A History of the Latter-day Saints, 1890–1930 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 289, explained: “By the 1920s the nearness of the millennium was deemphasized even more. In keeping with the changing emphasis, questions related to the imminence of the millennium were generally avoided.”
SURVIVING FUNDAMENTALIST BELIEFS

As the LDS Church distanced itself from doctrines like polygamy, Adam-God, the law of consecration, and blood atonement, conservative schismatic elements maintained these and other “fundamental” doctrines as tenets of their organizations. Fundamentalists generally believed that John Taylor was the last prophet who was acceptable to God but some taught that even he had been rejected.

As early as October 1882, George Q. Cannon complained at a stake conference in Tooele that, since his return to Utah from Washington in August, “I have heard more of new prophets and revelators, . . . than I have heard for several years.” John Taylor had been president of the Church since Brigham Young’s death in 1877, the government’s anti-polygamy campaign had not yet reached its climax, and many perplexed Saints must have felt a desperate need for authoritative rescue—if not by the return of the Lord himself then by unambiguous revelation. Cannon continued: “I do not know how many prophets I have heard of who have arisen; . . . Many revelations have been sent to me by persons who claim the right to preside over the Church and to be the Prophet of the Church. President Taylor has been the recipient of a number of similar communications, each one setting forth his claim to the presidency of the Church, and to the prophetic office; and some of them requiring us to accept the author as the person whom God has designated to be the revelator to and the President of the Church.”

A twentieth-century example of schismatic activity in Utah which is based upon the belief that the LDS Church is in apostasy for rejecting fundamental doctrines is the True and Living Church of Jesus Christ of Saints of the Last Days (TLC). The TLC was essentially founded in November 1990 when, according to James D. Harmston, dispensation heads Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and Moses ordained him to the prophetic office. Harmston, a retired real estate agent, had set up his headquarters in Manti, Utah, attached particular significance to the temple there, and constructed an elaborate theology, though not initially claiming to be other than Latter-day Saints. At its most developed, this schismatic sect preached that the United States

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would soon be devastated by God’s punishment while Harmston and his followers would be protected. While God wreaked vengeance upon the wicked, Harmston and his followers would be translated into specialized terrestrial beings who would have power to command the elements to punish the wicked.

Harmston, who claimed to be both Joseph Smith, and the Holy Spirit “restored” former LDS beliefs such as priesthood denial to blacks, the Adam-God doctrine, and plural marriage as a requirement for the highest level of exaltation. Another Harmston doctrine is a type of reincarnation and eternal progression which involves multiple mortal probations that can lead to godhood on the one hand or a downward progression on the other. Those who abandon the “truth” will be given black skins or even become demons. Incidentally, Harmston claimed that he would take the role of Jesus in the next life and that Gordon B. Hinckley, president of the LDS Church, was Cain in a previous life. His group’s cohesiveness was shattered when the Second Coming failed to materialize on schedule.

According to Tim Martin, who investigated the TLC for the Watchman Fellowship Profile, TLC views on the priesthood were closely connected to the practice of plural marriage:

It is in the best interest of man to obtain the highest priesthood possible, to ensure a better existence after this life. Men receive the priesthood, women are not eligible. Hence, a woman’s position in the next life depends on her husband’s level of priesthood authority in this life. If a man with high priesthood authority wants to help a woman married to a man with a lesser priesthood, he can rescue her. This means that he can lawfully, in the sight of God, take her from her current husband, and

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68 “Joseph Smith, Jr.,” True and Living Church website, http://www.tlcmanti.net (accessed December 26, 2007), states: “We do solemnly testify to you that Joseph Smith, Jr. is the angel that John the Revelator saw flying through the midst of heaven, that Joseph Smith, Jr. is the ‘witness/testator’, even the holy ghost, who came to this mortal probation ‘in the flesh’, and that Joseph Smith, Jr. is exactly who he said he is! He is our priest and king, who rules and reigns in the world of spirits, as well as on this side of the veil. He is our dispensation head and our Father.”

women have been rescued up to three and four times.\textsuperscript{70}

Becky Johns, as a member of the Case Reports Committee for the Mormon Alliance, met Harmston on at least two occasions and her article, which preceded the public announcement of the TLC Church’s organization or its public espousal of plural marriage, describes it more objectively and sympathetically than the above accounts. She does, however, confirm many of Martin’s observations and quotes Harmston as saying: “The LDS church has no sealing keys. They have nothing—less than nothing. They are a blasphemy before God—a stench in his nostrils.” In 1995 Harmston told Johns: “The LDS church in Salt Lake city will be completely destroyed. It will fall like a rock in one day. It will happen. God has rejected the Church.”\textsuperscript{71}

According to the group’s website, Harmston also taught: “It was foreseen that the Latter-day Gentile Church would sin against and reject the Fulness of the Gospel after it has been restored to them.” After quoting 3 Nephi 16:10, the official statement continued:

The prophecy is saying that the LDS Church would reject the Fulness of the Gospel placed in its charge. The authority of God would be removed from them and given to a remnant of people who will do the works of righteousness and who will keep their covenants. This is the pivotal message of the Book of Mormon for the people in the last days! This transition is now taking place, and the Lord is doing His strange act in the gathering of the outcasts of Israel. Priesthood authority has been given to the remnant to establish a Church and begin to implement all the Laws of Zion.\textsuperscript{72}

**THE “ONE MIGHTY AND STRONG”**

The schismatics who accused John Taylor of being a fallen prophet in the 1880s and the members of Harmston’s church share certain beliefs. Both groups would have agreed that the LDS Church was in apostasy for forsaking fundamental doctrines and that God had sent a new leader to “set his house in order.” This pattern of rejection and restoration has occurred among the Strangites, Josephites,

\textsuperscript{70}Ibid., 4.


\textsuperscript{72}“Book of Mormon Warnings in the Last Days,” True and Living Church website.
Brighamites, and in other Mormon factions. This pattern of rejection and restoration had been an important motivation for James J. Strang, Joseph Smith III, Granville Hedrick, and others to declare that they had been called of God to overturn the Brighamite “usurpa-
tion” and the other “apostate” Mormon factions. This cycle repre-
sents an inner fissuring—with one group in the Church accusing an-
other group in the Church of rejecting the gospel. Thus, it does not, at
first glance, seem necessarily related to the Gentiles’ rejection of the
gospel. However, historically, the two doctrines are nearly always con-
nected, perhaps because they represent points along a continuum of
purity versus contamination. Apparently it is only a short step for the
Saints who have already gathered out of Babylon and who therefore
view the Gentiles with suspicion and hostility to begin seeing those
same traits among insufficiently ardent or orthodox co-believers. Dis-
satisfied individuals within the churches established by the “restor-
ers” have repeatedly presented themselves as saviors with the divine
mission of restoring their church to a previous level of acceptability.

Perhaps the earliest expression in Mormonism of this cycle is
found in a letter from Joseph Smith Jr., written at Kirtland, Ohio, on
November 27, 1832, to William W. Phelps at “Zion” (Independence).
Orson Pratt included a portion of this letter in the 1876 Doctrine and
Covenants as Section 85 under the heading: “Revelation given
through Joseph, the Seer, in Kirtland, Ohio, November 27th 1832,
concerning the Saints in Zion, or Jackson Co., Missouri.” Verse 6 in-
troduced a future leader or leaders, further described in verses 7-8:

Yea, thus saith the still small voice, which whispereth through
and pierceth all things, and often times it maketh my bones to quake
while it maketh manifest saying:

And it shall come to pass that I, the Lord God, will send one
mighty and strong, holding the scepter of power in his hand, clothed
with light for a covering, whose mouth shall utter words, eternal
words; while his bowels shall be a fountain of truth, to set in order the
house of God, and to arrange by lot the inheritances of the saints
whose names are found, and the names of their fathers, and of their
children, enrolled in the book of the law of God;

While that man, who was called of God and appointed, that
putteth forth his hand to steady the ark of God, shall fall by the shaft of
death, like as a tree that is smitten by the vivid shaft of lightning. (D&C
85:6–8)

Although the Saints of Joseph Smith’s day usually interpreted
this description of the “one mighty and strong” as applying to Joseph
Smith himself—which was probably his intention—perhaps no other revelation has been less understood or has contributed more to speculation and to verbal violence between Mormons. Ogden Kraut, a fundamentalist author, now deceased, who lived in Salem, Utah, correctly summarized this confusion:

> It would be difficult to estimate the number of those who have claimed that grand title and honor of One Mighty and Strong. . . .

Most of these individuals have been dissenters from the LDS church, proclaiming their reasons why the Church needed to be set in order; and naturally each has claimed authority to accomplish the task. Usually he claims revelation from God assuring him that he has been “anointed,” and many have written down their “revelations.” Some have portfolios of over 100 revelations to “prove” their credentials.

There is an admixture of names, titles, and offices under the banner of the One Mighty and Strong. Some claim that all these titles apply to just one person, while others claim that different men will hold the various titles. For example, the scriptures mention the “Root of Jesse” ( Isa. 11:10, D&C 113:5–6), “A Man Like Unto Moses” (D&C 103:15–18), the “Marred Servant” (3 Ne. 20:44, D&C 43:4), the “Laminite Prophet” and the “Indian Messiah” (3 Ne. 21:23–24, D&C 101:55–62).  

In 1905, the LDS First Presidency (Joseph F. Smith, John R. Winder, and Anthon H. Lund) addressed the issue and strongly concluded that, were such a mission still in the future (in other words, not fulfilled by Joseph Smith), the one mighty and strong would be a future bishop in Independence, Missouri.  

The second part of the scripture—describing the “man, who was called of God and appointed, that putteth forth his hand to steady the ark of God” but who will “fall by the shaft of death”—has also intrigued and puzzled interpreters. The traditional interpretation is that the ark-steadier was Edward Partridge, Zion’s (Missouri’s) first bishop, who was tarred and feathered by a Jackson County mob in 1833, and who died in Nauvoo in 1840 at age forty-six. At Partridge’s funeral, Apostle John E. Page commented that “he did not know but the one [referred to in the revelation] should be Bishop Partridge. The Prophet Joseph

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74 For a more detailed discussion of this point, see Bill Shepard, “‘To Set in Order the House of God’: The Search for the Elusive ‘One Mighty and Strong,’” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 36 (Fall 2006): 18–45.
Smith spoke up and said he was the one referred to.”

According to Lyndon Cook, who has written extensively on the Doctrine and Covenants, Oliver Cowdery wrote to John Whitmer on January 1, 1834, quoting Joseph Smith as saying that the ark-steadying passage “does not mean that any one had [steadied the ark] at the time, but it was given for a caution to those in high standing to beware, lest they should fall by the shaft of death.”

H. Michael Marquardt, who is well versed in documents of the Joseph Smith period, also interprets “the one mighty and strong” as referring to Joseph Smith Jr., while the man who puts “forth his hand to steady the ark of God” is Edward Partridge.

**THE STRANGITE DOCTRINE OF GENTILE “REJECTION”**

During the fall of 1845, the Bringhamites were pressing to finish the Nauvoo Temple as part of their negotiated settlement with the local citizens to leave the state in the spring of 1846. Meanwhile, James J. Strang at Voree (now Burlington), Wisconsin, was preparing to challenge the Twelve’s authority. At that point, few in Nauvoo had heard of Strang or realized that they would soon be faced with weighing the merits of the claims made by this newcomer and by the Twelve.

James J. Strang was born March 21, 1813, at Scipio, New York, and was raised by Baptist parents in Chautauqua County, New York. His childhood was marked by extensive periods of illness and his diary,

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77H. Michael Marquardt, *The Joseph Smith Revelations; Text and Commentary* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1999), 219–20. Marquardt added that Joseph Smith had written to William W. Phelps on July 31, 1832: “Now this is a warning to all to whom this knowledge may come, and he that thinks he stands let him take heed lest he fall, tell Bro[ther] Edward it is very dangerous for men who have received the light he has received to be seeking a after [sic; after a] sign for there shall no sign be given for a sign except as it was in the days of Lot.”

which he kept from May 1831 to May 1836, depicts an unhappy and insecure young man who was driven by dreams of future greatness.\textsuperscript{79}

Although Strang was generally self-educated, he studied law and was admitted to the bar of Chautauqua County in 1836 but practiced this profession only periodically. Instead, he taught school, was a village postmaster, and edited a local paper. Strang became acquainted with Mormonism in 1836 when he married Mary Perce, whose sister was married to an active and dedicated Mormon, Moses Smith.\textsuperscript{80} By 1843 Moses and his brother Aaron, both LDS high priests, and other family members had established a pioneer settlement at Burlington, Wisconsin. James and Mary Strang moved there from New York the same year, and he began to practice law.\textsuperscript{81}

In February 1844, Strang and Moses’s brother, Aaron Smith, walked to Nauvoo where Strang was baptized by Joseph Smith and or-

\textsuperscript{79}Milo M. Quaife, \textit{Kingdom of Saint James: A Narrative of the Mormons} (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1930), 1–12, was biased against Mormon leaders, but his historical treatment of Strang is generally objective and fair. In one instance, however, he did Strang a great disservice when citing his diary entry of March 21, 1832, which clearly reads: “In the last year I have learned all that I profess to know. That is, I am \textit{ignorant} and mankind are frail and I do not half know that; nevertheless I shall act upon it for time to come for my own benefit.” Although Quaife had possession of the diary, he rendered the entry (203) as: “In the last year I have learned all that I profess to know. That is that I am \textit{eager} and mankind are frail and I do not half know that; nevertheless I shall act upon it for time to come for my own benefit” (emphasis mine). The error was corrected by Strang’s grandson in \textit{The Diary of James J. Strang}, Deciphered, Transcribed, Introduced and Annotated by Mark A. Strang (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1961), xxix, 17.


\textsuperscript{81}The best-known biography of Strang is Quaife’s \textit{Kingdom of Saint James}, which is unfortunately disapproving. For example, Quaife comments: “One of the happiest characterizations ever perpetrated by Theodore Roosevelt was the designation of a certain type of radicals as the ‘lunatic fringe’ of society. One can hardly read extensively in the literature of early Mormonism without becoming impressed with the thought that he is dealing chiefly with this lunatic fringe” (47). The best interpretation of
dained an elder by Hyrum Smith. The Smiths reportedly discussed the need for additional gathering places with Strang, then directed him to return to Burlington and send Joseph Smith a report on the merits of establishing a local stake at Burlington. Strang submitted a positive report on May 24 which described the Burlington area as an ideal place for “planting a Stake of Zion” because of its healthful climate, excellent farmland, and abundant water source. Joseph Smith, according to Strangite records and interpretation, wrote Strang on June 18, 1844, and appointed him to be his successor. This letter, known to Strangites as the “Letter of Appointment,” is a fundamental part of Strangite succession claims.

On June 27, 1844, the very day of the Smith brothers’ deaths, Strang claimed that he had been ordained by an angel to be a prophet, seer, revelator, and translator, receiving on July 9 the Letter of Appointment which Joseph Smith had written before his death, which appointed him to be his successor as president of the Church. Strang later told a group of his followers that on September 13, 1844, an angel revealed to him the location of ancient records buried in a local hill. Four of his converts, following Strang’s directions, dug up metallic plates covered with an alphabetical and pictorial record.

Although Brigham Young had successfully repudiated Sidney Rigdon’s claims to leadership in August 1844 and had done much to consolidate the apostles’ authority by focusing the attention of the Saints on completing the temple with its promised blessings, his pre-


Strang’s account of traveling to Nauvoo, his assignment by Joseph Smith, and his written response is in Chronicles of Voree, a holographic church record of the proceedings at Voree transcribed by James Hajicek, February 1844–June 1844, 6–9 (cited hereafter as “Chronicles of Voree”).

This letter was mailed at Nauvoo on June 18, 1844, and was received by Strang at Burlington on July 9. This letter was copied into the Chronicles of Voree, 1–6, and is currently located in James J. Strang Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, Doc. 1 (cited hereafter as Strang Collection).

Chronicles of Voree, September 13, 1844, 25–27. The Voree Plates are discussed in significant detail in Quaife, Kingdom of Saint James, 16–19.
eminence was a far from foregone conclusion. As 1846 wore on, many Mormons were uneasy about the right of the Twelve to head the Church. Rumors of polygamy and other secret practices disturbed many; and Brigham Young’s published statement on August 15, 1844, openly troubled many: “You are now without a prophet present with you in the flesh to guide you; but you are not without Apostles. . . . Let no man presume for a moment that his [Joseph Smith’s] place will be filled by another; for, remember he stands in his own place, and always will; and the Twelve Apostles of this dispensation stand in their own place and always will, both in time and in eternity, to minister, preside and regulate the affairs of the whole church.”

Adding to these concerns were the public announcements, documented above, that the Gentiles had rejected the gospel and that Nauvoo would be abandoned in favor of another gathering place in the West. Jacob Gibson, a former presiding authority in the Philadelphia Branch, expressed the discomfort of many when he wrote Strang on June 25, 1846: “There is two Branches of the church heare one of the twelve and one of Mr. Rigidons Both at verrry low ebb I am now occupying a rather newtral grown at my own request. I am some time agou chosen to preside over the Twelveit branch But after a short time Resigned in consequence of fals doctrin Twelve Heads ralling for orgin california. Taking the gospel from the gentiles no profit to lead no Sear to disurn the calamites &c &c.”

From 1844 through 1845, Strang and his supporters urged his claims mostly through personal contact and letters. However, by January 1846, a dozen or more dedicated Strangite missionaries were in Nauvoo, testifying about Strang’s calling, ordination, and doctrines and distributing copies of the first issue of his polemic newspaper, the Voree Herald. This paper contained an in-depth description of Strang’s calling, ordination, the history of the Voree plates, and scriptural evidences that he was Smith’s successor. It also warned against the projected exodus:

Let not my call to you be vain. The destroyer has gone forth among you and has prevailed. You are preparing to resign country and houses and lands to him. Many of you are about to leave the


86“Mr. James J. Strang,” June 25, 1846, holograph, Strang Collection, Document 314, quoted without revision.
haunts of civilization and of men to go into an unexplored wilderness among savages, in the trackless deserts to seek a home in the wilds where the footprint of the white man is not found. The voice of God has not called you to this. . . .

Let the oppressed flee for safety unto Voree, and let the gathering of the people be there. 87

A minor but significant point of Strang’s message was strenuous resistance to the Brighamite concept that the Gentiles had rejected the gospel and had been cut off by ecclesiastical fiat. Strangites bitterly resented the insinuation that the Gentiles had rejected the gospel and, hence, that missionary work among them was futile. Strang promptly took the offensive. Writing a major article in the March 1846 Voree Herald which he rhetorically addressed to his followers, he argued that, since the Gentiles were still being converted, they had not rejected the gospel: “But [as for the claim that] the people of the U.S. have rejected the Gospel. Have they? How is that? We tho’t some thousands had accepted it and others were daily receiving it. But they killed the prophet of God who was sent to this nation and thus rejected the Gospel. Pray where did you learn that a few persons, killing the prophet was equivalent to the whole nation rejecting the Gospel?”

Strang then reviewed three contradictory Brighamite directives concerning preaching to the Gentiles. He first quoted the July 15, 1845, issue of the Times and Seasons to show that Parley P. Pratt, Willard Richards, John Taylor, and W. W. Phelps had directed the elders then on missions to stay in the field and preach; and quoted Brigham Young’s statement published in the August 15, 1844, Times and Seasons that “the gospel in its fullness and purity, must now roll forth THROUGH EVERY NEIGHBORHOOD OF THIS WIDE-SPREAD COUNTRY AND TO ALL THE WORLD. . . . This has not been accomplished or hardly begun.” Furthermore, Strang emphasized that this first order had been officially cancelled by Heber C. Kimball at the April 1845 conference, printed in the July 15, 1845, Times and Seasons. Kimball ordered the missionaries to come back to Nauvoo and stay in Hancock County “ready to work and fight for the Priesthood.” Strang then summarized the third contradictory “commandment”:

“Five months later they are blessed with a new commandment, not to go out and preach, but to leave Nauvoo and Hancock County, and the whole country and go to a place where no body lives to hide their families while destroying their nation from which they, not God take the Gospel. The Gospel was not taken from the Jews in such hot haste, when they killed the Prince of Life. And he was murdered by the constituted authorities, in accordance with the wish of the people at large. Whereas, Joseph was murdered by a mob in defiance of the constituted authorities, and if the Twelve, spoke true the public expression of leading men throughout the nation was in condemnation of the deed. Shall we deny those men the Gospel[?].”

George J. Adams, a member of Joseph Smith’s Council of Fifty, was disfellowshipped by the Brighamites for scandal on April 10, 1845. In a letter from Lewisburg, Ohio, on July 6, 1846, he publicly announced: “James J. Strang is the President, Prophet, Seer, and Revelator, to this church, appointed by Joseph Smith.” He began vigorously preaching for Strang and wrote him, then at Voree, from Dayton, Ohio, that he was organizing the Saints into the true church after finding only confusion when he arrived: “I found them in an unhappy disorganized state, verily believing that the Gospel had been taken from this Nation. They did not even dare to meet together for the administration of the emblems of the Broken Body, and Shed Blood, of our Lord Jesus Christ. And after addressing them three or four times, Shewing [sic] them the true order of the Church, they all came forward like Saints of God should come, and voted to sustain the Authorities that have been appointed by Revelation. They are 17 in number.” Two weeks later on August 17, Adams wrote from Cincinnati, Ohio, described his missionary efforts in Ohio, and announced that he would decide for himself “whether God had taken the Gospel from this Nation.” He again encountered Church members who did not

89“To the Saints Scattered Abroad in All the World, Greeting,” Voree Herald 1 (July 1846): 3.
know what to believe or preach but found them receptive to his teachings about Strang. He left Cincinnati convinced that the gospel had not been rejected.  

That same month, August 1846, Strang published a second article charging that it was the Brighamites who had “rejected” the nation. He reported ironically on the Mormon Battalion enlistment:

They [the Brighamites] have gone perhaps one tenth the distance [from Nauvoo to their destination in the west], and behold 500 of them by counsel of Brigham are enlisted into the U.S. service, to go and conquer California . . . and add it to the U.S. Going to fight the battles of the Nation from which they are exiled by violence; enlarge the boundaries of a country which they say is too persecuting for the Saints to live in; and fleeing from the power of those who killed the prophet, and exiled them from their homes, are ready to spill their own blood in extending the dominion over the very country in which they are seeking refuge. O shame! where is thy blush.

In November 1849, Strang returned to this theme in an article pointing out the irony of the Brighamite withdrawal, especially since the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, signed in February 1848, had ceded the Great Basin to the United States. “Now that the country is conquered by the U.S. . . . [the Brighamites] have established government according to Gentile forms, and are asking the U.S. to extend its government over them.” Strang was actually using a double-edged argument. First, how could the Brighamites convincingly claim that the Gentiles had rejected the gospel when the Brighamites were not only continuing to preach among them but also endeavoring to establish political and commercial relations with them? And second, was it not the Brighamites who had rejected the Gentiles by moving away from the United States to the West?

The exodus westward became evidence in this battle of words that the Brighamites were in apostasy, because of revelations to Joseph Smith assuring the Saints that they “would not be moved,” a phrase that appears twice in a revelation of January 19, 1841. The first

92 “Going Out of the Nation,” Voree Herald 1 (August 1846): 3; emphasis his.
93 “Dear Frank [Cooper],” Gospel Herald 4 (November 1, 1849): 165.
point Joseph made was that completing the temple assured the Saints that they would not be moved:

But I command you . . . to build a house [temple] unto me [Christ]; and I grant unto you a sufficient time to build a house unto me; and during this time your baptisms shall be acceptable unto me. But behold, at the end of this appointment your baptisms for your dead shall not be acceptable unto me; and if you do not these things at the end of the appointment ye shall be rejected as a church, with your dead, saith the Lord your God. (D&C 124:31–32)

Strang’s second point, drawn from the same revelation, challenged the Twelve as leaders whom God recognized: “And if my people will hearken unto my voice, and unto the voice of my servants whom I have appointed to lead my people, behold, verily I say unto you, they shall not be moved out of their place” (D&C 124:45).

Strang had first used this argument in a February 1846 article, even before his first article attacking the Brighamite claim that the Gentiles had rejected the gospel. Tellingly, he concluded: “Now what is the trouble? Is Gods [sic] arm shortened that he can not save? Or have the Church followed leaders that God did not appoint[?]”

John E. Page was even blunter. One of Joseph Smith’s original apostles, ordained in 1838, he was disfellowshipped on February 9, 1846, and excommunicated on June 27, 1846. He had become converted to Strangism by March 1846 and was accepted as an apostle in that organization at a conference held April 6–7, 1846, at Voree. He denounced the belief that the apostles could choose one of their number to become a prophet:

I think it originated at Council Bluffs among a set of aspiring usurpers, who had been driven from the city of Joseph under the “cursings, wrath, indignation and judgments” of God “upon your own heads, by your follies and by all your abominations which you practiced before the Lord.” For the Lord told the saints at Nauvoo through Joseph in 1841, that if they would do his will “THEY SHOULD NOT BE

94“Shall Not Be Moved,” Voree Herald 1 (February 1846): 3.
MOVED OUT OF THEIR PLACE,” (Nauvoo).96

Lyman Wight, ordained an apostle in 1841 by Joseph Smith and excommunicated in December 1848 by the Twelve, was another who read these prophecies the same way as Strang (and later the Josephites). Writing to Frank Cooper and Dennis Chidester, the editors of Strang’s *Northern Islander* on Beaver Island in July 1851, he lamented:

> We were to have a sufficient time to build that house, during which time our baptisms for our dead should be acceptable in the river. If we did not build within this time we were to be rejected as a church, we and our dead together. Both the temple and baptizing went very leisurely, till the temple was somewhere in building the second story, when Bro. Joseph from the stand announced the alarming declaration that baptism for our dead was no longer acceptable in the river. As much to say the time for building the temple had passed by, and both we and our dead were rejected together. . . .

> We remained in a gloomy fearful situation for a short time when the death of Bro. Joseph took place by the hands of the mob, . . . showing so much plainer than language could tell that the church was rejected if the head was taken from it.

> The church now stands rejected together with their dead. The church being rejected now stands alienated from her God in every sense of the word.97

At this point, Lyman Wight is obviously not talking about the Gentile rejection of the gospel but God’s rejection of the Church for failure to obey his commandment to build a temple in which to perform baptisms for their dead as specified in Doctrine and Covenants 124:31–32 (cited above).

