

On the Trail of the Twentieth-Century Mormon Outmigration

G. Wesley Johnson and Marian Ashby Johnson

This article gives an overview of a major history research project that is now coming to a close after twenty years of activity. It is the Mormon Outmigration Leadership History Project, sponsored by the Marriott School of Management. Its focus has been to study the great urban outmigration of the twentieth century, as members of the Latter-day Saint community moved from traditional Mormon lands to all four corners of the United States in search of employment and education. The project has compiled in-depth case studies of individuals and families who migrated to twenty “target cities” across the nation (table 1). Their stories furnish the evidence to enable the tracing and analysis of this outmigration and suggest that it was the dominant social movement of LDS society in the twentieth century.

In addition to discussing the methods and results of this outmigration research project, this article announces the creation of a rich new resource for researchers of twentieth-century Mormonism—the Latter-day Saint Outmigration Archive. Housed in the L. Tom Perry Special Collections at Brigham Young University, this archive holds over 550 interview transcripts, case studies, and memorabilia of LDS outmigrants. It will be a valuable resource for those interested in Mormon history, family history, migration patterns, sociology of religion, and leadership studies and will contribute to further publications about this facet of twentieth-century Mormon history.¹

1. We are now preparing a book tentatively entitled *Mormons Move to the Mainstream: The Reshaping of LDS Society in the Twentieth Century*.

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BYU Studies: What exactly is going to be in the Latter-day Saint Outmigration Archive?

G. Wesley Johnson: The most valuable thing in the Archive, of course, will be the audio recordings and the transcripts of the interviews with outmigrants. I don't know of many archives that include the recordings like this one will.

Marian A. Johnson: Those interviewed have also sent us other materials, like articles, photos, and newspaper clippings, which we hope will be included in the Archive.

BYUS: When will the Archive be available?

W. J.: We will be winding down our research in the fall of 2007, and then we will transfer it to Special Collections at BYU. There is a lot to prepare with an archive like this, so I would say in about two years.

BYUS: Looking into the future, in what other ways will the Archive serve historians?

W. J.: Eventually what I would like to see is a larger archive of LDS people in the twentieth century. We hope this project opens up a dialogue with non-Mormons on what modern Mormonism is all about. We hope it stimulates our LDS scholars to get out of the nineteenth century more often. At the last Mormon History Association conference, 95 percent of the papers were on the nineteenth century. Why are people wringing their hands wondering why the public doesn't understand us? Part of the fault is ours. Journalists can't find out about us in the twentieth century because our own scholars don't write about it.

M. J.: We need so much more information on what our doctrine and practices are all about today; the public thinks such strange things about what we believe. With more research on the twentieth century, they would realize we are not so different from those people who criticize us.



Beginning around 1900, thousands of young adults from the Mormon Corridor—the primary area of Mormon settlement running from Alberta, Canada, through the Rocky Mountains and down to Juarez, Mexico²—began to join other Americans and Canadians who were moving from rural to urban areas in search of economic and educational opportunities. These motives, combined with the reshaping of the Mormon doctrine of gathering, created an atmosphere in which Mormons migrated away from the pioneer settlements of the West. By the end of the nineteenth century, the idea of fleeing the scourge that was to come by gathering to the American West had changed to the idea of gathering to multiple Zions and building up the kingdom throughout the world.³ As communal gathering had separated Mormons from their surroundings, the abandonment of

2. The most comprehensive discussion of the Mormon culture region is by D. W. Meinig, who, in 1965, laid out a three-layered map of the region, which extended north to Boise, Idaho, south to Juarez, Mexico, west to Elko and Las Vegas, Nevada, and east to just inside the borders of Colorado and New Mexico. The settlements in Alberta were highlighted on his map, but not included in the contiguous corridor. D. W. [Donald William] Meinig, “The Mormon Culture Region: Strategies and Patterns in the Geography of the American West, 1847–1964,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 55 (June 1965): 213–18. See also Wilbur Zelinsky, “An Approach to the Religious Geography of the United States: Patterns of Church Membership in 1952,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 51 (June 1961): 193; Edwin Scott Gaustad, *Historical Atlas of Religion in America* (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), map in pocket, entitled *Religion in America: 1950*; and A. R. Mangus, *Rural Regions of the United States* (Washington: Work Projects Administration, 1940), fig. 2. Zelinsky writes that the Mormon culture region was one of the “only two possibly three cases of regions whose religious distinctiveness is immediately apparent to the casual observer and is generally apprehended by their inhabitants.” Zelinsky, “Approach to the Religious Geography,” 165.

3. Doctrine and Covenants 29:8 instructed, “Wherefore the decree hath gone forth from the Father that they shall be gathered in unto one place upon the face of this land, to prepare their hearts and be prepared in all things against the day when tribulation and desolation are sent forth upon the wicked.” See also D&C 42:36; 84:2–4. Although the change in interpretation of gathering began with Joseph F. Smith in the early twentieth century, the following quotes later in the twentieth century capture well the contrast: “The First Presidency and the Twelve see great wisdom in the multiple Zions, many gathering places where the Saints [should gather] within their own culture and nation.” Spencer W. Kimball, *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1998), 440. “The place of gathering for the Mexican Saints is in Mexico; the place of gathering for the Guatemalan Saints is in Guatemala; the place of gathering for the Brazilian Saints is in Brazil; and so it goes throughout the length and breadth of the whole earth. Japan is for the Japanese; Korea is for the Koreans; Australia is for the Australians; every nation is the gathering place for

the practice forced the Saints into a new relationship with the world. The Saints had previously been instructed, “Go ye out of Babylon; gather ye out from among the nations” (D&C 133:7). In the twentieth century, many of the Saints would reverse this pattern, and instead of fleeing Babylon, they would purposefully enter it. This is not to say that immigration to Utah ceased or that population growth did not occur there, because growth did take place. From 1918, when George Q. Cannon told Saints not to plan on coming to Utah, to 1930, 117 new Mormon settlements were established in the West.⁴

In this article, we first discuss the history of the outmigration using frameworks that demonstrate the twentieth-century outmigration overall and the growth of the Church in a new locale. Next, we share how the information in the Archive was gathered and analyzed and what is available to researchers. Third, we contextualize the outmigration in religious, social, and historical perspectives in comparison with other migrating populations. Fourth, we review the main research issues that have arisen from the project and questions they raise. And lastly, we present three case studies as examples of what can be found in the Archive.

HISTORY OF THE OUTMIGRATION

The Mormon exodus of the nineteenth century is well known. The outmigration that brought Mormon leaders to the Salt Lake Valley in 1847 was only the beginning. From then until the coming of the railroad in 1869, tens of thousands of the faithful crossed the plains by wagon or on foot; for the next thirty years, the flow continued. By the debut of the twentieth century, the immigration situation was changing. A shortage of jobs and educational opportunities contributed to the choice of many to move away from the Intermountain West. Moreover, many Latter-day Saints, like thousands of other rural Americans, were now attracted by the lure of the city and a different lifestyle. In the spirit of Horatio Alger, humble young men and women migrated, hoping to succeed by “pulling up their bootstraps.” These men and women, filled with ambition and willing to take risks, were worthy successors to their elders, the nineteenth-century pioneers.

its own people.” Bruce R. McConkie, *Area Conference Report* (Mexico City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1972), 45.

4. Dale Beecher, “The Post-Gathering Expansion of Zion: Mormon Settlements of the Twentieth Century,” in *Times of Transition, 1890–1920: Proceedings of the 2000 Symposium of the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Latter-day Saint History at Brigham Young University*, ed. Thomas G. Alexander (Provo, Utah: Joseph Fielding Smith Institute, 2003), 103.



TABLE 1. Twenty Target Cities Studied in the Mormon Outmigration Leadership History Project.

As the new century dawned, changes in Church doctrine helped pave the road for this trend. First, a number of ecclesiastical pronouncements began to suggest Zion was not literally in one place but could be found where the faithful resided. For one thing, as Thomas Alexander points out, “By 1900 the extensive colonization efforts of the nineteenth century had virtually ended. Individual settlement rather than cooperative colonization became the norm.”⁵ Soon, statements by senior Mormon officials began to clarify the new situation. For example, in 1910, President Joseph F. Smith told European Saints they did not need to “trouble themselves too much about emigration.” And they should not worry about moving to Utah to receive temple ordinances; President Smith said that “if death should intervene before the ordinances were performed, their children could see to it that the work was done.”⁶

5. Thomas G. Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 201.

6. Both Joseph F. Smith references are quoted by Jan Shippy in *The Scattering of the Gathered and the Gathering of the Scattered* (St. George, Utah: Dixie College, 1991), 5, based on references from a thesis by Douglas D. Alder.

The stories of these urban pioneers are compelling and at times inspirational, especially those of the earliest migrants, who often arrived at their destinations with few funds and no job offers. The challenge of the city brought out the best in many people and made them lively competitors. But living far from kin and friends was sometimes lonely, and so the Church, even though in many instances not fully organized, often became a dominant force in their lives. The networks provided by Church members could make the difference between flourishing in the new environment and giving up and going back home.

Once relocated, these outmigrants put down roots and, along with Church members native to these locales, helped establish and expand the Church and became leaders in their new communities. However, not all Mormon outmigrants remained active or contributed to the building up of their wards and stakes. As Jan Shippo has pointed out, this was especially true shortly after World War II. “Having joined or been drafted into the service at just the age when adult perceptions of identity are in the process of becoming fixed, having been propelled into the fellowship of wartime service units, and having settled outside the Mormon culture region after the war, so many of these young men were, at best, nominal Mormons.” A bishop in Pittsburg, California, lamented that he “had a little over 100, at times, inactive Adult Aaronics.”⁷ While those who did not remain active may be an important factor in fully understanding the outmigration, it is beyond the scope of this project. All of the men and women interviewed remained active in the Church.

Four Waves in the Twentieth Century

The outmigration seems to have occurred in four different stages or waves during the course of the twentieth century: First, from about 1900 to 1930 there was a slowly increasing interest, often among singles, in moving outward. Second, from 1930 to 1945 many families began to move because of the Great Depression and because of job opportunities caused by the advent of World War II. Third, from 1945 to 1970 (in the midst of a housing boom) a number of new target cities became desired destinations. Only in this period can one begin to speak of mass migrations. And fourth, from

7. Shippo, *Scattering of the Gathered*, 10. In another essay, Shippo described these differences of activity among Latter-day Saints in the twentieth century. Jan Shippo, “Beyond the Stereotypes: Mormon and Non-Mormon Communities in Twentieth-Century Mormondom,” in *New Views of Mormon History: A Collection of Essays in Honor of Leonard J. Arrington*, ed. Davis Bitton and Maureen Ursenbach Beecher (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987), 342–55.

1970 to 2000 greater numbers moved out and even more new destinations became viable options to settle.

