

The *Frontier Guardian*

Exploring the Latter-day Saint Experience at the Missouri, 1849–1851

Susan Easton Black

As the largest Mormon primary source from 1849 to 1851, the *Frontier Guardian* is crucial to understanding the Latter-day Saint experience at the Missouri River. Until now, historians have extracted only small sections of the paper, such as marriage announcements, obituaries, and advertisements,¹ because of the *Guardian's* size. Although it is only four volumes, the newspaper contains eighty-one issues, each spanning four pages in length and divided into six columns. This translates into roughly four thousand single-spaced pages on 8.5" x 11" paper. Fortunately, the recent publication *The Best of the Frontier Guardian* along with its searchable DVD-ROM of all eighty-one issues will help researchers explore the Mormon experience in Pottawattamie County, Iowa.

As the *Guardian's* editor in chief, Elder Orson Hyde believed the newspaper was an essential tool to help the region's Saints remain focused on their westward trek. Although he occasionally visited Church branches, Hyde knew regular communication between ecclesiastical leaders and members was imperative. Since ecclesiastical leaders previously had used newsprint to connect with members in Missouri, Ohio, Illinois, and England, he employed the same medium in Iowa.

Hyde looked to the first five Church periodicals—*The Evening and the Morning Star*, *Latter Day Saints' Messenger and Advocate*, *Elders' Journal of the Church of Latter Day Saints*, *Times and Seasons*, and *Millennial Star*—as examples for the *Guardian*. He utilized this newspaper foremost

1. See Lyndon W. Cook, comp., *Death and Marriage Notices from the "Frontier Guardian," 1849–1852* (Orem, Utah: Center for Research of Mormon Origins, 1990).

as a Church oracle, publishing First Presidency epistles, doctrinal treatises, and news and letters from the Salt Lake Valley before printing local news, poetry, wise sayings, or fictional stories.

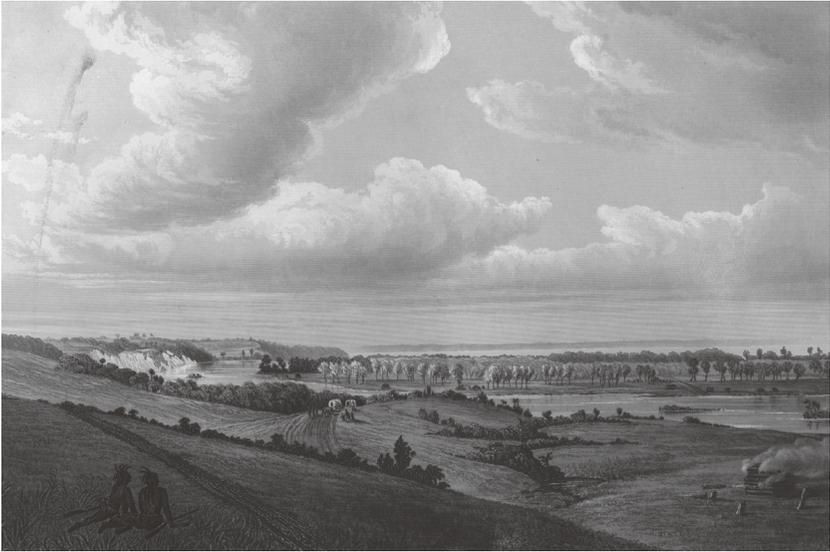
This article offers a brief history of Mormon newspapers in order to place the *Guardian* in context, an account of Hyde's appointment as the presiding authority over the Pottawattamie area, then a historical overview of the *Guardian*, and finally an analysis of its contents to introduce readers to this important source.

History of Latter-day Saint Newspapers

The first Church newspaper was *The Evening and the Morning Star*, edited by William W. Phelps and published in Independence, Missouri. Religious doctrine, history, hymns, instruction, revelation, and missionary letters kept the Saints informed. From June 1832 to July 1833, this eight-page, double-columned paper was applauded by its Latter-day Saint readership as informative and inspiring. However, a mob soon destroyed the press and what it believed was the last issue of the *Star*. In some respects, the paper survived the attack. In distant Kirtland, Ohio, under the able editorship of Oliver Cowdery, issues of the *Star* were printed in 1833. Cowdery reprinted previous issues, believing they had not had a wide circulation among the eastern Saints. He also ended up adding ten issues of his own to this Ohio edition. Differences between the final issues and the preceding ones were the inclusion of a commentary describing the problems faced by the Saints in Missouri, a new sixteen-page format, and fewer grammatical errors.²

In 1834, the *Star* was succeeded by the *Latter Day Saints' Messenger and Advocate*, a paper whose very name suggested its purpose—a messenger of the restored gospel and an advocate of true principles. Under Cowdery's leadership, the first issues of the *Messenger and Advocate* were printed from October 1834 to May 1835. Cowdery was replaced by John Whitmer and Warren Cowdery, then in February and March 1837 by Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon. Although the paper had multiple editors, neither its purpose nor its tenor changed. In a sixteen-page, double-column format, the paper contained selected doctrinal addresses, letters from traveling missionaries, inspirational poetry, hymns, minutes of Church conferences, and local events, such as marriages and deaths. The newspaper reported 8 births, 242 marriages, and 195 deaths. The new twist that did not mirror

2. See Ronald D. Dennis, "The Evening and the Morning Star," in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed. Daniel H. Ludlow, 4 vols. (New York: Macmillian, 1992): 2:477.



Steel engraving by Frederick Piercy of the Missouri River in Council Bluffs, Iowa, c. 1850s. Courtesy Church History Library.

old issues of the *Star* was the inclusion of an annual index printed in the last issue of each volume.³

In late 1837, nearly four months after the final issue of the *Messenger and Advocate*, another Mormon newspaper came into existence. The *Elders' Journal of the Church of Latter Day Saints*, with Joseph Smith as editor and Thomas B. Marsh as publisher, began publication in Kirtland. Although the concept of an elders' journal had merit—to keep traveling elders informed of Church business—after only two issues (October–November 1837), printing of the paper stopped. Its small run in Kirtland was repeated in Far West, Missouri, where two additional issues were printed, before the paper again ceased publication.⁴

In many respects, the next paper, the *Times and Seasons*, was much more successful than other Church periodicals. The print run of 135 issues symbolized the success. Similar to its predecessors, the sixteen-page, double-column paper contained Church doctrine, history, local events, missionary letters, minutes of meetings, and general contemporary news.

3. See J. Leroy Caldwell, “Messenger and Advocate,” in Ludlow, *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 2:892.

4. See Kirtland Elders' Quorum Record, 1826–1844, December 6, 1837, Church History Library, Family and Church History Department, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City.

The paper was printed monthly in Nauvoo between November 1839 and October 1840. After that it became a biweekly publication, appearing on the first and fifteenth of each month through February 15, 1846. The first editors were Don Carlos Smith and Ebenezer Robinson. In 1842, Joseph Smith became the next editor. Under his editorship, documents such as the translation and facsimiles of the Book of Abraham and the Wentworth Letter were published. Between late 1842 and May 1844, John Taylor and Wilford Woodruff edited the paper. Then from June 1844 until mid-February 1846, Taylor worked as the sole editor.⁵

The *Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star* was the fifth newspaper to be recognized as an official organ of the Church. The *Star* began in England in 1840 with Parley P. Pratt as editor and continued publication until 1970. Pratt unabashedly announced that the purpose of the *Star* was to proclaim the restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ and to gather into one fold his sheep.

To accomplish this far-reaching purpose, Pratt and his many subsequent editors printed doctrinal addresses of Church leaders and excerpts of the history of the Church. The inclusion of conference minutes, missionary letters, local news, and poems mirrored the content of other Church periodicals.⁶ The dramatic difference with the *Star* was the inclusion of emigration statistics, news of the Perpetual Emigrating Fund, ship departures, and so forth. By including similar information about emigration train rosters and departures, the *Frontier Guardian* mirrored the *Star* more closely than any other early Mormon periodical.

