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Restorations Belong to Everyone

Florence S. Jacobsen

Restoring a home is a very personal matter for the restorer. After research and study, the restorer becomes a member of that long ago family, thinking their thoughts, living the routine of their daily lives, knowing what and when they ate, how they cooked, what they wore, how they communicated, traveled, and entertained. The restorer comes to understand the family's place in the community, their education, daily work, financial status, and even their personal tastes.

The restorer is faced with reconstructing, in those empty rooms, the historic yesterdays of another era and incorporating, along with the furnishings, the spirit of determination, love, strength, survival, and fulfillment of those who lived there many years ago. When the restoration is complete, a strong personal tie has developed which is not easy to break.

I remember well the night the restoration of the Joseph Smith Home in Palmyra was completed in the summer of 1965. The handmade curtains and oilcloth stenciled blinds were hanging at the windows, the furniture in place, the dishes in the cupboard, the pantry filled with crocks and pans, the beds made, the night clothes hung on large square nails in the closets, and the candles in the old tin candle holders, ready to be lit with sulfur matches. It looked as if the family had stepped outside for a moment. As darkness came on, we lit the candles and by their glow walked from room to room, surveying each familiar item, reminiscing regarding the work it had required, but not begrudging the hours we had spent scraping paint from the small window panes, hemming by hand the curtains, polishing the old floorboards on our knees, cleaning the rust of years from the old milk pans. But most of all, we keenly felt the spirit of the great family who had once lived there. We sat in the rocking chairs in the parlor and reverently remembered the great events that took place in Palmyra and in this home, and their relationship to our own lives. Reluctantly, we blew out the candles, shut the door, turned the key in

the lock, and said goodbye. In the morning, the home which had been "ours" during the restoration would belong to everyone.¹

Having been through this same experience with Brigham Young's Lion House, the Forest Farm in Salt Lake City, the Joseph Smith, Sr., Home in Palmyra, and helping to furnish the Wilford Woodruff and Brigham Young Homes in Nauvoo, and the Promised Valley Theatre in Salt Lake, the prospect of two more restorations in the St. George area was not a new or overwhelming task; neither was it without problems. November 1, 1974 was a typical day in the Curator's Office,² taking care of visitors, answering inquiries by phone and mail regarding historic sites, art, and artifacts, accepting the gift of a lovely pioneer quilt and an English blueware tureen brought across the plains by ox team, when I answered the flashing light on my phone indicating an incoming call. I suddenly realized I had an unusual situation on my hands. The call was from a representative of the St. George Chamber of Commerce, who expressed great concern that their busy winter season was upon them and Brigham Young's Winter Home in St. George (see Illustration 1) and the Jacob Hamblin Home in Santa Clara, Utah, were closed to visitors.

The city of St. George had booked many conventions and tour groups for the winter months and these two historic attractions—now closed, but advertised in the Chamber of Commerce brochures as "open to the public"—hurt the integrity of the community, since the homes were an integral part of their heritage where the story of St. George could be heard by visitors.

I was sympathetic to the Chamber of Commerce problem, but helpless, as negotiations for exchanging the Church-owned Brigham Young Farm Home in Salt Lake City for the state-owned Brigham Young Winter Home in St. George and the Jacob Hamblin Home in Santa Clara were not yet completed. All three homes which had been open to the public for tours, were now closed until the properties could be exchanged.

The Brigham Young Winter Home in St. George had been owned by the Young family from 1870 until 1882. After being left vacant for a decade, it served as an office and residence for other families until the mid-1940s, when it was again left vacant and allowed to fall into such disrepair, it was proposed the house be demolished.³

¹Those involved in refurbishing the home were: Mrs. Elizabeth E. "Tibby" Simmons, Kaysville; Mrs. Margaret R. Jackson, Mrs. Gwen Wilcox, Mrs. Vie Watts, and Mrs. Florence S. Jacobsen, all of Salt Lake City.

²From October 1973 to January 1975, the Curator's Division was part of the Church Public Communications Department; since then, it has been part of the Church Historical Department.

³Dorothy O. Rea, "Restoration Nears Finish," *Deseret News*, 26 March 1963.



Salt Lake City U. S.
July 25th 1896

James G. Blackleg
St. George

Please deliver to Sister Lucy B.
Young, Guardian & Trustee for & in behalf of Rhoda Mabel
Young, Cora Young and Susan Young, the following
personal property in your charge at St. George:

| | |
|------------------------------------------------|-------|
| 1 Unpainted pine table | 4.00 |
| 4 Flat-irons | 4.00 |
| 1 Blazed washbowl | 1.25 |
| 1 Fly catcher | .75 |
| 3 Feather dusters & Broom, corn brooms the lot | 1.00 |
| 3 Small glass table lamps | 1.00 |
| 1 Varnished paper map of U. S. | 1.50 |
| 1 Pine table 2 leaves | 6.00 |
| 1 de centre table with figured cover | 11.00 |
| 12 Rush bottom chairs (painted) | 24.00 |
| 6 Black, walnut hat racks | 6.00 |
| 1 Large table bell | .25 |
| 1 Small oval tray | .70 |
| 2 Match Safes | .50 |

Fortunately, Gordon C. Young, a great-grandson of Brigham Young and Mary Ann Angell Young, hoping to preserve the home for posterity, put up the initial money to save it from demolition. He and other descendants of Brigham Young then purchased the house and property in 1959 and gave it to the state of Utah to be restored and operated as an historic site. From then until the exchange of homes was proposed by the state and Church in September 1973, it was operated as a state historic site. In August 1975, the exchange had still not been made when I visited the homes in the Dixie area to assess possible restoration needs.

I was impressed with these two historic homes, but my personal feelings were mixed regarding giving up the Brigham Young Farm Home which in former days was on the outskirts of Salt Lake City surrounded by acres of meadows, fields of grain, alfalfa, corn, potatoes, mulberry trees planted for sericulture, and black locusts for making furniture. The home was a "modern cottage of generous proportions" and a favorite place of entertainment and festivities, especially New Year's Day when family and friends would arrive from the city by sleigh, sheltered from the cold by buffalo robes.

Upstairs, the long hall which spread across the south end of the house had many uses, one of which was dancing, with a band of musicians in one end playing to the caller's "Balance to the Corner" and all "Promenade."⁴

After the death of Brigham Young, the Farm Home was used as a Church meetinghouse, then a residence, and as it changed hands the original structure was remodeled, the large porches and the rear of the house, including the long hall, removed. The farm land was divided into building lots until houses, city streets, and a freeway encroached, leaving only a portion of the original house on a small city lot. Gwen and Frank Wilcox lived in the home for fifteen years, having purchased it in 1954. In 1969, they proposed giving their equity in the house to the Church providing it would be restored. Approval was given, the remaining mortgage paid, and the physical restoration commenced.

My involvement was as adviser throughout the long months of restoration, as the contractor literally put back that portion of the home which had been removed. I watched as Frank and Gwen Wilcox lovingly "put together" the interior furnishings, the major portion coming from their own collection. The restoration was done under the direction of Elder Mark E. Petersen, of the Quo-

⁴Susa Young Gates and Leah D. Widtsoe, *The Life Story of Brigham Young* (New York: Macmillan, 1931), pp. 343-44.

rum of the Twelve, in his capacity as Chairman of the Church Historic Sites Committee.

It was a happy day, 2 April 1970, when Elder Spencer W. Kimball, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve, gave the dedicatory prayer. Now the old house, which more than a hundred years ago had been home for the daily living and festivities of an historic family, plus the center of a thriving 600-acre experimental farm of intermountain agricultural "firsts," was ready to provide the public a glimpse of a way of life and the culture of the past.⁵

During my twelve years of involvement with restorations in the Church, a special process had evolved, even though each project had been uniquely different. The Dixie restorations of the Brigham Young Winter Home and the Jacob Hamblin home in Santa Clara (to be completed simultaneously), again posed special problems. Following the exchange of properties, restoration approval was given, and a budget was allocated. A supervisor from the Church Building Department was assigned, and an architect chosen with the Curator's Division serving as consultant.⁶

First—Thorough historical research regarding the purpose and period of the community, the property, the home, family life, and individual members was completed.

Second—The historical architect, using the research available, and consulting with the curator, drew plans of the original building and specified reconstruction needs, including the inconspicuous addition of some modern necessities, such as heating and air conditioning systems, electrical outlets, a security system, along with the finish of interior and exterior walls, floors, woodwork, and landscaping. Even the visitors' entrance, exit, and route through the home were considered in the early planning stages, so consecutive tour groups would not cross each other's paths.

Third—The actual reconstruction and restoration was undertaken, with bids being taken from various contractors and the contract let.⁷ Then the physical work began, with the architect, building supervisor, and the Curator's Division guiding the restorative process, including gardens, fences, gates, and drinking fountains.

Fourth—Using research information, the Curator's Division attempted to locate and acquire all the necessary furnishings (see Illustration 2) from feather ticks to pantry crocks, bric-a-brac to window blinds, carpets to fringed linen towels, books to candle-

⁵Ibid.

⁶The Church Building Division Supervisor was Karl G. Lagerberg, and the architectural firm was Steven T. Baird and Associates, A. I. A., Salt Lake City, Utah.

⁷To the E. Lavell Goodwin Construction Company, St. George, Utah.

sticks, and coal oil lamps to coverlets. Using the floor plan, a proposed furniture schedule was detailed on paper with each item in place and each picture hung. Along with the furnishings, special replaceable rag-rug runners, to protect the historical wooden and carpeted floors, were woven for the areas where the public would walk.⁸ Barricade standards were designed and hand-grained to match the woodwork and complement the decor of the home.

Fifth—As each item was acquired, it was tagged with a number corresponding to the furniture schedule on the floor plan (see Illustration 3), then stored in a space allocated for the specific room. For example, the secretary (desk) to be placed in the parlor was purchased from an antique dealer in Salt Lake, moved to the Curator's storage area, cleaned, repaired, and tagged with "J Parlor" to correspond with the parlor furniture schedule, then moved to the storage space reserved for the parlor furniture. Each item was thus treated, including curtains, bric-a-brac, chandeliers, wall sconces, crocks, irons, and even dust ruffles. To furnish nine rooms by long distance and include every item for a "living" home, required months of searching and many decisions, plus consternation with soaring prices and the unavailability of many historical items. Sometimes concessions were made with the hope that eventually a better example could be acquired and placed in the home later.

Sixth—Along with the acquisition of furnishings which were historically related to the Brigham Young Family, their contemporaries, or the period, the Curator's Division began working on the script for the guides who would escort visitors through the home, plus a printed brochure to give to the public, the completion of which had to coincide with the opening of the restored home.

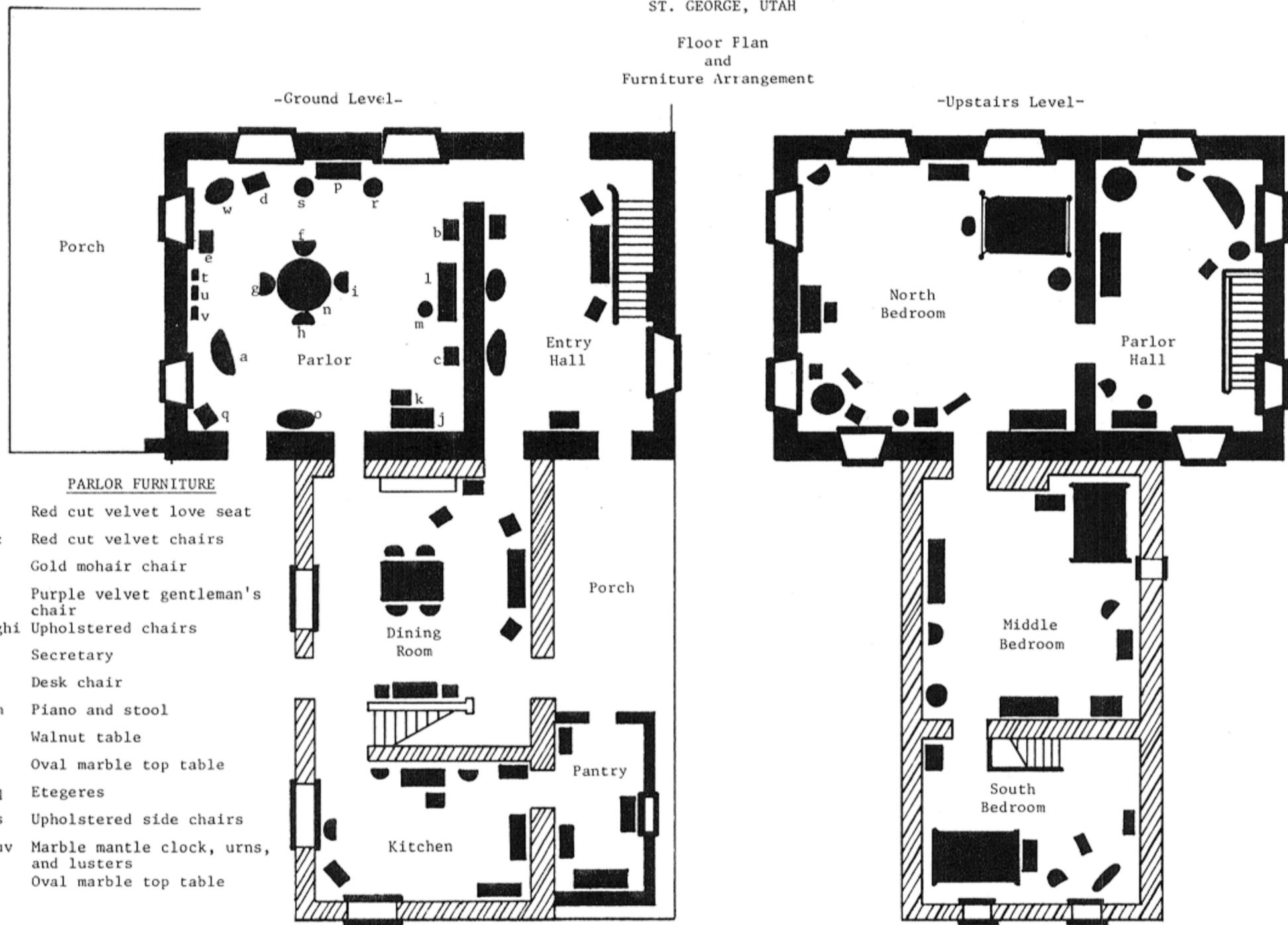
Seventh—When the physical restoration of the building was complete, a good housecleaning was in order: paint scraped from the old window panes, windows washed inside and outside, porches scrubbed, and floors cleaned and polished. Local members of the Church responded to the request for help and the home was spotlessly cleaned, ready to receive the "new" old furnishings.

Eighth—A moving van was rented to transport the furnishings to the home in St. George, along with such modern equipment as an ironing board and iron, sewing machine, nails, hammer, picture wire, hooks, wax, cleaning cloths, brass polish, shoe polish, stove black, window cleaner—the list was much longer, and all were used to complete the home. As the van was unloaded, rugs and

⁸The rag rug runners were woven by Deseret Industries from all wool rags, and then dyed brown by Salt Lake Cleaning & Dyeing Company, to soften the brightness of the modern colors used in weaving the runners.

RESTORED BRIGHAM YOUNG'S WINTER RESIDENCE
ST. GEORGE, UTAH

Floor Plan
and
Furniture Arrangement



- PARLOR FURNITURE
- a Red cut velvet love seat
 - bc Red cut velvet chairs
 - d Gold mohair chair
 - e Purple velvet gentleman's chair
 - fghi Upholstered chairs
 - j Secretary
 - k Desk chair
 - lm Piano and stool
 - n Walnut table
 - o Oval marble top table
 - pq Etegeres
 - rs Upholstered side chairs
 - tuv Marble mantle clock, urns, and lusters
 - w Oval marble top table

 Structure initially purchased by Brigham Young in 1871
 Additions made by Brigham Young after 1871

carpets were laid first. Furniture followed, each tag showing in which room and where it was to be placed.

Ninth—After all was unloaded, the real work began. The newly-wired antique hanging lamps, coal oil wall sconces, and chandeliers were installed, the rope beds were roped, and made up in the manner of 1872, with feather ticks, sheets, old quilts, pillow shams, and coverlets, all ready to receive a weary family member. Curtains were pressed, some shortened, curtain rods and tie backs installed, and finally the curtains were hung. Pictures adorned the walls, and the bric-a-brac was carefully unpacked and placed on the polished surfaces of the furniture. Then the pathway rugs were laid and the barricades put in place to protect the lovely artifacts of long ago.

In researching the history of the home and the community, we discovered their special skills, the kinds of furniture and fabrics manufactured and used, and what they raised on their farms and in their gardens. We also learned of Brigham Young's Dixie experiences, that he owned other houses in the community, and that the purpose for his long winter stays in St. George during the last years of his life was to find rest from his heavy responsibilities and improve his failing health.⁹

In diaries, Church minutes, and histories, it was exciting to find colorful descriptions of the colonization of St. George, so named by Brigham Young for his close associate, George A. Smith.

For example, Erastus Snow, the apostle assigned to oversee the Cotton Mission, gave the 300 families called in October Conference 1861 to settle Dixie, these instructions in preparation for leaving their homes to build a new community:

I do not feel it will be wisdom to load ourselves down with household furniture, but if a woman wishes to take her rocking chair along, why, let her take it, . . . but leave the heavy furniture behind.

In reference to timber for making our bed steads and other articles of furniture, we can find plenty of it.¹⁰

We want every mechanic to take with him his tools.

Those brethren who can, will do well to take along tents, particularly those who have large families.

All kinds of choice seeds should be taken, particularly those that are adapted to that part of the territory.

Next spring we shall have a carding machine; hence those that have sheep should take them along . . . for we not only want to

⁹Dale Glen Wood, "Brigham Young's Activities in St. George During the Later Years of His Life" (Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1963), p. 27.

¹⁰Western White (Ponderosa) Pine was quite plentiful and was the principal wood used in Dixie for making furniture.

raise the cotton, but the wool. We want the linsey woolsey and the jeans.

All musicians that are called will take their instruments with them, . . . also their music books. . . . Take your school books along. We will pitch our tents and teach our children.¹¹

Among those called to go were blacksmiths, farmers, vinedressers, wheelwrights, machinists, coopers, adobe makers, masons, plasterers, painters, carpenters, joiners, shingle makers, cabinetmakers, chair makers, weavers, tailors, millwrights, farmers, tanners, and many others with skills to establish a permanent settlement.¹² Their new homes were well-built, usually of adobe, the architecture reminiscent of the homes they had left behind in other settlements.

Brigham Young often visited the southern settlements as he had great interest in the success of the industries which would help make the Saints more self-sufficient by producing commodities that could not be produced in the northern territories, such as cotton, grapes, figs, molasses, indigo, olives, madder, sugar, almonds, and other products of a southern climate.¹³

From 1861 to the first winter visit in 1870, Brigham Young made eight recorded journeys to St. George, not staying any one time long enough to really rest. Late in 1866, Brigham Young sent word to St. George that he would like to winter there, but felt he could not until the settlement was linked to Great Salt Lake City by telegraph. The telegraph line was completed in 1867. On 25 November 1870, St. George authorities received a telegram stating President Brigham Young and George A. Smith had departed from Salt Lake to spend the winter in Southern Utah. The party arrived 8 December 1870. A letter from George A. Smith, dated 10 January 1871, explains Brigham Young's need to winter in a warmer climate:

It is clearly apparent that President Brigham Young did not seek a temporary retirement from the pressure of his ministry and business any too soon.

He has been confined to his room most of the time since we arrived.¹⁴

He was suffering from rheumatism and fatigue.

Susa Young Gates, daughter of Brigham Young and Lucy Bigelow, writes:

¹¹Ivan J. Barrett, "History of the Cotton Mission and Cotton Culture in Utah" (Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1947), pp. 113-15.

¹²Juanita Brooks, "St. George, Utah—A Community Portrait."

¹³Brigham Young in *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1855-86), 9:201.

¹⁴Wood, "Brigham Young's Activities in St. George," p. 28.

In 1870, father moved my mother to St. George, where he bought a good house, surrounded by a semi-tropical garden of grapes, almonds, peaches and other luscious fruits.

At first, father brought his friends and Aunt Amelia, as well, to spend the winter at mother's home, which was always over-crowded. Aunt Eliza Burgess also had a home in St. George.¹⁵

In 1870, Brigham Young purchased a four-room adobe house from Henry W. Lawrence. Lawrence had previously purchased the home from James A. Chesney, who had built the house on a lot he had "won" in a draw from a hat when property was allocated to the new settlers in 1862. This home became known as Brigham Young's "new" home.¹⁶

In 1872-73, Brigham Young had Miles Romney and son add to the original Chesney structure a spacious two-story adobe and native pine front section. The addition consisted of a large parlor, hall and stairway, upstairs parlor hall, and bedroom, plus porches and a full basement. An office was later built east of his residence.¹⁷

James A. Bleak, official St. George historian, reports that President Brigham Young arrived 15 December 1873, and immediately moved into his "new" house even though it was not completely finished. The home was not as ornate as its Salt Lake counterpart, but was comfortable with its high ceilings, well-lighted deep casement windows, and pine woodwork hand-grained to resemble oak.¹⁸ The decor was in keeping with his love for fine, well-built furniture, and proudly displayed store-bought carpets in the parlors. Brigham Young was usually accompanied on his visits by one of his wives, who saw to his comfort in the "new" home. When he was not in residence, the home was unoccupied.¹⁹

His last winter, 1876-77, was spent in his St. George Home. He was happy over the pending completion of the temple and proud that the entire structure, including the furnishings, was to be a home enterprise. Late in 1876, he reported:

The Provo factory is making upwards of a thousand yards of beautiful light-colored carpet for the building. Washington factory is busily engaged in making some, and the sisters of the Southern settlements are busy making rag carpets for the hallways. Fringe is being made out of Utah-produced silk for the altars and pulpits.²⁰

On 4 April 1877, the annual conference of the Church con-

¹⁵Gates and Widtsoe, *Life Story of Brigham Young*, p. 359.

¹⁶Wood, "Brigham Young's Activities in St. George," p. 42.

¹⁷Brigham Young Manuscript Collection, Box 90, Folder 4, Items 911, 919, and 022, Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah.

¹⁸Wood, "Brigham Young's Activities in St. George," p. 43.

¹⁹Gates and Widtsoe, *Life Story of Brigham Young*, pp. 343-45.

²⁰Wood, "Brigham Young's Activities in St. George," p. 56.

vened in St. George, combined with the formal dedicatory services of the temple. During that winter, Brigham Young attended to the temple ordinance work for his father, mother, and other kindred dead. One of his sons, a nephew, and five of his daughters, spent the winter assisting in this family temple work.²¹

At a meeting in St. George on 15 April, the President said: "I have been with you more than five months. I have this to say to those present and those of this stake of Zion, you have done an excellent work." The next day he left the southern community for the last time and started the return trip to Great Salt Lake City.²²

On 29 August 1877, Charles L. Walker of St. George, made the following report in his diary:

This afternoon a telegram came from Salt Lake City announcing the death of our much beloved President Brigham Young at 4 o'clock which spread a gloom over the entire city. Stores were closed and business suspended and all are wrapt in grief.²³

After Brigham Young's death, the executors of his estate compiled inventories of the furnishings of the St. George home. It was from this source that we knew he had an engraving of the Salt Lake Temple and lithographs of Joseph and Hyrum Smith hanging in his Winter Home, along with the other typical furnishings of the 1870-77 period. The inventories became the guide for furnishing the restored Brigham Young Winter Home.²⁴

With the help of many people, by May 1976, the restoration of the house and furnishings were completed and ready for dedication, everything in it having been cleaned, repaired, personally evaluated and chosen, polished, hung, draped, or placed.²⁵ Once again, we took that final reminiscing walk of inspection through the rooms, and knew it was time to turn out the lights, lock the door, and again say goodbye—the restoration no longer belonged to those of us who had worked on it, but to everyone.

²¹Gates and Widtsoe, *Life Story of Brigham Young*.

²²St. George Stake Records, 15 April 1877.

²³Wood, "Brigham Young's Activities in St. George," p. 60.

²⁴Inventory of household furniture, Brigham Young's Winter Home, St. George, noted in a letter from George Q. Cannon (executor, Brigham Young estate) to James G. Bleak (attorney), St. George, Utah, 25 July 1878. Brigham Young Manuscript Collection, MS d #54, Item 4, Church Historical Department.

²⁵Those who assisted in the restoration were: President Kenneth R. Metcalf, St. George, Utah Stake; Donald Ellsworth, director of the St. George Visitors Center; Missionaries Robert L. and Luella Wilson, Springville, Utah; Relief Society sisters from the stakes in the area and personnel from the Curator's Division of The Church Historical Department. The home was dedicated on 29 May 1976 by Elder L. Tom Perry, Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. A complete catalogue, including a photograph of each item, was compiled simultaneously as the furnishings were put in place.

The Religious and Family Background of Brigham Young

Rebecca Cornwall and Richard F. Palmer

Mormon origins, writes Jonathan Hughes in *The Vital Few*, are deeply embedded in the institutional experiments of nineteenth-century America.¹ Social and religious upheaval triggered by the Revolutionary War included a burst of Americans across the Appalachians—and the pioneering movement was accompanied by significant religious innovation. Nowhere, poses Whitney Cross, was religious upheaval more apparent and more intense than in western New York state.² Nowhere else, even before the War of 1812, does Hughes' description apply better: "Sects multiplied, vanished, reappeared in a new guise; latter-day prophets abounded in a whirlwind of Christian heresy and deviation. And in that heated religious atmosphere there appeared a new faith of stupendous novelty"—Mormonism, with its prophet who had seen God, his Indian Bible translated from gold plates, his grant of divine priesthood power to every male adherent.³

As its devotees multiplied, the founding prophet supervised the grooming for leadership of another son of the Burned-over District, Brigham Young, who even before Joseph Smith's assassination in western Illinois, became a controlling influence in the Council of Twelve Apostles and directed the emigration of thousands of British Saints to America. After 1844 he supervised the Mormon settlement of the Great Basin, established schools and irrigation companies, and made a permanent mark on the economy of the western United States. Four generations later he was still re-

Rebecca Cornwall is a research historian, Salt Lake City, Utah. Richard Palmer is an Auburn, New York, correspondent for the *Syracuse Herald-Journal*. The writers are grateful for the suggestions of Leonard Arrington and Davis Bitton.

¹Jonathan Hughes, *The Vital Few: American Economic Progress and its Protagonists* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1966), p. 74.

²Whitney R. Cross, *The Burned-Over District: The Social and Intellectual History of Enthusiastic Religion in Western New York: 1800-1850* (New York: Harper & Row, 1950).

³Hughes, *The Vital Few*, p. 75.

garded as a man with "that peculiar American compulsion to conquer and possess the continent," a man who "abhorred the great market economy" of Babylon (the United States), and abhorred its unwholesome moral fetishes to boot.⁴

But Brigham Young, until age thirty-one, was a painter and carpenter of less-than-modest origins from western New York. He was raised by parents who inclined toward the Lorenzo Dow, excitable brand of Methodism and, from age fourteen on, sought a peaceful, regulated, *unexcitable* life of hoped-for prosperity. He married a Methodist but mildly chastized his younger brother for taking too seriously the "dearth" of true biblical religion in the world. Though dutiful enough a believer, he preferred to be known as an honest, hard-working, thorough craftsman who dealt justly with his neighbors and was a friend to all, even his own wife and children. How does one find in such beginnings the leader of perhaps the most sensational institutional experiment to come out of the American frontier? Where in Brigham's roots are the strands of secret hopes and conflicts which somehow got caught up and worked by the social and religious currents of his day to produce a Latter-day Saint loyalist *sans par*? Clues must lie in Brigham's family and religious inheritance—in the religious cauldron of western New York and in the catharsis of frontier Methodism.

"My ancestors," said Brigham Young to a Great Basin congregation of similar New England background, "were some of the most strict religionists that lived upon the earth. You no doubt can say the same about yours."⁵ He referred not to his Pilgrim ancestors, but to his father and grandfather whose adult lives were encompassed by the long metamorphosis of Puritan theology into democracy. They attended church in an era in which Puritanism underwent secularization. Church membership was still synonymous with citizenship. The minister was still the social protagonist of a village or neighborhood; he controlled the schools and his voice was significant in political questions. But the Great Revival of 1740, whose intent was to reinvigorate colonial Protestantism with signs of piety and inner dedication, had divided New England Congregationalism.⁶ Jonathan Edwards, its distinguished protagonist, was deeply influenced by George Whitefield, who preached in the colonies in 1742 with enthusiastic reception. By

⁴Ibid., p. 73.

⁵Brigham Young, sermon of 15 August 1852, published in *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (London: Latter-day Saints Book Depot, 1854-86), 6:290 (hereafter cited as *JD*).

⁶See Edwin Scott Gaustad, *The Great Awakening in New England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968); and Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century* (New York: Macmillan, 1939).

Whitefield's second visit the reception had more than cooled, and the cooling had little to do with theology, for Whitefield's flocks were characterized by "disorderly conduct" and emotional emphasis on inner conversion. Those who opposed Whitefield and Edwards became known as the "Old Lights," and they had their day. But the New Lights attracted followers who believed Whitefield's method made religion vital. He put fizz into flat wine. While they lost the immediate battle, they won the war by setting a tone for western American religion for 150 years.⁷

Brigham Young's ancestry was represented by both Old and New Lights. His great-grandfather Ebenezer Goddard was born and raised in Boston. When he married and took up land in Framingham, Ebenezer "fell in with the opinions of John Wesley," believing that the colonial ministers of the day had strayed from strict biblicism.⁸ "Like the Jews," he believed in rigid observance of the Sabbath. A son-in-law illustrated this common colonial attitude with a story in which a Boston merchant was fined five shillings for kissing his wife on the Sunday he returned from a long voyage.⁹ Ebenezer believed in reading the Bible and holding it the only standard for human behavior and values.

John Howe, another of Brigham Young's great-grandfathers, was the first town councilman when Hopkinton, adjoining Framingham, was chartered in 1730. It was Howe, representing the town, who went to Boston to fetch Samuel Barrett of the North Church to be Hopkinton's pastor. Barrett, and John Howe as a leading townsman, were "steadfast and immovable" through the "troublesome times" of dissension and disaffection over the Great Revival and the Half-Way Covenant, an attempt to renew flagging church participation by permitting communion for persons of good intent who were nevertheless unable to meet rigid membership standards.¹⁰ In congregational alignment John Howe was an Old Light.

William Young, Brigham's great-grandfather on his father's side, was a friend of Barrett in Boston, but also a sympathizer with Scotch-Presbyterians who broke away from churches in Boston and nearby villages such as Hopkinton because of their dis-

⁷Ibid.; and Joseph Allen, *The Worcester Association and its Presidents: A History of Four Ministerial Associations: Marlborough, Worcester Old, Lancaster, Worcester New* (Boston: Nichols and Noyes, 1868).

⁸Samuel Adams Drake, *History of Middlesex County, Containing Carefully Prepared Histories of Every City and Town in the County* (Boston: Estes and Lauriat, 1880), p. 485.

⁹John Haven in a speech at a meeting of the Young and Haven families in Nauvoo, 8 January 1845, minutes in Brigham Young Collection, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah (cited hereafter as Church Archives).

¹⁰Allen, *Worcester Association*, pp. 60-61.

satisfaction with the Half-Way Covenant. A clause in his will provided money for the Boston Scotch-Presbyterian congregation.¹¹

If quantity of family lore is an indication, the Goddards were much more an influence on Brigham and his brothers and sisters than the Howes or Youngs. Ebenezer Goddard was "much respected and beloved for his upright conduct and benevolent principles and disposition." Indeed, in his young manhood he was appointed sheriff of Middlesex County. "Grandfather was a man that would do justice in the strictest manner to every one that employed him," wrote Brigham Young's sister, Fanny. "Therefore many widows called upon him to be an administrator to their estate, [in] which capacity he always gave entire satisfaction, and had many very warm and devoted friends."¹²

Although "not much inclined to the marvelous," Ebenezer and his wife were to have experiences that harked back to witchcraft days and that they could never account for by rational means. In the course of defending a widow's property, he came to odds with the leader of a "peculiar group of religionists" who lived secluded from the village and married in an unorthodox manner. About this time strange phenomena began to occur in the household. Papers disappeared from locked desks and were found dry in the well; silt was repeatedly found in the bottom of the fresh milk can. At first a black servant was blamed, chastized several times, then whipped upon one too many infractions. But one morning Grandmother Sybil Goddard watched her day cap fall from Dick's apron and tear itself in half, one half sailing of its own accord up the chimney as she caught the other. Next the hearthfire was discovered smothered by family books, and the last straw was when Sybil watched her twin babies' clothing appear suddenly down the stovepipe. When she looked the babies were naked, and no one else was in the house. It appeared to be a good, old-fashioned poltergeist.

They sent for many ministers, the most devout and holy men they could find. They got sixteen together at their house and they seemed to feel the importance of the occasion. They fasted two days and nights and the third day they spent in fervent prayer. There was one man among them that seemed more intent upon the subject than any other; he could not be denied; he pled with the Lord as a

¹¹Drake, *History of Middlesex County*, pp. 485-86; William Young's will, copy in possession of John Young Family Association; and Susa Young Gates, "Family Memories," notes for a biography of Brigham Young in the Susa Young Gates Collection, Utah State Historical Society Archives. Mrs. Gates' notes include unsubstantiated, even contradictory, assertions. Thus some of her statements must be weighed against other evidence.

¹²Genealogical letter written by Fanny Young, sister of President Brigham Young, to her brother Phineas Howe Young, 1 January 1845, microfilm copy in Genealogical Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah (cited hereafter as Genealogical Archives).

man would plead for his life, that he would break the power of the destroyer, that he would rebuke him and command him to leave the house and family forever. Towards night, on the third day when he was pouring out his soul with such fervour, and they were all united with him, in a moment there seemed to be a shock through the whole house, not of distress or sorrow, but of joy and assurance that there was a God in the heavens, whose ears could be penetrated with the cries of his children, and who was not slow to answer the prayers of those that put their trust in him. From that hour not a thing of the kind ever took place in their house or anywhere about them.¹³

Until Ebenezer's death, Fanny continued, he mourned his beating of the black servant.

While there appear to be elements of the apocryphal in the tale, it has a certain value in telling us that: (1) Brigham's ancestors experienced spiritual phenomena impressive enough to remember and retell; (2) the family had no rational explanation for these experiences, leading them to question some of their religious assumptions; and (3) it convinced them that God was real and nearer than they had supposed.

Ebenezer's daughter (Brigham's grandmother) gained from this inheritance some eccentric views. She believed that Jacob's ladder was not broken but that angels still descended and ascended it.¹⁴ In later years she countenanced "a very powerful revival" in the town of Colistown and regretted that "in the town of Hopkinton there has not been any particular attention to religion."¹⁵ This was the grandmother Brigham mentioned in several sermons many years after leaving the East, referring to her economy and thrift in taking care of her one silk dress and being satisfied with little wealth.¹⁶ Her memory was kept alive by parents wanting to instill certain virtues into their children.

By and large, the Goddards and Howes appear to have been conventional New England freemen, farmers of more or less established condition who stayed out of debt, were known and respected in the village, made their wives moderately comfortable, perhaps helped send a nephew to Yale or Harvard to become a minister. Their children were christened at Christ Church and went to subscription school, singing school, and church socials.¹⁷

Susannah Goddard Howe's daughter Nabby (Brigham's mother) became "quite a reformer."¹⁸ An invalid on the frontier,

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Haven, family meeting of 8 January 1845.

¹⁵Letter of Susannah Brigham Hwe, 5 August 1827, published in Susa Young Gates, "Mothers of the Latter-day Prophets: Abigail Howe Young," *Juvenile Instructor* 59 (January 1924):6.

¹⁶*JD* 19:74 (19 July 1877) and *JD* 15:222-23 (9 October 1872).

¹⁷Haven, family meeting of 8 January 1845; and Gates, "Mothers," p. 4.

¹⁸Ibid.

she was sometimes fetched by neighboring families to spend the day giving counsel at the houses of newlyweds. She had the frugality of her grandmother; "neatness, as the old term was used, belonged to her as of inherited right . . . (she was) exceedingly methodical and orderly."¹⁹ She is portrayed by Brigham's daughter Susa as having had a lively sense of humor, being "the prettiest girl in the county," with her sisters very popular at socials, and a fine singer.²⁰

On Brigham Young's father's side of the family the tradition is more sketchy. A letter written in 1845 by Brigham's sister Fanny Young reported that their grandfather, Joseph Young, came alone from England with the reluctant blessing of his physician-father, William Young. According to Fanny he practiced medicine in Boston until losing his money and prestige through gambling and drinking, then removed to Hopkinton or Framingham where he resumed practice, married Widow Treadway, and struggled unsuccessfully to fight off his sins.²¹

The records show that Joseph was the son of William Young, profession not given, of Boston. Joseph died in middle age from a blow by a falling post or limb while crossing a field one night, leaving ten children including an infant. Among his personal effects listed on the death records were medical instruments. According to Fanny, "as soon as Dr. Joseph's sleeping dust . . . was decently committed to the grave, every man to whom he owed a dollar was on the wing."²² Reverend Barrett, as executor of Joseph's will, sold the widow's farm to pay debts and every possession covered by law was confiscated. "The Selectmen of the Town found places for most of her children and bound them out."²³

John (Brigham's father) and his brother Joseph, Jr., at ages six and four, were bound out as servants to Colonel John Jones, son of William Young's New Hampshire friend and one of the few truly wealthy landowners in Hopkinton. Jones' estate was in Ashland (first called Unionville), four miles from Hopkinton, where he had married the daughter of the previous owner and acquired a gristmill. Over the years a cluster of mills and shops had grown up there. Most of the people who worked in them "lived in town," commuting from Hopkinton.²⁴

¹⁹"Notes on Ancestry," Susa Young Gates Collection, Utah State Historical Society.

²⁰Haven, family meeting of 8 January 1845; and Gates, "Mothers," p. 4.

²¹Fanny Young to Phinehas Howe Young, 1 January 1845.

²²Ibid.; probate records of Middlesex County.

²³Fanny Young to Phinehas Howe Young, 1 January 1845.

²⁴Colonel John Jones was a local justice of the peace, son of Colonel John Jones of the Massachusetts General Court, born 1722 and died 1797. See Edwin P. Conklin, *Middlesex County and its People*, 4 volumes (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1927), 2:486-95. For history of Ashland, see Drake, *History of Middlesex County*, pp. 227-32.

John Young entertained his children with tales of his upbringing in the Jones household. John described the Colonel as “a wicked, merry man” and the Colonel’s wife as a selfish, grasping woman who took a disliking to John. Once when John ran away from one of her whippings, the Colonel was obliged to take the boy to the barn and administer punishment. Once in the barn, the master stomped his foot, cried “You dog, why did you run away from your mistress,” and warned John not to do it again. As a father John himself was free with whippings (“It used to be a word and a blow with him but the blow came first,” Brigham said), so his sons, gathered around the hearth, must have listened with particular glee to the stories of their father being whipped.²⁵

At age thirteen John ran away to enlist in the Continental Army, serving off and on for the duration of the war. He must have had the Colonel’s implicit approval, although Jones did later turn in John’s enlistment papers for payment of taxes.²⁶ At the close of the war John returned to work for the Colonel not as a servant, but as a hired man, “at good wages.” “The Colonel said he was worth more to him than any two strangers he could get.” John worked for him for at least two more years and perhaps even after his indenture was up.²⁷

John Young was small and wiry (5’3” when he enlisted, probably several inches taller at maturity), light-complexioned, gregarious, ambitious, and adventurous but upright in morals. Someone in the Jones household had evidently attended to his moral training. He had been a favorite of some of the kitchen help and was quick to assess and satisfy others’ expectations. The master was expected to take or provide transportation for his servants to Sunday meeting. Ashland was equally distant from Framingham, Upton, and Hopkinton and they could have gone to any of these meetinghouses.

Hopkinton was a fair-sized township in which not everyone was personally acquainted but everybody had heard of everybody else and just about all were related by ancestry or marriage. John became acquainted with Nabby Howe, perhaps at meeting or at a social on the Jones estate—or maybe at singing school or grammar school. Colonel Jones was likely required by the indenture agreement to provide the orphan with several years’ schooling, and John, who later became the first ordained patriarch of the LDS Church, did learn to read and write.

Nabby’s parents, especially her father, objected strenuously to a

²⁵Fanny Young to Phinehas Howe Young, 1 January 1845.

²⁶S. Dilworth Young, *Here is Brigham* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1964), pp. 15-16.

²⁷Fanny Young to Phinehas Howe Young, 1 January 1845.

match with "the little orphan."²⁸ John could guarantee no inheritance or livelihood in the event of Nabby's widowhood. His father had been a drunkard and a gambler and he had been raised with the black servants in the kitchen of a worldly man; Colonel Jones' daughter Olive had not yet married the new reverend Nathaniel Howe. But in 1785 Nabby, at age nineteen, married John Young in the Congregationalist Church; Elijah Fitch was pastor at the time.²⁹ They apparently set up house in Ashland, John perhaps continuing to work in one of Colonel Jones' enterprises.³⁰

This was a time of unrest in the new states. The American Revolution had wearied villages, broken old ties, and cleared the frontier for settlement. Sons of families which had resided in the same county or township four generations were now uprooted. That John stayed indicates several possibilities: first and foremost, that he felt there was a future for him in Hopkinton and that for the first years, at least, he was able to provide for his young, growing family. Second, that there were compelling ties to the area—perhaps the claims of parents, perhaps a preference for village society. At this time he may have been a craftsman and millworker rather than a farmer. Third, he may have fully intended to go but hadn't yet accumulated the resources to purchase a favorable site. Last, John was a congenial man who liked to please his associates and father-in-law and perhaps aspired to acceptance by the society which had labelled him "the little orphan."

There must have been characteristics about Hopkinton which John did not like. Post-Revolutionary Hopkinton was "a strongly democratic town," which could be translated to mean not so much a town that supported democratic government and the war (although they sent their share of soldiers to General George Washington), as that they opposed hierarchical control of any kind. Like other small towns, Hopkinton had been hit by war debts and now complained about the cost of maintaining a state and later a federal government. The General Court ought not to sit in Boston, citizens complained. Lawyers fees were too heavy, administrators' salaries too large, and servants of the court too many. The state ought not to be sending money to the national Congress with its own debts unpaid.³¹ Only one Hopkinton citizen, in postwar election, voted for funding state armed vessels.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Drake, *History of Middlesex County*, pp. 485-94.

³⁰It is speculation that John and Nabby settled in Ashland. In 1869, in response to a letter from Maria L. Hayden of Ashland in which she asked about his residence there, Brigham responded: "I was not born till after they had moved from that section." Brigham Young letter, 20 March 1869, photocopy in Genealogical Archives.

³¹Drake, *History of Middlesex County*, pp. 485-92.

Nabby's father Phineas Howe was one of the writers of a letter defending the majority vote which was criticized in Boston.³²

The same spirit cropped up in local religious matters. Based on his gradual accomplishments which did not begin to show until after 1800, Reverend Howe's pastorate was called "one of the longest and most successful" in Hopkinton. If so, his years before 1800 must have been truly rugged. For during one of the "successful" years, "borne down with the fatigues of manual labor" and pastoral duties besides, Reverend Howe petitioned for increased support. He tried to get the elders to buy his house for him. "This passed in the negative by a large majority." He asked them to increase the public and private subscription to the church fund. "This passed in the negative by a large majority." He asked them for several other measures to lighten his burdens and facilitate the function of the pastorage. "These passed in the negative by a large majority."³³

John, with his skeptical eye toward respectability, and Nabby, with her Reform heritage, apparently felt an indifference toward mainstream Hopkinton life which was worked upon by economic setbacks. Through the family Bible we know that John's first foray into the West came in 1788 or 1789. Rhoda's birthplace is listed in the family Bible as Platauva District, New York.³⁴ This was a "vast forest wilderness where fish and game were plentiful" on the eastern side of Catskills. Dutch immigrants had been farming there since 1770; a number of Revolutionary War veterans had arrived after 1782. John's older brother William Young had died there in 1784 and John may have taken up his land, or he may have taken his own. Durham was a freehold, meaning that it lay unclaimed between patents and was therefore open to homesteading. George Stimson of Hopkinton had left for Durham in 1784 with one son, sending a year later for his wife and eight remaining children. Increase Claflin and his brother John of Framingham, who were related to the Goddards by marriage, left for Durham in the winter of 1786 on an ox sled. A new turnpike (well-prepared road) laid out between Windham and Durham in 1789 and 1790 made the journey easier.³⁵

³²Ibid., p. 494.

³³D. Hamilton Hurd, *History of Middlesex County, Mass.* 3 vols. (Philadelphia: J. W. Lewis & Co., 1890), 3:795.