The backdrop of these outmigrations was the decrease in available employment in the Mormon Corridor as industrialization spread throughout the Intermountain West and many young people chose to leave their family farms. So, they often left home in search of better jobs. The second major reason was the search for higher education. Until after the middle of the century, those who wanted to attend professional schools needed to leave the region. The magnet cities (New York, Washington D. C., Chicago, San Francisco, and Los Angeles) all had universities where one could study law, business, education, medicine, or science.

It is also true that many outmigrants stayed in their new target city for only a few years to obtain their degrees, or they gained employment experience that could be transferred elsewhere. Some returned to the Intermountain West, many moved to different cities where opportunity beckoned, and others decided to put down roots and make their homes where they had first landed. The important thing was that the outmigration experience, whether five, fifteen, or fifty years in duration, shaped the lives of many persons and their families. Those who returned home had now become acquainted with the wider world; those who moved to other cities had learned lessons in their first target city; and those who stayed became the basic demographic for the expansion of the Latter-day Saint community across the country during the course of the century. The outmigration set in motion a transfer of peoples from one region to all four corners of the nation and established a new tradition of finding Zion wherever they went.

Three Stages of Local Growth

Some years ago, Richard Bushman made some suggestions for analyzing the way new congregations emerge.⁸ From his observations and his own experience as an outmigrant living in Massachusetts, Delaware, and New York, he argued that new congregations pass through three phases before they become fully operational (that is, able to fully replicate the typical wards of the Utah Church): First is a “pioneer period,” characterized by the arrival of “transient elites,” who may be members of the military, graduate students, or business people on temporary assignment who organize local services. In some cases, a place mainly has a “lone ranger,” such

8. This construct was later employed by Armand L. Mauss in his book *The Angel and the Beehive: The Mormon Struggle with Assimilation* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 11–15.

as George Albert Smith Jr., who for many years was the only Mormon faculty member at the Harvard Business School and who helped find rental locations so the embryonic church could hold regular meetings. Bushman suggests that these pioneers are often responsible for helping create a local congregation before there are adequate converts or before they mature.

Bushman calls the second phase the “settlement period,” during which more permanent migrants move into town, attracted by economic or educational incentives, and many of them decide to stay. During this period, a locally bred leadership begins to function and many parishioners seek to emulate Utah congregations: roadshows are mounted and youth activities become highly structured. However, sometimes tension surfaces between the leadership and the growing locals. And then, ironically, as outmigrants become longtime dwellers in their new city, they often send their children back to Utah for college to discover their “roots.”

Bushman’s third phase is the “entrenchment period,” where the Church now becomes a permanent part of the local scene, new chapels are built and not rented, and the Church is generally accepted. The split between outmigrants and locals tends to disappear over time and in many instances these families intermarry. The creation of LDS institutes causes many college students to stay at local institutions rather than go back to Utah. Much later, as temples begin to appear on the scene, some outmigrants decide to stay put rather than return back to their original home at retirement.

This useful construct has been adapted and modified for this research project. To date, we have found that in some instances, in the third period, the tension between outmigrants and locals continues, although beneath the surface. A further variation can be seen in looking at the Boston area: after three or four waves of significant immigration by Mormons from the West, Boston leadership is still mainly in the hands of the outmigrants, despite the fact that many locals have emerged in the past half-century as valuable resources. This tension in many communities lasts well into modern times, beyond the stages suggested above.⁹

CREATING THE OUTMIGRATION ARCHIVE

In order to provide a collection of oral histories of outmigrants who became LDS leaders, the Outmigration Project was founded at BYU in the

9. Richard Bushman pioneered the study of Mormon wards in the outmigration and set in motion the study of a ward in Delaware of which he was bishop. See Susan Buhler Taber, *Mormon Lives: A Year in the Elkton Ward* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993).

mid-1980s in the College of Family, Home, and Social Sciences under the direction of Dean Martin Hickman. Later it was moved to the Marriott School of Management under the auspices of Dean Ned Hill and, accordingly, added emphasis was given to collecting data about the managerial leadership qualities of outmigrants. The project chose twenty communities to serve as “target cities” for this study, which were selected for their population size and geographical diversity and which, by the year 2000, had all become centers of LDS populations. Over 550 interviews have been conducted with outmigrants who became leaders of some sort in their new environs.

As leadership cases were desired by the Marriott School, we adopted four criteria for inclusion: first, people who were leaders in the Church in some way; second, members who were financially successful; third, members who pursued higher education; and fourth, members who were active in the political, social, and cultural life of their new cities. On the whole, most of the leaders selected filled all four of these categories. It is important to note, though, that these categories are not measures of intrinsic value to the Church or measures of spirituality. As Armand Mauss says, “Having grown up in the California Bay Area during the 1930s and 1940s, I can think of scores of spiritual giants who were indispensable to the growth of the Church there, while barely able to support their families economically.”¹⁰

The transcripts of these interviews and accompanying case studies will be donated to the L. Tom Perry Special Collections, where they will be available for future researchers. As time moves on, the recent past quickly becomes the distant past, and historians of twentieth-century Mormon history will look to interpret the twentieth century in more depth. Some have already started.¹¹

10. Armand Mauss, email to the authors, December 19, 2006.

11. While the majority of study of the twentieth century has focused on the early decades, scholars are starting to focus on the rest of the period. Some of the notable studies include, but are not limited to, the following: Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition*; Noel B. Reynolds, “The Coming Forth of the Book of Mormon in the Twentieth Century,” *BYU Studies* 38, no. 2 (1999): 6–47; Jan Shipps, “In the Presence of the Past: Continuity and Change in Twentieth-Century Mormonism,” in *After 150 Years: The Latter-day Saints in Sesquicentennial Perspective*, ed. Thomas G. Alexander and Jessie L. Embry (Provo, Utah: Charles Redd Center for Western Studies, Brigham Young University, 1983), 3–35; Shipps, “Beyond the Stereotypes,” 342–60; Mauss, *Angel and the Beehive*; Richard H. Jackson and Mark W. Jackson, eds., *Geography, Culture, and Change in the Mormon West: 1847–2003* (Jacksonville, Ala.: National Council for Geographic Education, 2003); Alexander, *Times of Transition*; Gregory A. Prince and William Robert Wright,

The interviews were loosely structured, open-ended classic oral history interviews, most lasting a minimum of one and one-half hours. They were taped and have been transcribed. The interviews today are housed in two collections: the original interviews, or Old Series, which number about 350, carried out mainly by teams of graduate history students assigned to visit each of the twenty target cities. The procedure for selecting interviewees was to contact several persons, whether Church or secular leaders, in target cities and ask them to nominate a list of persons, emphasizing that we needed to speak to outmigrants most familiar with the history of the Church in that area. With the lists in hand, interviewers would then phone and screen potential interviewees, seeking diversity of occupations, church assignments, gender, and general background.

In summary, the database can be accessed for a random survey of typical outmigrants in the Old Series and studied for the formation of leadership personalities in the New Series. Lists of pertinent interview questions were given to interviewers, but they were given discretion in how to utilize them. As historians, we were mainly interested in the qualitative and unique biographies of these outmigrants, but the responses to most of the questions make it possible to furnish generalizations about the process of outmigration. Our goal was to put faces and stories together with the outmigration destinations and numbers.

Each one of these interviews has a file that includes the original tape, interviewer notes, edited transcript, and in many cases, supporting materials such as personal resumes, clippings, photos, memos, and copies of letters. In addition to individual interviews, we conducted and recorded several roundtables with outmigrants. These took place in the Barlow Center (Washington, D.C.), BYU, the University of Utah, and Dixie College.

CONTEXTUALIZING THE OUTMIGRATION

Historians have studied migrations for centuries. In the nineteenth century, one of the earliest scientific observers was E. G. Ravenstein, who classified different types of migrations.¹² Following his lead, theorists have examined many possibilities over the years. They have accepted his dictum

David O. McKay and the Rise of Modern Mormonism (Salt Lake City: University of Utah, 2005); Carol Cornwall Madsen and Cherry B. Silver, eds., *New Scholarship on Latter-day Saint Women in the Twentieth Century* (Provo, Utah: Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Latter-day Saint History, 2005); and Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Mormonism*, ed. Reid L. Neilson (New York: Columbia University, 2005).

12. See E. G. Ravenstein, "The Laws of Migration," *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society* 48, no. 2 (1885): 167–227.

that the search for employment is the primary reason for migrations. For example, take a modern restatement of Ravenstein by Cadwallader: “Labor will migrate from low-wage to high-wage areas.”¹³ But he softens this classical definition for our times: “As history has demonstrated, there is the potential for a good deal of cultural, institutional, and political variation under capitalism.” This condition was particularly true in the case of Mormons in the nineteenth century, whose major goal was to find a promised land. It was also true of Jews, who departed first from Germany, and later from Poland and Russia, seeking freedom and to escape pogroms and prejudice. The possibility of improving the way one earned a living was important, but it was not the only factor.

As to why people migrate, demographers White and Woods offer a commonsense explanation:

Migration occurs because migrants believe they will be more satisfied in their needs and desires in the place that they move to than in the place from which they come. An important emphasis must be placed on the word “believe.” Migration occurs as a result of decisions made by the individuals in the light of what they perceive the objective world to be like.¹⁴

Project interviews confirm this observation—outmigrants really believed they could improve their lives.

White and Woods also point out that “migrants are not a random selection from the population of the place of origin. Migrants do not form a random cross-section addition to the population of the place of destination.”¹⁵ This substantiates the findings of our study, that Mormon outmigrants were highly individualistic and possessed attributes of flexibility, ambition, love of adventure (or risk-taking), and a strong belief in self, qualities not ordinarily found in the general population. Thus, while in Ravenstein’s day economic motivation was the main factor to study, today a more nuanced approach has become acceptable. We have therefore followed White and Woods: “The use of migrant histories can be extended to a recognition that migration is a highly *cultural* experience for all those involved. . . . Migration tends to have meanings for a given society or for

13. See Martin Cadwallader, *Migration and Residential Mobility: Macro and Micro Approaches* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), 39, and 8 for following quote.