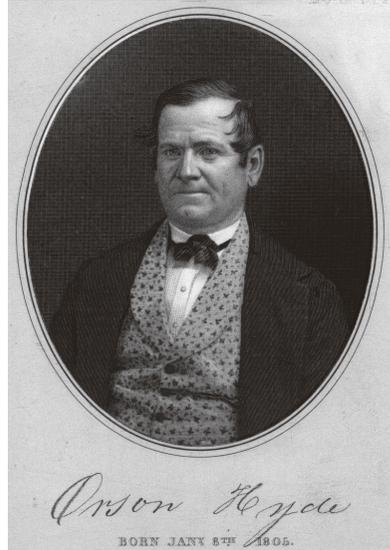
5. See Reed C. Durham Jr., "Times and Seasons," in Ludlow, *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 4:1479–80; Robert T. Bray, "'Times and Seasons': An Archaeological Perspective on Early Latter Day Saints Printing," *Historical Archaeology* 13 (1979): 53–119; Parry D. Sorensen, "Nauvoo Times and Seasons," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 55 (1962): 117–35. The *Nauvoo (IL) Times and Seasons* should not be confused with the *Nauvoo (IL) Neighbor*, a weekly newspaper published from May 3, 1843, to October 29, 1845, and edited by John Taylor. This paper was not an official Church publication but rather was a replacement for the *Nauvoo (IL) Wasp*, which had begun in April 1842. The *Neighbor* was not altogether without Latter-day Saint news, however. Taylor printed articles about conflicts between the Saints and what he perceived as their enemies at all levels of society. See Darwin L. Hayes, "Nauvoo Neighbor," in Ludlow, *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 3:999.

6. See Stanley A. Peterson, "Millennial Star," in Ludlow, *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 2:906; James P. Hill, "Story of the Star," *Millennial Star* December 1970, 10–13.

Orson Hyde and the *Frontier Guardian*

In June 1844, Orson Hyde was in Washington, D.C., presenting a memorial summarizing the outrages of the state of Missouri against Latter-day Saints. On June 27, “he felt very heavy and sorrowful in spirit, and knew not the cause. . . . He retired to the further end of the hall alone, and walked the floor; tears ran down his face. . . . He never felt so before, and knew no reason why he should feel so then.”⁷ Days later he learned of the Prophet’s martyrdom, which he believed had caused this sorrow. Although the loss of Joseph Smith weighed heavily on Hyde for many years, he spoke optimistically of the Church’s destiny: “I will prophesy that instead of the work dying, it will be like the mustard stock that was ripe, that a man undertook to throw out of his garden, and scattered seed all over it, and next year it was nothing but mustard. It will be so by shedding the blood of the Prophets—it will make ten saints where there is one now.”⁸

After his return to Nauvoo, Hyde saw the fulfillment of his prophesy. New converts arrived almost daily in the community, eager to help build up the Church. The Saints needed a shepherd to assist them as they prepared to continue their journey to a westward Zion. Although he wanted to follow Brigham Young to the West in 1846, Hyde accepted a call to stay behind in Nauvoo to complete and dedicate the Nauvoo Temple and encourage even the most reluctant Saints to push westward. History repeated itself when Young asked Hyde to fulfill similar duties in Iowa two years later. Rather than lasting only a



Orson Hyde served as editor in chief of the *Frontier Guardian*, president of the Quorum of the Twelve, and president of the Church in Kanesville. He believed the *Guardian* was essential to helping Saints in Iowa stay focused on their westward trek to the Salt Lake Valley. Courtesy Church History Library.

7. Joseph Smith Jr., *The History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2nd ed. rev., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1971), 7:132.

8. Smith, *History of the Church*, 7:198.

few months, as had his assignment in Nauvoo, Hyde's work in Iowa lasted roughly four years.⁹ Mormon emigration, establishing temporary settlements, organizing the Church structure within those settlements, keeping peace with the Native Americans, and bolstering the faith of the Saints in this frontier setting were but a few of his main responsibilities. Such responsibilities would have been difficult for a team of people, let alone one man. But Hyde had the organizational skills and the "loyalty and devotion to Brigham Young" needed to keep the Iowa Saints focused on their westward journey.¹⁰

Young had chosen Hyde to gather the scattered Saints of Iowa because he was familiar with the land. Hyde had traveled up and down the mid-Missouri Valley, speaking to Saints scattered throughout the small communities. He was a father figure to many as he offered encouragement and advice to those headed west. He also had experience settling Church business and aiding migration. As historian Richard E. Bennett said, "With Young and most of the authorities now in Salt Lake Valley, it was once again left to Hyde, as had been done earlier in Nauvoo, to complete unfinished business, settle conflicts and defections, and facilitate migrations westward."¹¹ Hyde accomplished much of his work through the



Thomas Leiper Kane befriended the Latter-day Saints and became a confidant to Brigham Young. Orson Hyde named the Pottawattamie County Mormon settlement Kaneshville in honor of Kane. In 1853, Kaneshville was renamed Council Bluffs. Courtesy L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.

9. See Howard H. Barron, *Orson Hyde: Missionary, Apostle, Colonizer* (Bountiful, Utah: Horizon, 1977), 163, 178–95.

10. Marvin S. Hill, "An Historical Study of the Life of Orson Hyde, Early Mormon Missionary and Apostle from 1805–1852" (master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1955), 3.

11. Richard E. Bennett, *Mormons at the Missouri, 1846–1852: "And Should We Die..."* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), 220. The *Davenport (IA) Gazette* pronounced Hyde the successor of Joseph Smith: "Orson Hyde, it is rumored, is about to become the successor of Joe Smith. Whether he claims the leadership by revelation from heaven, does not appear. But no doubt he will appeal to their superstitions." "Mormonism," *Davenport Gazette*, May 1, 1845, 2.

Frontier Guardian. On February 7, 1849, its first issue rolled off the press as an official Church publication.

Overview of the *Frontier Guardian*

Assuming his position as editor, Hyde confessed, “It is with a trembling hand and a faltering knee that we step forward to our seat in the Editorial Chair.”¹² Nevertheless, Hyde frequently used the *Guardian* to vent his frustrations and disappointments, and an overview of the paper says as much about the editor as it does about the paper itself.

Volume One. As the editor of a newspaper that would be distributed in most of the twenty-six states of the Union and in England, Wales, Ireland, France, Italy, and Denmark, it was Hyde’s “ardent wish, and sincere prayer that the words we employ, and thoughts we record may be the dictation of that Spirit, that is destined to bless the world, make an end of sin and triumph gloriously over all things.” To accomplish the ambitious goal, he wrote a prospectus that outlined the paper’s objectives: (1) to conspicuously display principles of the gospel, (2) to maintain a “healthy moral atmosphere,” (3) to aid the education of youth, (4) to avoid political interference, (5) to appeal to all classes of citizens, and (6) to advertise businesses and prices that would help the Saints emigrate.¹³

On March 7, 1849, Hyde’s counselor George A. Smith encouraged Church members to subscribe to the paper: “Every Elder should have the *Guardian* by him; from it he can learn the principles, which it is his duty and calling to communicate to his fellow men.” He added, “Every farmer [also] should take the *Guardian*. Its matter will instruct the young and inexperienced, in relation to their agricultural pursuits.”¹⁴

Confident that Smith’s directives would lead to increased subscriptions, Hyde announced on March 21 that the *Guardian* would become a weekly newspaper.¹⁵ Yet such preparations never materialized. To help fill the *Guardian*’s pages, Hyde depended on mail carriers for newspapers from other cities. In this era, newspapers frequently reprinted stories from other publications; when carriers failed to bring the needed papers, Hyde

The *Bloomington Iowa Democratic Enquirer* editorialized, “The celebrated Orson Hyde, by far the most influential man in the Mormon church.” “Mormon Vote,” *Iowa Democratic Enquirer*, August 26, 1846, 2. The *Keokuk (IA) Dispatch* printed, “Orson Hyde is another of the Twelve, and head of the Colony at Council Bluff.” “The Mormon Bribery,” *Keokuk Dispatch*, September 16, 1848, 2.