³⁴A story in Fanny's genealogical letter, which describes a tearful welcome by the Howe grandparents, may refer to the family's return from Green County. Otherwise, our sources are the Young family Bible, cited in Young, *Here is Brigham*, p. 18; and Brigham Young's Manuscript History, p. v, Church Archives, in which he states that Rhoda was born "in Platauva District, New York (where the village of Durham now stands, in Green Co., New York) Sept. 10, 1789."

³⁵Mrs. J. Van Vechten Vedder, *History of Greene County, 1651-1800*, Volume 1 (Catskill, N.Y.: County Historical Society, 1927), pp. 13-15, 74, 121, 127.

It may have been in Durham that John and Nabby began their formal tenure as Methodists. Methodist itinerants had preached to small Boston congregations in 1772, 1784, and 1778, and the Youngs may have had contact with Lee and Freeborn Garrettson, who had established a lively circuit in the counties to the south of Greene County and would have been venturing into nearby settlements. The Newburg Circuit saw three very active years, 1789–1791, in which 171 settlers were baptized by Methodist elders, a notable achievement considering Dutch Reformed, Congregationalist, and Presbyterian ministers were also active in the area.³⁶ “Often a Methodist circuit rider called at a not-yet-finished cabin before the mud in his stick chimney was dry or weight poles had been positioned on the roof.”³⁷ The Methodists had a “mobile army of itinerants” who could be present wherever a grave was opened or an infant delivered. Grieved one minister: “The Methodists by their manner of supplying preachers have had great advantages in our new settlements.”³⁸

It is family tradition that John returned to Hopkinton in 1790 at the pleading of Nabby’s parents—and possibly because he discovered that Durham was wilder country and farming more formidable without the help of sons than he had anticipated. “I remember when we came to our Grandfather Howe’s,” recalled Brigham’s older sister. “All the family flew out to receive us, and caught the three children (one older and one younger than myself) in their arms while my grandmother and mother wept.”³⁹ They established themselves on the south slope of Sadler’s Hill. That year the first son, John, Jr., was born. He joined Nancy and Fanny, who had been born during the first residence in Hopkinton, and Rhoda, who was born in Durham, Greene County, New York.

For another ten years the family remained in Hopkinton, presumably farming. During that period Nabby, Susannah, Joseph, and Phinehas were born—all of these before the birth of Brigham. A family of eight children put considerable strain on John’s earning capacity. During this period the older daughters must have been tutored in one of the subscription schools of Hopkinton, as

³⁶George Claude Baker, *An Introduction to the History of Early New England Methodists, 1789–1839* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1941), p. 5; Methodist Records of Newburgh, New York Circuit, 1789–1836, microfilm, Genealogical Archives; and Arthur C. M. Kelly, comp., “Zion’s Reformed Lutheran Church, Athans, Greene County, New York, Baptism Records, 1704–1899,” typescript, 1974; Vedder, *History of Greene County*, pp. 186–202; Records of Christ Episcopal Church at Greenville, Greene County, New York, 1805– , microfilm, Genealogical Archives.

³⁷William Warren Sweet, *The Methodists* (New York: Cooper Square Publications, 1964), p. 57.

³⁸Baker, *Early New England Methodism*, p. 13.

³⁹Genealogical letter of Fanny Young.

Fanny developed a facility with handwriting, spelling, and language.

Surely by now John and Nabby Young were affiliated with Methodism. Jesse Lee had created a circuit which ran from Boston up the coast to Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Methodism appealed to John, who believed that a man might hold to an orthodox creed yet be a meager Christian, just as a man "may keep inside of statute law, and yet be a meager citizen."⁴⁰

Although John probably flinched at the flowery language of some Methodists who claimed that "the Churches of the Pilgrims were in a strange decay, worn with controversy and smitted with the broad and baneful light of half-heartedness," he certainly would have agreed that there were many who were spiritually dead, with only the form and some of the doctrine left.⁴¹

The circuit riders appealed to struggling, frustrated, unlanded farmers like John. Methodist itinerants were graduates of "Brush College—more ancient though less pretentious than Yale or Harvard or Princeton." For a library they had "the Word of God, the Discipline, and the Hymn Book, supplemented by trees and brooks and stones." The college "parchments of literary honors were the horse and saddlebags."⁴² Though they asked for money, these itinerants seldom got it, and they were known to be self-sacrificing. For this reason few were married; in Virginia only three of eighty-four preachers had families.⁴³ The Methodist circuitrider became a folk figure for his presence in good weather or ill, in receptive or hostile surroundings. Hence the folk saying: "There's nobody out but crows and Methodist preachers."⁴⁴ If they were uneducated for the most part, homely and rough-mannered, the circuit riders had grit. They attracted a class like themselves—machinists, artisans, seamen, farmers with little education and not much stock in society.⁴⁵

Finally, Methodists rejected the harsh, punitive, exclusivist doctrines of Puritanism and Anglicanism: predestination and limited atonement. Laymen such as John Young could understand the open, ecumenical tone of John Wesley and American Bishop Francis Asbury, who were impatient with the theological quibbl-

⁴⁰A. B. Hyde, D. D., *The Story of Methodism: Tracing the Rise and Progress of That Wonderful Religious Movement, etc.* 2 vols. (Springfield, Mass.: Willey, 1888), 2:71.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 22.

⁴²Sweet, *The Methodists*, p. 45.

⁴³Ibid., p. 49.

⁴⁴Bernard A. Weisberger, *They Gathered at the River—The Story of the Great Revivalists and their Impact upon Religion in America* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1958), p. 46.

⁴⁵Baker, *Early New England Methodism*, pp. 17-18.

ings that divided sects. Methodism, at least in its origin, was interested in the heart of religion—inner conversion.⁴⁶

John Young appreciated the Methodist emphasis on the “Witness of the Spirit” and “Christian Perfection.” “A perfect shrub is not one incapable of further growth but the one best fitted to grow into a tree.” “Christian Perfection was the cleansing, disinfecting work of the Holy Ghost in hearts surrendered.”⁴⁷ There was room in Methodism for the unsanctified to become sanctified. It offered a creed to match the hopes of an upwardly-mobile frontier generation: egalitarianism, tolerance, and, contradictorily, an emphasis on performance. Works were the common Methodist’s expression of John Wesley’s abstractions.

In 1801 John Young made another try at fortune. In southwest Vermont a fifty-year-old controversy was finally settled between absentee landowners who had obtained their patents before the Revolutionary War, and settlers who had actually lived on the land, made improvements, and organized into towns and governments. In 1780 a key plot of Whitingham land called Fitch’s patent was conveyed to settlers. Land promoters obtained much of it and in 1797 Vermont itself, having become a state, redivided the still controversial patent according to actual use or disuse. This set off a mild rush to the area. Between 1791 and 1810 Whitingham quadrupled in population; in 1800 it had 868 persons or about 200 families. Among the Massachusetts families to remove to Whitingham were the Wheelers, Fullers, Faulkners, Sawyers—and Youngs.⁴⁸

On 18 November 1800, John bought for a dollar-an-acre his fifty-acre Lot 21 of Fitch’s Land Grant from his sister’s wealthy husband, John Mosely. He now had two sons old enough to help clear land (John, Jr., was ten, and Joseph was eight), and probably the offer was too good to pass up. In January 1801, wanting to be already established by spring harrowing, John moved the family one hundred miles, probably along the Worcester road via Williamstown, to Whitingham. Here they engaged in “opening new farms,” meaning that they hired out to others besides clearing their own land.⁴⁹

There is some evidence that the move was a sore point in fam-

⁴⁶Hyde, *The Story of Methodism*, p. 71.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 72.

⁴⁸A. Augustine Butterfield, *Some Facts about the Early History of Whitingham, Vermont* (Brattleboro, Vermont: The Vermont Printing Co., 1916), pp. 14-50; and Hamilton Child, comp., *Gazetteer & Business Directory of Windham County, Vermont, 1729-1884* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Printed at the Journal Office, 1884), pp. 22-70, 304.

⁴⁹Young, *Here is Brigham*, p. 22; Elden J. Watson, ed., *Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 1801-1844* (Salt Lake City: Elden J. Watson, 1968), p. iv. Originally published in Volumes 25-26 of the *Latter-day Saints’ Millennial Star* (Liverpool).

ily relations. Rhoda, twelve years old, was left behind "with Grandfather" (presumably Phineas Howe) perhaps as a placation.⁵⁰ And it seems to have been in Whitingham that Nabby had her first serious sick spell. The infant Brigham (named for his great-grandmother Sybil Brigham) was born in Whitingham 1 June 1801. He was nursed from the bottle and cared for by the second daughter, Fanny, who was now fourteen years old. The baby clung to Fanny; "no one could pacify him but my sister Fanny," and he cried lustily if anyone else tried. In good weather Fanny would carry him on one hip while she milked the cow, which also refused to be managed by anyone else. Fanny seems to have become a substitute mother figure for the family; she is described as "gentle and deft-handed" and, besides nursing Brigham, later took charge of Lorenzo and Louisa, who were born after Nabby was mostly bedridden with consumption.⁵¹ Children born after Brigham were Louisa and Lorenzo Dow.

Whitingham tradition suggests that Brigham's father "was a poor basketmaker."⁵² There could be truth to this; it may be that John's land turned out to be less than promising in location and quality. It was steep, rocky, and not part of the fertile but narrow riverbed plots. Dissatisfied or unable to meet payments, John deeded back his property to his brother-in-law after only two years.⁵³ He may have thought the prospects had been misrepresented to him—the family later spoke with less than admiration of Joseph Mosely. We know, too, that Brigham's older sisters wove straw hats for the family and perhaps for townspeople and that this was a common way for New England village women to earn grocery money.⁵⁴ Brigham once said: "My father was a poor, honest, hard-working man . . . but the Lord never would permit him to get rich."⁵⁵

If he did not get rich, John Young gained some significant associates in Whitingham. The original owner of the plot on which John's lot stood was Nathan Whiting, to become one of the six founders of Vermont's Reformed Methodism. Even before the Youngs arrived the small but vocal Methodist congregation in

⁵⁰Fanny Young to Phineas Howe Young, 1 January 1845.

⁵¹James A. Little, "Historical Items on the Life of Brigham Young," notes and research materials collected by Little for a biography of Brigham Young, James A. Little Collection, Church Archives; Little, "Biography of Lorenzo Dow Young," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 14 (1946):25-132; and Gates, "Family Memories" and draft for chapter on Ancestry of Brigham Young, Utah State Historical Society.

⁵²Child, *Gazetteer & Business Directory of Windham County*, p. 304.

⁵³Whitingham Deeds, Windham County Clerk, p. 675.

⁵⁴See "Letters of a Proselyte, the Hascall-Pomeroy Correspondence," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 25 (January 1957):68.

⁵⁵*JD* 9:104-5.

Whitingham had been disillusioned with the authoritarian tenor of Episcopal Methodism. They had not yet seceded; circuit riders were sent by the annual conference to the area beginning in 1798 and continuing until 1820. But, along with many other congregations, the group had acquired democratic sentiments; they wanted representation in the selection of local exhorters, in the use of church property, and in the decision-making at annual and quarterly conferences. Moreover, the Calvinism in Whitingham was a mild brand; the creed of the Congregationalist Church established in 1795 resembled Arminianism more than Antinomianism.⁵⁶

Having little to react to, Whitingham methodists turned inward. They concluded that American Methodism, which had originated as a cleanser of Anglicanism, had developed its own "pomp, ministerial oppressions, and selfish affections." "Faith and its operations" had been allowed by the episcopacy to lapse. The reformers "dared not limit faith, except by a thus saith the Lord"; they fully believed in the evidences of faith: temporal as well as moral healing and a variety of spiritual gifts.⁵⁷ Their attitude could be contrasted with that of Nathan Bangs, New England itinerant who one day felt faith operating in the form of a "prompting" to walk through the snow to a remote cabin. The impression was forceful; he dutifully made the long wade through the snow to the cabin but found not a soul there. Bangs "gave up trusting impressions."⁵⁸ An early Reformed Methodist would never have given up trusting impressions. He would have concluded that either he had misread the prompting, or the soul in the cabin had not listened to one.

In later years John Young evidenced sympathy with unorthodox Methodists such as Lorenzo Dow and eventually affiliated with Reformed Methodists transplanted to New York state. Said his son Lorenzo: "Within my recollection he was always a Methodist until he was a Mormon. He was at first an episcopal Methodist but afterwards, in common with many others, became a Reformed Methodist. These undertook to practice some of the doctrines now taught by the Latter-day Saints." Among these "doctrines" were baptism by immersion and faith healing.⁵⁹

Early in 1804 the family moved one hundred miles southwest into the Whitestown or Chenango region of eastern New York. Two large land patents had been promoted and many Vermont

⁵⁶John Winebrenner, *History of All the Religious Denominations in the United States* (Harrisburg, Pa.: John Winebrenner, 1849), p. 383. Butterfield, *Early History of Whitingham, Vermont*, p. 81, prints the articles of belief of this Whitingham Congregation.

⁵⁷Winebrenner, *History of All the Religious Denominations*, p. 383.

⁵⁸Hyde, *The Story of Methodism*, p. 120.

⁵⁹Little, "Historical Items."

farmers took the bait, including the Joseph Smith, Sr., family who settled temporarily in the southern part of what later became Chenango County. The area, especially north near Sherburne, was more sparsely settled than Whitingham. In 1807 only thirty citizens voted in the region. No good road entered the county until a year after the Youngs came, when the Oxford-Catskill turnpike was finished from the Hudson River Valley and a bridge was built across the Unadilla River. Land in 1805 was three dollars an acre but went up as the area became more accessible.⁶⁰ The population center of the Chenango district was twenty miles south of Sherburne, in Guilford and Unadilla, which lay between the Unadilla and Susquehanna rivers. This was where the Youngs came to trade. The entire region grew so rapidly, with so many town divisions, that though Louisa was born in the same place as Lorenzo, her birthplace is recorded as being in a different town.

Chenango County was settled by the same western Connecticut and Massachusetts families who were "twice removed" from deep New England, having tried Vermont already. They were joined by Pennsylvanians who had moved up the Susquehanna River Valley. Often they came in large family groups, sometimes individually, occasionally as village units.⁶¹ Like John they would have been consigned to survival on scrubby farms back home, and they were not resigned to such a subsistence. They had the Yankee ambition, or, as the first Goddard to come to Boston from old England was described, "they came to inspect the area and liked this new country and the large possibilities here."⁶²

These fourth-generation Puritans liked to settle with hometown people and kinfolk, and they brought their customs and religion with them. Or perhaps their ministers followed them to keep them to the faith. It was the New Lights, enthusiasts of the Great Awakening and their children, who had tended to move west and north; now they moved into New York and brought their revivalistic nature along. They were encouraged by Presbyterian, Methodist, and even Congregationalist ministers who worked the area, but especially by Methodists. There was Lorenzo Dow, who came through New York about 1807 bringing his camp meeting technique which some found too blazing and unmanageable. "Crazy Dow" was only one of the more flamboyant of many Methodist itinerants who periodically canvassed Chenango and other counties. The revivals seemed to coincide with economic cy-

⁶⁰Reverend S. N. Robinson, "Half-Century Discourse," Guilford, New York, 1862, microfilm of typescript, Genealogical Archives.

⁶¹Cross, *The Burned-Over District*, pp. 5-6.

⁶²Joel P. Grove, comp., "Early Ancestry and Genealogy of Willard Richards and Brigham Young (Cousins)," typescript, 1962-63, p. 62, Genealogical Archives.

cles—people “sought God more earnestly in adversity than in prosperity.”⁶³ The Youngs may have been ready for some intense religious experience after their failure in Vermont.

Methodist activity in the area began about the turn of the century, but Methodist preachers were usually considered “awful creatures” and were often forbidden to return.⁶⁴ By about 1810 it had become the Chenango Circuit, with twenty-five preaching places, a respectable route. But in Sherburne where the Youngs settled they did not have their own chapel, and the circuit did not gain enough members to have its own quarterly conference until 1814, two years after the Youngs left the area.⁶⁵

When the Youngs arrived in Sherburne they were expected, like the Congregationalist communicants in “this transplanted New England community,” to support the “Calvinistick Congregationalist Society.” They paid in proportion to their tax levy.⁶⁶ There are fairly thorough minutes, lists of deacons and communicants, and baptisms which reflect the religious atmosphere of the settlement. In 1808, when Brigham was seven, the annual meeting included an unusual catechizing of small children and baptized youth “with regard to their views and feelings on religious subjects.” In 1807 and again in 1810 the monthly meetings were sparked by “conferring” on theological tenets, notably the doctrine of election. The society agreed “that scripture shows no difference between divine decree and the foreknowledge of god” and that theirs was “an intelligent faith.” One can picture a Methodist itinerant coming into the area, stumping for his Arminian doctrines at the Stowell Meeting House, and starting a theological brew which affected all the sects in the neighborhood.⁶⁷

The War of 1812 brought a “decline of vital piety in the church,” a form of godliness with the power having fled. This year the annual meeting was small—a smallpox epidemic had stricken the region: “It was thought best to spend some time in prayer.” After the war religious activity intensified in the beginning of a remarkable series of revivals which swept the entire region. In 1816 Smyrna, near Sherburne, saw a “Great Revival,” the Lord “visiting” the church with 104 additions to communion

⁶³Cross, *The Burned-Over District*, pp. 5-6, 10, 12.

⁶⁴James H. Smith, *History of Chenango and Madison Counties* (Syracuse, N.Y.: D. Mason & Co., 1880), p. 472; Rev. A. C. Salls, *Brief History of Guilford Methodism* (Oxford, N.Y.: Geo. Stafford, 1902), n.p.; and Earl Oldfield, “Methodism in Guilford, 1813-1964,” typescript, 1964, n.p., microfilm at Genealogical Archives.

⁶⁵Oldfield, “Methodism in Guilford.”

⁶⁶Mrs. Edwin P. Smith, comp., “Records of Discontinued Churches of Northern Chenango County,” Volume 3, typescript, 1969, p. 31.

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 48, 54.

within a few months. But in 1816 the Youngs had moved further west and were seeing the revival in Genoa or Tyrone.⁶⁸

The various frontier sects had more in common than not. Moral standards took the form of social custom; what one society was demanding of its members another society also expected. The minutes of disciplinary action for the "Calvinistick Society" are revealing of values and personalities. In 1805 a man was disfellowshipped for taking property that did not belong to him. A young girl had taunted another girl, a regular churchgoer, by decoying her into the woods and pouring oil onto her dress; the infractor was dismissed from the society for associating with the "loose and vain," attending idle plays, and spending her time in "vain jesting." Later there was disciplinary action for those who had violated the Christian Sabbath, gone to balls and vain amusements, used ardent spirits immoderately, neglected family prayers, not attended to public worship, evidenced dishonesty in a trade with another man. The clerk notes that most who were cut off from the church never returned.⁶⁹

An action of particular interest involved Samuel Foote, a relation of Judge Isaac Foote and a prominent member of the community. At one time Brigham was a hired hand of Isaac Foote, although Foote's son later claimed his father found the boy "shiftless and much of a shirk" and discharged him.⁷⁰ Samuel Foote had a charge brought against him for "countenancing young people in holding balls at their house contrary to the well known and established rules of this church." A hearing was called in which Foote "cast reflections on the church for having such rules." Though the deacons and preacher reasoned and labored with him, he left "much troubled" and did not appear at the next hearing. Later he made a part-confession but was afterward overheard at the country store complaining about the minister. When he and his wife refused to answer this new charge, both were cut off from the society.⁷¹ This was an issue which would have interested the entire community; Brigham's father, though not a Congregationalist, was strictly opposed to dancing and would not permit his children even to listen to a fiddle. Brigham ever afterward had to confront instinctive uncertainties while enjoying music and entertainment, although he defended these and supported them in the Mormon community.⁷²

⁶⁸Ibid., pp. 49-52.

⁶⁹Ibid., pp. 60 ff.

⁷⁰Isaac Foote writing to the *Chenango Union* (Norwich, N.Y.), 8 May 1883.

⁷¹Smith, "Records of Discontinued Churches," pp. 64-67.

⁷²*JD* 2:94 (6 February 1853) and *JD* 13:147 (11 July 1869).

Methodists and Congregationalists had similar methods of “levelling the rash frontier freedom.” Members of Methodist quarterly conferences were “particularly examined one by one” regarding the Lord’s supper, baptism both adult and infant, diligence in church callings, “experience” or inner conversion, family spiritual instruction, “Family Habits viz Drinking spiritous liquor and Wearing of Gold and ornamental apparel,” fasting, financial offerings, and attendance at love feasts and class meetings. The Methodist Discipline contained less dogma than practice—Have you borrowed from a neighbor and not returned an item? Do you pray with your family morning and evening?⁷³

Quarterly conferences were judicial courts, handling charges brought by member against member for everything from returning broken a borrowed item, to digging after money.⁷⁴ Most charges were referred to a local committee of three arbiters who “affectionately labored” with the contenders to produce repentance and reconciliation. Immorality was more serious; there are long transcripts of hearings in which witnesses of “strict veracity” were questioned regarding the character of a defendant. Such “trials” attracted community-wide interest and helped to transplant social order and morality in areas where the social structure was still crude. Pastoral visits did the same; Methodist circuitriders, when coming into a new area, were not reluctant to pry into the personal behavior of families they boarded with. Neighbors followed this example, keeping tabs on one another’s conduct. Many a Smyrna pioneer—Congregationalist, Presbyterian, Baptist, Episcopalian, Quaker, or Methodist—“thought himself a Christian” if he fasted, prayed, attended church, and rebuked his neighbors.⁷⁵

The Young home was representative of the times. “I was brought up a Christian, very strictly,” Brigham said.⁷⁶ He never heard his father swear, “not so much as a darn it or curse it or the devil. So you can see I was brought up pretty strictly.” He was taught as a child not to take a pin from the dooryard of a neighbor without permission. “Never did my mother or father countenance any of their children in anything to wrong their neighbour or fellow-being, even if they were injured by them.”⁷⁷

⁷³Quarterly Conference Records of Pompey, New York, Circuit, in Sweet, *The Methodists*, p. 565. The Mormon catechism read to adult members during the Utah Reformation of 1856 has the same spirit and style. See Diary of Samuel A. Woolley, 4 November 1856, Church Archives.

⁷⁴Clark Jillson, in *Green Leaves from Whitingham, Vermont* (Worcester, Mass.: Private Press of the Author, 1894), p. 113, says that a notion was common “through all this region of the country” that gold and silver were buried “under most of New England.” The idea originated, he believed, in the story of Captain Kidd, who buried 16,000 pounds on Gardiner’s Island before his hanging in 1701.

⁷⁵Sweet, *The Methodists*, pp. 562, 566, 643; Hyde, *The Story of Methodism*, p. 49.

⁷⁶JD 16:73 (25 May 1873).

⁷⁷JD 6:290 (15 August 1852).

Brigham portrayed his father as "very circumspect, exemplary and religious." John was strict to the point of sternness, so strict that the older children may have chafed under his rule—the daughters married very young, the sons developed well-controlled but lasting jealousies and resentments.⁷⁸ Even Brigham, ninth in line so that he probably escaped the harsher learning experiences, grew up protective of his right to make up his own mind and choose his own course without being hurried.⁷⁹ That family loyalty existed was probably attributable to the children's observation that their parents' "precepts of morality were sustained by their good examples."⁸⁰

Nabby Howe Young is portrayed in family traditions as an ameliorating influence on John's sternness.⁸¹ She taught the children to pray so that "God would send His guardian angel" to watch over them.⁸² "Of my mother—she that bore me—I can say, no better woman ever lived in the world than she was. . . . I judge the matter . . . from the principles and the spirit of the teachings I received from her," said Brigham.⁸³ An invalid with worsening health, Nabby would call a child to her bedside, telling him/her to pray and to read the Bible and live a moral life; her affection was couched in religious sentiments. It may be that Nabby's more sympathetic manner helped win the children's loyalty to John, who instilled the same values and thoughts in a harsher way.

Though softer in her methods, Nabby sustained John's strict religious views. She too taught the children to accept the Word of God literally, every word of it. And Brigham was receptive to this. He was at least as strict as his father. "From the days of my youth . . . from the day that I came upon the stage of action to act for myself there never was a boy, a man, either old or middle aged, that ever tried to live a life more pure and refined. . . ."⁸⁴ To a brother Brigham seemed a favorite of their father's, "who I never new to find fault with him but once." Nor could Joseph remember Brigham getting angry except once, and on this occasion "he was violent, I thought."⁸⁵ Though Brigham used tobacco, he

⁷⁸"Family Memories," Susa Young Gates Collection, Utah State Historical Society.

⁷⁹*JD* 9:248–49 (23 March 1862): "I am not disposed to compel any person to partake of that which they dislike, or have an aversion for. This may not be right in every case. Why it is right with me is, that, if a person urges upon me that which I am not disposed to receive, it creates in me an alienation of feeling toward that person. I am naturally opposed to being crowded. . . ."

⁸⁰Watson, ed., *Manuscript History of Brigham Young*, p. 1.

⁸¹Gates, "Family Memories"; S. Dilworth Young, *Here is Brigham and Young Brigham Young* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1962); *Proceedings of the Dedication of the Brigham Young Statue*, Capitol Building, Washington, D.C., n.d.

⁸²Little, "Biography of Lorenzo Dow Young," p. 25.

⁸³*JD* 6:290.

⁸⁴*JD* 1:41 (11 July 1852).

⁸⁵Little, "Historical Items."

would not take liquor.⁸⁶

... Young men would say to me, "Take a glass." "No, thank you, it is not good for me!" "Why, yes, it is good for you." "Thank you, I think I know myself better than you know me." ... I recollect my father urged me [to sign the temperance pledge]. "No sir," said I, "if I sign the temperance pledge I feel that I am bound, and I wish to do just right, without being bound to do it; I want my liberty"; and I have conceived from my youth up that I could have my liberty and independence just as much in doing right as I could in doing wrong.⁸⁷

One way to beat a more-than-exacting system of guilts and controls was to outdo it.

The fears and rigors of frontier religion merely reflected the stridency of day-to-day life. Both tended to be heavy-handed, to weed out those who could not cope, for whatever reason, and to develop in the survivors a certain smoldering but ebullient toughness. "Don't expect king's etiquette from me," Brigham Young would later say. "In my youth if I had on a pair of pants that would cover me I did pretty well."⁸⁸ "I have not suffered," he reminisced during a hard Great Basin season,

I have gone without eating and not half clad, but that was not suffering. I was used to that in my youth. I used to work in the woods logging and driving team, summer and winter, not half clad, and with insufficient food until my stomach would ache, so that I am used to all this, and have had no suffering.⁸⁹

Daughter Susa saw Brigham's boyhood as "a healthy struggle with the forces of physical and human nature";⁹⁰ Brigham no doubt would have agreed but he would have added that as a boy he made a path with his night prowling between the loft stairs and the bread cupboard to get extra slices of bread and butter—he always went to bed hungry. In maturity he took care to see that his wives each had stores of crackers, fruit, and molasses so that the children would never go hungry between meals. And he added:

I have been a poor boy and a poor man, and my parents were poor. I was poor during my childhood, and grew up to manhood poor and destitute; and I am acquainted with the various styles of living, and with the different customs, habits, and practices of people; and I do know, by my own experience, that there is no necessity for

⁸⁶Brigham had conquered the tobacco habit by 1862 according to a letter to Brigham Young, Jr., in October of that year. See Dean Jessee, *Letters of Brigham Young to His Sons* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1974), p. 33.

⁸⁷*JD* 14:225 (27 August 1871).

⁸⁸*JD* 14:103 (8 August 1869).

⁸⁹*JD* 12:287 (8 October 1868).

⁹⁰"Notes on Ancestry," Susa Young Gates Collection, Utah State Historical Society.

people being so poor, if they have judgment, and will rightly use it.⁹¹

Brigham was a boy, probably no older than six years, when he got his introduction to the Camp Meetings of Lorenzo Dow. No doubt before this he had been touched by the less sensational work of Methodist itinerants—the house-visiting, circuit stops, and distribution of Methodist literature. But now Brigham was to experience a different kind of revival—Methodism intensified. The Methodists had discovered how to reach more people more effectively. The camp meeting was loud, crowded, and hyperactive. It was disorderly and confused. The Methodists (some of them) recognized its dangers and brought it increasingly under controls, but they weren't afraid of it—nor of the “frontier energies unleashed there.” Religious experience was what they wanted; they meant to get to a listener, not to his mind, but to his heart. “Worship without tears, fainting, and moans was a sham.”⁹² They stationed their preachers at various pulpits, all preaching at once, shouting to passersby like hawkers, each in his own style.⁹³ If one preacher didn't get to a man, another might. Conceivably at one of these meetings Brigham's father “came into perfect light.”⁹⁴ This scant-spoken, deep-feeling child of Puritans, frustrated in his efforts to prosper, his wife becoming an invalid and a young daughter having died, was apparently “got to” by Lorenzo Dow.

But Dow didn't get to young Brigham. Brigham had heard a great deal about the esteemed preacher, and he “had thought a great many times” that he would like to hear a man who could tell him something about God and heaven:

So I went to hear Lorenzo Dow. He stood up some of the time, and he sat down some of the time; he was in this position and in that position, and talked two or three hours, and when he got through I asked myself, “What have you learned from Lorenzo Dow?” and my answer was “Nothing, nothing but morals.” He could tell the people they should not work on the Sabbath day; they should not lie, swear, steal, commit adultery, &c., but when he came to teaching the things of God he was as dark as midnight.⁹⁵

This didn't mean that Brigham gave up. He was impressionable and had “a great many reflections, especially when alone,” conversing with himself “upon these eternal things.”⁹⁶ Then he

⁹¹JD 4:312 (6 April 1857).

⁹²Weisberger, *They Gathered at the River*, p. 48.

⁹³Winthrop Hudson, *Religion in America* (New York: Scribner's, 1965), p. 137.

⁹⁴Hyde, *The Story of Methodism*, p. 21.

⁹⁵JD 14:197-98 (3 June 1871).

⁹⁶JD 19:6-7 (29 April 1877).

would go to the meetings and ask the ministers questions. He listened to "one of the smartest of American preachers preach on the soul of man," and the preacher ended up saying the soul of man was "immaterial." Brigham did not "give a farthing" for such answers.⁹⁷ They would tell him that a moral life, a confession of Christ the Savior, was all that was essential to salvation; he had read the Bible and he did not believe so.⁹⁸ He went to more meetings: "I have been at many of their meetings and seen their modes of conversion." It was animal magnetism (hypnotism), he decided.

I have seen the effects of animal magnetism, or some anomalous sleep, or whatever it be called, many a time in my youth. I have seen persons lie on the benches, on the floor of the meeting house, or on the ground at their camp meetings, for ten, twenty, and thirty minutes, and I do not know but an hour, and not a particle of pulse about them. . . . I used to think that I should like to ask such persons what they had seen in their trance or vision; and when I got old enough and dared ask them, I did so. . . . "Brother, what have you experienced?" "Nothing." "What do you know more than before you had this. . . ." "Nothing more." "Have you seen any person?" "No." "Then what is the use or utility of your falling down here in the dirt?" I could not see it, and consequently I was an infidel to this.⁹⁹

He did not ask very many questions, for, as he said, "I was brought up to treat everybody with that respect and courtesy that I could hardly allow myself to think aloud, and consequently very seldom did so." But he thought plenty, and he observed. He overheard the wife of a minister say to some of her sisters in the church, "Do you suppose that we shall be under the necessity of eating with our hired help when we get into heaven? We do not do it here, and I have an idea that there will be two tables in heaven."¹⁰⁰ He observed men

who were considered good, clever, honest men, who would take the advantage of their neighbors or workmen if they could. I have seen deacons, Baptists, Presbyterians, members of the Methodist church, with long, solid, sturdy faces and a poor brother would come along and say to one of them, "Brother, such-a-one, I have come to see if I could get a bushel of wheat, rye or corn of you. I have no money, but I will come and work for you in harvest," and their faces would be drawn down so mournful, and they would say, "I have none to spare." "Well, deacon, if you can let me have one bushel, I understand you have considerable, I will come and work for you just as long as you say, until you are satisfied, in your harvest field, or hay

⁹⁷*JD* 12:55 (26 May 1867).

⁹⁸*JD* 11:254-55 (17 June 1866).

⁹⁹*JD* 14:113.

¹⁰⁰*JD* 14:100 (8 August 1869).

ing or anything you want done." After much talk this longfaced character would get it out, "If you will come and work for me two days in harvest, I do not know but I will spare you a bushel of rye." When the harvest times comes the man could have got two bushels of rye for one day's work; but the deacon sticks him to his bargain, and makes him work two days for a bushel of wheat or rye." I did not read the Bible as they read it . . . said I, "Just go your own way, I want none of it." I wanted no religion that produced such morals. ¹⁰¹

He found he could "put all their doctrines, when simmered down to truth, into a snuffbox of the smallest class, put it into my vest pocket and go on my way."¹⁰²

Nabby Howe Young died in 1815, ten days after Brigham's fourteenth birthday, after a long, dismal struggle with tuberculosis. For a time Fanny acted as substitute mother, having left her profligate husband. But soon John "broke up hoosekeeping" and moved further west to Wayne, Steuben County (later Tyrone, Schuyler County), where he purchased on contract one hundred acres in the primitive Sugar Hill district. Brigham was apprenticed to an Auburn Carpenter, though he sometimes lived with relatives. Lorenzo, seven years old, was sent to live with his married sister Rhoda Greene, and later was bound out to Susannah's husband, James Little. "The family separated and never lived together as a family afterwards," with children coming for short periods and going again. Sometime between 1815 and 1817, at age fifty-two, John remarried a widow with several children of her own and continued a life that was hard and lonely and rough. The family seldom had money; payments on the farm came out of harvest proceeds with little or none left over.¹⁰³

The effect of the common but harsh, austere, frontier experience was to develop self-reliant, stoic youth who suffered from chronic frontier depression. Often this "depression of spirits" was associated with religion and became a preface to "the new birth." Lorenzo Dow told of taking his gun into the wilderness when still a boy with the intent of ending his life. "All nature seemed to wear a gloomy aspect; and every thing I cast my eyes upon seemed to bend itself against me, and wish me off the face of the earth."¹⁰⁴ The boy Dow would go to a funeral and dare not look at the corpse for fear of becoming one.

"There was more or less of a gloom over my feelings

¹⁰¹JD 15:164-65 (9 October 1872).

¹⁰²Watson, ed., *Manuscript History of Brigham Young*, p. 62.

¹⁰³Little, "Biography of Lorenzo Dow Young," p. 25; Little, "Historical Items"; Watson, ed., *Manuscript History of Brigham Young*, pp. v-vi.

¹⁰⁴Lorenzo Dow, *The Dealings of God, Man, and the Devil as Exemplified in the Life, Experience, and Travels of Lorenzo Dow* (Cincinnati: Applegate & Co., 1858), p. 10.

from the earliest days of my childhood that I have in any recollection," Brigham Young said.¹⁰⁵

Before I possessed the spirit of the Gospel [Mormonism], I was troubled with that which I hear others complain of, that is, with, at times, feeling cast down, gloomy, and desponding; with everything wearing to me, at times, a dreary aspect. . . . They appeared at times as though a veil was brooding over them, which cast a dark shade upon all things, like the shade of the valley of death, and I felt lonesome and bad.¹⁰⁶

Of his older brother Joseph he said, "For many years no person saw a smile on his countenance."¹⁰⁷

Brigham thought he might find relief in religion. When he was twenty-three, he was baptized a Methodist.¹⁰⁸ But it brought him no peace of mind:

I remember that when I made a profession of religion, after being called an infidel by the Christians, I often used to get a little puzzled. The Evil One would whisper to me that I had done this, that, or some other thing wrong, and inquire whether that looked like a Christian act, and remark, "You have missed it; you have not done right, and you know it; you did not do as well in such a thing as you might; and are you not ashamed of yourself in saying you are a Christian?"¹⁰⁹

It was in 1830 that Lorenzo Dow Young, Brigham's younger brother, had a dream in which the Savior drove up in a white carriage drawn by white horses and asked, "Where is Brother Brigham?" The Savior inquired about all of the family, but especially Brigham, Lorenzo related. He slept no more that night for fear of the family's future, but when he related his dream to his father, John reassured him, saying he "didn't think the fearful interpretation was correct."¹¹⁰ Later, Brigham himself had a remarkable experience, along with his friend Heber C. Kimball and their wives. One beautiful clear night each had gone outside with his wife. On the eastern horizon a light arose—Heber described it as white smoke which formed into a belt and dipped bow-like toward the west. The light was accompanied by a noise "like the mighty wind," and the light formed itself into an army, row after row of twelve men abreast, moving across the sky in platoons. They looked like Revolutionary soldiers, with muskets and hats, and they marched every man in step in "profound order." For sev-

¹⁰⁵*JD* 8:129 (22 July 1860).

¹⁰⁶*JD* 3:320–21 (20 April 1856).

¹⁰⁷*JD* 12:95 (30 June 1867).

¹⁰⁸Minutes of family meeting, 8 January 1845; and Watson, ed., *Manuscript History of Brigham Young*, p. 1.

¹⁰⁹*JD* 7:6 (3 July 1859).

¹¹⁰Little, "Biography of Lorenzo Dow Young," p. 26.

eral hours armies of men came up from the northwest, marched to the southwest accompanied by the report of arms, and went out of sight. After several hours the vision faded away, although the next night neighbors also reported seeing it.¹¹¹

“A very remarkable occurrence,” said Brigham in retrospect.¹¹² Heber’s wife was frightened and asked Father Young what it meant. “Why, it’s one of the signs of the coming of the Son of Man,” said John.¹¹³ The Kimballs did not doubt it, nor did Brigham, who not many months later would receive a copy of the Book of Mormon, read it, and gradually become convinced that the Son of Man had indeed come and established a new Apostolic Order.

¹¹¹Orson F. Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball, An Apostle* (Salt Lake City: Kimball Family, 1888), pp. 31–33.

¹¹²Family Meeting of 8 January 1845.

¹¹³Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball*, p. 33.

Brigham Young's Family

PART I 1824-1845

Dean C. Jessee

Historical studies of Brigham Young have generally measured his success in terms of well-known public accomplishments as colonizer, governor, businessman, and prophet. On the basis of his leadership in settling some 100,000 people in more than 300 communities in the American West, and establishing schools, factories, churches, and other institutions for their benefit and improvement, historians have placed the Mormon leader "among the most successful commonwealth builders of the English speaking world"; they have also lauded him as a man who exercised "powers of leadership that rivaled those of history's heroes."¹ And with respect to his religious contributions, his followers have held him on a plane with the biblical prophets. "I do not suppose there was ever a man breathed a breath of life who, in the short space of forty-five years, has done so much towards the establishment of the government and kingdom of God, as our beloved president Brigham Young," Wilford Woodruff said shortly after Brigham's death in 1877.²

In addition to his public accomplishments, Brigham Young deserves notice as the head of one of the largest families in Mormonism, where his position as husband and father touched the lives of many wives and fifty-seven children. Indeed, he measured a significant part of his personal success in terms of how well he fulfilled his domestic role. He was convinced that the quality of his performance at home would determine his happiness in this world and in the world to come. He once remarked that he would "rather be annihilated," than be deprived of his family in

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¹Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Oxford History of the American People*, 2 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), 2:309; and Ray A. Billington, *The Far Western Frontier* (New York: Harper, 1956), p. 195.

²Wilford Woodruff as cited in Brigham H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of The Church*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1930), 5:516.

eternity.³ A daughter wrote that her father "was great in his handling of large affairs, in his infinite power to mold men and measures"; but that "if he had failed, as he himself once said, in his duties as husband and father, he would have waked up in the morning of the first resurrection to find that he had failed in everything."⁴

The general historical sources that show the public lives of prominent men form an essential part of the biographical record, but more private sources that document their home lives, where actions and behavior are hidden from public view and thus perhaps less restrained, may also provide invaluable insights into the lives of such men. So it is with Brigham.

By concentrating only upon the extensive sources of Brigham Young's public life, the writer glimpses but the tip of the iceberg as far as Brigham's personal struggles in life are concerned, because these public sources indicate little of the depth of his effort to care for his family. This was intentional on Brigham's part. Living in an era when curious minds were constantly seeking a glimpse of his private affairs, he told the Church Historian that he wanted but few details of his family life included in the public record.⁵ While these conditions were necessary, they combined to close the door on the magnitude of his personal burdens in the pages of his public records. To ascribe to Brigham Young gigantic proportions on the basis of his public achievements, while failing to uncover the personal struggles that made his accomplishments even more heroic, is to laud him for courage without measuring its extent or defining the difficulties that made him what he was.⁶

An important contribution to the study of Brigham Young's family life has been the recent organization of his voluminous papers in the archives of the LDS Church in Salt Lake City and the identification of pertinent sources in other depositories. While the records that specifically document this phase of his life are not extensive, and at some points totally lacking, enough have been preserved to sketch a fair outline of his domestic experience and assess his personality on the basis of how he performed there.⁷

³Diary of Willard Richards, 16 February 1847, MS, Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (hereafter cited as Church Historical Department).

⁴Susa Young Gates and Leah D. Widtsoe, *The Life Story of Brigham Young* (New York: Macmillan, 1930), p. 340.

⁵Historian's Office Journal, 31 January 1857, MS, Church Historical Department.

⁶At Garden Grove, Iowa, during the Mormon Exodus of 1846, Willard Richards reported Brigham Young as saying, "I am reduced in flesh so that my coat that would scarce meet around me last winter, now laps over 12 inches. It is with much ado that I can keep from lying down and sleeping to wait the resurrection" (Diary of Willard Richards, 3 May 1846).

⁷A product of the frontier, Brigham Young had little formal schooling and would probably never have taken a public office had he not been converted to Mormonism. But his religious con-

For purposes of this study Brigham Young's family life has been divided into three segments: 1) the years of instability, 1824-1845, which cover the time from his first marriage until the exodus from Nauvoo—years that were characterized by frequent and in some cases extensive absences from his family, and the difficulties of providing for them during the movement of the Latter-day Saints from New York to Illinois; 2) the years of transition from 1846-1848, during which Brigham Young moved his family from Nauvoo to the Salt Lake Valley, a task complicated by a significant increase in the size of his family and his being the responsible leader of the Mormon exodus; and 3) the years of consolidation, 1849-1877, which saw Brigham establish his family on a permanent setting in the Salt Lake Valley. The first period will be treated in this issue. Subsequent articles will treat the second and third periods.

YEARS OF INSTABILITY, 1824-1845

On 8 October 1824, seven years after leaving his father's home to begin providing for himself, Brigham Young married Miriam Angeline Works in Aurelius, New York, where he had been working as a joiner, painter, and glazier. To this union was born a daughter, Elizabeth, in 1825. Four years later Brigham moved to Mendon, New York, where he built his family a comfortable four-room, colonial-style home and where a second daughter, Vilate, was born in 1830. Brigham Young would probably have lived out his life there among family and friends had he not responded to the message of two Mormon missionaries who came to town in the fall of 1831. His formal acceptance of the new religion in the waters of baptism the following April was to have a far-reaching effect upon himself and his family.

Five months after Brigham Young joined the Latter-day Saints, his wife Miriam died. Suffering from consumption, she had been an invalid during the latter part of her life. During those years Brigham would rise in the morning, get breakfast for his family, dress the children, clean the house, carry his wife to a rocking chair by the fireplace, and go to work, where he earned fifty cents a day. Upon his return in the evening he cooked supper, took care of the children, put his wife to bed and finished the day's housework.⁸ Following Miriam's death, Brigham was invited to live

victions required him to step boldly upon the stage of life, though he never overcame his feelings of inadequacy with language. He was keenly aware that his phonetic spelling was not standard and had his public correspondence corrected by clerks. We present his private documents here as they were originally written so as to preserve their authenticity.

⁸Gates and Widtsoe, *Life Story of Brigham Young*, p. 5.

with his good friend Heber C. Kimball, whose wife Vilate took care of the little girls—one now seven and the other two.