The parallels between this section and Lyman Wight’s language make it clear that this was the threatened rejection he found so trou-

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96“Remarks on the Brighamite Conference,” *Gospel Herald* 3 (August 17, 1848): 93; emphasis his.
bling. The link between the Gentiles rejecting the gospel and the Lord rejecting the Church with its dead was more psychological than prophetic or logical. The picture of divine history that the Saints understood involved other rejections: (1) The Jews had rejected Christ so the gospel was being taken to the Gentiles; (2) The Saints, as “believing blood” of the house of Israel hidden in various nations, had accepted the gospel and had rejected Babylon; but (3) the “day of the Gentiles” was a brief one, and after they rejected the gospel, it would again go to the house of Israel in its various branches. However, if the Saints failed to keep God’s commandments—including building his house within the time appointed—they, too, would join the rejected and rejecters. It was a confusing and terrifying prospect.

It seemed clear to all sides, then, that the definition of whether the temple had been completed was a vital piece of evidence, either for or against the authority (and divine acceptability) of the Twelve versus the divine commission claimed by James Strang and other contenders. One of these claimants was the already-defeated Sidney Rigdon who had retired to Pittsburgh with a small group of followers but who announced that the temple would never be finished and that the Twelve would thereby be doomed.98

On May 21, “Americus,” a pseudonymous correspondent, published a denunciation of Rigdon and his followers as individuals who seldom if ever contributed any temple tithing—usually in the form of tenth-day labor or contributions in kind—even when they were supposedly devout believers. He charged:

As they have withheld their substance from building this Temple at a time when they acknowledge God required it to be done, how came they to get a revelation from Heaven that the temple was rejected of God because it was not sooner completed?—And how came they to find out that God has rejected those who have been faithful and done all in their power to complete the work? It must be that they have obtained this knowledge as a reward for their covetousness, or else they were drones in the hive and would not work, and the Mormons stung them and cast them out. Will you, Mr. Editor, give a few

98During the trial of Sidney Rigdon on September 8, 1844, Brigham Young testified: “Elder Rigdon is now preaching secretly to the people. . . . He has prophesied in the name of God that we won’t build the temple.” “Trial of Elder Rigdon,” Times and Seasons 5 (October 1, 1844): 666–67. I could not find a published source in which Rigdon made such a statement.
words of explanation upon these matters?[^99]

This request was so patent an invitation to John Taylor, then editor of the Neighbor, that it seems likely that the first letter had been written specifically to provide such an opening. He responded with a parable defending God as just:

> We would answer Americus by asking another question. A certain man had two sons, and he said to them both, “go and labor in the field, and if you complete your work at a certain time you shall receive a great reward.” They both enter the field and one begins to labor and continues all the day long faithfully, but the other is idle and does nothing but tries to hinder the faithful one. The father knows precisely how both have conducted, and says to the idle one:—You shall be rewarded and continue to be my son, and even be exalted in my favor; but I will not speak to the faithful one at all; still I will tell you, that as he has not completed the work in the time specified, I will not accept it, neither shall he be any longer my son; but shall be disowned and sent away. Would Americus honor the justice of that father’s decision? This is a true illustration of the character of Rigdon’s God after whom his own character is, no doubt, formed.^[100]

Two days later when the exterior walls had been completed up to the place where the capstone would be laid, William Clayton (who may have been the author of the “Americus” letter), saw it as a distinct defeat for Rigdon: “The Rigdonites have prophesied that the walls would never be built; but through the blessing of God we have lived to see the prediction come to naught.”[^101] Two months later, missionary Amos Fielding, traveling through Pittsburgh, wrote Brigham Young a letter stressing that Rigdon’s followers were supremely confident that the temple would not be finished but that “if ever the roof of the temple is finished, all Rigdonism falls to the ground in this place.” He asked Young to “write a few lines” and also announce in the Neighbor when “the roof shall be finished, that is, all the shingles nailed on . . .


[^101]: George Smith, An Intimate Chronicle, 549.
as there are many standing aloof on account of this prophecy.”

Clayton even recorded rumors that Rigdon might try fulfill his own prophecy by setting on fire the timbers and shingles being stored to finish the roof. The Brighamites thus saw a clear connection between the temple’s completion and the Church’s survival.

Although Brigham Young made finishing the temple a top priority, he was pragmatic enough to realize that he was working against the expulsion deadline which would not allow the Saints to stay longer than the spring of 1846. As early as September 11, 1843—even before Joseph Smith’s death—he had told a group of Saints in Boston: “If the Temple at Nauvoo is not built, we will receive our endowments, if we have to go into the wilderness and build an altar of stone. If a man gives his all, it is all God requires.” Orson Pratt expanded this point theologically in late 1845 from New York, just as the endowments were commencing in Nauvoo:

Let none of the saints be discouraged in the least, about their endowments in the Temple; for the saints in the West, are still laboring with all diligence for the completion of the great building. The saints mean to show their willingness before God, to obey the great commandment, concerning the building of that house, though they should be driven from it the day after it is finished, or even before.

From what the Lord has indicated in the Book of Covenants I should not be surprised, if the saints should be hindered by their enemies from completing it.

In this commandment which the Lord gave, to build him a house in Nauvoo, . . . [Pratt then quoted D. & C. 124:49-55 to show that if enemies prevented them from completing the Nauvoo Temple, God would punish them but hold the Brighamites guiltless.] If the Lord had not forseen that this would be the case, why did he give to us these very curious sayings, as “an example” unto us in the

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103 George Smith, An Intimate Chronicle, 546.
105 “Brigham Young,” History of the Church, 6:28.
building this house?

Therefore, brethren, be of good cheer; for if we have done all that we could, and are still willing to do all that we can, to fulfil this great commandment, and our enemies hinder us, “it behooveth the Lord to require that work no more at our hands,” and “he will accept of our offerings,” the same as if we had completed it. But if we had now forsaken the work, like Rigdon and other apostates, when we might have continued thereon, then we should surely expect to be rejected with our dead; for the curse would have been upon our own heads, instead of our enemies. But now any failure will be answered upon mobs and apostates, who have endeavored to weaken our hands; while the faithful will be accepted, receive their endowments, and will save themselves with their dead. They shall not fail to receive the ordinances of endowments, though in the mountains or wilderness.106

As soon as the attic story was completed enough that it could be furnished, decorated, and dedicated for the performance of endowments, the Twelve took the position that the temple was finished “enough” to achieve the purpose for which God had commanded its construction. (The baptistry had been completed and baptisms had been performed there for some time.) Brigham Young underscored this “completion” with not one but four dedications. The main meeting room on the first floor was finished in time for October 1845 conference, and this room was dedicated in a public service on Sunday, October 5.107 The attic story was dedicated in a private ceremony attended by twenty-two leading authorities on November 30, 1845.108 Endowment sessions followed night and day from December 9, 1845, until Brigham Young left the city on February 15, 1846.

The third dedication was a private ceremony of about twenty elders on April 30, 1846, presided over by Brigham Young’s brother, Joseph, whose dedicatory prayer included the plea that God would “avenge the blood of his servants [all the Mormons who were martyred by the Gentiles] . . . and mete out to the enemies of the Saints the same measure which they have meted out to them.”109 Wilford Woodruff recorded with obvious satisfaction on that day: “[D]edicated the

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108George Smith, An Intimate Chronicle, 192.
Temple of the Lord built by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, unto His Most Holy name. We had an interesting time. Notwithstanding the many fals Prophesies of Sidney Rigdon And others that the roof should not go on nor the House be finished And the threats of the mob that we should not dedicate it yet we have done both."

The fourth dedication followed in a public ceremony that spanned two days, one on May 1 for Mormon workmen and their families, followed by another on Sunday, May 2, attended by approximately five thousand, who had purchased tickets for the occasion. Apostle Orson Hyde, when presenting a discourse in the temple on May 3 told the Saints:

As respects the finishing of this House I will ask why have we la-boured [sic] to Complete it when we were not expecting to stay... If we moved forward & finished this House we should be received & accepted as A Church with our dead but if not we should be rejected with our dead. These things have inspired And stimulated us to Action in the finishing of it which through the blessing of God we have been enabled to accomplish And prepared it for dedication. In doing this we have ownly [sic] been saved as it were by the skin of our teeth. The enemy Prophesyed [sic] we should not get the roof on but we have finished it And on Thursday night we met in this temple prayed in our white robes & dedicated it unto God And truly An interesting season we enjoyed."

In this context of disputed authority, the doctrine (or nondoc-trine) of the Gentile rejection of the gospel was a minor but significant element. However, even while the Strangites were charging that the Brighamites were mistaken in claiming that the Gentiles had re-jected the gospel, as early as the fall of 1847, Strangite leaders were taking what seemed like an inconsistent position by acknowledging that the Gentiles, by failing to accept the gospel enthusiastically, were, in fact, perilously close to being rejected.

In September 1847, after a silence of about a year on this particular topic, Strang charged:

110 Kenney, Wilford Woodruff’s Journal, April 30, 1846, 3:41.
The time is hastening when he [God] will cut off the gentiles as he
did the Jews. And he judged the Jews out of their own mouths, so will he
judge the gentiles. . . .

And when the times of the gentiles are come in, that they fully re-
ject this testimony, as the Jews rejected Christ, then, as surely as God has
destroyed Israel with all the curses which he pronounced by the MOUTH of
Moses, so surely will he take those curses off Israel and put ALL OF
THEM UPON THE GENTILES.”

Strang’s change of position from 1846 (when he argued that the
Gentiles were actively accepting the gospel) to September 1847, when
he claimed that the Gentiles were in danger of being rejected, re-
lected his declining success at maintaining and/or increasing the
size of his church. In fact, the period of his greatest success came be-
tween June 27, 1844, and December 1846 when he actively made his
claims known to the Church and worked to build a successful organi-
zation. The winter and spring of 1846 saw impressive growth, with
hundreds of Brighamite converts gathering to Voree. The high point
of his ministry (both in terms of numbers and in actively threatening
the Brighamites) came in the fall of 1846. At that point, Voree’s popu-
lation had increased to an estimated five hundred, Strang had se-
cured possession of the Kirtland Temple, and branches throughout
the United States acknowledged him as Joseph Smith’s successor.
However, the Voree Mormons were impoverished and struggled to
keep the newspaper going, help converts gather to Voree, and
support an active missionary program.

After October 1846, several major schisms erupted at Voree, re-
ducing the number of missionaries, damaging Strang’s reputation,
and resulting in the formation of an active anti-Strang element. Other
consequences include the loss of the Kirtland Temple, the reemerg-
ence of the Brighamites as challengers to Strang’s authority in
branches throughout the United States, and Strang’s failure to secure
the allegiance of the English Mormons. In essence, he was losing
ground to the Brighamites and only a limited number of Gentiles
were filling his depleted ranks.114

By August 1848, Page spelled out the current Strangite position:

113“Answer to W ______,” Zion’s Reveille 2 (September 16, 1847): 106;
emphasis his.

114The best work on Strang’s meteoric rise and steady decline is
Robin Scott Jensen, “Gleaning the Harvest: Strangite Missionary Work,
“The all absorbing question is have the Gentiles continued in the goodness of God by which they were ingrafted? If so, all is well. . . . And inasmuch as the present Gentile apostate church possesses all the necessary facilities to suppress the true gospel, as Israel did once before, they undoubtedly will avail themselves of the opportunity until their fullness of iniquity is finished.”

But within months, Page’s commitment wavered. The April 1849 conference at Voree retained him as an apostle only after a public examination of his shortcomings resulted in his pledge to renew his efforts. He reneged on this pledge, was “silenced” on July 4, 1849, and was excommunicated three days later. He promptly joined Strang’s opponents, published lengthy attacks on him, and formally affiliated first with the Brewsterites in November 1849 and, in 1859, with the Hedrickites. He refused overtures from the New Organization (later the RLDS Church), which had been organized in the early 1850s by talented Strangites who were particularly disillusioned by the disclosure in 1849 that Strang had been secretly practicing polygamy. Motivated by the belief that a son of Joseph Smith would come forward and assume the Church presidency, the New Organization offered an alternative for Mormons who could not tolerate Brighamism or Strangism; and a point on which they all agreed was that Strang himself had become a rejected prophet.

The transition of Strang’s organization from Voree to Beaver Island in Lake Michigan was essentially complete by early 1850. On April 3, 1851, Strang published an article in his newspaper signaling a sharp change in his evaluation of Gentile acceptability: “Many have looked for the downfall of this nation by the array of the north against the south. This will not be. The nation will perish in the anarchy of laws despised and trampled on by the whole people. There is no wickedness, no act of oppression ever undertaken of by a despotic government, which has not been successfully accomplished in this.”

Strang’s strong language was a response to repeated acts of Gentile harassment and persecution at Beaver Island. Shortly after this public pronouncement, Strang and dozens of Mormons were arrested, held in jail at Detroit, and were tried on charges of treason, robbing the mails, and trespassing on federal lands. A jury trial in July 1851 deter-


mined that the Mormons were innocent of any criminal activity.\(^{117}\)

In short, after 1847–48, Strang’s sermons and doctrinal writings generally indicate his realization that the majority of the Church would not accept his call and neither would the Gentiles. In essence, he would have a limited following. However, the direction of his doctrinal development seems clear. If he had not been mortally wounded on June 28, 1856, I have no doubt that he would have agreed with the Brighamites that the Gentiles had rejected the gospel.

Ironically, a week before he was wounded, the *Northern Islander* was completing a serialized article titled “Apology for the Mormons,” written either by Strang or by editors Frank Cooper and Dennis Chidester, which emphasized the persecution of the Mormons under Joseph Smith and James J. Strang. The last paragraphs show that they correctly evaluated their isolation from the law, overestimated their ability to defend themselves, and underestimated the ruthlessness of their enemies: “We do not expect Governor or President to protect us against mobs. We live in the continual assurance that any one of us might be murdered in a neighboring county, and not a magistrate could be induced to issue process against the murderer.” After predicting that the Mormons would resist mob action with violence, the article concluded: “We will neither purchase temporary peace and future calamities by dishonorable trafficking with political jugglers, nor will we yield our homes to enemies. If we live, here will we live. If we die, here will we die, and here shall our bones be buried, expecting in the resurrection of the just to possess the land forever, and dwell with the righteous during the lifetime of the eternal.”\(^{118}\)

On June 16, 1856, Strang was summoned to the dock at St. James’s Bay on Beaver Island to meet with officers of the steamship *Michigan*. There he was ambushed by former members of his church. Vicki Cleverley Speek, in her excellent book on the Strangites, describes the event:

Strang and his escort stepped onto McCullock’s dock and started to walk down the narrow passageway between piles of cordwood. [Thomas] Bedford and [Alexander] Wentworth stepped behind them and followed for about fifteen or twenty feet, just far enough to clear


\(^{118}\)“Apology for the Mormons,” June 1, 1856, *Northern Islander* 6 (June 19, 1856): 2.
the crowd, then simultaneously fired at Strang. One shot struck the
king [Strang] in the left side of the head behind his ear and traveled
up through his high silk hat. As Strang turned to see where the shots
were coming from, another shot struck him in the back on the left
side, penetrating one of his kidneys. A third bullet glanced off his
right cheekbone about an inch under the eye. . . . Wentworth ran full
speed for the Michigan. Bedford took his horse pistol and hammered
Strang in the face with the butt until the pistol was broken. The attack
on Strang threw his organization into disarray.\textsuperscript{119}

Wentworth and Bedford were never punished for the assault on and
subsequent death of Strang. As in Missouri, the Strangites were
driven from their property, often with only the possessions they could
carry. They never received any redress:

Immediately after the shooting, a mob of area fishermen started
gathering on uninhabited parts of Beaver Island and began harassing
the Mormons. Strang was transported to Voree two weeks after he
was shot in hopes his removal would defuse tensions. Several groups
of Mormons voluntarily left Beaver Island but around July 1 some 50
to 60 mobbers forced the majority of the Mormons from their homes
and then aboard ships with only the possessions they could carry.
They were then forcibly deposited at different cities bordering Lake
Michigan. Destitute and scattered, they concentrated on gathering
their families, obtaining housing, and making a living.\textsuperscript{120}

As Strang lay dying, he advised his followers: “Tell [Apostle]
Anson [Prindle] to tell the brethren in a quiet way that I think we have to draw off before our enemies." Another apostle, Edward Chidester, announced the “sad news” of Strang’s death and instructed: “You enquire what to do. His directions was for every man to take care of his family and do the best he could till he found out what to do.”

Unfortunately, clear instructions never came. Many of Strang’s followers felt betrayed because of their losses and separations, confused by the lack of a successor. Milo M. Quaife, who estimated that “approximately 2,600 Mormons were driven from Beaver Island” following the fatal attack on Strang, speculated that “the great majority, probably, abandoned, sooner or later, all pretensions to Mormonism.” On the contrary, most Strangites who retained a Mormon identity found a new spiritual home in the Reorganized Church when Joseph Smith III was ordained his father’s successor in April 1860.

Still, according to Apostle Warren Post, some of Strang’s apostles attempted to provide leadership. However, “but a few attended” a conference on October 6, 1856, “& there was not much done for the

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123 Quaife, Kingdom of Saint James, 174, 180–81. Roger Van Noord, King of Beaver Island: The Life and Assassination of James Jesse Strang (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 245, gives a more realistic number for the Mormons driven from Beaver Island at “less than 600.”

relief of the Church.” They tried for another conference two months later on December 6,

but the poverty of the Saints, and the inclemency of the weather, prevented there being much done at that Conference. The Saints being anxious to obtain the word of the Lord, concerning them, and the cause of Zion, proposed a fast; and the last day of the year 1856 was kept by some of them as a day for fasting and prayer. That day was not kept, only by a few, for the people are determined to do what seemeth right in their own eyes. There were five of the Apostles [Warren Post, James Hutchins, Isaac Pierce, L. D. Hickey, and L. D. Tubbs] on the 10th of Feb. 1857 in the wilderness 6 miles from Racine, [Wisconsin] and there prayed and communed with each other all night. We became satisfied, that the Twelve could not lead the Church without a Prophet; and concluded to take care of ourselves & families; and when occasion offered; minister to the necessities of the Saints, according to our abilities, until we have the word of the Lord to guide us on to other duties.¹²⁵

Wingfield Watson, presiding high priest over the Strangites from 1897 to 1922, caught the essence of Strangite history when he wrote with pathos in April 1919 to Milo M. Quaife, then superintendent of the Wisconsin State Historical Society:

As to how, and to what extent Mr. Strang’s organization has been kept up, since his death, we can only say that we have all been put to our wits end to know what to do, and we have gone through a great and sore trial, and it gives us little else than pain, and sorrow to undertake a relation . . . of what we have gone through.

To be short, we have been through fire and through water through reproach and persecution, through the spoiling of our goods, and poverty, and exile and in peril amongst false brethren and apostates. . . .

But as you enquire how the organization under Mr. Strang has been kept up since his death, I can only say that this organization has not been well kept up, from the circumstances in which we were placed; for when Mr. Strang was taken from us, most of us were as a lot of little children suddenly on the wharf at Chicago we knew not what to do. . . . However it wasn’t many days before all were scattered, and many were lost to each other, and their descendants of the first, second and third and fourth generation are scattered in many of the States, especially in the Western States.

¹²⁵Post, Apostolic Testimony of Warren Post, 4:27.
Where there was an Elder who remained faithful, he taught his children and grand-children, and baptized them into the faith, and preached the gospel to his neighbors also and baptized any who were willing to receive the gospel... It was not in the nature of things, to be expected that we could do a great work, for nearly all the men had families dependant upon them for support, and Mr. Strang’s last advice and counsel to us, was, to let every man take care of himself and his family, and do the best he can until he is informed further what he shall do.\(^{126}\)

William D. Russell, professor emeritus at Graceland University and an authority on the changing Josephite Church, concludes that, “had Strang appointed a successor, probably his kingdom would have continued with some degree of success. But without a designated successor, his group dwindled off to a few loyal followers, the most important of whom were Lorenzo Dow Hickey and Wingfield Watson.”\(^{127}\)

According to the Strangite faithful, however, Strang did not appoint a successor because he realized that the first or Gentile portion of the dispensation would close, in accordance with 1 Nephi 13:42, when he died. Another important factor was the fundamental Strangite belief that one prophet did not have sufficient priesthood to ordain another prophet. Joseph Smith had, of “necessity” been “called by the direct revelation of the word of God” who “sent Peter, James and John to ordain him to the Priesthood, because they, having been duly called and set apart, and filled an acceptable ministry on earth, had entered into life, capable of ministering in heaven and on earth, as God should send them.” Joseph’s successor (Strang himself, according to this view), had to be ordained by an angel because none of the “surviving Priesthood . . . were equal to Joseph in authority, and the less is blessed of the greater.”\(^{128}\)

The clincher for Strangites, however, is their belief that 2 Nephi

\(^{126}\)Wingfield Watson, Letter to “Dear Mr. M. M. Quaife,” February 14, 1919, Strang Collection, Book 2, Doc. 10.


3:11–12 stipulated that the first prophet of the last dispensation would be of Ephraim’s lineage (Joseph Smith, who brought forth the Book of Mormon), to be immediately followed by one of Judah’s (James J. Strang, the stick of Judah, who brought forth the Book of the Law of the Lord):

But a seer will I raise up out of the fruit of thy loins; and unto him will I give power to bring forth my word unto the seed of thy loins—and not to the bringing forth my word only, saith the Lord, but to the convincing them of my word, which shall have already gone forth among them.

Wherefore, the fruit of thy loins shall write; and the fruit of the loins of Judah shall write; and that which shall be written by the fruit of the loins of Judah, shall grow together, unto the confounding of false doctrines and laying down of contentions, and establishing peace among the fruit of thy loins, and bringing them to the knowledge of my covenants, saith the Lord.

The murders of both prophets thus became definitive evidence that the Gentiles had rejected the gospel; but despite Strang’s ministry, the “Jewish” period has not yet opened. Orthodox Strangites consider themselves to be in an interregnum period which will end when an angel ordains a man of Jewish lineage to head the Church.

Meanwhile, in 1897, L. D. Hickey, the last active Strangite apostle, ordained Wingfield Watson a high priest and gave him the responsibility of heading the Church. Watson’s tireless efforts were the main reason the Strangite Church survived as an identifiable organization. Prior to his death in 1922, Watson chose Samuel H. Martin, a high priest from Pueblo, Colorado, to succeed him. That pattern still continues. All who headed the Church, from the apostles in 1856 to the present presiding high priest, Vernon Dee Swift of Artesia, New Mexico, have had to deal with schisms, doctrinal disputes, and would-be prophets. In this context, the Strangites, now reduced to fewer than one hundred members, have longed for a prophet “of the lineage of Judah” to be called of God and ordained by angels to set God’s house “in order.”

In short, their theology mandates adherence both to the doctrine of the rejected gospel and also to the emergence of a prophet of Judah, even though both positions demonstrably handicap efforts to thrive organizationally.

129 Shephard, “To Set in Order the House of God,” 45.
Note: Part 2 of this article will appear in the summer issue, tracing interpretations of the “rejected gospel” among other expressions of Mormonism that trace their roots to Joseph Smith Jr.’s teachings. They include the movements affiliated with Charles B. Thompson, Alpheus Cutler, Granville Hedrick, and the “New Organization” that became the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints—in some ways the strongest challenger to the Brigham position.
THE CONSEQUENTIAL COUNSELOR: RESTORING THE ROOT(S) OF JESSE GAUSE

Erin B. Jennings

Wherefore, be faithful; stand in the office which I have appointed unto you; succor the weak, lift up the hands which hang down, and strengthen the feeble knees.

And if thou art faithful until the end thou shalt have a crown of immortality, and eternal life in the mansions which I have prepared in the house of my Father. (LDS D&C 81:5–6; RLDS D&C 80:1g–1h)

THANKS TO PAST RESEARCHERS Mario S. De Pillis, Robert J. Woodford, Lyndon W. Cook, and D. Michael Quinn, Jesse Gause and his brief association with Mormonism have not been forgotten.1 Published articles have indicated that very few resources and documents on his

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life are available. However, more sources have now surfaced in reference to Joseph Smith’s former first counselor, with particularly illuminating information coming from his extended family.

Perhaps the most exciting development is that a comparison of documents and handwriting samples identifies the hitherto unknown Scribe A for *Joseph Smith’s New Translation of the Bible* as Jesse Gause. From June 1830 to July 1833 Smith dictated biblical revisions to several scribes—Oliver Cowdery, John Whitmer, Emma Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and Frederick G. Williams. Now Jesse Gause’s name can be added to their number. Between March 8 and 20, 1832, Gause transcribed the revisions that covered what is now known as New Testament manuscript 2, folio 4, pages 136–49, in the Joseph Smith Translation.

But what else is known about the life of Jesse Gause? Even the pronunciation of his surname has been mysterious. U.S. census takers spelled it phonetically, yielding the following sounds: 1790: Goss, Gaws; 1800: Gaus; 1810: Goss, Gauze; 1820: Gause, Gauze, Gaws; 1830: Gaughes; and 1840: Gauze, Gaus. It actually rhymes with “laws.”

I have traced Gause’s paternal line back to his great-grandparents, Quakers from Pennsylvania. (See Appendix.) His paternal grandparents also lived in Pennsylvania, and so did his parents, although all five of his father’s surviving brothers and sisters moved out of the state, notably to Ohio, where Gause himself would encounter Mormonism.

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Scott H. Faulring, Kent P. Jackson, and Robert J. Matthews, eds., *Joseph Smith’s New Translation of the Bible* (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 2004), 529–47. This book is called, variously, the “Holy Scriptures,” the “Inspired Version,” the “New Translation,” and the “Joseph Smith Translation,” but they all refer to Joseph Smith’s revision of the Bible. He read and dictated revisions on an 1828 Phinney edition of the King James Translation, which Oliver Cowdery purchased on October 8, 1829, from E. B. Grandin in Palmyra, New York. It is now on display in the Community of Christ Museum. Scribes took his changes down as he dictated them. The original manuscript for the Joseph Smith Translation is housed in the Community of Christ Library-Archives.

This pronunciation was verified by Quaker research expert Thomas D. Hamm, college archivist and curator of the Friends Collection, Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana; F. Gregory Gause II (Jesse’s great-great-grandnephew), telephone conversation with me April 20, 2006; and Yvonne Shilling (Jesse’s great-great-grandniece), telephone conversation with me April 20, 2006.
Handwriting sample of Jesse Gause (“records”) with superimposed handwriting samples of the unknown scribe in the Joseph Smith Translation (“record”). Both samples depict the following traits: straight with right slant (slope) of between 40 and 45 degrees; narrow to normal letter spacing; and lack of initial stroke.