14. Paul White and Robert Woods, eds., *The Geographical Impact of Migration* (New York: Longman Group, 1980), 7.

15. White and Woods, *Geographical Impact of Migration*, 12.

a sub-section of that society that cannot be reduced to clear-cut economic or social factors alone.”¹⁶

The twentieth century brought about new paradigms for migrations for several American groups who were victims of prejudice and oppression. The Jews, crowded in their East Coast ghettos, wanted to strike out for new opportunities across the nation. The Irish, also penned up in cities, now sought ways to move up the social ladder and move to the suburbs. And what of the African Americans in the South, walled in by restrictive Jim Crow covenants, waiting for the chance to move to Northern and Western cities—for jobs, to be sure, but also to be free from societal restraints. Thus it is important to consider the conceptualization of migrations within the wider context of American social history. The study of Mormon migrations can learn much from the factors and issues dominating the analogous migrations mentioned above.¹⁷

For example, that church congregations welcomed new migrants is an essential part of the stories of African American migrations, especially during and after World War I. These migrants had by far the most difficult challenge. In the analysis of the Mormon outmigration, we draw from many analogies furnished by Jewish, Irish, and African American experiences. All of these groups shared the fact that in 1900 they were disadvantaged, lacked decent employment, and suffered from prejudices against them. Yet all of these groups migrated to improve the quality of their lives through education and job opportunities.¹⁸

16. Paul Boyle, Keith Halfacree, and Vaughan Robinson, *Exploring Contemporary Migration* (Longman: New York, 1998), 72. Emphasis in original.

17. For example, on the Jews, see the excellent studies on early migrations by Jack Glazier, *Dispersing the Ghetto: The Relocation of Jewish Immigrants across America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998); for later migrations see Deborah Dash Moore, *To the Golden Cities: Pursuing the American Jewish Dream in Miami and L.A.* (New York: The Free Press, 1994); and on the Irish, see Timothy Meagher, *The Columbia Guide to Irish American History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005); and J. J. Lee and Marion R. Casey, eds., *Making the Irish American: History and Heritage of the Irish in the United States* (New York: New York University Press, 2006); and on African-American migrations, see excellent study by James N. Gregory, *The Southern Diaspora: How the Great Migration of Black and White Southerners Transformed America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005); and E. Marvin Goodwin, *Black Migration in America, from 1915 to 1960: An Uneasy Exodus* (Lewiston, New York: E. Mellen Press, 1990).

18. How Mormons fit into a rapidly urbanizing American society cannot be explored in detail in this article. Because of its importance, this subject will be covered in a forthcoming article we are preparing based on the project’s archives.

Urbanization is also an important factor that drove American migration during the twentieth century. People left their rural homes to find better jobs, to obtain higher education, and to live an urban lifestyle with its cultural amenities (concerts, museums, theaters, and so on). Jewish and Mormon migrants seem to have shared similar tracks in the twentieth century—moving into the middle class via white-collar jobs. Very few Mormons sought factory jobs (except during World War II), a trend similar to Jewish migrants. Both groups were ambitious in education and sought out the best universities; both groups sought out federal government positions, and both groups flocked to professional schools. Jews had to fight ceilings on university enrollments and residential housing restrictions, both of which eased after 1945. The Mormons had the advantage of being perceived as Protestants and hence rarely suffered this sort of discrimination. The important point is that Mormon outmigration took place in a national context of rural people moving to metropolitan areas. The Mormon quest for assimilation was therefore similar to many groups, but it differed in details.

One way of looking at this process is through the paradigm made famous by Harvard business historian Alfred D. Chandler, who won the Pulitzer Prize for his analysis of the emergence of modern management in the American corporation. Chandler reminds us that when Adam Smith, the classical laissez-faire economist, wrote *Wealth of Nations*, Smith spoke of the “invisible hand” of the market as the driving force in the emerging world economy.¹⁹ In other words, if every nation were able to engage in free trade, the world economy would be kept in order by the regulating mechanism of the invisible hand. By contrast, Chandler’s study argued that the invisible hand of the market started to disappear around 1900 as great American corporations such as U.S. Steel, Swift, American Tobacco, and others began to dominate the nation’s business. The reason, according to Chandler, was the emergence of the “visible hand” of the new corporate manager who sought to control conditions of the market through vertically integrated firms, cartels, trusts, and mergers.²⁰

In drawing an analogy between changes in these macroeconomic trends and Mormon migration patterns, one finds an inverse parallel that is helpful in explaining the twentieth-century migration patterns. While the marketplace became more centralized at the advent of the twentieth

19. Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (New York: Modern Library, 1937), 423.

20. Alfred D. Chandler Jr., *The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977).

century and capital coalesced in the hands of fewer and fewer large firms, Mormon migration patterns became less centralized and more and more population centers of Mormonism sprang up.²¹ The directives of Joseph Smith and Brigham Young had served as the visible hand in shaping Mormon migration patterns for much of the nineteenth century. Under Smith, the Saints were to gather to population centers to build up cities of Zion. And under Brigham Young's leadership, the majority of Latter-day Saints immigrated to the Salt Lake Valley. From there, Young dispatched these families to settle in numerous outposts throughout the Mormon Corridor. It is the contention of this article, therefore, that at the turn of the twentieth century, this situation changed. The invisible hand of economic and educational opportunity took over from the visible hand of prophetic directives in shaping Latter-day Saint migration patterns. Mormons now moved out of the pioneer settlements in the West in a random manner to search for professional and educational opportunities in urban centers around the country.

This being said, the teachings of Joseph Smith and administrative decisions of Brigham Young had paradoxically laid a foundation for the twentieth-century outmigration. Joseph Smith had taught that the Latter-day Saints embraced truth from whatever its source. In his letter to John Wentworth, he reaffirmed the Pauline injunction "If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report, or praiseworthy, we seek after these things."²² And in Kirtland, Ohio, he had revealed to the Saints the injunction to "seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom; seek learning" (D&C 88:118). Brigham Young declared, "We believe in all good. If you can find a truth in heaven, earth or hell, it belongs to our doctrine. We believe it; it is ours; we claim it."²³

In taking benefit of the resources of the nineteenth-century "host culture," Brigham Young dispatched Latter-day Saints from the Mormon

21. This is not to say, though, that the Church itself became less centralized over the twentieth century. In many ways, the Church became much more centralized and uniform. As Armand Mauss has written, "The system of governance evolving in the church began to be based far less upon the individual prophetic initiative of a Joseph Smith or a Brigham Young and far more upon the collective, collegial, and bureaucratic model usually associated with large corporations." Mauss, *Angel and the Beehive*, 23.

22. Joseph Smith Jr., *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2d ed., rev., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1971), 4:541. Philippians 4:8 is the text Joseph Smith was paraphrasing.

23. Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (Liverpool: F. D. Richards, 1855–86), 13:335 (April 24, 1870).

Corridor to the East Coast and to Europe to gain education and experience not available to them in the Intermountain West. In preparing for construction of the most recognizable Mormon symbol, the Salt Lake Temple, Brigham Young sent Truman Angell to Europe to study religious architecture. He also sent a group of artists to France to study the most current art techniques in preparation for painting the murals of the Salt Lake Temple.²⁴ Latter-day Saints like these served as role models for those in the twentieth century who sought expert training outside of the Mormon West.

DIFFERENT FACETS REVEALED BY THE PROJECT

Standing back and analyzing the interviews collected, similarities arise that help explain the motivations and causes of the outmigration. Doing so also reveals the shared experiences that most of the outmigrants went through regardless of their location. Further research needs to be done to fully understand the implications of this phenomenon, its causes, and its effects. At the outset, though, visible trends are seen. The following is a sampling of some of the important facets that have emerged thus far.

Assimilation

Many who left the West to study or complete training programs wanted to return home quickly and did so. But others desired instead to stay in their new locales and assimilate into the larger culture of their new residence. Settling far from the Mormon Corridor was facilitated by changes in the Church itself. The face of the Church had radically changed since the nineteenth century with the abandonment of polygamy, theocracy, communitarianism, and anti-American rhetoric. And while struggles still ensued and perceptions were not changed overnight, the more mainstream face of Mormonism fostered an environment wherein Latter-day Saints were accepted in businesses and universities that previously would have shunned them.²⁵

24. The artists were John Hafen (1856–1910), Lorus Pratt (1855–1923), John B. Fairbanks (1855–1940), Edwin Evans (1860–1946), and Herman H. Haag (1871–95). Richard G. Oman, “Arts, Visual,” in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed. Daniel H. Ludlow, 4 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 1:70–73.

25. For more on the relationship of Mormons in the Intermountain West to the broader American culture, see Mauss, *Angel and the Beehive*; Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition*; and Kathleen Flake, *The Politics of American Religious Identity: The Seating of Senator Reed Smoot, Mormon Apostle* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2004).

On the whole, persons interviewed did not perceive that they were moving toward Babylon. They tended to share the American wish to move to the cities and, therefore, simply joined a national process that was rapidly gaining steam by 1900. Moreover, the overwhelming evidence suggests that the outmigration was a positive experience. For example, Ned Hill commented on the benefits of his years as an outmigrant faculty member at Cornell and Indiana Universities as follows: “It was wonderful to know that there were awfully good people who were Catholics, Jews, or atheists—people of very different backgrounds. We developed dear, dear friends whom we still interact with today.”²⁶ With similar responses repeated hundreds of times in the project’s interviews, the data strongly suggest that most Latter-day Saints participated willingly and wholeheartedly in their new homes, becoming active in their neighborhoods or communities, but never relinquishing their own individual and unique identity.²⁷

The changing public image of the Church in the twentieth century is a topic related to assimilation but will only be touched on here in a limited way. Reactions to questions about public perceptions about the Church vary greatly in our interviews, but on the whole, most of the outmigrants fostered positive perceptions of Mormonism. The information gathered from the Outmigration Project suggests that relations were rarely a problem, or, if so, have improved. But work still remains to be done. As Claudia Bushman has written, “As the Church tries to manage its public face and

26. Ned Hill, interview with the authors, March 8, 2007.

27. The authors have studied a similar phenomenon during several major field trips to West Africa among the Senegalese, the first people in Africa to be colonized by the French in 1659. It was remarkable after three hundred years, in the face of having the French language and law imposed upon them, that these resilient people kept alive in their homes traditional language, dress, and customs, and for many, their Islamic beliefs. Yet at the same time, they had become productive members of a society and economy that was making a transition from colonial rule to independence. Publicly, they had become assimilated; privately, they had clung to their uniqueness for over three centuries. G. Wesley Johnson, *The Emergence of Black Politics in Senegal* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1971); G. Wesley Johnson Jr., “The Senegalese Urban Elite, 1900–1945” in *Africa and the West: Intellectual Responses to European Culture*, ed. Philip D. Curtin (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1972), 139–87; Marian A. Johnson, “An American in Africa: Interviewing the Elusive Goldsmith,” *International Journal of Oral History* 1 (June 1989): 110–30.

to build bridges with other groups, tensions flare. . . . Making peace with the larger community continues to be a serious issue.”²⁸

Replication

Woodrow Wilson biographer Andrew George created a construct to help understand the activity of political leaders that he called an “operational code.” He argued that it was important to discern what the politician’s operational code was before one could understand that politician’s career.²⁹ This framework might be transferred to an analysis of Mormon leaders interviewed in this study. The great value these leaders brought to an organization no longer expanding under the leadership of a visible hand was an operational code approach to community leadership.