Shortly after Miriam died, Brigham Young traveled twice to Kirtland, Ohio, where he made his initial contact with Joseph Smith, and then settled there, in company with the Kimbells. During the five years he lived in Kirtland he accumulated some \$4,000 worth of property, went on six proselyting missions for the Church, accompanied Zion's Camp to Missouri and back in 1834, was called to the Church's original Quorum of Twelve Apostles, and plied his trade in helping to build prominent Kirtland landmarks, including the temple, printing office, and school. In addition to this, he was able to restore some stability to his family life when he married Mary Ann Angell in February 1834. She "took charge of my children, kept my house, and labored faithfully for the interest of my family and the kingdom," he later wrote.⁹

The early years of Brigham and Mary Ann's marriage were interrupted by frequent assignments that separated him from his family. Less than three months had elapsed, with Mary Ann expecting their first child, when he left with Zion's Camp for Missouri; but he returned in the autumn in time for the birth of his first son, whom they named Joseph Angell Young. After Brigham's call to the Quorum of the Twelve in 1835, he again departed, this time on a five month proselyting mission in the eastern states. In 1836 he was gone half the year on similar service. During this latter absence, while laboring in New England, Brigham wrote the earliest known letter to his wife. This document, with other family correspondence, is invaluable for its insight into personalities and feelings. It also helps to remind us that the schooling of Brigham Young's day (he had only eleven days of schooling) was hardly beyond the stage of phonetic spelling.¹⁰ The letter, sent from Pawlet, Vermont, on 3 June 1836, was addressed to "My whife my Companion in tribulation and in the Kingdom." After expressing his inability "to Convey my mind to you by letter," and reporting that he had "injoied my self verely well," since leaving Kirtland, he continued:

What shal I say to you to comfert your hart. I Pray for you and I feele that the Lord will bles you and keep you from danger and bare you upon the arms of faith. Tell the Children that I remember them in my Prares. I Pray the Lord to giv you streng[t]h and wisdom in all things. Let me say to Elizibeth be a good girl and mind your mother and be good to Vilate and letle Joseph and I [k]now you

⁹"History of Brigham Young," *Deseret News*, 10 February 1858.

¹⁰See Elinor Hughes Partridge, "Nineteenth-Century Spelling: The Rules and the Writers," *Ensign* 5 (August 1975): 75-80.

will be. Vilate be a good girl and mind your Mother and studdy your book. . . . Mary Kiss that lettle son of ours and tell him to make hast[e] and groe so he can goe with me. . . . When I shall see you is unknown to me. If enney [of] the Brethern inquire about me tell them I am doing as well as I can. So Fair Well. The Lord bless you.¹¹

Six weeks later Brigham addressed another letter to Mary Ann; he was then in Providence, Rhode Island. It was now July and he lamented the fact that he had not yet heard from his wife since he left home in April.

Once more I take my pen in hand to right to you. I think this is the fo[u]rth time that I have ritten to you sence I left home, but I have not heard a word from you sence I left. I have som faint hopes that I shall here from you when I get to Boston. . . . I am calculating to return home as so[o]n as Posable after the first of September. I think that I shal be able to return and pay for my house and I want to repare it this fall so that I can feele contented about my famely when I leve them. Mary if you can I wish you wold have Brother A. Bonney get som lumber or timber or ston and if you have a chance to b[u]y enny thing for bilding and when I com home I [will] Pay for it. I [would like] to say agradel [a great deal] but I will not write with pen and enk but I com[e] and see you and speak to you face to face. I want you should write to me as so[o]n as you rec[e]ive this. . . . My Dear Mary I remember you continually in my Prayrs. My love to all my little children. Be good to your mother and pray for me when I am away. Fairwell. I remane your hosbon and frend.¹²

Brigham returned to Kirtland in September 1836 and was with his wife in December when she gave birth to twins—a boy and a girl they named Brigham and Mary Ann. The twins were not quite three months old when their father left home again on a “special mission” to the East appointed by the Prophet Joseph Smith. In company with his cousin, Willard Richards, Brigham traveled day and night by stagecoach “over very rough roads” through Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York.¹³ After eleven days he wrote to Mary Ann from Richmond, Massachusetts:

My companion, haveing a fue mineuts I atempt to wright a fue lines to you. Brother Willard and my self are now at his fathers. To morrow we shall start for New York. We found our frends well. They want to com to Kirtland. We had a good journey thou[g]h

¹¹Brigham Young to Mary Ann Angell Young, 3 June 1836, MS, Philip Blair Collection, Special Collections Department, University of Utah Library (hereafter cited as U. of U.). As will be evident, an important part of the source material in this article was drawn from this collection and is reproduced here with the generous permission of the University of Utah Library. In adhering to original writing habits, minimal punctuation has been added to facilitating reading.

¹²Brigham Young to Mary Ann Angell Young, 21 July 1836, MS, U. of U.

¹³“History of Brigham Young,” *Deseret News*, 10 February 1858.

very much fortuegd [fatigued] riding day and night in the stage. We arrived here yeasterday about 9 A.M. This morning I was sick about one [h]our then got better. . . . I think I shall returne as soon as posable. I can vue my famely with the eye of the mind and desire to be with them as so[o]n as duty will permit. Yet I [pe]n this to comfort my mind that they are not suffering for food and rament. . . . Tell the girls to be good and pray for me and as for my wife I [k]now that she pray[s] for me all ways. Mary I remember you allways in my prayrs. . . . My best love to my wife and then to my house hold. So fair well. I remane yours.¹⁴

Arriving back at Kirtland in May 1837, Brigham was scarcely home a month when he was called on another assignment to the East, evidently connected with the difficulties that had beset the Church at Kirtland. Before he saw his family again the spirit of apostasy at Kirtland began to make such serious inroads upon the faith of the Saints there as to threaten the very existence of the Church. Returning in August, Brigham found feelings of disaffection so strong that "it was difficult for any to see clearly the path to pursue." During this "siege of darkness" he put forth his "utmost energies" to sustain confidence in the Prophet Joseph Smith and "unite the quorums of the Church." In doing this his popularity decreased to the point that he was forced to flee from Kirtland in the night of 22 December to avoid mob violence.¹⁵ Joined by his family some time later, Brigham set out for Missouri. At the time of his departure the twins were a year old, Joseph A. was three, Vilate, eight, and Elizabeth, thirteen.

After suffering many hardships due to inclement weather and poor traveling conditions, Brigham arrived at Far West, Missouri, on 14 March 1838. Here he purchased a small improvement on Mill Creek, and began to fence a farm in the hope of a permanent resting place for his family. But he had no sooner established himself and was able to purchase some additional land than he was again forced to abandon everything in the wake of the difficulties that beset the Latter-day Saints in Missouri—difficulties that eventually forced the entire Mormon population to leave the state. With Joseph Smith in prison, Brigham struggled under the double burden of caring for his family and directing the Mormon exodus from Missouri. To complicate matters, Mary Ann became so ill "that her life was despaired of for a long time." When she was finally able to travel in February 1839, Brigham took what few things he could carry, "leaving my landed property and nearly all my household goods," and with his wife and five children

¹⁴Brigham Young to Mary Ann Angell, 24 March 1837, MS, U. of U.

¹⁵"History of Brigham Young," *Deseret News*, 10 February 1858.

made his way to Illinois, where he stopped in Atlas, Pike County, for a few weeks before moving to Quincy.¹⁶

Brigham Young remained in Quincy until after Joseph Smith's return from Missouri and plans were made to establish a settlement at Commerce sixty miles to the north. Then on 16 May he took his family and headed for the new place of settlement. Crossing the Mississippi on the 23rd he established his residence in a room of an old abandoned military barracks at Montrose, Iowa.

His entire family was ill on 14 September 1839, when Brigham arose from his bed to begin his mission to England. He himself was so sick that he was "unable to go thirty rods to the river without assistance," and his wife (who had given birth to their sixth child ten days previous) and other children were unable "to wait upon each other." On 6 April 1840, more than six months after this unpromising start, Brigham arrived in England. While there, in addition to proselyting work, he directed the printing of important Church publications including the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, the *Millennial Star*, and a hymn book.¹⁷

The first known contact with his family after arriving in England is a short letter dated 2 June 1840. The document was sent with John Moon, who had been selected to lead the initial shipload of Saints from England to America. Accompanying the letter was a small box containing a gift. Too busy to write more, Brigham directed his brief message "To my Dearest Mary Ann Young."

You will find a small key in this Letter which will enable you to unlock a little work Box. There you will [find] 2 letters. Read No. one first then No. two. Then look at the little presents. I have no more time to wright to you at present so I sub[s]cribe my self you[r] husben and companion in life. So fare well. Yours in the Bonds of mattromony, Brigham Young.¹⁸

Ten days later from Manchester where he and Parley P. Pratt were working on the publication of the hymn book, Brigham found time to address his family at greater length. A highlight of the letter is his recounting of "a visit" he had made to them in a dream the night before:

To my Dearest Mary. I now take my pen to wright a fue words to you. I have ben verry desirus to here from you. I get a little knews ecasenely [occasionally] by the Br[ether]in that recive letters from there wifes. Gratley to my sa[t]esfaction last night I paid you a visit in that contry. I first saw Elizabeth. I shoke her by the hand. Enquired

¹⁶Ibid., 17 February 1858.

¹⁷Ibid., 24 February 1858.

¹⁸Brigham Young to Mary Ann Angell Young, 2 June 1840, MS, U. of U.

whare you was. She said you was about the house. Still I thaught we ware out of dores, but you soon came along whare I was. I shok you hartley by the hand and kist you two or three times and said to you whare is my Dear Children. You and Elizabeth boath spoke and said they ware at [s]chool and are all well. I says is Violate at [s]chol? Yeas you boath said. You then replied the children feele verry well suited with there situation and was verry fond of there Books. I wanted to see Violate and my little Jode Boy or Joseph and Mary and Brigham but did not. All this I saw in the night vision.¹⁹ And I also saw much more concerning the Church which I shall not relate. One thing more I thought that I had got to takere [take care] of my own famely fore the Church would not be able to doe much for our famelies. Before you get this you will probable see Sister Moon. I sent som little presents by her. There was one thing I did not menshen in my letter for I had sealed it up. Jest before the compnia started, Brother Henery Moon baught you and Violate Kimball, a butiful calico frock patte[r]n, thred to make them up, one yeard of factory for each, 9 and 1/2 yards. . . . I would like to see you ware that frock when I com home, but I doe not know when that will be at present. . . .

Unable to finish his letter on the twelfth, Brigham continued "to wright a fue lines more" a week later:

Saterdy the 20. . . . I asteam [esteem] it a grate privelege that I can converce with you with my pen. . . . As to my enjoyments I am as happy in this contry as I could be in enny place in the world whare I had got to be deprived of the sociity of my famely. They [the people of England] are as loving a set of people as ever I saw in my life, y[e]a thay are more so in their aperance then the Americans. But my soul says sweet home sweet home, my blesed famely, yea my kind and loving family, how sweet is home. You might think that I am verry anxious to get home, but it [is] not so. . . . but when the time has fully com, and the Lord says goe home my hart then will leap for joy. . . . If we get 5000 copes of the Book of Mormon spread in Urop [Europe] and Brother Pratt gets his famely here so he can attend to the paper and keep it agoing, I shall feele perty well satesfyde to com home and see you and the children and my Brotheren that I love in the Bonds of truth. . . .

Again interrupted, Brigham finally completed his letter in Liverpool, where he had traveled to supervise work on the Book of Mormon:

¹⁹On 11 June 1840 Brigham recorded the account of his dream in his diary: "Thursday 11. Went to visit a garden. It was rane y and unplesant. Came home. I was rejoiced because I had a comfortable home. After Br. P. P. Pratt and myself talked som[e] time about the nesity of the Elders having the power of God with them. I fell asleep and dremed a dreme. I first dremed of being at home in the Stat[e]s. I first saw Elizabeth. I asked her whare her mother was. She said she was about the house. She soon came in. I shook hands [with] her hart[i]ly as I had don with Elizabeth. I imbraced her in my arms and kissed [her] 2 or 3 times and asked hir whare my dear children was. She and Elizabeth boath ansard [answered] and said they ware at [s]chool and they ware well and enjoyed the [s]chool and loved there Books. My wife says we feele well but you must provide for your own families for the Church are not able to doe [it]for them" (Diary of Brigham Young, 1837-1845, MS, Church Historical Department).

I am about to finish my letter and send it. . . . Br. [John] Taylor has jest received a letter from his wife, so I get a little knews from you or about you. . . . I understand you are agoing to have a house built and som of the rest of the Sisters. I reculect what Br. Joseph said to us, if we would leve our famelies and goe to Englan on our mision that our famelies should want for nothing. This he said in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. I beleve it. I have felt satesfied and contented about my famely ever sence I left them. And I had rather you would stay there then to goe to the east as things are at present. For when I com home I shall want to be with the Brotherin [of] the first Presedency.

If you get a house built have it built whare it will suite you there. I have not anide [an idea] of injoying a house and home long at a time till the ancent of days comes and sets and Judgment and power is given to the saints of the most high God. Then and not till then doe I expect to have peace on the Earth long at a time, I think I shall com home and enjoy a season of [peace] with my family ecaisonly [occasionally].

I think much about you having the c[are o]f such a large famely upon your hands and no one to see to or doe enything for them but your self. Your task must be grate. I shall endeavor to Send to your assistence as often as I can. I have sent a little present by sister Moon to you that I think will cheere your hart. You may expect to here from me agan this fall. . . . I have no more to wright that I want to wright at present. To Elizabeth may the Lord bles you and keep you humbel and Violate, be good girles and pray for me that the Lord will enable me to doe his will. I sub[s]cribe myself yours in the Bonds of love matromony and the everlasting covenant.²⁰

By November Brigham Young was in Manchester again. Parley P. Pratt had returned to America to get his family and Brigham had been confined to the office for several months working on the publication of the Book of Mormon, the hymn book, and the *Millennial Star*, in addition to directing the proselyting work of the elders in the European mission. On the twelfth Brigham again wrote his wife: "Once more Mary I wright to you for fere that you have not recived the letters that I have latley sent to you. I sent you one this weak, one weak before last, and now there is som going to America and I feel to say a little more to you." Having heard of hardship in his family, he responded:

I understand you have had hard worke to get enny thing for your self and famely to make you comfortable. This I doe not here from you but from others. You may well think that my hart feeles tender toards you, when I relise your patiants and willingness to suffer in poverty and doe everything you can for my children and for me to goe and due the thing the Lord requires of me. I pray the Lord to bless you in all things and my children and help us all to be faithful to him and our Bretherin. This will bring [honor] to the name of

²⁰Brigham Young to Mary Ann Angell Young, 12, 20, and 24 June 1840, MS, U. of U.

our Redemer on the Earth also upon our heds and the best of all is we shall have eternal life.²¹

The last known communication of Brigham Young to his family from England is dated 15 January 1841, at Liverpool, three months before he left to return home:

I am now seated to wright a fue lines to you. I feele thankful that I can communicate to you my thoughts and feelings, thou[g]h far from you. I am injoying tolarble good he[l]th for me. I have rec[e]ived a long letter from you which was a blesing to mee to have knews from your own hand. I felt sorry to here [hear] that you had ben sick. I am aware that your worke is to[o] hard for you, even if you ware all well; I pray for you and the children continuly. It is all I can due. I can not help you about your daly work. . . . You said in your letter you wanted to know about the time I should come home. I can tel you what I think about it at present. On the 6 day of Apriel 1841 we hold a Councel of the twelve with the officers of the church for the purpos of arangen [arranging] the affares of the church so that we can leve. I think we shall start for home then, and make our way as fast as we can. I beleve this is the feelings of all the twelve. This is all I can say upon the subject, the will of the Lord be don. If we due start by the middle of April we shall be home in June. . . .

As to my feelings I injoy my self as well as I ever did in my life though my labor is verry hard. But the grace of god is saficiant for me. I feele a grate desire for my famely, but I feele they are in the hands of the Lord God of Isreal. . . . I am aware the time seems longer to you and the children that I am gon then [than] it do[e]s to me for you onley have one seene [scene] of things before you. It is not so with me and the fact is my buisness or mision is so hevey upon me that I have but little time for enny thing elce. If I would give up my mind to think of my famely it would destract me and I should not be fit for the work the Lord has set me about. You said you hoped I would not charge you with ingratitude. I due not know that I have. If I have, I have don it ignerently for it has not ben in my hart to due it nether is it now in my hart to due it. I desire to ad[d] to your comfort and hapiness. I have nothing to say to you upon this point, for I think you have. . . . [n]ever had enny thing elce in your hart toards me but to make me happy and comfortable. . . .

Elder [Lorenzo] Snow is in Birmingham. He braugh[t] me your letter. I recived it as a presious morsel. There was one word in it that I did or due not understand. It is this [hold it to the fire and you can read].²² I recived the other letter you speak of. I have not wreten as often as I should like to have don. Latley I have had so much to talk about and due that I could not verry well. . . . You say in your letter little Mary Ann cried the other night and did not want to goe to Bed till she had kneled down and praid for Father;

²¹Brigham Young to Mary Ann Angell Young, 12 November 1840, MS, U. of U.

²²The brackets are in the original.

bless the little creater. How I want to see hir. After you recive this letter you nead not write to [me] agan.

Mary, if you can helpe Br. Truman Angel to enny little thing do so, for I ow[e] him. To my children Elizabeth be a good girl take good care of your helth and of the children be humble and pray for me. Vilate be a good girl and be kind to the little ons. Pray for your self and for your Father and Mother and for the children and teach the littl ons to pray. You mus studday your book and lern the children to read. My little son Joseph be a good Boy. Mind your mother. Help hir bring wood and water for hir. When I com home I mean to bring you and Brigham a nise little wagon, so you can draw wood and goe to [the] mil for your mother. Little Brigham how I due want to see him. Be a good Boy and I will com home soon to see you and the rest of the children. My little daughter Emma²³ she dos not know eny thing a bout me. But Mary remembers me and I am glad of it.

I hope you have got what I sent to you by Br. Turley. He will pay you thirty dallars when ever you want. You said in your letter I might think you was rich know [now] but I did not nether due now think you are. But I think one thing, glory to God in [the] highest for his goodness to me in putting it in to my power to help my poor wife and children to a little to b[u]y them a morsel of bread. It is not me but the Lord that has don it . . . th[r]ough me. If the Lord bleses me so I can I shall send you a little by Br. Hiram Clark who will get there in Apriel. . . . I should like to have you b[u]y a nother first rate Cow so we can have plenty of milk and butter when I get home so we can feed the poor, for I shall have a grate menny to visit me. (I am your for ever) Brigham Young.

. . . if you get a garden planted this seson I will try to be there to fence it. If you can get your house finished by the time I come home I shall be glad. But due not truble your self if it is not convenient.²⁴

Something of the difficulties that faced Mary Ann Young at Nauvoo in her husband's absence is seen in the only known letter written by her to Brigham while he was in England. The letter was begun on 15 April and completed on 30 April. It was directed to a New York address. Brigham left England on 19 April, so obviously received the letter after his arrival in America:

Agreeable to your request I Attempt to communicate a few lines to you. I have red your kind letters. They have been a great comfort to me. . . . I long to see you att home once more. I pray my Heavenly Father in the worthey name of Jesus that he will protect you from all evil and prosper you on your way home. . . . I hope you will for-

²³According to Nauvoo sealing records, the full name of this child, born 4 September 1839, was Roxy Emma Alice Young. While this letter and the one of Mary Ann to Brigham dated 1841 indicate the use of the name Emma in her early years, by 1847 Alice was being used and is the name that appears on subsequent family genealogy lists.

²⁴Brigham Young to Mary Ann Angell Young, 15 January 1841, MS, U. of U.

give me for not writing to you. . . . I feel in hopes I shall be able to get work and fire wood along this Spring. I am glad to hear the work of the Lord is prospering in England. It gives me much joy. I feel to give glory to God for his mercy to the children of men in the last days. . . .

Mary Ann continued her letter two days later:

Saturday the 17. Br. [Hiram] Clark . . . called the next morning after his arrival and gave me the two letters from you and the litle Box undisturbed as it was from your hand. I feel the Lord is good. I think we have learned quite a lesson since you left home. That is to trust in the Lord. Alas, that is a great thing. They that trust in the Lord shall not be confounded worlds without end. Amen. I long to see you at home once more My Dear Husband. May that God whose servents we are protect and speed you on your way in safety with our dear Breatheren.

I think you would hardly know the children. They have grown so much larger since you left home. The girls did not recover from their sickness until January. There was four or five months my family was helpless nearly on my hands. But through the mercy of my heavenly Father we are all in good health at present. But I can truly say I am ashamed of my writing. I have no Sickness upon me yet I am constantly fatagued when I can get time to sit down to write in the day time: and I cannot write by candle light as I have with the rest of the family . . . had very sore eyes. Litle Emmas eyes have been so very sore she could not open them nor bare the light for some time.

I feel that it is through the mercy of God that we enjoy the Blessing of health at the present. . . . I am thankful for all the Blessings I hav received. I should be glad if I had a better house to recieve into. But it has been so differcult to obtain work that what I had done is not done as I wanted itt. But I am thankful for a comfortable shelter from the Storm. I have done the best I could so I will thank my hevenly Father for all the blessings I recieve and pray the Lord to continue his mercys with us. The litle Boys talk much about their litle wagon that Father is a going to bring them. Joseph [says] tell Father I send my best love to him. E[lizabeth] says she wants some Light plain silk to make her a Bonnet of, [also a] Belt & Slide. She would like some litle white artificial flowers. She says you may do as [you have] a mind about geting them. . . . I am as ever yours M.A. Young.

The letter was finally finished on 30 April with these lines about the children:

Litle Brigham says tell Father to come home. Mary says I want to see Father and Emma says yes. I think she will go to you as you Dreamed when you come home. I Bid you farewell for a litle Season.²⁵

²⁵Mary Ann Angell Young to Brigham Young, 15, 17, and 30 April 1841, MS, Church Historical Department.

After an absence from his family of twenty-two months, Brigham Young arrived back in Nauvoo on 1 July 1841. He found Mary and his six children living "in a small unfinished log cabin, situated on a low wet lot, so swampy that when the first attempt was made to plow it the oxen mired."²⁶ Since joining the Latter-day Saints in 1832 Brigham had been away from his family on proselyting missions or other Church assignments nearly half of his time. A few days after his return from Nauvoo Joseph Smith called to see him and in the course of his visit conveyed a revelation that addressed the subject of his absence from his family:

Dear and well-beloved brother, Brigham Young, verily thus saith the Lord unto you: My servant Brigham, it is no more required at your hand to leave your family as in times past, for your offering is acceptable to me.

I have seen your labor and toil in journeyings for my name.

I therefore command you to send my word abroad, and take especial care of your family from this time, henceforth and forever. Amen. (D&C 126)

While these must have been comforting lines to Brigham and Mary Ann, they neither relieved the heavy demands upon his time, nor completely discontinued his "journeyings abroad." Within a month of his return from England, the burden of Church business in Nauvoo was placed upon the Quorum of Twelve. Brigham Young as president of the Quorum spent most of his time regulating missionary work and the settlement of immigrating Saints upon Church lands, attending quorum meetings, visiting nearby congregations, and meeting as a city councilor of Nauvoo. Beyond this, he did find a little time to improve the conditions of his family.

Although I had to spend the principal part of my time, at the call of Bro. Joseph, in the service of the church, the portion of time left me I spent in draining, fencing and cultivating my lot, building a temporary shed for my cow, chinking and otherwise finishing my house; and as the ground was too damp to admit of a cellar underground, I built one with two brick walls about four or six inches apart, arched over with brick.²⁷

Something of the extent of Brigham Young's absence from his family during the first decade following his baptism can be sensed from an isolated entry in his diary dated January 1842: "This evening I am with my wife a lone by my fire side for the first time for years. We injoin it and feele to prase the Lord."²⁸

²⁶"History of Brigham Young," *Deseret News*, 10 March 1858.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Diary of Brigham Young, 1837-1845.

A high point of the year 1842 for Brigham and Mary Ann Young came on 20 August with the birth of their fifth daughter, Luna. The child was less than three weeks old when her father left Nauvoo with Heber C. Kimball on a special mission to the East to help counteract the influence of John C. Bennett's anti-Mormon publications. During this mission Brigham baptized twelve persons.

After returning to his family on 4 November, Brigham was stricken with a severe illness. Years later he remembered it as "the most violent fever" he had ever experienced. Such was its virulence that the skin peeled from his body. Joseph Smith and Willard Richards gave him a special blessing and prophesied that he should recover, but the blessing did not preclude long suffering. During the eighteen days the fever raged, Brigham lay in his log house in an open room that was so cold that an attendant employed to fan the fever-ridden patient, froze his fingers and toes even though he was wearing boots, greatcoat, and mittens.

When the fever left on the eighteenth day, Brigham was propped up in a chair, but was so far gone that his eyes had set in his head and he could not close his eyelids. Suddenly, his chin dropped and he stopped breathing. Mary Ann, seeing this, quickly emptied the contents of a water bucket on him, but with no effect. She then dashed a handful of strong camphor into his face and eyes. Still there was no response. Desperately, she held his nose and placing her mouth over his, blew hard to set his lungs in motion. Finally, he began to breathe again; but recovery was slow. Not until the middle of January 1843 was he able to leave the house for the first time since his illness.²⁹

In addition to his civic and Church responsibilities, Brigham Young found enough time to improve the temporal comforts of his wife and children. On 31 May 1843, nearly two years after his return from England, he completed a new, brick dwelling for his family. "I moved out of my log cabin into my new brick house, which was 22 feet by 16, two stories high, and a good cellar under it, and felt thankful to God for the privilege of having a comfortable, though small habitation."³⁰

About a month after moving into his new home Brigham was called to leave it. In company with Wilford Woodruff and George A. Smith, he started on a special assignment to the eastern states to solicit funds for the building of the Nauvoo House. He had been gone about two months when he received a letter from Mary

²⁹"History of Brigham Young," *Deseret News*, 17 March 1858.

³⁰Ibid.

Ann. Written to her "Dear and well Beloved" husband, the epistle brought news of sickness at home. The letter was being written "while our litle family is quietly resting in bed which has been very seldom for four weeks past."

I was taken with enfluensy and Colamorbus [cholera morbus] the first. Brigham was taken with the scarlot feever. Before he recovered the three litle girls were taken. Mary had the Canker so she did not swallow for ten or eleven days eny thing But drink except a little fish flesh once. Vilate was taken very sick one week since with scarlot feever. The Colamorbus took hold of her yesterday in a very severe manner so she appeared nigh unto Death But through mercy of God and the utmost exertion she is quite comfortable. . . .

Hoping that the worst was over and better days were ahead, Mary Ann continued:

The children are all geting Better and I can truly say I feel thankful, for I am much worn down with standing over them By day and By night and hearing their cries with pain and distress oftimes calling for Father to come and lay hands on them. I am shure it peirced my heart with much sorrow. I feel to thank my heavenly Father there is prospect of health returning to us again at presant. There is much sickness in this place. . . . Some children died with the same disease our family has had. There is no change in our temporal affairs for the Better since you let home.

Realizing that the news she had imparted was not calculated to bring comfort, Mary Ann checked herself and apologized; but where her trials had been so severe, her writing reflected her feelings:

I do not want to say things to you to trouble you. You must excuse me for saying so much about the distress we have passed through. I feel somtimes as though I could never get eny thing else on my mind. . . . May the Lord Bless you and make you an instrument of doing much good. You have all our Praits. I am yours in bonds of the everlasting Gospel.³¹

If the break in the clouds seemed to presage better days, in reality it was only the introduction to another trial. Ten days after the date of the above letter, the Young's six year old daughter, Mary Ann, died of what was diagnosed as "dropsy and canker."³² This little girl was the twin of Brigham, Jr.—the lovely "little creater" of an earlier letter, who didn't want to go to bed until she had prayed for her father. Sources do not tell where Brigham Young was or the date when he received news of the death of his daughter.

³¹Mary Ann Angell Young to Brigham Young, 16 and 17 August 1843, MS, Church Historical Department.

p ³²"Record of Deaths in the City of Nauvoo," MS, Church Historical Department.

On the same day that Mary Ann finished her letter, Brigham (“thankful to have the oppertun[ity]”) also wrote one. The theme of his letter was the same as his wife’s—illness.

I have ben verry sick with my old complaint. Feele some better to day. . . . When I was so sick I thought if I could only be at home, I should be thankful. There is no place like home to me. I due not value leveing home and all that is deare to me for the sake of the gospel if I could onley injoy my helth. You and I must take som masurs to recover our helth or we shall not last a grate meny years; and I want that we should live meny years yet and due much good on the earth. . . .

After explaining his travels in some detail, Brigham pinpointed the nature of his ill health:

took the rales cares [rail cars] for New York. Arived a[t] 6 P.M. It commenced raining in the after noon. We had a grate flood in this place. My teth commenced aking about the time it commencd raining. I was sick and destresed about 4 day[s] and nights. Hardley got enny sleep. I sufferd much. . . . I took some pill[s], was anointed. Had hands laid on me thursday night. My destres continued till a bout 12 o c[lock]. I laid down went to sleep. Had a good nights’ rest. Have been perty well ever sence.³³

Two months later, on 22 October 1843, Brigham returned to his family at Nauvoo.

The following spring Brigham Young again undertook a special assignment to the East—this time to solicit support for the candidacy of Joseph Smith as President of the United States. In company with Heber C. Kimball and Lyman Wight, he left Nauvoo on 21 May. While waiting for a boat at Fairport, Ohio, on Lake Erie he started a letter to Mary Ann: “I feele lonsom. O that I had you with me this somer I think I should be happy. Well I am now because I am in my cauling and duing my duty, but [the] older I grow the more I desire to stay at my own home insted of traveling.” Continuing the letter some time later from Albany, New York, Brigham wrote that he had not had much sleep and was “perty well tired out.”

Last night I felt for sometime as though I had got to get a new const[it]ution or [I would] not last long. How I due want to see you and [the children]. Kiss them for me and kiss Luny [Luna] twice or mor. Tel hir it is for me. Give my love to all the famely. I nead not mension names. . . . Dont you want for eney thing. You can borrow monney to get what you want. . . . After taking a grate share of my love to your self then deal it out to others as you plese.³⁴

³³Brigham Young to Mary Ann Angell Young, 17 August 1843, MS, original at Yale University Library.

³⁴Brigham Young to Mary Ann Angell Young, 12 June 1844, MS, original in possession of Dr. Wade Stephens, Bradenton, Florida.

Brigham told Mary Ann that he would travel to New York, and Vermont, and then attend a Boston conference before returning home. On 9 July he heard the first rumors of the death of Joseph and Hyrum Smith—news that was confirmed one week later “while at Br. Bement’s house in Peterboro” in a letter one of the church members had received from Nauvoo.³⁵ A letter from Mary Ann dated 30 June confirmed the sorrowful news:

My Dear Companion. I set down to communicate a few lines to you at this time. My heart is full. I know not what to write to comfort you at this time. We have had great afflictions in this place since you left home. . . . You have now been gone allmost six weeks. I have not had a line from you since you left home. I have not time to write much now. We are in great affliction at this time. Our Dear Br. Joseph Smith and Hiram has fell victiams to a verocious mob. The great God of the creation only knows whithe[r] the rest shall be preserved in safety or not. We are in tolable good health at presant. I have been Blessed to keep my feelings quite calm through all the storm. I hope you will be careful on your way hom and not expose yourself to those that will endanger your Life. Yours in hast[e]. If we meet no more in this world may we meet where parting is no more. Farewell.³⁶

One attraction that drew Brigham Young to the East that summer of 1844 was his daughter, Vilate, who at the time was attending school in Salem, Massachusetts while living with Church member friends. Brigham visited her on 18 June. And shortly after his return to Nauvoo he wrote her expressing uncertainty that he would see her again that year. He counseled her “to be steady to your school and practis on the Pianna. Get all you can while you have an opertunity.” He told of the desire of the other children to see her, and concluded: “You must be a good girl and pray for me and the rest of us that we may live long on the Earth to due good. Take the council of Br. and Sister Felt, and see sister Cobb as often as you can and harken to hir instruction. I beleve she is a good woman and would not council you wrong for the world knowenly.”³⁷

A letter to Vilate dated 28 August 1844 in which Brigham wrote that he did not know when he would travel east again, because “the Church are not willing to have Br. Kimball or my self go from this place a tall,” is the last known personal communication between Brigham Young and members of his family prior to the 1846 exodus from Nauvoo.³⁸

³⁵“History of Brigham Young,” *Deseret News*, 24 March 1858.

³⁶Mary Ann Angell Young to Brigham Young, 30 June 1844, MS, Church Historical Department.

³⁷Brigham Young to Vilate Young, 11 August 1844, MS, Church Historical Department.

³⁸Brigham Young to Vilate Young, 28 August 1844, MS, Church Historical Department.

Brigham's Gospel Kingdom

Eugene England

My aunt told me a story as she lay in a hospital bed. She had pioneered in Idaho, as one of the last generation who moved out to the frontiers to build what Leonard Arrington has called the Great Basin Kingdom in a process begun by Brigham Young, and she was telling me why she loved "Brother Brigham." "You know why it took many years to build that stone wall, the one you can still see a part of east of the Beehive House? When the immigrants would come in the wagon trains, many of them didn't have a thing. They had used up all they had, just to get here from England or the East. Sometimes there were a few who didn't even have a place to go for a home or work. So Brigham would hire them to work for him. It was usually some worthwhile, needed job on his farms and orchards, but if those were all taken he would say, 'See the pile of rocks in that corner; I need it over in this corner.' Whatever the job he gave them, he would pay them enough to live on but not as much as the work was paying elsewhere. So they were anxious to leave and start their own farm or shop or hire out to others in the colonies. The next year others would come in and he would say, if there was nothing else, 'See the pile of rocks in this corner; I need it over in that corner.' And that is why it took so long to build that little wall. They thought they were smart to earn what they could and get out of the employ of such a hard man, but he was the smart one. He never gave charity, but he helped many make their new lives." Then, with her face livened by her special form of calm assurance and her thin, strong fingers gesturing, she added, "He didn't tell them what he was doing but he just did it; he made them feel worth something down in here."

Brother Brigham knew what he was doing, and he was sometimes explicit:

My soul feels hallelujah, it exults in God, that He has planted this people in a place that is not desired by the wicked; . . . I want hard times, so that every person that does not wish to stay, for the sake

of his religion, will leave. This is a good place to make Saints, and it is a good place for Saints to live; it is the place the Lord has appointed, and we shall stay here until He tells us to go somewhere else.¹

Of course, it was not mere persecution, or work as an end, that he was after, or even the building of a mighty empire, but that sense of self-worth that my aunt treasured from her own pioneering, that realization of joy-bringing satisfaction that comes only from doing something worthwhile—something honest and developing—with our own divine potential. Brigham Young was intent on fulfilling his growing vision of the promise he had made the Nauvoo Saints in the dark hour of their bewilderment at Joseph's death: "There is an Almighty foundation laid, and we can build a kingdom such as there never was in this world."² And that is what they did—after the trial of people and leaders in the Nauvoo expulsion and the Iowa crossing and the Winter Quarters death and the early starvation in the Valley. They built, under President Young, a kingdom such as the world had not seen, an unearthly kingdom—though a kingdom partly made of rock walls and nail factories and "Rag Missions" and sorghum molasses—that made people into Saints. It was a kingdom that, though it had no dangerous political ambitions, appalled the politicians and economists and the moralists of the western world and finally had to endure the crushing intervention of the United States Government. Meanwhile it attracted tens of thousands of dedicated converts from all over the world and secured the material and spiritual foundations of the modern Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. And it set the vision for all future generations of Mormons, even in the areas where it was defeated, of an ideal someday to be reached or completed.

Most Mormons, including those who know little else about him, and many non-Mormon writers, including those who admire nothing else in Mormonism, have been impressed by the kingdom Brigham built. They have called Brigham Young the greatest western colonizer and praised the disciplined dedication and courageous resourcefulness with which he and the Mormons created a thriving and harmonious commonwealth in a desert wilderness. For instance, Christopher Lasch, a fine non-Mormon historian, while reviewing some books on the Mormon experience in 1967, expressed his admiration that "in Utah, under Young's leadership

¹Brigham Young in *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1855-86), 4:32 (hereafter cited as *JD*).

²Minutes, "Special Meeting at Nauvoo," 8 August 1844, MS, Brigham Young Papers, Archives of the Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (hereafter cited as Church Archives).

the Mormons created a self-sufficient, cooperative, egalitarian, and authoritarian economy devoted not to individual enrichment but to the collective well-being of the flock.” Lasch cited the present LDS Church Historian, Leonard Arrington, who in his landmark study of the Mormon economy, *Great Basin Kingdom*,

shows how the Mormons accomplished, through a system of cooperative and compulsory labor, impressive feats of planning and development—irrigation, roads, canals, sugar beet factories, iron works—without generating the institutions or the inequalities elsewhere associated with industrial progress.

Lasch concludes: “Cooperation and planning caused the desert to bloom, in marked contrast to the exploitive patterns of agriculture which on other frontiers exhausted natural resources and left the land a smoking waste.”³ But even in this high praise, Lasch, like most other commentators, seems to miss the point of Brigham Young’s kingdom—and therefore misses its highest achievement. He fails to see the relationship of successful kingdom building to basic Mormon religious principles; he therefore cannot see the continuance in the twentieth century Church of those remarkable but for him inexplicable pioneer virtues. He cannot see that the principles continue with Mormons as a foundation for other, just as dedicated, forms of kingdom building and remain the basis for a continuing idealism that envisions a kingdom—as literal as Brother Brigham’s—to be built in preparation for the coming of Christ.

It is interesting that one of the few scholars who have clearly seen these things is Ernst Benz, a non-Mormon professor of religion at the University of Marburg, Germany. Speaking at a forum at Brigham Young University in March 1976, Professor Benz commented on the increasing secularization, or worldliness, of all the world’s religions, which has taken the form of a decline not only of institutional churches but of the influence of religion on all areas of modern man’s thinking and behavior. He then pointed out a quite different, positive kind of “secularization” or involvement of the divine with the world, God’s penetration into

the matter of the world to model and shape it according to his own will, for modelling mankind, for building up His kingdom. Considering this type of secularization we must as historians admit that Mormonism is the best example of this positive secularization of the Christian gospel because it was driven from its very beginning by the aim to prepare and even to anticipate the promise of the coming kingdom of God. . . . The persecution and the destruction of their

³Christopher Lasch, *The World of Nations* (New York: Knopf, 1973), p. 66; an essay originally printed in the *New York Review of Books*, 26 January 1967.

holy places drove them finally into the western desert, and there they fulfilled the most admirable and astonishing work of making . . . the desert blossom under the most atrocious exterior conditions of nature, of climate, of absence of material resources.

But Benz goes on to see much deeper into that achievement than others such as Lasch. He points out why Mormons have differed from all other millenarian movements in having unique resources for avoiding the great danger of such positive secularization, the tendency of successful building of a literal physical kingdom (even though in explicit preparation for Christ's literal coming to reign at its head) to "proceed so far into worldliness, that it comes in the advanced state of it to be an interruption or a loss of contact with the original or heavenly source and with the heavenly aim."

With a kind of insight into Mormon theology and experience that is extremely rare, Benz points to three basic Mormon concepts which he has faith will prevent the ideal of the Mormon kingdom from declining into a "social gospel" effort merely to solve man's material problems: First, the concept of the "Everlasting Gospel," a body of truth (what Joseph Smith called the "ancient order of things") which does not evolve or decay but is revealed again and again in its original power, including the permanent duty of mission—the divine call and power to spread that Everlasting Gospel from the kingdom throughout the whole earth. Second, the "permanent presence of the gifts of the Holy Spirit":

Mormons always preserved a very living feeling and consciousness of the presence of the Holy Spirit and of the activity of his gifts, above all of prophecy as a living element of the guidance of the Church. Prophecy is more than mere adaptation, more than compromise, it is the way of divine guidance through the dangerous deserts and rocky mountains of human history, it inspires and enables the believers in the future as it did in the past to prepare and to anticipate so far as possible the coming kingdom of God.

Third, and most important, in Benz's opinion, in keeping Mormons from perverting the kingdom through the wrong way of secularization, is their unique idea of the origin and destiny of man—the "incarnation of preexisting spirits in human bodies" as part of a God-given opportunity "to advance in the grand scale of being, in which he is to move in the eternal worlds":

In a free decision man enters the way of endless progression, and with the full knowledge of all the risk of it, the great law of increasing complexity, the law of endless development of all his powers in the midst of a universe becoming increasingly complex. In this concept of man there is practically no place for the sense of the loss of the consciousness of the transcendent origin and aim of man. Denying his heavenly origin, man would deny himself, would deny

the sense of his life, the meaning of the community of man in which he lives, the sense of the universe in which he dwells.

... The will of developing this image of God, the will to perfection, the will to reach the end of the development of all his power given him from above is deep-rooted in man's life; hope and aim of perfection is a basic element of life itself.⁴

Benz quotes only one example of how this religious vision was translated into practical terms by Brigham Young, but it is in a central area, related to all others—that is, Brigham's understanding of life as education, which he expressed in the powerful image, taken literally in Mormon theology, of the world as a school:

Intelligent beings are organized to become Gods, even the sons of God, to dwell in the presence of Gods, and become associated with the highest intelligences that dwell in eternity. We are now in the school, and must practice upon what we receive.⁵

It is impossible to understand adequately Brigham Young's character and actions, or to appreciate properly his achievement in building "the kingdom of God," without seeing that its greatness did not derive merely from a fortunate combination of people and circumstances that produced a colony successful materially—or even admirable morally—but from a religious vision shared by President Young and his people that produced a school for educating men and women he thought of literally as "potential Gods." And Benz is right that central to that process were Brother Brigham's commitments in the three areas that have uniquely kept Mormon secularism truly religious: his undeviating loyalty, in all his kingdom building, to establishing and disseminating worldwide an ancient order of truth, the Everlasting Gospel; his personal reception and wide cultivation of the gifts of the spirit, including prophecy, both in working out his own and his family's salvation and in blessing the Saints throughout his kingdom; and his constant talking about, occasional ecstatic exultation in, and consistent planning in terms of the divine potential of every human being in this earthly school. As my aunt would say it: "He knew what he was doing; he made them feel worth something down in here."

These resources are the key to understanding not only the miraculous success of the tangible kingdom in the desert but to answering certain historical and biographical puzzles: For instance, a constant mystery to gentiles who overlook the background of Mormon persecution has been the source of Brigham Young's ap-

⁴Ernst Benz, "Mormonism and the Secularization of Religions in the Modern World," *BYU Studies* 16 (Summer 1976):629.

⁵*JD* 8:160 (2 September 1860).

parently absolute power over a people raised in democratic traditions—his ability to direct them to make incredible sacrifices, even to the death, when they could have pulled up and left at any time. And a puzzle even to some Mormons has been the source of Brigham's apparently enormous personal wealth—what seems to critics an inconsistent involvement of a prophet in profits and politics and a greedy accumulation of a lion's share of scarce resources among a destitute people. But there *are* answers now, which both Mormons and gentiles need to look at.

It is important to see that it was Brigham Young's success in winning the Mormons' loyalty to him as the true successor to Joseph Smith—by sharing with them and consistently developing in them Joseph's vision of their earthly purpose and possibilities and by truly functioning as a prophet to them—that gave Mormons an other-worldly perspective, but one that paradoxically freed them for energetic, courageous building in this world. Their fundamental loyalty, reinforced by bitter persecution and despite deep-seated, scripturally validated loyalty to the Constitution of the United States and its principles, was not to Europe or the United States, or even Nauvoo or Salt Lake City, but to an eternal City of God, an ideal to be realized in their hearts and minds as well as in buildings and to be fully realized only in the future; thus they could endure setbacks and losses, move and rebuild, or move out to colonize again and again at the call of the prophet. Confident that President Young was receiving divine direction concerning this whole unified spiritual and physical kingdom and receiving it according to changing circumstances as they developed, they could accept, with clear-eyed but persistent obedience, the directions from their prophet on all aspects of their lives, from health remedies to architecture to marriage choices, and then adjust with equanimity when the directions changed, even reversed, as conditions changed. These people were not dupes or fools; they were willing to give such power over their lives only to one who they were convinced, on continuing evidence both of his enjoyment of the gifts of the spirit and of his practical success, was indeed God's spokesman.

This turning back to a pre-Enlightenment desire to unite power and goodness in one person, in a prophet-king, appalled most non-Mormons. The federal officials appointed to Utah who tried magnanimously to interject the individualism and divisions of Eastern-style democracy and laissez-faire capitalism into the Mormon theocracy were amazed at the rejection of their attempts by the people themselves. They failed to understand that Brigham Young's power was freely given him. And those who were (and

are) offended at Brigham's imperious one-man leadership, his involvement in business development, and his seeming carelessness in mixing his own and Church resources simply fail to understand both the times and his fidelity to the basic Mormon concept of stewardship in building the Kingdom of God. All—labor and capital, windfalls and profits, talents and time—all was to be used according to his God-given responsibility to direct, and was to be used for one purpose, the good of the kingdom.

