

Dennis B. Horne, with material prepared in 1890 by Orson F. Whitney. *Latter Leaves in the Life of Lorenzo Snow*. Springville, Utah: Cedar Fort, 2012.

*Reviewed by William G. Hartley*

In this important study, Dennis B. Horne provides a biographical treatment of Lorenzo Snow's nine years as President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and his three years as President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Horne is no stranger to writing about Church history. He has authored a book about the life and teachings of Bruce R. McConkie, an edition of Abraham H. Cannon's journals, as well as a devotional and anecdotal history entitled *Faith to Heal and Be Healed*. He has also worked in television broadcasting and as a technical writer for the Church's Materials Management Department.

Lorenzo Snow's life is certainly long overdue for an in-depth analysis. Born in Mantua, Ohio, on April 3, 1814, Lorenzo Snow embraced Mormonism in 1836, filled several missions, entered into plural marriage in 1845, emigrated to Utah in 1848, and was ordained an Apostle in February 1849. From 1849 to 1852, he served missions in Italy, Switzerland, and England. In 1853, he began serving as the church and community leader in Brigham City, Utah, a duty he held many years. He toured Europe and the Middle East from 1872 to 1873. In 1886 and 1887, he was imprisoned for practicing plural marriage. He became the President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in 1889, served as the first president of the Salt Lake Temple, and succeeded Wilford Woodruff as Church President in the fall of 1898. During travels to St. George, Utah, in early 1899, he received inspiration to promote the paying of tithes by the Saints. On October 10, 1901, he died at age eighty-seven. In short, his life intersected with nearly every major development in nineteenth-century Church history. Historians and lay readers alike should find this study to be of great value.

Previous work about Lorenzo Snow is limited. In 1884, five years before he became President of the Twelve, his sister Eliza R. Snow published *Biography and Family Record of Lorenzo Snow*. Five years later, Elder Snow, upon release from prison, employed close friend and noted historian Orson F. Whitney to write a biographical sequel to the Eliza Snow book, extending to when Lorenzo became President of the Quorum of Twelve. From 1889 to 1890, Whitney took up pen and ink and wrote a manuscript, “Later Leaves in the Life of Lorenzo Snow.” Years later, Snow’s teenage grandson LeRoi C. Snow typed the Whitney manuscript. The complete manuscript remains unpublished.

Previous biographies of Snow are by Thomas C. Romney, who treats Snow’s presiding years in a limited measure, and by Francis M. Gibbons, whose work lacks references to any sources and has no bibliography. Part of the difficulty is that there is less source material about Lorenzo Snow than any other LDS prophet (14). Family tradition says that a Snow descendant burned a trunk-load of his papers, diaries, and correspondence. Therefore, for Snow’s presidency years, Horne found that the best available sources are journals of Snow’s close associates, newspaper reports, and the *Journal History of the Church*.

Horne’s book is the most definitive work on the leader and prophet who brought the Mormon faith into the twentieth century. In particular, Horne’s book examines Snow’s twelve presiding years in greater detail than any previous study. He first provides Orson Whitney’s material that covers from 1885 to 1889, comprising nine chapters of the book; Horne adds a few endnotes that comment or clarify. He uses about one-third of the Whitney manuscript, excluding material copied from others and excising long discussions about the antipolygamy crusade, which, Horne explains, the Manifesto made superfluous (14). Horne then takes up where Whitney left off and provides a thorough biographical treatment of Snow’s presiding years. Those years involved difficult issues and situations: disunity among some of the Twelve; succession in the Presidency; the Manifesto; Church sugar enterprising; Utah adopting national political parties; the “Political Manifesto”; chafing by leaders like Moses Thatcher, B. H. Roberts, and Charles Penrose; the Salt Lake Temple’s completion; financial crises in the early 1890s; Utah statehood; oppressive Church debt; and the Spanish-American War.

Horne starts the book with a substantial biographical look at Orson F. Whitney and his association with Lorenzo Snow. The first chapter summarizes Snow’s life up to his call to the apostleship in 1849, and the

second chapter covers his apostolic ministry. Chapters 3 through 11 are from Whitney's manuscript, as mentioned, and deal with Snow's plural marriages, including his exile, arrest, incarceration, and release. The next nine chapters by Horne explore new territory. The first three deal with Snow's experiences as President of the Quorum of the Twelve and then with problems he inherited upon becoming Church President. The next three chapters are about the Church's financial distress and President Snow's tithe-paying campaign. The final three chapters concern the end of President Snow's ministry, his passing, and his legacy. Seven appendices enrich the study, including one dealing with the "As Man now is, God once was" couplet attributed to Snow. Another looks at his St. George tithing discourse.

This book is meat, not milk. Horne deals forthrightly with difficult and controversial issues, many of which most Latter-day Saints know little about. For example, in a section called "The Windows of Heaven Revisited," Horne values Jay Bell's revisionist, critical assessment and lays out the "unsubstantiated elements" in the "promised rain" story (325–27). Horne also looks at the period of intense transition after the 1890 Manifesto, claiming that the Quorum of the Twelve was a body of men "in disarray and disunity." While "disarray" might be an overstatement, this period, Horne acknowledges, is "of such importance that it requires appropriate notice here and at later key points" in the book (201). He devotes full attention to the Woodruff-to-Snow succession delay and does not avoid the touchy Bullion-Beck mine controversy.

The book offers new information that is faith-affirming as well. For example, Snow was informed through a dream while he slept in the temple that he (age 82) and his wife Minnie (age 42) were to have another child. Despite their advancing years, Minnie was expecting a few months later (231–32). Other examples include Snow's experience raising the dead (233) and additional documentation of Christ's visitation in the Salt Lake Temple, where he instructed Snow to immediately reorganize the First Presidency (233, 261–66 and endnotes).

The author highlights a number of Snow's initiatives that powerfully influenced the Church, and of those, Horne says, two were Snow's most important achievements. First, as President of the Twelve, his peace-making skills brought unity, often settling difficulties between his brethren who held strong, opposing positions. Second, as Church President, he put in motion needed measures to resolve the Church's massive debt problems.

The book incorporates fine scholarship by historians like Ron Walker and Tom Alexander, and it draws heavily from journals and studies of “insiders” Wilford Woodruff, Anthon H. Lund, Rudger Clawson, Francis M. Lyman, L. John Nuttall, John Henry Smith, and George Q. and Abraham H. Cannon. As happens in most thoughtfully crafted histories, Horne’s commentary endnotes often are rich and merit close reading.

While some readers might find the separate narratives distracting, Horne tackles well his double task of presenting Whitney’s 130-year-old history and then producing new history of Snow’s presiding years. Latter-day Saints will appreciate Horne’s faithful treatment of Lorenzo Snow’s prophetic impact, and readers of any persuasion will find here an excellently researched, documented, structured, and argued history.

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