It should also be pointed out that although leaders seemed to maintain an operational code, the reality is that all faithful members who migrated carried with them what analysts have called cultural capital—that is, they were bearers of cultural assets that enabled them to help in the process of replicating the LDS Church as it was run in the West. In Rodney Stark’s analysis, this concept is clarified: “Religious capital consists of the degree of mastery of and attachment to a particular religious culture. [It] has two parts, which can be roughly identified as culture and emotions.”³⁰

Other analysts, particularly the French, have recognized this and employ several terms, such as *culture de diaspora*,³¹ *capital ethnique*,³² *ethnicité diasporique*,³³ *capital culturel migratoire*,³⁴ and a phrase that summarizes the concept, traveling culture.³⁵ These various concepts speak to the same phenomenon one can observe in the Mormon outmigrants: they all arrived at their target cities bearing the imprint of many years

28. Claudia L. Bushman, *Contemporary Mormonism: Latter-day Saints in Modern America* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2006), 146.

29. Alexander George, “The Operational Code: A Neglected Approach to the Study of Political Leadership,” *International Studies Quarterly* 13 (June 1969): 190–222.

30. Stark, “Rise of Mormonism,” 64–65.

31. Chantal Bordes-Benayoun and Dominique Schnapper, *Diasporas et nations* (Paris: Odile Jacob, 2006), 69.

32. Jean-Pierre Hassouan, *Hmong du Laos en France* (Paris: PUF, 1997).

33. Martine Hovanessian, *Les liens communautaire: Trois generations d’Armeniens* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1992).

34. Alain Taurrius, *Les Nouveaux cosmopolitismes: mobilités, identités, territoires* (La Tour d’Aigues: Editions de l’Aube, 2000).

35. Robin Cohen, *Global Diasporas: An Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2001). Cohen and some of the other authors cited recognize the pioneering work of James Clifford, “Diasporas,” *Cultural Anthropology* 9, no. 3 (1994): 302–38.

of socialization in Mormon doctrine and culture that made it possible to quickly assume a useful role in whatever branch or ward they contacted. The above concepts suggest this role was more than simply knowing how to act during a liturgical event. The *operational code* was something that some outmigrants possessed and contributed to their selection as leaders in their new congregations.

Few other churches have an authoritarian, centralized organization like that of the LDS Church. Consequently, few have more concern for replication in the way in which local congregations are organized and operated than Latter-day Saints do. By the twentieth century, the Church had largely become standardized. In contrast to the way the Church organically functioned during the life of Joseph Smith, it now had Primary, Mutual, and Sunday School. And in contrast to meetings being held in houses or in shady groves, Latter-day Saints now met in chapels and tabernacles. Even the Relief Society had its own buildings. Church meetings became scheduled and the way they were conducted was routinized. Whereas section 27 of the Doctrine and Covenants says that “it mattereth not” what one uses for the sacrament, this and many other things now mattered. This “way of doing things” came to be viewed as the correct way of administering the Church. Branches and wards outside of the Intermountain West that had not adopted all of the characteristics of the way the Church was run in early-twentieth-century Utah were seen as less developed and needing the aid of leaders from the West. Records show that in most instances, new converts were not placed into positions of ecclesiastical leadership but, rather, were trained in apprenticeship-type fashion as counselors to leaders imported from the Mormon heartland.

This caused some resentment on the part of members in these areas who felt condescended to. One factor that complicated this relationship was the fact that waves of outmigrants kept arriving in target cities, which meant that at any given time, a new outmigrant might arrive and be named as bishop instead of a longtime resident being called. Indeed, our interviewees often repeated something to the effect of, “The last Mormon to get off the train from Utah became the new leader.” There is no question that previous experience, whether in the Mormon Corridor or as a missionary, counted, and in some cases, so did close ties with authorities in Salt Lake City. One woman from New Jersey lamented the fact that her husband, a local convert, over several decades was always called as an assistant to the outmigrants, who took the main leadership positions. There were many

instances of privately kept, hurt feelings when local people in the Church, hoping to become leaders themselves, were often denied the opportunity because of the reliance on outmigrants.³⁶

Critical Mass

Another factor in the way local congregations develop has little to do with time periods or phases but is a function of the development of a “critical mass.” This concept has been put forth by Frederick Luebke to help explain the growth of ethnicity in the Great Plains areas of the country. Once a critical mass of the population was in place, a community (or part) could develop an ethnic identity.³⁷ On studies we carried out in the 1980s on the history of Phoenix, we at first believed the city had few ethnic enclaves. But once we began to investigate what appeared to be largely a WASP (White Anglo-Saxon Protestant) community, beneath the surface were many ethnic groups (Jews, Italians, Poles, Germans) in addition to the African Americans and Hispanics, who had higher visibility. These subrosa groups had never achieved enough of a critical mass as had the blacks and Mexicans, and therefore never organized ethnic neighborhoods. Hence to the casual observer, they never appeared to be there.³⁸

The critical mass concept seems to be relevant for studying the great outmigration to this extent: it was a key factor in giving Mormons enough self-confidence to participate more fully in their adopted communities, such as entering local politics, serving in voluntary associations such as school boards, library committees, or participating in service organizations such as Rotary Club. Phoenix and Palo Alto were communities where a critical mass of LDS residents developed by the 1960s and 1970s, with Mormons elected as mayors.³⁹ As applied to the growth of local Mormon congregations, the concept of critical mass seems to be important. After

36. See an early discussion of this problem in Mauss, *Angel and the Beehive*, 62–66.

37. Frederick C. Luebke, *Immigrants and Politics: The Germans of Nebraska, 1880–1900* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1969); Frederick C. Luebke, ed., *Ethnicity on the Great Plains* (Lincoln: Center for Great Plains Studies, 1980).

38. Phylis Cancilla Martinelli, “The Transformation of an Ethnic Community: Phoenix’s Italians, 1880 to 1980,” in *Phoenix in the Twentieth Century: Essays in Community History*, ed. G. Wesley Johnson Jr. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993), 69–74.

39. In the 1960s, David B. Haight and later Jack Wheatley each served as mayor of Palo Alto, California, and in 1970 John Driggs was elected mayor of Phoenix.

all, only when certain demographic levels are reached can an area become converted from a district into a stake.

Leadership

When the Marriott School of Management assumed sponsorship for the Outmigration Project, it was decided to focus most of the subsequent interviews on the experiences of leaders in both the Church and secular arenas. Hence the New Series of more than 200 interviews examines how outmigrants became leaders in their new communities. They faced multiple challenges: how to ascend the ladder in their career efforts; how to balance Church, office, and family demands on their time; how to build a solid reputation in their new city; and how to navigate successfully in largely non-Mormon communities. We have been gratified to study how outmigrants forged ahead and became not only local leaders, but also many became nationally recognized.

Here are some examples: Bruce McGregor, an attorney and stake president in San Marino, California, who in the face of many “Anglo” families moving away, organized banquets and welcoming parties for the newly arrived Asians and Asian-Americans in his area. James Quigley, who upon becoming head of the New York-based accounting firm Deloitte and Touche, notified his employees he would no longer tolerate swearing or telling off-color stories. Menlo Smith, a candy manufacturer from St. Louis, who was appalled by the extreme poverty he found while serving as a mission president in the Philippines, responded to that need by organizing a nonprofit micro-credit society, which spread to a half dozen other countries and has now serviced over 500,000 clients. Dick Peery of Palo Alto, who took over his father’s modest real estate business, doggedly *walked* the length and breadth of Silicon Valley to identify new valuable properties, becoming today one of the principal landlords in that area. In an extremely competitive climate, G. Stanley McAllister, former New York City stake president, presided over the expansion of thirty-four Lord and Taylor department stores across the nation. Linda Crandall of Mesa, Arizona, built up one of the leading dietician services and training programs in the nation. Linda Daines, a college beauty queen from Utah State University, as a young mother took her MBA at Columbia and became a partner in the brokerage firm of Goldman Sachs.

Many lessons on how leaders develop can be learned from these cases. All of these stories of personal success share similar foundations: hard work, creativity and imagination, superior education, the ability to

become role models to others, strong activity in their local churches, and undoubtedly the good luck of being in the right place at the right time.⁴⁰

Retirement

A somewhat new factor to consider in studying the outmigration is the influence of retirement. In the early years, a great number of outmigrants returned to the Mormon Corridor to set up new households. But during the past several decades, with temples being built in Boston, New York, Chicago, St. Louis, Oakland, and Washington, D.C., many outmigrants have elected to stay put. On the other hand, the emergence of St. George, Utah, as a major retirement destination, with an area population of over 100,000, serves as a new attraction for some outmigrants to return to Utah. Moreover, for many years the Salt Lake area had many associations for persons who had formerly lived elsewhere, such as the New York club or the California club, but as time goes on, these organizations tend to diminish. Perhaps the availability of inexpensive air travel, inexpensive phone service, and email means that people can stay connected vicariously and that face-to-face meetings count for less.

Roles of Women

Another important issue is the influence of women—single and married—in the outmigration process. They came as professionals seeking careers, as heads of Relief Society, Young Women, and Primary auxiliaries, and as homemakers supportive of their husbands in relocating. Case studies are being prepared to illustrate all of these roles. For example, in Newport Beach, California, one finds Marian Bergeson, who was a California state senator and Orange County supervisor; and Debbie Dickson, who heads her own accounting firm. In Manhattan, Michelle Larsen is a professor of microbiology at Albert Einstein College. In Boston, Laurel Thatcher Ulrich is a chaired professor of history at Harvard University. Outmigrant women are not only involved in their careers and education, but many are also wives, mothers, homemakers, and active Church members. They are prime examples of Church members who brought cultural capital with them to their new homes. They accumulated this capital—the experience to lead and organize—during their earlier socialization in the Mormon Corridor or on missions. Without these women serving in Church leadership roles, it is doubtful that the Church as an institution could have been

40. Compare Jeff Benedict, *The Mormon Way of Doing Business: Leadership and Success through Faith and Family* (New York: Warner Business Books, 2007).

so fully and successfully replicated in these communities. The crucial roles of women in the LDS outmigration experience was confirmed in dozens of interviews with stake and ward priesthood leaders.