Such a perspective also helps us understand Brigham Young's amazing confidence about the kingdom, even from the frightening days of early 1849, when for many of the Saints the issue of survival was still very much in doubt and some were thinking very seriously of moving on to California. At the lowest point of morale, in February, he said to the Saints,

We have been kicked out of the frying-pan into the fire, out of the fire into the middle of the floor, and here we are and here we will stay. God . . . will temper the elements for the good of His Saints; he will rebuke the frost and the sterility of the soil, and the land shall become fruitful. Brethren, go to, now, and plant out your fruit seeds. . . . As for gold and silver, and the rich minerals of the earth, there is no country that equals this; but let them alone; let others seek them, and we will cultivate the soil. . . . Brethren, plow your land and sow wheat, plant your potatoes.⁶

Indeed, it seems that over the next few years irrigation leached the sterile alkali from the soil, and the combination of plentiful water through that irrigation and yet hot, continuous sunshine, unimpaired by rainclouds, began to produce exceptionally fine crops; it even seems, according to modern climatologists, that a general worldwide warming trend brought sufficiently long growing seasons. But the most important thing is that the Saints, with very few exceptions, did resist the lure of California, and even the temptation to exploit Utah's own mining potential (and thus avoided the mining camp evils of greed, boom and bust economy, and degeneration of morals). They plowed their lands and planted potatoes. And along with the windfall of needed goods, and a market for their surplus teams, wagons, and food, that came with the influx of forty-niners that summer, they began to harvest enough to sustain the 5,600 residents in the valley the winter of 1849-50 (plus a number of stranded gold-seekers) and still leave a large surplus in storage. The next summer continuing immigration from the Winter Quarters area back on the Missouri brought the population to 11,000. The "starving period" was over and Brig-

⁶Sermon of February 1849, reported in James S. Brown, *Life of a Pioneer* (Salt Lake City: Cannon & Sons, 1900), pp. 121-22, as cited in Leonard J. Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1958), p. 61.

ham Young began to act on his already formed plans to colonize the whole area and build the political and economic, the industrial as well as agricultural base for the literal kingdom.

As he began to build, Brigham, as their Moses, did not forget, in all his apparent self-confidence, the true source of the protection and success the Mormons had enjoyed in their role as modern Israel. On 28 July 1850, he wrote Orson Hyde, in charge back at the Winter Quarters area way-station, by then centered at Kaneshville, Iowa, where 7,000 still waited their turn and others were coming in from Europe:

We feel no fear. We are in the hands of our heavenly Father, the God of Abraham and Joseph Who guided us to this Land, who fed the poor Saints on the Plains with Quails, Who gave his people strength to labour without Bread, who sent the Gulls of the Deep as Saviours to preserve (by Devouring the crickets) the Golden Wheat for Bread for his People and who preserved his Saints from the wrath of their enemies, Delivering them from a bondage more cruel than that inflicted upon Israel in Egypt. He is our Father and our Protector. We live in his Light, are Guided by his Wisdom, Protected by his Shadow, Upheld by his Strength. . . .

Dear Brother . . . we will do the Best we can to Get along with our Domestick affairs with the Blessing of the almighty. We shall none of us have to Die but once.⁷

But as we have seen, Brigham thought a man a fool—worse than a fool, a neglectful steward of God's gifts—if he relied only on such miracles. He was certain God was in charge and thus he was able to work without fear or even undue haste or anxiety, especially after the chastening of the Iowa experience. He was confident that he must only do his best and God's will for the kingdom would be realized, even if God occasionally had to take up the slack of human failure or inability with his miracles. This confidence helped greatly in freeing Brigham to act decisively and to move others to do their best—both through his actions and through his exhortations such as that letter to Orson Hyde.

So President Young sat down in the desperate spring of 1849 with his General Council of Fifty (a kind of town meeting of the chief leaders of church and community) and began to plan the kingdom. It did not surprise him later when the enterprise was saved from failure by the exceptionally good harvests of 1849 and 1850 and the windfall profits of various kinds from the gold rush. He was willing to take the Lord's blessing, without blinking at the irony (any more than he did again in 1858-60 when the economy was bolstered by U. S. army trade and surplus) that the king-

⁷Brigham Young to Orson Hyde, 28 July 1850, Brigham Young Outgoing Correspondence—Drafts, Church Archives.

dom was profiting from something that was in some ways a serious threat to it—and without compunction at charging what the market would bear: “What! sell bread to the man who is going to earn his one hundred and fifty dollars a day, at the same price as you do to the poor laborer, who works hard here for one dollar a day? I say, you men who are going to get gold to make golden images . . . pay for your flour!”⁸ Those two profitable years gave President Young the confidence to move rapidly ahead with bringing the thousands of Saints still remaining in Iowa and to plan for immigrating the 30,000 converts from England; to send out missionaries, especially starting in 1852, to many parts of the world; and to spread out colonies up and down the central corridor and even into distant parts of the huge provisional State of Deseret confidently envisioned in those meetings in 1849.

That “state” functioned quite fully, with the Church President also as its “governor,” for two years while the Mormons sought federal approval, and again it functioned as a kind of “ghost government” from about 1860 to the ’70s, during a time when the executive and judicial branches of the central territorial government were regarded as an alien collection of carpetbaggers. Late in 1849, Brigham’s astute friend, Thomas Kane, who knew the ways of Washington, had warned the Mormons against settling for less than statehood. Wilford Woodruff reports an interview with him in Philadelphia, in which Kane described President Polk’s continuing animosity (spurred by Missouri Senator Benton) and Polk’s clear intention, despite Kane’s efforts with him, to appoint territorial officials from the East who would not be friendly. Woodruff quotes Kane as saying,

You are better off without any government from the hands of Congress than with a Territorial government. The political intrigues of government officers will be against you. You can govern yourselves better. . . . You do not want corrupt political men from Washington strutting around you. . . . You have a government now, which is firm and powerful, and you are under no obligations to the United States. . . .

Brigham Young should be your governor. His head is not filled with law books and lawyers’ tactics, but he has power to see through men and things.⁹

Unconcerned with Mormon preferences, Congress created Utah Territory under the Compromise of 1850, which settled the controversy over slavery in the new territories acquired from Mexico (California was given statehood with slavery forbidden and Utah

⁸Sermon published in the *Deseret News*, 20 July 1850.

⁹Manuscript History of the Church, Brigham Young Period 1844–1877, 26 November 1849, MS, Church Archives.

and New Mexico were made territories and left to decide about slavery, which they both rejected). This decision also reduced the ambitious size of the original "state," which had included all of present-day Utah and Nevada, large parts of Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, Wyoming, and Oregon, and, to make possible what Brigham envisioned as a corridor to the sea, most of Southern California. And, though Brigham Young was appointed governor (in what was, given the national opposition to Mormons, a rather courageous choice by President Millard Fillmore) this action introduced the first of many presidentially-appointed non-Mormon officials to Utah.

There was difficulty almost immediately, of the kind Kane had foreseen. One of the gentile officials, Associate Justice Perry Brocchus, asked to speak to the Saints in a special conference in September 1851, shortly after his arrival. There he made some remarks about polygamy that were insulting, especially to the Mormon women present. President Young, responding in obvious anger, publicly criticized Brocchus and the other officials. After other disagreements developed in the next few weeks, especially over control of a \$24,000 federal appropriation to the Territory (including the prerogatives of the elected territorial legislature), most of the gentile appointees left, taking with them the money and also the first of a series of vindictive reports about Brother Brigham and the Mormons that led eventually to much trouble, even a massacre, and a threatened occupation by federal troops.

The departure of these officials created a central judicial vacuum, which Brigham Young filled ingeniously and to the general benefit of the Saints but, as with many other such actions, to the consternation and eventual opposition of outsiders. Governor Young had the territorial legislature extend criminal jurisdiction to the county probate judges. As a result, even when federal courts were again able to be in session, accused persons, as well as applicants for citizenship, etc., could choose the probate judge, often the natural leader of the town, the Mormon bishop, rather than an anti-Mormon federal appointee who was dead set, for instance, against polygamy. This combining of local church authority with government authority (usually including both judicial and executive power) was attacked by outsiders as subversive of American principles. But to Brigham and the Mormons (and ironically to some Utah gentiles who preferred the spirit of amicable arbitration for the public good in Mormon courts) it seemed by far the best way to reach substantive, as opposed to merely procedural, justice.

President Young's attitudes and actions toward the gentiles structured much of the Mormon history of the 1850s. Soon after

he first arrived, on 28 July 1847, he had lectured the then isolated Saints:

We do not intend to have any trade or commerce with the gentile world, for so long as we buy of them we are in a degree dependent upon them. The Kingdom of God cannot rise independent of the gentile nations until we produce, manufacture, and make every article of use, convenience, or necessity among our people. . . . I am determined to cut every thread of this kind and live free and independent, untrammelled by any of their detestable customs and practices.¹⁰

He then proceeded to spend two thousand precious dollars of Battalion pay to buy out the only gentile landholder in the area, Miles Goodyear, who had a homestead at what became Ogden. Despite the economic costs in transportation and the lack of capital goods and know-how he continually rejoiced in the isolation that resulted from moving 1,000 miles beyond the frontier into a land that had as its chief virtue the fact that "nobody else wanted it." He planned and developed the kingdom using the beehive ("Deseret" means honeybee) as a symbol and model—of unified (even to the edge of uniform), orderly, cooperative work for the public well-being rather than individualistic struggle for private profit. These values, expressed both in the colonization and irrigation process and in industrial development, though antagonizing to proponents of the new rugged individualism and laissez-faire capitalism that gained sway in the rest of the United States after 1850, were quite similar to the economic policies of the earlier Puritan Northeast. In fact, in a final irony that Arrington has noted, policies of central direction, cooperation, and long-run planning (much like what Mormons had developed earlier in the face of government opposition), "as the result of the failure of individuals, the success of large corporations, and the impositions of government, came to characterize national policy with respect to the West in the twentieth century" and have become the policies the United States has advocated in its efforts to help many developing countries.¹¹

In forming the root values of the kingdom and persisting in action that conformed to those values, Brigham Young was able to be patient, even optimistic, in what many felt to be a hopeless task (and which in fact brought many failures) because of absolute faith in his calling and in the divine guarantee of ultimate success in what mattered. Thus, though some colonies had to be aban-

¹⁰"Norton Jacobs Record," 28 July 1847, typescript in Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.

¹¹Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, pp. 63 and 412.

doned (a few at great economic loss when they were called back during the 1857 Utah War) and many developed in ways quite different from the original intent, and though the ambitious attempts at developing a wholly self-sufficient industrial base seemed more often than not to end in drastic cut-back or abandonment, without Brother Brigham's prophetic vision and drive much less—perhaps nothing—would have been achieved.

Of course, great success did come in the important things. The towns were built and the schooling in faith and endurance, in ingenuity and unselfishness, went on. The first expansion from the Salt Lake Valley formed an "inner cordon" of settlements in the irrigable valleys along what is now known as the Wasatch Front, a 250-mile north-south barrier of mountains that produces rain and snowfall sufficient to bring year-long streams into the nearby valleys. Sending out colonies north and then south and then north again, by 1856 Brigham Young had fully established settlements along the two to twenty-mile-wide arable strip from Cache Valley south to Parowan, and these towns were constantly growing from an influx of immigrants. In the meantime he had ringed the kingdom with colonies at strategic points of entry: Carson Valley where the California trail crossed the Sierra; Fort Bridger and Fort Supply on the Oregon Trail in Wyoming; and Lemhi in northern Idaho. Also, following a systematic exploration under Parley P. Pratt between Salt Lake City and San Diego, Brigham had formed the skeleton for a great "Mormon Corridor," a proposed trade and immigration route to the sea, with twenty-seven settlements, including present-day Las Vegas, Nevada and San Bernardino, California.¹²

The Mormon colonization process was developed in part under Joseph Smith: preliminary exploration, followed by a "call," much like a mission assignment, issued to a carefully chosen company, who were fully equipped and extensively exhorted to properly build the kingdom and who then moved out in the fall or winter to build a fort and homes before beginning spring planting. This was turned into a smooth routine by President Young, as we can see in the Iron County mission sent out in December 1850, under Apostle George A. Smith: The 167 persons reached their site, an untouched sagebrush valley 250 miles south of Salt Lake City, on 10 January, immediately nominated county officials, and on the 15th had elections. By 28 January a meetinghouse was being built and letters were sent to Washington, D.C., for a post office charter and meteorological instruments. Houses were up by the end of

¹²See Milton R. Hunter, "Mormon Corridor," *Pacific Historical Review* 8(June 1939):179-200.

February and work was progressing on a school, canals, roads, and a gristmill and on development of the iron works that was, along with establishing a link in the Mormon Corridor, one of the colony's major responsibilities. On 4 July, Smith reported in his journal, "All was silent, not a gun fired, nor a drunken man seen in the streets," feeling no need to notice that what six months before had been an empty wilderness now had peaceful lanes and ripening crops and a full civil and religious society—a school for making Saints. But he and the other leaders, under Brigham's tutelage, were well aware that that was what they were doing, as we see from a comment the next year on this same group of people by Apostle Erastus Snow, who went to Parowan with Apostle Franklin D. Richards to spur development of the iron industry, which was already successfully begun by these pioneers but was having some cooperation problems:

We found a Scotch party, a Wel[s]h party, an English party, and an American party, and we turned Iron Masters and undertook to put all these parties through the furnace, and run out a party of Saints for building up the Kingdom of God.¹³

Despite the achievement of the colonists in turning out quality iron in just one year and the boost given the work by the reorganization and capitalization under Elders Snow and Richards, the effort to establish an iron industry (which Brother Brigham favored because iron, unlike gold, was a "civilizing" metal) suffered a series of setbacks and finally failed. This was true in varying degrees of other major industries attempted by President Young in his efforts to provide a self-sufficient commonwealth. Development of a paper mill was the most successful enterprise and gives us insight into Brigham's methods: After one abortive effort in 1851 under a skilled papermaker converted in England, better machinery was obtained and the first successful mill west of the Mississippi established—mainly to provide for the Church's paper, the *Deseret News*. An even superior set of engines was purchased in 1860 and, to meet the continuous and growing need for rags to make a good quality paper, George Goddard was called by the prophet to serve a "Rag Mission":

When President Young first made the proposition, the humiliating prospect almost stunned me [Goddard had been a merchant, had gone to Brigham Young for business advice and now found himself called to "go from door to door with a basket on one arm and an empty sack on the other, enquiring for rags"], but a few moments' reflection reminded me that I came to these valleys of the mountains from my native country . . . for the purpose of doing the will

¹³Report published in the *Deseret News*, 25 December 1852.

of my Heavenly Father. . . . I therefore answered President Young in the affirmative, and for over three years . . . my labors extended, not only visiting many hundreds of houses during the week days, but preaching rag sermons on Sunday. The first time I ever spoke in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, . . . was a rag discourse, and Presidents Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball backed it up with their testimony and enlarged upon it.¹⁴

A pottery plant, Deseret Pottery, also established in 1851 by skilled converts from England, was much less successful and was abandoned at substantial loss in 1853, though a profitable pottery business was established privately by 1856. Attempts to establish wool manufacturing with imported sheep, machinery, and convert-experts from Europe met a similar fate, the effort dragging out over ten years and finally failing due to insufficient sheep, many having been killed by coyotes and wolves; it was revived years later with several mills.

Perhaps most interesting of these pioneer enterprises was the attempt to implement in Utah the process that had been developed in France to extract sugar from beets. In his effort to make the kingdom self-sufficient—in this case to stop the potential outward flow of over \$200,000 a year for sweetenings—President Young experimented with the sugar beet seeds in 1850 and then pushed hard to develop the industry. Apostle John Taylor, who was serving a mission in France, was appointed to obtain seed and machinery, which, with the aid of a young French convert-engineer, he brought to Utah at great cost and heroic efforts by 1852. After attempts to get the machinery working in Provo failed, Brigham took over the financially pressed private company that had been organized by Elder Taylor and made it part of the Church's public works program. A factory was to be built with tithing labor in what came to be called Sugarhouse in southeast Salt Lake City.

The President had been enthusiastic about the project, sending Church aid to bail the company out of unexpected expenses on the trip from France, encouraging farmers to plant beets even though there was continual failure to produce edible sugar, pushing hard on Elder Taylor (" . . . Get that machinery in operation. I want to see some sugar").¹⁵ Finally, in a meeting with the concerned principals about the takeover, President Young shows us much about his strengths and weaknesses and his methods as steward of the Lord's Kingdom. From the two somewhat different sets of minutes for that meeting on 17 March 1853, one set appar-

¹⁴*Deseret News*, 4 April 1896, as cited in Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, p. 115.

¹⁵Minutes, 1 November 1852, MS, Brigham Young Papers, Church Archives.

ently by George D. Watt, we can determine the following: Brigham Young was first concerned to know what the fundamental loyalties of the people in the company were: "I want to know if these other men [some present whom he hadn't previously met] come for Mormonism and if they are going to stay. Then I shall know how to propose to those men—if they came for money or to build up the kingdom."¹⁶ This initial assessment of the character and intentions of those he was dealing with was basic to Brigham's leadership style. Hugh Nibley reports his grandfather Charles Nibley's reminiscence that President Young always placed first-time visitors to his office in a black leather chair,

facing the strong light of day and calm blue eyes of Brother Brigham, who sat there at his desk, his back to the window, quietly waiting for his guest to say something. . . . [He] would never say a word for the first three minutes. And at the end of those first three minutes he always knew exactly the sort of man he was dealing with, and the nature—greedy, benign or sinister—of his business. . . . Brigham Young used to say that no man, if allowed to speak, could possibly avoid revealing his true character.¹⁷

After hearing from the men in the bankrupt sugar company their reasons for being there and satisfied that most were devoted to the kingdom, President Young was confident he could test their faith with bluntness. He made it clear that he would assume no personal obligations but only act in his role as Trustee-in-Trust for the Church. And the Church's obligations he could not assess until the bills were presented and settlements made. If this was President Young's first announcement of such a condition it may well have invited resentment, but he seemed to know his audience and continued with customary directness to speak his mind; as reported by Watt:

I should say to you brethren I shall do with you as I please. . . . And if you do as you are told and the Lord blesses us we shall be well enough off. . . . It is not for the profit of it, but in a few years it will be; but I never expect to cease my operations until that is perfect and the Iron business and the Cotton and everything else. By and by we shall be independent and not be depending upon our enemies. . . . The country is too new for you to receive your wages every Saturday night. But you can take what you need now in potatoes and flour.

In the other set of minutes Brigham then repeats to them what he says he told the converts he made in England when they talked

¹⁶Minutes, 17 March 1853, two manuscripts by different scribes, Brigham Young Papers, Church Archives.

¹⁷Hugh Nibley, "Educating the Saints—A Brigham Young Mosaic," *BYU Studies* 11 (Autumn 1970):61–62.

of coming to Zion in Nauvoo, that he could only promise them they would have "hard fare, persecution and tribulation. . . . Only live to your religion, and you shall receive it until you are satisfied." But along with this psychological preparation for them to sacrifice for the kingdom, Brother Brigham also creates a fine sense of unity with them:

If I hired a man out of the Church to work for money I should expect to pay him money for his labor; but you are Brethren, and should feel the same interest as I feel for the upbuilding of our Common Cause. You will do as I instruct you if you wish to be saints; and if we live, we will live together; if we die we will die together. . . .

. . . If you will work anyhow, and do as I do, that is, abide by the Church whether she be in a swimming or a sinking condition, I will put you in a situation; but I cannot at the present juncture of affairs promise that you shall be as well off, in a temporal point of view, as you were in your native country. I can say, however, if you will stay here and do the best you can for the establishment of the kingdom of God, you shall be blessed.

Because they trusted Brigham Young's calling as a true Prophet of God, that promise meant everything to the men, and his effectiveness is revealed in part by the report of one man's discussion with him at the end of the meeting in which he asks if Brigham still wants to hire him. Brigham says, "Yes, you are a pressman are you not?" The man replies, "Yes, sir. But I came here to do whatever I am told to do; if you want me I am willing to serve you."

Despite some problems, President Young had similar success, because of a fundamental unity of faith and purpose, in the very delicate matter of dealing in the meeting with John Taylor. Elder Taylor may have initially had hopes for making some profit since the company, though instigated by Brigham, had started as a private venture and the apostle had expended his own means and become somewhat proprietary in his feelings, though to this point the project had been nothing but a headache to him. As Watt reports it, Brother Brigham was extremely hard on Elder Taylor in this meeting, probably too hard, blaming him for every problem encountered in getting the machinery there: "I want to relieve you from the responsibility, and when we get the machinery together I don't want you to dictate. . . . I know you are just as wild in your calculations as any man can be." When Elder Taylor objected to such treatment, President Young pressed further, but also made an important distinction:

If I have not the right of judging you here the Community can. It is nothing against your moral or religious character, and I have a

right to judge you as a good man, a saint or a preacher, but as to money you don't know anything about it. . . . A man's judgment in temporal matters has nothing to do with religion. . . . I can go with Bro. Taylor into the Holiest of Holies and pray with him, but that does not say he knows anything of business. . . . I have no feelings but what I freely tell.

Clearly that last was one of Brother Brigham's great understatements, but again, as with Parley P. Pratt earlier, Brigham knew his man. The harrowing scene ends with this reported interchange: Young: "Bro. Taylor and I are just as good friends as we were twelve months ago." Taylor: "I would go and fight for Bro. Brigham today." Young: "And I would do everything for him." Taylor: "I am thankful I can swim in the same stream with men who know what is right."¹⁸

President Young did seem to *know* what was right—and *was* essentially right—even when he was, as he was here, in some ways wrong. The upshot of the meeting was that he took over direct management of the whole affair, with Orson Hyde ("a snug business man") appointed to superintend construction of the building. Brigham had sound, unblinking accuracy in judging men and knew Hyde would do better—even though he trusted Elder Taylor more than Elder Hyde in Church affairs and ultimately recognized him in the place of seniority in the Quorum that assured he would be Brigham's successor as President. But Brother Brigham was, in his characteristic hyperbolic bluntness, perhaps too harsh with his tongue, and he probably underestimated the problems of producing sugar—which included faulty machinery and possibly wrong or incomplete information from France on the process. This time his supreme confidence in his ability to "financier" in practical matters did not prove out, because the factory, after more years of trouble and of faithful farmers producing unused beets, finally was given up for good in 1856 at a loss of over \$150,000 to the Church, investors, and beet raisers.

What are we to make of such "failures"? For one thing, daring major Church enterprises like the sugar factory and the iron mill reached close enough to success that they encouraged sporadic continuing efforts that eventually led to some of Utah's major private industries. For another, such bold efforts to establish economic foundations for a totally new and independent religious commonwealth had special goals—to utilize the skills of European immigrants in building a literal Kingdom of God to function as a divine school—that paradoxically made the usual forms of "success" more difficult but also assured that even in "failure" the en-

¹⁸Minutes, 17 March 1853.

terprises would achieve the most important goals and the kingdom would press on. As Arrington has suggested, the Mormons were crippled by a fundamental problem of lack of sufficient capital to see the projects through to final success, and their efforts would have achieved more of traditional *financial* success if knowledgeable private interests had been allowed a freer hand in the day-to-day direction, and a stronger voice in the making of basic decisions.¹⁹ But mere financial success was not the basic goal; the Mormon businessman “was not a capitalistic profit-calculator, but an appointed overseer of a part of the Kingdom,” and besides serving the more basic religious goals, “this concept of collective entrepreneurship and administration . . . saved the Great Basin Kingdom from the oblivion which seemed inevitable when so many of its major projects fell through.”²⁰

So, despite the harsh environment, formidable setbacks from poor harvests in 1847-48 and 1855-56, and the failure or near-failure of many major experimental efforts, Brigham Young continued to build his kingdom. He succeeded because of major windfalls, yes, but also by achieving superior organization of what scarce capital was available, including willing and skilled human labor as well as machinery, livestock, and money; by motivating in the original pioneers what is to us hardly believable individual sacrifice and cooperative, obedient effort in a great cause; and by maintaining that vision in the new generation that grew up and the thousands of new immigrants that came in a constant stream—nearly 70,000 by his death.

It was Brother Brigham who had organized the real beginning of immigration from Europe in Liverpool in 1840, as well as leading in the establishment of a missionary effort so fruitful that it continued to bring in converts by the thousands each year, all anxious to “gather to Zion.” Although a significant purpose in the immigration was to fulfill the Mormon religious principle of gathering a modern Israel out of the world to build a separate, exemplary kingdom, the special economic and organizational needs of that kingdom were also important. Even in 1840 Joseph Smith had instructed Brigham Young to first emigrate those with the skills and capital to build an economic base for those who would follow. In 1850, when a “Perpetual Emigrating Fund” was organized under the laws of the provisional State of Deseret, President Young’s instructions to Church agents in Europe were to first find iron and textile manufacturers, metal workers, and potters, “artisans and mechanics of all kinds,” to have them emigrate im-

¹⁹Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, p. 129.

²⁰*Ibid.*, p. 130.

mediately in preference to anyone else, and to bring machinery, tools, and blueprints with them.²¹

The emigration system was developed on the foundation laid by Brigham in 1840: It began with a member's application to a local Church agent in Europe; the gathering and organization of companies for each ship at Liverpool followed; then the long voyage to New Orleans and up the Mississippi to St. Louis and the Missouri to Kanesville (after 1854 to New York and by train as far west as possible); finally along the Pioneer Trail to Utah and assignment to an established community. It became the most successful privately financed immigration system in United States history, praised not only by Charles Dickens, who saw it operating in Liverpool, but by modern scholars who have studied its overall achievements.²²

Most interesting in understanding Brother Brigham is the spirit of consecration which, under his direction, informed and motivated the system of emigration. If emigrants had been required to pay their own way many would have been left behind or doomed to a long wait in saving the approximately \$100 needed. So companies were formed according to ability to pay: self-supporting "cash" emigrant companies (about forty percent); "Ten Pound" companies frugally designed to cost about that much—about \$50 per adult and \$25 per child (another forty percent); and "P.E." companies of those who could pay nothing. Systematic saving in established funds was encouraged in the European Mission of the Church, and added to this were nearly all European tithing receipts and contributions of wealthy converts (beginning with Jane Benbow's gift to Brigham back in 1840). But by far the main contributions to the Perpetual Emigrating Fund—labor, produce, cattle, etc., as well as cash—were those of the Saints already in Zion, estimated in 1900 to have totalled \$8,000,000. Of course, those aided were themselves expected to make the Fund "Perpetual" by repaying the loan as fast as they could (they pledged by signed contract to "hold ourselves, our time and our labor, subject to the appropriation of the perpetual Emigration Fund Company, until the full cost of our emigration is paid") and many did work for the Church, through Brigham's Public Works, which in turn gave tithing resources to the Perpetual Emigrating Fund.

Brigham Young's ingenuity in marshaling these diverse resources—including such things as stray cattle and unclaimed prop-

²¹Brigham Young to Orson Pratt, 14 October 1849, printed in the *Millennial Star* 12 (1 May 1850):141.

²²Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, pp. 98-104; the Dickens description was published in his *The Uncommercial Traveler* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1861).

erty turned over by the Territory—into a working process is impressive. Especially important, and possible only because of the trust and spirit of consecration President Young shared with the Saints, was the use of what Arrington calls “sight drafts,” by which resources physically present in one place could be used in another form elsewhere. For instance, the Saints left any cash they had in Europe or at outfitting stations like St. Louis to be used by the Church to pay ship and wagon costs, etc. They were in turn given drafts for food, implements, etc., in Utah that had been donated there to the Fund. Or a Utah Saint could contribute labor or food to his local tithing office and receive a draft on the Church’s tithing resources in Europe to emigrate his family. Brother Brigham was much involved in this process, not only as planner and motivator but as personal guarantor in his complex role as spiritual and temporal leader. And when he was not able to meet all the drafts coming in he spoke his mind with characteristic verve:

When Br. Erastus Snow arrived on the first of this month, he came in the morning and informed me that he had run me in debt nearly fifty thousand dollars to strangers, merchants, cattle dealers, and our brethren who are coming here; he said, “Prest. Young’s name is as good as the bank.”

... I will pay you when I can, and not before. . . . It is the poor who have got your money, and if you have any complaints to make, make them against the Almighty for having so many poor. . . . I cannot chew paper and spit out bank bills that will pass in payment of those debts.²³

Sometimes he came down hard on the immigrants who were still in debt:

I want you to understand fully that I intend to put the screws upon you, and you who have owed for years, if you do not pay up now and help us, we will levy on your property and take every farthing you have on earth.²⁴

But, as in other cases we have seen, this was merely Brigham’s sharp bark to make a point and encourage the genuine backsliders rather than a threat with much bite in it. Most immigrants could not really generate a surplus, and the chief form of “repayment” was contributions of labor and tithing, as is revealed by the growing total of accrued debt (counted up each year by the block teachers who visited each home monthly), which reached over \$1,000,000 by the time of Brigham’s death.

²³Journal History of the Church, 16 September 1855, MS, Church Archives (hereafter cited as Journal History). This compilation was made by the Church Historian’s Office, under the direction of Andrew Jenson, in the 1890s; it includes parts of the Manuscript History of the early period.

²⁴JD 3:6 (16 September 1855).

Rather than "put the screws" on those unable to repay, President Young put his energy into cutting down expenses and finding better ways to use the variety of resources he had in the kingdom. For instance, when immigration was resumed in 1860, after the Utah War hiatus, Brother Brigham took advantage of a surplus of teams and wagons obtained from the abandonment of his express company and the army surplus sales, both brought on by that war, and after careful experimentation in 1859 began to send ox trains out from Utah to bring the immigrants from the Missouri Valley. Brigham's nephew, Joseph W. Young, found that properly cared for oxen could make the 2,200-mile round trip in six months and delivered a sermon in October Conference on "the science of Ox-teamology." By order of the First Presidency, needed men, teams, equipment, etc., were apportioned to various communities and gathered in Salt Lake City in April, where they were inspected and organized. Surplus cattle and other expendable goods were taken east to be sold, thus reversing the cash flow that had been draining resources at the outfitting stations. And the President didn't miss a chance for other, more spiritual benefits. Those who went were called as "missionaries" and carefully shepherded by good leaders; they were often unmarried men who looked for and found prospective brides among the immigrants they brought back. On the economic side, during the sixties the equivalent of about \$2,400,000 was used for immigration, but very little actual money changed hands. As the intercontinental railroad moved west the trips to the railhead became shorter and shorter until, with the completion of the railroad in 1869, "Ox-teamology" ended.

A more dramatic example of Brigham Young's ingenuity in bringing over the immigrants to his kingdom was the handcart companies, which were his response to economic depression. Despite the hostile environment and failure of some early enterprises, the kingdom survived the crucial building period of the early fifties, largely on the strength of a series of increasingly good harvests; but beginning in 1855 crop failures (reduced by one-half to two-thirds by grasshoppers and drought) and loss of nearly half the cattle in the disastrous winter of 1856 completely depleted surpluses and quickly reduced the 35,000 settlers to a condition of semi-starvation similar to early 1849. Brother Brigham used every resource of wit and power at his command. He wrote circulars advising on conservation of food (glean the fields and use more efficient seed-drills) and cattle (mend fences) and on use of land ("let every inch of field and garden be put in the highest state of cultivation").

President Young's ultimate resource was the faith of the Saints, and in the extremity of the 1855-56 winter he asked them to adapt to the crisis the long-standing but sporadic custom of fasting, by going without food on the first Thursday of each month and donating the food thus saved for the poor, a practice that was so effective it has continued in the modern Church as the monthly first Sunday "fast day." Ultimately Brigham had to ask each head of family to place his household on close rations (one-half pound of breadstuff per day) and use all surplus in feeding those in need:

Set the poor to building your houses, to making fences . . . or doing something, and hand out your grain to them. . . . If you do not pursue a righteous course, we will separate you from the Church. Is that all? No. If necessary we will take your grain from your bin and distribute it among the poor and needy, and they shall be fed and supplied with work, and you shall receive what your grain is worth.²⁵

This is hyperbolic rhetoric again, Brother Brigham's half-humorous but effective way of making sharp enough a serious point (there is no evidence that a forced levy was ever used, any more than in getting immigrants to pay debts to the Perpetual Emigrating Fund). What he actually *did* was feed nearly 300 persons throughout the famine with the resources directly available to him, employing many of them in building an extra house and barn and in work on that wall my aunt told me about:

I build walls, dig ditches, make bridges, and do a great amount and variety of labor that is of but little consequence only to provide ways and means for sustaining and preserving the destitute. . . . Why? I have articles of food, which I wish my brethren to have; and it is better for them to labor, . . . so far as they are able to have opportunity, than to have them given to them.²⁶

President Young called another 300 unemployed men in Salt Lake City on missions—both colonizing (to Las Vegas, Carson Valley, etc.) and proselyting (the East Indies, Australia, etc.). Though most of the missionaries had to be supported from Church resources, this put them to productively building the kingdom.²⁷

With such efforts the kingdom survived, but though none died the community came close to starvation and with tithing and Perpetual Emigrating Fund donations next to nothing (and Perpetual Emigrating Fund cattle killed by the winter), it seemed the expensive "gathering of the poor" from Europe would have to

²⁵JD 3:122 (8 October 1855).

²⁶Journal History, 8 June 1856.

²⁷Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, p. 155.

stop. But President Young, unwilling to curtail such an essential part of the purpose and success of the kingdom, instead revived an idea first suggested in a General Epistle in 1851, when he had ventured that immigrants could come on foot, like the forty-niners with their wheelbarrows, in seventy days.

I am . . . thrown back upon my old plan—to make handcarts, and let the emigration foot it, and draw upon [the carts] the necessary supplies. . . . They can come just as quick, if not quicker, and much cheaper—can start earlier and escape the prevailing sickness which annually lays so many of our brethren in the dust.²⁸

That letter was to Apostle Franklin D. Richards, in charge of the European Mission. On the same day Brigham Young wrote his son-in-law Edmund Ellsworth, serving on a mission under Elder Richards:

I do believe that I could bring a company across without a team and beat any ox train if I could be there myself. Would you like to try it? It will by much relieve our Brethren from sickness and death, which I am very anxious to do. There is a railway from New York to Iowa City and will cost only about 8 dollars for the passage, then take handcarts, their little luggage with a few good milk cows, and come on till they are met with teams from this place, with provisions.²⁹

It was a good plan on paper and there is great optimism in the General Epistle Brigham sent to Europe on 29 October 1855, to be published in the *Millennial Star* (“let them gird up their loins and walk through, and nothing shall hinder or stay them”). Such promises infected Elder Richards, who wrote a series of enthusiastic editorials for the *Star*. This brought an excited response, and nearly 2,000 signed up for the much cheaper (under \$50) but untried method. Perhaps too many signed up, or there was some other misunderstanding between Church agents in Liverpool and those at the outfitting station, because the last two of five companies had to wait for their handcarts to be built—many from green lumber that later broke up—and were disastrously late on the trail.

The first three companies seemed to justify President Young’s confidence, arriving in remarkable time (about sixty-five days) by the end of September without suffering more than the usual number of wagon train deaths and still proudly carrying letters they had meant to send on ahead but couldn’t because no one passed them. Church leaders were extremely pleased. Elder Woodruff

²⁸Brigham Young to Franklin D. Richards, 30 September 1855, retained copy, Brigham Young Papers, Church Archives.

²⁹Brigham Young to Edmund Ellsworth, 30 September 1855, retained copy, Brigham Young Papers, Church Archives.

wrote, "As I gazed upon the scene, meditating upon the future result, it looked to me like the first hoisting of the floodgates of deliverance to the oppressed millions. We can now say to the poor and honest in heart, come home to Zion, for the way is prepared."³⁰

As if on cue from a Greek tragedy, this expression of pride was followed immediately by the arrival of Franklin D. Richards and other missionaries returning from England (including Brigham's son, Joseph A.) with the solemn news that two more companies were still behind them. Elder Richards was still optimistic and could speak in the General Conference the next day about the handcart pioneers' faith that God would turn away the storms so that they would not suffer more than they could bear. But President Young was as usual not about to *wait* for a miracle. As soon as he understood that there were still 1,000 walking immigrants five to seven hundred miles out on the trail where winter storms could come at any time he announced a new theme for the conference:

The text will be—to get them here! I want the brethren who may speak to understand that their text is the people on the Plains, and the subject matter for this community is to send for them and bring them in before the winter sets in.

That is my religion; that is the dictation of the Holy Ghost that I possess, it is to save the people. . . .

. . . This is dividing my text into heads; first, forty good young men who know how to drive teams. . . ; second, sixty or sixty-five good spans of mules, or horses, with harness . . . thirdly, twenty-four thousand pounds of flour, which we have on hand. . . .

I will tell you all that your faith, religion, and profession of religion, will never save one soul of you in the celestial kingdom of our God, unless you carry out just such principles as I am now teaching you.³¹

Wallace Stegner, who has written the most perceptive and moving account of this episode, describes what followed:

"You may rise up now," he told them, "and give your names."

They rose up and gave their names, and more than their names. Though they had no information on exactly how bad the condition of the companies might be, they had enough experience to guess. With the unanimity of effort which had always been their greatest strength, they oversubscribed Brigham's first request, and when new requests were made, they met those too. By October 7, three days after Richards' arrival, the first contingent of the rescue party was

³⁰Wilford Woodruff to Orson Pratt, 30 September 1856, *Millennial Star* 18 (November 1856):794–95.

³¹*JD* 4:113 (5 October 1856).

heading eastward into the mountains. . . . The presence of . . . Brigham's son Joseph A. Young, Cyrus Wheelock, and others, was significant. They were the missionaries who had converted a good many of the handcart emigrants in the first place. . . . They may have felt partially responsible, or have felt the Church to be responsible, for the delays at Iowa City. Whatever may be said of their excessive zeal in the first place, they were neither indifferent nor cowardly once they knew the handcart companies might be in distress. Separated from their families for two years or more, restored to the valley no more than forty-eight hours, they turned unhesitatingly around and drove out again with the rescue wagons.³²

President Young sent 250 wagons out to keep the trail open and to provide a relay of supplies and fresh teams down to the Valley. He goaded the vanguard rescuers (who at one point turned back because of the blizzards) until they pushed themselves at a desperate pace up through the already snow-blocked passes and reached the two companies camped in snowdrifts, out of food, and waiting for the end. They were literally angels of mercy for people among whom death was a constant presence after the delays from collapsing carts and loss of their supply wagons in a buffalo stampede had put them into the increasing mountain cold, nearly exhausted, and without sufficient food. Stegner writes,

It is hard to imagine the emotions of rescue, the dazed joy of being snatched from the very toppling brink. . . . It is quite as hard to visualize the hardship that even rescue entailed—that jolting, racking, freezing, grief-numbed, drained and exhausted 300 miles on through the winter mountains to sanctuary. In Echo Canyon, between the battlements of red sandrock [where a year later, some of these rescuers would face an advancing U.S. Army], a child was born in one of the wagons. . . . He was wrapped in the “garments,” the holy underwear, of one of the young rescuers, and they named him, with a haunting appropriateness, Echo. Against all probability, both he and his mother lived.³³

But the deaths continued along that 300 miles until the number reached over 200, compared to 11 and 40 in the more famous Fremont and Donner disasters:

Perhaps their suffering seems less dramatic because the handcart pioneers bore it meekly, praising God, instead of fighting for life with the ferocity of animals and eating their dead to keep their own life beating, as both the Fremont and Donner parties did. And assuredly the handcart pilgrims were less hardy, less skilled, less well equipped to be pioneers. But if courage and endurance made a story, if human kindness and helpfulness and brotherly love in the midst of raw hor-

³²Wallace Stegner, *The Gathering of Zion* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), p. 250. The original essay, “Ordeal by Handcart,” appeared in *Collier's*, 6 July 1956, pp. 78–85; it was rewritten and expanded by Stegner for his book.

³³Stegner, “Ordeal by Handcart,” p. 85.

ror are worth recording, this half-forgotten episode of the Mormon migration is one of the great tales of the West and of America.³⁴

It is clear who the victims of this classic tragedy of overreaching were: not only those who died of cold and hunger and exhaustion, but the many more who wore lasting scars of body (almost all had frozen hands and feet) and spirit (some later apostatized). Even the rescuers suffered lasting damage. For instance, William Kimball, who spent a whole day carrying women and children through floating ice on a crossing of the Sweetwater, and who, according to the journal of one of them, "staid so long in the water that he had to be taken out and packed to camp and he was a long time before he recovered as he was chil[le]d through and in after life he was allways afflicted with rhumetism."³⁵

The heroes are fairly obvious too: the rescuers like Kimball and Joseph A. Young, who bucked his way back and forth along the trail many times. Perhaps especially Levi Savage, the lone voice raised in opposition when the decision to go on despite being over a month behind was made at a mass meeting of the two companies back on the Missouri in mid-August. After arguing forcefully against risking their lives in blind trust that snowfall would be late, and seeing everyone else vote to go on, he is reported to have announced:

Brethren and sisters, what I have said I know to be true; but, seeing you are to go forward, I will go with you, will help you all I can, will work with you, will rest with you, will suffer with you, and if necessary I will die with you.³⁶

Savage did not die, but he later endured Elder Richards' allegation (when the missionaries from England passed the companies) that his opposition had been simply lack of faith in God, and he saved the lives of less hardy and experienced companions in the final agony.

To those trying to identify a scapegoat for the tragedy, blame seems to have been fixed publicly by the Church President on Elder Richards:

Are those people in the frost and snow by my doings? No, my skirts are clear of their blood, God knows. If a bird had chirped in brother Franklin's ears in Florence [Nebraska], and the brethren there had held a council, he would have stopped the rear companies

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Patience Loader Archer Journal, p. 87, typescript of original, Brigham Young University Library.

³⁶From "Mr. [John] Chislett's Narrative," published in T. B. H. Stenhouse, *The Rocky Mountain Saints* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1873), p. 317.

there, and we would have been putting in our wheat, etc., instead of going on to the Plains and spending weeks and months to succor our brethren.

But to anyone who has read many of Brigham Young's speeches—or examined his actions carefully enough, that speech of rebuke is fairly standard in tone and color, actually quite mild compared to some. It could even be read as providing, in the face of growing anxiety on the part of relatives and friends of the pioneers still struggling toward them, authoritative explanation of what had happened and a *defense* of Elder Richards: "Here is brother Franklin D. Richards who has but little knowledge of business . . . and here is brother Daniel Spencer . . . and I do not know that I will attach blame to either of them." The speech is largely a very frank discussion, like the one with Elder Taylor about the sugar factory ("I have no feelings but what I freely tell"), of what had caused the disaster (the late start, not prevented, as it should have been, by the Church agents) and how the problem would be prevented in the future: "I am going to lay an injunction and place a penalty, to be suffered by any Elder or Elders who will start the immigration across the Plains after a given time; and the penalty shall be that they shall be severed from the Church, for I will not have such late starts."³⁷ Elder Richards, and the other missionaries, had encouraged the emigrants to rely on miraculous intervention to protect them from needless folly in a practical decision—something Brother Brigham would never do; he understood and forgave such a mistake but wanted no misunderstanding about what the mistake was.

At the same time there is a certain defensiveness in Brigham Young's speech, and here we come closest to a possible tragic flaw in this protagonist of the handcart tragedy. President Young was clearly wounded by this disaster, in a way that the failures of dozens of industries could not touch him. Here was where his stewardship touched human lives and where the old abhorrence of violence and unneeded, unredemptive suffering came to the fore—and he wanted very much not to feel responsible. He was right most of the time and wanted to be right all the time. When he made some of the usual miscalculations that plague us all, considering the stakes with which he played, the costs were proportionately much greater. Even in these, such as the economic failure of the sugar factory, he maintained a singular equanimity, essentially because of his unbounded faith that he was God's steward and God would over-rule all according to His will, salvaging good out of

³⁷JD 4:69, 68, 66–67 (2 November 1856).

even his errors and weaknesses, or providing strength, as He had given him in the Iowa crossing, to regroup and try again. But when it came to violence, I see a new dimension: avoidance if possible at whatever cost; deep pity and haunting heartbreak on the positive side; but a certain resentment of those responsible, including himself, and a desire for vindication. In this case, determined that the handcart scheme should prove itself despite the tragedy, President Young sent a company of seventy missionaries back along the trail by handcart (and without commissary wagons) to Florence in forty-eight days as soon as possible in the spring. He then made other ambitious efforts to facilitate continuing the scheme, but bad publicity and the interference of the Utah War kept the numbers very small, and in 1860 the round-trip ox-team caravan from Utah was established.

Deeper than any vindictiveness, however, and deeper than the need to be right, was Brother Brigham's heroic acceptance at a personal level of the pain of responsibility. That two months of rescue operations must have been the longest two months of his life. Speaking to the Saints in the Old Tabernacle on Sunday, 2 November, he reminded them how comfortable they were despite the recent famine:

We can return home and sit down and warm our feet before the fire, and can eat our bread and butter, &c., but my mind is yonder in the snow, where those immigrating Saints are, and my mind has been with them ever since I had the report of their [late] start. . . . I cannot talk about any thing, I cannot go out or come in, but what in every minute or two minutes my mind reverts to them; and the questions—whereabouts are my brethren and sisters who are on the Plains, and what is their condition—force themselves upon me. . . .³⁸

A classic and oft-quoted statement of the LDS doctrine of faith and works is President Young's great sermon on hearing that some survivors of the Martin company were entering the valley on Sunday morning, 30 November 1856. He instructed the bishops and other brethren on placing the refugees in good homes, and then he announced:

The afternoon meeting will be omitted, for I wish the sisters to go home and prepare to give those who have just arrived a mouthful of something to eat, and to wash them and nurse them up. . . . Were I in the situation of those persons who have just come in, . . . I would give more for a dish of pudding or a baked potato and salt, . . . than I would for all your prayers, though you were to stay here all afternoon and pray. Prayer is good, but when baked potatoes and milk are needed, prayer will not supply their place.³⁹

³⁸*JD* 4:62 (2 November 1856).