Handwriting sample of Jesse Gause (“resignation”) with superimposed handwriting samples of the unknown scribe in the Joseph Smith Translation (“revelation” and “resurrection”). Both samples depict the following traits: large upper and lower zone with small middle zone; small terminal strokes; t-bars with long-bar variation, i-dots being accent or accent grave.

Handwriting sample of Jesse Gause (“right”) with superimposed handwriting sample of the unknown scribe in the Joseph Smith Translation (“righteous”). Both samples depict the following traits: lean upper and lower zone on loops, covering stroke on “g” and “h,” varying pressure applied, and arcade connecting strokes.
Jesse Gause grew up surrounded by Quakers, espoused that faith, and married a Quaker woman. After her death, he moved with his four young children nearer to his sister, Ruth, who was at that time affiliated

4Jesse’s father was not raised Quaker, nor did he ever officially join the Quakers. His paternal great-grandparents (Charles and Jane Powell Goss) were Quaker and died in the Quaker faith. However, his grandfather, Evan Goss, was disowned in the 1760s for marrying “out of unity” (marrying a non-Quaker). Therefore, Evan’s children (Jesse’s father) were not raised Quaker. Jesse’s maternal great-grandparents (William and Mary Miller Beverly) were both Quaker but Mary was disowned in 1736 and William was disowned in 1739. His maternal grandfather (Samuel Beverly) was disowned in 1757 (after his marriage in 1753 to Ruth Jackson). Ruth (Jesse’s maternal grandmother) was never disowned and died in the Quaker faith. Jesse’s mother (Mary Jackson Beverly) was raised Quaker (her mother Ruth still being in the faith) but was disowned for marrying out of unity in 1780
with the Shakers. Jesse briefly espoused that faith, joined the Mormons in 1832, almost immediately was named a counselor to Joseph Smith, accompanied him to Missouri in the spring of 1832, returned in time to depart on a mission with Zebulon Coltrin in August 1832, parted amicably from him on August 20, and is never heard of again. By 1836, his minor children were petitioning the orphans’ court for a guardian.

In sum, Jesse Gause ardently but not successfully sought religious faith in three different faith communities. Mormonism is best viewed as a way station in an on-going search for religious certainty that consumed much of his adult life, but his sojourn in Mormonism cannot be documented as lasting even a full year.

**JESSE GAUSE’S LIFE**

In 1781, Jesse’s father, William, married Mary Jackson Beverly. Jesse was born in 1784, on the “original Beverly farm between [the] Thomas Jackson farm and old Taylor farm or Hazel Dell.” He was the second of their eleven children: Samuel, Jesse, Jonathan, Lydia, Ruth, Harlan, Hannah, Lewis, William Jr., Mary Ann, and Eliza. All six sons averaged six feet in height.5 William’s ancestors were from Scotland and Wales, and Mary’s hailed from Ireland.

Jesse’s mother, Mary, was a strong influence in the family. She had a firm hand and her word was law. A granddaughter recalled her as “a tall commanding figure, with large gray eyes, a noble forehead, and of fine conversational powers. Her intellect was of a high order. Being a great reader and possessing a very retentive memory, she could recite poetry by the hour, mostly the touching and tender ballads of olden times.”6

Jesse’s maternal grandparents were Samuel Beverly and Ruth Jackson Beverly. Samuel was quite well off, thanks to an inheritance when she married William Gause. Mary’s membership was not reinstated until 1810 after Jesse had already applied for his own membership. It was quite common for those who were not actually members to fellowship and attend Quaker services. This is most likely what happened during Jesse’s youth, especially since his grandmother Ruth was never disowned and lived with Jesse’s parents as a widow.


6Annie Gause, “Notes from Conversation with Aunt Hannah,” 1873, 3, Gause Family Files, Chester County Historical Society, West Chester, Pennsylvania.
from his grandfather (for whom he was named) of two hundred acres
and livestock. Mary was the second of their two children, both being
daughters. Jesse would have known his Grandmother Ruth very well.
After her husband’s death in about 1800, sixteen years after Jesse’s
birth, Ruth moved in with daughter Mary and son-in-law William and
was a member of the household until she died.\textsuperscript{7} She must have been
quite fond of Jesse, since she named him executor of her estate in
1812.\textsuperscript{8} He was then twenty-eight.

The first of William and Mary’s children was Samuel. The 1850
census lists Samuel as a teacher but living separately from his family,
no doubt because he was living and teaching school with his brother
Jonathan who operated his own academy.\textsuperscript{9}

The third child, Jonathan, was a member of the first Masonic
lodge chartered in Chester County. Living into his eighties, he was a
celebrated educator for fifty-seven years, counting the famous au-
thor and poet Bayard Taylor\textsuperscript{10} among his more notable students.\textsuperscript{11}

Lydia, the fourth child, married Alexander McKeever. They

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{7}Gause, “Notes,” 2.
\item \textsuperscript{8}Ruth Beverly, administrative bond dated January 23, 1812, Chester
County Wills, Chester County Archives, West Chester, Pennsylvania.
\item \textsuperscript{9}U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1850, West Bradford, Chester, Pennsyl-
vania; roll M432_764, p. 238, image 478. At least three of Samuel’s children
became teachers: Mary, Lewis, and Charles. U.S. Bureau of the Census,
1850, Kennett, Chester, Pennsylvania; roll M432_764, p. 190, image 382;
U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1850, Harrisburg West Ward, Dauphin, Pennsyl-
vania; roll M432_774, p. 41, image 84.
\item \textsuperscript{10}“A vivid and romantic personality, Bayard Taylor was popularly
regarded by mid-nineteenth-century America as a great writer. His trans-
lation of Faust has achieved enduring appreciation and has been widely
recognized as ‘a handsome contribution to American culture.’ Although
the bulk of his work is deservedly forgotten Taylor is historically memo-
orable both for what he represented and for what his contemporaries be-
lieved him to be.” Robert Spiller et al., \textit{Literary History of the United States}
(New York: Macmillan, 1960), 822, quoted in Division of History, Office
of Archeology and Historic Preservation, National Park Service, “Na-
tional Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form for
Bayard Taylor House, ‘Cedarcroft,’ Kennet Square, Pa.,” photocopy in
my possession.
\item \textsuperscript{11}Futhey and Cope, \textit{History of Chester County}, 395, 562. Two of Jona-
raised their family in Delaware, where, in 1818, Alexander was teaching at the Wilmington Friends School. They returned to Pennsylvania in the 1830s; and in 1836, Alexander taught school in Concord. In 1840, Alexander became the editor of the *Upland Union*, a newspaper that ran until 1853.

The fifth child, Ruth, lived into her mid-seventies, never married, and was associated with the Shakers for a while, making her Jesse’s most immediate connection to Shakerism when he affiliated with that movement in early 1829. She also helped care for Jesse’s four children for a short time after the death of his first wife.

The sixth child, Harlan, named in honor of his uncle Henry’s family, operated the Columbian Inn tavern in Kennett. He was the father of ship-building mogul John Taylor Gause of Wilmington, Delaware. The seventh child, Hannah, lived to age ninety but, like her sister Ruth, never married. Remembering Jesse, she said that he “was very much interested in the genealogy of the family and made an extensive investigation during his parents’ lifetime. And I have heard different older members in the speaking of such and such an event, refer to Brother Jesse as their authority.” The eighth child, Lewis, farmed with his father and raised his family in Chester County.

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14 Obituaries, *Delaware County Republican*, August 19, 1859.

15 “William Gause (Goss) and his wife, Mary Beverly Gause, and their Descendents [sic],” 1, Gause Family Files, Chester County Historical Society, West Chester, Pennsylvania.


The ninth child, William, died young in an ox-cart accident. The tenth child, Mary Ann, married coach manufacturer Caleb Sharpless Jackson; they lived in Kennett. The eleventh child, Eliza, married Cheyney Hannum, editor of the Literary Casket, a schoolteacher with Eliza’s brother Jonathan, and executor of her father’s estate. After Cheyney’s death, Eliza married George Price Davis, a former assistant schoolteacher turned storekeeper. George died in the 1850s, after which Eliza operated a boardinghouse in Kennett.

Jesse began his religious pilgrimage in the Quaker faith. A London Grove monthly meeting of Friends in 1806, when Jesse was twenty-two, recorded that Jesse was received on his own request. Two years later he was granted a certificate to the Redstone monthly meeting in Fayette County, Pennsylvania. When the census of 1810 was enumerated on August 6, Jesse was living in Fayette County, Pennsylvania, apparently with his aunt and uncle, Lydia and Henry Harlan. In December 1810, Jesse was granted a certificate to the

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21“William Gause,” 2.
23Marriages, Village Record, March 18, 1830; Futhey and Cope, History of Chester County, 562; William Gause, will dated June 12, 1834, proved August 18, 1835, Chester County Wills, Chester County Archives, West Chester, Pennsylvania.
28U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1810, Luzerne, Fayette, Pennsylvania; roll 54, p. 963, image 175. Lydia and Henry’s son Ezekiel, the cousin
Kennett monthly meeting in Chester County.\textsuperscript{29}

From 1812 to 1813, Jesse served as the principal of the Wilmington Friends School on the corner of Fourth and West in Wilmington, Delaware,\textsuperscript{30} where, according to a county history published in 1926, “the best equipped teachers, physically and mentally, of this early period, were the Scotch-Irish. They were eagerly sought for by the schools of the county.”\textsuperscript{31} During January 1814, which would have been the middle of the school year, Jesse traveled to Ohio, where a mortgage document dated February 1, 1814, showed that he purchased land in Muskingum County.\textsuperscript{32} This was the same year that his extended family started their migration west from Fayette County, Pennsylvania. Although a Quaker in good standing during 1814–15, and therefore bound by conscience to refuse military service, Jesse also is listed on a militia class roll in Delaware.\textsuperscript{33} Whether this affiliation represented disaffection from Quakerism, a crisis of conscience, or something else for Jesse is not known.

However, he chose a Quaker bride, marrying Martha Johnson at the Philadelphia Southern District monthly meeting on June 14, 1815. It was a Quaker custom for an engaged man to transfer to his fiancée’s monthly meeting prior to the marriage. The two would then

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Jesse would visit in 1832 with Zebedee Coltrin, was living in Chester County. U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1810, West Marlborough, Chester, Pennsylvania; roll 47, p. 151, image 17.
\textsuperscript{29}Hinshaw, \textit{Quaker Genealogy}, 4:87.
\textsuperscript{30}Teachers Supported by the Wilmington monthly meeting, 1794–1842, School Committee records and vouchers, Wilmington Friends School safe; Accounts of the Treasurer of the Fund for Friends belonging to the Wilmington monthly meeting, Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania. I am indebted to Terry Maguire at the Wilmington Friends School for providing me with this information.
\textsuperscript{32}The sellers were John and Margaret Lee. State of Ohio, Muskingum County Mortgage Record Book E, 1814, 76–77.
\textsuperscript{33}Class roll of the Fifth Company of the Second Regiment of the Commissioned and Noncommissioned Officers and Private Men in the Fifth District Company, of the Second Regiment of the Militia of the State of Delaware for 1814, August 4, 1814, Delaware Military Archives, 5:901, Delaware Public Archives, Dover.
\end{flushleft}
usually request a transfer back to the husband’s monthly meeting after the wedding.\textsuperscript{34} By 1816, they had moved to Ohio where, in April, at the Plainfield monthly meeting in Belmont County, they were received on a certificate from the Philadelphia Northern District.\textsuperscript{35}

In 1819, their first child, Harriet Amelia, was born. Another daughter, Hannah Sheward, followed in 1820.\textsuperscript{36} Both girls were likely born at Mount Pleasant, Jefferson County, Ohio. Harriet Amelia’s birth coincided with a nationwide recession that impacted Ohio severely. During their five-year stay in Ohio, Jesse had made two additional land purchases in Morgan County.\textsuperscript{37} By 1820, eleven of his relatives in Ohio were farming and two were involved in manufacturing.\textsuperscript{38} On the 1820 Mount Pleasant, Jefferson County, Ohio census, Jesse was not listed as being in agriculture so he was most likely teaching school.

While United States goods, especially agricultural products, were in high demand, Americans had purchased Western land at an extravagant rate. In 1815, Americans purchased roughly one million acres of land from the federal government. In 1819, the amount of land had skyrocketed to 3.5 million acres. Many Americans could not afford to purchase the land outright. The federal government did allow Americans to buy the land on credit. As the economy ground to a halt in 1819, many Americans did not have the money to pay off their loans. The Bank of the United States, as well as state and private banks, be-

\begin{footnotesize}

\textsuperscript{35}Hinshaw, Quaker Genealogy, 4:331.


\textsuperscript{37}Ellen T. Berry and David A. Berry, comps., Early Ohio Settlers: Purchasers of Land in East and East Central Ohio, 1800–1840 (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 1989), 105.

\textsuperscript{38}U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1820, Kennett, Chester, Pennsylvania; roll M33_96, p. 394, image 205.
\end{footnotesize}
gan recalling loans, demanding immediate payment. The banks’ actions resulted in the Banking Crisis of 1819. The federal government tried to alleviate some of the suffering with the Land Act of 1820 and the Relief Act of 1821, but many farmers, Ohioans included, lost everything. 39

By 1820, Jesse and Martha were living in the Quaker community of Mount Pleasant in Jefferson County, Ohio. 40 Mount Pleasant was a hub for Quakers and abolitionists alike—a primary stop on the Underground Railroad, smuggling escaped slaves to freedom. It was also the birthplace of the Philanthropist edited by Charles Osborn—the first antislavery newspaper in the United States. 41 Jesse and Martha, unaccountably, did not transfer their monthly meeting records from Plainfield in Belmont County to Short Creek in Jefferson County (the monthly meeting location closest to Mount Pleasant) until 1821. 42 June 19–20, 1820, brought Alexander Campbell, then a twenty-one-year-old preacher and future co-founder of the Disciples of Christ, to Mount Pleasant for his first great debate. His opponent was the Secession (or Seceder Presbyterian) minister, John Walker. The two focused on the proper method of baptism, with Walker defending infant baptism. “There can be little doubt that Campbell won an overwhelming victory in the Walker debate,” comments historian Bill J. Humble. “The community sensed this, interpreting Walker’s demand that the discussion be abruptly terminated as a virtual sur-

41 Ibid.
It seems likely that Jesse and Martha, living in the same township, attended this two-day event—or at least that Jesse did. As his later life shows, he had an intense curiosity about principles associated with biblical doctrine, and such a debate surely piqued his curiosity. The debate may also have fueled the fire of his pursuit for religious truths.

Whether the crisis in Ohio had left Jesse among the destitute or whether five years on the Western Reserve had gotten the better of him, in August 1821, he, Martha, and their daughters moved back to Delaware, where, from 1824 to 1825, Jesse again served as the principal of the Wilmington Friends School on Fourth and West. After Owen Beverly was born in June 1825 in Delaware, the family moved to Philadelphia, and there, in February 1828, Martha died giving birth to Martha Johnson Gause. To the grieving Jesse, events in Ohio must have seemed far off. In July 1828, he was summoned to court three times via the Morgan County Sentinel in McConnelsville, Morgan County, Ohio, but failed to appear. Damages were assessed to John Clemens “by reason of the non performance by the said defendant of said covenant.” A default judgment for $586.75 was awarded to Clemens, and one of Jesse’s 1817 land purchases was sold to satisfy the judgment.

According to Shaker historian Priscilla J. Brewer, “Jesse Gause

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44 Hinshaw, *Quaker Genealogy*, 4:204. The Wilmington, Delaware, monthly meeting recorded in March 1822 receiving them on the certificate from Short Creek, endorsed by Kennett. Pennsylvania Quaker Monthly Meeting Records, Wilmington Membership, 1827–85, Ph648, p. 45; Teachers Supported by the Wilmington Monthly Meeting, 1794–1842.


of Philadelphia lost his wife in childbirth in 1828, and was left with the care of three young children plus the new infant. In the absence of relatives, it was an understandable decision for him to move with his family to the Hancock community. Additionally, Quakers frowned on a second marriage before the customary two-year waiting period, and unmarried Ruth, then age thirty-seven, was living with the Shakers at Hancock Village, Massachusetts.

The Shaker system was divided into three classes:

The first, or *Novitiate Class*, are those who receive faith, and come into a degree of relation with the Society, but choose to live in their own families, and manage their own temporal concerns. Any who choose may live in this manner, and be owned as brethren and sisters in the gospel, so long as they live up to its requirements. Believers of this class are not controlled by the Society, either with regard to their property, children, or families; but act as freely in all these respects as the members of any other religious Society, and still enjoy all their spiritual privileges, and maintain their union with the Society; provided they do not violate the faith, and the moral and religious princi-

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48 Cook Public Library, “Friendly Research.” Hancock Shaker Village was established in 1783. In 1826 it built a round stone barn and became the “center of a thriving dairy industry, . . . with many acres of medicinal herbs, vegetables, fruits, and other crops.” Separated from the outside world, they enjoyed a simple, peaceful, and hard-working lifestyle. The village was organized into “six smaller communal groups known as Families for efficiency of work, worship, and administration.” Praised for honesty, industriousness, and the quality of their goods, “they developed a wide variety of crafts, trades, and industries, including woodworking and metalworking, basketry, broom making, and much more.” Hancock Shaker Village, “Life at the Village,” www.hancockshakervillage.org/page.php?PageID=550 (accessed December 3, 2007). Across the state line in New Lebanon, New York, Leman Copley’s brother Luther was a skilled waterwheel designer who remained a devout Shaker his entire life. “Believers like Copley provided their younger colleagues with appropriate role models and served as tangible proof that it was not impossible to live a good Shaker life. . . . In 1834, Brother Philemon Steward recorded in his journal a discussion about the advisability of patenting Brother Luther Copley’s new water wheel design.” Brewer, *Shaker Communities*, 75, 102.
Affiliation with the first class allowed Jesse to live outside of the village with his sister if he wished. Gause family history indicates that Ruth took Jesse’s motherless children “among the Shakers to raise.” However, on February 22, 1832, Ruth apostatized from the Shakers and moved back to Chester County, Pennsylvania, leaving Jesse’s children with the Shakers at Hancock Village.

**JESSE GAUSE AS A SHAKER**

Jesse must have found a spiritual home with the Shakers, for he formally affiliated in early 1829. On November 15, 1828, Jesse wrote a letter to the Wilmington monthly meeting Hicksite group resigning his membership. The clerk copied his brief missive into the record:

The following communication from Jesse Gause was received and read; “To Wilmington Monthly meeting of Friends, Dear friends, Being united in membership with another religious society, and wishing to give friends no unnecessary trouble on my account, I feel it my duty thus to notify you that I wish to resign my right of membership in the Society of Friends. Your sincere friend, Jesse Gause’ 15th of 11th mo. 1828. On consideration the Meeting concludes to accept it as a relinquishment of his rights in the Society of Friends, And John Reynolds and Isaac Jackson are appointed to Inform Jesse Gause, that he is no longer a member.

While living at Hancock Village, Jesse extended an invitation to any of his acquaintances joining the Shakers to move near him. On March 24, 1829, Robert Smith, Jesse’s former pupil, wrote to a correspondent: “Jesse Gause my old schoolmaster and one of my most par-

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51Hancock Shaker Members and Data, line 182.
52Ibid., line 657.
53Jesse Gause, Letter to Wilmington monthly meeting of Friends, November 15, 1828, Pennsylvania Quaker Monthly Meeting Records, Wilmington (Hicksite) Membership, 1824–33, Ph651, p. 135.
ticular friends has settled here and had expressed a wish that any of his former acquaintances joining the ‘Believers’ might settle near him... I reside in the same house with my friend.”

Jesse was “teaching grammer [sic] to a class of sisters on Cardel’s system,” Robert adds.

A month later, Robert wrote to the same correspondent that Jesse’s encouragement had influenced him to investigate Shakerism seriously: “I concluded to follow this invisible leader and give this narrow way a fair trial. This decision was strengthened by the importunity of my wife and the friend of my youth Jesse Gause who were both anxious that I should stay and at least put myself in the way of finding out the actual good that these people enjoy.”

Both Robert and Jesse were searching for a Primitivism-based religion, one that could resolve the internal-spiritual conflicts continuously created by abrasive contact with the outside world. In both letters, Robert described Shakerism’s appealing features to his correspondent, and doubtless Jesse found these same aspects attractive:

In what I call Metaphysical Theology their lives are precisely similar to yours—They believe in & have performed among them various miracles possess the gift of Tongues & have faith in divine communications revelations visions and in every respect appear to be an exact counterpart of the idea that I have always had of the Primitive Christians.

I am satisfied that before any individual will ever be capable of keeping a company together under a united interest he must drink deeply into the spirit that prevails here the more I see of it the more I am pleased with it come then and see how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity much may be learned.

Although Jesse resigned from the Wilmington Hicksite Quak-

54Robert Smith, Letter to Peter Kaufmann, Hancock, Massachusetts, March 24, 1829, MSS 136, Box 2, letter #6, Kaufmann Inventory, Ohio Historical Society, Columbus. I am indebted to Barbara Walden, site coordinator, Kirtland Temple, for bringing these letters to my attention.

55William S. Cardell was a New York linguist and grammarian. He authored *Essay on Language* (1825) and *Elements of English Grammar* (1826).

56Robert Smith, Letter to Peter Kaufmann, Hancock, Massachusetts, April 28, 1829, MSS 136, Box 2, letter #9, Kaufmann Inventory, Ohio Historical Society, Columbus.

57Ibid., March 24, 1829.

58Ibid., April 28, 1829.
ers, he was still considered a member of the Wilmington Orthodox Quakers. The Hicksites, followers of Elias Hicks, had separated from the main group of Quakers in 1828. The designation “Orthodox Quaker” differentiated those who stayed with the original group from the Hicksites. As a result, Jesse’s resignation, which had been addressed only to the Hicksite group, was accepted only by them and he was still considered a member of the Orthodox group in Wilmington. On April 16, 1830, Jesse wrote another letter of resignation, this one addressed to the Wilmington Orthodox meeting: “Having united myself with another religious society, and as I cannot consider myself properly a Member of two religious societies at the same time, I hereby resign my right of membership with friends, wishing this resignation to be entered on the records of the monthly Meeting.” Yet that same month, his four children were granted a certificate to the Quaker East Hoosack monthly meeting in Adams, Berkshire County, Massachusetts. These contradictory actions indicates uncertainty about what course of action he would be taking. The Shaker records do not indicate that any of his immediate family members ever signed a covenant, but Ruth did. Being undecided about the future of his children’s religious upbringing, Jesse made certain they had a transfer certificate to the appropriate Quaker monthly meeting in the Berkshire County area so they could reaffiliate with the Quakers in the future if they chose to do so. In 1829, Jesse, Owen, and baby Mar-

59“The split was not purely doctrinal. It reflected tensions that had been growing between the elders—who were mostly from the cities—and Friends who lived farther away from major communities and Meetings. Hicksite Friends were mostly country Friends who perceived urban Friends as worldly. Many of the Philadelphia Friends were wealthy businessmen, and many of the country Friends kept less peculiar in matters of ‘plain speech’ and ‘plain dress,’ which by this point in time had become a sort of jargon and a sort of uniform, respectively.” “Elias Hicks,” Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elias_Hicks (accessed December 3, 2007).

60Jesse Gause, Letter to Wilmington Monthly Meeting of Friends, April 16, 1830, Pennsylvania Quaker Monthly Meeting Records, Wilmington Men’s Minutes, 1827–33, Ph652, p. 85.

tha were listed as living with the North Family at Hancock Village, while Harriet Amelia and Hannah were listed as living with the Church Family. At Hancock, Jesse met his second wife, Minerva Eliza Byram. Because the Shakers discouraged marriage and practiced celibacy, the two left the village together and were married on August 30, 1830, at Jefferson, Schoharie County, New York. According to Byram family records, Minerva and her sister Melinda “joined the Shakers but left to marry.” However, Shakerism drew them back. By October 22, 1831, Jesse, Minerva, and their five-month-old son, William Randall, were living fifteen miles from Kirtland, Ohio, in the Shaker community of North Union.

**JESSE GAUSE AS A MORMON**

What happened next is still not clear; but by March 8, 1832, Jesse was not only a Mormon but Joseph Smith’s first counselor. At a conference held January 25, 1832, at Amherst, Ohio, Smith received the revelation now canonized as LDS/RLDS Doctrine and Covenants 75, listing the names of several men called as missionaries. Perhaps one of these missionaries baptized Jesse, but no baptismal record has

62 Hancock Shaker Members and Data, line 657.
66 These missionaries are William E. McLellin, Luke S. Johnson, Orson Hyde, Samuel H. Smith, Lyman E. Johnson, Orson Pratt, Asa Dodds, Calves Wilson, Major N. Ashley, Burr Riggs, Simeon Carter, Emer Harris, Ezra Thayer, Thomas B. Marsh, Hyrum Smith, Reynolds Cahoon, Daniel Stranton, Seymour Brunson, Sylvester Smith, Gideon Carter, Ruggles
been found for him.

On March 1, in a revelation given at Kirtland (LDS D&C 78/RLDS D&C 77), the United Firm was organized, instructing Smith, Rigdon, and Newel K. Whitney to “sit in council with the saints who are in Zion.”67 Jesse was not included in the revelation and was not yet ordained to the high priesthood.

Jesse’s signature, however, appears on an undated protest of charges concerning conference minutes from Zion along with those of Sidney Rigdon, David Whitmer, Peter Whitmer Jr., Hyrum Smith, and Reynolds Cahoon. Thus, Jesse was in Kirtland in early March 1832:

We the undersigned having received and examined the minutes of the last general conference held in the land of Zion on the January 28–9–30th 1832 and from matured reflection and examination. and by comparing them with the revelations which we have received from our heavenly <father> to regulate his church in these last days, do find that they are illegal, and the proceedings of said conference not according to the laws and regulations which we have received by revelation from our common redeemer and as such we do not consider them as binding on his church, neither do we feel ourselves authorized to acknowledge them as being <of> God nor yet according the mind of the holy spirit. we therefore prefer the following charges against that conference to the president of the high Priesthood our beloved brother Joseph who has been ordained unto this office by a conference held in Amherst Lorain county ohio on the 25 of January 1832.