12. “To Our Readers,” *Frontier Guardian*, February 7, 1849, p. 2, col. 1.

13. “To Our Readers.”

14. “To the Saints in Iowa,” *Frontier Guardian*, March 7, 1849, p. 2, col. 5.

15. Orson Hyde, “Prospectus,” *Frontier Guardian*, March 21, 1849, p. 4, col. 6.

could not publish a weekly newspaper because of lack of material.

This dilemma, exacerbated by the need of an expert printer, caused Hyde much duress until he hired printer John Gooch Jr. in May 1849.¹⁶ With Gooch in place, Hyde was relieved from the daily work at the *Guardian* office to attend to ecclesiastical matters. However, when Gooch printed statements such as “The lack of Editorial matter in this number must be attributed to the continued absence of the Editor,” Hyde returned.¹⁷ On December 12, the paper reported the hiring of Daniel MacIntosh¹⁸ as an assistant editor to help shoulder the responsibility.¹⁹

Hyde hoped MacIntosh could make the *Guardian* a weekly publication, yet Hyde continued to worry about the late mail. He solicited friends, even from abroad, to send him “a few papers when you have the chance.”²⁰ In addition, he also asked for money to help defray the expense of printing the *Guardian* because many subscribed, but few paid a full subscription rate. Hoping to resolve what had become a personal financial drain to him, on December 12 Hyde announced a change in delivery: instead of distributing the papers to



George A. Smith was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve and a counselor to Orson Hyde in the Kanesville presidency. Courtesy Church History Library.

16. John Gooch Jr. was born in Concord, Massachusetts, worked as a printer on the *Frontier Guardian*, ran a boarding house, sold building lots, and journeyed to the Salt Lake Valley in 1852. See the annotated list of people mentioned in the newspaper on the *Frontier Guardian* DVD-ROM. Gooch is first listed as the printer of the *Guardian* on page 2 of the May 30, 1849, issue.

17. “The lack of editorial matter . . .,” *Frontier Guardian*, October 3, 1849, p. 2, col. 1.

18. Daniel MacIntosh served as an agent and editor of the *Frontier Guardian*. See the annotated list of agents mentioned in the newspaper on the *Frontier Guardian* DVD-ROM.

19. Daniel MacIntosh, “Response,” *Frontier Guardian*, December 12, 1849, p. 2, col. 1. MacIntosh’s name was spelled several different ways in the newspaper.

20. “Request,” *Frontier Guardian*, November 14, 1849, p. 2, col. 4.

subscribers through an agent, he dropped them off at the individual post offices where subscribers could retrieve them and pay their postage.²¹ Then he asked that commodities be brought, without hope of compensation, to the Guardian office. Hyde specifically requested “pork, beef, . . . cash or California Gold Dust” and “10,000 feet good lumber at \$2[.]00 per hundred. . . . Besides cheese, eggs, chickens.”²²

Volume Two. On February 6, 1850, Hyde boasted that one year had lapsed since the *Guardian* first came off the press and that it had never “been delayed an hour behind its regular time.” He expressed gratitude to printer John Gooch, “whose long and bony fingers can pick up type as fast as a chicken can pick up corn.” Then, in salesmanlike fashion, Hyde asked, “Who, among the Saints, will raise up a family of children without giving them education, the bible, and the *Guardian*?” “You who feel too poor to subscribe for the Guardian, just ask yourselves how much money you pay out for comparatively useless things.”²³ He also invited loyal subscribers to attend a printer’s banquet, with the proceeds benefiting the *Guardian* staff. Although the banquet was profitable, the financial woes of the paper remained apparent.²⁴ Hyde wrote, “A failure to give notice of a wish to discontinue the paper at the expiration of the term subscribed for, will be considered as an engagement for the next year,” and “Advertisements not marked on the copy for a [definite] period, or a distinct number of insertions, will be continued until ordered out, and payment exacted accordingly.”²⁵ Believing this fiscal policy would solve the money problems, Hyde left Kanesville in June for the Salt Lake Valley at Brigham Young’s request.²⁶

In Hyde’s absence, Gooch and MacIntosh published the *Guardian* as usual. Although neither held a Church leadership position, they continued Hyde’s clarion call to repent. Using the *Guardian*, they rebuked those who entertained company on Sunday and claimed that “idleness [was] a crime

21. “To Our Agents,” *Frontier Guardian*, December 12, 1849, p. 2, col. 3.

22. “Wanted in Exchange for the Guardian,” *Frontier Guardian*, November 14, 1849, p. 3, col. 4; “Wanted on Subscription for the Guardian,” *Frontier Guardian*, September 5, 1849, p. 2, col. 1.

23. “Punctuality,” *Frontier Guardian*, February 6, 1850, p. 2, col. 3; “Question . . .,” *Frontier Guardian*, February 6, 1850, p. 2, col. 3; “Subscribe for the Guardian,” *Frontier Guardian*, February 6, 1850, p. 2, col. 4.

24. “Printers Banquet,” *Frontier Guardian*, February 20, 1850, p. 2, col. 6.

25. “A failure to give notice . . .,” *Frontier Guardian*, March 6, 1850, p. 2, col. 3.

26. “It is expected that Elder Hyde . . .,” *Frontier Guardian*, June 26, 1850, p. 2, col. 3.



Original masthead of the *Frontier Guardian*.

next akin to stealing.”²⁷ To James Allred, president of the Pottawattamie high council, such unsolicited advice overstepped Gooch and MacIntosh’s ecclesiastical bounds. Allred insisted that columns in the *Guardian* be made available for his advice. Gooch and MacIntosh hesitated before printing one brief statement by Allred: “It was not wisdom for the Saints to go forth in the dance” before they pray, help the poor, and pay tithing.²⁸

Another peculiarity of the Gooch and MacIntosh publishing efforts was their multiple requests for remuneration. For example, they wrote in one issue: “Wanted—Flour, meal, . . . to keep the printers from going hungry. Don’t forget the cash to buy clothing.”²⁹ After Gooch and MacIntosh had used such tactics for months, some readers questioned Hyde’s judgment in giving the two men responsibility for the paper. Others wondered whether Hyde would return to Kaneshville and reclaim his rightful place as editor in chief.

When Hyde returned in November, a great celebration ensued. Following the festivities, Hyde went to the *Guardian* office and resumed his position. He implemented changes to the paper and reduced subscription rates to one dollar per year. More important, he announced that the paper would enter the political arena: “In politics we are decidedly [W]hig, and we intend still to maintain inviolate those principles, because we believe them to be the most productive of good to our favored country.”³⁰ This

27. “Sunday Visiting,” *Frontier Guardian*, July 10, 1850, p. 2, col. 1; “Idleness,” *Frontier Guardian*, July 10, 1850, p. 2, col. 5.

28. “A Word to the Saints in Pottawatamie County,” *Frontier Guardian*, November 13, 1850, p. 2, col. 5.

29. “Wanted,” *Frontier Guardian*, July 24, 1850, p. 2, col. 5. See also, “The man who would . . .,” *Frontier Guardian*, October 2, 1850, p. 1, col. 5; “Would you prosper . . .,” *Frontier Guardian*, October 2, 1850, p. 2, col. 2; “To Those Who Owe for the *Guardian*,” *Frontier Guardian*, October 16, 1850, p. 2, col. 1.

30. “End of the Second Volume,” *Frontier Guardian*, January 22, 1851, p. 2, col. 2. Hyde’s decision to favor the Whig party did not sit well with the editor of the *Keokuk Dispatch*. He reprinted a letter written by A. W. Babbitt to the editor of the *Statesman*: “Mr. Hyde announces himself a whig, (but not an ultra whig,) has no set notions, has never voted but once in his life, knows little or nothing about Federal and State policy, yet he assumes the responsibility of influencing a

announcement was a dramatic shift from earlier days when the Latter-day Saints were decidedly Democrats.