³⁹Sermon printed in *Deseret News*, 10 December 1856.

But I see more of his real anguish in the luminous autobiography of Mary Goble Pay, who as a child of thirteen in the Martin company froze her feet at the last crossing of the Platte, who saw her two little sisters die on the trail and her mother finally expire on the day they arrived:

Three out of four that were living were frozen. My mother was dead in the wagon. Bishop Hardy had us taken to a home in his ward and the brethren and the sisters brought us plenty of food. We had to be careful and not eat too much as it might kill us we were so hungry.

Early next morning Bro. Brigham Young and a doctor came. . . . When Bro. Young came in he shook hands with us all. When he saw our condition—our feet frozen and our mother dead—tears rolled down his cheeks.

The doctor amputated my toes using a saw and a butcher knife. Brigham Young promised me I would not have to have any more of my feet cut off. The sisters were dressing mother for the last time. . . . That afternoon she was buried.⁴⁰

The girl refused to have her feet cut off, despite the pressing advice of another doctor when they didn't heal for a while:

One day I sat there crying. My feet were hurting me so—when a little old woman knocked at the door. She said she had felt some one needed her there for a number of days. . . . I showed her my feet and told her the promise Bro. Young had given me. She said, "Yes, and with the help of the Lord we will save them yet." She made a poultice and put on my feet and every day after the doctor had gone she would come and change the poultice. At the end of three months my feet were well.

I hope President Young knew about that healing of Mary's frozen feet through faith in his promise, as surely as he knew he was ultimately responsible for their being frozen.

Brother Brigham was not one to linger long in self-doubt or despair. He not only sent out that spring the missionary company to revive faith in his handcart scheme, but he immediately set to work planning the extremely ambitious Brigham Young Express and Carrying Company (known as the Y.X. Company) with a series of way stations along the trail, to carry freight, mail and immigrants. Arrington has written:

As the largest single venture yet tackled by the Mormons in the Great Basin, the Y.X. Company was a bold and well-conceived enterprise, which, if "war" had not been its outcome, would undoubtedly have changed the whole structure of Mormon, and perhaps Western, economic development. . . . [It] anticipated the Pony Express, the

⁴⁰As cited in *A Believing People: The Literature of the Latter-day Saints*, ed. Richard H. Cracroft and Neal E. Lambert (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1974), p. 145.

Ben Holladay Stagecoach line, and the Russell, Majors, and Wadell freight trains of the late '50s and '60s.⁴¹

After it was learned, in February 1857, that the U. S. mail contract had been awarded Hiram Kimball, an agent for the Church, President Young spent much time that spring choosing the spots for the way stations, which were to be actual settlements with farms, etc.; soliciting and organizing the contributions of men, wagons, cattle, material, provisions (over \$100,000 worth in the first half of '57); and counseling and setting apart the "express missionaries," who were to see their work as religious duty and live accordingly—including treating their teams with kindness! The effort proceeded rapidly; mail was being carried by the middle of February, and by July many of the way stations were nearly completed and stocked. But as the chorus in a Greek tragedy would have pointed out, even while Brigham Young was proudly reporting the progress of this enterprise to the Saints in the April conference, bragging that "the company is the Latter day Saints . . . this is the only people that can do it,"⁴² U. S. President James Buchanan was considering actions that would not only destroy the Y.X. Company at great loss but bring the Church to the very brink of battle with federal forces and put Brigham and the succeeding leaders in a defensive position against the government and outsiders for the next forty years.

Events had come together like diabolical Fates. In 1856 the new Republican Party formed itself around opposition to slavery and to the notion of popular sovereignty, which would allow territories to decide about slavery. It used Utah polygamy as a sensationalistic example of what could happen under such popular sovereignty. The Republicans resolved that "it is both the right and the imperative duty of Congress to prohibit in the Territories those twin relics of barbarism—Polygamy and Slavery." They lost the election, but many anti-polygamy resolutions subsequently appeared in Congress, and Democratic President Buchanan, unwilling to move against slavery in the South where his major support was, chose to oppose polygamy so he would not be vulnerable to Republican attack on both issues. In this mood he reacted precipitately to a vitriolic letter of resignation in March 1857 by W. W. Drummond. Drummond was a gentile who had been appointed associate justice in Utah in 1854 and had soon come into wide-open conflict with President Young and the Mormons when he attacked the probate court jurisdiction and especially when it was

⁴¹Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, p. 162.

⁴²Secretary's Journal, 7 April 1857, Brigham Young Papers, Church Archives.

discovered he had deserted his family and brought with him a mistress, whom he actually had sit beside him in court. Without investigating Drummond's character or the substance of his false charges that Governor Young had destroyed court records and was heading what amounted to a rebellious dictatorship, and without even notifying the Mormons, Buchanan cancelled the mail contract and dispatched an expeditionary force of 2,500 troops to install a newly appointed Utah governor, Alfred Cumming.

There was fine dramatic irony in the patriotic displays in which Brigham Young led the unknowing Saints on 4 July and 24 July, even while troops were marching against them under the flag the Mormons were saluting. In fact it was on 24 July itself that definite word arrived of the army's approach, though there had been rumors before. President Young and the Church leaders were gathered at the top of Big Cottonwood Canyon with 2,500 Saints for a jubilant celebration of their entrance into the valley a decade before, when Abraham Smoot, who had heard in Missouri of the government actions and rushed back the 1,000 miles to Utah in twenty days, rode up to Brigham's tent with the news. Brother Brigham calmly let the Saints continue their celebration in peace that night, but to his close colleagues he began a characteristically hyperbolic call to arms that clearly grows out of the bitter experiences of the preceding twenty years:

I said if [Expedition Commander] General Harney came here, I should then know the intention of the government; And it was carried unanimously that if Harney crossed the *South Pass* the *buzards* should *pick his bones*. The feeling of mobocracy is rife in the "States." The constant cry is Kill the Mormons. *Let them try it.*⁴³

Even when faint rumors had begun to come in earlier in July Brigham had taken a hard line: "I wish to avoid hostilities with the United States, but before I'll see this people suffer as they have done heretofore I will draw my sword, in the name of Great God, and say to my Brethren let our Swords fall upon our enemies."⁴⁴ On 20 August he reflected,

The Day I entered the Salt Lake Valley 24 July 1847 I remarked—if the devil will let us alone for 10 years—we will bid them defiance. July 24 1857—10 years to a day—I first heard of the intended expedition to Utah under Genl. Harney. I feel the same now. I defy all the powers of darkness.⁴⁵

⁴³Secretary's Journal, 24 July 1857.

⁴⁴Secretary's Journal, 12 July 1857.

⁴⁵Secretary's Journal, 20 August 1857.

On Sunday, 26 July, in speaking to the Saints at the Bowery, President Young seems fixed on defending the Saints and their rights against literally Satanic forces: "The Kingdom of Heaven is here, and we are in it, and they are angry at us solely for that. . . . All hell and its devils are moving against it."⁴⁶ But another dimension in his feeling and thinking is apparent in the note for his Secretary's Journal that that night at the usual prayer circle they "have prayed for our enemies." On the one hand, there was anger and anxiety over the renewal of persecutions he had led the daring exodus to the desert partly to escape, as well as some resentment at the government's disdainful launching of its expedition without investigation—without even consulting him as governor. Mormon scouts in disguise among the oncoming soldiers had heard them brag about "scalping Old Brigham" and helping themselves to "extra" Mormon wives. In the absence of contrary evidence, Governor Young chose to regard the expedition as an enemy mob and girded Zion for battle. He called back missionaries from the East and Canada and eventually from foreign lands; he called in the outpost settlements at San Bernardino and Carson Valley; he mobilized the Nauvoo Legion and sent out guerrilla forces to spy on them and then harass the troops and destroy supply trains and Mormon forts that might be used by the enemy; his sermons and letters escalated the rhetoric of total war (e.g., the Secretary's Journal for August 16: "Warning the brethren to prepare for the worst. And bring their minds to making every town a 'Moscow' and every mountains pass a 'Potters field,' ere they would permit a mob to desecrate the Land which God has given us"); finally on September 15, he, as governor, declared the Territory under martial law: "Citizens of Utah—We are invaded by a hostile force who are evidently assailing us to accomplish our overthrow and destruction. . . . [I] forbid all armed forces, of every description, from coming into this Territory under any pretence whatever."⁴⁷

On the other hand there is a clear strain of calm, assured pacifism. President Young forcefully instructed the guerrillas under command of his counselor, General Daniel H. Wells, to burn forage, drive off cattle, even burn supplies—all as delaying tactics—but absolutely to shed no blood. On August 30, he said to the Saints:

Cannot this Kingdom be overthrown? No. They might as well try to obliterate the sun. God is at the helm. . . .

⁴⁶Sermon quoted in *Journal History*, 26 July 1857.

⁴⁷Brigham Young, "Proclamation by the Governor," photographic reproduction in Nels Anderson, *Desert Saints* (1942; reprint ed., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), p. 173.

Sow your grain early this fall. Many wish to know whether I think we shall reap. I do not care whether we do or not, but I intend to sow early this fall so that it will ripen next season. . . .

The Lord has suffered the wicked to drive us about, that we might accomplish his designs the sooner. . . .

. . . do not be angry with [the army], for they are in the hands of God. Instead of feeling a spirit to punish them, or anything like wrath, you live your religion; and you will see the day when you will pray God to turn away from your eyes the sight of their afflictions.⁴⁸

And indeed forces were already at work to defuse what by the end of the year became known in the East as “Buchanan’s Blunder.” Commanding General Winfield Scott had early seen the military folly of the expedition, but his letter of opposition was kept secret from Buchanan by Secretary of War John B. Floyd, who, it later turned out, benefited through kickbacks from the huge supplier contracts. General Harney saw the same problems and found an excuse to resign his command in Kansas, which resulted in its being given to Colonel Albert S. Johnston, whose name thus became notorious in Mormon legend. A Captain Stewart Van Vliet was sent ahead, arriving on 8 September, to convey the troops’ peaceful intent and secure cooperation by the displaced governor (who was addressed in the letter from Harney as “President Young of the Society of the Mormons” in what Brigham saw as calculated insult) and to buy provisions for the troops. Van Vliet was treated courteously but firmly by President Young, who considered him a “gentleman” who “understood our position,” and the officer returned sobered by the Saints’ unanimous determination (he had been present at a large meeting where they all shouted “Amen” to the proposition “All of you that are willing to set fire to your property and lay it in ashes, rather than submit to their military rule and oppression”⁴⁹). Despite the reluctance of his superiors to believe him, Van Vliet then began to work toward securing the peace commission from Washington that successfully negotiated a truce nine months later.

The Lord did seem to be at the helm, because the harvest that fall, in sharp distinction to the previous two, was huge (according to Wilford Woodruff “the largest ever known in these valleys”⁵⁰), big enough to support the called-in settlers and missionaries and the militia and to compensate for the disruptive evacuation of all northern Utah the next spring. The guerrillas succeeded in slowing down the army until snow had so blocked the passes they had to winter in misery near the burned-out Fort Bridger. Though

⁴⁸Journal History, 30 August 1857.

⁴⁹Anderson, *Desert Saints*, pp. 171–72.

they finally marched through Salt Lake the next June, it was a somber triumph. They set up Camp Floyd in the desert about forty miles south of Salt Lake and finally left in 1860, after providing the Mormons another great windfall through trade and the disposal, for next to nothing, of the army's surplus property.

But Brother Brigham's rhetoric, effective in meeting his goal of rousing the Saints to faith and energetic action, this time may well have helped tip the balance toward a tragedy that eventually caused him great anguish and hurt the kingdom badly in terms both of national sympathy and internal confidence. During the tinderbox conditions of August 1857, a company of emigrants was making its way south from Salt Lake City toward southern California. There were constant irritations caused by the unwillingness of the Saints—mobilized for defense and suspicious of any strangers—to carry on normal sales of food. More seriously, there was also a firing of the smoldering hatred for Missourians, caused by a band of them, attached to the company, who boasted of their part in the murder and rape of Mormons in 1838 and threatened more of the same. The company had a series of run-ins with Indians, some of whom—and one Mormon—were supposedly killed by an ox the emigrants poisoned. The impending war between their friends the "Mormonees" and the gentile "Mericans" had made the Indians even more hostile than usual toward the emigrants. The Indians finally attacked on September 7 and then besieged and sporadically fired upon the company at Mountain Meadows near Cedar City. At that city a few days previous, the emigrants, furious at the Mormons' continued refusal to sell food, had destroyed some property and threatened that they would return with troops from California to drive them out. After the emigrants left Cedar City, angry and frightened civil and Church authorities had sent a rider the 260 miles north to get President Young's advice. But when three emigrants escaped the siege and had an encounter with some Mormons where one emigrant was killed and the other two fled, some of the local Mormons seem to have feared certain retaliation from California if the main body escaped, and planned a massacre for 11 September. A group of them, led on the field by John D. Lee, who had been called in as a local Church agent among the Indians and later claimed the Indians had threatened to kill him if he did not help them, somehow got the emigrants to disarm and leave their barricades for safe passage to Cedar City. Apparently Lee's command, "Do your duty," started the planned massacre—which called for the fifty Iron County militiamen to

⁵⁰*Millennial Star* 19 (1857):766.

slaughter the men and the 200 Indians to kill the women and older children—about 120 killed. Only seventeen small children survived to be eventually returned to the East.⁵¹

The messenger rode in to Salt Lake City while Brigham Young was entertaining Van Vliet and remained only four hours before turning back for another hard three-day ride under Brigham's command, "Go with all speed, spare no horse flesh," and with a letter to Isaac Haight, presiding Church authority at Cedar City:

You must not meddle with them. The Indians we expect will do as they please, but you should try to preserve good feeling with them. There are no other trains going south that I know of. If those who are there will leave, let them go in peace.⁵²

But the messenger was two days late. An official report to Governor Young on 30 September by the local Indian agent described the massacre as wholly the work of Indians, and Brigham, preoccupied with an impending war, seems to have had no contrary suspicions until sometime later, when gentile investigations and the pall of guilt that lay over Cedar City must have slowly made the truth apparent to him. The process of determining guilt and responding to it was complicated by distance and the delay caused by the war; by the fact that, as Nels Anderson has said, "most investigators were not so much interested in the facts as in using the incident to indict Brigham Young";⁵³ by the oath of secrecy the participants made with each other; and by the incalculable tragic emotion and traumatic defensiveness felt not only by them and their friends and families but by all Mormons, who had come to think of themselves as God's chosen people, veritable Saints—the victims, not the perpetrators, of massacres.

It would seem impossible to understand Mormon history without understanding *both* the Haun's Mill Massacre, when Mormon men and children were murdered and mutilated and Mormon women tortured and raped, *and* the Mountain Meadows Massacre, where Mormons murdered many men and consented to the murder of women and children. Levi Peterson has written a superbly intelligent and compassionate essay on how Juanita Brooks, in her studies of the Massacre and of John D. Lee, has brought to Mormon historical consciousness much of the truth of the tragic massacre and the tragic cover-up and scapegoating that followed. He shows that she has functioned not only as truth-revealing historian

⁵¹The best single source on this material is Juanita Brooks, *The Mountain Meadows Massacre* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1950).

⁵²Brigham Young to Isaac Haight, 10 September 1857, Brigham Young Letterbook No. Brigham Young Papers, Church Archives.

⁵³Anderson, *Desert Saints*, p. 192.

but as a classic tragedian in that her work not only arouses the tragic emotions of loss of innocence, of pain and anguish and sympathy at intolerable loss, but does that in a way, because of her own empathetic commitment to the Mormon people and the kingdom, and because of her courage and skill, that is healing and redemptive. Peterson poses the challenge:

Mormons are still hard put to confront the massacre. If good Mormons committed the massacre, if prayerful leaders ordered it, if apostles and a prophet knew about it and sacrificed John D. Lee, then the sainthood of even the modern church seems tainted. Where is the moral superiority of Mormonism, where is the assurance that God has made Mormons his new chosen people? For many Mormons, these are intolerable questions and they arouse intolerable emotions.⁵⁴

Brigham Young came to feel those emotions, probably more acutely than most because of his more acute aversion to bloodshed than most of his frontier-conditioned associates. On 27 January 1857, with the handcart tragedy still weighing on him, the President had talked to his office staff, meditatively, almost obsessively, about the terrible crime of shedding innocent blood: "If I should hereafter, say 50,000 years, in the spirit world meet a man in my journeys . . . [who] asked me 'did you not . . . spill my blood 50,000 years ago' I never wish to have this feeling in the eternal world."⁵⁵

In 1866, while challenging gentile members of his audience at the Old Tabernacle to prove in court the private insinuations some were making about his involvement in a recent murder in Salt Lake, he said,

I will tell the Latter-day Saints that there are some things which transpire that I cannot think about. There are transactions that are too horrible for me to contemplate. The massacre at Haun's mill, and that of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, and the Mountain Meadows Massacre and the murder of Dr. Robinson are of this character. I cannot think that there are beings upon the earth who have any claim to the sentiments and feelings which swell in the breasts of civilized men who could be guilty of such atrocities; and it is hard to suppose that even savages would be capable of performing such inhuman acts.⁵⁶

We know that Brigham Young's enemies were wrong in accusing him of perpetrating or condoning the Massacre, but his role in the cover-up—as accessory after the fact—and in the fate of

⁵⁴Levi S. Peterson, "Juanita Brooks: The Mormon Historian as Tragedian," *Journal of Mormon History* 3 (1976):52.

⁵⁵Office Journal, 27 January 1857.

⁵⁶*JD* 11:281 (23 December 1866).

John D. Lee is still unclear. Blame was increasingly focused on Lee by those who broke silence, and he was summarily excommunicated by the Church in 1870 and was executed by civil authorities on the massacre site nearly twenty years after the event, 23 March 1877, just five months before Brigham's own death.

There are a few hints of Brother Brigham's complex feelings: John D. Lee was part of Brigham's own family, a son through the sacred early Mormon ceremony of "Adoption," a loyal and tried Saint and intrepid builder of the kingdom. But it apparently became clear to the President that Lee had participated in a kind of thing Brigham Young almost irrationally abhorred, and that he had lied to Brigham about it. In addition, the cancer of that action threatened the kingdom from within and without. The complexity of response is indicated in John D. Lee's continuance for a while in positions of trust in southern Utah that could not have been possible without President Young's approval—but the sudden withdrawal of Brigham's support and association after a certain point. In this tragic dilemma, Brother Brigham may have experienced a loss of innocence, in choosing the kingdom over full candor and then over loyalty, even greater and more painful than the one in Iowa. I do not know how he might have done better, given the narrow alternatives. If he could have, but did not, it is difficult to feel other than empathy and forgiveness for a prophet of God who so deeply and personally suffered the tragedy. And it is possible to feel new understanding of what it may cost a mere mortal to be called to that role of prophet. As Peterson has written,

The pain of tragic loss is best coped with through recognition and expression rather than through repression and denial. Because of the work of Juanita Brooks, more and more Mormons will be able to recognize and speak of the tragedy that occurred to Mormons at Mountain Meadows. More and more of her readers will respond to her realistic concept of sainthood, the sainthood of those for whom . . . perfection is a struggle to achieve rather than the achievement itself. There will be more and more who can accept human frailty in prophets and apostles, knowing that if God has chosen to work through human beings, he has thereby chosen to work through imperfect means.⁵⁷

Brigham Young was perfectly candid about being imperfect. In the year following the Mountain Meadows Massacre he had ample opportunity to show as well that he was a prophet. Perhaps most impressive in that showing is his firm and well-vindicated reliance on God's protection of the kingdom: "It is a solemn time.

⁵⁷Peterson, "Historian as Tragedian," p. 54.

The armies of the Gentiles are making war upon us because of our religion. . . . We have to trust in God for the result. We shall do what we can, and leave the work in his hands.”⁵⁸ And yet he was constant in his recognition—and in reminding the Saints—that whatever the outcome of this attack on the kingdom they had built with their hands, the adversity they were passing through could serve, depending on their righteous response, to further the basic goals of the kingdom:

Should we live in peace, year after year, how long would it be before we were glued to the world? . . . It would be contrary to our feelings to attend to anything but our own individual concerns to make ourselves rich. . . . This shows to us that all things pertaining to this world are subject to change, and such changes as we cannot control.⁵⁹

It is true that President Young continued to make dramatic and invigorating speeches to the Saints as God seemed to them to fight their battle—to close up the passes with snow and bring Buchanan under congressional attack:

If [the soldiers] come here, I will tell you what will be done. . . . Men shall be secreted here and there and shall waste away our enemies. . . .

. . . I want you to prepare to cache our grain and lay waste to this Territory; for I am determined, if driven to that extremity, that our enemies shall find nothing but heaps of ashes and ruins. . . .

. . . With us it is the Kingdom of God, or nothing; and we shall maintain it, or die in trying—though we shall not die in trying.⁶⁰

However, throughout the “war” Brigham constantly affirmed his readiness to negotiate with anyone who would deal with him fairly and not under threat of force. According to one gentile writer’s report, Brigham Young’s constant emphasis was to avoid bloodshed “so that if another course should be adopted . . . the feeling of revenge should not hinder the . . . peace.”⁶¹ Thus, when his old friend Thomas Kane suddenly showed up as a mediator from President Buchanan in February 1858, after a heroic journey through Panama and up from Southern California that injured his health, Brigham welcomed him as an answer to his prayer for a bloodless solution: “Friend Thomas, the Lord sent you here, and he will not let you die . . . till your work is done. You have done

⁵⁸Manuscript History, 30 September 1857.

⁵⁹*JD* 5:294 (6 October 1857).

⁶⁰Journal History, 18 October 1857.

⁶¹As cited in Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, p. 181.

a great work, and you will do a greater work still.”⁶² President Young later reflected on this crucial time:

When Colonel Kane came to visit us, he tried to point out a policy for me to pursue. But I told him I should not turn to the right nor the left, ONLY AS GOD DICTATED. I should do nothing but what was right. When he found that I would not be informed, only as the Spirit of the Lord led me, he felt discouraged, and said he would not go to the army. But finally he said, if I would dictate he would execute. I told him that as he had been inspired to come here, he would go to the army and do as the Spirit of the Lord led him, and all would be right. He did so—and all was right.⁶³

This was of course a memory recorded after successful resolution of the conflict, but in fact Kane did make another dangerous trip, out through the snow to the army camped at Fort Bridger. There, after some difficulties with the belligerent General Johnston, he convinced Cumming, the appointed governor, to travel unescorted to Utah to investigate the situation. When he arrived in April Governor Cumming was treated with good-humored respect by the Mormons. Brigham Young convinced him of the falsity of Drummond’s charges and that he would be accepted fully as governor if the army kept out.

In March the Church leaders had agreed with the President’s feeling that if Kane were unsuccessful and Johnston marched on them when the passes opened up, resistance would lead to much futile bloodshed and that evacuation and a “scorched-earth” policy was the best course. Some have pointed out that this tactic served to turn world opinion in favor of the Mormons and thus was designed to allow Brigham Young to save face after his belligerent threats of the previous fall. There is no doubt that Brigham played a cagey and effective game with the federal powers. But the “Big Move,” as it came to be called, was no game, and the 30,000 people leaving their homes and trekking south in wagons was an awesome sight that greeted Cumming as he traveled down Weber canyon and then south from Ogden to Salt Lake City. President Young was dead serious, bringing to fulfillment a plan that had been in his mind since the first news of invasion. He had written on 6 January 1858, to W. I. Appleby, President of the Eastern Mission:

Rather than see my wives and daughters ravished and polluted, and the seeds of corruption sown in the hearts of my sons of a brutal soldiery, I would leave my home in ashes, my gardens and orchards

⁶²Journal History, 25 February 1858. This source is located in Preston Nibley, *Brigham Young, the Man and His Work* (1936; reprint ed., Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1970), p. 323.

⁶³Manuscript History, 15 August 1858.

a waste, and subsist upon roots and herbs, a wanderer through these mountains for the remainder of my natural life.⁶⁴

Whatever the outcome, Brother Brigham knew this was a way of testing, and therefore developing through its exercise, the faith of the builders and beneficiaries of the kingdom. Their feelings, as they responded immediately to President Young's call to leave all behind again, are captured by a teen-age participant:

We packed all we had into father's one wagon and waited for the command to leave. . . . One morning father told us that we should leave with a large company in the evening. . . . Along in the middle of the day father scattered leaves and straw in all the rooms and I heard him say: "Never mind, little daughter, this house has sheltered us, it shall never shelter them." . . . That night we camped on Willow Creek in the south end of the valley, and at ten o'clock every soul with bowed head knelt in prayer to God. As I dropped to sleep I heard my mother whispering that the Lord had heard our prayers and that our homes should not be burned.⁶⁵

But the Saints were *ready* to burn those homes, and Brigham Young stood firm in the face of Cumming's pleas, even commands, to have the people return. They remained, Brother Brigham with them, in Provo and further south until late in June, when Buchanan's peace commission had arrived and successfully negotiated a settlement; in it the Mormons received a full "pardon." President Young said, "I thank President Buchanan for forgiving me, but I really cannot tell what I have done") and Johnston led his army in an eerie "triumphal march" through the city, which was completely deserted except for the men who stood ready to set it to the torch if one soldier stepped out of line.

One incident during the negotiations with the peace commission seems especially revealing of Brigham Young's character and style. From the minutes of the meetings and the somewhat expanded account by Tullidge in his contemporary *Life of Brigham Young*, it seems that, despite the assurances of the peace commission that Johnston would not begin to march toward Salt Lake City until hearing from them, at a delicate point, when agreement to allow the "occupation" was close, Porter Rockwell burst into the room and whispered something in President Young's ear. Brigham then severely announced that the troops *were* moving and, despite the objections of the commissioners that such could not be the case ("My messenger would not deceive me," said Brigham), he turned to William C. Dunbar, a noted Scotch singer present, and commanded, "Brother Dunbar, sing 'Zion.'" Brother

⁶⁴Journal History, 6 January 1858; P. Nibley, *Brigham Young*, p. 325.

⁶⁵As cited in Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, p. 188.

Dunbar then sang a stirring song which had been composed that year to rally the Saints—and is still sung by the Mormons (though now in a less martial version):

In thy mountain retreat, God will Strengthen thy feet;
On the necks of thy foes thou shalt tread,
And their silver and gold,
As the prophets have told,
Shall be brought to adorn thy fair head. . . .

Here our voices we'll raise, and we'll sing to thy praise,
Sacred home of the prophets of God;
Thy deliverance is nigh,
Thy oppressors shall die,
And the gentiles shall bow 'neath thy rod.⁶⁶

Whether it was the song, or the determination reflected in the eyes of the Mormons around the table moving their lips fiercely in unison with Brother Dunbar—or Brother Brigham's words the next day, which took full advantage of this fortuitous situation to drive home his demands—the peace commission acquiesced in his conditions:

We are willing those troops should come into our country, but not to stay in our city. They may pass through if it needs be, but must not quarter less than forty miles from us. . . . Before the troops reach here this city will be in ashes, every tree and shrub will be cut to the ground, and every blade of grass that will burn shall be burned; . . . as God lives, we will hunt you by night and day until your armies are wasted away. No mob can live in the homes we have built in these mountains. That's the program, gentlemen, whether you like it or not. If you want war you can have it, but if you wish peace, peace it is; we shall be glad of it.⁶⁷

The ten years that followed the peace were full of irony for the Saints. The occupation by a huge gentile army (Camp Floyd became the largest military post in the United States) and its vice-filled satellite community of camp followers would seem to have ended Brigham Young's drive for an isolated and self-sufficient kingdom. But the Church leaders held firm to their policy, even financing their efforts at home industry with profits from such windfalls as the occupation and trade with gentile-developed mines⁶⁸—thus turning to their own purposes the very forces that threatened self-sufficiency. The soldiers, who jeered the impover-

⁶⁶Edward Tullidge, *Life of Brigham Young* (New York: n.p., 1876), p. 310.

⁶⁷Journal History, 11 June 1858.

⁶⁸Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, p. 196.

ished and somewhat humiliated Saints when they returned from the "Big Move" to their hard-won homesteads, were pulled out of Utah to fight in the bloody Civil War, leaving to the Mormons the camp and surpluses; and Johnston, an effective commander who reduced potential antagonisms with his fairness but remained implacably disdainful of the Mormons as rebels, himself then joined the Southern rebellion, as did those other rather self-righteous instigators or participants in the crusade to put down the Mormon "secession," Governor Cumming, Secretary of War Floyd, and even President Buchanan.

Meanwhile the Mormons, expected by many (including some who thought them justified) to join the Confederacy—and, in fact, despite feeling that this war would perhaps destroy the country and usher in the Millennium—remained firmly loyal to the Constitution and the Union. But they did not send soldiers and only participated in the war by responding to Abraham Lincoln's request to Brigham for a company of cavalry to protect the mail route through Wyoming. Even this ended when Colonel Patrick Connor arrived from California on October 1862 at the head of the Third California Volunteers, took over the postal guard duty from the Mormons, and built Camp Douglas on Salt Lake City's East Bench expressly to intimidate Brigham and the Saints. Connor joined with other gentiles in the city determined to destroy Mormon hegemony, especially involving himself in prospecting activities in Utah mountains with the explicit purpose of attracting so many gentiles to these riches that the Mormon culture would be overwhelmed.

Brigham Young remained quite aloof from all this, actually going into a year of near isolation in his home and office after Cumming took over, which seemed (besides being a precaution against the threats of gentiles encouraged by the presence of Johnston's soldiers) to be a way of showing that whatever the title bestowed on Cumming, the Utah government could not operate except with Brother Brigham's consent. Though Utah's applications for statehood continued to be denied in the growing crusade against polygamy in the '60s, President Young operated the "ghost" government of the State of Deseret and that political reality was recognized by Lincoln in his direct approach to the Mormon leader for the guards for the mail route. Lincoln told a visitor from Utah that the Mormons were like the logs he occasionally encountered as a youth clearing timber, "too hard to split, too wet to burn, and too heavy to move," and added, "You go back and tell Brigham Young that if he will let me alone I will

let him alone.”⁶⁹ And generally that is what Lincoln did, attempting to be fair with Utah appointees and refusing to push prosecution of the Morrill Anti-Bigamy Act of 1862, which disincorporated the Church and limited its real estate holdings to \$50,000.

It was partly in response to the Morrill Act, and subsequent acts aimed at destroying the Church’s power through direct economic attack, that President Young made some, to him, very natural transfers of Church property into his own name. These actions have contributed to a misunderstanding and suspicion about him that ranks in seriousness with the questions about the Mountain Meadows Massacre. Jack Adamson, in his perceptive and moving introduction to Dean Jessee’s edition of Brigham Young’s letters to his sons, quotes from a hasty note written in 1856 to Joseph A. in England: “I want you to be faithful that you may [be] worthy of your stashion in my Kingdom.” And then Adamson comments: “My Kingdom? Did he mean in my Father’s kingdom where there are many mansions. . .? It was late and Brigham was wearier than he realized. Who can know what he meant?”⁷⁰ But there is no mistake, and no mystery. Brigham meant “my” kingdom—and in a way that ought to be clearer than it is, even to Mormons themselves, inheritors of the tradition of consecration and stewardship President Young so firmly established. He meant it in precisely the way he said “my family”—meaning the nearly 1,000 people at any one time included in the total of his wives and children, those sealed to him by “adoption,” and the families of men hired by him to work on “his” various and expanding projects, all those to whom he felt responsible as a patriarch. And that use of “my” ought to be understandable since it is close to the same sense in which any member of a closely knit modern family might refer to that unit, where he feels responsible to all and all of whose resources he shares and helps direct for the common good. President Young’s position as prophet and his special skills combined to make it natural for him to be the center of the process of developing the new economy in Utah—especially given the integrated vision of temporal and spiritual effort and success that he shared with his followers. As an outsider saw it,

Brigham Young is at the head of everything; . . . he receives the revenues, and he spends them,—both without any apparent accountability; the best farms are his, the largest saw-mills, the most pros-

⁶⁹As cited in James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976), p. 313.

⁷⁰Dean C. Jessee, ed., *Letters of Brigham Young to His Sons* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1974), p. xx.

pering manufactories; . . . There is immense wealth in his possession; but what proportion of it he calls his own, and what the church's, no one knows,—he apparently recognizes no distinction.⁷¹

Actually President Young did recognize a distinction, especially in his clerk's carefully kept books, but the distinction was not absolute because it was not very important to the central purposes of the kingdom. Brother Brigham used the available resources in whatever way his judgment and inspiration told him was for the good of the kingdom—whether in using the Church's tithing resources to feed unemployed people to whom he had given work on "his" farm or in making drafts on his personal accounts to pay for emigrating people to Utah when "the Church's" Perpetual Emigrating Fund resources were insufficient.

Brigham Young did develop great "personal" wealth and holdings. Originally this happened through his own basic abilities, as craftsman, farmer, and entrepreneur, and then it continued and increased through his use of the resources and trust accorded his position to get the pioneer economy going—especially through personally directing a book credit system by which labor and material resources could be put to use in the time before a money and industrial economy had been created. His wealth seemed greater than it actually was because he at the same time managed the similar—and interchangeable—Church system as "Trustee-in-Trust." The confusion became even greater—and has unfortunately persisted to the present, even among Mormons—because beginning in 1862 much Church property was consciously put into private hands (other trusted leaders' as well as President Young's) to avoid escheatment by the federal government.

Gentiles were mystified, eventually infuriated, by this casual mixing of religious and economic power, by what seemed to them a primitivistic affront to the new American ways that the Enlightenment and the Revolution had made possible. But it is some of the gentiles who provide us the best testimony concerning Brother Brigham's honesty and ability. Fitz Hugh Ludlow, who visited in 1868, concluded that if Brigham Young had to support himself by farming,

he understands soils, stock, tools, rotation, irrigation, manures, and all the agricultural economies so well that he would speedily have the best crops within a hundred miles' radius. With his own hands he would put the best house in the settlement over the heads of himself and his family.

Ludlow described President Young as sitting in the Church of-

⁷¹Samuel Bowles, *Our New West* (Hartford, Conn.: Hartford Publishing Co., 1869), p. 215.

fice, "managing a whole nation's temporalities with such secular astuteness that Talleyrand or Richelieu would find him a match . . . and the Rothschild family could not get ahead of him if the stakes were a financial advantage."⁷² These qualities, and Brigham's style of operating as if all were included in his kingdom, continued to be perplexing, even offensive, to some, but it is easy to see that the advantages to the Church and the community—the gospel kingdom—were at least as great as to himself.

For himself, Brother Brigham actually claimed nothing, except that God had appointed him steward over the kingdom, which of course meant everything. If he can be condemned in the economic area at all it must be with his developing love of quality that led him, not to personal luxury in life-style (though he loved well-made watches, carriages, etc.), but to build and furnish with fine things homes in Salt Lake City and St. George and perhaps occasionally indulge some of his wives' and daughters' special tastes. Even these indulgences are revealed mainly by his strong, even public, efforts to *curb* luxurious tastes in his family and others (for instance, his formation of the Retrenchment societies); and his efforts to achieve quality in his homes and decorations were mainly a part of his felt responsibility to set standards for this pioneer community struggling to build a civilization in the wilderness. Certainly he cannot be seriously criticized (although he might well have prepared better) for the difficulties that attended settlement of his estate after his death, when some members of his family did not understand fully his tacit assumptions about the holdings all belonging to the kingdom.⁷³ Just as Joseph did not succeed in making clear to everyone the proper mode of succession of authority that should follow his death, Brigham did not succeed in making clear to all his vision of consecration to the kingdom before he died.

Of course, President Young did not seek or originally plan to take such a direct role in secular matters, at first delegating to "Presiding Bishop" Newell K. Whitney the responsibility for tithing and public works. But one ward bishop much later recalled that Bishop Whitney

seemed quite at a loss to make a move. . . . [And] in a short time the spirit of the Aaronic [more temporally oriented] priesthood seemed to come upon President Young and he immediately set men to work, and he has had upon him more or less the responsibility of both priesthoods every since.⁷⁴

⁷²Fitz Hugh Ludlow, *The Heart of a Continent* (New York: Hurd and Houghton, 1870), p. 373.

⁷³See Leonard J. Arrington, "The Settlement of the Brigham Young Estate," *Pacific Historical Review* 21 (February 1952):1-20, esp. pages 16-20.

⁷⁴Minutes, 11 February 1875, Brigham Young Papers, Church Archives.

With that assurance and that spirit Brigham Young acted boldly and decisively to build the kingdom: "When it comes to sleep, I do not stay awake contriving how we are to financier. I can understand in a very few minutes all that is necessary and possible to be done, without taking very great thought in the matter."⁷⁵ He acted with the continually legitimized confidence that he expressed in 1856: "There is not a person in this Church and kingdom but what must acknowledge that gold and silver, houses and land, etc., do multiply in my hands. . . . that I am as good a financier as they ever knew, in all things that I put my hands to."⁷⁶ One evening in 1859 as his clerks were discussing the game of chess, which he remarked he knew nothing about, he commented that, instead of manipulating mere wooden pieces, "I have had to play with the kingdoms of the worlds as a board and living characters as pieces." A clerk commented that President Young had played very well and he replied, "Yes and I am not displeased with nor regret any move that I have made."⁷⁷ Mormon folklore, which like any other preserves not so much literal historical truth as the group's basic values and perceptions, has passed along an anecdote that, whether it actually happened or not, should have, because it so aptly captures this sense of assurance in Brigham Young and the somewhat amused and amazed appreciation of that assurance felt by his people. Brother Brigham was looking over the burgeoning Salt Lake Valley with a visiting minister from the East, who was much impressed: "What you and the Lord have done with this place is truly amazing." "Yes, Reverend," Brigham replied, "and you should have seen it when the Lord had it alone!"

That seeming arrogance did not amuse some of Brigham Young's gentile contemporaries, notably Ralph Waldo Emerson, who objected to such "one-man power."⁷⁸ But Brigham was only acting and speaking with his characteristic plain honesty about a fundamental Mormon concept, that of stewardship. By this he understood that all the world is God's, to be used for God's purposes in providing eternal joy and progress for all his children, and that he uses human beings to safeguard and develop those resources. President Young believed he happened to be placed at the head of God's earthly kingdom and given commensurate gifts, and it was his job to make the most of them:

Man is destined to be a God—and has to act as an independent

⁷⁵JD 8:201 (8 October 1860).

⁷⁶JD 4:67 (2 November 1856).

⁷⁷Secretary's Journal, 17 February 1859.

⁷⁸James Thayer, *A Western Journey with Mr. Emerson* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1884), p. 34, as cited in Leonard Arrington and Ronald Esplin, "Building a Commonwealth: The Secular Leadership of Brigham Young," *Utah Historical Quarterly*, forthcoming.

being—and is left without aid to see what he will do, whether he will for God, and to practise him to depend on his own resources, and try his independency—to be righteous in the dark—to be the friend of God and do the best I can when left to myself, act on my Agency as the independent Gods, and show our capacity.⁷⁹

And of course, by acting responsibly with his capacities as God's steward, and by consecrating everything to the building of the kingdom, he felt he was able to receive God's aid, not only in making up for his inadequacies and the losses incurred at the hands of nature and the kingdom's enemies, but in making the kingdom into a blessing for all. To the "ghost" legislature of the never recognized but nevertheless functioning "State of Deseret" he said in 1866:

Trusting in God, and exercising those energies with which He has endowed us, let us continue to found new Settlements, built new towns and cities, make roads, construct canals and water ditches, both for navigation and irrigation, and contribute with our means and strength to every improvement which will extend our area of civilization, enhance the fertility, beauty, and greatness of our State and add to the comfort, convenience and happiness of our fellow citizens and the stranger who may visit it.⁸⁰

Brigham Young's supposedly selfish efforts to build "his" kingdom did not come to success in all the details he intended, or even in its apparently central religious goal, that of self-sufficient unity and order, but it did succeed in building the Utah Commonwealth in ways that have been a blessing to Mormons and gentiles alike. Leonard Arrington has pointed out that the remarkable thing about Brother Brigham's building of his kingdom was not his pragmatic flexibility, great as that was. It was rather his stubborn adherence to policy he believed was revealed from God, in the face of those who saw Mormonism as a barrier to the spread of individualistic and competitive economic and political principles and who therefore produced the "stream of laws, administrative directives, judicial decisions, and occupation armies which progressively reduced the scope of Church and group economic activity."⁸¹ And Arrington has also pointed up the irony that despite its natural and human obstacles the kingdom "by the end of the century . . . had provided the basis of support for half a million people in an area long and widely regarded as uninhabitable" and thus "demonstrated the effectiveness of central planning and voluntary cooperation in developing a large semi-arid region."

⁷⁹Office Journal, 28 January 1857.

⁸⁰Journal History, 21 January 1866.

⁸¹Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, p. 410.

Despite having given up, gradually during Brigham Young's lifetime and then altogether in the 1890s, what seem his central goals of self-sufficiency and isolation from the gentile "Babylon," when to persist would have done even greater harm, Mormons have continued to hold fast to Brother Brigham's ideals of community and order. In fact, in Arrington's words, Mormons, "having no doubt of its attainability and inevitability, . . . still discuss the type of society that will exist when the kingdom is finally realized."⁸² They continue to prepare themselves—in vows of consecration to the gospel kingdom of *all* their time, talents, and means; in storing a year's supply of food and clothing; in practicing gardening, canning, sewing, and many other skills of self-sufficiency; and in continual sharing with the needy through fast offerings and the welfare plan—for a time when they firmly believe God will call them by his prophets to step forward and complete the building of Brigham Young's kingdom.

President Young continued to build throughout his life, adding over 150 new communities in the 1860s, with the impetus for self-sufficiency brought by the Utah War and the peace ironically given Utah by the Civil War. For example, the prototypical and heroic "Dixie Mission" was sent to southern Utah in 1862 to grow cotton for the kingdom. As late as 1872 Brigham was discussing with Thomas Kane, who came to Utah and visited the southern settlements with him, the prospects for expanding the colonization into Mexico. Even at the end of his life, Brother Brigham was planning and beginning to develop additional colonies in Arizona, as irrigable land in Utah became fully used. Always his vision remained constant, as a letter to the editor of the *New York Herald* in 1873 indicates. He explains with terse wit his resignation from various business responsibilities in favor of others "competent to succeed me" and then gives us, in his unique personal voice, the essence of his life and its continuing challenge:

For over forty years I have served my people, laboring incessantly, and I am now nearly seventy two years of age and I need relaxation. . . . We intend establishing settlements in Arizona, in the country of the Apaches, persuaded that if we become acquainted with them, we can influence them to peace. . . . In Utah we have a fine country for stock raising and agriculture and abundance of minerals awaiting development, and we welcome all good citizens who love peace and good order to come and settle with us. . . . It has been frequently published that I have a deposit of several millions of pounds sterling in the Bank of England. Were such the case I would most assuredly use the means to gather our poor Church members. . . . All my means are invested here improving this Territory. All my transac-

⁸²Ibid., p. 411.

tions and labors have been carried on in accordance with my calling as a servant of God. I know no difference between spiritual and temporal labors. God has seen fit to bless me with means, and as a faithful steward I use them to benefit my fellow men—to promote their happiness in this world in preparing them for the great hereafter. My whole life is devoted to the Almighty's service, and while I regret that my mission is not better understood by the world, the time will come when I will be understood, and I leave to futurity the judgment of my labors and their result as they shall become manifest.⁸³

⁸³Brigham Young to the Editor of the *New York Herald*, 10 April 1873; as cited in P. Nibley, *Brigham Young*, pp. 490-92.

Woman's Place in Brigham Young's World

Jill Mulvay Derr

For more than a century those who have written about Brigham Young inevitably have taken an interest in his relationships with women, at least within the connubial context. To his American contemporaries Young became the personification of Latter-day Saint involvement in plural marriage or polygamy. They portrayed him as a despot with a harem, a man who had "outraged decency and riven asunder the most sacred social and domestic ties."¹ Horace Greeley, who visited the Mormons in 1859, criticized President Young for esteeming so lightly the opinions of his wives and other women and considered his apparent restriction of woman to the single office of childbearing and its accessories as an inevitable consequence of polygamy.² Mrs. C. V. Waite, a traveler who lived among the Mormons a few years later, agreed that polygamous marriages could only degrade women. "Instead of being a companion to man . . . she becomes, under this system, merely the minister to his passions and physical comfort." Waite characterized Brigham Young as foremost among the oppressors of women. "He declares that women have no souls—that they are not responsible beings, that they cannot save themselves, nor be saved except through man's intervention," she wrote.³

Even twentieth century biographers of Brigham Young have looked at his attitudes towards women almost exclusively in terms of his practice and explanation of polygamy. M. R. Werner's *Brigham Young* (1925) devoted three of thirteen chapters to polygamy and made no mention of Young's involvement in reorganizing the Relief Society, the official Church organization for Mormon women. Stanley P. Hirshson's biography of Brigham Young, *Lion of*

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¹Mrs. T. B. H. [Fanny] Stenhouse, *Tell It All: The Story of a Life's Experience in Mormonism* (Cincinnati: Queen City Publishing, 1874), p. 273.