First we charge this conference with insulting the Bishop in Zion our beloved brother Edward, by saying [ ] in their minutes “ap-pointed brother Edward Partridge moderator” when he has been pre-viously appointed moderator of the conferences in Zion by commandment, and also moderator by virtue of his office as Bishop of the

church in so doing assuming an authority as a confidence to which they had no right for whi– God appoints authorities in his church let no conference take it upon them to reappoint these authorities for in so doing the claim a right which is not granted to them.

First we charge deem it of primary importance that every order & regulation in the church of Christ, established in wisdom, for its government Should be preserved inviolate, & as the proceeding of this conference reported in its minutes relative to the appointment of a moderator are illegal as that office, by revelation was confered upon an individual, namely our beloved Brother Edward, Bishop of the Church. We therefore charge the conference <in this act of appointment> with assuming a power with which it has not been invested.

Secondly) In said minutes we find find the name <of> Olivr Cowdery associated with breatheren Gilbert and Partridge in writing a letter to the agent w in ohio on business pertaining to the stewardship of the Bishop his agent and councillers, thereby disengag[ing]ing the order established legally in the church and infring ing on the rights of the Bishops councilors whose prerogative it is to be associated wth the Bishop and his agent in transacting all business pertaining to this stewardship.

Thirdly) we charge this conference with assuming authority to which they had no right in the appointment of a clerk, when it belonged to the moderator to appoint his own clerk.

Fifthly) we charge this conference with illegality <improperly> in appointing brother John Correll a superintendent in sch schools when his office requires all his attention as councillor to the Bishop to understand the laws of the kingdom so as to be able to assist him in all things pertaining to his office.

we therefore shall move before the court of the high Priesthood, to be holden in Zion as soon as possable that these minutes be eraced from the church records.

With contradicting dates of January 23–24 and 27 or January 28–30, the minutes of the Zion conference arrived in Kirtland the first few days of March. Since Jesse had not been ordained to the high priesthood before March 1 and the other signers were already mem-

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68Sidney Rigdon, Jesse Gause, David Whitmer, Peter Whitmer Jr., Hyrum Smith, Reynolds Cahoon, undated protest against irregularities in a conference of January 28–30, 1832, manuscript, CR 355, LDS Church Archives, typescript copy in my possession.

bers of the high priesthood, this undated list of charges was posted after Jesse obtained high priesthood status.

Living in Kirtland during February and March, Jesse traveled to Hiram, where on March 8, he and Rigdon were ordained by Smith as his “councellirs of the ministry of the presidency of <th> high Priesthood.” On March 15, Smith received another revelation (LDS D&C 81/RLDS D&C 80) stating that Jesse should be “proclaiming the gospel in the Land of the living and among thy Brethren.” If the Book of Commandments had been completed, the printing of which was interrupted on July 20, 1833, this revelation would have originally fallen on or near pp. 189–90. On March 8, 1833, Frederick G. Williams replaced Jesse in the presidency of the high priesthood; Jesse’s name was replaced in the manuscript revelation by Williams’s as it now appears (LDS D&C 81/RLDS D&C 80). On that same day, another revelation to Smith (LDS D&C 90/RLDS D&C 87) confirmed that Rigdon and Williams were to “continue in this ministry and presidency.”

Jesse Gause had no known prior connection with Mormonism. From the few surviving records, it cannot be known why Smith placed

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70 Kirtland Revelation Book, 10–11.
71 Ibid., 17–18; see also Book of Commandments holograph, 139, Community of Christ Library-Archives.
72 Kirtland Revelation Book, 53. Exactly a year earlier, Gause and Rigdon had been ordained as Smith’s counselors. Additionally, on March 15, 1833, Smith received a revelation (LDS D&C 92/RLDS D&C 89) calling Williams to the United Firm; again, exactly a year earlier, Smith had received the revelation for Jesse (LDS D&C 81/RLDS D&C 80) that would ultimately be attributed to Williams. Kirtland High Council Minutes, 11, LDS Church Archives, on Selected Collections, 1:19.
so much trust in Jesse. Richard Lyman Bushman observes, “In his need for talent and experience, Joseph frequently placed unjustified confidence in untried converts.” What did Smith discover in Jesse that made him a suitable counselor and scribe? Did Jesse’s intelligence, educational background, and denominational variance appeal to Smith? It seems likely that, along with his top-notch grammar and writing skills, Jesse’s previous religious affiliations and knowledge of the scriptures were important factors. Even while living at Hancock Village, residents had access to a wide variety of reading materials. Robert Smith had assured his correspondent: “The Apocryphal Testament & numerous other works of Religious, Liberal, Literary & amusing character are kept & read by different individuals no pains is taken to conceal them nor any means made use of to discountenance the reading of them.” Mario De Pillis has identified “the double bishopric” (Edward Partridge in Missouri and Newel K. Whitney in Ohio) as “a Shaker idea” that “doubtless came from Gause. If one stops the evolution of Mormon church government at the introduction of the second bishopric (or stake) in 1832, a resemblance to the church government of the Shakers emerges that is too remarkable to be coincidental. For the Shakers also divided their far-flung communities into an eastern and a western bishopric.” D. Michael Quinn also sees Jesse’s Shaker background as playing a significant role in his appointment as first counselor.

On March 20, Smith received a revelation to cease work on the Bible translation. Jesse, who had been in Hiram near Joseph, must have returned to Kirtland since he was not mentioned in any accounts of the tar and feathering of Joseph and Sidney that occurred four days later.

On April 1, Joseph Smith, Jesse Gause, Newel K. Whitney, and

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74Smith, Letter to Kaufmann, March 24, 1829.
75De Pillis, “Mormon Communitarianism,” 173, 176.
76Quinn, “Jesse Gause,” 490.
77Manuscript in Whitney Collection, in Marquardt, Joseph Smith Revelations, 206–7.
78See Joseph Smith et al., History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Lat-
Peter Whitmer Jr. left Hiram, headed for Missouri. The next day, Rigdon joined the group at Warren, Ohio. They arrived in Independence on April 24.

Jesse attended six meetings in Zion. At the first, held April 26, he was one of nine high priests who sustained Smith as the president of the high priesthood and also offered the closing prayer. During this meeting, Smith received a revelation (LDS D&C 82/RLDS D&C 81) about the United Firm. It instructs Edward Partridge, Newel K. Whitney, A. Sidney Gilbert, Sidney Rigdon, Joseph Smith, John Whitmer, Oliver Cowdery, W. W. Phelps, and Martin Harris to achieve unity “by a bond and covenant that cannot be broken” (v. 11). Although the original revelation is not extant, it seems likely that Martin Harris’s name was later substituted for Jesse Gause’s. Jesse was present during the revelation, while Harris was not even in Missouri; and Jesse attended a United Firm meeting on April 30, at


Smith, History of the Church, 1:265.

Sidney Rigdon, Journal, April 2, 1832, MS 713, fd. 2, p. 1, Sidney Rigdon Collection 1831–58, LDS Church Archives. The relevant entry reads: “2d April I left Chardon and arrived at Warren where I met Br Joseph S– N K Whitney and Jesse Gaus and proceeded immediately for Wellesville.”

History of the Church, 1:266.

Cannon and Cook, Far West Record, 43–45.


which the other eight men named in the revelation were present.\textsuperscript{85}

On April 27, the meeting from the previous day resumed with Jesse in attendance and named the Firm in Zion, Gilbert, Whitney & Company, and the Firm in Kirtland, Newel K. Whitney & Company.\textsuperscript{86}

Jesse was present on April 30 at the Literary Firm meeting where they chose a committee to select revelations and make “all necessary verbal corrections” for the Book of Commandments. Three thousand copies, in lieu of ten, were to be printed. Those present also discussed printing an almanac and named Phelps editor for the hymns Emma Smith had selected.\textsuperscript{87}

On the same day, with Jesse again in attendance, the United Firm met\textsuperscript{88} and Smith received the revelation (LDS D&C 83/RLDS D&C 82) confirming that men should support their wives and children.\textsuperscript{89}

The fifth meeting at which Jesse was present occurred almost a month later on May 26, at the home of Sidney Gilbert, to consider “a certain transgression of our br. Oliver committed in the fall of 1830.”\textsuperscript{90} It concerned a personal indiscretion that most assumed had been resolved, and the record does not explain why the issue was being readdressed. Was this an attack on Cowdery’s character and therefore an indirect attack on Zion? Since Smith and Rigdon had left Missouri on May 6, Rigdon could have instigated the assault with Jesse now acting as his stand-in. It was no secret that Rigdon and Cowdery were often at odds. Rigdon had unofficially replaced Cowdery as Smith’s right-hand man; and only four months earlier at the November 8, 1831, conference in Hiram, Rigdon had criticized Cowdery by saying if there were any mistakes or errors in the revelations, the scribe was to blame.\textsuperscript{91} Jesse was a first counselor, sharing that rank with Rigdon, and perhaps Cowdery was harboring resentment toward him.

On May 29, Jesse attended the dedication of the \textit{Evening and the Morning Star} office in Independence, his sixth and last appearance at

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{85}Cannon and Cook, \textit{Far West Record}, 47–48.
\textsuperscript{86}Ibid., 45.
\textsuperscript{87}Ibid., 46–47.
\textsuperscript{88}Ibid., 47–48.
\textsuperscript{89}Manuscript in Whitney Collection, in Marquardt, \textit{Joseph Smith Revelations}, 209–10.
\textsuperscript{90}Cannon and Cook, \textit{Far West Record}, 48–49.
\textsuperscript{91}Ibid., 17.
\end{footnotesize}
a meeting in Missouri. The minutes report: “Several appropriate commandments were read by br. John Whitmer, after which some explanatory remarks were made by brs. Phelps Oliver & others in relation to rules & regulations of the office & the important duties devolving upon those whom the Lord has designated to spread his truths & revelations in these last days to the inhabitants of the earth.” Jesse may have been one of these “others.”

The tension between the two firms and their members was increasing; each bishopric had its own goals. If Smith had come to Missouri hoping to achieve a reconciliation, as the “unity” revelation of April 26 suggests, the accord was fast dissolving. Tensions increased, with tempers flaring at both the eastern and western hubs. With conflict still on the horizon, in September 1832, Smith, by then back in Kirtland, received a revelation on September 22–23 (LDS D&C 84:76/RLDS D&C 83:12c–12d), chastising the Saints in Zion for insufficient deference to the visiting authorities: “For they are to be upbraided for their evil hearts of unbelief, and your brethren in Zion for their rebellion against you at the time I sent you.”

Apparently the situation remained unresolved. Four months later on January 14, 1833, Orson Hyde and Hyrum Smith wrote sternly to “the Bishop, his Council and the Inhabitants of Zion:”

“There is one clause in Brother Joseph’s letter which you may not understand; that is this, ‘If the people of Zion did not repent, the Lord would seek another place, and another people.’ Zion is the place where the temple will be built, and the people gathered, but all people upon that holy land being under condemnation, the Lord will cut off, if they repent not, and bring another race upon it, that will serve Him.”

Jesse may have stayed in the Partridge or Gilbert home, or possibly with Phelps at the newly dedicated print office. Almost certainly his grammatical and writing skills would have been welcome at the

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92 Cannon and Cook, Far West Record, 49–50.
93 Quoted in Smith, History of the Church, 1:320; see also De Pillis, Mormon Communitarianism, 170–83.
Evening and the Morning Star, whose first issue appeared on June 1, 1832. Jesse may have written “Common Schools,” an appeal to the disciples to “loose [sic] no time in preparing schools for their children, that they may be taught as is pleasing unto the Lord, and brought up in the way of holiness. Those appointed to select and prepare books for the use of schools, will attend to that subject, as soon as more weighty matters are finished. But the parents and guardians, in the Church of Christ need not wait—it is all important that children, to become good should be taught so.”

Gause also delivered some “Lectures in Grammer [sic],” for which he was paid three dollars. Apparently Jesse left Independence by stagecoach shortly thereafter, since the minutes of a special council meeting held July 3 do not list him among those attending, nor does he appear in minutes after that point.

Meanwhile, back in Kirtland on July 5, Sidney Rigdon was alarming the Saints with an exploitive lamentation: “The keys of the kingdom are rent from the Church, and there shall not be a prayer put up in this house this day. . . . I tell you again . . . the keys of the kingdom are taken from you, and you never will have them again until you build me a new house.” His sermon so wrought upon the Saints that Hyrum rode to Hiram on July 6 and brought Joseph back to Kirtland on July 7 to set matters straight. The exasperated Joseph delivered Rigdon to Satan’s buffetings and appointed Frederick G. Williams as his scribe on July 20. Consequently, from July 7 to 28, Jesse functioned as Joseph’s only counselor in the First Presidency. However, Joseph forgave Sidney and on “Saturday the 28th 1832 Brother Sidney

95“Common Schools,” Evening and the Morning Star 1, no. 1 (June 1832): 6.
96John Whitmer, Account Book, June 4, 1832, MS F 365, #5, LDS Church Archives. “John Whitmer’s role as clerk involved a lot of writing and Gause’s presence had provided John an opportunity to brush up on his grammar.” Romig and Siebert, “First Impressions,” (draft).
97Cannon and Cook, Far West Record, 50–51.
98Lucy Mack Smith, Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith the Prophet, and His Progenitors for Many Generations (Liverpool: S. W. Richards, 1853), 195; emphasis hers.
99Ibid., 196: “Joseph told him, he must suffer for what he had done, that he should be delivered over to the buffetings of Satan, who would han-
was ordained to the hight priesthood the second time.”

From June 4 to August 1, 1832, Jesse’s whereabouts were unknown. He comes into focus at only one point: a short stopover at North Union’s Shaker community south of Kirtland. Matthew Houston, a resident of the community, wrote to a correspondent in New York on August 10, 1832, stating that Jesse had come through “a few days since” looking for Minerva, who was still living there with their little son William Randall. Minerva had not converted from Shak- erism to Mormonism with Jesse, nor did his visit change her mind. Jesse returned to Kirtland alone; and by 1834 at the latest, Minerva and William Randall had left the Shaker community at North Union and were living in Franklin County, Indiana, near her brother George. On April 27, 1834, she married Elijah Davis, and William Randall grew up in Davis’s home in Brownsville, Union County, Indiana. In December of 1840, Elijah and Minerva Davis were among the founding members of the Campbellite Church of Christ in Brownsville.

After leaving North Union, Gause likely headed to Strongsville, where he met up with Zebedee Coltrin. The next known sighting of him was recorded in Zebedee’s missionary journal. Starting their journey on August 1, 1832, Gause and Coltrin primarily visited Jesse’s Quaker friends and relatives. When Joseph

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100 Hyrum Smith, Journal and Account Book, July 28, 1832, Hyrum Smith Papers, 1832–44, vault MSS 774, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

101 Matthew Houston to Seth Y. Wells, New Lebanon, New York, August 10, 1832, Shaker Manuscripts, Western Reserve Historical Society Series IV:A fd. 51, Cleveland.

102 Marriage of Elijah Davis and Minerva Gause, April 27, 1834, Marriage Records, 1811–1953, Franklin County Courthouse, Brookville, Indiana.

103 Sam Houston, History of Texas (N.p.: n. pub., 1895), 602.

Smith received his revelation on March 15 commanding Jesse to preach “among thy Brethren,” 105 Jesse selected “brethren” from his first religious affiliation— the Quakers, not the Shakers. Unfortunately, Coltrin never mentions Gause except to document his presence, and his diary is the sketchiest possible summary of their itinerary; but out of the list of hosts grows the image of a web of relatives, friends, and friends of friends whom the two missionaries freely approached with the message of this new religion.

Coltrin’s diary records that they began their mission on August 1, staying their first night “at Br Kingberry’s in Painsville.” 106 This man was Horace Kingsbury, uncle to the better-known Joseph C. Kingsbury. 107 Twenty-year-old Joseph C. Kingsbury had moved to Kirtland in 1831 where he clerked for and lived with Newel K. Whitney, “embraced this New Revelation,” and was baptized Mormon by Burr Riggs on January 15, 1832. 108

On August 2, the two missionaries “traveled to chancy Lovlins in Madison & held Meeting in his house in which good attention was paid.” 109 Even though Chauncey Loveland willingly hosted Mormon missionaries, he did not join the Church until June 1846; his sons Levi and Chester joined in 1837. 110

The next day found them in Thompson at “br. Copley’s.” 111 Although Leman Copley was out of favor with the Church at the time of

106Zebedee Coltrin, Journal, August 11–20, 1832, 29, MS 1443, Access No. 35852-ARCH [132500], LDS Church Archives.
107Kirtland High Council Minutes, 2. John P. Greene ordained Horace an elder on December 9, 1832.
this visit,¹¹² he was nevertheless hospitable to Mormon missionaries and travelers.

Next, according to Coltrin, “4th went to br. John Reeds in Rome where we remained till the 7th inclusive.”

John Reed and his family, along with his adopted son, Henry Green, lived in Rome, Ashtabula County. Reed’s daughter, Clarissa, married Levi Hancock in 1833 and his daughter Laura Lucinda later married Patriarch Thomas Steed. “Laura often played at the feet of the Prophet Joseph Smith and was held on his lap on many occasions when he was a guest of the Reed home while hiding from his enemies.” John Reed had been baptized with his wife in 1831, and was ordained an elder by John Smith on February 15, 1832.

Coltin continues: “8th traveled south 3 miles below Warren & lodged with the Widow Marshal 9th went to Thos. Frenches at Salem.” Quaker Thomas French had previously lived in Redstone, Fayette County, Pennsylvania, at the same time as Jesse’s uncle Enoch Gause. The two men were surely acquainted, since both men moved to Goshen, Ohio, in 1805–06, where Thomas was listed as one of the early schoolteachers and property appraisers. In 1808, Thomas moved to Salem, Columbiana County, Ohio, where in December 1828, he was disowned for disunity at the Salem monthly meeting.

The missionaries continued on the “10 th to Joseph Ingram’s in New Garden.” In 1823, Joseph Ingram and his family transferred from the Bradford monthly meeting of Friends in Pennsylvania to the New Garden monthly meeting in Columbiana County, Ohio, where
in 1828, he affiliated with the Hicksite group.\textsuperscript{121} On the 1830 census, he was listed in the same township as Eli Wickersham.\textsuperscript{122} Eli’s sister Mary was married to Edwin D. Woolley, an early convert and long-time bishop in Utah.\textsuperscript{123}

The missionaries stayed three days, August 11–14, with Jesse’s first cousin, Ezekiel Harlan who, with rare loquacity, Coltrin describes as “manifest[ing] great tenderness, before we parted Showing that he was almost convinced. but having been a strong Hicksite there were some matters that he wished to have a further time to consider on, we left him a book which he wished to read, the greatest difficulty with him was to believe in the existance of a Devil independant of mans, we pray God that he may yet be brought in to believe & obey the everlasting Gospel. for we think he is honest.”\textsuperscript{124} Also a Quaker, Ezekiel Harlan was the son of Jesse’s paternal aunt, Lydia Gause Harlan. Philip Wickersham, another brother of Mary Wickersham Woolley, was a neighbor of Ezekiel, living so close that they are listed on the same sheet in the 1830 census. Ezekiel’s brother William lived in the same township; he is listed immediately after Henry Woolley, suggesting families ties reinforced by neighborly proximity, that may not be fully understood.\textsuperscript{125}

The missionaries’ next host was Job Wickersham at Fairfield, Columbiana County.\textsuperscript{126} The Wickershams had moved from Chester County, Pennsylvania, in the early 1800s.\textsuperscript{127} Job’s brother Thomas, also of Fairfield, and their sister, Ann Wickersham Marsh, were both

\textsuperscript{121}Hinshaw, Quaker Genealogy, 4:826.
\textsuperscript{122}U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1830, Butler, Columbiana, Ohio; roll 128, p. 503.
\textsuperscript{124}Coltrin, Journal, 34–35.
\textsuperscript{125}U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1830, Center, Columbiana, Ohio; roll 128, pp. 445, 448.
\textsuperscript{126}Coltrin, Journal, 30.
\textsuperscript{127}“Ohio Land Grants,” Chester County, Then and Now 1, no. 1 (January 1987): 27.
Hicksite Quakers. 128

On August 15, Gause and Coltrin “pass ed [sic] through greersbury 12 m from Fairfield & 20 from Lisbon we lodged that night at the falls of big beever 10 m from Greersburg 16th passed through Economy & arrive at Pittsburg.” Here the missionaries stayed for two days and encountered both interest and opposition, prompting one of Coltrin’s lengthiest passages and providing a glimpse, by his implied inclusion of Gause with every “we,” of these missionaries in action:

We endeavoured to be faithful in embracing every opportunity of declaring our testimony for the Gospel in its fullness in the last days. & for the book of Mormon, & the Judgments that God was about to pour out upon the impenitent & that they have already begun we reasoned with many on these Subjects. & succeeded So far as to obtain an acknowledgement from a number that most that we said was reasonable. but we found in most a great prejudice against the book of Mormon. but we think that in most cases we succeeded in lessening that prejudice considerably In Pittsburg. Several of their Greatest champions were brought against us. Some of Whom manifested a good degree of candour asking many questions. & Stating that they had heard that we denied the Scriptures. & took the book of Mormon in the place thereof. which we of course contradicted. & they appeared to give credit to our Statements & finally agreed with us in every Statement relative to the principles of the Gospel. & the Judgments, about to be poured out, & in relation to the indian & the gathering of the Jews but others declared it was all of the Devil & that we were deceived in relation to the book of Mormon, they endeavoured to confound us with their learning & sophistry pretending that they were concerned for us on account of our delusion believing us to be honest, but they failed miserably both in confounding us with all their learning & all they could say strengthened & confirmed us, in our faith & in several instances they opposed each other, some declaring their desire to read the book, & that it ought not to be condemned unexamined, & if they could believe, be convinced of the things we Stated concerning it. They would Join the Church immediately. 129

Although Coltrin mentions Economy simply as on the itinerary,

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129Coltrin, Journal, 30–34.
it was something of a stronghold for followers of George Rapp. Like the Shakers, they practiced communal living and celibacy.\(^{130}\) John Zundel, a member of “one of the most numerous and influential Rappite families,” joined the Mormons about 1832—according to De Pillis, “possibly at the hands of Jesse Gause.”\(^{131}\) No documentation has yet been found to confirm or deny this possibility.

On August 18, the two missionaries went to Brownsville “& lodged at Dr. Curry’s.”\(^{132}\) Born of Scotch ancestry in Chester County, Pennsylvania, Dr. Joseph Curry moved to Allegheny County in 1804,\(^{133}\) but never became a Mormon.

August 19 was a Sunday, so they “went 4 m to Carvel rigdens & attended a baptist meeting near by.”\(^{134}\) Carvel, who lived in Library, Alleghany County, Pennsylvania and was baptized in May 1831 by Luke Johnson, was Sidney’s older brother.\(^{135}\) Their sister, Lacy, had married Peter Boyer, the brother of Carvel’s wife, Sarah, making the two men double brothers-in-law. Though Lacy died in 1827, Peter, who was living nearby, had also been converted in May 1831.\(^{136}\) The Baptist service Gause and Coltrin attended would have been the preaching at Peters Creek Baptist Church. In its graveyard is the

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\(^{130}\) Joseph H. Bausman, *History of Beaver County, Pennsylvania and Its Centennial Celebration*, 2 vols. (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1904), 2:111–12. In addition to communal living and celibacy, the Rappite lifestyle also included eating five meals a day, no separation of the sexes into different households, no separation of children from parents, disuse of tobacco, acknowledgement of no written creed aside from the Bible, and surrendering property into one common stock. Hinds, *American Communities*, 11–13, 16.

\(^{131}\) De Pillis, “Mormon Communitarianism,” 187.

\(^{132}\) Coltrin, Journal, 30.


\(^{134}\) Coltrin, Journal, 30.


Rigdon-Boyer burial plot. Here Sidney and his circuit-riding cousin John Rigdon had previously studied scriptures under Reverend David Philips. By the end of 1834, Carvel had been ordained an elder. More than ten years later, at a church conference on April 7, 1845, Sidney Rigdon “nominated Carvel Rigdon to the office of father and Patriarch” of his then-established Pittsburgh church. The following day at the conference, Peter Boyer was unanimously accepted as one of the “standing High Councillors for the whole church.” Peter eventually returned to the Baptist faith and is buried in Peters Creek Cemetery near Lacy.

Sunday evening, the two missionaries walked another five or six miles “to Morrises tavern where we lodged & went next morning 5 miles to breakfast at Backhouses.” The Backhouse tavern in Monongahela was a sturdy brick building on the corner of Main and Fourth streets, constructed by “James Mercer, prior to 1834. After his death the house was used as a tavern by Mrs. Backhouse.” It was their last stop together. Zebedee recorded on August 20: “Brother Jesse & I After praying with & for each other parted in the fellowship of the Gospel of our Lord & Saviour Jesus Christ.”

After this brotherly parting, Jesse Gause then disappeared from Mormonism. Four months later on December 3, 1832, he was excom-

139“Minutes of a Conference of the Church of Christ, held in the City of Pittsburgh, commencing on the 6th and ending on the 11th of April, A. D 1845,” Messenger and Advocate of the Church of Christ 1, no. 11 (April 15, 1845): 169, 172.
140Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Bender, comps., “Peters Creek Baptist Church Cemetery Burials,” (1985), 1, typescript copy in my possession.
142J. B. Finley and Chill W. Hazzard, Centennial Anniversary of the Founding of Monongahela City, PA, celebrated November 15, 1892 (Monongahela City, Pa.: Chill W. Hazzard, 1895), 21.
143Coltrin, Journal, 35.
municated in absentia. Three months later in March 1833, Frederick G. Williams replaced Jesse in the presidency.

Was it another internal-spiritual conflict that swayed Jesse’s thinking, deflecting him from continuing to pursue an ideal theology in Mormonism? Mormonism’s communal lifestyle was thriving at that time in Kirtland, even though it had floundered briefly in June 1831 when Leman Copley reclaimed the property on which new converts were settling. Had any of Jesse’s experience with Shakerism combined with Sidney Rigdon’s idealistic fervor kept the system stable up to that point? Mario De Pillis hypothesizes that Gause’s influence had been decisive, if not in practice, at least as its theological ideal: “By the time Jesse Gause had disappeared from the scene late in 1832, Mormon Communitarianism was successful and strongly established in the minds and hearts of the Saints.” If so, it may be his only lasting contribution to the Mormon faith he embraced so successfully, but so briefly.