Volume Three. With these changes in place, the third volume was begun on February 7, 1851. To most subscribers, everything about this volume was new: masthead, political direction, even the publication day—Friday, which corresponded with the departure of the Kanesville mail. But the biggest change was the absence of a doctrinal treatise on page one; in its place were articles promoting temporal wealth. The content also shifted, with a three-to-one increase in the number of emigration articles.

Hyde hoped all these changes would help sell the paper prior to his permanent move west. On June 13, Hyde wrote, “This is probably the last article that we may write previous to our departure for [Salt Lake City].” He advised newspaper agents “that the vacancies occasion by those who may have left for the Valley be filled immediately. Therefore let each Township, or Branch of the Church, call a meeting, and elect by the vote of said meeting, a good man to receive and distribute the Guardian in their location.”³¹ However, Hyde left Kanesville on June 28, with an expected return date of October, even though he had not sold the paper. His departure this time was again in response to Brigham Young’s request that he come to Salt Lake.³²

During Hyde’s absence, Gooch and MacIntosh were responsible for publishing the *Guardian*. They also were in charge of the new general store in the Guardian office. For sustenance they penned, “We are still in want of Wood to keep the Printers warm. . . . Our Devil [printer’s assistant] says: if fuel for fire is not furnished him quickly, he will quit work.” Then, unbeknown to Hyde, Gooch and MacIntosh increased the price of the yearly subscriptions by ten cents to \$1.10. They also organized a contest, asking readers to bring the biggest vegetables to their office. Although subscribers may have balked at the increased rate, the contest was an immediate success. “Squash weighing sixty-four pounds” and “a Radish weighing four pounds and fourteen ounces” were brought to the office. “Who can beat these?” was the question asked in the next issue.³³ As if the contest were real, and not a trick to get food for the staff, more vegetables were brought.

whole community; and lest he sh[ould] betray ignorance as their guide, he directs them to a political knave to counsel them ‘when and where to act.’” “The Mormon Bribery,” *Keokuk Dispatch*, November 2, 1848, 2.

31. “Warning,” *Frontier Guardian*, June 13, 1851, p. 2, col. 1; “To Our Agents, and Others in this County,” *Frontier Guardian*, June 13, 1851, p. 2, col. 3.

32. “Fifth General Epistle,” *Frontier Guardian*, May 30, 1851, p. 1, col. 6.

33. “Wood! Wood!!!” *Frontier Guardian*, October 17, 1851, p. 2, col. 3; “Some of the Products of Pottawatamie County,” *Frontier Guardian*, October 17, 1851, p. 2, col. 3.

MacIntosh and Gooch reported this news of extraordinary vegetables while neglecting such important matters as minutes of a Church conference held in Kanessville.³⁴ To even the casual reader, the *Frontier Guardian* had changed again.

When Hyde returned to Kanessville, he did not express disdain at the past actions of Gooch and MacIntosh. Selling the *Guardian* and moving to the Salt Lake Valley was more important. For those who wondered if the newspaper would immediately cease publication, Hyde assured them, “We shall continue the publication of this paper until we remove” or sell.³⁵ With that said, Hyde announced that the portion of Pottawattamie County “owned and occupied by the Mormon population [was] for sale.” To prospective buyers, he advised, “Now is the time for speculation and investment.”³⁶ For those who called themselves Saints, a letter from the First Presidency advised them to purchase horses, mules, oxen, and wagons for the westward trek.³⁷

Volume Four. The first two issues—two more than Hyde had planned—were printed as the *Frontier Guardian* before the name was changed to *Guardian and Sentinel*. These first two issues lacked articles on doctrine. Instead, articles appeared on the nation’s capital, France, and England, coupled with an honorific poem extolling the past greatness of the *Frontier Guardian*.³⁸ The new direction of the paper and the attractive masthead succeeded in bringing an interested buyer. On February 20, 1852, Hyde announced the paper had been sold to attorney Jacob Dawson from Fremont County, Iowa.³⁹

34. The conference was held October 6, 1851, but the minutes of the conference were not printed until the end of the month. “Conference Minutes,” *Frontier Guardian*, October 31, 1851, p. 1, col. 5.

35. “Reminiscence,” *Frontier Guardian*, November 14, 1851, p. 2, cols. 3–4.

36. “Pottawatamie County For Sale,” *Frontier Guardian*, November 14, 1851, p. 2, col. 4.

37. “To all the Saints in Pottawatamie,” *Frontier Guardian*, November 14, 1851, p. 2, col. 6.

38. See North Pigeon Joe, “The Frontier Guardian,” *Frontier Guardian*, February 6, 1852, p. 4, col. 1.

39. Under Dawson’s leadership, the *Kanessville (IA) Guardian and Sentinel* featured “Politics, Literature, Arts, Sciences, and . . . General news of the day.” Politically, it remained Whig, but its columns were opened to discussion. In his final issue as editor, Hyde wrote, “We may scribble a little now and then for the *Guardian and Sentinel* to benefit, arrange, and order our emigration.” “Prospectus for Publishing the *Frontier Guardian* and *Iowa Sentinel Weekly*,” *Frontier Guardian*, February 20, 1852, p. 2, col. 5; “Valedictory,” *Frontier Guardian*, February 20, 1852, p. 2, col. 3.

Analysis of the *Guardian's* Content

Compared to other Mormon newspapers, the *Guardian's* content was not unique in its approach to religious doctrine, Church news, day-to-day secular events, weather, politics, and business opportunities. However, the subject matter of the *Guardian* was unique because it was the Church's only newspaper at Kanesville that chronicled life in this way station for western emigration. And, like other nineteenth-century papers, the *Guardian* was a composite of exchanges or clippings and telegraph dispatches. Most of the national and international news, short fictional stories, pithy sayings, and humor were reprints from other publications.

The paper reflected the religious persuasion of its editor in chief and most of its readership. From the selection of newspaper agents, most of whom were also set apart as missionaries, to the lead article—a doctrinal treatise—the *Guardian* was a Mormon newspaper in Iowa. As such, Hyde believed it deserved a place in every Mormon home.⁴⁰ To help him circulate the paper among Church members, thirteen men were named in early 1849 as “missionary” newspaper agents.⁴¹

During the first year of publication, agents were not called to labor in the Missouri Valley. This suggests first and foremost that they were expected to be proselyting missionaries, which confused the missionary/agents who failed to forward “money that is paid to [them] by subscribers for the *Guardian*.”⁴² Most missionary/agents had assumed subscription monies should offset mission expenses. Once this matter was resolved, more agents were called.⁴³

It was not until January 1851 that Hyde sent agents to several former Mormon encampments in Pottawattamie County. By this time, however, these encampments were surveyed communities with a post office and an organized Church branch. Hyde assigned branch officers in these communities to select a “man to be your neighborhood Postmaster to receive

40. See, “Who that is a friend . . .,” *Frontier Guardian*, February 7, 1849, p. 2, col. 5; “Suppose that every subscriber . . .,” *Frontier Guardian*, February 21, 1849, p. 2, col. 4; “If a man . . .,” *Frontier Guardian*, May 2, 1849, p. 2, col. 5; “Be kind . . .,” *Frontier Guardian*, September 5, 1849, p. 1, col. 4.

41. The most renowned of the newspaper agents in Missouri was David Whitmer of Richmond. “Agents for the *Guardian*,” *Frontier Guardian*, March 7, 1849, p. 2, col. 1.

42. “Agency,” *Frontier Guardian*, May 2, 1849, p. 2, col. 2.

43. See “Agents for the *Guardian*,” *Frontier Guardian*, January 22, 1851, p. 1, col. 1; “Agents for the *Guardian* in this County,” *Frontier Guardian*, January 22, 1851, p. 1, col. 1.



