Book Reviews

The Hofmann Maze

A Book Review Essay
with a Chronology and Bibliography of the Hofmann Case

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The impact of the Mark W. Hofmann murder and forgery cases will be felt in the LDS community for years to come. This is obviously true in the lives of the families he so brutally affected with his pipe bombs; it is not any less true in the lives of his own family whose love and support he betrayed so callously. But it is also true in the larger Mormon community where the shock of murder and the widespread deceit through forgeries seemingly touched the very core of Mormon history and tradition.

While it is early to fully assess the damage to either the public or the scholarly community, what follows is an attempt to provide readers of *BYU Studies* with a reasonably comprehensive guide to the literature and basic facts of the Hofmann case. First, we present a review essay on the three book-length studies of the Hofmann saga; next, a detailed chronology of the Hofmann case as a guide through the complexities of the various episodes and events; finally, a bibliography designed to lead readers to other source materials in addition to providing a guide to the main known Hofmann forgeries. While Hofmann's forgery activities went far beyond Mormon manuscripts, the focus here is almost entirely on the Mormon-related materials.

David J. Whittaker is associate librarian with responsibility for Mormon manuscripts in the Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, and an associate editor of *BYU Studies*. He expresses his thanks to the many individuals who reviewed and assisted with the chronology and the bibliography, particularly Ron Barney of the Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; Dean C. Jessee, William G. Hartley, and Ronald K. Esplin of the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Church History, BYU; and Paul H. Peterson of the BYU Department of Church History and Doctrine. An abridged version of the review essay appeared as "Special Section" insert in *Newsletter* (Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University) 3 (September 1988).