**Jesse’s Children**

What happened to Jesse Gause? Although no death record has been found, he almost certainly died sometime between mid-August 1835, and mid-September 1836. He was definitely no longer in touch with the Mormons of Kirtland by December 3, 1832, or with his family by September 14, 1836, since, on that date, Jesse’s two oldest children, seventeen-year-old Harriet Amelia and sixteen-year-old Hannah, petitioned the Orphans Court in Chester County, Pennsylvania, to appoint their uncle Jonathan Gause as their guardian. Hannah was granted a certificate to the Bradford (Pennsylvania) monthly meeting in 1838; and in 1839, Harriet Amelia was granted one to Kennett. Both certificates were granted by the Wilmington meeting, meaning that, when the girls left Delaware in 1828, they had

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144 Joseph Smith, Diary, December 3, 1832, Box 1, fd. 1, p. 3, Joseph Smith Collection, LDS Church Archives, on Selected Collections, 1:20.
145 Kirtland Revelation Book, 53.
146 De Pillis, “Mormon Communitarianism,” 189.
147 Jesse was listed in his father’s will which was proved August 18, 1835. William Gause, will dated June 12, 1834.
148 Harriet Amelia Gause and Hannah S. Gause, Petition for Guardian, September 14, 1836, Orphans Court Records, Chester County Archives, West Chester, Pennsylvania.
not been received by another Quaker monthly meeting at a different location.\(^{149}\)

Hannah died between 1838 and 1849.\(^{150}\) Harriet Amelia never married; and in 1850, she and her grandmother Hannah Johnson were living in Wilmington, Delaware, with Joel and Lavinia King. Lavinia was Harriet Amelia’s first cousin, the daughter of Jesse’s older brother, Samuel.\(^{151}\) By 1860, Harriet Amelia was living with her younger sister, Martha Gause Heston, in Newark, New Jersey.\(^{152}\)

In 1842, Owen and Martha, Jesse’s other surviving children from his first marriage, petitioned the Chester County Orphans Court to appoint a guardian. Once again, Jonathan Gause assumed that role. He was appointed guardian over Owen’s person and estate (Owen was then seventeen), but for fourteen-year-old Martha, who was still living out of state in Hancock, Massachusetts, he was appointed guardian over the estate only.\(^{153}\)

Owen married Harriet Powell in 1848; their daughter Ella was born the next year, followed by Harriet’s death in 1850.\(^{154}\) Owen, baby Ella, and Owen’s sister Martha then moved in Wilmington, Delaware.\(^{155}\) In 1852, he married Sarah Miller.\(^{156}\) Their first daughter,

\(^{149}\) Pennsylvania Quaker Monthly Meeting Records, Wilmington Membership, 1827–85, box Ph 648, p. 45.

\(^{150}\) This death date can be deduced by Hannah’s absence from her maternal grandmother’s will. Hannah Johnson, will dated May 19, 1849, probated July 22, 1852, A Calendar of Delaware Wills, New Castle County 1682–1800, Historical Society of Delaware, Wilmington.


\(^{153}\) Owen B. Gause, Petition for Guardian, August 1, 1842, Orphans Court Records, Chester County Archives, West Chester, Pennsylvania.; Martha Gause, Petition for Guardian, August 1, 1842, also Orphans Court Records.


\(^{155}\) U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1850, Wilmington, New Castle, Delaware; roll M432_53, p. 70, image 402.

\(^{156}\) “William Gause,” 2.
Jessie, was born in Ohio in 1854, where Owen entered Cleveland Homoeopathic Medical College in 1855. That same year he transferred to the Homoeopathic Medical College in Philadelphia, from which he graduated in 1857. He opened a practice in Trenton, New Jersey. In 1860, his son, Percival Owen Beverly Gause, was born, and Owen was appointed a member of the faculty at Philadelphia’s Homoeopathic Medical College but did not move back to that city until 1862. For 1860–64, Owen was listed as a doctor of physiology and pathology. “He filled successively the chairs of physiology, physiology and pathology, midwifery and diseases of women and children, obstetrics and puerperal diseases and diseases of infants.” In 1866, he was one of the founders of the Homoeopathic Medical Society of Pennsylvania and, in 1869, its president. In 1867, a new college was organized, the Hahnemann Medical College of Pennsylvania. Owen was one of its first faculty members and also served on the first board of professional trustees and board of curators. In 1868, daughter Hannah was born. On March 4 of that year, Owen delivered the valedictory address at the annual commencement of Hahnemann Medical College. His address, though typically florid in the style of the period, also conveys genuine

157U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860, Trenton Ward 1, Mercer, New Jersey; roll M653_698, p. 33, image 34.
161Ibid., 2:63.
163King, History of Homoeopathy, 2:63.
idealism and calls the students to high standards of duty:

If you go forth imbued with a lofty ambition, with a clear conception
of the responsibilities of your calling . . . you will not fail, but walk
amid suffering humanity, a dispenser of mercy, . . . carrying light into
darkness. . . . You will be called to stand as it were on the threshold of
time and eternity.

Go forth then full of faith, full of enthusiasm; go, resolved to meet
every emergency with calmness and fortitude. Never shrink from any
responsibility, but meet it with an unwavering determination to relieve
distress and carry succor to those who are in danger of death. . . . And
may the Benediction of Heaven rest upon you.166

Owen sponsored three prizes for scholarship to reward excep-
tional students.167 His last child, Claudia, was born in 1876.168 In
1883, Owen was a proponent and signer of U.S. Senate Bill 117
(passed as Act No. 107, the Anatomy Act, an amendment to the 1867
Armstrong Act),169 that made unclaimed bodies available for medical
students’ dissection “to prevent unauthorized uses and traffic in hu-
man bodies.”170 In 1887, Owen traveled to Aiken, South Carolina,
where he practiced during the winter. His son, Percy, had been prac-
ticing there since his graduation from Hahnemann College in 1881,
but was apparently unwell.171 Percy died November 10, 1887, the day
before his twenty-seventh birthday, and is buried in St. John’s Method-
odist Episcopal Church Cemetery.172 Owen and his wife Sarah were
members of the St. John’s Methodist Episcopal Church in Aiken.173

The next year, Owen “was made emeritus professor of obstetrics. He
was a strong force in the faculty and an interesting and instructive lec-

166Ibid., 13–14.
167King, History of Homoeopathy, 2:63.
168U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1880, Philadelphia, Philadelphia,
Pennsylvania; roll T9_1172, p. 315, image 429.
http://jeffline.jefferson.edu/SML/archives/exhibits/notable_alumni/
william_s_forbes.html (accessed December 3, 2007).
170W. J. McKnight, A Pioneer Outline History of Northwestern Pennsylva-
nia (Brookville, Pa.: J. Lippincott, 1905), 298.
171King, History of Homoeopathy, 1:414.
172Allen, “Percival Gause.”
173Gasper Loren Toole, II, Ninety Years in Aiken County: Memoirs of
Aiken County and Its People (N.p.: n. pub., 1958), 212, 303. It is possible that
turer.” He was then sixty-three. Until his death, Owen spent winters practicing medicine in Aiken, South Carolina and summers at Asbury Park, New Jersey. He died June 11, 1895, in Hahnemann Hospital, donating his entire library to the college and his instruments to his attending physicians.

In 1851, in Wilmington, Delaware, Jesse’s youngest daughter, Martha Johnson Gause, married Reverend Newton Heston, a Methodist Episcopal minister. Their ministerial lifestyle was not sedentary. Their frequent moves spanned Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York. They had four children—Herbert, Newton, William (died in infancy), and Anna. Herbert worked as a railroad clerk in New Jersey and was a fire marshal for the railroad in Philadelphia. Newton Jr. was a steamship clerk. In October 1861, Newton withdrew from the Methodist Episcopal Church, accepted an ap-

Owen had previously been Baptist. It was published that he donated money to the American Baptist Missionary Union in May 1850. “Donations,” Missionary Magazine 30, no. 8 (August 1850): 270.

174 King, History of Homoeopathy, 2:63.
176 King, History of Homoeopathy, 2:63.
177 Marriages, Delaware County Republican, October 17, 1851.
pointment to the Congregational Church of Brooklyn, and remained there until his death in July 1864.\footnote{Henry R. Stiles, A History of the City of Brooklyn, 3 vols. (Brooklyn, N.Y.: n. pub., 1870), 3:799.}

William Randall, Jesse’s only child by his second wife Minerva Byram, left his Indiana home in 1848, headed for California.\footnote{Houston, History of Texas, 602.} Over the next five years he accumulated wealth in Stockton as a teamster during the gold rush.\footnote{Bureau of the Census, 1850, San Joaquin, Stockton, California; roll M432_35, p. 287, image 557.} He returned to Indiana in 1853 to study law and was admitted to the bar in Liberty, Union County, Indiana. He married Amanda Louthan in 1854, and they later moved to Albany, Gentry County, Missouri, where he practiced law until the outbreak of the Civil War.\footnote{Bureau of the Census, 1860, Albany, Gentry, Missouri; roll M653_620, p. 0, image 122.} Their son George was born in 1859 in Liberty, Indiana, and their daughter Jessie in 1861 in Missouri.\footnote{Houston, History of Texas, 602.} W. R. (as he came to be called) was a Confederate and served as a captain and major in the Missouri State Guard, Second Regiment, Fourth Division, during 1861.\footnote{R. S. Bevier, History of the First and Second Missouri Confederate Brigades 1861–1865 (St. Louis: Bryan, Brand & Company, 1879), 70.} On January 1, 1862, he enlisted with the Third Missouri Volunteer Infantry as a captain, being promoted to the rank of lieutenant-colonel on May 8, 1862, and to colonel in October 1862.\footnote{Index of service records, Confederate, 1861–1865, Office of Adjutant General, box 101, reel s731, Missouri State Archives, Jefferson City. He participated in the battles of Elk Horn, Farmington, Iuka, Corinth, Port Gibson, Baker’s Creek, Big Black, and Vicksburg; see also J. Stoddard...} On May 22, 1863, while fighting in the battle of Vicksburg, “Col. W.R. Gause of the 3rd Missouri impro...
vised a hand grenade, tossing it into the ditch and killing and wounding 22 of his fellow Missourians on the Union side. In 1864, Colonel Gause was recruiting new soldiers in Missouri. At the end of the war, along with practicing law, his business included buying and shipping mules and horses in Vicksburg and Jackson, Mississippi, where the family relocated in 1866. In 1867, his wife Amanda died and his daughter Jessie was sent back to Missouri to live with Amanda’s aunt and uncle, Mary and Henry Louthan. Colonel Gause moved to Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas, in 1870 and "for a number of years was a prominent and successful practitioner in the courts of the State and the United States. He became identified with politics during that time, and represented the Democratic [P]arty, of which he was a stanch member, in the Sixteenth Texas Legislature." In March 1873, he married Louisa Cabanne Stevenson and resided in Fort Worth until his death on November 26, 1882. "He was a great lover of fine horses, and was considered one of the finest judges of horses in the South." William Randall Gause is buried in Oakwood Cemetery in Fort Worth, Texas.

George Louthan Gause, grandson of Jesse, was born January 31, 1859, in Liberty, Union County, Indiana. He arrived in Fort Worth with his father in 1870.

He clerked and followed other avocations for several years, among

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190 Houston, History of Texas, 602.

191 Bureau of the Census, 1870, Palmyra, Marion, Missouri; roll M593_791, p. 659, image 562. Bureau of the Census, 1880, Palmyra, Marion, Missouri; roll T9_702, p. 346.4, image 697.

192 Houston, History of Texas, 602.

193 Ibid.; Fort Worth Democrat, March 15, 1873.

194 Markgraf and Yoder, Historic Oakwood Cemetery, 81.

195 Ibid.
other things spending three years at work on a ranch in Clay County, Texas. Returning to Fort Worth from the ranch, he entered the law office of Pendleton & Cooper and read law, expecting to follow in the footsteps of his father and chose the law as a profession. After his admission to the bar he opened an office, but, within a short time thereafter, he was forced to abandon the law and seek a vocation which would permit of plenty of outdoor work. Leaving the law office he engaged in stock-trading, as he is a natural born trader, and, in fact, traded and bought about everything that was for sale in which he saw money. In 1876, he opened the Missouri Wagon Yard on Weatherford Street in Fort Worth, where he boarded and leased animals and vehicles. George speculated successfully in real estate, earning a great deal of money in a few months. By 1882, he was involved in the livery business and in 1887, he opened the Palace Livery Stable, one of the area’s finest. The renting of hearses led to an added interest in undertaking; and in 1886, George studied embalming, earned three diplomas, and founded a family business that endured for nearly a century. He was “considered the most scientific embalmer and experienced funeral director in Fort Worth, and one of the best in the South.”

On March 24, 1889, George married Mamie Frost Sullivan. They had two daughters: Louise, born in December 1889 and an unnamed girl born and buried in February 1891. Then, like his father and grandfather, George suffered the death of his wife. Mamie died November 26, 1897, and George never remarried. In 1915, Louise married John Ware, and together George and John ran the Gause-Ware Funeral Home. George was a member of the Knights of Pythias.

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201 Ibid.
202 Bureau of the Census, 1930, Fort Worth, Tarrant, Texas; roll 2393,
of Pythias and the Methodist Episcopal Church.  

With George’s death on December 18, 1938, Jesse Gause’s surname line came to an end. Though few, Jesse’s posterity in Tarrant County, Texas, outnumber their counterparts in Chester County, Pennsylvania, who have virtually died out.

**APPENDIX**

**Paternal Line**

A convenient point for beginning Gause family research is with Jesse Gause’s paternal great-grandfather, Charles Goss of East Nottingham, Pennsylvania, who married Jane Powell in 1724 at the New Garden Quaker meetinghouse. Jane was the daughter of Evan Powell, and Gwen Lloyd Powell. The births of their sons—Evan (Jesse’s grandfather, born January 23, 1725) and Charles Jr. (March 11, 1726)—were recorded in the New Garden Monthly Meeting Quaker meetinghouse records.

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205 Yvonne Shilling (great-great-grandniece of Jesse Gause), telephone conversation, April 20, 2006.

206 Charles Goss was listed under the heading of “freeman” on the East Nottingham tax-rate assessment of 1722. Futhey and Cope, *History of Chester County*, 197.


1731)—were recorded in the minutes of the New Garden monthly meeting. In June 1732, the parents died of smallpox, leaving their orphaned sons in the guardianship of their maternal grandfather: “My will is it my father in law Even Powel of Newgarding . . . take caer of my . . . Children.”

Charles Jr., Jesse’s grand-uncle, married Grace Dixon in 1753 in New Castle County, Delaware, and they had six known children: Sarah, Solomon, Rachel, Amy, Isaac, and Mary. In 1762, the family moved to Virginia, then returned to Pennsylvania in 1770, settling near Redstone Creek in Fayette County. There was some unresolved difficulty about their membership, which resulted in Charles being “disowned” by the meeting; Amy was also briefly disowned for “marrying out,” and Rachel had “gone out in her marriage.” Previously, Sarah was disowned for marrying her first cousin, Enoch Gause (son of her father’s brother Evan). Charles Jr. died in Fayette County in 1808. In 1814, the rest of the family emigrated to Ohio and Indiana. By 1817, Jesse’s family with the Gause surname was no longer present in Fayette County, Pennsylvania.

Jesse’s grandfather, Evan Gause, married Hannah White
Walker in 1751, at Old Swedes Church in Wilmington, Delaware.215 Hannah was apparently not Quaker, since in 1754, Evan made an acknowledgement to the New Garden monthly meeting for being married by “a priest.”216 They had six known children: Enoch, Jonathan, William, Evan Jr., Sarah, and Lydia. Of the six, only Jesse’s father, William, remained in Chester County.217 William’s brother Enoch and his family moved west before 1810, settling in Ohio and Indiana.218 Another brother, Jonathan, and his family also moved west. Evan Jr. moved south and settled an area known as Goss Port (location currently unknown). Sister Sarah died without marrying, and sister Lydia married Henry Harlan; by 1820, they were living in Centre, Columbiana County, Ohio with their son, Ezekiel, and his family.219 According to the 1820 federal census, when Jesse was in Ohio, his father William was in Pennsylvania. Though he may have also been engaged in agriculture, William “followed tailoring for many years in Chester county, and with his apprentices went from house to house ‘to do up their work;’ or, in the language of that day, ‘he whipped the cat.’ He was a hearty, jovial man, and the neighbors looked forward with pleasure to the few days that ‘Billy Gause and his men’ would spend with them.”220 Four free colored persons were listed as members of William’s household.221 William died July 12, 1835, followed by Mary on July 15, 1841.

In 1810, several members of the Gause family were living in

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215 Evan Goss was listed as “inmate” on the East Marlborough tax list of 1753. Futhey and Cope, History of Chester County, 185; Gilbert Cope, Genealogy of the Gause Family (West Chester, Pa.: n. pub., 1896), 1.
218 Hinshaw, Quaker Genealogy, 4:87.
219 Gause, “Notes,” 1; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1820, Centre, Columbiana, Ohio; roll M33_91, p. 84, image 93.
221 U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1820, Kennett, Chester, Pennsylvania; roll M33_96, p. 394, image 205.
the township of Luzerne, Fayette County, Pennsylvania. They included Lydia Gause Harlan (Jesse’s paternal aunt), her husband, Henry Harlan, his grand-aunt Grace Dixon Gause (widow of Charles who died in 1808) her son Isaac, daughter Mary, and the families of her adult children—Solomon, Eli, and Rachel (wife of Daniel Gudgel). Grace’s son Nathan was living in Greene County, which bordered Fayette to the south, her daughter Amy (wife of Jonathan Jones) lived in Jefferson County, Ohio, and her daughter Sarah, who was married to Jesse’s uncle Enoch Gause, and their sons, Evan and Isaac, lived in Columbiana County, Ohio.

Maternal Line

On Jesse Gause’s maternal line, I have traced his ancestry to his third great-grandfather, Samuel Beverly, who was “rocf [received on a certificate from] Beylenacre MM, Ireland” on December 9, 1722, along with his wife Jennatt at the New Garden monthly meeting in Chester County, Pennsylvania. He had only one son, William, on whom he bestowed a large tract of land between Kennett and Marlborough, Pennsylvania; part of this land later became Cedarcroft, the home of Bayard Taylor. Additionally, he “furnished his son’s house and stocked his farm with a bountiful hand.” William’s son, Samuel, inherited from his grandfather Samuel “the plantation I dwell on containing about 200 acres with stock.”

This second Samuel was Jesse’s grandfather. He married Ruth

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224Hinshaw, Quaker Genealogy, 4:480.
227Gause, “Notes,” 2.
228Samuel Beverly, will dated December 2, 1747, proved May 29, 1751, Chester County Wills, Chester County Archives, West Chester, Pennsylvania.
Jackson Beverly on April 11, 1753 at the London Grove monthly meeting in Chester County, Pennsylvania and had two daughters, whom they raised in Chester County.
THE SANCTIFICATION OF MORMONISM’S HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY

Michael H. Madsen

The blessings of the Most High will rest upon our tabernacles, and our name will be handed down to future ages; our children will rise up and call us blessed; and generations yet unborn will dwell with peculiar delight upon the scenes that we have passed through, the privations that we have endured; the unceasing zeal that we have manifested; the all but insurmountable difficulties that we have overcome in laying the foundation of a work that brought about the glory and blessings that they will realize.

—Joseph Smith

TODAY TENS OF THOUSANDS of Latter-day Saints flock annually to the

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1Joseph Smith et al., History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day

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sites of Mormonism’s early history, where they do indeed “dwell with peculiar delight upon the scenes” associated with their faith’s origins and development. Although owning, occupying, managing, and visiting the actual places associated with early Mormonism are activities currently valued by the LDS Church and its members, this has not always been the case. Early Mormons established themselves in New York, Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois before finally settling in the remote American West. For decades the Church was effectively divorced from these eastern and midwestern sites. History, nevertheless, remained a vital aspect of the Latter-day Saints’ collective identity. Non-Mormon writers Richard N. Ostling and Joan K. Ostling comment: “There is a very real sense in which the church’s history is its theology. . . . [J]ust as creedal churches have official statements of faith, the Mormon Church tends to have official versions of sacred history.”

Not until the twentieth century, however, did the LDS Church begin to reacquire eastern and midwestern properties significant to the Church’s history. This article examines the increasingly prominent role of place in the construction of Mormon history and in the promotion of a common Mormon identity. I suggest that the historic spaces of Mormonism are becoming sanctified from the top down as the LDS Church hierarchy engineers the creation of sacred space. This emerging sacred historical Mormon geography, in turn, plays an increasingly important role in the ongoing construction of Mormon identity. I recognize the complex and sometimes meandering story attached to each historic site but refer the interested reader to the sources cited in the notes, as well as my dissertation, for more background, since this article focuses primarily on contemporary interpretation of these sites. I also appreciate that referring to actions by “the Church” anthropomorphizes it, obscuring the important role played by individuals in the acquisition, development, and interpretation of each site—and resistance to each of these steps. However, in the interests of moving the story to the contemporary moment, I have employed this useful device.

Sacred places might strike us as being static, effectively fixed in


place, but they are actually fluid and dynamic, temporary and mobile. Indeed, there is no reason to suppose that the processes inherent in sacred-space creation should diminish over time. Some scholars, aware of the potentially powerful influence of sacred places, recognize that modern institutional hierarchies can play an important role in the “creation” of sacred space. Religious studies scholar Rowland Sherrill, for one, maintains that “sensibilities bent on [works of consecration] do indeed exist today. He believes that certain places await only the needed “organization of memory, emotion, and intellect” to be transformed into sacred places. Sherrill identifies the United States as a prime location for works of spatial consecration because sacred places provide believers with a sense of the “home place,” and “the ‘homeless’ condition of the modern American self would only go to intensify the desires and work of the sacralizing sensibility, even if now it might need to invent new experiential and interpretive tactics to gain sacred grounds.”

The leadership of the LDS Church may very well possess just such a “sacralizing sensibility.” The hierarchical organization of Mormonism, combined with its rapidly expanding and increasingly diverse membership, make it a likely candidate for “works of consecration” that bind adherents to location. Mormon historic sites provide the perfect staging ground for the construction of meanings that influence collective memory and identity. At the same time, they are spiritually and theologically significant, thus magnifying their potential impact on group identity. They serve not only to connect Church members worldwide to a shared history but, as sacred space, to a shared theology and worldview as well.

Today the LDS Church manages more than forty historic sites in North America. Tours are conducted at thirty-five of these sites and nineteen have visitors’ centers. Tens of thousands, and in some cases hundreds of thousands, of visitors annually visit these places. My research has focused primarily on three areas: Palmyra, New York (associated with Joseph Smith’s First Vision in the Sacred Grove, the Hill Cumorah from which he retrieved the Book of Mormon plates, and

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4Ibid., 335.
5Ostling and Ostling, Mormon America, 241.
near Fayette, where he organized the Church); Kirtland, Ohio (the Church’s first major gathering place for 1,500 to 2,000 Saints and site of the first temple); and Nauvoo, Illinois (basically an all-Mormon city where Joseph enunciated his most distinctive doctrines and where he and his brother Hyrum were assassinated nearby).

**RECLAMATION OF MORMON HISTORIC SITES**

The early Mormons essentially left everything behind as they moved from one state to another. Once established in the West, the Latter-day Saints actively sought and received some measure of isolation, and the Church lost almost all connection to the places central to its early history. In 1880, when the Church celebrated the fifty-year anniversary of its organization in western New York, “no attempt was made to commemorate the sites of early Mormonism in the East.” In that same year, officials in Salt Lake City learned that, by default judgment, an Ohio judge had ruled that the RLDS Church was in rightful possession of the Kirtland Temple.

Two decades later, however, the Saints exhibited a greater interest in their past and in the places associated with its important events. The turn of the twentieth century coincided with the passing of the generation who had participated in the Church’s formation and

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crossed the plains. Lorenzo Snow, who led the Church from 1898 to 1901, was the last Church president who had been an adult with Joseph Smith. He was succeeded by Joseph F. Smith (1901–18), a nephew of Joseph Smith, who increasingly emphasized and promoted the Church’s distinctive history. The forces that had prevented the Church from reestablishing a strong eastern presence also began to wane with statehood and greater acceptance. Accordingly, the first half of the twentieth century saw Church authorities and rank-and-file members reacquiring some of the key historic sites of Mormonism in the East and Midwest.

As I interpret the development of historic sites, however, this surge of interest in the early twentieth century was not widespread. Mormonism’s early history had been divorced from actual sites for more than half a century, replaced by kingdom-building in the West and a future focused on the long-promised return to Jackson County, Missouri. Both emphases waned slowly. Historical memory remained an important element of Mormon identity; but most within the faith apparently felt little need to commemorate that sacred history in place,

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10 For Joseph F. Smith’s efforts to use the Church’s history to focus attention away from the Reed Smoot hearings, see Kathleen Flake, *The Politics of Religious Identity: The Seating of Senator Reed Smoot, Mormon Apostle* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

and acquiring important historic sites was not a high priority for Church officials. In 1909, for example, Joseph F. Smith’s First Presidency decided not to take an opportunity offered to purchase Joseph Smith’s Nauvoo property. In 1924 when a local landowner in Palmyra set an exorbitant price on his property near the Hill Cumorah, a Church representative told him: “The Church has existed for 100 years without possession of Cumorah and still seemed to be doing alright without it.” The Church owned several key historic properties in 1930, the centennial of its organization, and yet “no major plans existed for commemorating the early Mormon settlements.”

As the twentieth century progressed, worldwide missionary efforts produced rapid growth, both in the United States and internationally. During this outward-looking time, Church leaders recognized the potential of world’s fairs and expositions to further promote a positive Mormon image. Millions visited these Mormon pavilions, where LDS representatives tried to address common misperceptions among potential converts. In the process, Church authorities also learned about effective displays and presentation methods.

Inspired by the success of these world’s fairs pavilions, the LDS

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12 Bingham, “Packaging the ‘Williamsburg of the Midwest,’” 16. Management of historic sites also varied according to the personal interest of individuals who were involved. For example, Susan L. Fales’s “‘The Spirit of the Place’: The Clifford Family and the Joseph Smith Memorial Farm,” Journal of Mormon History 33, no. 3 (Fall 2007): 152–86, relates the persistent and eventually unsuccessful struggle to manage the Prophet’s Vermont birthplace as a self-sustaining farm and, simultaneously, as something of a community center for local residents and a meeting site for missionary conferences.