Military Service

Military service affected thousands of twentieth-century Mormons. Some of the earliest Mormon outmigrants served in World War I, and, because they visited the wider world, were stimulated to seek education or careers far from the Mormon heartland. Even more important was the period from World War II to the present, when thousands of young men and women served in the armed services. There are countless stories of service personnel stationed at places such as the Presidio in San Francisco, Luke or Williams Air Force bases in Phoenix, and at the Pentagon in Washington, who returned to settling in these places after discharge. Equally important is the fact that many branches of the Church owe their founding to military outmigrants who had the leadership skills to organize religious services in a wide variety of locations, both at home and abroad.⁴¹

Mission Service

A great number of males interviewed for this project were returned missionaries, and most of them attributed their interest in exploring broader horizons to their mission experiences. Take, for example, G. Stanley McAllister, mentioned above, who grew up in Salt Lake City and served in the Eastern States Mission in the 1920s and later returned to New York to become an executive at CBS and then executive vice-president of Lord and Taylor. Also from Utah, J. Willard Marriott served as a missionary in New England, and on his way home, visited Washington, D.C., which later became the scene for the founding of Marriott Hotels. Places such as Atlanta, Detroit, and Dallas also furnish cases of missionaries who later returned. It can be argued that the missionary experience was critical not only for introducing thousands of young persons to other parts of the country, but also for creating a climate of adventure and willingness to move elsewhere that had less often existed at an earlier time.

41. See also Jan Shipps, *Sojourner in the Promised Land: Forty Years among the Mormons* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 264–65.

Growth of Universities in Utah

Two important developments for changing the outmigration from a trickle to a flood after World War II occurred in a growing Utah. First was the increasing population of students enrolling at Utah State University, the University of Utah, and Brigham Young University. As these students graduated during the next half century, great numbers of them departed from Utah as Latter-day Saint outmigrants seeking better opportunities. The most compelling case study is that of the spectacular growth of BYU under the leadership of Ernest L. Wilkinson, who took over in 1951 when 5,000 students were enrolled and increased it during his administration of twenty-five years to over 25,000 students (table 2). Many of these students heeded the inscription on the west entrance to the campus, which proclaims, “Enter to learn, go forth to serve” and “The world is our campus.” Increasingly, the student body was drawn from children of outmigrant parents who wanted a Mormon academic experience for their children (and perhaps hoped they would meet a Mormon spouse). Once graduated, most of these outmigrant children themselves proceeded to move out to other parts of the country. As for BYU students who came from homes along the Wasatch corridor, an increasing number of them also outmigrated, as table 3 illustrates.

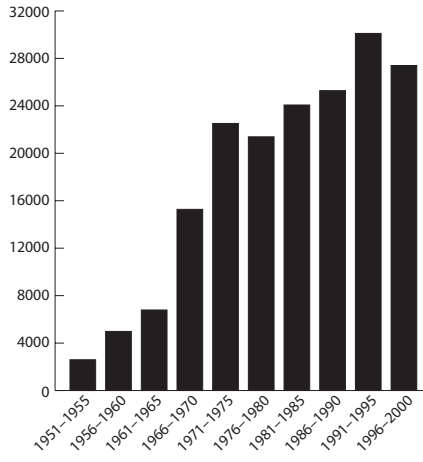


TABLE 2. Enrollment at Brigham Young University.

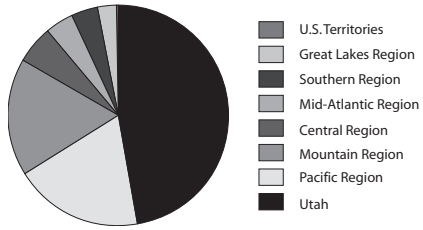


TABLE 3. Demographics of BYU Graduates Living in the United States, 2006.

The second factor was the great influx of LDS students who enrolled in graduate and professional schools across the nation. Places such as Harvard, the University of Chicago, and New York University had earlier accepted Mormons, but after World War II a surge of Utah college graduates headed for advanced studies at Yale, Columbia, Cornell, Wisconsin,

Minnesota, Michigan, Indiana, Duke, USC, UCLA, Stanford, Berkeley, and a host of other universities. Dozens of campus wards sprang up in these towns, and the service of these outmigrants helped the Church to grow. It was no surprise that our interviews revealed that most of the early leaders of these campus branches and the resulting wards were outmigrants. Thus, in the second half of the twentieth century, a major starting point for the outmigration is to be found in Utah's universities, from whence tens of thousands of students departed to help found or strengthen LDS communities elsewhere.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

The insights discussed above are some of the major factors in our research, but a host of other questions are worth asking of the data in the new Outmigration Archive, such as how did outmigrant families relate to their new surroundings? How did children manage in new schools? How did ward members become surrogate families in faraway locations? How did the outmigrant family stay in touch with Mormon Corridor roots? Did their departure cause more family members to follow them? How did the breadwinner develop networking and contacts in a new locale? Were Church members an important part of the networking? What were the reactions of professors and employers to the Mormon outmigrants? How did intellectuals fare in the outmigration? What perceptions did neighbors and colleagues have of Latter-day Saints? What role did wives of men seeking opportunities have in the decision to not return to the West? How had they assimilated into the host culture while their husbands were at work, school, or both? Did they become active in community affairs? Did they seek employment outside of the home? If so, why? Did class become an issue in urban wards where wealthy and non-wealthy members mixed? How did outmigrants relate to people from races and ethnicities whom they had previously not lived among? For the net result of this process, as pointed out above, was the reshaping of Latter-day Saint society in the twentieth century.

CONCLUSIONS

The twentieth century was an era of enormous growth and expansion for the Latter-day Saints. In 1900, Mormons were predominantly rural, not overly well educated, not very wealthy, relatively provincial in outlook, with little national influence, standing apart from American society. By the year 2000, Mormons had become mainly urban, living in large metropolitan areas, often highly educated, many quite prosperous, increasingly

assimilated into the American mainstream, spread across the continent with less than a third of them residing in the traditional Mormon Corridor. To say the least, this was an amazing transformation. But how did all this occur? Where are the detailed accounts of the people who forged these new trails? Answering these questions is the challenge faced by the new historians of the Mormon twentieth century.

The Outmigration Project takes a strong step in the direction of stimulating and facilitating new research on Latter-day Saint history in the twentieth century, and perhaps the greatest contribution of the Outmigration Project is to suggest strategies for further research on the reshaping of Mormon society in the twentieth century. At that century's beginning, the focus on Mormon activities was sharply limited to the Intermountain West. By midcentury, with the outmigrants swelling by the tens of thousands, the entire demographic profile of the Latter-day Saint community changed dramatically. As the Church's population doubled and trebled, it changed even more radically by the year 2000. Many Mormons had been transformed from a rural to a highly urbanized people, and many had become upwardly mobile economically, socially, and politically. In national corporations, in many cities and states, in universities, in professional firms, in research centers, and in government, Mormons have become a minority group widely recognized for their achievements. This project takes seriously the need for scholars to look at the broader Mormon society in addition to studying the institutional church. That growing society deserves to have its history told. The Mormon Outmigration Leadership History Project hopes to stimulate the writing of what the late Dean May called "the history of the Mormon people."

Thus, it might well be asked, what are the implications of the outmigration for the interpretation and writing of twentieth-century LDS history? The following are three concepts suggested by the interviews and collateral materials we have collected from twenty cities: First, these materials enlarge the resources for the study of Mormon history outside of the Mormon Corridor. Similar to the way histories have been written about Saints living far from Nauvoo during the early 1840s, so too this project aims to increase our understanding of the Latter-day Saint experience in the twentieth century beyond the Wasatch Front. Second, this research tracks the shift in Latter-day Saint culture from a rural, isolated setting to becoming a nationally and internationally oriented people. During the twentieth century, the Church became multinational and multilingual. Third, this study provides insight into the general process of assimilation of Latter-day Saints into the larger society rather than standing apart from surrounding society, as was typically the case during the nineteenth

century. How Mormons moved toward the mainstream of American society and yet maintained a sense of uniqueness could be the touchstone for understanding how LDS society was reshaped during the course of the twentieth century.

Looking ahead, one might also add that the twentieth-century outmigration prepared many Mormons to become part of yet another movement, the migration of expatriates overseas. Many businesses, law and accounting firms, government offices, military services, and Church divisions have recruited Mormons for overseas assignments, often because of their language capabilities. In many places Mormons, although small in number, have become important players on the international scene. Some, after winning a promotion to New York or San Francisco, decided to continue upward by going to London or Hong Kong. It is fair to say that some talented Mormons have become globetrotters and have carried the outmigration one step further. How all of these migrations and transformations have influenced Mormon society remains a vast field of study in order to capture the history of these people before it is too late.

The perspective of the outmigration can also serve as a platform for understanding how the Latter-day Saints are expanding into an international church. Elder Henry B. Eyring of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles summarized well the experience of outmigrants when he told us, “You know, the outmigration is the story of my entire family. . . . Behind all of this individual activity, I think I perceive the invisible hand of the Lord, to help spread our people across the land.”⁴²

Finally, in order to convey a concrete feeling of what happened during the great outmigration, we present below three case studies—each from the Outmigration Project Archive—representing three different geographical areas. These biographies typify the experiences of numerous people. These examples were chosen because they show how outmigrants, starting with nothing or very little, could in time become important leaders in their careers, in their Church callings, and in their communities. Like many others, these three persons had somewhat similar backgrounds—growing up in rural areas or in urban semi-poverty in the midst of loving families. The two men in our example of case studies possessed a desire to leave their humble circumstances in their native Utah and Idaho, to move far away and better themselves. The one woman in our example had to struggle both before and after her first marriage, and yet succeeded against formidable odds. These vignettes demonstrate that one can find as much inspiration in these twentieth-century urban struggles as one finds in the

42. Henry B. Eyring, interview with the authors, March 2002.

lives of nineteenth-century pioneers. The circumstances and times were different, but faith and courage are still the primary requisites for success.

WILLIAM F. EDWARDS MOVES TO WALL STREET

Bill Edwards was born in 1906 in Emery, Utah, after his father had died of pneumonia. Edwards later recalled, “The night my father died the sheriff came in and informed my mother that my father’s business had gone bankrupt.” In fact, his father’s creditors arrived the very night of his passing and took over the assets of the business. Bill’s mother, Rodellia, soon moved to Richfield to live with a half-sister and took a non-paying position with a millinery shop in order to learn the business; later, with these new skills in hand, she bought a shop in Gunnison and moved her small family there for the next nine years and later moved to Rigby, Idaho. “Mother was able to build a store; we lived in the back and upstairs,” Bill said.

Bill grew up attending local schools and later worked part time in a drug store. After becoming disenchanted with his surroundings as a teenager, he had an epiphany that changed his life. Even though no member of his family had ever attended college, he recalls, “I was inspired with the thought that I had to leave Rigby, and I was supposed to go to BYU. This was a manifestation to me from the Lord as real as anything that’s ever happened in my life.”