The new masthead of the *Frontier Guardian* debuted with the first issue of volume 3 in February 1851.

the papers for you.”⁴⁴ This action changed the status of missionary/agent to agent for those called to Pottawattamie County and put in place fifteen agents in the Missouri Valley by January. Almost one year later, the number of local agents had increased to twenty-eight. This brought the total number of agents, including local and those assigned throughout the United States and England, up to 109.⁴⁵

Lead Articles. As editor of an official Church publication and hoping to attract Latter-day Saint subscribers, Hyde printed lengthy doctrinal treatises that covered all six columns of page one. Although he was editor in chief and a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, he never featured his own doctrinal writings. Instead he often relied on Orson Pratt’s writings that were first printed in the *Millennial Star*, because “a flood of testimony from the pen of Elder Pratt is poured upon the world, and if they can resist its clear and majestic current, it would really seem to us, that they possess more of a reckless opposition to the dictates of conscience, than of simple honesty of heart that is a pre-requisite to eternal life and salvation.”⁴⁶

Unfortunately, issues of the *Star* were not always available. Rather than delay publishing the *Guardian*, Hyde sometimes printed letters from prominent missionaries. When such letters failed to arrive at the office, Hyde turned to doctrinal treatises printed in earlier newspapers such as *Times and Seasons*, *Messenger and Advocate*, and *The Evening and the Morning Star*. Hyde sometimes quoted portions of the Doctrine and Covenants to fill the *Guardian*’s columns.

44. “Home Regulations,” *Frontier Guardian*, June 13, 1849, p. 2, col. 5.

45. “Travel Agents,” “Agents for the Guardian,” “Agents for the Guardian in the County,” *Frontier Guardian*, January 23, 1852, p. 1, col. 1. See the annotated list of newspaper agents mentioned in the newspaper on the *Frontier Guardian* DVD-ROM.

46. Orson Pratt, “The Question Answered, Was Joseph Smith Sent of God!” *Frontier Guardian*, February 21, 1849, p. 2, col. 1.

Joseph, Nauvoo, and Past Wrongs. Page two usually contained articles about Joseph Smith. Although the young Prophet had met a martyr's fate, his life, teachings, and struggles were never far from the thoughts of Hyde and other Church members.

Hoping to keep the memory of Joseph Smith in the forefront, Hyde informed readers of sundry events in old Nauvoo. He took special interest in updates about the Nauvoo Temple⁴⁷ and in Lucy Mack Smith, the widowed mother of the slain Prophet, who “concluded to stay there and lay her bones with her husband and sons.”⁴⁸

News from Salt Lake Valley. News from the valley took precedence over local Church news.⁴⁹ The information came in three forms—First Presidency epistles, letters from ecclesiastical leaders, and news from traveling missionaries. To Hyde, however, the most reliable news came from epistles and letters.

Six general epistles of the First Presidency were printed verbatim in the *Guardian*. The first contained information about a city being built in the Salt Lake Valley and the return of the Mormon Battalion. The epistle also advised emigrants to be properly outfitted before heading to Zion.⁵⁰ The second epistle informed the Pottawattamie Saints of the status of the Perpetual Emigrating Fund.⁵¹ The third contained news of settlements in Utah Valley and southern Utah. It also instructed leading elders to come quickly to the Salt Lake Valley.⁵² The fourth epistle mentioned the establishment of other settlements to the north and new mission assignments,⁵³ while the fifth began with a brief history of the Church and encouraged

47. See “Dreadful Tornado—Destruction of the Temple Walls,” *Frontier Guardian*, July 24, 1850, p. 1, cols. 1–2.; “Night of Martyrdom,” *Frontier Guardian*, June 27, 1849, p. 1, cols. 4–5; “Death of Joseph and Hyrum Smith,” *Frontier Guardian*, June 27, 1849, p. 2, col. 3; “Nauvoo Temple,” *Frontier Guardian*, June 27, 1849, p. 1, col. 3.

48. “Mother Smith,” *Frontier Guardian*, November 14, 1849, p. 2, col. 1.

49. Statements such as “Much important matter had to be omitted, to give place to the news from the Great Salt Lake Valley” were commonplace in the *Guardian*. See, for example, “Much important matter . . .,” *Frontier Guardian*, May 30, 1849, p. 2, col. 2.

50. “First General Epistle . . .,” *Frontier Guardian*, May 30, 1849, p. 2, cols. 2–6.

51. “Important from Salt Lake City,” *Frontier Guardian*, December 26, 1849, p. 1, cols. 1–4.

52. “Third General Epistle of the Presidency,” *Frontier Guardian*, June 12, 1850, p. 2, col. 5–p. 3, col. 2.

53. “Fourth General Epistle of the Presidency,” *Frontier Guardian*, December 11, 1850, p. 1, cols. 1–4.

emigration to Zion.⁵⁴ The final epistle assured the Pottawattamie Saints of Hyde's safe arrival in the valley and announced that the poor in Kanesville would be gathered to Zion.⁵⁵

As for letters from Church leaders, "Some have thought it very hard and extortionate to be obliged to pay 40 cents postage on a letter from the Salt Lake [Valley] here," printed Hyde.⁵⁶ He urged payment, especially when the unclaimed letter was from a Church leader, for these letters often contained minutes of conferences held in Salt Lake City. Letters also contained descriptions of celebrations in the valley—July 24 being the most elaborate.⁵⁷

Mormon Emigration to Salt Lake Valley. "Push the Saints to Zion, and persuade all good brethren to come, who have a wheelbarrow, and faith enough to roll it over the mountains," wrote the First Presidency.⁵⁸ To those leaving Babylon, Hyde warned, "We say to all persons abroad, when you leave for this place, leave honorably, so that if you should be sent back to preach the gospel to your old neighbors, you would not be afraid or ashamed to meet them."⁵⁹ He also printed news of their departure aboard ships in Liverpool.⁶⁰

With such a massive exodus underway, it is unsurprising that Kanesville became a major trailhead for Mormon emigrants. For some travelers, the community was more than a way station for the journey ahead. As they waited for grass to grow on the plains to sustain cattle and teams, these emigrants were schooled on commodities needed for the next leg of their

54. "Fifth General Epistle," *Frontier Guardian*, May 30, 1851, p. 1, col. 2–p. 2, col. 1; "See the General Epistle on First Page," *Frontier Guardian*, May 30, 1851, p. 2, col. 3.

55. "Sixth General Epistle," *Frontier Guardian*, November 14, 1851, p. 1, col. 2–p. 2, col. 2.

56. "Salt Lake Postage," *Frontier Guardian*, March 7, 1849, p. 2, col. 2.

57. See "24th of July, at Great Salt Lake City," *Frontier Guardian*, September 19, 1849, p. 4, cols. 1–5. News of Mormon emigration was reported in the *Iowa Standard*: "The Mormons are said to be crossing in large numbers at Council Bluffs, and from 1,500 to 2,000 wagons are expected to leave in a few weeks for the Great Salt Lake." "Oregon and California Emigrants," *Iowa Standard*, May 24, 1848, 2.

58. "From the Presidency," *Frontier Guardian*, July 24, 1850, p. 2, col. 4.

59. "Zion no Refuge for the Wicked," *Frontier Guardian*, August 8, 1849, p. 2, col. 4.