14 Foote, Shadowed Ground, 256. These properties included the Joseph Smith birthplace, the Smith family farm in Palmyra, the Hill Cumorah, and the Peter Whitmer Sr. farm.

15 Gerald Joseph Petersen, “History of Mormon Exhibits in World Exposition” (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1974). Petersen notes that the Church first presented a specifically Mormon display (as opposed to a generic Territory of Utah display) at the 1909 Seattle Exposition. The Church also established a prominent presence at the 1915 World’s Fair in San Francisco, the 1933 Chicago World’s Fair, the 1935 California Pacific
hierarchy began to view Church historical properties in the East and Midwest as potential proselytizing hubs. Assigned the utilitarian potential of attracting potential converts, these sites thus could make stronger arguments for budgets, furnishings, and staffing. Accordingly, the LDS Church set out in the 1960s and 1970s under Presidents McKay, Joseph Fielding Smith, Harold B. Lee, and Spencer W. Kimball to more or less convert their historical properties into permanent exhibits. The rise in popularity of heritage tourism sites like Williamsburg provided optimistic parallels. Thus, large and elaborate visitors centers designed with non-Mormons in mind were constructed at several Mormon historic sites.

Based on the Williamsburg model, missionaries staffing the historic sites during the last third of the twentieth century made a concerted effort to portray early Mormons as archetypical American frontier pioneers and modern Mormons as mainstream Christians. They played up Mormon connections to the American past and downplayed the religion’s distinctive characteristics. In short, the places associated with early Mormonism were presented to the public primarily as historic sites, with little emphasis on any inherent sacrality.16

The decision to utilize missionaries as tour guides simultaneously gave the Missionary Department more responsibility at these

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16Madsen, “Mormon Meccas,” 95–98, discusses how the historical emphasis at Mormon historical site visitors’ centers in the mid to late twentieth century overshadowed the spiritual and religious emphasis, while pp. 98–128 explain the difference between the “competing visions” of the Church’s Historical and Missionary departments.
sites and enhanced the level of centralized control. Competing interests within both the Church’s leadership and bureaucracy have vied for supremacy in the management of Mormon historic sites since that time, with the LDS Historical Department and the Missionary Department finding it necessary to compromise on a number of matters.

**HISTORICAL EMPHASIS**

This historical emphasis in the mid to late twentieth century reflected prevailing LDS attitudes regarding space. The LDS Church has always rejected the idea of shrines. In 1966, future LDS apostle Bruce R. McConkie, emphatically stated as a matter of doctrine that “shrines play no part in true worship.” Latter-day Saints “go to temples and meetinghouses, kneel before holy altars, perform sacred ordinances, and are taught the doctrines of salvation. But they do not worship at these places because some holy being once stood there, or because a bone or hank of hair of a dead person has been exhumed and is there displayed.”

17 He firmly specified: “The Father and the Son both stood in the Sacred Grove in the Spring of 1820, but this greatest of all recorded theophanies did not make that grove of trees a shrine. . . . It is not a shrine in the sense that many denominations have shrines, nor is there any sanctity now attached to the trees and the land there located. But it is a spot held sacred in the hearts of those who believe in the truth of salvation, because they glory in the transcendent event that took place there.”

18 McConkie emphasized that no sanctity is attached to the Sacred Grove, and that only the event that transpired there is sacred. By extension, then, other Mormon historic sites in New York, Ohio, and Missouri, would likewise not have possessed any special sanctity. Thus, it is not surprising that, as the LDS Church reclaimed its historical geography, LDS writers’ descriptions of Mormon historic sites in the mid-twentieth century reflected this anti-shrine theology. In 1953 Alma P. Burton, a member of Brigham Young University religion faculty, published *Mormon Trail from Vermont to Utah: A Guide to the Historic Places of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. In the preface, Harold Glen Clark wrote: “It is a noble and interesting task to pre-

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18 Ibid., emphasis mine.
pare a guide for those who wish to visit the points of interest in the early History of the Church. Our purpose in publishing this booklet is to help you see the soil from which a great people have come. *We do not venerate or worship the historical buildings and landmarks described herein. However, we feel that your visit to them with the help of this guide will permit you to measure the progress of the Church.*

The book itself focuses on historical points of interest without using “spiritual,” “hallowed,” or “reverent.” “Sacred” appears only three times in reference to past events and, aside from the “Sacred Grove,” never describes any places in the text.

In 1965 another Mormon writer, R. Don Oscarson of Nauvoo, wrote a similar travel book, *The Traveler’s Guide to Historic Mormon America.* This guide, too, contains numerous photographs, maps, and historical narratives. Once again, the terms “sacred,” “spiritual,” “reverent,” and “hallowed” are nowhere to be found. Twenty years later in 1986, Mormon geographers Richard H. Jackson and Roger Henrie, writing in the *Journal of Cultural Geography,* declared that Mormon historic sites in places like Kirtland and Nauvoo “remain important only for their historical values.”

These authors reinforced the Church-directed sentiment of the mid-to-late twentieth century: Mormon historic sites were historically interesting; they should be recognized and celebrated by all history buffs as an integral part of the American experience. By the end of the twentieth century, however, this historical emphasis began to give way to a more spiritual interpretation of Mormon historic sites. I have chosen 1995, the year Gordon B. Hinckley became Church president, as a symbolic date to mark this shift in emphasis. Of course this change from secular history to sacred space was neither clear-cut nor immediate. Many Mormons prior to 1995 felt a spiritual attraction to

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19 Alma P. Burton, *Mormon Trail from Vermont to Utah: A Guide to the Historic Places of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1953), 3; emphasis mine. Harold Glen Clark, who directed BYU Extension Services, helped initiate BYU’s Travel Study program in 1951, and this booklet was presumably designed to accompany BYU-sponsored tours.


early Mormon historical sites. It is also important to note that doctrinal resistance to site sanctification in the LDS Church is not unique. For centuries, Protestantism in general resisted Catholic-style venerations of shrines and holy relics. In a more secular vein, nineteenth-century Americans were generally reluctant to commemorate key events and heroes as a way of avoiding the trappings of monarchy.

**CONTEMPORARY SPIRITUAL EMPHASES**

Much of the recent change at Mormon historic sites can be attributed to the efforts and influence of Church President Gordon B. Hinckley. Hinckley developed an interest in Mormon history at an early age, listening to his parents’ stories of the family’s pioneer heritage. In 1935, returning home from his mission in England, Hinckley was serendipitously present at the Hill Cumorah when President Heber J. Grant dedicated its Angel Moroni Monument. Hinckley also visited Carthage and Nauvoo. His route to the Salt Lake Valley approximated that of Mormon pioneers.\(^2^2\)

Hinckley was soon hired as executive secretary of the newly formed Church Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee. One of Hinckley’s responsibilities was to produce media designed to introduce Mormon and non-Mormon audiences to the Mormon past. He spent a great deal of time in the Church’s archives, poring over pioneer journals for material with which to produce film strips and radio programs. Hinckley developed both an affinity and an affection for Mormon history.\(^2^3\) He also developed a keen sense for how this “heritage” might acquire a powerful emotional dimension for Church members. In 1941, seventeen years before becoming a General Authority, Hinckley wrote an evocative letter to a radio executive about a soon-to-be-produced radio series:

> As I stood on these historic spots pictures of dusty wagon trains, of weary handcart pioneers, of graves dug in the prairie while wolves stood by, of old men dropping from exhaustion and young men winking at bonneted girls, of a hundred voices singing “Come, Come, Ye Saints” and Pitts brass band playing music for a dance—these and a

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\(^2^3\)Ibid., 101. Dew comments: “The more he studied and wrote, the more real these images became.”
thousand other pictures passed before my mind’s eye. There’s a story in every mile of that trail, and as I stood there over the graves of men and women who had walked a thousand miles over all kinds of ground, I felt that their story is deserving of a better telling than we are giving it... The job now before us is to make the drama as vital as the real thing was.  

Clearly it was not enough for Hinckley’s audience to know the Mormon story; he wanted them to feel it as well.

In 1958 Hinckley became an apostle, giving him an increasingly stronger voice in the ecclesiastical hierarchy. For the next thirty years, as the Williamsburg model dominated the presentation of Church historic sites, he retained his conviction about the emotional and spiritual component of the Mormon story. In 1980, when the Church celebrated its sesquicentennial, Hinckley’s influence gave Mormonism’s historical geography a much more prominent role in this commemoration than the centennial celebration fifty years earlier. In 1926 the Church had acquired the Peter Whitmer home, site of the 1830 organization. In the mid-1970s, the Church made plans to build a modest, red-brick meetinghouse on the property for local Church members. Dismayed by the prospect of a plain, modern building, Hinckley pushed instead for a large, New England style chapel and a faithful reconstruction of the original Whitmer house. Responding to concerns about the expense, Hinckley acknowledged: “It will cost some money. But there is only one place where the Church was organized, and outside of the First Vision, the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, and the restoration of the priesthood, nothing is of greater historical significance.”

Hinckley’s view prevailed with the First Presidency (then Spencer W. Kimball, Marion G. Romney, and N. Eldon Tanner). On April 6, 1980, foreshadowing the Church’s forthcoming deep technological involvement, he arranged to broadcast a session of general conference from the reconstructed Whitmer Home. It was the first—and only—time for a broadcast to originate from a locale other than Salt Lake City. Addressing that session, Hinckley recounted major events in the Church’s early history from the Whitmer home.

By the time Hinckley became the fifteenth Church president in 1995, a significant aspect of his four-decade career had been spent en-

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24 Quoted in Dew, Go Forward with Faith, 91.
25 Quoted in ibid., 368.
hancing a shared sense of heritage among the membership, often using the actual spaces of Mormon history to accomplish this. As president of a rigorously hierarchical organization, revered by millions as a prophet, his influence is keenly felt in the redefinition of Mormon historic sites.

The first important anniversary of his presidency was 1997, the sesquicentennial of the 1847 pioneer trek to the Salt Lake Valley. Hinckley ensured that commemorating this event involved all LDS Church members in spite of the fact (indeed, I would suggest, because of the fact) that the majority of the membership has no personal, familial connection to this event. The slogan “Faith in Every Footstep” became known to Latter-day Saints worldwide; and numerous commemorative events, including historical reenactments, took place in dozens of different countries.26

Historian John Bodnar described how “pioneer” has typically been used in the United States as a local, vernacular symbol to compete with nationalistic symbols promoted by more powerful business and government interests.27 In contrast, the Church appropriated “pioneer” as a transnational symbol, one that links the worldwide members to a Utah-based religion, reinterprets it as a universally applicable metaphor, and encourages each member to engage in acts of sacrifice and devotion.

Since 1995 the LDS Church has invested millions in historical restorations. The Smith family log home in Palmyra, meticulously restored in 1999, is one example. In spring 2000 the Church announced a three-year, $10 million plan to expand visitor facilities and restore and rebuild several landmarks in Kirtland, Ohio.28 This award-winning project was completed in 2003. A state road was re-routed (at a cost of $5 million) and a compact Mormon village, painstakingly

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modeled after 1830s Kirtland, was created.  

Nauvoo, one of the most popular Mormon historic sites (250,000 annual visitors), has also seen its share of Church investment. When the $30 million Nauvoo Temple was completed in the summer of 2002 (discussed below), more than two hundred Mormon missionaries were assigned to work there, managing the crowds of visitors who poured in for the open house. Nauvoo then had a population of approximately 1,000.

Unlike earlier Church investments that emphasized missionary work at historic sites for non-Mormons, the post-1995 emphasis has definitely focused on members of the Church, deepening and strengthening their commitment to the Church through their personal spiritual experiences. These sites are still staffed by missionaries, and the proselytizing role is still strong; but it takes the form of asking Mormon visitors to fill out cards providing contact information for nonmember friends and relatives who might be interested in investigating Mormonism. By passing these referrals along to missionaries in other missions, the historic site missionaries believe that they are playing an important role in the diffusion of the Mormon faith. This change, like all activity at Mormon historic sites, has been directed from the top down, with officials in Salt Lake City guiding the transformation.

The Newell K. Whitney Store in Kirtland, Ohio, provides an excellent case study of how the uses and meanings of Mormon historic sites have changed over time. Joseph Smith, freshly arrived from New York in January 1831, made it his headquarters, meeting often with the fledgling Church’s leaders and missionaries. It was also the site of twenty canonized revelations. Most Latter-day Saints left Kirtland for Missouri in 1838. In 1964, Wilford Wood, a Mormon from Bountiful, Utah, purchased the store.  

Ironically, considering that Joseph Smith received the Word of Wisdom in this building, it was then being used as a “beer parlor.”

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The LDS Church purchased the property from Wood’s widow in 1976. Initially, local LDS missionaries assigned to work in Kirtland lived in it. In 1983, the Church restored the Whitney Store to its 1830s appearance and began to promote it as a historical property. Today, the missionary staffers enthusiastically present the Whitney Store as a “sacred place.” Indeed, at one point in the “tour,” Mormon visitors are invited to offer personal prayers in a room in which Joseph Smith received numerous revelations. A box of tissues, one of the few anachronistic objects in the building, is conveniently provided in case visitors begin weeping.

When did the Whitney Store become sacred? Was it sacred when it was built in 1819? When Joseph Smith met there with Church members? After the Saints left Kirtland? When it was used as a beer hall? When Wilford Wood purchased it? When the Church purchased it? When the Church restored it? Was it sacred, then not sacred, then sacred again?

I began visiting Mormon historic sites as a researcher in the summer of 2000, spending many hours at sites in and near Palmyra, Kirtland, Nauvoo, and Winter Quarters. I observed that the rhetoric currently employed by the missionary guides at Mormon historic sites is a contributing factor in the sanctification of these places and that the missionaries often quote President Hinckley to authenticate the site’s holiness. For example, at the Hill Cumorah Visitors’ Center near Palmyra, New York, I was struck by the regularity with which the missionaries informed visitors that they were occupying “sacred ground.” Sister Smith, for example, told a group of LDS visitors: “You know, President Hinckley has been here five times in the last five years. He says you are walking on sacred ground while you are here.”

A few weeks later at the Smith log home in Palmyra, Sister Taylor told her group: “This farm was dedicated for us to come here

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All interview quotations in this article come from my field notes, compiled between 2000 and 2003. I have assigned pseudonyms to the missionaries, all of whom were either young single sisters or retired missionary couples. Although men from these couples were also tour guides, this article happens to quote only women. The message did not differ in substance regardless of the age or gender of the tour guide.
so we can learn more about Jesus Christ.” It was a rather curious beginning for a “historical site” tour, but she made the connection by stating: “These are sacred places. President Hinckley said that next to the tomb where they laid the Savior’s body, this is the most sacred place on earth.” She told another group: “I want you to know that the Spirit of the Lord dwells within these places. These are sacred places.” As I took repeated tours with various groups, I soon realized that almost all of the missionaries at this site repeated some variation of President Hinckley’s statement in each tour.

A clear conclusion from my field research at Palmyra, Kirtland, Nauvoo, and Winter Quarters is that missionaries following Church-approved guidelines in their presentations promote the spiritual nature of the place, often at the expense of historicity. At the Whitney Store in 2001, for example, the first thing that Sister Davis told her tour group, of which I was a member, was: “Lots of historical things happened here, but I want to focus on the spiritual things.” Another Whitney Store guide referred to it as a “sacred” and “holy” place several times during her presentation. Back in Palmyra, Sister Brown began her presentation by saying, “I will tell you lots of historical stuff, but I want you to remember what you’ve felt. Don’t try to remember everything I say.” In 2002, I heard similar presentations in Nauvoo and Winter Quarters. I recorded literally scores of examples of such verbal sanctification of Mormon historic sites in my 2000–02 field research.

Since 1999, President Hinckley and other LDS Church leaders have contributed to the verbal sanctification of Mormon historic sites. Numerous statements on the specialness of these places have been made at general conferences and at the sites themselves. In 2000, for example, the Church produced a video, Special Witnesses of Christ (copy in my possession). In it, members of the First Presidency and Twelve shared personal convictions about the divinity of Jesus from various locales. Several segments were filmed in the Holy Land and, significantly, Mormon historic sites. Boyd K. Packer, acting president of the Quorum of the Twelve, spoke from the interior of the Kirtland Temple by courtesy of its owner, the Community of Christ. President James E. Faust, standing on the site of the Nauvoo Temple (it had not yet been rebuilt), declared: “I am humbled to stand on this sacred ground.” President Thomas S. Monson testified from the top of Hill Cumorah and from the Grandin Press Building in Palmyra, site of the first printing of the Book of Mormon. President Hinckley,
who had opened the video speaking from Israel, concluded by speaking from the Sacred Grove, which he described as “hallowed ground reverenced by Latter-day Saints throughout the world.” Belden Lane in *Landscapes of the Sacred* points out that one way in which space is sanctified is by “royal decree.”³² The Church leaders’ verbal sanctification of Mormon historic sites appears to fit this description.

In 2001, I was at the John Johnson home near Hiram, Ohio, south of Kirtland, where Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon worked on a new “translation” of the Bible and where Joseph was tarred and feathered by angry neighbors on the frosty night of March 24, 1832. Here I observed a very interesting conversation between a representative of the Church’s Historical Department from Salt Lake and a historic site missionary. The home, owned by the Church since 1956, was undergoing a major restoration to return it to its 1830s condition. The Historical Department representative told the missionary that, when the Johnson Home reopened, the tour would change its focus from the dramatic tar-and-feathering to Joseph’s receiving Doctrine and Covenants 76, which details the multi-kingdom Mormon concept of the afterlife.

The historic site missionary, a retired gentleman, questioned the wisdom of the proposed new focus. Most LDS visitors expected to hear about the tar and feathering incident; it was an exciting, tragic, and well-known story. The Salt Lake representative, however, was firm: “Look,” he said, “we only have fifty minutes for this tour and we need to focus that time on the spiritual aspects of this place. The Church would not have spent the money to restore this building if it were just to be used as the setting for the tar and feathering incident.” This explicit redirection from history to doctrine was a telling example of what I had come to think of as the new emphasis.

Historic site missionaries prior to 1995 may have been interested in spiritual matters, but the emphasis on spirituality at Mormon historic sites has clearly intensified. In 2000 I shared this observation with Sister Smith, then serving in the Hill Cumorah Visitors Center. “Oh yes,” she agreed. “It certainly has changed. It’s more on the Spirit now. I have noticed a change in just the past few years. Some of the older couple missionaries who were trained three years ago still focus

on the history, but now the focus is on the Spirit.” She added matter-of-factly, “We want to give people the sense that they are on holy ground.” Sister Jones added, “They’ve changed the focus of these sites from what happened here to what it means to us.” Although the missionary was on the site, the interpretation clearly was directed by the “they” (Missionary Department leaders) who specified personal, spiritual experiences as the content.

**REINFORCING MEANS OF SANCTIFICATION**

Reinforcing these explicit interpretations of sanctity at historic sites are the high-quality maps and photographs of Mormon historic sites in the most recent printing (1999) of the triple combination (Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price). Although the 1979 LDS edition of the Bible included twenty-two full-color maps of Old and New Testament sites, earlier editions of the triple combination, including the 1981 edition, the first to include a new notation and cross-referencing system, had only a few simple, black-and-white maps, but without a gazetteer or accompanying text. In contrast, the 1999 triple combination contains seven high-quality color maps, accompanied by an index of place names (nearly 200) and several pages of explanatory text. Eighteen high-quality color photographs of key historic sites are also included. In all, twenty-three pages of maps, photos, chronology, indexes, and explanatory text have been added to Mormon scripture. I suggest that their inclusion sends a message that these places are sacred to the same extent that maps and photos of the “Holy Land” accompanying the Bible also document sacred sites.

Also in 1999, the first of six volumes on Mormon historic sites was published by a Church-owned publisher. Designed primarily for Mormon visitors to these locales, they provide a detailed and comprehensive description of hundreds of places that figure (sometimes tangentially) in Church history, accompanied by 128 maps and almost a thousand photographs. The most striking feature of this book series, however, is its title: *Sacred Places: A Comprehensive Guide to Early LDS*

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33Historic site missionaries receive special training (usually lasting about three weeks) at LDS Missionary Training Centers in preparation for their field assignments. Sister Smith’s comments confirm that the LDS Church is actively training its historical site missionaries to emphasize the sites’ sacred nature.
Historic Sites. Although the vast majority of the places described in the book must be considered quite mundane (e.g., the general store in Mendon, New York, where Brigham Young “took $4.36 of merchandise in 1829”), they nevertheless fall under the general title “sacred places” by virtue of their connection to the LDS past.

General editor LaMar C. Berrett wrote a preface, replicated in each of the six volumes, laying out the rationale for the inherently sacred nature of the sites described in the volumes. It begins: “When the Prophet Moses came to the mountain of God and the burning bush, the Lord said unto him, ‘Put off thy shoes from thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.’ Through the ages, the location at which sacred historical events occurred have traditionally become holy. How holy or how sacred a site is depends on the understanding of those beholding it.”

This message establishes a parallel relationship between Mormon historic sites and Mount Sinai. Berrett also acknowledges that a process of sanctification exists, with locations “at which sacred historical events occurred” acquiring some measure of sacrality over time. Barrett does not describe how sacrality is ascribed to a site, attributing it instead to “the understanding of those beholding it.” In other words, if people believe that a certain site is sacred, it is. So how do people come to believe that a site is sacred? Being told that a site is sacred by respected, well-educated academic authorities on Church history must surely be a factor, especially when it parallels expressions of sanctity by General Authorities, including the Church president himself.

In fact, President Hinckley has taken the lead in mandating literal constructions of sacrality at Mormon historic sites by announcing decisions between 2000 and 2002 to build temples at three key his-

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34LaMar C. Berrett, ed., Sacred Places: A Comprehensive Guide to the Early LDS Historic Sites, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1999–2007). Bookcraft published the first volume of Sacred Places. This company was subsequently purchased by Church-owned Deseret Book, which published the remaining volumes.


Toric sites: Palmyra, Winter Quarters, and Nauvoo.

Temples are highly significant places of worship for LDS Church members. Their interiors are dedicated and consecrated to the Lord, hence automatically making them sacred space. Furthermore, in a “halo” effect, Church members have a sense that a temple also sanctifies the surrounding area to some degree. Richard O. Cowan, professor of Church history at BYU, for example, stated: “The presence of God’s spirit, as well as his personal visits in temples, results in an abundance of divine power being concentrated there. This influence then radiates outward from these sacred structures to bless the whole area.” Therefore, building and dedicating a temple is concomitant with establishing sacred space in a heretofore-profane location.

The first LDS temple was constructed in Kirtland, Ohio, in 1836, and is beautifully maintained by the Community of Christ, which shares the Joseph Smith years with Utah-based Latter-day Saints who still acknowledge a strong emotional identification with the structure. Joseph Smith died before the Nauvoo Temple was completed, literally on the eve of the departure from Nauvoo of Mormons who had chosen to follow Brigham Young. An arsonist set fire to the sacred edifice in 1848, and a tornado in 1850 destroyed most of the remaining structure. By 1910 only four temples, all in Utah, were in operation. Prior to 1995 there were forty-six Mormon temples worldwide. One of President Hinckley’s dramatic gestures as Church president was to set the goal of a hundred temples by 2000, a goal that was exceeded. There are now 136 temples either in use or under construction (as of November 2007).

In this context, President Hinckley’s announcements of temples to be built in Palmyra, Winter Quarters, and Nauvoo came as a surprise because a temple’s location is generally determined demographically—wherever large numbers of Latter-day Saints found themselves greatly distant from a temple. The Palmyra Temple broke this pattern. With about 18,000 Mormons in western New York, there was no reasonable expectation of a temple anywhere in the area in the foreseeable future. Nevertheless, in January 1999, Hinckley hiked through heavy snow to the top of a hill on property once owned by the Smith family and designated it as the future temple’s site. The next month, he announced plans for the temple’s construction.

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37Richard O. Cowan, *Temples to Dot the Earth* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1989), 222.
At the groundbreaking ceremony, Hinckley linked the decision directly to the site: “This is where the First Vision occurred, and I think it appropriate that we build a House of the Lord on this ground.” The presence of a temple thus further imbues this location with holiness. Hinckley remained deeply involved in the construction, overseeing the implementation of such outward symbolism as earth, moon, sun, and star stones, well-known decorations of the Nauvoo Temple (original and rebuilt) and on the Salt Lake Temple, but otherwise not used on modern temples. He added another dimension of significance by announcing that it would be dedicated on April 6, 2000, the anniversary of the Church’s organization and also, it is widely believed, the date of Jesus Christ’s birth. Brigham Young laid the cornerstone of the Salt Lake Temple on April 6, 1853, and the completed temple was dedicated exactly forty years later on April 6, 1893. Young also dedicated the St. George Utah Temple on April 6, 1877, but no other temple was dedicated on that date until the Palmyra Temple in 2000.

The actual dedication also involved a step that conferred additional sanctity on the site. Following the completion of a temple and prior to its dedication, an open house is held offering guided tours for all comers, Mormon and non-Mormon alike. The dedication itself and all subsequent admissions, however, are only by presentation of a temple recommend, in which ecclesiastical leaders certify the worthiness of the individual Latter-day Saint through biannual personal interviews. Hinckley directed that the dedication be broadcast by satellite to LDS meetinghouses throughout the United States and Canada. Accordingly, the first dedicatory session was broadcast in twelve languages to meetinghouses in twelve time zones. An esti
mated one and a half million Latter-day Saints thus viewed the dedication and joined in by singing the hymns and performing the “Hosannah Shout.” Thus, they were by far the largest number ever to participate in that sacred ceremony. President Hinckley, presiding at the dedication, declared: “This is no ordinary day. There will never be another day quite like this in the history of this work.”

With this temple’s announcement, site selection, embedded symbolism, dedication date, and participation by more than a million Latter-day Saints, Church leaders made it clear that this temple, by virtue of its location, is special. A parallel message is that this location, already considered sacred, has acquired greater sanctity by virtue of the temple’s presence.

Two months after the dedication of the Palmyra Temple, Hinckley announced that a temple would be constructed on the site of Winter Quarters, a temporary city that sheltered the westward-bound Nauvoo refugees in 1846–47. This temple too made little demographic sense but great symbolic sense. The Winter Quarters Temple was constructed adjacent to an old pioneer cemetery containing the remains of approximately four hundred early Mormons. In fact, seven additional bodies were discovered during the construction of this temple. Once again, the dedication ceremonies for the temple in April 2001 were broadcast to meetinghouses throughout North America.