²Horace Greeley, "Two Hours with Brigham Young," *Daily Tribune* (New York), 20 August 1859, as quoted in William Mulder and A. Russell Mortensen, eds., *Among the Mormons: Historical Accounts by Contemporary Observers* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967), p. 327.

³Mrs. C. V. Waite, *The Mormon Prophet and His Harem; or an Authentic History of Brigham Young and His Numerous Wives and Children* (Cambridge, Mass.: Riverside Press, 1866), pp. 217-18.

the Lord (1969) considered polygamy in three of the book's fifteen chapters and mentioned the Relief Society only briefly as the women's advocate for retrenchment and plural marriage.⁴ Though neither of these biographies is in any sense definitive, they are both indicative of a prevailing assumption about Brigham Young that has lived on for more than a century: that he was an oppressor of women.

The recent involvement of historians in women's studies has sparked new interest in the lives of Mormon women. The period that has received the most attention from current scholars is the 1870s, 1880s, and 1890s, the time when Mormon women emerged into public life.⁵ The administration of Brigham Young coincides with the first part of this span, and with good reason. Young himself was in part responsible for the increased sphere of activity of nineteenth century Mormon women. His own people were convinced of that. In fact, Mormon *Woman's Exponent* editor Louisa Lula Greene Richards heralded Young as "the most genuine, impartial and practical 'Woman's Rights Man' upon the American Continent."⁶

Opposing views of Brigham Young as feminist and anti-feminist are both in a sense correct. Each represents certain aspects of Young's attitudes toward women, but neither represents the whole. Young's vision was one of ultimate human liberation to which personal choice and responsibility were integral. But equally necessary for the freedom promised with a knowledge of the truth (John 8:32) were obedience and submission to the order of the Kingdom of God, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This freedom-submission paradox pervaded Young's attitudes toward the Mormon women he addressed and with whom he worked in various contexts.

He spoke of individual women as daughters of God, free agents, beings with the same eternal possibilities as men. Yet, within the family context, he insisted that wives submit themselves to their husbands and chided mothers who pursued personal interests at the expense of their children. As the Mormon commu-

⁴M. R. Werner, *Brigham Young* (London: Jonathan Cape, Ltd., 1925); Stanley P. Hirshson, *The Lion of the Lord: A Biography of Brigham Young* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969).

⁵The first such study was Leonard J. Arrington's "The Economic Role of Pioneer Mormon Women," *Western Humanities Review* 9 (Spring 1955):145-64. More recent studies include Claudia L. Bushman, ed., *Mormon Sisters: Women in Early Utah* (Cambridge, Mass.: Emmeline Press Ltd., 1976); Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, "The Eliza Enigma: The Life and Legend of Eliza R. Snow," *Essays on the American West, 1974-1975*, ed. Thomas G. Alexander (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1976); Jill C. Mulvay, "The Liberal Shall Be Blessed: Sarah M. Kimball," and Sherilyn Cox Bennion, "The Woman's Exponent: Forty-two Years of Speaking for Women," both in *Utah Historical Quarterly* 44 (Summer 1976). The *Utah Historical Quarterly* 38 (Winter 1970) issue was fully devoted to women's studies with several articles treating this period.

⁶Louisa G. Richards, "Work for Women," *Woman's Exponent* 1 (15 April 1873):172.

nity increased in complexity, Young gave sisters the resources and encouragement to pursue roles outside their homes. This mélange of prescriptive behavior for women has never significantly blurred the monolithic image of Young as an oppressor of women, though in recent years some Church members have attempted to resurrect Young as a woman's rights advocate. A more careful appraisal of Brigham Young must not only acknowledge the apparent incongruities in his prescriptions for women, but assess to what extent he resolved them.

At least as often as he addressed men and women separately Brigham Young addressed them jointly, speaking to "ladies and gentlemen," or more likely to "brethren and sisters." They were "sons and daughters, legitimately so, of our Father in heaven."⁷ These children of divine parents (Young, like Joseph Smith, acknowledged a Mother as well as a Father in Heaven⁸) came to earth endowed with assorted talents and abilities that were not necessarily sex-differentiated. Speaking in tongues, the interpretation of tongues, and healing were spiritual gifts practiced by both men and women with the approval of President Young.⁹ He preached that women and men alike had access to the promptings of the Holy Ghost ("Let every man and woman, without exception, obtain that Spirit. . .") and that their exaltation in the next life to godhood (the ultimate promise for righteous Saints) was predicated upon their personal choices in this life. "Now those men, or those women," he emphasized,

who know no more about the power of God, and the influences of the Holy Spirit, than to be led entirely by another person, suspending their own understanding, and pinning their faith upon another's sleeve, will never be capable of entering into the celestial glory, to be crowned as they anticipate; they will never be capable of becoming Gods.¹⁰

Not only were spiritual resources available to women and men alike, but both were capable of developing more temporal skills. Young indicated that some Mormon sisters "if they had the privilege of studying, would make just as good mathematicians or

⁷Brigham Young, sermon of 8 August 1852, in *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1855-86), 3:93 (cited hereafter as *JD*).

⁸Brigham Young taught men could become gods and women "Eves" or "queens of heaven." Brigham Young, "A Few Words of Doctrine," 8 October 1861, Brigham Young Papers, Archives of the Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah (cited hereafter as Church Archives); see also *JD* 3:365. The clearest statement of the Mother in Heaven concept, Eliza R. Snow's hymn, "O My Father," or, as she titled it, "The Eternal Father and Mother," was said to be Young's favorite hymn. See "Deseret Theological Institute," *Deseret News*, 27 June 1855; and Heber J. Grant, "Favorite Hymns," *Improvement Era* 17 (June 1914): 777.

⁹*JD* 3:364 (22 June 1856); *JD* 13:155 (14 November 1869).

¹⁰*JD* 7:160 (29 May 1859); *JD* 1:312 (20 February 1853).

accountants as any man; and we think they ought to have the privilege to study these branches of knowledge that they may develop the powers with which they are endowed.”¹¹ Susa Young Gates, daughter of Brigham and journalist and suffragist of national renown, said her father was “always proud to recognize and acclaim the woman of gifts and encourage her to use them to the fullest extent for the establishment of righteousness on earth.”¹²

Young’s emphasis on individual freedom and development was offered within a context ever present in Mormondom: the Kingdom of God was in fact a kingdom governed by “the Government of the Son of God,” “a heavenly institution among men”—the priesthood.¹³ The presence of the priesthood among the Latter-day Saints was what designated them as God’s covenant people. For Young it was the priesthood that “forms, fashions, makes, creates, produces, protects and holds in existence the inhabitants of the earth in a pure and holy form of government preparatory to their entering the kingdom of Heaven.”¹⁴ According to Young, Saints who subjected themselves to be governed by the priesthood would “live strictly according to its pure system of laws and ordinances” until they were unified as one. He promised: “The man that honors his Priesthood, the woman that honors her Priesthood will receive an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of God.” Those who numbered themselves among the Saints, whether or not they held government (priesthood) offices, would gain blessings by honoring and obeying the “pure system of government” by which the Saints were governed.¹⁵

From the time the priesthood was restored to Joseph Smith its offices were available only to males. Like their Puritan counterparts two centuries earlier, Mormon women found themselves at the bottom of a hierarchically ordered system. The Mormon order extended from the First Presidency, with the responsibility of governing the entire Church, through stake presidents and bishops with governmental responsibility for specific geographic regions, to the individual father whose priesthood responsibility was righteous government of his family. Women assumed the responsibility for governing children and for heading households in the absence of their husbands, a frequent occurrence in Mormon society. This divinely designated order did not necessarily imply that females

¹¹*JD* 13:61 (18 July 1869).

¹²Susa Young Gates and Leah D. Widtsoe, *The Life Story of Brigham Young* (New York: Macmillan, 1930), pp. 293, 296; see also *JD* 7:162 (5 June 1859).

¹³*JD* 10:320 (31 July 1864); *JD* 9:330 (3 August 1862).

¹⁴*JD* 13:281 (30 October 1870).

¹⁵*JD* 11:249 (17 June 1866); *JD* 17:119 (28 June 1874).

were intellectually or spiritually inferior to males.¹⁶ Brigham Young himself acknowledged “that many women are smarter than their husbands,” though it was “not the privilege of a woman to dictate the husband.”¹⁷

The number of Young’s sermons pointing to the gifts and responsibilities of men and women would seem to indicate that for him this governmental system did not necessarily detract from the individual worth and agency of women. Nevertheless, critics who accused Young of placing women in a secondary or inferior position, particularly within the marital relationship, were not without some justification. “The man is the head of the woman,” Young declared, tying into a Christian tradition that dates back to Paul.¹⁸ “Let our wives be the weaker vessels,” he said, “and the men be men, and show the women by their superior ability that God gives husbands wisdom and ability to lead their wives into his presence.”¹⁹ According to Young the father was to be “the head of the family, the master of his own household” and the wives and children were to “say amen to what he says, and be subject to his dictates, instead of their dictating the man, instead of their trying to govern him.”²⁰

Woman was under the obligation to follow her husband because of the order set forth by the first parents, Adam and Eve, in the Garden of Eden. “There is a curse upon the woman that is not upon the man,” said Young, “namely, that ‘her whole affections shall be towards her husband,’ and what is the next? ‘He shall rule over you.’”²¹ This explanation for woman’s secondary position within marriage was so popularly held during the nineteenth century that feminists headed by Elizabeth Cady Stanton published volumes of *The Woman’s Bible* in 1895 and 1898, attempting to analyze and reinterpret this and other passages from the Old Testament that seemed degrading to women.²²

¹⁶Feminist scholar Mary Ryan observed of the American Puritan community: “No individual of either sex, could presume to be one among equals in the seventeenth-century community. . . . Within the church, all parishioners were subservient to the minister and found their destined places somewhere within the hierarchy of elders, deacons, and the general congregation. . . . Within the household, the ranks descended from the patriarchal father to his wife, the mistress of the household, and on to children and then to servants and any other non-kinsmen who resided in the home. . . . Within this hierarchical *Weltanschauung* of the seventeenth century, inequality was not the peculiar stigma of womanhood, but rather a social expectation for both sexes.” Mary Ryan, *Womanhood in America from Colonial Times to the Present* (New York: New Viewpoints, Franklin Watts, 1975), pp. 40–41.

¹⁷*JD* 9:39 (7 April 1861); *JD* 17:159 (9 August 1874).

¹⁸*JD* 11:271 (19 August 1866). See Ephesians 5:23.

¹⁹*JD* 9:308 (15 June 1862). See also 1 Peter 3:7.

²⁰*JD* 4:55 (21 September 1856).

²¹*JD* 4:57 (21 September 1856).

²²See Eleanor Flexner, *Century of Struggle: The Woman’s Rights Movement in the United States* (New York: Atheneum, 1973), pp. 47, 220.

Certainly President Young's statements regarding the dominant role of the husband were not radical for his time. Ironically, one of his female critics tried to describe the ideal position of woman in contrast with what was prescribed by Young:

The position of woman, and her duties in life, are well-defined in New Testament Scriptures. If married, she is to direct her household affairs, raise up children, be subject unto her husband, and use all due benevolence toward him; but his duties are equally well-defined.²³

The lack of contrast is what is striking, especially since Brigham Young did take time to define the responsibilities of the Mormon husband. For example, while he taught that a man should place himself at the head of his family, as the master of his household, he also counseled each man to treat his family "as an angel would treat them." "A man is not made to be worshipped by his family," said Young. A man was to be good and upright so he could earn the respect of his family. They were not obligated to follow him in unrighteousness.²⁴

Like many of his contemporaries, Young was sensitive to woman's dependence on man. He remarked on several occasions that such dependence was not only hard on women, but sometimes harmful. "I do not know what the Lord could have put upon women worse than he did upon Mother Eve, where he told her: 'Thy desire shall be to thy husband,'" said Young, noting that he "would be glad if it were otherwise."²⁵ He saw that the female sex had long been deceived and "trodden under foot of man" and that "it is in their nature to confide in and look to the sterner sex for guidance, and thus they are more liable to be led astray and ruined."²⁶ And he preached the curse "never will be taken from the human family until the mission is fulfilled, and our Master and our Lord is perfectly satisfied with our work." One implication of this was that woman's essential, "uncursed" nature was not marked by dependence upon man.²⁷

Whether the notion of the curse upon woman was vitally Mormon or simply reflected the traditions of the larger culture in

²³Waite, *The Mormon Prophet*, p. 223. This was in accordance with a whole set of behavioral norms for nineteenth century women. See Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860," *American Quarterly* 18 (Summer 1966): 151-74.

²⁴*JD* 4:55 (21 September 1856); *JD* 14:106 (8 August 1869).

²⁵*JD* 16:167 (31 August 1873).

²⁶*JD* 11:271 (19 August 1866); *JD* 12:194 (6 April 1869).

²⁷*JD* 15:132 (18 August 1872). Earlier he had said "there is one thing she [woman] cannot away with, at least not so far as I am concerned, and that is, 'and he shall rule over thee.'" *JD* 9:195 (9 February 1862). But the former view was the one Mormon women advocated through the 1870s without objection from Young. See Jill C. Mulvay, "Eliza R. Snow and the Woman Question," *BYU Studies* 16 (Winter 1976):261, 264. Latter-day Saints leaders, male and female, became increasingly silent on the matter of the curse toward the turn of the century.

which Brigham Young lived, it explained the great number of weak, male-clinging and abused women he encountered and it provided a biblical precedent for placing the man at the head of his family. This biblical precedent complemented the Latter-day Saint concept of priesthood government with males as officeholders. Thus the patriarchal family became part of a larger family-community with Brigham Young—"the controller and master of affairs here, under Heaven's direction"—at its head. Male and female submitted to a graded and ranked system, a "beautiful order," where all worked "for the good of the whole more than for individual aggrandizement."²⁸ This was strikingly different from the larger American society where women were admonished to be submissive for the sake of an order that was nonexistent outside the family unit.²⁹

Though Brigham Young saw woman's dependence upon man as a possible problem, he could not conceive a solution outside of adherence to the order of the kingdom. Total independence was no more an option for women than it was for men who chose to be part of the system. So while Young allowed that women should develop their talents, seek their own inspiration from the Holy Spirit and make their own choices, according to Young a "woman of faith and knowledge" would say, "It is a law that man shall rule over me; his word is my law, and I must obey him; he must rule over me; this is upon me and I will submit to it." Young emphasized that by rule he did "not mean with an iron hand, but merely to take the lead," "in kindness and with pleasant words."³⁰

But Young's message was interpreted variously. Some inferred from his statements that the patriarchal order of God's community, particularly within the family, was not arbitrary (that is, as God had decreed it without offering men any explanations). Martha Spence Heywood, plural wife and schoolteacher in Nephi, Utah, confided to her diary her reaction after hearing Brigham Young discuss the matter:

Before he spoke, supposing that he would, I prayed my Heavenly Father that I might get instruction that would suit my particular circumstances and I felt that I did and had the very thing pointed out that I needed . . . especially the principle that a woman be she ever so smart, she cannot know more than her husband if he magnifies

²⁸*JD* 1:48 (9 April 1852); *JD* 12:153 (12 January 1868).

²⁹The "Cult of True Womanhood," as set forth by Welter, made piety, purity, submission, and domesticity values for women but not for men. See Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood." In Mormonism these were common values for men and women, though Young was prone to teach that women were of a more refined nature than men, a little purer and more pious. *JD* 12:194 (6 April 1868); *JD* 14:120 (21 May 1871); *JD* 18:233 (15 August 1876).

³⁰*JD* 16:167 (31 August 1873); *JD* 9:195 (9 February 1862); *JD* 9:39 (7 April 1861).

his Priesthood. That God never in any, any age of the world endowed woman with knowledge above the man.³¹

Young may not have taught intellectual or spiritual inferiority but some of his followers heard it. Wrote Fanny Stenhouse, a woman whose twenty years as a Mormon culminated in apostasy: "I thought that I might perhaps derive some consolation from the sermons in the Tabernacle—something that might shed a softer light upon my rugged pathway. But instead of obtaining consolation, I heard that which aroused every feeling of my soul to rebellion."³²

If some female members of his community were troubled by what Young had to say, it is not surprising that non-Mormons were appalled as they filtered his words through their own perceptions of Mormon polygamy, turning the household-heading husband into a tyrant and the submissive wife into a subjugated woman. The fact that as many as twenty percent of his listeners were living in polygamy did affect what Young had to say to them. According to Mormon doctrine woman could not be exalted without man. Neither could a Mormon man be exalted without a woman. All were exhorted to marry and Mormons prided themselves upon their marriage system which allowed "every virtuous woman" to have "a husband to whom she can look for guidance and protection."³³ But plural marriage posed peculiar problems and Young particularly was aware of them. "Where is the man who has wives, and all of them think he is doing just right to them?" Young asked. "I do not know such a man"; he continued, "I know it is not your humble servant." He said he found "the whole subject of the marriage relation . . . a hard matter to reach."³⁴

Though he was committed to a pure union between husband and wife without any "alienation of affection," Young knew from experience that a polygamous husband could not meet all of a wife's needs for companionship. "I feel more lonely and more unreconciled to my lot than ever," one of Brigham's wives wrote him in 1853, "and as I am not essential to your comfort or your convenience I desire you will give me to some other good man who has less cares." This wife did not divorce or leave Young, though under the system of plural marriage divorce was liberally extended as an option for dissatisfied women. Four of Brigham's

³¹Martha Spence Heywood journal, 27 April 1856, photocopy of typescript, Church Archives.

³²Stenhouse, *Tell It All*, p. 343.

³³*JD* 11:268 (19 August 1866).

³⁴*JD* 17:159–60 (9 August 1874); *JD* 2:90 (6 October 1854).

wives did eventually leave or divorce him.³⁵ Perhaps because even within his own family he could see no way of meeting expectations for intimacy, he advised women not to worry about it, but to turn their attention elsewhere, especially toward their children. "Are you tormenting yourselves by thinking that your husbands do not love you?" Young once asked. "I would not care whether they loved a particle or not; but I would cry out, like one of old, in the joy of my heart, 'I have got a man from the Lord!'"³⁶

Young's emphasis on woman's child-bearing/child-rearing role received as much criticism as anything he taught, and yet in no other area were Young's teachings so nearly identical with the ideals of the larger society. "The mothers are the machinery that give zest to the whole man, and guide the destinies and lives of men upon the earth," proclaimed Young in 1877.³⁷ "She controls the destiny of every community," one Henry C. Wright had written in 1870 in *The Empire of the Mother over the Character and Destiny of the Race*. While *Godey's Lady's Book* described mothers as "those builders of the human temple who lay the foundation for an eternity of glory or of shame," Young counseled that "it is the mother's influence that is most effective in moulding the mind of the child for good or for evil."³⁸ Young's admonitions to pregnant women and nursing mothers to be faithful and prayerful that their infants might enjoy a happy influence could have appeared in any number of contemporary women's magazines and mothers' manuals. In antebellum America motherhood was seen as woman's "one duty and function . . . that alone for which she was created." Even nineteenth century feminists came to use the importance of motherhood as a basis for their reforms in education and civil rights. So, in his time, Young was not anti-feminist when he stated that the woman who rose at the resurrection to find that her duty as a wife and mother had been sacrificed in order to pursue any other duty would find her "whole life had been a failure."³⁹

³⁵Emily D. Young to Brigham Young, 24 February 1853, Brigham Young Family Correspondence, Church Archives. Jeffery O. Johnson's "The Wives of Brigham Young," photocopy of typescript, Church Archives, is an informative listing including wives' birth and death dates, date of marriage to Brigham Young, number of children born to each marriage, and wives' other husbands and children. Johnson, who based his listing on sealing records, includes fifty-five women as wives, though only about sixteen of these were connubial wives. On divorce see Lawrence Foster, "A Little-Known Defense of Polygamy from the Mormon Press in 1842," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 9 (Winter 1974): 30. Foster compares early ideas about divorce within the plural marriage system with some of Young's later statements on the matter. It should also be noted that Brigham Young told women never to seal themselves to a man they did not want to be sealed to. *JD* 6:307 (8 April 1853).

³⁶*JD* 9:37 (7 April 1861).

³⁷*JD* 19:72 (19 July 1877).

³⁸*Godey's Lady's Book* as quoted by Ryan, *Womanhood in America*, p. 165. *JD* 18:263 (8 October 1876).

³⁹Susa Young Gates, "Editor's Department," *Young Woman's Journal* 5 (June 1894):449.

Why then did contemporary critics find Young's emphasis on woman's role as mother so disgusting? Because the closer polygamy-practicing Mormons came to laying claim to the ideals of the American family, the more threatening seemed their "distortions." The raising up of children—posterity—was put forth by Mormons as one of the major purposes of polygamy. Women had the privilege of bringing into mortality God's spirit children, Young taught, "that God may have a royal priesthood, a royal people, on the earth. That is what plurality of wives is for."⁴⁰

Disturbing, too, in a culture that so lavishly and exclusively praised women for motherhood, was the fact that Mormon motherhood was not the glory of woman only, but of the man as well. "The more women and children a man has, the more glory," one critic summarized it.⁴¹ From time to time Young counseled fathers to take the responsibility for training the children who would bring them honor, but he told mothers they bore the major responsibility for raising righteous children. Admittedly Young emphasized for men more often than for women that the "greatest gift of God" hereafter would be "posterity to an eternal continuance." To whom did the glory of posterity belong? In a recent study of the accommodation of religion to women Barbara Welter suggested that the projecting of the marital relationship into eternity with parenthood as the highest mutual goal gave Mormon women greater status in their role here and hereafter.⁴² However, for nineteenth century onlookers this distortion of motherhood by requiring women to share their one claim to fame with men, and polygamous men at that, was untenable.

Finally, Young's critics felt that he emphasized child-bearing and child-rearing at the expense of the marital relationship. Stenhouse said that Saints were told that "the great object of marriage . . . was the increase of children" and that other aspects of marriage such as "the companionship of soul; the indissoluble union of two existences—were never presented." Certainly Young made it clear that most women would be happier if they worried less about their husbands and more about their children. While he did not deny that a romantic and close relationship might exist between a husband and a plural wife, he was not willing to engender such expectations in women whose husbands were regularly called away from home for Church service. He continually admonished men to humor and "happify" their wives, but Stenhouse was

⁴⁰JD 9:37 (7 April 1861).

⁴¹Waite, *The Mormon Prophet and His Harem*, p. 218.

⁴²JD 1:67-68 (8 April 1852); JD 8:63 (20 May 1860). Barbara Welter, "The Feminization of American Religion," Mary S. Hartman and Lois W. Banner, eds., *Clio's Consciousness Raised: New Perspectives on the History of Women* (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), pp. 149-50.

not far from Young himself when she affirmed that woman's aspirations for intimacy "had nothing to do with the hard, cruel facts of their life in Polygamy."⁴³ Ironically, perhaps, independence for women was a common by-product of the marital system that left them so often on their own to manage family, farms, and businesses.

For Brigham Young, woman's place was with the family, in the home, but it was also with the larger family-community, in the kingdom. Women submitted to the well-ordered kingdom, but the kingdom in turn gave them new freedom, particularly during the last decade of Brigham Young's administration.

Between 1861, when the telegraph linked Utah to the rest of the United States, and 1869 when the transcontinental railroad forged the bond with steel ties, soldier-miners came to Utah as troops of the Third California Volunteers, commanded by Colonel Patrick Connor who promised to "invite hither a large Gentile and loyal population, sufficient by peaceful means and through the ballot-box to overwhelm the Mormons."⁴⁴ The coming of the gentiles was inevitable, but the disintegration of the kingdom was not.

"I do not know how long it will be before we call upon the brethren and sisters to enter upon business in an entirely different way from what they have done," Young postulated at April conference in 1867.⁴⁵ The following December he announced, "We have sisters now engaged in several of our telegraph offices, and we wish them to learn not only to act as operators but to keep the books of our offices."⁴⁶ While ten years earlier the Mormons had taken to the surrounding mountains to stave off the Utah Expedition, they would now fight on an economic front and the draft was to be without regard for sex. "Let us . . . no longer sit with hands folded, wasting time, for it is the duty of every man and of every woman to do all that is possible to promote the kingdom of God on the earth," said Young.⁴⁷

Through this emphasis on cooperative building of the economic kingdom Brigham Young extended to women significant opportunities for personal and collective growth and advancement—

⁴³Stenhouse, *Tell It All*, pp. 343-44. William Lawrence Foster's excellent dissertation, "Between Two Worlds: The Origin of Shaker Celibacy, Oneida Community Complex Marriage and Mormon Polygamy" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1976) confirms that "by partially breaking down exclusive direct emotional involvements in family affairs in favor of Church business, polygamy may well have contributed significantly to the long-range demands of centralized planning and to the rapid establishment of religious and communal order" (p. 384).

⁴⁴Connor to R. C. Drum, Assistant Adjutant General, U.S. Army, 21 July 1864, cited in Leonard J. Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1958), p. 473.

⁴⁵*JD* 12:32 (8 April 1867).

⁴⁶*JD* 12:116 (8 December 1867).

⁴⁷*JD* 18:77 (31 August 1875).

first, through allowing them spiritual and economic influence within the Church organization and second, through encouraging women's education for and involvement in a variety of trades and professions.

The Relief Society of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints had been organized by the Prophet Joseph Smith in the spring of 1842 and had functioned much as other literary, benevolent and antislavery societies of the time. Its labors were "deferred" by Brigham Young following the 1844 death of Joseph Smith because Emma Smith, society president, refused to follow priesthood counsel.⁴⁸ The decision to reinstate an official organization for Mormon females in the male-governed Mormon community was suspended until 1854 when Young discovered that local Relief Societies could be a fine community resource.⁴⁹ By December 1867 he had decided they were a resource the kingdom could not do without and he then announced that women and their bishops should immediately organize societies in local wards. "We have many talented women among us," he said, "and we wish their help in this matter. . . . you will find that the sisters will be the mainspring of the movement."⁵⁰ Young's statement was prophetic. As a domestic revolution swept the United States in the years following the Civil War (including the development of gas lighting, domestic plumbing, canning, improved stoves, washtubs, and sewing machines) American women would increasingly turn their energies toward women's clubs while Mormon women would come to claim the Relief Society as their unique women's organization.

Young commissioned one of his wives, Eliza R. Snow, who had served as secretary to the Nauvoo society but whose willingness to obey the priesthood was unwavering, to instruct bishops in the format of the organization and teach the women their responsibilities. Their first responsibility was, as indicated by their name, to provide relief to the poor. Young encouraged them in this endeavor, particularly in finding for those in need "something to do that will enable them to sustain themselves."⁵¹ He also challenged the women to sustain the self-sufficiency of the Mormon commu-

⁴⁸This was presumably due to the confusion of that time, but also undoubtedly because Joseph Smith's wife Emma who presided over the society and wielded tremendous influence over the women did not support Young's claim to Church leadership and had already used her position to further her antipolygamy sentiments. John Taylor address to women's conference, 17 July 1880, *Woman's Exponent* 9 (1 September 1880):55.

⁴⁹A study of early Relief Societies was recently completed by Richard Jensen, "The Indian Relief Society Movement, 1854-55," manuscript, files of the Church Historian, Church Archives.

⁵⁰*JD* 12:115 (8 December 1867).

⁵¹*JD* 14:107 (8 August 1869).

nity through retrenchment. They could help fight the economic battle by making and wearing homemade hats and clothes rather than goods imported from the eastern states. They were to set their own fashions, to be thrifty in their households, and to find ways to do their own carding, spinning, weaving, and knitting. "What is there in these respects that the members of the Female Relief Society cannot accomplish," asked Young.⁵²

This need to adapt economically Young presented as a religious obligation counseling both men and women to cease their extravagance. He praised those women who were willing to "help build up the Kingdom of God" by wisely attending to their household affairs. "Every woman in this Church can be useful to the Church if she has a mind to be," Young concluded.⁵³

Women may not have found themselves feeling useful to the kingdom by merely donning homemade hats and dresses. Many of them steered clear of Young's suggested apparel and his reproofs were frequent, though he freely acknowledged that he could not even control his own family's taste for finery. What did give women a new sense of usefulness was their involvement in cooperative home industry, an effort which gave them for the first time business and financial responsibility within the Church. With money they had raised from fairs and parties women imported knitting machinery, raised silk, set up tailoring establishments, bought, stored and sold grain, made everything from straw hats to shoes, and bought property and built their own cooperatives where they could sell their homemade goods on commission.⁵⁴

By 1876 Eliza R. Snow reported that 110 branches of the Relief Society had disbursed \$82,397 over a seven to eight year period: seventy-three percent of which was to relieve and support the poor, sixteen percent for building purposes, seven percent to help the poor emigrate, and the remainder for other charities and missionary work.⁵⁵ That a great deal of what the women did came as a direct result of President Young's prompting and prodding is without question.

"President Young recommends silk culture as one very profitable branch for the sisters, and offers, free of charge, all the cuttings they wish, from the Mulberry orchard on his farm," Eliza R. Snow editorialized in the *Mormon Woman's Exponent* in 1875.⁵⁶

⁵²JD 14:104 (8 August 1869).

⁵³JD11:352 (6 April 1867).

⁵⁴See Arrington, "The Economic Role of Pioneer Mormon Women."

⁵⁵Eliza R. Snow, "The Relief Society," 1876, holograph, Special Collections, Western Americana, Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah.

⁵⁶Eliza R. Snow, "To Every Branch of the Relief Society in Zion," *Woman's Exponent* 3 (1 April 1875):164.

Sericulture became a "mission" for the Relief Society sisters which they carried out for nearly a decade. Utah women maintained their involvement in the silk industry until it faded from the state after the turn of the century. They took pride in the tablecloths, scarves, and dresses that came from their countless hours of labor with mulberry leaves and cocoons.

"At the suggestion of President Brigham Young we would call the attention of the women of this Territory to the subject of saving grain," wrote Emmeline B. Wells, the woman commissioned by Young to head up the grain storage program in 1876.⁵⁷ The program was Emmeline's project, not Brigham's, and over a period of forty-two years resulted in the storage of several hundred thousand bushels of grain in woman-made granaries scattered throughout the Church. The grain was sent to earthquake and famine victims in San Francisco and China, and the remaining two hundred thousand bushels was sold to the U.S. government at the close of World War I. For fifty years beyond that time the Relief Society operated solely on interest from the sale of the wheat.

One final example of Young's prodding is the Relief Society cooperative established in Salt Lake City to serve all the women of the territory. In 1876, when Relief Society women had just completed a summer-long display of their homemade goods in commemoration of the nation's centennial, Brigham Young addressed them:

It would be very gratifying to us if you could form an association to start business in the capacity of disposing of Home-made Articles such as are manufactured among ourselves. . . . If you can not be satisfied with the selection of Sisters from among yourselves to take charge, we will render you assistance by furnishing a competent man for the transaction of the financial matters of this Establishment.⁵⁸

The Relief Society Mercantile Association opened the Woman's Commission Store within a month and operated it themselves.

That the women took these "stewardships" seriously as their own is shown in the spunk they manifested in doing business with Young himself. Fifteenth Ward Relief Society president Sarah M. Kimball read Young's suggestion for the storing of grain by women and immediately contacted him to head her ward's subscription list for funds. "The more I weigh it the more my faith increases in our (the women's) power to accomplish in this direction with your (the men's) assistance."⁵⁹ It was a nice reversal of

⁵⁷Emmeline B. Wells, "Sisters Be In Earnest," *Woman's Exponent* 5 (15 October 1876):76.

⁵⁸Brigham Young to the President and Members of the Relief Societies. . . , 4 October 1876, Brigham Young Letterbooks, Volume 14, Church Archives.

⁵⁹S. M. Kimball to President Young, 26 October 1876, holograph, Brigham Young Correspondence, Church Archives.

supportive roles. Eliza R. Snow, who took it upon herself to manage the Woman's Commission Store, wrote to Young to explain to him that he could not dictate the terms of commission on the goods from his woolen mill. "Although we are novices in the mercantile business, we are not green enough for that kind of management."⁶⁰

Young knew that Mormon women were inexperienced in public affairs; they needed the guidance of assigned tasks, he felt, especially in these early years of their involvement outside the home. But he did not present them with detailed programs and though he expected them to account for their stewardships, he did not oversee their work. The growth of the women as individuals was a critical part of building the Kingdom of God. "The females are capable of doing immense good if they will," he said, "but if you sit down and say 'husband, or father, do it for me' or 'brother, do it for me, for I am not going to do it' when life is through you will weep and wail, for you will be judged according to your works, and having done nothing you will receive nothing."⁶¹ Statements such as: "We wish to develop the powers of the ladies to the fullest extent, and to control them for the building of the Kingdom of God," or "If we can succeed in guiding their [the ladies'] ideas correctly it will be an advantage to the whole community," underscore the fact that Young's primary motive was ever the growth of the kingdom, but they also reveal his faith that only through Saints building God's kingdom could God build Saints.⁶²

"If I had my way I would have every man and woman employed in doing something to support themselves," Brigham Young told a group of St. George Saints. At approximately the same time he began the reorganization of the Relief Society in 1867, Brigham Young began emphasizing vocational and professional education for women. In reference to business classes opening at the University of Deseret, Young announced in December 1867 that he hoped young and middle-aged students, male and female, could learn the art of bookkeeping and acquire a good mercantile education.⁶³ Young's general epistle to Church members for January-February 1868 applauded the admission of women to the school:

⁶⁰Eliza R. Snow to Prest. B. Young, 10 February 1877, holograph, Brigham Young Correspondence, Church Archives.

⁶¹Brigham Young sermon, 5 August 1869, in *Deseret News Weekly*, 11 August 1869.

⁶²Ibid.

⁶³Brigham Young Unpublished Sermons, ca. 1876-1877, St. George, manuscript, Church Archives; *JD* 12:116 (8 December 1867).

In addition to a knowledge of the elementary branches of education and a thorough understanding of housewifery, we wish the sisters, so far as their inclinations and circumstances may permit, to learn bookkeeping, telegraphy, reporting, typesetting, clerking in stores and banks, and every branch of knowledge and kind of employment suited to their sex and according to their several tastes and capacities. . . . Thus trained, all without distinction of sex, will have an open field, without jostling and oppression, for acquiring all the knowledge and doing all the good their physical and mental capacities and surrounding circumstances will permit.⁶⁴

For Young, a division of community labor among men and women would enable the community to function more efficiently. He saw women particularly better-suited than men to some trades. He had "seen women in the harvest field, ploughing, raking, and making hay." This he found unbecoming: "This hard laborious work belongs to men," he said. But he was sure that a woman could pick up type and make a book. "I know that many arguments are used against this," Young admitted, "and we are told that a woman cannot make a coat, vest or a pair of pantaloons. I dispute this. . . . Tell me they can not pull a thread tight enough, and that they can not press hard enough to press a coat, it is all folly and nonsense." Young liked to see women involved in telegraphy and clerking, because he could not abide "great big, fat lazy men" doing such light work. Besides, he observed, "a woman can write as well as a man, and spell as well as a man, and better."⁶⁵

"Keep the ladies in their proper places," said Young, which he described as "selling tape and calico, setting type, working the telegraph, keeping books, &c."⁶⁶ In addition Young actively encouraged the movement of women into some professional fields, especially medicine. In 1873 Bathsheba Smith reported that "the President had suggested to her that three women from each ward be chosen to form a class for studying physiology and obstetrics."⁶⁷ A few weeks later Eliza R. Snow declared that "President Young is requiring the sisters to get students of Medicine. He wants a good many to get a classical education, and then get a degree for Medicine. . . . If they cannot meet their own expenses, we have means of doing so."⁶⁸ For several years Young had been teaching that women should attend to the health of their sex.

⁶⁴General Epistle, January-February 1868, manuscript, p. 26. Brigham Young Circular Letters, Church Archives.

⁶⁵*JD* 16:16, 21 (7 April 1873).

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁶⁷*Woman's Exponent* 2 (1 August 1873):35.

⁶⁸"An Address by Miss Eliza R. Snow. . . , August 14, 1873," *Woman's Exponent* 2 (15 September 1873):63.

With the influx of educated gentile doctors following the Civil War and the coming of the railroad, Young realized the Latter-day Saints would need professional doctors in order to remain self-sustaining.

Romania Bunnell Pratt, the first Mormon woman to get professional training under this program, returned to Utah from the Woman's Medical College in New York after her freshman year there. Her finances were depleted and so she paid a visit to President Young who instructed Eliza R. Snow to "see to it that the Relief Societies furnish Sister Pratt with the necessary money to complete her studies." This encouragement came in spite of the fact that Romania had to leave her young children with her own mother in order to complete the training. "We need her here," said Young, "and her talents will be of great use to this people."⁶⁹ Having graduated from the Woman's Medical College at Philadelphia, Dr. Pratt returned to Utah in 1877 and announced her intention to practice as well as teach courses in anatomy, physiology, and obstetrics. She later served as resident surgeon of the Deseret Hospital, a hospital founded by the Relief Society as a result of her commitment to the obstetrical care of women and the training of nurses and midwives.

Young also encouraged the movement of women into journalism. When Louisa Lula Greene approached him about commencing a newspaper for Mormon women he gave her the requisite sanction and the *Woman's Exponent*, a semimonthly tabloid, was born. Over a forty-two year period the paper was an outlet for the journalistic and literary endeavors of Mormon women. Young showed an interest in involving women in higher education, appointing Martha Jane Knowlton Coray to a three-member board of directors for Brigham Young Academy when the school opened under his direction in 1875. Two years later he named Ida Ione Cook as one of three trustees for the proposed Brigham Young College in Logan. Cook had just lost the position of Cache County Superintendent of Schools because territorial laws did not allow women to hold public office.⁷⁰

Ever concerned with order Young never stopped prescribing a sphere of activity for women, but over a period of years the sphere he prescribed became wider and wider. During the last decade of his life Young taught that home and family were not the only means whereby a woman could make a contribution to the king-

⁶⁹"A Biographical Sketch of R. B. Pratt," *Young Woman's Journal* 2 (September 1891):534.

⁷⁰See Bennion, "The *Woman's Exponent*;" also Jill Mulvay, "The Two Miss Cooks: Pioneer Professionals for Utah Schools," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 43 (Fall 1974): 396-409.

dom. "We believe that women are useful, not only to sweep houses, wash dishes, make beds, and raise babies," he said,

but that they should stand behind the counter, study law or physic, or become good bookkeepers and be able to do the business in any counting house, and all this to enlarge their sphere of usefulness for the benefit of society at large.⁷¹

The status of Mormon women decidedly improved during the administration of President Brigham Young. His reorganization of the Relief Society launched women into an era of public activity that involved them in business and gave them new economic status in a community that was itself concerned with economic identity. Within Mormonism's social order where women had previously held no offices, they gained position and visibility as leaders in organizations for women and children. Though women were clearly not admitted to the priesthood, they began to share some of its influence over women through disbursement of funds and counsel at general, stake, and ward levels. It was during this same period that Utah women were granted the elective franchise, though the extent to which Young may have influenced the territorial legislature in passage of the February 1870 act is not clear. He never publicly acknowledged that women were receiving rights long since due to them.⁷²

While some Mormon women celebrated Young's advocacy of women's rights, he did not, Henry Ward Beecher-like, latch on to the nineteenth century feminist movement. Most of its ideals were not in conflict with Mormonism and Young did not discourage the involvement of prominent Relief Society women in the national campaign for women's rights. Certainly he felt free to borrow ideas and rhetoric from the movement: women were capable of doing many things tradition had made the work of men; it was time to awaken women to their possibilities. With Young's endorsement and prodding Mormon women joined their American sisters in attending universities, providing medical care for women, running telegraph offices, and staffing a money-making organization that contributed to their church's needs. Yet while Mormon women, and sometimes their national contemporaries, celebrated these advances as feminist victories, Brigham Young never did. His motive in giving opportunity to women was not to move them toward equality with or independence from men.

⁷¹*JD* 13:61 (18 July 1869).

⁷²Beverly Beeton in "Woman Suffrage in the American West, 1869-1896" (Ph.D. diss., University of Utah, 1976), pp. 56-58, suggests that the motivation behind the granting of suffrage to Utah women was a pragmatic political consideration rather than a commitment to woman's inherent rights.

Yet Young's lack of adherence to the feminist creed does not mark him an oppressor of women. Young was for his people a prophet and seer, a seer whose ever-present vision and motivation was the Kingdom of God, a holy family-community where individuals did not exist independently of one another. He proclaimed that the priesthood order restored to Latter-day Saints prescribed a system of interdependence through which members working for the common good were individually benefited. The question is whether or not the system he administered did in fact benefit women by encouraging their growth and development.

It would seem that Young's strong emphasis on men and women sustaining the patriarchal order within the family unit did not dramatically forward the advancement of Mormon women. It reiterated the importance of the traditional order within the non-traditional plural marriage system, and while it provided some women with security it offended and confused others. Had order been Young's only concern Mormon women would have been stifled, but Young's predilection for charting the organization was offset if not overshadowed by his commitment to put the organization to work. He used available human resources by distributing responsibilities at every level of the governmental system.

Through the 1850s and '60s Young called upon women to assume responsibility at the family level, to use their personal resources in maintaining households and nurturing Zion's rising generation. But in the years following the Civil War the Mormon family-community demanded additional resources to stave off the growing economic, social, and political influence of non-Mormons. Without deemphasizing the importance of motherhood, Young was quick to shift available female resources to organizational levels other than the family. Relief Societies were formed in every ward and various programs for them, including home industry and commission-cooperatives, grain storage, and obstetrical training, were administered by women working at a general level. In proportion to Young's increased use of women as vital resources, the kingdom grew and the women grew. The hierarchically ordered system of interdependence did allow for woman's development, and applause to Brigham Young for maximizing the system's paradoxical possibilities is long overdue.

Brigham and Heber

Stanley B. Kimball

I love brother Brigham Young better than I do any woman upon this earth, because my will has run into is, and his into mine. . . .

Heber C. Kimball, *Journal of Discourses*
January 25, 1857

For over thirty-nine years Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball were as close and dedicated to a common cause as any two men could be. This friendship was so enduring and intense that it may be unique. One is drawn to the classics or the Old Testament for such parallels as Damon and Pythias, Castor and Pollux, or David and Jonathan. But even these friendships are not comparable for they were of much shorter duration. World history offers few, if any, good analogues. Certainly the friendship of Brigham and Heber was unique in Mormondom. The closest equivalent would be the love between the brothers Joseph and Hyrum Smith.

The companionship of Heber and Brigham began early in 1829 when they were both struggling young twenty-seven-year-old artisans, husbands, and fathers in Mendon, Monroe County, twelve miles south of Rochester, in western New York. It was strengthened by their discovery and acceptance of the Restoration together and sealed by all they experienced for decades while building and bettering the Kingdom. The two intimates shared religious experiences, homes, wagons, trails, trials, triumphs, missions, persecution, disappointments, responsibilities, and leadership. Their union brings to mind the Hebrew proverb about "a friend that sticketh closer than a brother" (Proverbs 18:24).

By 1829 Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, and Heber C. Kimball were living, unknown to each other, within a ten-mile radius—the Smiths in Palmyra, the Kimballs and Youngs in Mendon. By 1833 their lives had been inextricably intertwined in furthering the Restoration. The trio worked together until Joseph's martyrdom in 1844; then the two carried on until Heber's death in 1868; Brigham finally died in 1877.

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The two men met either through Brigham's sister, Fanny Young Carr, who had lived with the Kimball family since 1827 to help Vilate, who was at times sickly, or they met as a result of Heber's compassion. The Youngs "were in lowly circumstances" he said, "and seemed to be an afflicted people and of course were looked down upon by the flourishing church where we lived . . . to them, my heart was united. . . ."¹

In the beginning Heber seems to have been the dominant personality; then there was a transition period extending to August 1844 (after the death of Joseph), during which Brigham became preeminent, somewhat in the manner of the reversal of positions between Barnabas and Paul in Acts. After Brigham became president in December 1847, there was, of course, no question who took precedence.