By the fall of 1924 Edwards earned \$135 to pay for tuition and books at BYU. Upon arrival in Provo, he found his new roommate without money as his family’s sugar beet crop had not yet been harvested. So Bill lent him enough to get started in school. Bill’s folks promised to send him \$10 a month, but after Christmas that income ceased, leaving him on his own. Living in poverty, Bill worked on the weekends and was paid in food, and he used broken boxes found on the street for fires. “I learned how to master living on oatmeal,” he recalls. “In the morning I would cook it as a cereal . . . then for lunch I would fry it. Then for supper I’d stir it up and bake it. It would be a rather hard biscuit to eat with water, but I got along beautifully.” After getting



William F. Edwards

a job at the Hotel Roberts, Bill's financial situation eased. "That was the beginning of the end of my struggles at BYU. . . . During the next two school years, I worked at the hotel from about six to seven in the evening until after midnight. I had to wash walls; I can tell you everything about the sixty-nine rooms in that hotel!" Still, that job didn't pay enough, and to supplement his income, he stoked the furnaces at the hospital several times a day.

In school Edwards had decided to major in accounting and finance. "I wanted to be in the world of business," he later recalled. He had a chance to work with two outstanding professors in his area: Harrison V. Hoyt and Herald R. Clark. Bill joined the Alpha Delta Commerce fraternity and became a member of the student body council. For both his junior and senior years, he was elected class president. In his senior year (1927–28), his elected vice president was Catherine Eyring, whom he began dating after she asked him out in spring of that year. "It was a lovely evening," Edwards recalled. He never dated anyone afterward, and the couple married the following year.

Upon graduation, Bill received an offer to become the manager of a hotel near the Grand Canyon. He says, "I tentatively was considering that until the concept of going to New York dominated [my thinking] in the spring quarter of 1928. . . . I could go to New York, register at the New York University Graduate School of Business, and I would be able to find work, then in two years get my master's degree." The classes were also held several blocks from Wall Street, which is why many students preferred jobs in that area. He knew several other former students who had done this: "A number of us became aware . . . and there were a number of us that went back at the same time."

In New York, Bill immediately found an apartment in Greenwich Village and obtained employment as a cost accountant with Criterion Advertising, and after Christmas 1928, he was hired by Central Hanover Bank near Wall Street. Everything seemed to be fitting nicely into place. His classes at NYU were practically next door, and he could grab a bite to eat at the Automat: "I specialized in a bowl of beans I could buy for five cents and smother it with ketchup that didn't cost anything. That took care of me until I got home, which was after 9:30."

Meanwhile, he was courting his fiancée through correspondence and planning for their wedding, which took place in the summer of 1929. After Catherine arrived in the city, Bill had to keep the same schedule: leave for work at 7:30 a.m. and attend night classes until 9:30 p.m. "How she survived during this period and with babies as they came (all six were born during our time in New York) I am still amazed." Bill had little time for

any social life beyond church meetings: “We never socialized with non-LDS. I didn’t socialize with the people I worked with. I was friendly, but our social life was built around the Church membership.” Asked if he were active in the community, even in politics, Bill laughed and said, “We had no motivation to be active in Tammany Hall.” He reflected further on the Church in New York:

When you have a group of people like we were, with our relatives all out west, and we back in New York, you build your family around your church group. The babies come, and you know everybody’s children, you know every child by name in the ward. And you feel close and intimate to each one. Each one is interested in the welfare of the other person. And remember, you do not have your relatives around. You don’t have uncles and aunts and grandpas and grandmas. All of that intimate relationship of life becomes centered around your church group. And therefore we would feel quite like a family.

After two years, the Edwards family began to think of New York City as their permanent home, unlike many of their friends, who looked at it as a temporary experience. After completing his master’s degree, Bill contemplated working full time, but Catherine, coming from a family of able educators, encouraged him to enroll in the doctoral program at NYU, which he did, graduating in 1937. He also moved his family from the city to Long Island, following a path taken by most Mormon couples to locate in the suburbs, especially when they had children.

Meanwhile, the Church was reorganizing. President Heber J. Grant created the New York Stake in 1934, splitting the region off from the Eastern States Mission. The stake was the first of the twentieth century to be organized east of the Mississippi River. As part of the creation, a new ward in Queens was organized with Ernest Wilkinson as bishop, and Wilkinson called Edwards to serve as a counselor in the bishopric. Edwards recalled the responsibility he felt as a representative both inside and outside of the Church: “I always felt they expected more from me because I was a member of the Church. I think that all those fine people who remained active felt that we were the image of the Church, and we had to represent it favorably.”

In 1935 Edwards obtained a position with Goldman Sachs. He was in an enviable situation, since the company helped him compile much of the research data required for his doctoral dissertation on the transportation industry. In 1938 he left Goldman Sachs to join a partnership with several men who had also worked there to found a new firm. Edwards was put in charge of market forecasting and analyzing potential investments, which became his forte. By 1941 his reputation was such that he was invited to

speak before the prestigious New York Society of Security Analysts. His talk was “extremely well received,” and he was invited again to address this influential group many times. A leading publication of the time, *The Commercial and Financial Chronicle*, asked to print every talk he gave. He soon was invited to give similar addresses in Boston and Chicago and to other banking groups in New York.

Following in the footsteps of Harvey Fletcher, Edwards was called to become stake president in New York and had become vice president and portfolio manager of a large group of mutual funds. Only in his early forties, Edwards recalled a turning point in his career: “I commenced to have a feeling develop, which controlled the rest of my life. I felt a very strong feeling that I didn’t get the satisfaction that one would want, just earning good money. . . . By 1950, when I was 44, I had just reached the top of my profession. There was no better job in New York for an investment man than I had. I became quite convinced that working for money alone didn’t achieve my goal.” Edwards was interested in service, and he toyed with seeking a teaching position at NYU, which meant he could also continue working as a consultant. “The Lord would not have protected and blessed me so much unless he had something important for me to do,” he recalls.

In 1949 he was consulted by Church General Authorities about the upcoming vacancy in the presidency of BYU. He urged them to consider his longtime friend Ernest Wilkinson, who by now had moved to Washington, D.C. Then, “when he was asked to be president, within two days he was in my office in October 1950 and asked me if I would come to BYU with him as dean of the business college. I felt that I could be a great help to him. I have quite a different way of working with people than President Wilkinson had, and I felt I could help him succeed.” It meant taking a pay cut of 85 percent over his New York salary, but Edwards “prayerfully pondered this for only a few hours” and decided that going to BYU was the answer to his new goal of dedicating his life to be of service to others. He affirmed, “My sweet wife supported me” in this radical change of career and lifestyle.

Edwards became a right-hand man for Wilkinson for several years, not only as dean of the business school, but also as an informal assistant to the president. Several years later, Wilkinson made Edwards a vice president of the university. But the residency of such a well-qualified financial expert soon attracted the eye of President David O. McKay, who asked Edwards in 1955 to come to Salt Lake to advise the First Presidency on financial matters. By 1957 this became a call to move to Salt Lake and work as secretary of finance to the First Presidency. Edwards did this for a while and then worked for First Security for ten years. He returned to BYU for

several years to occupy one of the school's first endowed chairs until his retirement.

Reflecting on the significance of his New York adventure, Edwards recalled:

The New York stay was a tremendous experience for me, from the point of view of my academic training, in terms of developing my spirituality. I don't know if I could have made such progress in the West. I may never have had the opportunities I had back there. We had golden opportunities. Living out in the mission field was a great blessing to our family—it held us together. Every Saturday, every Sunday was a family day. So New York had a great impact on us, and it helped me prepare so that we could come back West.

ROY OSCARSON SELLS SHOES IN ST. LOUIS

Roy Oscarson, the son of Swedish immigrants, grew up in Pleasant Grove, Utah, on his family's fruit and berry orchard. He recalled, "We had all the necessities of life. We lived off what we raised and the fruits. We drove into Salt Lake and sold our produce on the growers' market there." He remembered fondly going to this open air market in a team and wagon, stopping off in Sandy for the night, rising early to get their stand set up. He continued, "We also had cows to herd and milk and weeds to pull and trees to prune. We were very busy with chores. . . . I suppose the greatest heritage we had was the example and experience of industry that was in my father and my mother, who worked from dawn to dusk and even after."

Oscarson graduated from high school and then worked at the Bingham Copper Mine before being called to the Swedish Mission. He was pleased to serve in the land where his father was converted. Roy's mission created an interest in Sweden, its people, and its culture that lasted a lifetime. Upon returning from Europe, Roy found Utah in the midst of the Great Depression. Instead of preparing to go to college, he scrambled to find a job. A former mission companion alerted him to a position in Salt Lake selling shoes at Christensen's for \$10 a week—a hinge upon which the rest of his life swung.

With his meager earnings in hand, Roy married Vera Brown, his high school sweetheart, in the Salt Lake Temple. He and a friend set up their own shoe business, but a



Roy Oscarson

lack of capital proved to be fatal in an economic climate that was growing worse. Roy was left with a family to provide for, debt from a failed business, and no job. A new Baker shoe store had just opened in Salt Lake, and Roy found work there on commission as an extra salesman. He earned a 5 percent commission on every pair of shoes he sold, with the typical price being \$3; with hard work, he was able again earn \$10 a week working part time. Then a regional manager told him that a full-time job was opening up in the Seattle store in August of 1932 for \$18 a week. That sounded good to Roy, although he would have to pay his own expenses to get to Seattle. So he hitchhiked to Seattle and arranged for Vera and the baby to come later when he had saved enough to pay for their trip. Although he had found employment, Roy's debts still took seven years to pay off. They would have preferred to stay in Utah, Roy recalled, but the economy "was disastrous, so while we didn't want to leave, we left because of the necessity of survival."

The Oscarsons found Seattle at first to be "gloomy and depressing . . . but we learned to love the area. . . . We got used to the rain." They made contact with the Church in Seattle, which at that time consisted of a small branch with around 100 members. "I was asked to serve on the district council, and I traveled around that area all the way from Grace Harbor to Vancouver, British Columbia. They were small, tiny branches. That's what it was like in 1932."

The Oscarsons spent seven years in the Northwest. Roy was transferred from Seattle to Spokane three years after his arrival in Washington. He later spent time working in Portland, Oregon; Seattle again; then he was moved to Tacoma, Washington, where he had been hired as the manager of a Chandler shoe store. He received a promotion to be the regional manager over the Los Angeles area. With the passage of time, however, he put this period of travail into a larger perspective: "Going to Seattle was probably the best thing that happened to us. We got launched into a company that was fast growing and promoted from within, with continuous advancement. Eleven years after going to Seattle, I was brought into St. Louis as general sales manager of the entire company."

Although he had visited St. Louis many times on business, moving there was quite a contrast to living in the Pacific coastal cities. St. Louis had formidable challenges, including pollution and poverty. In 1943 people were still burning soft coal, which left the city coated with soot. Air conditioning was not on the scene yet, which left the city "very uncomfortably warm and humid" in the summers. Furthermore, as Roy recalls, "There had not been a new building built in downtown St. Louis for sixty years. It was really the pits; that's what it was. The town was surrounded by slum

areas, with open outhouses in the back: very, very ugly. The city had gone downhill. . . . As [residents] expanded into the suburbs, they sort of abandoned downtown.”