60. See "The Mormons," *Frontier Guardian*, April 18, 1849, p. 1, col. 3; "The ships 'James Pennell' and. . .," *Frontier Guardian*, October 17, 1849, p. 2, col. 6; "Emigrants from Britain," *Frontier Guardian*, June 12, 1850, p. 2, col. 2; "We learn that. . .," *Frontier Guardian*, April 18, 1849, p. 2, col. 2; "The St. Louis Intelligencer. . .," *Frontier Guardian*, June 12, 1850, p. 3, col. 2.

journey: rifles, turkeys, geese, ducks, cows, coins, good teams, and good wagons.⁶¹ After these trains were outfitted, the newspaper declared, "We hope to see trains starting from this point every week."⁶² Hyde believed a spring launch was critical for a successful journey.⁶³ To facilitate migration, he printed the dates and places of expected departures.⁶⁴

Often the size of the trains was larger than even Hyde had expected. One train, for example, consisted of 700 wagons, 4,000 sheep, and 5,000 head of cattle, plus unnumbered horses and mules.⁶⁵

Hyde also consistently advised the emigrants to form a "strictly military" company and have every wagon "examined to see if it contains the requisite amount of provisions, utensils and means of defence."⁶⁶ Assured that his advice would be heeded and that all were ready, Hyde urged a speedy journey to avoid unfavorable weather and instructed the emigrants to follow "the North side of the Platte, the entire distance; not even crossing it at Laramie. This route is, at least, one hundred miles shorter."⁶⁷ He also warned of marauding Indians, because "they say that the Indians were rapidly assembling for the great council at Fort Laramie. . . . They '*will be the white man's friendly enemy as long as they live.*'"⁶⁸ With this said, wagon trains departed from the greater Kaneshville area.

It should be noted that those who headed for the gold fields in "California companies" received a different message from Hyde: "Every man engaged in hunting gold, and every one that visits the gold region, goes armed to the teeth. Scenes of violence occur; there is no security for life and property."⁶⁹ He spoke of "men loaded with gold, [who] appear like haggard vagabonds, clothed in filthy and tattered garments of the

61. See "Salt Lake Emigrants," *Frontier Guardian*, February 21, 1849, p. 2, col. 3; "Take turkeys. . .," *Frontier Guardian*, February 21, 1849, p. 3, col. 5; "Small Coin," *Frontier Guardian*, April 4, 1849, p. 2, col. 3; "How to Prosper on the Plains," *Frontier Guardian*, May 29, 1850, p. 2, col. 2.

62. "Goods for the Valley," *Frontier Guardian*, January 9, 1850, p. 2, col. 2.

63. See "Official," *Frontier Guardian*, May 29, 1850, p. 2, col. 2.

64. See "Rally! Rally!" *Frontier Guardian*, May 16, 1849, p. 2, col. 1.

65. "Emigration," *Frontier Guardian*, June 12, 1850, p. 2, col. 1.

66. "Salt Lake Emigrants," *Frontier Guardian*, February 21, 1849, p. 2, col. 3.

67. "North Side of the Platte!" *Frontier Guardian*, December 11, 1850, p. 2, col. 2.

68. "Arrivals Through the Plains," *Frontier Guardian*, October 17, 1851, p. 1, col. 6 [italics in original]; see also "Western Emigrants, Take Notice," *Frontier Guardian*, May 2, 1849, p. 2, col. 4.

69. "A letter from San Francisco. . .," *Frontier Guardian*, February 21, 1849, p. 2, col. 1; see also "The Gold Region and Gold Fever," *Frontier Guardian*, February 7, 1849, p. 2, col. 3.

meanest kind” and that “miners were suffering from sickness and want of provisions.”⁷⁰ Despite this description, California companies left Kanesville with marked regularity.

Minutes of Church Conferences in Kanesville. Minutes of the annual and semiannual Kanesville conferences (from April 1849 to October 1851) were printed in the *Guardian*. In addition to sustaining general and local authorities—including Hyde—at these conferences, those who attended listened to sermons on a variety of topics.⁷¹

In 1849, Hyde spoke of severe weather and local affairs before calling the congregation to emigrate to Zion and to remember the Kanesville poor.⁷² At the April 1850 conference, hundreds of non-Mormons in California companies attended. Seizing the missionary moment, Hyde welcomed the guests and spoke of angels visiting the earth and of his visit to Jerusalem. He went on to speak about American politics and what he perceived to be the threatening dissolution of the Union. Then, unexpectedly, he asked if the congregation approved of his “course and policy in Pottawatamie, and east of the Rocky Mountains.” A vote was taken, and the actions of Hyde were sustained. During this conference, Hyde also addressed problems of the poor and the need to pay tithing.⁷³ The next year he reminisced about his service in Pottawattamie County.⁷⁴

Local Church News. Knowing when and where meetings and conferences were being held was important to Church organization in Pottawatamie County. But to Hyde, payment of tithes and fast offerings to benefit the poor was even more important.⁷⁵ For those who hesitated to pay tithing, Hyde provided opportunities for them to give service.⁷⁶ As to fasting,

70. “Late from the Gold Regions—More Extensive Discoveries,” *Frontier Guardian*, March 7, 1849, p. 1, col. 6; “California,” *Frontier Guardian*, March 7, 1849, p. 3, col. 4.

71. At the different conferences Hyde was sustained as “President of Pottawatamie county,” with George A. Smith and Ezra T. Benson as his counselors and as “President over the different branches of the Church, this side of the Rocky Mountains.” See “Conference Minutes,” *Frontier Guardian*, May 2, 1849, p. 1, col. 4; “Conference Minutes,” *Frontier Guardian*, May 1, 1850, p. 1, col. 3; “Adjourned Conference,” *Frontier Guardian*, May 2, 1851, p. 1, col. 6; “Conference Minutes,” *Frontier Guardian*, October 31, 1851, p. 1, col. 5.

72. “Second Day,” *Frontier Guardian*, April 18, 1849, p. 2, col. 3.

73. “Conference Minutes,” *Frontier Guardian*, May 1, 1850, p. 1, cols. 1–4.

74. See “Conference Report,” *Frontier Guardian*, May 2, 1851, p. 1, col. 6.

75. See, “Tithing,” *Frontier Guardian*, December 12, 1849, p. 2, col. 1.

76. See, “Tithing,” *Frontier Guardian*, February 21, 1849, p. 2, col. 6.

an abstinence of food and drink, he set aside a specific day each spring for the practice.⁷⁷

Although the payment of tithes and offerings was important, there were other issues that demanded Hyde's response. One issue was an attempt by Latter-day Saints in Kanessville to distinguish between "Brighamites" and "Hydeites." To those who believed Hyde and his counselors were divided in their "feelings, views, and in our counsel, &c.," Hyde assured them that "we have been *one* and united in *every single movement and principle*."⁷⁸ For those who openly opposed him and the teachings of the Church, Hyde responded by printing their names and alleged sins in the *Guardian*.⁷⁹

As for self-proclaimed Church leaders, like Sidney Rigdon, Alpheus Cutler, James Strang, and others, Hyde referred to them as the "disaffected." Those who followed such men were called upon to repent. Hyde then advised the faithful to embrace returning prodigals and to gain greater wisdom by adhering to the word of God.⁸⁰ "The Alpha and Omega of our song is, 'KEEP OUT OF DEBT,'" and "the practice of gaming on the Sabbath will cease."⁸¹ He also condemned excuses for failing to worship, such as "Overslept myself. Could not dress in time. Too cold. Too hot. Too windy. Too wet. Too damp. Too cloudy. Don't feel disposed. No other time to myself."⁸² Yet, Hyde believed, "the Church in Pottawatamie county was never more united than at the present time."⁸³

Poetry. Poetry in the *Guardian* had historical significance to Mormons. For example, "The Wayfaring Man," "The Assassination of Gen's Joseph Smith and Hyrum Smith," "Cry of the Martyrs," "The Seer," "Praise to the Man," and "'Tis an Orphan at Its Birth" reminded readers of Joseph Smith's martyrdom. "A Journeying Song for the Camp of Israel," "California Song," "Let Me Go to the Valley," "Farwell to Kanessville," "Farewell to Iowa," and "Haste to Zion" reminded readers of the trek that lay ahead.

77. See, "Fasting and Prayer," *Frontier Guardian*, April 4, 1849, p. 2, col. 1.

78. "Brighamites and Hydeites," *Frontier Guardian*, June 27, 1849, p. 2, col. 1; italics in original.

79. See, "Meeting of the High Council," *Frontier Guardian*, February 7, 1849, p. 4, col. 4; "James H. Mulholland . . .," *Frontier Guardian*, February 7, 1849, p. 2, col. 3.