While in Mendon the two friends heard tales of Mormonism and read stories in the nearby Rochester *Daily Advertiser and Telegraph* about a "Golden Bible." Then one day in April 1830, Joseph Smith's brother Samuel, the first Mormon missionary, came into the area. He happened to visit Tomlinson's Inn in Lima, eight miles southwest of Mendon, and proceeded to interrupt the lunch of the first person he saw who, providentially or otherwise, was Phineas Young, an itinerant preacher for the Methodist Episcopal Reformed Church and Brigham's brother. Samuel talked him into buying a copy of the Book of Mormon—perhaps the single most important copy ever sold. Phineas read the book and in quick succession so did his father, his sister Fanny, his brother Brigham, and "many others," most of whom accepted it. According to tradition, Heber read the same copy.²

Shortly afterwards a lone missionary, Alpheus Gifford, from Rutland, Tioga County, Pennsylvania, was traveling with his brother Levi and four friends—Elial Strong, Eleazar Miller, Enos Curtis, and Abraham Brown—who were investigating the new faith. They were enroute to Kirtland, Ohio, to visit with Joseph Smith. Gifford, who had previously been an independent preacher, was preaching along the way and in the course of this "mission" came to the house of Phineas Young in Victor.³ Gifford might have learned from Samuel Smith that Phineas had a copy of the Book of Mormon and the visit was a follow-up, or it may be that

¹Journal of Heber C. Kimball, 94b, p. 4, Archives of The Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (cited hereafter as Church Archives).

²Some writers claim that the critical copy of the Book of Mormon was the one Samuel placed with Mrs. John P. Greene—Brigham's sister Rhoda—also of Mendon.

³The line separating the townships of Mendon and Victor ran between Phineas' and Heber's homes, so that although Phineas lived in Victor, he was still close to the other Youngs and Kimballs.

simply because Phineas had read the book, he invited Gifford and companions into his home to preach to his relatives and neighbors.

Learning of this and prompted by curiosity, Heber and Brigham went to their friend's white clapboard home to hear the Mormon. There, in a lamplit parlor, they heard the characteristically simple, short, and direct message of early Mormon missionaries. Gifford rose and told with earnest, simple conviction of the new prophet, the new faith. He related "that a holy angel had been commissioned from the heavens, who had committed the Everlasting Gospel and restored the Holy Priesthood unto men as at the beginning."

How much Gifford knew or told of Joseph Smith's 1820 vision and Joseph's calling to be the new prophet is not known, but he surely related how Joseph received and translated the Book of Mormon and organized the Church of Jesus Christ in New York in 1830. Heber noted that he also

called upon all men everywhere to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins, and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost; and these things should follow those that believe, viz., they should cast out devils in the name of Jesus, they would speak in tongues, etc. and the reasons why the Lord had restored these things was because the people had transgressed the laws, changed the ordinances, and broken the Everlasting Covenant.⁴

The accent was on new revelation from God and the reopening of the heavens.

One sermon was enough for Brigham and Heber. "As soon as I heard them," Heber said,

I was convinced that they taught the truth, and I was constrained to believe their testimony. I saw that I had only received a part of the ordinances under the Baptist Church. I also saw and heard the gifts of the spirit manifested in them, for I heard them speak and interpret and also sing in tongues which tended to strengthen my faith more and more. Brigham Young and myself were constrained, by the Spirit, to bear testimony of the truth, and when we did this, the power of God rested on us.⁵

They soon had another spiritual experience in which the "glory of God shone upon us, and we saw the gathering of the Saints to Zion, and the glory that would rest upon them; and many more things connected with that great event, such as the sufferings and persecutions. . . ."⁶

⁴Journal of Heber C. Kimball, 94, p. 3, Church Archives.

⁵"Synopsis of the History of Heber C. Kimball," *Deseret News*, 31 March 1858.

⁶Ibid.

Heber was so spiritually excited that during January 1832 he took his horse and sleigh and, accompanied by Brigham and Phineas and their wives, traveled to the nearest branch of the Church to learn more about it. This was at Columbia (now Columbia Crossroads), Bradford County, Pennsylvania, about 130 miles south of Mendon, near where Gifford and friends had come from. (Vilate, perhaps for health reasons or from lack of interest, did not go.) They stayed in Pennsylvania about six days, attended the Mormons' meetings, heard them speak in tongues, interpret, and prophesy. Heber was fully converted. For some reason, however, none of them was baptized in Columbia. Perhaps they wished to let Gifford perform the ordinance. Heber may also have wanted to wait until Vilate had sufficient faith to join him.

When Gifford and his newly baptized friends returned to Mendon the following April, he baptized Heber and Brigham. Soon the Mendon Branch numbered about thirty, including ten Youngs, two Kimballs, and the John P. Greene family, and seems to have been led by Brigham's brother, Joseph.

Shortly after baptism, Heber and Brigham were called as missionaries by Joseph Young. It was common in the early Church to ordain new male converts as elders and send them on short missions to preach what little they had learned. That summer of 1832 Heber, Brigham, and Joseph labored in nearby Genesee, Avon, and Lyonstown, where they built up small congregations.

That fall Heber and Brigham decided they must travel the 300 miles to Kirtland to see the new prophet personally. Before they could do so, however, Miriam Young died in September and Brigham and his two young daughters, seven-year-old Elizabeth, and two-year-old Vilate (named after Heber's wife), moved in with the Kimballs. A month later they set out in Heber's wagon. So impressed were they with Joseph and Kirtland that they decided to move themselves and their families there. Twelve months later they did so. Brigham, out of gratitude for all Heber had done for him, built them all a home. Several months later Brigham remarried and established his own household.

In Kirtland the two did all they could to aid the new prophet and the struggling Church by contributing time, money, and muscle. When the call to join Zion's Camp came in 1834, both volunteered and marched nearly 2,000 miles to Western Missouri and back in a futile attempt to reinstate the Saints who had been driven from Jackson County by the mob and the militia.

After Zion's Camp both were named as original members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. On 18 February 1835, the first three apostles were chosen and ordained: Lyman E. Johnson,

Brigham Young, and Heber C. Kimball. On subsequent days, Orson Hyde, David W. Patten, Luke S. Johnson, William E. M'Lellin, John F. Boynton, William Smith, Parley P. Pratt, Orson Pratt, and Thomas B. Marsh were likewise chosen and ordained. All these men had participated in Zion's Camp and had therefore proven themselves, to that point, strong in the faith. Not many years would pass, however, before most of these men would suffer complete or temporary relapse. Only Heber and Brigham never, under any circumstances, lifted their hands or voices against the Prophet.

As fellow apostles they went on four missions together, but not always as companions. From May 1835 through August 1844 they journeyed twice to the eastern states, once to southern Illinois, and once to England. While they were on these missions their families drew close for mutual comfort. At the time of Heber's second and Brigham's first mission to England in 1839, for example, not only were the two missionaries sick, but so were their wives—Vilate and Mary Ann, and their children—all huddled together in Heber's fourteen by sixteen foot log cabin in Nauvoo. Only four year old little Heber Parley Kimball was well enough to carry a cup of water around to the others. This was the sad setting of Heber and Brigham's well-known incident of standing up in their wagon, calling to their wives, and waving their hats over their heads, shouting "Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah for Israel!" as they drove off.⁷

Enroute to New York the pair experienced a minor miracle. In Indiana Heber determined they had but \$13.50 between them. By the time they reached Kirtland, Brigham, who kept the money, had paid out over \$87.00 for food, lodging, and transportation and suspected Heber had secretly added money to the purse. Heber declared he had not and concluded only divine intervention could account for the circumstances.

Between these missions they continued to strengthen the kingdom. While Joseph was in the Liberty Jail in Missouri in 1838 and 1839, for instance, they were in charge of Church affairs and, after Brigham had to flee to Illinois, Heber assumed leadership.

By April 1839, the Missouri period was over and the two apostles devoted their energies to building up Nauvoo and expanding the kingdom. There they received phrenological readings, became active in Masonry, received their temple ordinances, and

⁷*President Heber C. Kimball's Journal*, Faith-promoting Series #7 (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor Office, 1882), pp. 84-85.

entered plural marriage. In 1844 in Massachusetts, while on their last mission, they read newspaper accounts of the murder of their Prophet and sorrowfully turned homeward.

Back in Nauvoo Brigham was sustained as president of the Quorum of the Twelve and as leader of the Church. Heber, partly because he was next in seniority and partly because of his closeness to Brigham, became and remained until his death, twenty-four years later, *de facto* and *de jure*, a counselor to Brigham, and the second-ranking leader in the Church. Although they did not know it, they had been on their last mission. Thereafter, they became administrators and a new phase of their life began. Up to Joseph's death all of the apostles had been generally equal; seniority had not had much importance. Later it became increasingly significant.

Throughout the life of Joseph Smith, Heber had been a mild, independent, easygoing missionary-apostle with little flair for leadership or feel for authority. After the death of Joseph, he voluntarily subordinated himself to Brigham and became a dynamic, authoritarian lieutenant. His sermons of this period show how quickly he began to assume the role of authority, how soon he began to change from a follower to a strong leader. These early sermons were as commanding, hortatory, vigorous, and straightforward (though not quite as salty) as any from the Utah period.

With the all-important question of succession settled, Nauvoo turned from its grief to effecting the plans of its martyred prophet—completing the temple, building a better Nauvoo, and expanding the proselyting program. To accomplish this, Wilford Woodruff was sent to England to preside over European affairs, and a special committee of three—Brigham, Heber, and another apostle, Willard Richards—was organized to preside in North America.

In Nauvoo, Brigham and Heber were especially busy preaching, administering, building homes, reading and writing history, tending to family affairs, looking after the sick, finishing the temple, negotiating with anti-Mormon forces, preparing for an uncertain future, and hiding occasionally to avoid writs and summonses on various charges against them—in short, building up Nauvoo as they prepared to leave it.

To fully understand Brigham's and Heber's actions after January 1845, it is necessary to know that by then the Council of the Twelve had decided to abandon Nauvoo and move west. This decision, however, was not made public until the following September when anti-Mormon activities recommenced in earnest. They were, therefore, for the most of 1845 in the awkward position of

encouraging the people to labor mightily to build a city which was soon to be abandoned.

In January 1845 the Council of the Twelve issued a general epistle exhorting the Saints to do all in their power to build the temple and assuring them that "our city is progressing, and the work of the Lord is rolling forth with unprecedented rapidity." At the same time the *Nauvoo Neighbor*, and later the *Times and Seasons*, commenced a series of articles about Indians and Oregon which were most likely designed to prepare the Saints, psychologically at least, for a westward move.

In spite of the pressures and responsibilities placed on them, they took time to worry over piano lessons for their daughters. Helen Kimball had no piano at home to practice on, but

President Brigham Young had a small piano and invited me [Helen] to come to his house and practice with his daughter Vilate, who though younger than myself, had had previous advantages, but was rather indifferent, and he thought if I practiced with her, she would take a greater interest. Their piano stood in Sister Young's room, and her health being very poor, he proposed to have it brought to our house when the upper part was done. This pleased us both immensely.⁸

In spite of their successes—in fact, largely because of them—the Saints were forced to abandon Nauvoo. In February 1846, Brigham and Heber entered into a three-year pioneering venture. Theirs was the main responsibility of transplanting a whole people successfully into the Great Basin.

Despite the heavy responsibility they shared in this undertaking, they managed to make a grand adventure of it. They went hunting, riding, fishing, exploring. They investigated caves, climbed mountains, rolled stones down steep inclines, stood guard, broke trail, scouted, treated with Indians, struggled through quicksand and fought prairie fire, ate all kinds of game, and were chased by a mother bear—the most dangerous animal in the West. And, what's more, at the end of each day's excitement they could share these experiences with young wives. (Other than Brigham's brother, Lorenzo, only Heber and Brigham were accompanied by spouses.) Later, Heber's wife, Ellen Sanders (née Aagaata Ystendatter Sondrason) gave him a son on 13 February 1848.

In December 1847, after the pioneers had established a viable colony in the Valley of the Great Salt Lake, and were back in Winter Quarters, the First Presidency was formally organized.

⁸Helen Mar Whitney, "Life Incidents," *Woman's Exponent* 11 (15 March 1883):154.

Since the death of Joseph Smith, Brigham had led the Church in the capacity of president of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles. This had worked well; few had questioned his authority. Indeed, some considered the Quorum of the Twelve enough leadership. There seems to have been neither revelation nor pressing need for this move and the sources do not make it clear why the reorganization took place when it did. One main reason, perhaps, was that for the first time since the death of the Prophet, the Saints were enjoying relative peace and security. No one was threatening them, and they had found and colonized a new home.

Brigham first suggested forming a separate First Presidency in October and the proposal was formally discussed in a November meeting of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Several were against it. They believed that a First Presidency could not be appointed without revelation. There was also the supposition that the creation of a separate First Presidency might diminish the role of the Quorum of the Twelve. Orson Pratt, one of the main dissenters, complained that the subject "has been thrown in incidentally in conversation."⁹ After several more discussions, a final meeting was held on 5 December at the home of Orson Hyde, leader of the Iowa Saints, located at his own small settlement, Hyde Park, a few miles south of Kaneshville on Pony Creek. At this meeting Brigham again presented the question of reorganization to the nine apostles present. During this deliberation, when the question of power and authority came up, Heber commented, "I don't consider it would give [them] any more power than they have now," and ingenuously added, "I have all the power I can handle."¹⁰ After thorough discussion, the proposal passed unanimously. Hyde, who would succeed Brigham as President of the Quorum of the Twelve, then moved that Brigham be sustained as President of the Church. Brigham promptly selected Heber as his first and Willard Richards as his second counselor. On the following December 27 this reorganization was sustained by the general membership of the Church in that area during a general conference held in Kaneshville. After three and one-half years the Saints again had a First Presidency, and Brigham, the dynamic, pragmatic "Lion of the Lord," led out as chief executive.

There were certainly more capable and better-educated administrators Brigham could have chosen for a first counselor than Heber—Wilford Woodruff and John Taylor, for example, who eventually did head the Church. If one accepts, however, the imperative in Heber's 1842 patriarchal blessing—"Thou shalt attain

⁹Brigham Young, Council Minutes, November 1846, Church Archives.

¹⁰Ibid., 5 December 1846.

to the honor of the three"—and the principle of revelation, then his selection can be considered providential. One could argue, however, that it was more a reward for years of totally dependable friendship, proven loyalty, well-trying faith, compatibility, spiritual affirmation, and support. Perhaps it was both. (As already noted, Brigham, Heber, and Willard had already been functioning as a sort of executive committee since 1844.) In any event, never, except perhaps near the very end, did Brigham seem to have regretted his choice. Heber remained loyal until death.

The following year of 1848 found Brigham and Heber in the valley to stay. From Heber's baptism in 1832, he had generally been an independent agent, building the kingdom as a missionary and as an apostle. After he became first counselor to Brigham in 1847, he went on no more missions. All of his zeal and energy gradually turned into devoted service to and support of Brigham Young, Joseph Smith's successor and President of the Church.

Heber was Brigham's constant supporter, defender, and champion. He continually held him up as Joseph's successor—a prophet, leader, revelator, priest, governor, head, seer, and holder of the keys to life and salvation—and insisted that the rest of the Saints do the same. "If I should tell you what the will of the Lord is," he once said, "it would be: do as my servant Brigham Young tells you to."¹¹

While he became a devoted counselor, he instinctively realized that friendship in the fullest sense can exist only between peers, and, furthermore, he had no intention of becoming lost in Brigham's shadow. He succeeded in maintaining his independent spirit, rugged individuality, and parity through his increasingly powerful and outspoken preaching style and his ability and penchant to prophesy—two character traits which made Heber nearly as well-known as Brigham, who on occasion declared that Heber was his prophet and that he loved to hear him prophesy.

In Utah Heber became as important and influential as it is possible in the Mormon Church for anyone, other than the prophet, to become. It could be argued that of all the thirty men who have ever served as counselors to the various presidents of the Mormon Church, Heber was the most important. In reality, he was Brigham's only real counselor until 1857 when Daniel H. Wells succeeded Willard Richards and Jedediah M. Grant as Brigham's third second counselor.

In Utah Brigham stamped his personality and will on everything—all political, social, economic, and cultural life. As chief ex-

¹¹Scrapbook of John Pulsipher, 2 April 1854, Church Archives.

ecutive he delegated little decision-making to others. The power of the ancient formula, "Verily, verily, thus saith the Lord" was stated or implied by him in most of his public utterances. Willard, probably due to lingering palsy and dropsy, did much clerk and recorder work, and remained a man behind the scenes, inconspicuous, retiring, but powerful with the pen, the drafter of most of Brigham's Church and state papers. Heber, a modern Jonathan, who was without exaggeration as loyal a friend, follower, and supporter as any man ever was, remained clearly second in command.

A close reading of the sources for the first years in Utah leaves the distinct impression that Heber and Brigham were paternalistic, authoritarian, and not only tried to do everything all at once, but succeeded rather well. They addressed themselves to cultural and social problems as well as to the more pressing and immediate economic and administrative necessities. Authority was concentrated in a few hands.

For twenty years after 1848 the president and his first counselor continued to be inseparable and acted in accord in all major doings and decisions concerning the Great Basin Kingdom. Even in the course of Heber's sad last years he never turned from his dogged devotion to Brigham. Together they concerned themselves with all manner of economic, political, social, religious, and cultural affairs. They apportioned lots and land; organized scores of colonies; treated with Indians; developed "home manufacture"; organized wards, stakes and missions; called and sent missionaries to the world; petitioned for statehood; defended the kingdom; fostered education, theater, music, dance, and libraries; alternately scalded and praised the saints; entertained prominent visitors; and preached endlessly.

During Heber's last four years some things apparently happened to mar this almost too perfect union. Exactly what took place is obscure for there are few documents. We do know, however, that Heber construed some acts by several Church leaders to be an attempt to ease him out of the First Presidency and his position as successor to President Young. This situation seems to have been one final trial of his Job-like trust. He had suffered much and long in the cause of his faith, and had every right to expect that his last years would be of consummation and harvest. For some reason this was denied him. He lived long enough to endure what he considered to be a maneuvering to reduce his influence and to realize a sense of inadequacy. After more than thirty years of total devotion and dedication to the Restoration, he felt himself bypassed, a champion of an outdated manner of Kingdom-building. Heber and the rough, impetuous Galilean Pe-

ter were somewhat alike. Both had been essential in the beginning of the movements to which they devoted their lives, but both lived to be overshadowed by better-educated Pauline types. It was not for Heber to stand before Agrippa nor to preach on Mars' Hill.

What offended Heber may have been simply carelessness or thoughtlessness. It is also possible that, given the realities of the all-out crusade against the Mormons during the 1860s, especially the anti-polygamy bills which were introduced into Congress, and the delimiting of the size of the territory, some Church leaders actually were trying to neutralize Heber's outspokenness and bring into his place someone more diplomatic and adept at negotiating with gentiles. In any event, as is often the case, what a person thinks is true is as painful as if it were true. These several acts helped break his heart.

With all of his humor and saltiness, Heber was an unusually sensitive man—it was part of his sincere nature. He was almost always kind, even-tempered, and humble, and ordinarily did not respond externally to slights. By the mid-1850s he was becoming defensive and cantankerous—defensive because of his lack of education and sophistication; cantankerous because of age, illness, and disappointment. He had been at his best as a missionary and pioneer. As the Kingdom grew and matured, he must have realized that he was becoming increasingly anachronistic and incapable of making the significant contributions he had made in its early days.

In 1854 he announced in the Territorial Legislature: "I want to speak and not be here like a Dumb Dog. I am ignorant of many technicalities, but when you come to the truth I know that as well as Professor [Albert] Carrington, Professor [Orson] Pratt, Professor [George A.] Smith, or Professor [Wilford] Woodruff."¹² This statement suggests that he took political life seriously; it is, however, possible to read more into it. Carrington, Pratt, Smith, and Woodruff were all much better educated than Heber and it is entirely possible that his unnecessary use of the title "professor" before each of their names was sarcastic, reflecting his surmise that they looked down on his lack of education.

In 1860 Heber publicly said, "You need not try to step in between me and my President, for you cannot do it without hurting yourselves. . . . My name is Faithful—my name is Integrity!"¹³ A surprisingly defensive statement from one who had been a member of the First Presidency since 1847. In 1861 in a public meeting at

¹²Historian's Office Journal, 20 December 1854, Church Archives.

¹³*Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1855–86), 8:276 (cited hereafter as *JD*).

which Heber was present, Joseph A. Young admonished the people not to use "low vulgar or obscene expressions," and Albert Carrington "made a few remarks on the same strain. . . ." ¹⁴ Since Heber had long been criticized by the gentiles for his coarseness, it is likely that he deeply resented these sentiments expressed publicly and considered that they were aimed directly at him. An analysis of his subsequent public discourses reveals that he modified his platform manner. He gave fewer talks, and those he did make were mild, short, bland, full of scriptural quotations (which he had hardly ever used before), containing none of his habitual spice and ginger.

During 1864 events took place which caused Heber to seek assurance from the Lord that his position would not be undercut and that he would not be removed as first counselor. In February of that year Brigham ordained three of his sons—John Willard, Joseph Angell, and Brigham, Jr.—as apostles. Later that year, in August, Young conferred upon Brigham, Jr., "all the power I hold as one of my counselors." ¹⁵ This seemed to suggest that Brigham, Jr., was becoming the heir apparent to the Presidency. Heber was not told of these ordinations for four months, and was terribly offended when he did learn of them. He told a son that "the power of the Priesthood" placed on the head of John W. Young "would not stick" and that apostle "George Q. Cannon was among those who were trying to get between him [Heber] and President Young. . . ." ¹⁶

Whatever Brigham meant by these acts of 1864, the shadow of dynastic pretensions which they cast mortally offended his First Counselor, his most loyal of all followers, and his friend of more than thirty years.

Again, in September 1864, the *Deseret News*, edited by the same Albert Carrington, who had already indirectly criticized Heber's language, printed an editorial rebuking members of the community who "resorted to swearing and obscenity in language." It is doubtful that this was in any way directed at Heber, but the Fort Douglas *Vedette* of September 28 gleefully insisted that it was, and labeled it an official rebuke of Heber by his own people. In anguish, Heber appealed to his God. "In the evening of January 12, 1865," he confided in a private memorandum book,

I was told by the Lord that I should not be removed from my place as first counselor to Pres. Young and those who had oppressed me when it was in their power to do me good, shall be removed from

¹⁴Diary of Charles L. Walker, 18 August 1861, Church Archives.

¹⁵Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 24 April 1864, Church Archives.

¹⁶Solomon F. Kimball, "Sacred History," typescript, p. 2, Church Archives.

their places. That Daniel H. Wells, Albert Carrington, Jos. A. Young and others were among that number.¹⁷

In 1866 Brigham again bypassed his first counselor. He ordained Joseph F. Smith an apostle and set him apart as a counselor in the First Presidency. Heber was not consulted, present at the ordination, or officially told of it for some time afterwards.¹⁸ Although he was never supplanted as First Counselor, Heber must have felt insecure in his position in the Kingdom. "Those were days of sorrow for father," a son wrote, "and he became so heart broken towards the last that he prayed to the Lord to shorten his days."¹⁹

Whatever the reality of Heber's fear and suppositions, he remained loyal to the last. There is no recorded word of his in criticism of Brigham; Heber chose to place the blame for his sorrow on others. How much longer Heber might have lived is unknown. He did, however, become less active, and little is known of his last few years. His death on 22 June 1868 was caused by paralysis stemming from his being thrown from his wagon in Provo by a lunging horse sometime the preceding May.

Toward the end Heber could not speak. On that hot Monday in June he lay in his upstairs west bedroom and Brigham sat by his side fanning him with his right hand. The two old warriors in the kingdom were together to and at the end. Whatever differences might have existed between them were dissolved by glances of mutual trust and love, and with clasped hands. Heber died peacefully.

In the minds of the Saints, Heber and Brigham's love and companionship was such that George Q. Cannon deemed it appropriate in the invocation at Heber's funeral to ask God to comfort Brigham in his loss before he thought to invoke the Lord's peace on the family. It may even be that the full realization of Heber's death affected Brigham so much that Cannon was moved to remember Brigham first and more fully in his prayer. "We pray thee, our Father," he said, "this day to pour the consolations of thy Holy Spirit upon thy servant Brigham. May his heart be comforted. May he be cheered and May he be strengthened and sustained by thee." Then, remembering the family, he added, "Let thy Spirit rest down upon the family of thy servant who has gone from us, upon his wives, his children and his connections. . . ."²⁰ Such was one of the great friendships of all time.

¹⁷Private Memorandum Book, 12 January 1865, Heber C. Kimball Papers, Church Archives.

¹⁸Joseph Fielding Smith, *Life of Joseph F. Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1938), p. 227.

¹⁹Kimball, "Sacred History," p. 2, Church Archives.

²⁰Heber C. Kimball obituary, *Deseret News*, 1 July 1868.

Research to date has failed to turn up any comment by Brigham Young regarding the matters which so perplexed and hurt his longtime friend and counselor. All we have in writing is Brigham's pride in Heber's faithfulness as a member of the First Presidency as he expressed it at the time in his eulogy at Heber's funeral:

He was a man of as much integrity I presume as any man who ever lived on earth. . . . I am happy to state, it is a matter of great joy to me; this is the third counselor that has fallen asleep since I have stood to counsel this people—and they have died in the faith full of hope; their lives were filled up with good works, full of faith, comfort, peace and joy to their brethren. . . . The Lord selected him and he has been faithful and this had made him a great man; just as you and I can become if we will live faithful to our God and our religion.²¹

We also have one touching reference to Heber made a year after his death. On 19 June 1869 Brigham Young was in Paris (present-day Idaho), and said he seldom alluded to his friends who were gone for it called up a flood of emotions. He said that "when he thought of Bro. Heber the recollections of the past througed [thronged?] upon his mind and over came him. The brethren must pardon him for being a child when he alluded to his old friend and companion."²²

²¹*JD* 12:186, 187.

²²Bear Lake School of the Prophets Minutes, 19 June 1869, Church Archives. I wish to thank Charles Peterson for drawing this item to my attention.

George Francis Train and Brigham Young

Davis Bitton

One of the most unusual literary productions to appear following the death of Brigham Young was a lengthy "poem" by George Francis Train. First published in the *Buffalo Agitator*, "The Death of Brigham Young" was reprinted in the *Deseret News* on 17 October 1877, less than two months after the president's death. In order to appreciate it we must have some idea who George Francis Train was and what he had to do with the Mormons.¹

Train's early life was crowded. Born in 1829, he became an orphan at age four when his parents and three sisters died of yellow fever. Raised by his grandmother in Massachusetts, he farmed and learned to be self-reliant. In his late teens he moved into Cambridge and supported himself by working in stores. At sixteen he was taken on by the shipping company of Enoch Train (a relative), and soon, by hard work and determination to do more than he was told, he was assigned responsibility for dispatching ships. Still a young man, George Francis made valuable contacts, and, never lacking in self-confidence, he began trying things on his own—buying and selling, sending different goods to different parts of the world, turning a profit wherever he could. Soon after the discovery of gold in California he commissioned construction of a 2,000 ton clipper ship, the *Flying Cloud*, which he sold for a handsome profit. Before this phase of his life was over, many other clipper ships had been built, for which he was later not reluctant to take full credit: "I was still in my teens, and consider it not an insignificant thing to have accomplished the initiation of this magnificent clipper service which revolutionized sailing vessels all

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¹Biographical sketches are in the *Dictionary of American Biography*; the *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*; and D. C. Seitz, *Uncommon Americans* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1925). Autobiographical, but sketchy, is George Francis Train, *My Life in Many States and in Foreign Lands* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1902).

over the world. . . .”² In 1850, at age twenty-one, George Francis Train was assigned to take charge of the Liverpool office. He returned to the States briefly in 1851 and married the beautiful seventeen year old Wilhelmina Davis. Steadily increasing his interest in the parent company, he soon left for a two year stint in Australia, where the gold rush was at a fever pitch. After traveling extensively in China, India, France, and Russia—and having experiences which he wrote of in his first books—Train returned to the United States.³ He played at least an important role in arranging for the financing of 400 miles of railroad construction connecting the Eastern and Midwestern states. Then in 1858 he returned to England. Always a wheeler-dealer, Train established the first municipal streetcar or tram systems in England—in Birkenhead, Staffordshire, and Darlington. A pro-Union spokesman during the Civil War, he ran into strong opposition in England. He returned to America as “the most popular American in public life.”⁴ Always able to catch the eye of the public, he lectured to and debated before enthusiastic crowds.

It was at this time, during the Civil War, that Train began organizing the great transcontinental railway. If we can trust his own account, he put together the trust, retained control, and traveled to Omaha to break ground for the first mile of track west of the Missouri River. It was from this point that he sent the following telegram to Brigham Young:

Citizen Brigham Young, chief of the Mormons. I hereby make you director that end of Union Pacific. Don't say no. Answer paid.
Signed George Francis Train.

Young's reply was equally to the point:

All right. Yes to the directorship. Push on U.P. Signed Brigham Young.⁵

During the next six years Train continued to attract attention by speeches and “spectacular activities” such as the construction of a magnificent villa at Newport. He was well satisfied with the Mormons' work on the railroad, and in 1869, the year the transcontinental line was completed, included in his lecture in New England a substantial defense of the Mormons:

Who established the first newspaper west of the Missouri, in 1832, at Independence? The Mormons. Who in 1846, penetrated

²Train, *My Life*, p. 76. Train did not invent the clipper ship; nevertheless, the *Flying Cloud* was a noteworthy vessel, twice holding the record for fastest passage from New York to San Francisco.

³Early books written by Train include *An American Merchant in Europe, Asia, and Australia* (1857); *Young America Abroad* (1857); *Young America in Wall Street* (1858); and *Every Man His Own Autocrat* (1859).

⁴Train, *My Life*, p. 276.

⁵Letter of George Francis Train, *Deseret Evening News*, 17 January 1903.

from Iowa, the western land and moved towards the Pacific the great column of progress? The Mormons. Who first raised the American flag in the great western basin? The Mormons. Who made the Utah wilderness blossom as the rose? The Mormons. [Applause] What other sect, creed, or church in America ever expended five millions in immigration? (That's so.) How does it happen that the red Indian never interferes with a Mormon train? That the American government never spent but \$75,000 for the Indians in the Mormon land when they threw away millions outside of that? [Applause] Who was it discovered the great gold mines out of California? The Mormons. The first emigrants at Yerba Buena landed from the Brooklyn, a Mormon ship; and the first "brick" made in California was mined by a Mormon, and the first printing press was taken there in '48 by a Mormon. Who sheltered and fed the poor starving emigrant bound for the Eldorado in '48 and '49, when, foot-sore and heart-sick, they found themselves in the wilderness? The Mormon colonists. [Applause, and "That's so."] Who made the Pacific Railroad a necessity? Brigham Young and his Mormon host. Who fed the miners, gave Montana food, and clothed the naked? These same much-abused Mormons.

The oration went on, building up to a point of climax, to praise "the enterprise of this Napoleon of colonists—Brigham Young." He urged Young to resist the government's anti-Mormon legislation: "Take my advice, Brigham: fight for your rights!"⁶

Not surprisingly, this kind of lecture led some people to ask whether George Francis Train had become a Mormon. In San Francisco, he answered a reporter's question by saying that "he had only one wife and was not a Mormon, but he was not sure he would not become one." He went on to explain that the Old Testament authorized polygamy, so that "if we accept the Old Testament as part of the rule of Christians, we must accept Brigham's doctrines."⁷

While in Utah in 1869 Train gave two lectures, which, one gathers, were his usual mixture of personal experiences, anecdotes, and strong opinions, with a seasoning of remarks complimentary to the Mormons and their leader. He would appear on the stage dressed in top hat, overcoat, gloves, and carrying a cane. Divesting himself of these one at a time, he then stood forth dressed in "a dress coat with gilt buttons, white vest and black pantaloons," and "on the left breast of his coat he wore the badge of the Fenian Legion of Honor."⁸ Train was a real showman—a combination of Liberace and Billy Graham.

⁶*Deseret News*, 31 March 1869; also 22 March 1869.

⁷Journal History of the Church, 29 June 1869, Church Archives, Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah.

⁸*Deseret Evening News*, 4 September 1869.

Through the eyes of this visiting celebrity we get three valuable glimpses of Brigham Young. Having made an appointment, Train was waiting for his private interview with the Mormon leader. While waiting he was introduced to George Q. Cannon, George A. Smith, and others. He was even introduced to two different "Mr. Youngs," two of Brigham's brothers, one of whom explained, "There are five brothers of us here." Train then became deeply involved in some kind of discussion with George A. Smith and did not hear, when another person was introduced to him, the words, "This is the president." The whole thing quite unsettled the visitor: "It was a considerable time before I became aware that he was the President. He sat there so modest and unassuming that I could not believe he was the President." When Train came to his senses and finally realized to whom he was talking, he told Brigham Young that a man of his accomplishments "ought to put on more airs."

When Train came out on the stage for his first lecture he noted that there was too much light—too many gas stage lights had been turned on for him. He asked that some of them be put out. The stage manager did not hear the request or was otherwise occupied. Train asked again that some of the footlights be extinguished. "I furnish all the gas required for this stage," he said. "Turn out the gas!" From a proscenium box Brigham Young quietly got up, came onto the stage, and with his broad-brimmed hat put out the lights at the rear of the stage. "Well," said Train, "for once I consider myself beat. I might have done it myself; I am very glad, for once, to be thrown entirely in the shade." He led the audience in three cheers for Brigham Young, "the grand head of Mormondom."

One more glimpse. President Young called on the visitor at his hotel, took him out in his carriage, and then took him in a special train on a trip to Ogden. Seated together were the two men, Brigham's wife Amelia, and "one other lady." At every station there were cheering crowds. At one of the stops President Young

got out and bought four balls of red sugared popcorn and brought them in his pocket handkerchief, giving one to each of the ladies, ate one himself and gave me the other. I broke mine in two and ate it.

Such homely scenes remain in the memory when many other things are forgotten.⁹

⁹Ibid., 17 January 1903. The incident with the lights at the theater was only vaguely remembered in 1903: "There was loud applause when a gentleman got out of a proscenium box and with his broad-brimmed hat put out every light in the rear of the stage." Closer to the event is the ac-

The 1869 visit ended as quickly as it had begun, for Train was on his way eastward the first day of September. Before leaving he wrote, in his distinctive hand, a note addressed "To President Brigham Young, The Man of Destiny":

Having come all the way to Salt Lake to see a man who has reduced religious morality to real life—actually practicing what he preaches—a man who does not believe in the Speculum, Vaccination, Wine at the Sacrament or Restelism—a man who has organized a society where men live in their own houses and wear American clothes—making sage brush Deserts blossom with fruit and vegetable gardens—I can only say, as I bid you good bye, that high as was my admiration for your wonderful faith and code, my visit has only strengthened my former opinions.

Sincerely
Geo. Francis Train¹⁰

It is interesting to note what Train was complimenting the Mormons for. They did not believe in the speculum (a horoscope), vaccination (still relatively new, the practice was approached cautiously by most Mormons), and wine in the sacrament (water had become standard in Mormon meetings a few years earlier). "Restellism" (properly spelled with two *l*'s) was a nineteenth-century synonym for abortion, named after the infamous abortionist Madame Restell.¹¹

George Francis received a letter from Young in early 1870, explaining that a Turkish bath house was now being constructed in Salt Lake City and wishing Train success in his race for the presidency. Responding, in a letter dated 15 January 1870, Train wrote:

Thanks for your kind letter, which finds me on my 300th successive lecture, in course of 1,000 on the way to the White House.

You have shown your usual good sense in building the Turkish Bath. It will subtract twenty pounds from your body, and add a score of years to your life. Cannon and Cane [John T. Caine] both tried them in England.

Train was enthusiastic about Turkish baths as part of the "psychologic" system he espoused. More than once he urged Brigham Young to undergo this water cure if he would live long. To some extent it seems that the enthusiast was convincing his Mormon friends, although the idea of water cures and steam baths was not limited to George Francis Train.

count of the newspaper reporter: "His request not being immediately complied with, he repeated it, when President Young stepped forth and extinguished them, using his hat as a fan for the occasion." *Deseret Evening News*, 4 September 1869.

¹⁰George Francis Train to Brigham Young, 7 September 1869, Church Archives.

¹¹James Mohr, *Abortion in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), pp. 48–53, 94–96, and *passim*. I am indebted to David Brion Davis and Lester F. Bush, Jr., for helping me discover the meaning of this term.

The letter continues:

Congratulations on completion of railway. Where there is a will there is a way. It draws the fire of all who said you were afraid of the weapons of commerce and transportation. Where would the Pacific Railway have been but for you? Your response was prompt when I invited you to the banquet at Omaha, Dec 2, 1863, when Augustus Kountze (the Omaha backer) and your correspondent first broke the ground. Who advanced Reed the money for engineering? You did. Who first subscribed to Credit Mobilier? You did—and the Directors will cheat you out of the 500 per cent profit on stock unless you look sharp. The opening of the Railroads give the lie to your slanders. All said it would destroy you—it only strengthens your position. You remember I told you that the Colfax-Bross-Bowles-Wilkenson-Dickenson-Radical-Union-League conspiracy would culminate in Congress. It has. Cullom revamps Cragin's old bill, which originated long ago in the Gentile camp, by a Gentile Clerical Bummer connected with the Military Department. The success of the first Mormon War (a \$40,000,000 steal) makes the thieves smack their lips for more pickings from the Treasury.

Four bills already are before Congress. Cullom disfranchises all who have opinions of any kind in Utah. Cragin introduces the Witch Burning, French Guillotine, Spanish Inquisition plan. Howard Bastardizes all Mormon children—and Stewart proposes to steal your untaxed Union territory to pay Nevada's infamous sesesh debts. Congress is a coward—each member, privately is with you—but party tyrannizes. Last Sunday, I preached in Blackened Sepulchres, in reply to Anna Dickinson and *L'Homme qui Rit*—reminding my Irish Boys that twenty years ago, the same element that is now trying to steal your country and destroy your church, burnt Catholic Convents, destroyed Catholic Churches, rode Catholic Priests upon rails—and I notified the thieves in power, that the moment they moved on Utah, I would tear down a Puritan Church or two in New York by way of diversion! They cry Polygamy but mean plunder!¹²

This was 1870, let it be remembered, perhaps the lowest point in the most corrupt period of American politics. Although Train sounds extreme, he had reason for despising the politicians at Washington. Popular among lower-class Irish for having espoused the Fenian cause, he was threatening violence if the national government once again moved against the Mormons. Bluffing? Perhaps, but this same Train had seen revolutions in Europe and, aware of the use of "goons" and Mafia-type organizations, was ready to fight fire with fire.

He went on to urge Brigham Young, as he had in Utah, to stand up and fight:

Although they cannot appreciate moral power and intellectual superiority, they have a great respect for physical force. Hanging a

¹²Young's letter and Train's answer were printed in the *New York Globe*, 18 January 1870. The article was clipped and sent to President Young by George P. Bemis, Train's secretary.

Judge, a Congressman, and an Army Thief or two, on a lamp post, will clear the moral atmosphere. You took my advice on the Turkish Bath; take it once more. Buy a good stock of powder, balls, revolvers, rifles, and cannons. Act the Echo Canon Tragedy over, rip up the railroad, shoot down the invaders, play the Moscow in Salt Lake City, if necessary—in a word, stand by the guns. Don't give up the ship, and I will back you with a million of shellalaghs. Pulpit, party, and press are organized against you—but interest or fear is my motto.

Train concludes with regards to "George A. Smith, George Q. Cannon, Hiram B. Clawson, and all friends." He reports that he had briefly seen Robert T. Burton, who had reported that "Hooper [Utah's congressional delegate] is better." We thus get a rough sense of the circles of Mormon friends that Train had, and that in the East he could contact such Mormon agents as Burton and William H. Hooper.¹³

"Pulpit, party, and press" were against the Mormons, according to Train. In an effort to counteract the negative chorus, he sent a copy of these two letters (Young's to him and his own answer) to the *New York Globe*. George P. Bemis, Train's private secretary, in sending the clipping when it was published, wrote, "We will draw the fire of every fresh charge of the enemy in this quarter. Mr. Train fires too many guns for these Hypocritical Puritans. Have sent of 100 of the annexed cut only and pasted, with special note to 100 Editorial friends and with your publicity it is sure to roll!"¹⁴

Train saw himself as champion of the underdog Mormons—or at least this is the way he wanted the Mormons to see him. I do not know what he may have done behind the scenes as a lobbyist. He doesn't seem the type to work quietly. In any case when again visiting Salt Lake City in July 1870 he claimed that since his departure the previous September he had gone east to "spike the gentile guns and defeat the Cullom bill."¹⁵

Train's speech in the Salt Lake Theatre on Saturday, 23 July 1870, was full of braggadoccio. After getting well worked up, he offered to speak on any subject of the audience's choosing for two minutes at a time. Their choices were the Cullom Bill, the Chinese question, the one-man power, the European War, and his

¹³Robert T. Burton, one of Mormonism's most colorful figures, had served in the militia during the Utah War. He also served as deputy territorial marshal and led the expedition that suppressed the Morrisites in 1862. During the period mentioned here he was a member of the Salt Lake City Council, a member of the Utah Territorial Legislature, and sheriff of Salt Lake County. Also a bishop, he left in 1869 to visit Washington, D.C., where he assisted territorial delegate William H. Hooper.

¹⁴Copy in Church Archives.

¹⁵*Deseret Evening News*, 26 July 1870.

proposed trip around the world. It was a wonder, he said, that he still had enough strength to lecture after the grueling schedule he had been following. But his strength was due to the fact that he never drank wine or liquor or chewed tobacco. "I never committed adultery; in fact I am almost a Mormon. No wonder they call me a crazy man!" Needless to say the audience loved it. Train seemed to be riding high. He concluded his talk by proclaiming "that all the efforts of the politicians could not prevent the people of the United States making him the occupant of the White House in 1872."¹⁶

The next day was Sunday. Train attended meeting in the Tabernacle and in the morning heard discourses by George A. Smith, George Q. Cannon, and Brigham Young. That afternoon he agreed to speak. His speech, which we have in a complete transcription, was typical of him. Train started by a tribute to Brigham Young, whose speech in the morning session "had worked me up to such a pitch of mental excitement that if I had got up after him nothing could have stopped me." Train continued:

I knew before hearing him this morning that he was a statesman; I knew he was a reformer and a writer, but I did not know that he was a born orator. It is time that this country understood that he has the sacred fire which few possess, the art divine, the magic power of speech, which enables him to hold an audience in breathless attention, which is possessed by so few in this world.

Train would know, for his own powers of speech had been acknowledged all across the country. On this subject he was an expert.

Train used humor, occasional sarcasm, and ebullient flattery to win his audience. He felt lost there, he said, for it didn't seem like a church. Where were the stained-glass windows, the gold-clasp prayer books, the magnificent robes? He was "astonished" that water was used in the sacrament and that it was also served to "a poor, miserable heathen outsider." He recited the litany of Mormon virtues. They owned their own homes; they returned good for evil by sending 500 men in the Mormon Battalion; their word was their bond; they refused to practice infanticide. The Mormons were a foil with which to attack American society at large.

Interestingly, Train chose to differ with his hosts on one point. Two of the sermons in the morning had recommended the virtue of humility. Taking this idea as a point of departure, Train said:

¹⁶Ibid.

I believe that humility is bad—a swindle. I believe in assumption, and for this reason, I see, as a general thing, that humility is assumed; but there is no mistake about assumption. Assume your position and there are certain natural laws that will keep you in your position. . . . I say that natural laws are so arranged that no man can get beyond his level. Big logs get over the small logs; big stones over the small stones. It is a stock idea of mine that if you put a lot of potatoes into a spring cart, and haul them over a rough road, the small ones go to the bottom. Had President Young been a small potato like General Grant, he would have gone down before today.

If Young praised humility, it was only “the humility of power.”

Train did not miss a chance to throw ideas into unexpected combinations. Young’s comment that there was much ignorance in the land prompted the visiting celebrity to make the following sally:

Lord Bacon is said to have made the remark “knowledge is power.” He never said so. Bacon was a trump, he had brains, and he would never make such a stupid remark as that; but if he ever did make it, it is false, because knowledge is not power. In this country ignorance is power. Ignorance in the White House, in the Cabinet, in the Senate, ignorance on the floors of Congress and in the pulpit; ignorance in the law school, in the medical college, and everywhere ignorance signs in and governs this magnificent Republic.

The grand sport of criticizing was being indulged in, and doubtless the audience enjoyed the colorful speaker.

He urged the Mormons to stand up and fight for their rights. Thomas L. Kane and George Francis Train were the only two men who defended them in public, “but seven out of every ten out of our cowardly, toady, flunkey people believe as we do, only they have not the manhood to say so.”¹⁷

The next day Train sent a telegram from Ogden, Utah, to “Brigham Young, Statesman, Reformer and President of the Latter-day Saints.” Expressing thanks for hospitality and offering to subscribe five hundred dollars towards a “new international hotel of strangers,” the telegram concluded, “Almost thou persuadest me to be a Mormon.”¹⁸

Never content to remain idle or to lapse into middle-class respectability, Train had several exciting experiences during the 1870s. After leaving the Mormons he continued to lecture and make provocative pronouncements in various American cities; traveled to France, which was just then going through the throes of the Communist revolt in Paris, declared himself for the rebels, was thrown into prison and later expelled from the country; traveled

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Telegram, George Francis Train to Brigham Young, 25 July 1870, Church Archives.

around the world in eighty days (providing the basis for the Jules Verne novel); resumed his campaign for the American presidency, giving hundreds of speeches, but was not nominated at the Republican convention in 1872.