Oscarson arrived not knowing anybody in St. Louis other than his colleagues in the company. But Irving Edison, president and one of the five Edison brothers, founders of the company, made him feel very much at home: “I recall that on the evening I got here, the thirteenth of August, 1943, that Irving and his wife invited me to have dinner with them at the hotel.” Roy was curious to know why the brothers had bypassed older and more-experienced regional managers, some twenty of them, to offer him the position. Irving Edison hesitated to reply, and Roy worried that he had made a major gaffe. Finally the response came: other candidates had more experience, some with outstanding skills, but the brothers were looking for someone who could represent the company in every state of the Union: “We felt we had to have someone with that something extra. I don’t know quite how to define it. I think we’d call it a spiritual quality that you have.”

The LDS community consisted of about 500 members in the metropolitan region—the main branch was on Maple Avenue with two satellite Sunday Schools in East St. Louis and Belleville. But the total attendance at meetings was only about 80 or 90 people. When Roy first walked into the Maple Avenue chapel, a third of the plaster had fallen off the ceiling. “As you sat on the benches, you would get slivers in the calves of your legs. And there was a smell there. Every time it rained, the sewer would back up. Many times before services, my two boys, Dick and Don, would help me hose down the basement to get that smell out of there.” The building had been purchased in 1916, when it already was an old structure.

After being called as branch president, Oscarson decided that the time had come to relocate. He persuaded the members to help fix up the building, to replaster the ceiling, put in new window frames, sand the wood floors, and install new pews. The net result created an attractive building, which the Church was able to sell for \$16,000—the seed money for a building fund. At this point the members rented the Hamilton schoolhouse for two years while building the new chapel. His leadership and vision were valuable to the membership there. He later recalled, “There was a dearth of experienced leadership. . . . I suppose we brought a sense of confidence and assurance to the people that they very much wanted and needed.” The goal of obtaining a new church building “was a unifying force.”

Oscarson created an innovative campaign to raise funds. They bought and resold wooden pencils. The women were taught how to put on bazaars, which proved to be successful. But he determined the cornerstone of

success would come only after several well-off families made strong commitments to give to the fund. Roy got three other priesthood members together and challenged them to ante up: “The best way we’re going to raise money is take it out of our pockets. I will give a thousand dollars if you will.”

Roy was further motivated by the fact that several businesses with LDS executives had visited and thought of relocating in St. Louis, but once they looked at the miserable Maple Avenue chapel, they changed their minds. One executive from Idaho told Roy, “We can’t raise our family in this situation.” Once the new Jamieson chapel was dedicated, the situation radically improved. “It was an insurance that people moving here with family had some identification. It became a big thing, because afterwards, we began to get substantial families to come in here—people who had the same kind of dedication, ability, and confidence.”

As the members collected funds for the new structure, his boss Irving asked how the appeal was going. Roy told him, “We’re down to needing only \$6,000,” at which point Irving pulled out his checkbook and wrote out check for \$600: “I’ll pay my tithing on it,” he said. In later years when Roy was heading up the campaign to build the new stake center, Irving and his brothers contributed \$2,500. “They were that kind of people—very generous, thoughtful, and highly principled.”

Irving Edison later introduced Roy to the chief rabbi of the local Temple Beth Israel. “He used to call me number one Mormon for many years,” Roy recalled. He once was in Irving’s office when the rabbi was soliciting funds; Irving said, “By the way, rabbi, the Mormons raise their money by tithing.” “Well, yes,” acknowledged the rabbi, “but you know, we are the ones who started it.” To which Irving quipped, “Yes, but they made it work.”

Financially, LDS Church headquarters agreed to build a \$100,000 chapel with the local members being asked to contribute 20 percent. So, Oscarson flew to Salt Lake City to meet with Edward Anderson, who grouched, “I don’t think a \$100,000 chapel is worthy of a city like St. Louis.” Roy was stunned. “No,” continued Anderson, “You need something better than that!” Anderson recommended an American Colonial style building more elaborate than the one Oscarson envisioned. But this would cost more, and in the meantime, the Church headquarters changed its share of the construction cost from 80 percent to 70 percent.

Oscarson returned to Salt Lake to meet with the presiding bishop, LeGrand Richards. Oscarson told Bishop Richards that he didn’t have the heart and courage to go back and tell the members about the increased costs, to which Richards replied, “Brother Oscarson, this is not your

church, it's the Lord's church. If you don't have the heart and courage to ask the people, we'll just have to wait until someone does.' I had my hide tanned," Oscarson recalled. To solve the problem, however, Richards took Oscarson to meet George Albert Smith and J. Reuben Clark. After hearing his plight, President Smith said, "Go home. We'll make good on the \$100,000 at eighty/twenty, and you raise the balance." The handsome new Jamieson chapel was built at a total cost of \$175,000 and was dedicated by President George Albert Smith on September 4, 1949. Historian Stanley Kimball noted, "At the time this church was considered to be the finest LDS edifice between Salt Lake City and the nation's capital."

In 1958, Oscarson became the president of the new St. Louis Stake that was created by Elders Harold B. Lee and Mark E. Petersen. The stake consisted of six wards and branches, an impressive growth since the days at the Maple Chapel just fifteen years before. During Oscarson's eleven-year service as president (being released in 1969), the stake added another eight units. One of the reasons was the continuing growth of the economy in St. Louis, increased educational opportunities, and employment in the military.

Not only was the outlook improving for the Church in St. Louis, but a postwar revitalization effort to transform the old downtown got under way, and Roy Oscarson played a leading role. With flight to the suburbs, something needed to be done: "The fight here, which I remember vividly, was whether downtown St. Louis was to progress or decay," Roy noted. "We passed a smoke ordinance, cleaned up the waterfront, and had a competition for building a new monument, which resulted in the arch being built. Once that happened, private capital got interested, and the slums were cleared out. For the general downtown area, it was a whole new world." Roy believed that as these reforms were made, the general attitude of the populace improved, "and as a result, our feeling for the city has changed. . . . We like it here; seems like home to us."

Roy and the Edison brothers agreed to keep their home office downtown and by the late 1980s had built a new \$50 million building. Roy had become active in the Chamber of Commerce as Chairman of the Capital Funds Review Board, which screened all charitable appeals and drives in St. Louis. He was in demand as a public speaker and was very pleased (as a person who had never attended college) to be asked to give lectures at the Washington University Business School and a commencement address at BYU. In addition, Roy was tapped to become Honorary Consul for Sweden for twelve years and was awarded knighthood by the Swedish government. Looking back on these years, he summed up his outmigration experience this way: "Because of my family and others who have come along, working in the schools and universities, the whole attitude towards the

Church has changed. There is much greater tolerance and acceptance by the community.”

LA DORNA EICHENBERG FINDS SUCCESS IN LOS ANGELES

Some people taste the joy of success only later in life after a series of struggles. Such is the story of La Dorna Eichenberg, born to Lloyd Anthon Larson of Gunnison, and Dora Isabela Hicken of Heber, Utah. Her father, who had worked a few years for ZCMI-owned properties, decided to seek greener pastures in southern California and so moved his small family to Highland Park. So, as a young girl, La Dorna was packed into the back seat of an open roadster to move with her parents from Utah to California with a big collie to help keep her warm. “There were no motels in those days, so at night we slept in the car,” La Dorna recalled.

After a short stay in Mexico—which included living in a tent and learning to brandish a pistol—they moved to Los Angeles, where La Dorna’s Grandfather Larson had found a home for them. La Dorna began to gain an interest in the visual arts and received her first commission in grammar school when a classmate paid her a nickel for a picture of a princess. “It was a big thing,” she recalls. Meanwhile, the family located in Temple City and attended church in Alhambra.

During the Depression her mother fed those who came to her door, but in fact most immigrants pouring into California bypassed their city. Almost all of the men on her street worked for the WPA except her father, who was still employed by the Harbor Fish Company. “I didn’t realize we were poor, but we were. I vaguely remember his salary—it was about \$140 a month. Even then that wasn’t very good.” Her father even soldered the pieces of two old bikes together into one for her.

“There wasn’t any extra money. I had no allowance. I was supposed to ask if I needed something, but I never asked.



La Dorna Eichenberg as a small girl with her mother, Dora Isabela.

That's why I went to work in the dime store." She learned lessons about the treatment of employees during this time. She worked in the men's department where she was required to straighten all the shelves after closing time and without pay. Since La Dorna's mother was ill a great deal while she was growing up, earning money was always a necessity to help maintain the household.

La Dorna attended Alhambra High because of its superior art program. After high school she attended Pasadena Junior College, where in 1941 she won a competition and was selected to participate in the Rose Bowl parade atop a float, to attend the ball, and was given tickets to the game on the fifty-yard line. It was an exciting time, but after looking forward to these events she was crushed by the advent of the war when most of these activities were cancelled—a great disappointment for La Dorna and a sad time as she watched men go off to war.

After junior college, she enrolled at the Chouinard Art Institute. She was particularly attracted to the study of fashion illustration. "We had to take figure drawing every day. If you can draw a figure you can draw just about anything." Her main teacher was Hardy Gramatky from New York, a well-known illustrator who had been part of the commercial art colony in southern Connecticut; he had been brought to California to design posters for the war effort. Hardy had previously served on Walt Disney's original art staff and went on to specialize in illustrations for men's magazines. He believed in La Dorna's talent and encouraged her to come to New York after the war was over.

Meanwhile, La Dorna did her bit to help the war effort. She was recruited to draw portraits of servicemen who were hospitalized, to send back to their families. Many of them were seriously injured, in casts, in traction, and maimed. "I was very flattered. I was so pleased to be seeing these guys. But this was one of the saddest things I've ever done even though they were so happy with the drawings. They'd say, 'You made me look better, my girlfriend will like this.' It was so sad—I wished I could have done something more to help them." When the war ended and La Dorna graduated from her three-year program at Chouinard, she decided to accept Hardy Gramatky's invitation to New York. In fact she went to Westport and stayed with him and his wife, an illustrator of children's books, until La Dorna could find a place in New York.

La Dorna had an unusual experience in New York because Hardy introduced her to many of his artistic colleagues in the city who welcomed her visits to their studios. She was also taken to dine at a place known as the illustrator's club, of which Norman Rockwell was a member, where she met many of the top fashion models and got a good overview of the entire

New York commercial art scene. “It was an exciting thing for a young girl. Hardy was very good to me and thought I was going to make it.” To earn enough to live she became a model herself for \$25 an hour, when ordinary illustrators were paid \$2.10 an hour. “They were very nice to me. I can tell people now that I posed for *Cosmopolitan* magazine—at that time, it was a nice, sweet lady’s magazine, like the *Ladies Home Journal*.” The warm reception she found extended beyond the artists and into the streets of New York. “People said they were so unfriendly in New York,” she says, “but I would go into a place and young people would say, ‘Hi, California!’ I was blonde when I was young and very tan.”