80. "Rigdon's Confessions," *Frontier Guardian*, November 14, 1849, p. 2, col. 3; "Prospects of the Church," *Frontier Guardian*, April 4, 1851, p. 2, cols. 3-4.

81. "Keep Out of Debt," *Frontier Guardian*, August 8, 1849, p. 2, col. 4; "Shooting on the Sabbath-day," *Frontier Guardian*, November 14, 1849, p. 2, col. 4.

82. "Excuse for not Going to Church," *Frontier Guardian*, May 15, 1850, p. 1, col. 6.

83. "Prospects of the Church," p. 2, col. 3.

Local News of Kanesville. Hyde selectively printed news of greatest interest to the majority in Pottawattamie County. He instructed those “residing on the low bottoms of the Missouri river . . . to remove to higher ground.”⁸⁴ He printed news of “a good Choir of vocalists” being formed.⁸⁵ But it was government issues, marriages, deaths, and advertisements that consistently appeared in his newspaper.

Government Issues. Hyde held strong opinions on local government issues, especially elections. He believed Latter-day Saints had a right to vote in all elections. Furthermore, when state officials threatened to disfranchise Pottawattamie County in 1849, Hyde printed the full text of a legislator’s speech before the Iowa senate opposing the “deliberate disfranchisement of a whole county [Pottawattamie] containing, 4000 or 5000 inhabitants [who are Mormons], to condemn it to anarchy, exile and banishment, for no other assignable reason than because they voted as they pleased.” When the proposed legislation failed to pass, Hyde printed, “Our readers may forget as soon as they can, the injustice which the Democrats sought to do us. Indeed, the sooner the better; but never forget that four Whig members of the Senate stood by your interests to the very last hour.”⁸⁶

Angered by the action of state Democrats, Hyde promoted the Whig Party and its candidates and encouraged his readers to do likewise. On May 29, 1850, he asked, “Are You Whig or Democrat?” To Hyde, Whigs were as the “gentle rain upon the earth . . . while the Democrats are like a torrent falling from a broken cloud.”⁸⁷ “To the Polls! To the Polls!!” was his patriotic cry.⁸⁸

When Hyde learned that a “poll book” containing the votes of the Kanesville precinct had been stolen, he was livid. “Down with the Poll Book thieves!” he printed.⁸⁹ However, stealing the poll book was only one crime in Kanesville. Hyde also demanded that those “aiding and abetting boys to fight in our streets” be brought to justice.⁹⁰

84. “Notice,” *Frontier Guardian*, February 7, 1849, p. 2, col. 2.

85. “Music,” *Frontier Guardian*, August 8, 1849, p. 2, col. 5.

86. “Mr. Springer’s Speech, in the Iowa Senate,” *Frontier Guardian*, April 4, 1849, p. 1, col. 5; “We publish today . . .,” *Frontier Guardian*, April 4, 1849, p. 2, col. 3.

87. “Are You Whig or Democrat?” *Frontier Guardian*, May 29, 1850, p. 2, col. 1.

88. “To the Polls! To the Polls!!” *Frontier Guardian*, July 24, 1850, p. 2, col. 2.

89. “Stealing the Poll Books,” *Frontier Guardian*, March 20, 1850, p. 2, col. 4; “Contested Election,” *Frontier Guardian*, July 24, 1850, p. 3, col. 3.

90. “The Bars,” *Frontier Guardian*, January 8, 1851, p. 1, col. 4; “Interest vs Morality,” *Frontier Guardian*, January 8, 1851, p. 2, col. 2.

Marriages and Deaths. It was customary to announce upcoming marriages in the *Guardian*. The name of the bride and groom and the date and place of the wedding formed a typical entry. A poetic phrase promising future happiness for the bride and groom appeared next to the marriage entry when a gift was presented to the *Guardian* staff by the intended.

Death notices were written in a brief, matter-of-fact manner. For example, “We are informed that Oliver Cowdry [*sic*], Esq., died, at Richmond, Ray County, Missouri, on the 3d day of March last, of Consumption.”⁹¹ For those whose death brought special sorrow to the *Guardian* staff, a poetic verse followed the obituary.⁹²

Advertisements. To promote trade in town and elsewhere along the Missouri River, Hyde offered reasonable rates that encouraged merchants to advertise in the *Guardian*.⁹³ He encouraged readers to fraternize establishments that placed ads in his newspaper.

To discerning readers, however, it was establishments in Kanesville and vicinity that received his highest commendations.⁹⁴ Whether the reader was looking for a watchmaker, jeweler, tailor, dentist, doctor, sign painter, gunsmith, tin maker, music teacher, or attorney, Kanesville had the service. Those needing a buggy, cook stove, ready-made clothing, cheese, or a ferry ride, should look no further than greater Kanesville.

Dependence on Newspaper Exchanges and Telegraph Dispatches. As with other papers of the day, the *Guardian* was a composite of exchanges and telegraph dispatches. National and foreign news, fictional stories, wise sayings, and humor appearing in the *Guardian* lacked originality but proved Hyde had access to such papers as the *Boston Times*, *Burlington (IA) Hawk Eye*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Cincinnati Gazette*, *Detroit Free Press*,

91. “We are informed . . .,” *Frontier Guardian*, April 3, 1850, p. 2, col. 4.

92. See, for example, “Died,” *Frontier Guardian*, September 19, 1849, p. 2, col. 6; “Died,” *Frontier Guardian*, October 17, 1849, p. 2, col. 6; “Obituary,” *Frontier Guardian*, May 16, 1851, p. 2, col. 2.

93. See “Terms of the Guardian,” *Frontier Guardian*, February 7, 1849, p. 1, col. 1.

94. See, for example, “Business is lively . . .,” *Frontier Guardian*, May 16, 1849, p. 2, col. 1; “To Emigrants,” *Frontier Guardian*, January 23, 1850, p. 2, col. 3. Not everyone agreed with Hyde’s assessment of Kanesville. The *Keokuk Dispatch* reprinted an account written by a reporter for the *St. Louis (MO) Republican* who visited the Mormon community and wrote, “I visited the Mormon settlement at Council Bluffs. I found the Saints in what they call a prosperous and happy condition; but which I (not seeing things with an eye of faith) call a most miserable and degraded state, considering that they claim to be the chosen of the Lord, an example to all nations, and harbingers of the Millenium.” “Mormon Settlement in Iowa,” *Keokuk Dispatch*, January 25, 1849, 2.

Grand River (MI) Eagle, *New York Evening Post*, *New York Sun*, *New York Tribune*, *Springfield (IL) Republican*, and the *Washington (DC) Union*, as well as the *St. Louis (MO) Republican*, *St. Louis (MO) Union*, *New Orleans Times*, and *Washington (DC) Globe*.⁹⁵

Through these papers, Hyde informed readers of national events, such as the death of prominent politicians. Likewise, stories of the New York World's Fair, steamboat tragedies, railroad plans to the Pacific, and an "aerial machine now constructing in New York, to carry passengers to San Francisco" did not occasion unwarranted, lengthy editorials.⁹⁶

But for news that directly or indirectly had bearing upon the Saints, he took an aggressive, and sometimes confrontational, stance. For example, after reporting the electoral vote that propelled Zachary Taylor to the presidential office, Hyde delighted in noting that Martin Van Buren, who would not use his presidential office to help Latter-day Saints, did not garner one vote.⁹⁷ And when several exchanges claimed Mormons in the Salt Lake Valley had more than one wife, Hyde printed, "Some of our exchanges say that the Mormon men at Salt Lake Valley have from five to twenty-five wives, If this is so, they are certainly ahead of us, and if they keep on, they will be as bad as King David and Solomon, and some others of whom we read of in olden time."⁹⁸

When arguments were raised against admitting Deseret as a state, Hyde printed verbatim opinions from around the world. He told his readers that in Little Rock, Arkansas, Deseret was viewed as "Modern miracles—The New Mormon State." In Belleville, Illinois, the territory was an "internal organization being a Theocracy." The *New York Tribune* called it a "mystical appellation derived from their religious dialect" while the *London Times* claimed the United States would face a "great evil from contact with people

95. Of all the papers at his disposal, Hyde favored the *St. Louis Republican*. See, for example, "Missouri Republican," *Frontier Guardian*, March 7, 1849, p. 2, col. 3; "Correspondence of the Missouri Republican," *Frontier Guardian*, February 7, 1849, p. 2, col. 4.