The crowning event in the sanctification of Mormon historical

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44 Twenty-six temples were dedicated between the Palmyra and Win-
space, however, began in 1999, when President Hinckley announced that the Church planned to rebuild the Nauvoo Temple. “I’ve never seen anything that elicited more excitement than this announcement,” Hinckley later recalled.\(^{45}\) He also acknowledged that this temple, like Palmyra and Winter Quarters, was not driven by demographics. Indeed, the Nauvoo Temple District only comprises about 13,000 Latter-day Saints, by far the smallest in the United States.

Work on the Nauvoo Temple commenced in earnest with a cornerstone-laying ceremony in November 2000 at which Gordon B. Hinckley prayed “that this may become a holy site that the people of the world would want to come and see.”\(^{46}\) Hinckley was heavily involved in much of the decision-making, “down to the color of the carpets and the murals on the walls.”\(^{47}\) In April 2001, during an unannounced visit to check on the temple’s progress, Hinckley “hiked the temple from the basement to the top of the bell tower at ninety-two-years-old with cane in tow.”\(^{48}\) The LDS Church spared no expense in resurrecting one of the most enduring images of the Mormon past. Limestone, personally selected by President Hinckley, was imported from Alabama, a bell was produced in the Netherlands, and window panes were hand-blown in France. The temple was constructed in two and a half years at an estimated cost of $30 million.

As construction on the Nauvoo Temple neared completion,\(^{49}\)


Richard K. Sager, the president of the Illinois Nauvoo Mission, described it as “the focal point of the Church.” More than 350,000, representing every state and more than seventy countries, toured the temple before its dedication.

Given the precedent of the Palmyra and Winter Quarter temple dedications, it seemed logical to use the Church’s satellite network to broadcast the supremely important Nauvoo Temple dedication to LDS meetinghouses. This time, however, President Hinckley authorized a significant enlargement of the audience. Whereas the Palmyra and Winter Quarters Temple dedications had been broadcast throughout North America, the installation of a new satellite system allowed the Nauvoo Temple dedication to be broadcast worldwide: thirteen sessions on June 27–30, 2002, to more than three thousand meetinghouses in seventy-two countries. More than 2.3 million Latter-day Saints participated in the dedication.

In his dedicatory address, Hinckley emphasized that on this occasion the worldwide Church was united. Once again, President Hinckley selected a highly significant date for the dedication: June 27 is the anniversary of the murders of Joseph and Hyrum Smith. Hinckley even directed that the first dedicatory session begin at the exact time of the Church founder’s death.

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51Eight temples were dedicated in the interim between the Winter Quarter’s dedication and the Nauvoo dedication, but none of these were broadcast to an audience outside the proximate area.

This dedication thus became a prime example of how an institutional hierarchy can utilize technology to maintain its hierarchical control and reinforce a sense of collective identity on a grand scale among a widely dispersed membership. The Nauvoo Temple dedication, for example, was a global event; yet at the same time, it was private (only temple-worthy Mormons could view it) and intimate (with attendees gathering in their own ward and stake houses). It simultaneously united a far-flung, geographically and culturally disparate membership in an identity-shaping and memory-making ceremony that focused attention on a highly significant place.

This event, which transcended space, was very much about place. In 1999, Philip Barlow, later Mormon History Association president, commented: “Joseph Smith consecrated this space [Nauvoo], turning it into a sacred global vortex captured by Richard Bushman: ‘a funnel that collected people from the widest possible periphery and drew them like gravity into a central point.’ And at the symbolic center of this center, at the city’s highest point, the Prophet directed construction of the temple, the ultimate Mormon sacred space.”

The temple served as a focal point for the nineteenth-century Saints. Thanks to the truly heroic efforts of those who accepted Brigham Young as Joseph’s successor, the temple was finished and the night-and-day efforts to endow the membership sent them out on the plains with the now-abandoned temple as the unifying symbol of their faith and identity.

More than 150 years later, Joseph Smith’s fourteenth successor, Gordon B. Hinckley, rebuilt this sacred edifice in part, I believe, to enhance cohesion and promote identity among a geographically dispersed, culturally disparate, and rapidly growing membership. By

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53 Barlow, “Shifting Grounds in the Third Transformation of Mormonism,” 142–43. Particularly relevant on this point is Martha Sonntag Bradley’s presidential address at the 2004 annual conference, which focused on Joseph Smith’s role in creating sacred space. “Mormon spaces expressed a belief in Zion, that Zion was indeed possible, a complex, hierarchical spatial vision of the world drawn by their charismatic prophet. . . . The Mormons seized sacred space wherever they settled and rendered it meaningful. Space helped members of this faith live together in religious fellowship, forge a distinctive identity, and carry forward a particular interpretation of history.” “Creating the Sacred Space of Zion,” Journal of Mormon History 31, no. 1 (Spring 2005): 3.
constructing temples at Palmyra, Winter Quarters, and Nauvoo, President Hinckley literally imprinted these historic sites with sacrality. New generations of Mormons cannot avoid understanding that the Church’s history unfolded at places made sacred by that history and that they themselves, by virtue of their membership in the Church, both own and belong to those sites.

Philip L. Barlow observed in 1999 that the LDS Church during the twentieth century downplayed some of its more peculiar tenets, including its emphasis on specific places: “Sacred space shrank from a broad and present kingdom to temple, church, home, and symbol.”\(^{54}\) The past decade, however, has seen a reversal of this trend. What is driving this new emphasis?

THE RATIONALE OF SACRALIZATION

Gordon B. Hinckley, when asked to identify the greatest challenge facing the LDS Church, has consistently replied, “Growth.” At the dawning of the twenty-first century, many Mormons, particularly those in the western United States, are still the offspring of nineteenth-century “pioneer” progenitors; but most are not. Indeed, a majority of Mormons are first-generation converts; and as of 1992, the demographic balance shifted with the majority of the Church’s then-12 million members living outside the United States.\(^{55}\) More than 100 million copies of the Book of Mormon, printed in over 100 languages, have been distributed; and each year between 250,000 and 300,000 new converts join the Church. What do they have in common?

As early as 1994, Armand L. Mauss, also an MHA president, observed that some LDS Church leaders have become “concerned with the consequences of a muted Mormon identity,” and that segment of Church leadership “seems increasingly to have gained ascendancy during the most recent generation of Mormons.”\(^{56}\) I argue that Gordon B. Hinckley and those within the Church hierarchy who share his views are using the physical places in which Mormon history

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\(^{54}\)Barlow, “Shifting Grounds in the Third Transformation of Mormonism,” 147.


\(^{56}\)Armand L. Mauss, *The Angel and the Beehive: The Mormon Struggle*
occurred to nurture the “geographical memory” of Latter-day Saints, hoping to promote a common sense of identity among an increasingly diverse membership. Place does matter in establishing and maintaining a Mormon identity tied to a prophetic and sacrificial past, perhaps even more so for those Church members who have no familial link to that past.57

The Mormon leadership’s role in this process cannot be overstated. David Chidester and Edward T. Linenthal, professors of comparative religion and of religion and American culture, respectively, insist that “power is asserted and resisted in any production of space, and especially in the production of sacred space.”58 The Church’s official history represents a vital element of the LDS faith, and most Latter-day Saints revere statements from Church leaders. This situation facilitates the verbal sanctification of Mormon historic sites. A related topic, but one I do not explore in this article, is rank-and-file response. Efforts to sacralize space are efficacious only in the degree to which individuals respond personally. Doubtless many Mormons do not notice, heed, or respond to these official efforts at geographical sanctification. Others, particularly those whose family history is directly connected to these places, may have their own, uniquely personal regard for the sites. However, new converts, who in many cases face a jarring transition from non-Mormon to Mormon life, may be most responsive to the Church hierarchy’s efforts to consecrate space and anchor their membership to a sacred historical geography.

__MICHAEL H. MADSEN/HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY__ 253

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By merging the historical with the spiritual, the LDS leadership is transforming its heretofore mundane historical properties into what geographer Allan Pred described as “symbolically laden, meaning-filled, ideology-projecting” sites. More and more, these emerging sacred spaces “undergird identities” and “galvanize the deepest emotions and attachments.” Some scholars suggest that Judaism’s collective identity, once focused on historical events, is now tied more powerfully to the land of Israel itself. I believe that a similar reorientation from historical narrative to contemporary geography is currently underway within Mormonism. Certain previously unremarkable places in North America are increasingly becoming the focal points of a more geographically based Mormon identity.

Although a secular history rooted in place may contribute to a group’s collective sense of identity, a sacred history rooted in sacred space has the potential to greatly enhance group cohesion and identity by virtue of its religious significance, which weaves past, present, and future into a seamless whole. In Mormonism, history is not detached from people’s everyday lives. As a sacred heritage, it is bound up in their very identity. Similarly, the places in which this history occurred are not mere locations full of past significance; they are increasingly sacred places, reinforcing in the present the religious identity of its adherents.

CONCLUSIONS

Writing in 1854, Thomas Ford, governor of Illinois at the time of Joseph Smith’s death, grudgingly speculated that “Sharon, Palmyra, Manchester, Kirtland, Far West, Adamon Diahamen [sic], Ramus, Nauvoo, and Carthage Jail, may become holy and venerable sites.”

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names, places of classic interest, in another age.\textsuperscript{62} That age may be upon us.

The LDS Church was physically separated from the sites central to its early history for half a century. For most of the twentieth century, Church leadership and laity regarded these sites primarily as historical points of interest. But at the close of the twentieth century, LDS leadership, particularly President Hinckley, increasingly portrays and promotes Mormon historic sites as \textit{sacred} places. Concern over a diminution in the collective sense of Mormon identity appears to be a motivating factor in the leadership’s sanctification efforts.

Some anecdotal evidence suggests that these efforts may be yielding the desired effect. Officials at Church headquarters and historic site missionaries shared numerous examples of Latter-day Saints—particularly from outside the United States—who visited Mormon historic sites and commented to guides, in essence, “Now I feel that this is my history.” LDS Church leaders evidently feel that the Church needs more than just doctrine and history to maintain cohesion and unity. It needs a geography as well—sacred space that all Mormons—whether in Utah or Uganda—can embrace.

\textsuperscript{62}Thomas Ford, \textit{A History of Illinois: From its Commencement as a State in 1818 to 1847} (1854; rpt., Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 360.
Raised in Missouri and Kansas by a hard-working father and a stern Baptist mother who warned him of “fire and brimstone,” Charles D. Neff grew up with a strong moral outlook but with a shallow understanding of his faith. The Great Depression forged his empathy with the poor, while the horrors he witnessed in the Pacific theater of World War II fed his distrust of militarism. He flirted with atheism during the war; and when he converted to his wife’s faith in 1946, the caring relationships he found in a “loving community” were more important than the doctrines of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. He did not read the Book of Mormon and saw the Church as a fulfillment of Baptist beliefs, rather than the one true church (15). Yet within two years he was hired by the Church as a pastor, despite interrupting a meeting of Church leaders to relay his misgivings. And ten years later he was called to the Council of the Twelve, where he served from 1958 to 1984, vital years for the internationalization of the RLDS Church.

Charles Neff’s travels, views, and initiatives are noteworthy because he shaped the way the Reorganized Church operated in new nations in the 1960s and 1970s, because he developed long-lasting humanitarian organizations (most notably Outreach International), and because he was part of a small but influential group of Church leaders who questioned the Reorganized Church’s message and mission from within and pointed it toward paths it continues to pursue. During this “watershed” in the mid-1960s, Neff and his colleagues prevailed upon the First Presidency to clarify the Church’s “objectives and mission” (47). In this process, at least some Church leaders drew on Protestant and Catholic theology, diminishing the “Restoration” message of the Church. Some members saw these events—which Bolton labels “the RLDS Vatican II” (46)—as a way to help the Church make a
difference in the world, while others saw it as subverting the Church's raison d'être. I found it intriguing that, when RLDS leaders wanted to clarify core beliefs and rethink the meaning of Zion, they invited theologians from a Methodist seminary in Kansas City to teach the Joint Council of the Church about long-running theological debates, nineteenth-century American religious history, and religion and culture in the twentieth century.

The following passage illuminates Neff's role among a cadre of five "progressive" leaders in the Twelve and First Presidency who collaborated to change the Church's course from the mid-1960s onward:

Initially, the group was only a group of friends who enjoyed spending time with each other socially. Maurice Draper said, "Nobody planned it, it just happened." . . . They would eat lunch together, often travel together into the field, process information, share dreams and hash out plans for programs of the church. . . . Neff was the enthusiastic "doer" of the group. . . . He had a great deal of friend experience, especially abroad. . . . He was also a visionary who was "impatient with forms, programs and symbols." He had a passionate concern for the worth and dignity of people, attempting to understand how the programs and ideas at hand would affect people in their everyday situations. He was a shrewd and consummate negotiator with the ability to persuade and a willingness to compromise in order to establish the programs he and the group wanted. (50)

Neff appears to have been predisposed to learn from other churches. When he supervised the nascent RLDS Church in Japan in the early 1960s, Neff found that Asia "challenged the whole RLDS paradigm" (15). He came to favor cooperation with other Christian churches, simultaneously praising the "lofty moral precepts" of Eastern religion and philosophy (41). In searching for the "real, basic purpose of the Church," he settled on "fellowship," likening the Church to an extended family. As for the core message, he distilled two universal principles: the reality of a personal God and the dignity and worth of human beings (97). Neff was drawn to the people and their basic needs in the developing world; and as he watched his Church take root in countries like Korea, the Philippines, India, and Kenya, he concluded that the Church's primary goals in such places should be to foster community and liberate the poor. He favored indigenous local Church leaders and advocated adaptation of Church worship and governance to local culture. He steadfastly eschewed the "Americanization" of converts of congregations, insisting that his Church learn from Christ's spirit already at work in foreign cultures. As a result, he was somewhat impatient with American Church members and their attachment to the "distinctives" of the Reorganization. In later years, he looked upon the construction of a temple in Independence as a costly diversion of Church funds and energy from humanitarian labors far from headquarters.

Matthew Bolton writes about Neff in a gentle and friendly tone, playing up his achievements and pathbreaking views, without ignoring the con-
troversy that attended some of his innovations, and acknowledging that his style may have jarred some of his colleagues. Bolton writes as an insider: a graduate of Graceland University who studied Neff’s life there, a former employee of Outreach International now pursuing doctoral study of humanitarian organizations, and the son of a member of the Council of the Twelve in today’s Community of Christ. Among Bolton’s most important sources are rich inside sources—oral history interviews conducted in past years with Neff and several of his contemporaries among the Seventy, Twelve, and First Presidency of the Church.

Through his focus on Neff’s values and pursuits, Bolton reveals interesting details about the establishment of the Church in the developing world, even as he opens a window on internal decision-making processes at headquarters. We see the origins of the RLDS presence in East Asia, India, and Africa, and the development of various agencies for humanitarian development in such places. Despite an 1865 declaration that cautiously extended priesthood to all races (RLDS D&C 116), the Church’s entry into most nations happened at roughly the same time as it did for the “Utah Church.” In all developing countries, it is a recent story; in 1960 only 11 percent of the Church’s members lived outside the U.S. Midwest (26–27).

Reading about the RLDS entry into and establishment in developing countries, I wondered how it compares to the LDS trajectory of internationalization. Consider some of Neff’s tactics overseas and think about the approaches his LDS contemporaries adopted. In East Asia he cooperated with other Christian missionaries, insisted on native pastors, and shifted humanitarian projects away from dispensing goods toward providing basic health care (37–43, 56–60). In the Philippines, he eschewed doctrinal squabbles over the meaning of the Bible by emphasizing medical missions (74–79). Upon encountering polygamist converts in India, he first canvassed other Christian churches to see how they handled the issue, then successfully persuaded Church leaders in Missouri to allow polygamists to join the Church, so long as they took no additional wives after baptism (65–74). (This policy elicited angry and frightened complaints from conservative members in the American Midwest, for whom opposition to polygamy had long been an important part of the Church’s identity.) In West Africa he founded Outreach International as a humanitarian institution, separating it from the Church’s name and missionary efforts (79–84). In East Africa, when officials balked

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at registering the Church because its name implied the need for the “reformation” of other Christian churches, Neff opted to register a completely independent Church called the “Christian Community Fellowship of Africa” (85–90). In various nations he encouraged “indigenization” not only in leadership but in forms of worship (including music). He also noted areas where women seemed to be especially well suited to play leading roles in evangelism and organization.

Influenced by liberation theology, Neff became increasingly committed to economic assistance for the most disadvantaged through education, health, and other interventions that were sensitive to local practices and needs. He appears to have been less interested in the perpetuation of the Church as an institution than in assisting the poor and oppressed. He also became increasingly critical of great-power politics and militarism. At the 1982 World Conference, his passionate denunciation of the nuclear arms race brought a standing ovation, but his allusions to a tax protest irritated the First Presidency, who thought he was grandstanding (130–31). Bolton allows that some of Neff’s more “radical” complaints, while reflecting deep-seated ideals, may also have reflected frustration at his waning influence within the Church hierarchy in the early 1980s (115).

“President Wallace B. Smith, . . . perhaps in response to the growing dissent in the church, rallied the church around the First Presidency and concentrated greater authority in this office,” explains Bolton. “This was displayed in 1984 when he threw his weight behind the growing women’s movement . . . and opened the doors for women in the priesthood” (116). His predecessor, W. Wallace Smith, had a less assertive leadership style with the result that “members of the Council of the Twelve were the de facto leaders of the church.” Bolton sees the resulting conflict as inevitable. Neff “viewed the centralizing of control as power-mongering by the Presidency and contrary to the spirit of decentralization that had been part of the Statement on Objectives in 1966” (117).

Perhaps significantly, Neff was released from the Council of the Twelve in that landmark year of 1984 at age sixty-two. (In the Community of Christ, members of the Twelve and First Presidency do not serve until death.) He characterized his release as the only “non-controversial part” of a lengthy revelation (now Community of Christ Doctrine and Covenants 156) that extended priesthood ordination to women and renewed the call for a temple in Independence. Yet his release was painful to him, as was his discharge as director of Outreach International. Some family members felt he had been forced out of office; and even before his release, as the composition of the Twelve and the First Presidency changed, he felt somewhat marginalized. Soon after his release, both his wife’s and his own health began to fail, and he died in 1991 at the age of sixty-nine.
In an afterword, Bolton outlines alternative views of Neff’s impact on his church. He engages each view in the biography but calls the last category “the dominant mode of thought among [current] church leaders.”

[Neff’s] legacy has been interpreted in several conflicting ways. These interpretations fall into four main groups: North American restorationist, North American liberal, internation[, ] and post-liberal. . . .

[The post-liberal] view is a middle ground between the restorationist and liberal positions in that it accepts the necessity of a careful academic critique of the history and beliefs of the church, yet still believes strongly in the power of the church’s story and theology.

People holding this position would interpret Neff’s legacy as ambiguous. They would appreciate his burning conviction of the gospel, his evangelical urge[,] and his belief in the worth of persons. However, many might be suspicious of his radical deconstruction of the church’s theology. A typical statement might be: “He was trying to make the RLDS church into just another Protestant church—why do that when there are already plenty of Protestant churches?” (155)

Bolton has written a sympathetic and readable account of Neff’s ministry. It is an administrative history that leaves me still curious about the real roots of Neff’s faith, as well as his family life. Meanwhile, wider questions await consideration. To the extent that the traditional RLDS self-definition broke down in the 1960s, to what extent was exposure to new nations and cultures the cause? Other forces at work could be the personalities and values of certain Church leaders like Charles Neff and their own exposure to modern Christian theology and historiography of American religion. Perhaps the new Mormon history played a part? What difference did the practice of retiring Church leaders, rather than lifelong appointment, make in RLDS Church governance and institutional memory? And if internationalization triggers self-examination in any church, in what ways have the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the Community of Christ walked a similar path, and in what ways have they diverged?

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Reviewed by David J. Howelett
In an exhaustively researched study, historian Matthew McBride narrates the literal and rhetorical construction of Mormonism’s second temple, constructed in Nauvoo, Illinois. Set within the tempestuous last years of Joseph Smith’s life and the confusion after his death, McBride’s story is as much about people in cooperation and conflict as it is the story of a physical building. As McBride argues, “Few aspects of life in Mormon Nauvoo excited more curiosity among visitors, solicited more contempt from critics and apostates, or inspired more zeal on the part of Church members than the construction of the temple and the introduction of its related doctrines and practices” (xiii). McBride’s study provides a thoroughly documented narrative history that adds to our understanding of the evolving centrality of sacred space to early nineteenth-century Mormons.

In fourteen chapters, McBride chronologically narrates the conceptualization, construction, contestation, destruction, and resurrection of the Nauvoo Temple from 1840 to 2001. The bulk of McBride’s chapters focus on the 1840s, while the last two focus on the temple lot after the physical temple’s 1848 destruction and the magnificent construction of a new Nauvoo Temple, which maintained the footprint and external appearance of the historic temple, beginning in 1999.

In his preface, McBride lays out seven succinct arguments briefly summarized here. McBride argues that the temple greatly contributed to the economy and employment in the booming early 1840s Nauvoo. The ambitious edifice was also “largely responsible for Nauvoo’s rise to national prominence” (xvi). While a moderately sized building by today’s standards, the Nauvoo Temple was an immense building for an age before steel construction. The temple, too, figured prominently in Joseph Smith’s evolving political praxis (the kingdom in the world), ecclesiology (doctrines of church government), and soteriology (doctrines of salvation). Vicarious work for the dead and evolving concepts of eternal exaltation became ritually inscribed on Mormon bodies within the temple. Practices and organizations formed in part to aid in the temple construction left a lasting influence on the shape of the modern Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. For instance, “tithing as the means to fund Church needs,” the ward unit (a tithing division organized by the Nauvoo bishops), and the Nauvoo Female Relief Society all had their partial origins with the temple construction effort (xvi). While such practices and organizations look somewhat different in the contemporary LDS Church, real continuities may be traced back to the Nauvoo Temple.

Perhaps McBride’s most original contribution lies in his arguments about the temple’s role in legitimizing and delegitimizing various successor claimants to Joseph Smith Jr.’s prophetic mantle. McBride’s argument de-
4. Custodianship of the authority necessary to administer temple ordinances played a critical role in the succession crisis. The ascendency of Brigham Young and [the majority of the Council of] the Twelve Apostles was due in part to their claim that Joseph had initiated them into all of the temple ordinances and bestowed upon them the sealing power and authority necessary to perform ordinances for others.

5. The temple and its associated theology acted as a sieve. For the faithful, the building effort and newly revealed ordinances affirmed the prophetic calling of Joseph Smith and Brigham Young. They viewed calls to contribute to the temple construction and to receive ordinances within its walls as a great privilege. For others, temple theology symbolized Joseph Smith’s fall from his standing as God’s mouthpiece. (xvi)

In other words, control, not simply of the temple site, but also of internal discourse on the temple, aided the ascendency of Brigham Young over others. Successor claimants who had been marginalized from power in Nauvoo, like Sidney Rigdon, were forced into defensive statements about the temple. In October 1844, Rigdon prophesied that the temple would not be completed. Drawing on Joseph Smith’s 1841 revelation that the Church and its dead would be rejected if the temple project was not completed within an “appointed time,” Rigdon proclaimed that judgment was nigh (201–3). In April 1846, James J. Strang, another claimant, likewise asserted that the church had been rejected for not completing the temple (334). Through continued temple construction and a reinterpretation of Smith’s 1841 revelation, supporters of Brigham Young seized the opportunity to construct Rigdon and Strang as failed prophets (201–2). Hence, supporters of Young dedicated the temple in a public ceremony on May 1, 1846, even after thousands of Saints had left Nauvoo. In turn, Rigdon, Strang, and later Joseph Smith III claimed that the temple was never fully completed, even if it had been dedicated (334). By implication, they argued, Young and his group had been rejected. Later twentieth-century Latter-day Saints would claim that the temple had indeed been completed; that is, the inner temple (the ordinances and authority to perform these practices) had been constructed well within Joseph Smith’s time frame (334–35). Thus, long after the physical destruction of the building, the rhetorical construct of the Nauvoo Temple continued to be a forum for legitimizing and delegitimating particular groups and practices.

As noted previously, the Nauvoo Temple story that McBride narrates is not one primarily of architectural influences, but rather a story of a people who rhetorically and literally constructed the temple. McBride, therefore, quotes extensively from participants, critics, and the curious—all of whom helped “construct” the temple. McBride’s study shares a particular Mormon penchant for listing the names of historical participants. While I
was slightly annoyed by these lists, many Latter-day Saint readers will be delighted to see the work of their ancestors so honored. Even as the 1840s Mormons felt that they granted the dead vicarious salvation in the Nauvoo Temple, McBride respectfully resurrects the voices of relatively unknown craftsmen and workers.

In many ways, McBride takes what historian Grant Wacker defines as an actor-oriented approach to his narrative. That is, McBride allows the participants to speak for themselves and extensively quotes diaries, newspaper accounts, and reminiscences penned decades later. Common builders like George Morris recount with pride their consecrated labor on the temple (328–29). At the temple capstone dedication, John Kay sings out a sarcastic W. W. Phelps hymn denouncing successor claimant Sidney Rigdon (211–12). And the irascible Brigham Young booms across the page as he fumes over a withdrawn 1845 bid by Illinois Catholics to buy the temple (270). In short, past figures speak with all of their pride and prejudice, humility and graciousness, stammering and eloquence.

Like any historical method, McBride’s approach is not without its weaknesses. “Actor-oriented” approaches tend to leave aside questions of human motivations; analytic categories—race, gender, age, class—often remain obscured. For example, beyond belief in the efficacy of temple ordinances, what were the motivations of Nauvoo Saints to complete the temple? Were Brigham Young’s motivations the same as those of common workers like Lorenzo Brown? Surely the legitimacy of one ecclesiastical group against other competitors motivated individuals, but how could members within the same ecclesiastical expression differ? These questions remain undeveloped.

In addition, McBride rarely addresses whether a primary source should be believed. McBride repeats without comment several stories that appear apocryphal at best. In several reminiscences, Joseph Smith Jr. becomes the omnipresent workman in the temple limestone quarries, “lending a hand with almost everything” and “quarrying stone for its [the temple’s] walls when his enemies were not pursuing him” (22, 27). McBride quotes William Sterrett’s highly questionable account of Illinois Governor Thomas Ford’s visit to Nauvoo in the days before Joseph Smith’s 1844 assassination. Sterrett claimed that Ford and his party desecrated the Nauvoo Temple baptismal font as they joked of Joseph Smith’s looming death (169–70).