La Dorna was active in the Church in New York. She recalls, “I had a very adventurous time in New York. The church was in a wonderful old building. There was only one ward in Manhattan, and it was mainly for young people who came to the city to have a career. They were all so talented and so much fun. . . . I lived in the East End Women’s Hotel, in a ten-by-fifteen-foot room with two twin beds, but no desk for me to draw. . . . I would put my stuff on the floor . . . and draw . . . on my hands and knees. That’s how I did my samples.”

She went home for Christmas and intended to return to New York, but instead married Robert Perine, who had courted her for the past five years. Although her husband was a successful artist, her art career was put on hold. They moved to Emerald Bay, where she enjoyed being near the beach and ocean. When they got married, Bob was not a member of the Church, but two years later he joined. These were happy years for the young family that came to include three daughters. But the marriage ended soon after the girls were out of high school.

By this time, La Dorna knew she would have to earn a living. Two of her daughters were living away from home pursuing careers, so she decided to go back to school to get her credentials as an art teacher. For this purpose, both she and her youngest daughter, Terri, enrolled at BYU. Terri had always been an outstanding student, an athlete, and an artist as well. La Dorna was proud of her and her other two daughters and was delighted to be studying with Terri at BYU. However, while Terri was on a BYU study tour in Spain, she was stricken by a lethal form of cancer (Ewing Sarcoma) and came home. She passed away the next year.

La Dorna had already suffered with the divorce, but when “they told me my daughter had seventeen months to live, I think that was the worst time of my life.” Along with these two terrible blows in a short time, La Dorna had a number of other things occur to hurt her. “I was angry. Everything negative was happening to me. I stopped going to church. I was mad at the priesthood for the way they treated me after my divorce—no

one ever visited me or my daughters for counseling. . . . Then I realized the reason I wasn't getting through to God was because I wasn't behaving well. . . . I finally straightened it out, and I was okay."

At this point, La Dorna had been single for five years. After graduating from BYU, she decided to go back to California and start looking for a job. She got a job as a fashion illustrator for Nash's and Buffum's department stores. But this employment was seasonal, so she sent out her resumes in search of a teaching position. "Nobody would see me. . . . When they realized I was fifty, they wouldn't even look at me. . . . Finally an old bishop who was in education got me a job as a home school teacher. I worked a year then I was hired by the school district, with his influence." In this capacity, she traveled to different elementary schools, carrying her supplies, and taught art five days a week. But she wanted to be teaching her own art class.

During this time she decided to take a class in writing where she met Bob Eichenberg, a former pilot, who had become an aide to a California state senator. "I had decided to never marry again. . . . I didn't even care if I went out with him or not. He did not feel the same way. He was wonderful. He was a very nice person. I dated him once, then found out that he was separated from his wife and they were getting a divorce. . . . So I said, 'I'm sorry, but no more dates.' . . . About six months later he showed up at my door with a certificate." And Bob had been baptized.

La Dorna and Bob were married, but La Dorna did not want to hold a reception. "We had nothing," she says. "Then a dear thing happened. I had a lot of friends in Corona del Mar—many of them were well off, beautiful women—they put on a reception for me. They brought in huge azalea plants to decorate. They brought wonderful food, such as crabmeat in little shells. And we didn't finish until ten o'clock at night."

A major turning point in her life occurred while visiting the school district's media center one day. Preparing for her round robin visits, she noticed a woman with bleeding fingers and a large bump on her hand—evidence of excessive scissoring. She had just cut out two hundred paper shamrocks and said, "I only have two hundred to go." La Dorna was shocked by this scene and recognized a need for a better method of creating visual aids for the classrooms she visited. When she returned home she was still thinking about this experience and described the incident to Bob. "If you take a cookie cutter and put a top on it, and put it under something like a paper cutter and pull down, and it cuts things out—why wouldn't that work? Bob agreed, 'Yes, we ought to do that for those teachers someday—when we have a little more time.' Well, we suddenly had more time, since . . . Bob's job with the state senator was phased out, and then he had

to have heart surgery and was forced to retire . . . and I was laid off because we got a new superintendent who cut all the music and art people out except for the band.” This was a crisis for them. They were both in their fifties, and although La Dorna had faced many obstacles in her life, how were they going to meet this challenge?

“We decided we’d better do that machine, if not for the teachers, for us.” They formed a company and developed their ideas for an invention that could be marketed to school teachers, with La Dorna designing and Bob implementing. Between them, they scraped up \$12,000 from their savings, borrowed \$6,000 from an aunt, and cashed in some bonds La Dorna had purchased when she was single. Bob worked with craftsmen and engineers to figure out how to build the machine they had in mind. “One man who built parts for cars let Bob use his machine shop for free. Ted made many suggestions. For his help, he got a lemon pie, since we didn’t have any money.”

“It was rough. Bob couldn’t get a job, but I was eventually recalled to teach junior high.” With this meager capitalization, they set out to produce their invention. But how could they market it? La Dorna heard about school district conferences where vendors could exhibit their wares. With no experience, she drove one hundred miles to her first conference and stayed at a Motel 6 (“that’s when they really were six dollars a night”). She found this experience difficult since she had to carry and set up heavy machines to demonstrate. “We had a table at first since we couldn’t afford a booth. We showed how it worked. I had to be a showman, but I’m the world’s worst salesman. However, when I put the die in the machine with five pieces of paper, pulled down the handle and five “Rs” came out, they would say, ‘I’ve got to have this!’ Then they would run and get their principal, or whoever could buy it for them.”

La Dorna attracted attention for these demonstrations with a large cartoon poster she had drawn, showing a lady holding a huge pair of scissors captioned: “Are you tired of cutting out letters?” This was put behind the demonstration table to catch the eye of passersby. However, the most important draw was the fact that she demonstrated the machine. No one stopped to inquire about the machine until they saw it at work.

The original machine sold for \$300; a starter set of upper- and lower-case letters cost an additional \$695. “The dies were extremely expensive to make, but many orders came in at more than a couple of thousand dollars.” About this time, Bob lost a part time job, and he too, started exhibiting the machines at schools and conferences. During their first year of business, they sold a total of 12 machines. “We couldn’t live on that income! We were barely making it.” But the next year, things picked up, and they sold 120

machines, and the following year almost 400. From then on, they averaged about a 50 percent growth each year.

La Dorna decided not to advertise. She believed that word of mouth and demonstrations would continue to sell the machine, but finally she was talked into an expensive ad in a national magazine. "It drew 2,000 letters, which was very good, but I hadn't listed the price. When I wrote back and told the price, we didn't sell a single machine."



Bob and La Dorna Eichenberg

Bob and La Dorna considered hiring salesmen but decided they would still do better by demonstrating the machine. So their lives became a great whirl, doing as many as 140 shows per year. They finally decided to hire teachers who knew how to demonstrate the machines and could get away from teaching for a few days. This turned out to be very enticing for these teachers: "They get to stay in a nice hotel for a few days. They like the people. They like doing it. They like the machine. They're proud of it. The same ones are still doing it. They don't quit." The business expanded both in the United States and outside as international salespeople were hired to sell the paper-cutting machines.

As for production, it was a slow move upward. "Bob was really good at producing the [early] machines. He found sources and somebody to build the parts. We had a little apartment over in Baywood where we would make and paint [the machines] on the patio . . . and store them under our bed. Our next space we got was 400 square feet. We were so proud of that. We grew fifty percent a year. We moved about six times in twelve years." They were finally able to afford a new center with over 130,000 square feet. Today, that is supplemented by six other production centers.

As entrepreneurs, they realized they could market smaller and less expensive machines to be used in the expanding scrapbooking market, and Sizzix was developed. "We had to have those made in China, which was not something I really wanted to do, but that's the only way we could do it. It's gone like mad," La Dorna says. Besides being pirated, the machines were copied and the Eichenbergs have paid high legal fees in litigation. In one instance, they had to spend more than \$450,000 in order to retrieve 50 machines. Patent problems presented another challenge.

As time went by, La Dorna recognized that advertising would bring greater growth. Word of mouth and demonstrations had been successful,

“but now everybody knows us. It’s wonderful that we have a really good reputation. That’s why the people came to us.” With advertising and growth came a larger product line, especially moving into the market for scrapbook enthusiasts. The company has also branched out into soft-cover handbooks to go with the products. One book on math for elementary school has been very successful. They are looking for ways to improve education and aid teachers in their classrooms.

Today, the company is run by Lisa, La Dorna’s daughter, who is also an artist. Although Lisa had no previous training in running a business, she has been successful in this position. Lisa’s husband works as the head of producing the machines. The company is mainly mail- and telephone-order oriented, but La Dorna observes that the women who answer the phones have to be good, since “today, we have thousands of articles the public can buy. We have thousands of different dies, thousands of numbers, and more than a dozen alphabet styles. . . . If you went to our plant, you’d be absolutely amazed . . . to see three stories up, the dies line the walls all the way up. . . . It is miraculous that Bob and I got into this. We had no business experience. We hardly had any money. And our employees are absolutely wonderful. They don’t cheat. They don’t steal. Most of them are not LDS but we gave them all a day off to visit the new San Diego Temple.”

La Dorna explained that during her life, going back to those early days at the dime store and when she was a fashion illustrator, she had been mistreated as an employee. “When Bob and I started the company, we agreed that we would never treat our employees unfairly. We pay higher rates and furnish a pension plan. We pay for all of that. We give bonuses at the end of the year, and some people make as much as \$10,000. We also have both a health and dental plan.”

La Dorna has lectured at conferences on how to become an entrepreneur, where the audiences listen closely to find out how this remarkable, yet unlikely couple, have prospered here and in the international market. Not only have their machines saved time for thousands of teachers, but they have given teachers possibilities of creative new ways to improve their teaching. Besides these benefits, the Eichenbergs have provided a pleasant workplace for employees now numbering over two hundred. Furthermore, the Eichenbergs have become generous philanthropists for many causes, including strong support for the Church and BYU’s programs.

La Dorna’s life has shown how Mormon culture has been of special relevance in her personal and business life. Although she was disappointed and hurt by church authorities during her divorce, she returned with a strong testimony of what her responsibilities were. Subsequently, she was

supported, encouraged, and benefited from the influence of other church leaders, and has given back the kind of support she received. She has enriched the lives of many people and in turn has been enriched.

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We invite further research of the LDS outmigration via the Latter-day Saint Outmigration Archive, which is anticipated to be ready by 2009 and housed in the L. Tom Perry Special Collections at Brigham Young University.

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