96. "Balloon for California," *Frontier Guardian*, April 4, 1849, p. 3, col. 5.

97. Joseph Smith met with Martin Van Buren. After Joseph explained the problems his people had suffered in the state of Missouri, Van Buren said, "Your cause is just, but I can do nothing for you." Smith, *History of the Church*, 4:80.

98. "Some of our exchanges say . . .," *Frontier Guardian*, December 26, 1849, p. 2, col. 2.

so loose and radical in their notions of God.”⁹⁹ Hyde then countered their arguments by writing of Deseret as a westward Zion.¹⁰⁰

As to news of how Mormonism was viewed abroad, Hyde was dependent on European newspapers carried on trans-Atlantic steamers, which regularly docked at St. John’s, Canada. The papers were read by telegraphers at St. John’s, who sent their summaries via “telegraph dispatches” to the States. Dispatches received at the *St. Louis Republican* office were published. Hyde found that most foreign clippings had some bearing upon Church members since Mormon missionaries were laboring in England, France, Denmark, and Italy. And news from Russia, Hungary, Austria, and even Tuscany was important because Mormons believed it would not be long until missionaries, perhaps themselves or their loved ones, would be called to labor in these far-distant climes.

Wise Sayings. Short pithy sayings were popular in nineteenth-century newspapers. The following are examples of the wise sayings Hyde printed: “The friendship of some people is like our shadow, keeping close to us while we walk in the sunshine, but deserting us the moment we enter the shade,”¹⁰¹ “The climax of human indifference has arrived when a lady don’t care how she looks,”¹⁰² and “Every species of moral reform ought to begin with ourselves.”¹⁰³

Fiction. The reading public often demanded short fictional stories. Usually, there was little substance to them, but in the first issues of the *Guardian* the stories conveyed morals.¹⁰⁴ Yet as time passed and few stories in the exchanges had a moral turn, Hyde concluded to print frivolity and leave readers to judge its worth. When Hyde eventually turned to stories of romance, his subscriptions increased.¹⁰⁵

99. “Modern Miracles—The New Mormon State,” *Frontier Guardian*, February 6, 1850, p. 1, col. 4; “The Mormons,” *Frontier Guardian*, February 6, 1850, p. 1, col. 5; “The Mormons in the valley . . .,” *Frontier Guardian*, February 6, 1850, p. 1, col. 5; “The London Times . . .,” *Frontier Guardian*, February 6, 1850, p. 1, col. 6.

100. “Believe not Every Spirit, but Try the Spirits if They Be of God,” *Frontier Guardian*, September 4, 1850, p. 2, col. 2.

101. “The friendship of some people . . .,” *Frontier Guardian*, May 30, 1849, p. 1, col. 6.

102. “The climax of human indifference . . .,” *Frontier Guardian*, September 5, 1849, p. 4, col. 3.

103. “Moral Reform,” *Frontier Guardian*, October 3, 1849, p. 1, col. 6.

104. See “We must ask pardon . . .,” *Frontier Guardian*, February 7, 1849, p. 2, col. 3.

105. See, for example, “List of Monies received . . .,” *Frontier Guardian*, February 6, 1850, p. 2, col. 6. See also the annotated list of final monies and examine the dates of subscription on the *Frontier Guardian* DVD-ROM.

Humor. Jokes were another common element in newspapers of the era. Some examples from the *Guardian* include “A person who had been listening to a very dull address, remarked that every thing went of[f] well, especially the audience!”¹⁰⁶; “Why cannot California be admitted as a State? Because the inhabitants are all *miners*”¹⁰⁷; and “‘I have met my match,’ as the Devil said when he encountered the lawyer.”¹⁰⁸

Conclusion

The *Frontier Guardian* followed in the footsteps of other Mormon newspapers by acting as an official organ for the Church. Hyde effectively used this medium to keep the Saints east of the Salt Lake Valley informed of Church business and to encourage them to gather to Zion. More specifically, the *Guardian* offers an interesting view of the Church during this era, which is different from that in Salt Lake City’s nineteenth-century *Deseret News*. The *Deseret News* tells of permanency—settling new areas and planting and harvesting crops. The *Guardian* tells of impermanency—waiting and preparing a people to cross the plains to reach a westward Zion.

The new accessibility of the *Frontier Guardian* on DVD is significant for historians, Church members, and genealogists. Publications that mention the Saints’ presence in Iowa are relatively few, and their written accounts of the Mormon settlement tend to be scanty. Also, stories in the *Guardian* clarify the location of over ninety communities on the Iowa side of the Missouri River, thus revealing the large Latter-day Saint presence in Pottawattamie County¹⁰⁹ and reinforcing the significance that Mormons had in western Iowa.

Names published in the *Frontier Guardian* make up a valuable genealogical database. Its 109 agents traveled throughout most of the United States soliciting subscribers. Through their efforts, the names of 2,975 subscribers residing in England, Upper Canada, and the United States, were printed in the *Guardian*. Another 753 names of individuals who failed to pick up letters at their respective post offices were printed also. And

106. “Going Off Well,” *Frontier Guardian*, March 7, 1849, p. 4, col. 6.

107. “Why cannot California . . .,” *Frontier Guardian*, May 2, 1849, p. 4, col. 5.

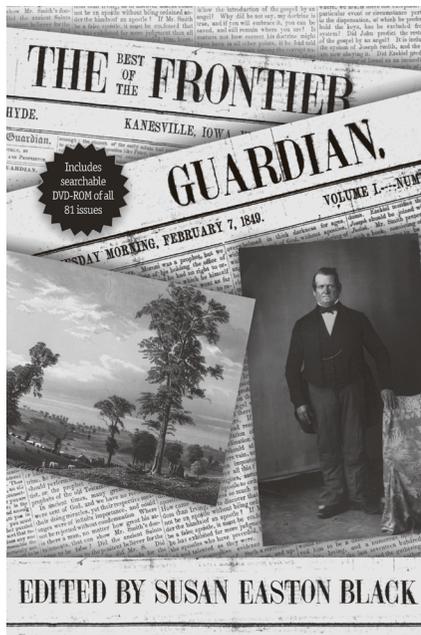
108. “I have met my match . . .,” *Frontier Guardian*, October 3, 1849, p. 4, col. 4.

109. For example, through reading the *Guardian*, historians now know that Pleasant Grove was eight miles above Kaneshville on the south side of Big Musquito and about five miles from Indian Mill in Pottawattamie County, while Indian Town was fifty miles east of Kaneshville on the east fork of the Nichnebotna River near the Pottawattamie Village of Mi-au-mise. See the annotated list of places mentioned in the newspaper on the *Frontier Guardian* DVD-ROM.

over 1,200 names of Kanesville residents and shopkeepers appeared in the *Guardian*. Furthermore, the newspaper lists Latter-day Saints leaving Potawatamie County for the Salt Lake Valley or for California as well as those who remained behind in Iowa.

In summary, the *Frontier Guardian* not only reveals the presence of at least four thousand Latter-day Saints in the greater Kanesville area during this era and contains the names of thousands of people, it also illuminates the religious, social, economic, and political aspects of a multidimensional Mormon society.

Susan Easton Black (who can be reached via email at byustudies@byu.edu) is Professor of Church History and Doctrine at Brigham Young University. She has authored, edited, or compiled over a hundred books during her career. This article is excerpted and adapted from *The Best of the Frontier Guardian*, published in 2009 by BYU Studies with an accompanying DVD containing a searchable library of all eighty-one issues of the *Frontier Guardian*.



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