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Of course, such narratives are useful for historians. Like mid to late first-century Christian gospels that reassured believers that Jesus was still present despite his physical absence, the accounts of the hard-working, omnipresent Joseph reflected how later generations of Saints needed the assurance that their prophet was still with them in the difficult days of the late nineteenth century. Sterrett’s account of Ford’s desecration reflects how Mormons understood “Gentile” civil authority at a particular historical conjuncture; it is also part of the larger nineteenth-century meta-narrative of extreme persecution constructed (and experienced) by the Saints. Such accounts, too, are discursive constructions of the Nauvoo Temple and its builders—whether or not they were contemporary constructions or retroactive reconstructions. McBride could have clarified the usefulness of these accounts with simply a few lines of explanation.

Yet my critique is mere quibbling when McBride’s many accomplishments are upheld. McBride sensitively explains the development of Nauvoo Temple ordinances with scholarly candor and believing respect. To his great credit, McBride neither glosses over the tensions surrounding the Nauvoo Temple’s construction nor silences the voices of dissent. For example, McBride includes an account of severely impoverished temple workmen striking for a day when the most basic provisions were lacking (303). He narrates the stonemasons’ 1842 charges of nepotism and corruption against the temple committee, along with Joseph Smith’s quick resolution of the conflict (120–21). Most commendably, McBride provides accounts from various Latter Day Saint ecclesiastical expressions without brushing aside such groups as mere “apostates.” The bitter rhetoric of the 1840s is not reproduced in McBride’s prose. Such polemical statements are left to the lips of the early-Latter Day Saints themselves. In this way, McBride’s actor-oriented approach proves a blessing; he avoids the vitriol of early-twentieth century denominational historians of all factions.

In a truly crowded field of Nauvoo scholarship, A House for the Most High demonstrates the viability of new research on Mormon Nauvoo. In competition with coffee-table books on the Nauvoo Temple, McBride shows balance, fairness, and thoroughness unsurpassed by these other works. Interested readers and historians of Mormonism’s early period will find McBride’s book a helpful reference work for years to come.

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Reviewed by Irene M. Bates

Michael Marquardt’s remarkable publication, *Early Patriarchal Blessings in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints* presents a rare and noteworthy gift to historians, biographers, and genealogists, as well as to the families of founding members of the Mormon Church. Besides being a valuable reference book containing more than 700 patriarchal blessings—all from the early nineteenth century and the beginnings of Mormonism—it is also a many-faceted resource for a wider field of readers. The author’s superb introduction gives concise background information regarding the origins of the LDS Church, plus details about the office of Church patriarch and the first three men to hold that office: Joseph Smith Sr., and two Smith brothers: Hyrum and William.

He also shares information regarding his sources, relating the difficulties encountered historically by those handling them. Marquardt spent forty years researching and tracing the original blessing books and documents, and acknowledges the help he received from the individuals and institutions who assisted him in this scholarly endeavor.

After the introduction, Marquardt presents several pages that quote blessings which the founding prophet, Joseph Smith Jr., bestowed on members of his family and friends. The blessing given to Hyrum is particularly striking in its promise of his brother’s great power and influence. The rest of the book—more than four hundred pages—centers on the hundreds of recorded blessings given by the first three men who were ordained Church patriarchs: Joseph Smith Sr., whom Joseph Jr. ordained December 18, 1833; Hyrum, ordained by his father September 14, 1840, shortly before Joseph Sr.’s death; and William, the prophet’s younger brother, ordained by the Quorum of Twelve Apostles May 24, 1845, following the assassinations of Hyrum and Joseph. Marquardt does not editorialize, nor does he share any of his personal responses to these historical documents. He comments simply: “A few explanatory notes are provided, but for the most part, the text of the blessing appears as originally recorded so as to allow the reader to evaluate any significance” (xvi). This approach is an important and generous aspect of Marquardt’s gift to his readers.

There is certainly room for investigation and interpretation in the vast amount of material the author has collected. For example, the blessings show the effects of the new and rapidly developing religious belief system on these first three Church patriarchs. There is evidence of their differing per-
sonalities in the styles and content of their blessings. Second, this concentration of blessings, given in post-Revolutionary America, may also enable readers to see them in the context of the larger evolving culture of Northeastern and Midwestern American society. And certainly other questions and approaches will occur to readers.

The blessings of Joseph Smith Sr., the first Church patriarch, show a tender concern for those he was blessing, especially for his family members. For example, to Hyrum, he says, “Thou hast loved thy father’s family with a pure love. . . . Thou has always stood by thy father and reached forth the helping hand to lift him up when he was in affliction”—according to a marked-out phrase “with wine” (12). He expresses thanks to his daughters-in-law Emma Hale Smith, Mary Fielding Smith, and Caroline Grant Smith (15–17) for the support they have given their husbands and assures them that they will share everything promised to their husbands. Even in the blessings given to those who have strayed or shown weakness in the faith, there is the same fatherly understanding, advice, and forgiveness. To his son-in-law, Calvin Stoddard, for example, who had been excommunicated and rebaptized but is still wavering, he offers hope (13). And he reproves Seymour Brunson who “has remembered justice, at times, more than mercy” (29).

Joseph Sr. made some extreme promises that seem startling to modern ears. For example, he told Sarah Harmon on March 8, 1836, “If thou desire thou shalt tarry till the Redeamer [sic] comes and thou shalt see him in the flesh” (65), assured Ethan Barrows on March 23, 1836, “Thou art one of the hundred & forty four thousand, who shall stand on Mount Zion with the harps of God” (67), and promised David Elliot, May 5, 1836: “Thou shalt tarry till the Redeemer comes. . . . Thou shalt be numbered with the hundred & forty four thousand on Mount Zion” (70). Such assurances appear to be a reflection of the times and the area where this first Church patriarch had lived. Visions, prophecies, and confident expectations of the Second Coming were typical of the “Burned-Over District” in upstate New York where the family spent two decades and from which many of the earliest converts came. The language and content of many of Father Smith’s blessings can be seen as a mirror-image of the expressions of revivalists—such as Charles Grandison Finney and others—during the Second Great Awakening.

The eloquence of Hyrum Smith, the second Church patriarch, is evident in his patriarchal blessings. While they include much of the content of the religious fervor of the New England of his earlier years, there is a beauty in his phrasing and imagery that is deeply moving. For instance, his blessing to John C. Bennett promises him “thou shalt have the power to heal the sick; cause the lame to leap like an hart; the deaf to hear; and the dumb to speak. . . . thy soul shall be glad and thy heart shall rejoice in God” (197) William Appleby “shall travel from sea to sea and from land to land to proclaim this gospel” (202–3).
Hyrum also gives beautiful and respectful blessings to women, referring to several of them as a “Mother in Israel.”

Another element introduced in Hyrum’s blessings is the growing concern with tribal lineage, perhaps because of the growing number of conversions that can be attributed to interest in the Book of Mormon. Hyrum declares the lineage of many receiving blessings, not only as descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh, but also of Levi, Benjamin, etc.

William Smith became the third Church patriarch during a critical time for Church leadership following the assassinations of Joseph and Hyrum Smith. William was in a precarious position in terms of limitations to his role as patriarch, and it seems almost inevitable that his personal concerns might have an effect on the content of his patriarchal blessings. Among the many blessings he gave women, he promised Irene U. Pomeroy that her blessing “will seal upon you a greater blessing and power than any other could give, as this office. . . holds the right of administering in all blessings; and of the presidency over all the Patriarchs in the church of God at this present time” (267). It is interesting, too, that he promised another woman, Abigail Abbott, that one of her posterity would “avenge the blood of the Prophets and Patriarchs” (244). William talks a great deal about the enemies of the blessing’s recipients, reassuring them that they will be endowed with great powers to overcome those enemies when the temple is completed. A number of William’s blessings were given to converts from England, Ireland, and Scotland, which is indicative of the success of missionaries then proselytizing overseas.

Readers who have access to blessings given during the twentieth century will see how very different these early blessings are. The blessing and ordination to the priesthood of a black member of the Church, Elijah Abel, by the Prophet Joseph Smith Jr. (99, undated), would not be seen again until the revelation in 1978 allowed black men to receive the priesthood. Nor would recipients receive blessings like that given by Joseph Smith Sr. to Solomon Warner Jr., which promised that “Kings, Nobles, & Royal blood shall hear thee and say thou art a man of God. . . . Thou shalt be translated and preach to other worlds, even from planet to planet” (146).

Michael Marquardt has mined a veritable treasure of information for us with this collection of early blessings. He has also given us an opportunity to recognize the radical and inevitable nature of change in the culture of Mormonism itself.

Book Notices

The *Journal of Mormon History* invites contributions to this department, particularly of privately published family histories, local histories, biographies, historical fiction, publications of limited circulation, or those in which historical Mormonism is dealt with as a part or minor theme.


This historic lecture was delivered "in the Salt Lake Theatre on Monday, September 22, 1884, stenographically reported by John Irvine" (title page) and reprinted with the correction of "minor punctuation and spelling errors" (80). The U.S. Congress had passed the sweeping antipolygamy Edmunds Act in 1882, which would be stiffened still further in 1887 by the Edmunds-Tucker Act; and the sense of siege among Latter-day Saints was strong.

The lecture was well attended. According to a *Deseret News* article by Orson F. Whitney, "There was not a seat left untaken, and hundreds were standing up, not alone in the lower part of the house, but in every circle as well," with another "three or four hundred" filling every space on the stage except the entrances and exits (6).

On August 10, 1884, three Mormon elders had announced a meeting at the residence of James Condor, Cane Creek, Lewis County, Tennessee. A fourth elder, en route to the meeting, was captured and held under guard. An armed "mob" with "masked faces" seized Condor, who ordered his son and stepson to get their guns. The mob leader, David Hinson, entered the house, and shot Elder John H. Gibbs. Men with him shot Elder W. S. Berry. Elder Henry Thompson escaped while the mob killed family members Martin Condor and J. R. Hudson, but not before Hudson killed Hinson. In leaving, the mob shot through the windows, wounding Mrs. Condor (8–12). The missionary being held under guard, Wil-
liam H. Jones, was allowed to escape during the shooting. B. H. Roberts and other missionaries, in disguise, exhumed the bodies and returned them to Utah for burial.

From a description of these slayings, Nicholson then reviewed a number of items that demonstrated “a conspiracy against the peace, and good order and well-being of the great majority” of Utahns (12), and enumerated a number of incidents showing prejudice, hostility, and outright fabrications. They included:

1. On May 7, 1882, Rev. L. A. Rudisill spoke at the Methodist Church in Salt Lake City at a meeting attended by Governor Eli Murray and two judges. Rudisill claimed that “Methodists had always occupied the front rank in opposing Mormonism” and credited it with “compelling” (Rudisill’s word) Congress to pass the Edmunds Act.

2. Rev. R. G. McNiece (location and denomination not mentioned) had reported an attempt to burn Logan’s Presbyterian Church on November 30, 1882. The arsonist was determined to be a non-Mormon, William Buder, whom the minister had ejected from a social for being “beastly” drunk (18). Still McNiece blamed the Mormons.

3. Rev. McMillan, who was given “free use” of Ephraim’s LDS meetinghouse for his meetings, lectured in the East about how he had preached with a Bible in one hand and his revolver in the other for his own protection. When Sanpete Stake President Canute Petersen chastised him for his “infamous . . . fabrications,” McMillan apologized and said he would “make it right”; but on his next visit out of state, he only embellished his former stories, which were published in Denver papers.

4. The Salt Lake Tribune published on March 15, 1884, a “Red Hot Address” purportedly by “Bishop West of Juab” encouraging the assassination of Utah Governor Eli Murray. When Church representatives pointed out to the editors that there was no Bishop West anywhere in the Church, that no meeting had been held in Juab on the day mentioned, and that no address “of that kind was ever delivered,” the Tribune “apologized” by announcing: “There was not a thing in that bogus sermon which has not been taught in the Tabernacle ha-rangues” (25–26). This fabricated sermon had been published and circulated in Tennessee, according to the account of the surviving Elder Jones (32)

5. Governor Murray sent Tennessee’s governor congratulations on his effort to find the Cane Creek murderers but added, “Lawlessness in Tennessee and Utah are alike reprehensible, but the murdered Mormon agents in Tennessee were sent from here as they have been for years by the representatives of organized crime” (48).

Nicholson enlivened his presentation with touches of sarcasm that were greeted enthusiastically: “Mr. Boreman, or rather Judge Boreman—I hope he will pardon me for forgetting his title—[laughter and applause] when I consider how little he is entitled to it” (15).
He continued with another half-dozen examples showing the conspiracy to destroy Mormonism, and an appendix reproducing several documents, including reports of earlier murders of Mormon elders in the South. The cumulative effect is to explain in great measure the Mormons’ feeling that they could not receive just treatment from the U.S. government in any of its branches and why, therefore, in those days of intensifying pressure against polygamy, they were determined to resist at all costs.


This work has no preface or statement of purpose, but this rigorous catechism was obviously designed to instruct young Mormons in the essentials of their religion, buttressed by lengthy (and presumably memorized) quotations from relevant scriptures. A distant remnant may survive in the identity/mission statements recited weekly by members of Young Women and Aaronic Priesthood quorums today.

The organization is systematic in eighteen chapters; and while many of the statements would not sound out of place in contemporary meetings, others show differences that have developed over time. The chapters and their titles are:

1. Name—Birth—Blessing—Baptism—Confirmation—Duty to God, Parents, and Mankind. For the first items, the catechist recites the day, month, and year of these ordinances, the elder performing the ordination and the location (branch and conference).

   Q. 18: Why should you love and obey your parents?
   A.: Because it is a command of God, and because they were the means of bringing me into the world; they nursed and fed me when I was a little babe, and now continually love me, and provide food, clothing and lodging for me. They watch over me in sickness, direct me in health, and teach me to be clean, neat, industrious, and orderly, so that when I have grown up I may be useful (6).

2. On the Knowledge of a God

   Q. 1: Are there more Gods than one?
   A. Yes, many. [1 Cor. 8:5]

3. Revelations of God to Man

4. Plurality of Gods

5. Person, Character, and Attributes of God

6. Relation of Men to God—Pre-existence of Spirits—Education, Development, and Perfection of Intelligent Beings

7. Council in Heaven—Rebellion of Lucifer—Creation or Organization of the Earth

8. The Fall

   Q. 15: Is it proper for us to consider the transgression of Adam and Eve as a grievous calamity, and that all mankind would have been infinitely more happy if the Fall had not occurred?
   A. No. But we ought to consider the Fall of our first parents as one
of the great steps to eternal exaltation and happiness, and one ordered by God in his infinite wisdom, for we cannot know the excellency and beauty of that which is good, unless we experience the wretchedness and deformity of that which is evil. (29)

9. Redemption from the Fall
10. Faith—Repentance
11. Baptism
12. The Holy Spirit
13. The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper

Q. 11: Are bread and wine always used in the Sacrament?
A. No. Water is occasionally used, when wine made by the Church cannot be obtained. (46)

14. The Church of Christ

Q. 13: How can the Church of Christ be known from other religious societies?
A: By various characteristics, among which may be named, its Priesthood and organization; its being led by a prophet having direct revelation from God; its enjoying the gifts and blessings of the Holy Ghost, and promising the same to all believers; its purity and consistency of doctrine; its unity and oneness of spirit; its gathering its members from among the wicked; its building of temples dedicated to the Lord, instead of building churches and chapels dedicated to men and women; its being persecuted and evil-spoken of by every other society and by every other people under heaven; and lastly, men may know the Church of Christ by obeying its doctrine, and obtaining a testimony for themselves by revelation from God. (49)

15. The Ten Commandments

16. Word of Wisdom
17. Priesthood—Organization of the Church
18. Dispensation of the Fullness of Times

Q. 30: Will the Lord inflict great judgments upon the wicked?
A. He will visit them with war and famine, plague and pestilence, until they are utterly wasted.

Q. 31: How will the righteous be engaged during the time the wicked are thus punished?
A.: Those who obey the Gospel will gather together on the continent of America, and build up the New Jerusalem, and other cities, and also many temples to the Lord, and become a holy, prosperous and mighty people, and will be called the Zion of the Lord, and he will reveal his knowledge and power and glory among them, to the astonishment of the nations. (74)

The publication date of 1877 means that it was published before Brigham Young’s death on August 28, 1877, and one of the answers identifies the First Presidency as Brigham Young, John W. Young, and Daniel H. Wells (65). Brigham Young ordained his son, John W., as an apostle on February 4, 1864, when John was nineteen, and as his counselor on April 8, 1873, at age twenty-eight; but John was never a member of the Quorum of the Twelve. Succeeding presidents John Taylor and Wilford Woodruff considered John a “counselor to” (not “in”) the First Presidency and grew increasingly mistrustful of his protracted residence in the East as a Church lobbyist whose services they
eventually could not afford.

The glue in this book’s binding was inferior, cracking and releasing pages as soon as the book was opened.


This autobiography of a “poet, singer, and voice teacher who lives with her husband and two sons in Salt Lake City” (inside back jacket) describes the odyssey of a Mormon woman who felt smothered by the silence imposed by being a “good” Mormon girl and wife. She found her voice and a healthier, happier way of living by exploring alternate spiritualities and religious communities. The book is therefore not only a contemporary Mormon woman’s autobiography but also a Mormon feminist document.

Illness resulting from silence is evidently a generational trait, since she tells stories of her own mother, a gifted singer and actress who desperately wants more children but who diets ferociously to keep her weight under 100 pounds and suffers repeatedly from laryngitis. Hart’s maternal grandmother had been “an emotional tornado.” As a result, Hart’s mother “fled into her social life, arranging to be away from home as often as possible, . . . allowing her mother to give her tranquilizers before she went on dates. . . . After her marriage, my mother . . . learned from her mother-in-law how to walk into a room without disturbing anyone” (160).

Hart’s exploration brings a riskier but healthier dimension to her marriage. Her husband, Kent, suffers from “chemical depression that runs in his family” (22). As a young wife, she had blamed herself for his depressions, anxiously making his lunch every day “just as my mother had done for my father” while simultaneously “I burned with resentment” (22). Kent remains firmly attached to the LDS Church, regularly taking their two young sons to Sunday meetings while she attends Quaker meeting.

Hart describes deep Mormon roots but safeguards the privacy of her family, never referring to her parents or grandparents by name, although she identifies as her ancestor’s sister a woman named Catharine Seely, who died slowly of scrofula after being bedfast from 1824 to 1838. Catharine’s diary (she lost her voice to the disease, 34–35) was one of the motives that drove Hart to act in her own self-defense. Hart alludes to “a Mormon prophet, my great-grandmother’s brother, who had grown up” in a family home in Huntsville (hometown of the McKays) where “my paternal grandmother had led tours of this house every Saturday in the summer (12) and also mentions “a family legend of multiple wives beaten sick by their husband, secretary to prophet Brigham Young” (161–62).

Hart describes her participation in several causes and communities: Quakers, protesting the war in Iraq,
visiting Italy, and exploring the spiritual power of Zuni, Tanglen (Tibet Buddhist), and Benedictine practices.

The memoir ends on a hopeful note after a job loss forced Hart and her husband to leave Connecticut and return to Utah: “Kent was offered the job I’d seen in his bar journal. My sons were able to know their great-grandparents before they died. My mother and I have gone into therapy together. Kent and I have embarked on an interfaith marriage, joining hands across our differences. With Kate [Hart’s best friend] beside me at the piano, I’ve continued to find music to sing and people who want to hear it. and had I not moved back home, I might never have begun, with many fearful pauses, to find words for my own history” (206).


Jerry Borrowman’s novel *'Til the Boys Come Home* enters the world of small-town Pocatello, Idaho, in 1911 and, in a story focused on deep friendship and loyalty, follows five teenage boys into the dark days of World War I. Borrowman weaves historical trivia and in-depth research on the machines, the politics, and attitudes toward the war into his story.

Fifteen-year-old Danny O’Brien is well known as the fastest sprinter in his town, but Trevor Richards, a newcomer, bests Danny on his own track. Not only that, but Trevor is a city boy. His family has just arrived from Salt Lake City thanks to his father’s appointment as general manager of the Idaho Division of the Oregon Short Line Railroad. With their fancy brick house and their two cars they are the talk—and occasionally the envy—of the town. Trevor himself seems to have come from a background very different from the rigorous and frugal lifestyle more typical of Pocatello.

All five are members of First Ward’s teachers’ quorum; and over time, Trevor’s openness and sincerity make a place for him. Events include motorcycle rides up City Creek Canyon, enjoying strawberry phosphates at the local drugstore, throwing quorum parties at the Richards’s house, and even planning a trip to Temple Square in Salt Lake City. As the boys grow older, some go to college, others to careers (none on missions), but they continue to get together for unofficial quorum reunions that keep their friendship solid.

In August 1914, World War I breaks out in Europe, but it seems very far away until early 1917, when Woodrow Wilson involves the United States. The conflict scatters the five friends across the globe, giving rise to vivid scenes like these two:

Their ship was next in line for attack, and Dan mentally braced for the blow that seemed inevitable. But then he saw the thick,
black smoke of a destroyer pour over the side of their own deck, and he watched in amazement as one of the escort ships steamed past them at an incredible speed. Within a matter of minutes, he heard a concussion. The fellow standing next to him said, “They’ve released the depth charges. That ought to scare off that blighter of a submarine.” Dan hoped so—oh, how he hoped so. (203)

Trevor stood nervously by the telephone, jumping every time it rang. For some reason, it chose to ring more frequently than he’d ever heard before, each time with news that didn’t matter to him. Finally, at around 1100 it rang, and McMurphy answered solemnly. He started writing. When he hung up, he handed Trevor a piece of paper. “Here’s the landing coordinates. They say your man will be there. Apparently he sent three code words to match your Indian, Stearns, and Steinway.”

“What are they?”

“Maniac, Bourgeois, and Salvation.”

Trevor shook his head in delight. “They got the right man.” (325)


The mention of the Mormon handcart trek west inevitably brings associations of the ill-fated Willie and Martin handcart companies. Theirs was a tragic tale, filled with suffering, starvation, and death as they sought to make their way to Utah. These two companies, however, were only two of ten who came to Utah between 1856 and 1860. Allen Christensen has written the history of the seventh handcart company, which traveled farther and faced its own challenges to reach Zion.

This company has been largely unknown, not only overshadowed by the great tragedy of the Martin and Willie companies but also because it was made up primarily of Scandinavians. Hence, their story was less accessible to English speakers. Christensen, a great-grandson of company member Niels Christensen, preserves both the story and the legacy of this company through the use of company member journals, letters to family members, and histories written about the church and Scandinavia. Christensen’s purpose is to portray these pioneers’ emigration as “an eloquent testament to their acceptance of the divinity of the restoration of the Church of Jesus Christ” (136).

In the first part, “Scandinavian Beginnings,” Christensen sets the stage for the departure of the Seventh Company by describing missionary efforts in Scandinavia during the early 1850s. While the work was slow at first, given the power of the Lutheran clergy, the missionaries began baptizing converts, who in turn began planning on going to Zion. Saints from Norway and Sweden sailed to Copenhagen, where they joined with Danish converts in sailing to Liverpool on April 17,
1857, during the first leg of their long voyage. They landed in Liverpool on April 22 and left for America three days later, landing in Philadelphia on May 30 and traveling by train to Iowa City.

The second part of the book, "Handcarts West," covers their departure from Clear Creek, Iowa, on June 12 under the direction of Captain Christian Christiansen. Their travel coincided at times with the march of the Utah Expedition before the tired pioneers pushed hard to get ahead of Johnston's Army. They reached the Salt Lake Valley on Sunday, September 13, grateful for their safe arrival. After the company's arrival, the members began settling in different areas throughout Utah Territory, spanning present-day Davis and Box Elder counties all the way to Sanpete County.

While every member of the Seventh Company is listed on the ship roster in the first appendix, Christensen focuses specifically on several individuals and their challenges during the trek. Anna Marie Sorensen, halfway through the trek, gave birth one night and continued walking the next day. Margrette Ohlsen Englestead Hansen was widowed for the second time during the trek west. Lars and Ane Pedersen and Anders and Ingerline Jensen each buried a baby at sea while sailing across the Atlantic.

In addition to the hardships endured by different members of the company, Christensen also writes about what they did afterwards. Many members of the Seventh Company were farmers, a trade that was much needed at that time in Utah. In addition, several of the company's men were skilled craftsmen who put their talents to good use, including helping to build the Manti Temple.

The influence of the Seventh Company continues even today. In the book's epilogue, Christensen outlines what happened to the descendants of members of the company. His own great-grandfather, Niels Christensen, has many descendants active in the LDS faith, with some serving as stake presidents, bishops, mission presidents, and in many other callings. Other members of the company also have faithful families, undoubtedly inspired by what these Scandinavian pioneers went through to reach Zion.


*Kirtland* is the second novel in a historical fiction series by Susan Evans McCloud. Esther Parke, the novel's heroine, is a new convert, living in Kirtland, Ohio, from 1833 to 1838. The story, told in first person, opens with Esther being baptized shortly after arriving in Kirtland with her husband and young daughter. It ends with their departure to Missouri with the rest of the Saints. Her struggles include living in poverty, maintaining positive relationships with those friends...
and relatives who did not convert to Mormonism, bearing children, and worrying about individuals who apostatize. Though reference is made to some historically significant events such as the building of the Kirtland Temple, they are not the author’s main focus.

McCloud presents Esther as a courageous and well-liked young woman, suffering from the cruelties of hedonistic “Gentiles” who react only with fear and persecution to the Mormon presence. In one chapter Esther tries to sell straw hats to earn money for postage to write to her father and sisters in Palmyra. She explains: “There were many Gentile establishments that I desired to get into, yet was loathe to approach myself. The lines of demarcation between us and our non-Mormon neighbors were being more firmly drawn every day. The starting of the temple made a difference. They thought us audacious, and they knew that this enterprise meant we intended to stay. As they saw it, the Mormons were squeezing them out already; they would be fools to stand by and watch us grow stronger yet” (57).

Another passage further portrays Esther’s values and viewpoint: “The actual weaving of the broad-brimmed hats was less work than pleasure, for we could all sit together and talk, the baby and the kittens playing at our feet, and a cool pitcher of water, or, if we were fortunate, lemonade ready in the kitchen. We wove sweet, mindless patterns while in the world about us dark, sinister patterns were being woven that would entangle our lives” (55).
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