At the end of 1872 he became involved in an incident that brought another brief encounter with the Mormons. The headlines were filled with allegations of an improper relationship between the Reverend Henry Ward Beecher and Lib Tilton. Among those making charges in rather explicit language was Victoria Woodhull—feminist, rabble-rouser, a female George Francis Train. Woodhull was charged with “obscenity” by Anthony Comstock and imprisoned. Train leaped to her defense and published the most explicit passages of the Holy Bible in his own newspaper to challenge the interpretation of obscenity. He was thrown into the New York prison, the Tombs. His hope of being a test case on the charge of obscenity was frustrated, as he was eventually pronounced “Not guilty, on the ground of insanity.” This official declaration of lunacy—with which many people might have agreed but which had no responsible medical diagnosis behind it—handicapped Train legally for the rest of his life, making it impossible, for example, for him to sell his extensive properties in Omaha, Nebraska.¹⁹

In the poem below an interesting passage indicates that a delegation of Mormons called on Train in the Tombs and offered to post bail. In the LDS Church Archives is a document hitherto unknown, a letter from Train to Brigham Young, dated 26 May 1873. Written on special stationery showing three owls deliberating and labeled “*jure de Lunatico Inquierendo* before Chief Justice Daly,” the letter, in Train’s strong, distinctive hand, reads:

The Tombs (6th month)
New York, May 26 73

Dear President Young

My gloomy abode here in the Tombs was full of sunshine today to see Brigham Junior, Cannon, and Richter drop in upon me with kind words from you. They assure me that you stand by Salt Lake and Utah and that your health was never better (thanks to my baths.) I want you by and by, by my side—so take good care of yourself. You’ve got fifteen years good work in you yet. Fearing that were going to cut loose from the old anchorage from Arizona I wrote the enclosed epigram. You should have seen the boys eyes sparkle as I recited it to them today in my cell. If you publish it in the *News*, send me two or three copies here at the Tombs. I shall win. My two delusions now are:—That I shall be dictator and some

¹⁹See various references in Train, *My Life*, *passim*.

day (although a land pauper now) will be the richest man in the world. You know we both agree in the one man power. Make my kind regards to your good wife Amelia whose acquaintance I remember with pleasure.

Geo. Francis Train
The Coming Dictator²⁰

Attached to the letter was a small photograph of Train. On one side he had written "From the Tombs" and on the other "To the Asylum," referring to his being judged insane.

There is some confusion about who made up the visiting delegation. The 1877 poem identifies the visitors as George Q. Cannon, Brigham Young, Jr., and Amos Milton Musser, while the letter written the day of the visit mentions Cannon, Young, and "Richter." I do not know how to explain this difference. Perhaps he established the correct identity later on, or perhaps his memory failed him. The diary of Brigham Young, Jr., is not of much help; it locates its author in New York City on 26 May but says nothing about a visit to the Tombs. Nothing is said in the letter about bail, which is mentioned in the poem four years later. We know enough about the case to realize that Train did not want to be out on bail; what he wanted was to be tried on the charge of obscenity. It does not seem implausible to think that the Mormon visitors told him they could help raise bail if he wanted them to. At least in 1877 he remembered them offering "Mormon bail."

George Francis Train did not do much during the remainder of his life. His 1873 letter to Brigham Young said that he was a "land pauper" and that he would be the richest man in the world. The first part of the statement was true. Unsuccessful in winning a court judgment that would allow him to take possession of his holdings without a guardian, he moved into the Mills Hotel in New York, talked to no one except children, except from the podium, for he did continue to lecture. In 1902, when his autobiography was published, he began by explaining, "I have been silent for thirty years. . . . For many years I have been a silent recluse, remote from the world in my little corner in the Mills Hotel, thinking and waiting patiently."²¹

As far as the Mormons were concerned, one interruption of his long silence occurred in 1877, when he published the following "epigram obituary":

²⁰George Francis Train to Brigham Young, 26 May 1873, Church Archives.

²¹Train, *My Life*, preface.

THE DEATH OF BRIGHAM YOUNG

When ten thousand columns of ink
Announce a great man's death! alas,
Tis apt to make all nations think
A great event has come to pass!
Not Emperor! King! Mikado! Shah!
Nor Sultan! Khedive! Pope or Czar!
Not Vanderbilt! Steward! Astor!²²
Nor fire! deluge! rail disaster!
No! Something greater. That great event
Is the death of Utah's President.
Against great odds, the brave old lion,
Died in his lair, as head of Zion!

Now Mormon land is wrapt in grief,
Mourning for its beloved old chief—
I cannot be the last to send
A cypress wreath to my old friend!
You know his friendship in the past,
I held as warmly to the last,
And also know I stood by him
Through good and ill—through thick and thin.

The first gold piece coined in Salt Lake,
You remember, he made me take,
It seems to me but yesterday
That I received his friendly note,
Writing in his generous way
The kindest words man ever wrote.²³
He was a King among his peers,
A King for three and thirty years!
Twelve thousand friends around his bier,
Shows how the Mormons loved their seer.
While other prophets have been cursed.
In this case the proverb is reversed.
This prophet stands out all alone
Honored alike in house and home.

THE MORMON EXODUS

His Winter march across the plains,
Like May Flower's voyage o'er the sea,
So far ahead of railway trains,
Was landmark in our history!
To plant his hundred thousand homes,
He paved the way with Mormon bones!
Cholera! ague! and Western fever,

²²Prominent millionaires whose names were household words in the 1870s were Cornelius Vanderbilt, John Jacob Astor, and A. T. Steward. Train had had dealings with such wealthy capitalists in his own railroad enterprises.

²³This note from Brigham Young to George Francis Train has not been found.

Could not daunt this true believer!
 Greatest of American pioneers,
 This argonaut beat all the seers.
 In republic's heart his kingdom built
 A kingly name not stained with guilt,
 His greatest enemies all agree,
 The *Herald's* slanders all died with Lee!
 And yet this journalistic knave
 Keeps up its lies and kicks his grave.²⁴
 This "Prophet" "Revelator," "Seer,"
 In life no longer lingers here,
 But leading figure of his age,
 His life is stamped on Utah's page.
 His cotton factories and his farms,
 His lands, his silk-worms and his barns!
 His workshops and his business plan,
 Proved him no ordinary man!
 He builds his mills; he makes his clothes
 And bats and boots; his wheat he sows.
 He makes canals, bridges, streets and roads,
 Where gophers lived, and snakes and toads,
 Are vineyards, orchards, gardens, fields,
 Filled with fruit and grain, rich Nature yields.
 From foreign lands he brought his flocks
 To these wild sands and wilder rocks.
 This painter, glazier, Vermont farmer
 Was just the man for nature's charmer.
 His *Via Dolorosa* march and stand,
 To victory, was something grand.
 Village to town; town to city grew,
 Where soil was old and man was new.
 His railroads, telegraphs and mines,
 His people free from frauds and crimes.
 His bold and independent course,
 Shows how a man can use his force.
 Wher'er the Mormon sunflower grows
 The desert blossoms as the rose.

I, with psychologic vision see
 How sad the Tabernacle must be.
 The Twelve Apostles will bear the pall,
 The band will dirge the "March of Saul."²⁵
 Bishops, high priests, elders will stand
 As mourners round their Mormon band.
 In a rosewood coffin, free from crape,
 Without display he lies in state!²⁶

²⁴The New York *Herald* had reveled in the alleged complicity of Brigham Young in the Mountain Meadows Massacre. Although that tragedy had occurred in 1857, it continued in the public consciousness and was perhaps the most common event associated with Mormonism in the 1870s, when John D. Lee was arrested, tried twice, convicted, and executed. That should be the end of the matter, Train is saying, but yellow journalists continued to try to implicate Brigham Young.

²⁵Famous funeral dirge by George Frederick Handel.

²⁶Brigham Young's actual coffin, as provided in his will, was to be "made of plump 1 1/4 inch boards, not scrimped in length, but two inches longer than I would measure, and from two to three

Unlike the old Egyptian Jew,
This Mosaic leader was always true.
His promised land was real money
That really flowed with milk and honey.²⁷
In the heart of a continent
This eagle built his eagle nest,
And took a coffin in his tent
So large that he could turn and rest!

THE PACIFIC RAILROAD

He got his first dispatch from me,
December, eighteen sixty-three.
I wanted him to lay a brick
When I broke ground with spade and pick,
Well knowing that the house would stand
If Brigham gave a helping hand.
I made him Director in the road
To help me pull the mighty load,²⁸
And always found him broad and fair
With all his dealings on the square.
Let no one with his pen and tongue
Hurl lies and sneers at Brigham Young!
He hath his faults, and who has not?
But should his virtues be forgot?

The symbols of his industry
Were the lion and the working bee.
He was the church; the active lion,
The bees the people that build up Zion!
No Pasha, Sheik, Viceroy, Tycoon,
From Pio Nono to Moses,
Ever attained such power so soon.
As the Mormon faith disposes.
When Cannon, Musser, and his son
Came to the Tombs with Utah bail,
I could but feel that Brigham done
What I would do were he in jail.²⁹

inches wider than is commonly made for a person of my breadth and size, and deep enough to place me on a little comfortable cotton bed, with a good suitable pillow for size and quality; . . . and to have the appearance that if I wanted to turn a little to the right or to the left, I should have plenty of room to do so. The lid can be made crowning." As cited in Richard H. Cracroft and Neal E. Lambert, *A Believing People: Literature of the Latter-day Saints* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1974), pp. 110-11.

²⁷Moses led the children of Israel from Egypt, but for forty years they wandered in the wilderness. Young brought them safely home to the Great Basin. Train may even be thinking in literal terms about the milk and honey.

²⁸See above, p.———. Young had been a director of the Union Pacific Railroad, had arranged for the Mormons to assist in the construction of the track, and had then been unsuccessful in collecting the promised payment for the Mormon building crews. Train is implying that whereas the scoundrels who were refusing to pay the Mormons were not honest in their dealings, Brigham Young was.

²⁹Who visited Train in his cell in the Tombs? According to this poem it was George Q. Cannon, Amos Milton Musser, and Brigham Young, Jr. The letter, dated from the Tombs, 26 May 1873, says: "My gloomy abode here in the Tombs was full of sunshine today to see Brigham Junior,

I'm sorry he did not live to see
The destiny in wait for me!

Though my hot-air bath prolonged his breath,
Holding my power on life and death,
I could for years have stopped life's chill
Had he surrendered to me his will!
That ruddy cheek, that clear blue eye,
Firm mouth and robust frame
Had too much force so soon to die,
Had I been there to cure his pain.
*The dying world some day will know
The power I hold to check Death's blow!*³⁰

THE BOOK OF MORMON

Am I a Mormon? No! Why ask?
I never wore a cowl or mask.
I'm what I am, and nothing more,
A stormy Petrel on sea and shore.
What do I think of Mormonism?
I never think of any schism!
Knowing no future and no past,
All bigot thought I long since cast!
I look upon religious creeds
As reptiles and as poisonous weeds,
That rack mankind with deadly pain,
And choke and kill the nobler grain!

This creed covers all lands and races,
All dogmas, forms, sects and faces!
Christians, Buddhists, Moslems, Voudoos,
Protestants, Catholics, Spiritualists,
In all their phases, and thus enlists,
From Ann Eliza to Edith Gorman,
Wide interest in the Book of Mormon!³¹
No greater action was ever done
Than this absorption by Brigham Young!
The difference 'twixt Brigham and Beecher,

Cannon, and Richter drop in upon me with kind words from you." Train to Young, 26 May 1873, Church Archives. The letter says nothing about bail, but the visiting Mormons must have made an offer. Perhaps W. W. Riter was in the little Mormon delegation. More likely Train later found out that the third member was A. M. Musser.

³⁰One of Train's enthusiasms was health. He had a so-called "psychologic" system, with special baths or water cures a central ingredient. In 1870 Brigham Young wrote to Train saying, "As an item of news I may inform you that a Turkish bath house is in course of erection in this city under the superintendence of an active, energetic agent who has taken pains to acquaint himself thoroughly with the *modus operandi*." *New York Globe*, 18 January 1870, clipping in Church Archives. This was in response to an earlier statement of Train's: "Brigham adopts my advice and orders Clawson to build a Turkish Bath. If he does he will live a quarter of a century, otherwise he will die, and a great ground swell of ambitious spirits will strike for the succession..." *Deseret News* (Semi-weekly), 11 September 1869.

³¹Train is praising the comprehensiveness of Mormonism. "Our religion embraces every truth pertaining to mortal life—there is nothing outside the pale of it," said Brigham Young in 1853. *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1855–86), 1:44.

The Mormon prophet and Christian preacher,
Was, Brigham to his wives was true,
While Beecher on other households grew!
One turned Polygamy to Monogamy
The other, Monogamy to Polygamy!
Beecher, one wife, with others free,
Brigham, many, but no adultery!³²

EDEN'S MORMON GARDEN

Where courts, rumshops, brothels are naught
Except where Gentiles their customs brought.
Where priests and lawyers receive their pay
In hoeing corn and mowing hay.
Where water instead of wine is sent
To administer the sacrament!
Where home-made clothes are ever worn,
And bastard babes are never born!
Where thieves and blacklegs never go
And tramps and bummers have no show!
Where idlers all men dislike
And where the workmen never strike!
Where bad diseases are not known
And Restelism has never grown!
Where every workman has house and barn
And every farmer owns his farm.
Where all the children go to school
And where you cannot find a fool!
Where banks don't break and Ring intrigues
Are not as thick as Union Leagues!
Where Grants, Tildens, Hayeses and Tweeds
Are not corrupted by Thurlow Weeds!
Where robbers, through a syndicate,
The people's stamps don't dissipate.
Where Belknaps, Babcocks and Beecher bees
Are not as thick as rats and flees!
Where no Spencers, Darlings, Furbers steal
The bread that makes the workman's meal!
Where women as well as men are sent
When Mormons elect their President!
Where no drunkard murders his bride
And ends his life by suicide!
Where reform don't mean a prison
The flag that floats is Mormonism.³³

³²Henry Ward Beecher, the eminent divine, had been implicated in a love affair with Lib Tilton, wife of the distinguished editor, Theodore Tilton. Fairly or unfairly, Beecher became a symbol of lechery and hypocrisy in the public media. See Gary L. Bunker and Davis Bitton, "Henry Ward Beecher and the Mormons," paper submitted for publication.

³³The allusions in this stanza would have been readily recognized by readers in 1877. The names in the first part were in the newspapers; they were politicians, bosses, and capitalists. Train had personal reasons for condemning places where reform meant a prison, and obviously he had been favorably impressed at conferences to see the Mormon women vote along with the men.

TO J. W. Y.³⁴

And now a word with you, my friend,
A friendly word that may cement,
Where'er you may your footprints bend,
My friendship for the President!
Strange things have happened far and near,
Since you and I held converse here,
Though you and I, in many lands,
Have crossed our palms in friendships bands,
And though too *Young* to miss the *Train*
We never shall shake hands again!
Tell my Utah friends to Hold the Fort
And I will guarantee support.
I'm asked the good of Mormon leaven?
Why doubling up one year in seven!
The territory will soon be let
To the noble State of Deseret!
With Young and Cannon, perhaps the choice,
In the Senate Chamber of Utah's voice.³⁵
Polygamy itself, no doubt,
In course of time may Peter out,
But Brigham's church will stand and grow
Where're the Mormon legions go!
In accordance with Mormon Law
Taylor succeeds to wage the war!
Please give to all my Utah friends
The courtesy good will extends.
Stand firm around that great salt sea,
I stick by those who stick by me.
The Physiologic power I hold
Is greater than the power of gold.
For gold is but the power of wealth,
While I have power to give you health,
The power to alleviate distress
And organize true happiness!

G.F.T.

There is an epilogue to the story. In January 1903, one year before Train's death, he wrote a letter to the *Deseret News*. He recalled his original contact with Brigham Young at the time of building the railroad, his complaint about too much light when he lectured in the Salt Lake Theater, his memorable trip to Ogden when Brigham Young bought popcorn. He proclaimed, "I was always the Mormon's friend!"

³⁴John W. Young, one of Brigham's sons, was an experienced railroad builder and investor and had done extensive lobbying in the East.

³⁵When Utah becomes a state and is entitled to two senators, Train is speculating, two likely choices would be George Q. Cannon and Young. The latter could be Brigham Young, Jr., but more probably here, given the heading of the section, Train is thinking of John W. Young.

During the difficult years when the Mormons suffered from bad press, one of the few people willing to speak up for them was George Francis Train. Since he did have an audience and was able to reach many people through statements to the press, through his writings, and especially through his lectures, he was, from the Mormons' point of view, a friend not to be despised. And there was a bond between Train and Young that was more than simple superficial interest. Both had risen from poverty to become figures of prominence; both were somewhat quixotic and yet, despite projects that may have seemed unrealistic, had achieved much; both slightly scandalized the public, which nevertheless was anxious to read about them; both were critical of many of the false values of the Eastern Establishment. Train's praise of Young and the Mormons, however extravagant it appeared, was not necessarily insincere.

From the Mormon side it would have been easy to have been taken in completely. The evidence is that they liked Train, were amused by him, enjoyed his flattery, and tried to help him when they could. But they knew his limitations. "Brilliant but erratic," was the phrase used by the Church newspaper in 1903. And in 1877 the long tribute to Brigham Young was introduced by the following statement:

Whatever may be said of the eccentricities of this singular genius who has stored away in his capacious brain, a most immense fund of information, his sympathies are ever with the abused, maligned and oppressed, and he has always been a consistent defender of the people of this Territory and a profound admirer of their great leader, now departed, whom he recognized as one of the leading minds of his age and race. We copy the epigram obituary; without assuming any responsibility for the view presented, although we cannot deny that it contains a great deal of condensed truth if hurried and sometimes inelegantly expressed.³⁶

³⁶*Deseret News*, 17 October 1877.

Brigham Young and Mormon Indian Policies: The Formative Period, 1836-1851

Lawrence G. Coates

Brigham Young has been acclaimed as one of America's greatest colonizers, empire builders, and religious leaders, and there is no doubt that his achievements left an indelible imprint upon the pages of western frontier history. Many of his accomplishments, however, need to be seen against a silhouette of his experience with the native Americans. His relations with the Indians were more than pious expressions of good will or statements of empty dreams, hopes, and visions for the future of the Indians. They were also more than simple deeds of kindness or acts of violence. The relations of Brigham Young with the Indians were a blend of his social-religious-humanitarian philosophy and practical measures that he thought necessary for establishing the Mormon kingdom of God on earth.

Generally guided by his religious ideas that the natives descended from the Lamanites of Mormon scripture and by the philosophy that "it was cheaper to feed the Indians than fight them," Brigham Young used various peaceful means in dealing with them. Thinking intimate contact was practical, he traded material goods for the natives' fur, hides, horses, and children; he also sent colonists to live among them as a kind of "peace corps" to help them alter their way of life and to live in harmony with the Saints. He likewise used Church and government funds to provide food, clothing, and other material goods so that the Indians would become dependent upon the Mormon people and not be so eager to fight.

Even though he preferred to use peaceful means, he anticipated that conflicts would occur between the Saints and the Indians; so

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he urged his people to build forts for their protection. When the forts proved inadequate during periods of intense violence, he ordered the Nauvoo Legion to fight the "hostile" natives. Finally, when he realized that some Indian problems could not be solved either by military or peaceful means, he requested the federal government remove the Indians from the Great Basin to some remote unsettled region where the slow change of their life-style would be less troublesome.

ON THE PLAINS

Before the epic Mormon exodus from Nauvoo in 1846, Brigham Young's association with the Indians was limited. During the early months of 1835 he served a short mission to the Indians of western New York, became aware of the Indians who were being moved from the eastern states to the western lands known as the Indian Territory, and sympathized with their plight. He was in Nauvoo during the 1840s when some Sac, Fox, Potawatomi, and other Indians visited the Prophet Joseph Smith. Young personally knew the few Indians who joined the Mormon faith and moved to Nauvoo to be with the Saints.² During this period, Brigham Young sealed two Indians, Lewis Dana and Mary Goat, "under the New and Everlasting Covenant for time and all eternity" in the Nauvoo Temple.³

The first real test of Brigham Young's ability to gain and maintain peaceful and friendly relations with the Indians came during the exodus from Nauvoo, when he first began his "private Indian diplomacy." Believing it was necessary to establish friendly contact with the Indians prior to the exodus, he sent delegations of Mormon elders to the Indians in the West to arrange for the Saints to camp on Indian land while moving to the Great Basin, despite the fact that it was illegal for private persons to negotiate with Indians.

Nevertheless, Brigham Young, like Joseph Smith, sent Indian delegates Lewis Dana, George Herring, and a Brother Otis, as well as former white missionaries to the Indians, Daniel Spencer, Charles Shumway, Phineas Young, and S. Tindale, to make peace

¹Diary of Brigham Young, 1832-36, Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah (hereafter cited as Church Historical Department). See also Joseph Smith, Jr., *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1949), 2:222 (hereafter cited as *HC*).

²For accounts of these visits, see *HC* 5:14, 67; 6:401-402; and Henry King to John Chambers, 14 July 1843; John Chambers to T. Hartley Crawford, 27 September 1843; and T. Hartley Crawford to John Chambers, 7 August 1843, in Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs, 1824-81 Iowa Superintendency, 1838-49. Microfilm copy located in Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

³*Woman's Exponent* 11 (15 May 1883):186, contains an extract from Heber C. Kimball's Journal. See also Ph[o]ebe W. Woodruff to Wilford Woodruff, 4 May 1840, in *Millennial Star* 1 (August 1840):89-90.

with the natives.⁴ These men frequently carried letters or certificates telling the Indians of their missionary purpose. In the letter sent with Spencer and Shumway, Young certified that these were men of honor and reputation and that they had a special message from the Great Spirit for the Indian people. Reflecting on passages found in Mormon scripture, he promised that these good Mormon men would

enlighten your minds with regard to ancient principles taught to your forefathers by the former prophets when the light of the Great Spirit shone forth on all your tribes and his glory shielded you from error. . . . We feel extremely anxious that you share in the . . . promised blessing to Israel and . . . we send . . . you these our beloved brothers praying the Great Spirit to aid and bless them and asking you to grant them your assistance that your people may be enlightened with truth.⁵

While making the epic march across Iowa into Indian country, Brigham Young continued his private Indian diplomacy. When he reached a Potawatomi village located along a branch of the Nishabnatotna River in early June 1846, he held a powwow with the natives and asked permission to pass through their land. Surprised by the Indians' demand for payment for the grass the Mormon livestock would eat, and thinking this request was inspired by Mormon enemies, he offered instead to give them the building improvements and bridges the Saints planned to construct. The Indians accepted these terms, apparently thinking they would profit by charging fees to other travelers for using these facilities.⁶

Later in June, the pioneers reached the Trading Point, where Brigham Young met with several Indian chiefs, agent Robert B. Mitchell, and trader Peter A. Sarpy to discuss the Mormon exodus.⁷ Meanwhile, Captain James Allen arrived from the East to recruit 500 Mormons to fight in the recently declared war with Mexico.⁸ Considering this request an opportunity to prove their loyalty to the nation and also a chance to raise some money for crossing the plains, Young advised the Saints to volunteer for service. Because this loss of manpower made it difficult to cross the plains in 1846, the Mormon leader asked Captain Allen for permission to remain on Indian land, and Allen granted the request contingent upon President Polk's giving his approval, which he eventually did.⁹

⁴HC 7:374, 379, 401, 437, and 439-42.

⁵This to the chiefs and all the honorable men among the Senecas and all the tribes through which we may pass, dated sometime in August 1845, Brigham Young Papers, Church Historical Department.

⁶Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 8 June 1846, Church Historical Department.

⁷Ibid., 20 June 1846.

⁸Ibid., 28 June 1846.

⁹Ibid., 20 and 26 July; 1 and 9 August 1846.

Meanwhile, Brigham Young did not wait for the president's authorization, but instead talked with several Potawatomi chiefs who gave permission for the Mormons to settle on their lands at Council Bluffs, Iowa. During these talks, Brigham Young gave them gifts and even invited some of them "to come over the mountains and see the Saints when they get located, and bring his men to hunt for us, and we would make them blankets, powder, cloth, etc."¹⁰ During one conversation, Young discovered several Indians who had either met Joseph Smith at Nauvoo or had been visited by Mormon elders sent out before the Mormon exodus. These early contacts with the Indians had created friendships between the natives and the Saints. Most Indians were not only kind to them, but on one occasion a Potawatomi chief proudly showed the Mormon leader a paper from "Father" Joseph Smith, dated 1843, counseling them not to sell their lands. This was depicted on a map showing the boundaries of the property drawn by W. W. Phelps, and containing two sheets of hieroglyphics from the Book of Abraham.¹¹

When the Saints crossed the Missouri River into Omaha country, Brigham Young followed the same procedures that he had used with the Potawatomies. Hearing the Omahas had recently returned to the region from their summer hunt, he sent three men to ask their chiefs to meet him for negotiations. The Saints wanted to stay on their land for a short time while they migrated west. In return, the Mormons would help the Omahas repair their guns, teach their children to read, and "if they wanted [us] to pay for occupancy of their lands we will pay them; but they should not touch our property, and we will not their[s]."¹²

On 28 August 1846 Brigham Young and other Mormon dignitaries met some eighty Omahas dressed in native costume near the banks of the Missouri River, where they began their talk by smoking the peace pipe. After this ceremony, Brigham Young stood and addressed the group, saying the Saints were being persecuted. Consequently, they were moving to California but wanted permission to live on Omaha lands while making their exodus. Reaffirming their willingness to aid the Indians and to pay for using their land, the Mormon leader suggested they sign a treaty to this effect. Following Young's proposal, Big Elk addressed the historic gathering, saying that he had no objections to the agreement, but he was not sure how the government would react, since the Otoes also claimed the land. Concluding his speech, Big Elk said he had

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid., 11 July 1846.

¹²Ibid., 7 August 1846.

heard favorable reports about the Mormons and hoped the Saints would live up to this reputation.¹³

Feeling uneasy about dual claims on the land, Young visited the Otoes, who lived along the north bank of the Platte River, and discussed the matter with them. The Otoes said they did not want any difficulties with the Omahas, but evading a direct answer, said they would give their reply after their chief returned.¹⁴ Apparently feeling satisfied that he would have no serious troubles with the Otoes, Brigham Young held another talk with the Omahas. Finally, after assurances that the Saints would use little wood for their stoves, houses, fences, and other purposes, Big Elk, Standing Elk, and Little Chief all placed their marks on an agreement stating that the Mormons could have the

privilege of tarrying upon the land for two years or more, or as long as may suit their convenience . . . provided that our great father, the President of the United States shall not counsel us to the contrary.¹⁵

Realizing the Saints also needed government approval, Young petitioned President Polk for permission to make a temporary settlement at Winter Quarters. Unlike the request to settle on the Potawatomi lands, permission was never granted to settle among the Omahas. Instead, an involved controversy developed among government officials, Indian agents, private citizens, and the Mormons.¹⁶ Finally, the Mormons abandoned Winter Quarters during the summer of 1848.

Meanwhile, friction had developed between the Saints and the Indians at Winter Quarters when the Mormons ranged their livestock along the river bottoms and the Omahas began taking two or three head of cattle per day. Disturbed by this situation, some of the Saints suggested the thieves be shot; others insisted they not trade with the Indians. Repulsed by these suggestions, Brigham Young objected to shooting them, instead advising the Saints to "form a square so that we could keep them out of our midst" and if they entered the fields and started "killing our cattle or stealing our blankets or anything else . . . [we should] whip them."¹⁷

¹³Ibid., 28 August 1846.

¹⁴Ibid., 3 September 1846. For a study that shows similar political problems, see John C. Ewers, "Intertribal Warfare as the Precursor of Indian-White Warfare on the Northern Great Plains," *Western Historical Quarterly* 6 (October 1975):397-410.

¹⁵Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 3 September 1846.

¹⁶See the correspondence exchanged between the Mormons and government officials during the Mormon sojourn on Indian lands in "Letters Received By the Office of Indian Affairs: St. Louis Superintendency, 1824-51," microfilm copy, Harold B. Lee Library.

¹⁷Juanita Brooks, ed., *On the Mormon Frontier: The Diary of Hosea Stout*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1964), 1:206.

Thinking Big Elk, like other "rulers" had power to police the members of his band, Brigham Young confronted him on the subject of stealing. Hearing that the Indians had taken some fifty head of livestock, Big Elk quipped that he thought the Saints were soldiers enough to defend themselves and property, and, furthermore, that "the destruction of his game, timber, and land were of more value than the cattle [they had] taken." He also said,

His young men could not help stealing when our cattle were all about . . . camp; his young men did not like white people, and they did not like him, he told them we would do them good, and they called him a liar. . . . His young men felt bad when we crossed the river . . . [and] cut the timber, we left them like the trunk of a tree—without leaves or limbs.¹⁸

It was during this confrontation with the Omahas that Brigham Young began practicing his famous Indian policy which he later summarized in the phrase that "it was cheaper to feed the Indians than to fight them." Seeking to avoid open conflict, Young promised Big Elk some tobacco, powder, and lead if the Mormons could herd their cattle "on the bottoms without molestation." Responding to this gesture, Big Elk said

he knew the white people were quick tempered, his people were slow; he should council them till he went to his grave; he came to settle the difficulty . . . but he would not ask for powder and lead, if he had means to buy it.¹⁹

In a few days, as promised, Brigham Young sent Big Elk a barrel of powder and one hundred pounds of lead, wished him a prosperous buffalo hunt, volunteered to get his guns repaired, and asked if he in turn would counsel his men "not to kill any more cattle."²⁰ Big Elk accepted the gifts and in a few days visited the Mormon leader, giving Young two horses and saying he could not control his bad young men, "although they had been chastized for their conduct."²¹

Young's Indian diplomacy did help maintain a degree of friendship with some of the members of the Omaha tribe, however. But an important factor that especially helped minimize the conflicts between the Mormons and the Omahas was the delicate and complicated intertribal conflicts between the Omaha Indians and the Sioux, Iowas, Otoes, and Pawnees. Fortunately, the large

¹⁸Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 24 October 1846.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid., 6 November 1846.

²¹Ibid., 15 November 1846.

number of Mormons living in the area gave the Omahas some protection from their ancient foes.²² Despite this aid, some of the Omahas continued to take the Saints' livestock and property, causing the pioneers to further distrust the Indians.

IN THE SALT LAKE VALLEY

Brigham Young followed many of the same practices he used with the Omaha Indians after the Mormons settled in the Salt Lake Valley. While crossing the plains, he organized the Saints into large companies and armed them with a variety of weapons, urging them to be vigilant in guarding their livestock and camps from possible Indian attacks. He also held several conferences with the natives while crossing the plains.²³ Reaching the Great Basin, he deliberately selected the Salt Lake Valley for settlement, partly because two of the more fertile areas, the Bear and Utah Lake valleys, were prime hunting and fishing grounds for the Shoshone and the Utes.²⁴ This decision proved to be a wise one, for the Saints had minimal conflict with the natives during the first eighteen months of their settlement.

Initial contact with the natives began when several Utah Indians offered the Saints "two ponies and a buckskin for a rifle and twenty charges of powder and balls."²⁵ In a few days, thirty Shoshone Indians also visited the Mormons and wanted to trade for guns and ammunition. But soon, an ancient feud surfaced between the Shoshone and Utah Indians. While bartering with the Saints, a Utah brave took a horse from the Shoshone camp. The Shoshone braves pursued the Utahs toward the mountains, a battle ensued, and two Ute Indians were killed. When the Shoshone braves returned, they were angry with the Mormons "because [they had] traded with the Utahs."²⁶ Claiming the Utah Indians had crossed over the boundary line, and apparently believing the

²²Brooks, *Diary of Hosea Stout*, 1:216-17. See also Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 13 December 1846 and January and February 1847.

²³For the organizational pattern see Doctrine and Covenants, Section 136. See also Manuscript History of Brigham Young for the period during the exodus, as well as *William Clayton's Journal: A Daily Record of the Journey of the Original Company of "Mormon" Pioneers from Nauvoo, Illinois, to the Valley of the Great Salt Lake* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1921), pp. 86-87.

²⁴Brigham Young knew a great deal about the Indians in the Great Basin before the Mormon exodus. He had studied John C. Fremont's *Report of the Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains in the Year 1842 and to the Oregon and North California in the Years 1843-44* (Washington, [D.C.]: Gales and Seaton, Printers, 1845). This report gave vivid descriptions of the Indians in the Salt Lake and Utah Valleys. Young talked with several missionaries and mountain men. Jim Bridger told him not to settle in the Utah Valley because of the hostility of the Indians. For Young's conversations with the mountain men and others he met crossing the plains, see Manuscript History of Brigham Young and *William Clayton's Journal*, esp. pp. 273-78.

²⁵Journal of Thomas Bullock, 27 July 1847, Church Historical Department.

²⁶*William Clayton's Journal*, pp. 327-330. For an article that illustrates how historians might well use the political patterns of the Indians within a region to help understand white-native relations, see Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr., "The Political Context of the New Indian History," *Pacific Historical Review* 40 (August 1971):357-82.

Saints would serve as a good buffer between them and the Utahs, these Indians offered the land to the Mormons for powder and lead. Brigham Young advised his people to keep away from the Indians and not trade guns, powder, balls, and lead with them, "for they will shoot down our cattle." He continued by charging that the Indians had stolen

guns yesterday and had them under their blankets and if you don't attend to this you are heating a kettle of boiling water to scald your own feet. If you listen to counsel you will let them alone and let them eat the crickets, there's plenty of them.

Remembering the intertribal conflicts between the Omaha and Otoe Indians over the ownership of land at Winter Quarters, Brigham said,

I understand the Shoshonies offered to sell the land and we were to buy it of them, the Utahs would want pay for the land too. The land belongs to our Father in Heaven and we calculate to plow and plant it and no man will have power to sell his inheritance for he cannot remove it; it belongs to the Lord.²⁷

Within a few weeks, while Brigham Young had returned to Winter Quarters, the Salt Lake Stake High Council implemented his policies. Believing uncontrolled trade with the Indians would result in private disputes with the natives, the High Council authorized only certain men to exchange goods with the Indians.²⁸ Some of the Saints disobeyed the policy. One person who violated the rule was brought before the High Council and accused of sowing dissatisfaction among the Indians. He was reprimanded and required to "take the pony back to the Indians . . . and get his things within two days."²⁹ The High Council also tried to protect the colony from Indian depredations by herding livestock, guarding the settlement, and supervising the construction of homes, arranging them so they would give the Saints protection from Indians and the elements.³⁰

During these early months of settlement, the Saints were surprised to discover the extensive Indian slave trade. The most powerful Utah Indian bands acquired Indian women and children from weaker bands by stealing, trading, and waging war. These hostages were exchanged for horses, saddles, bridles, guns, ammunition, and anything else that was scarce in the Utah Indian economy. Some Indian bands traveled to California, New Mexico, and Mexico to exchange their goods, while others waited for traders from the

²⁷*William Clayton's Journal*, pp. 327-30, 335.

²⁸See the Salt Lake Stake High Council Minutes, Church Historical Department.

²⁹*Ibid.*, 4, 11, 24 October 1847.

³⁰*Ibid.*

Southwest to come to Utah to make the trade.³¹ With the arrival of the Saints, many Indians saw a market close to home.

At first, the Mormons were reluctant to exchange goods for Indian women and children, but the Saints soon learned the necessity of engaging in this trade. In the fall of 1847, Batiste, Walkara's son, brought a sixteen year old boy and an eighteen year old girl to the Mormon fort and offered them for sale. Claiming he had taken the hostages from a band in Beaver Valley, Batiste told the settlers that if they did not buy them, he would kill them. Not believing him, the Saints refused the purchase. To their surprise and horror, Batiste took the prisoners to his camp, killed the boy, and returned to the fort to offer the girl for sale. Deeply moved by the situation and fearing Indian hostilities for refusing to trade, Charles Decker, Brigham Young's son-in-law, traded a gun to Batiste for the girl.³² Soon the girl became a regular member of Brigham Young's family, was given the name of Sally, and was reared as one of Brigham Young's children. Other Mormons also purchased Indian children during this early period.³³

Meanwhile, the Indians occasionally took a few head of livestock despite the Saints' efforts to protect their property. Responding to this situation, the High Council built a pen for stray animals and urged the pioneers to be more vigilant in caring for their stock. Early in March 1848, they sent a detachment of forty-four men with the marshal, who was given discretionary powers to bring about a settlement with the Indians who had taken their stock. When this military force confronted a band of Indians on the east side of Utah Lake, a band who had taken seventeen head of cattle and one horse, the chief (probably Little Chief) made a settlement by giving a gun for compensation. He had the guilty men whipped and they all promised "to do better."³⁴

Unfortunately, this peace with these Indians did not last, despite friendly relations with other bands, including Walkara, who came to the Salt Lake Valley in August and traded horses and mules to the Saints. In the fall and spring of 1848-1849, a few angry natives rejected Little Chief's advice that members of his

³¹William J. Snow, "Utah Indians and Spanish Slave Trade," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 2 (July 1929):66-73; L. R. Bailey, *Indian Slave Trade in the South-West* (Los Angeles: Westernlore Press, 1966), pp. 139-73; S. Lyman Tyler, "Before Escalante: An Early History of the Yuta Indians and the Area North of Mexico" (Ph.D. diss., University of Utah, 1951); and Leland H. Creer, "Spanish American Slave Trade in the Great Basin, 1800-1853," *New Mexico Historical Review* 24 (July 1949):171-83.

³²Testimony on Indian Slavery by Brigham Young, 11 January 1852, Brigham Young Indian Superintendency Papers, Church Historical Department.

³³Solomon F. Kimball, "Our Pioneer Boys," *Improvement Era* 11 (August 1908):735. Kimball quotes Mary Ellen Kimball's diary, Church Historical Department.

³⁴Brooks, *The Diary of Hosea Stout*, 2:332-40.

band should not steal Mormon livestock. They made a "hunting expedition" into the Salt Lake Valley to take some of the Saints' livestock and returned to Provo Canyon. At the same time, other reports (later proved false) circulated that many horses had also been taken from Brigham Young's herd. Meanwhile, Oliver Huntington reported to Brigham Young that Little Chief was angry with Blue Shirt and Roman Nose and their followers because they had rejected his counsel and stolen Mormon cattle. Reportedly, he said,

if the big captain does not kill them I will, but it will look better for you to kill your own enemies. If they are not killed now, they will soon get more men to stealing cattle and then you will come up and kill me, my men, women, and children.³⁵

After a lengthy consultation, Young decided that a display of military power "would put a final end to their depredations in the future."³⁶ So in early March, John C. Scott led some thirty-five men to search for "hostiles." After looking unsuccessfully, the expedition met Little Chief who volunteered his sons to guide Scott to Blue Shirt's camp. Traveling at night to avoid detection, they crept up Battle Creek Canyon and surrounded three lodges of sleeping Indians. The Indian guides and D. B. Huntington requested that the Indians surrender and pay for the stock they had taken. But after repeated requests, the Indians not only refused to discuss the matter but demanded that the whites leave. They finally "gave a war hoop and fired three guns."³⁷ Captain Scott ordered his men to return fire, and within two hours all the Indian warriors were killed except a sixteen year old boy. After rounding up the Indian women and children, Little Chief urged the Saints to kill the boy to prevent him from taking revenge, but they rejected his advice. Instead, they took him and many of the other refugees to the Salt Lake Valley, where the Saints fed them until they were resettled among their relatives.³⁸

There is no doubt that this unfortunate episode generated hostile feelings toward the Mormons and Little Chief's group among certain bands in Utah Valley. New troubles started when the sixteen year old Indian refugee joined Wanship's and Goship's bands

³⁵Diary of Oliver Boardman Huntington, 1842-1900, Volume 1, page 53, Utah State Historical Society. Much of the politics between the Mormons and the Indians as well as the intratribal feuds can be seen in the way that Calvin Martin conceptualizes white-Indian relations in his article, "Ethnohistory: A Better Way to Write Indian History," *Western Historical Quarterly* 9 (January 1978):41-56.

³⁶Diary of Oliver Boardman Huntington, 1:55. Quotation comes from Brooks, *Diary of Hosea Stout*, 2:344.

³⁷Brooks, *Diary of Hosea Stout*, 2:346. Stout gives a very detailed description of this campaign from pages 344-347.

³⁸Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 27 February 1849.

and persuaded them to seek revenge by attacking Little Chief's band, killing one of his sons and stealing some of his livestock and horses. Expecting assistance, Little Chief told the Mormons that if they were his friends they should prove it by helping him get his horses back.³⁹ In a few days the request was honored.⁴⁰

Furthermore, when the Saints entered the Utah Valley to make their first settlement along the Provo River in March 1849, a band of Utahs led by Angatawata stopped them along the trail before they reached the river and refused to let them pass until they promised not to drive them from their lodges or interfere with their traditional way of life.⁴¹ Apparently agreements were reached that permitted the Saints to settle along the Provo.

During this period, Brigham Young also heard reports from Jim Bridger that Indians were on the warpath. Old Elk, a chief in the Utah Valley who frequently troubled the Saints, was urging all Indian bands to join him in an attack on the Mormon settlements.⁴² Louis Vasquez, Bridger's partner, reported that Barney Ward and two other Mormons had been trading with Bannocks and subsequently two of these Indians were murdered. Vasquez reported that the Indians blamed the Mormons and "talked of coming to the valley to war upon the Saints." Brigham Young discounted these reports as rumors and charged that Bridger and other mountaineers were "the real cause of the Indians being incensed."⁴³

Seeking to avoid an Indian uprising, Brigham Young took several defensive steps. First, he reorganized the Nauvoo Legion, which had been disbanded just before the Nauvoo exodus, by calling every able-bodied man between the ages of fourteen and seventy-five into service.⁴⁴ Second, he advised local authorities at Provo to finish their fort quickly and stay near the settlement. He also told them to place a cannon on top of the fort, to gather large numbers of small stones to use for grapeshot, and to keep a vigilant guard both day and night. Additionally, they were not to give presents to the Indians. However, if the Indians eventually proved to be friendly, the Saints were counseled to teach them to raise grain.⁴⁵ Third, Young restricted authorization to trade with the

³⁹Ibid., 12 April 1849. Hosea Stout reports that the sixteen-year-old boy joined Wanship's band and was killed in this battle.

⁴⁰Ibid., 7 May 1849.

⁴¹Orson F. Whitney, *History of Utah*, 4 vols. (Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon and Sons, 1892), p. 399.

⁴²Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 17 April 1849, Church Historical Department.

⁴³Ibid., 12 May 1849.

⁴⁴Brooks, *Diary of Hosea Stout*, 2:351. He said John Taylor and Brigham Young spoke on Sunday, 22 April, and said the "next Saturday [was] to be set apart in the after-noon to organize the Nauvoo Legion as the Indians were acting suspiciously."

⁴⁵Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 18 April 1849.

Indians in the Utah Valley to Alexander Williams and D. B. Huntington.⁴⁶ Fourth, he tried to counteract the undesirable influence he thought the mountain men had among the Indians by sending his own men to establish friendly relations with the Shoshone and Utah Indians. For this purpose, Thomas L. Smith was sent to visit the Indians near Bear Lake to establish friendship with these natives and if possible to negotiate the return of some women and children who belonged to Chief Walkara's band.⁴⁷ At the same time, D. B. Huntington was sent to make friends with Walkara.

A MORMON PEACE CORPS

Evidently, Young's strategy paid some dividends, for in June of 1849, Walkara and his men met with Mormon leaders. After all parties had smoked the peace pipe, Walkara declared his friendship with the Snakes, Timpany Utes, and the Mormons and asked the Saints to settle on his land. Brigham Young promised that if the chief would send him some guides in "six moons we will send a company to your place." Trying to assure Walkara that the Mormons were seeking peaceful relations, he continued, "We have an understanding with Goship and Wanship [Indians of the Salt Lake Valley] about this place. We want to be friends with you."⁴⁸

Seeking to make a Mormon settlement on Walkara's land attractive to the chief, Young revealed his plan for helping the Indians adjust to Mormon colonization. He promised to build Walkara a house and to teach his people to build homes, to raise livestock, to make blankets, and to read the Book of Mormon so they might know about their forefathers.⁴⁹ He also promised to trade them ammunition to hunt with. Likewise seeking to impress Brigham Young with his friendliness, Walkara gestured as he said:

Beyond the mountain, plenty of streams. From Salt Springs, over a mountain, lots of timber. The next sleep, good land, plenty of timber and grass. All my land clear. The Timpany Utes killed my father four years ago. I hate to have you stay on this land. If you come unto my land, my people shall not steal your cattle, nor whip them. I want the Mormon children to be with mine. I hate you to be on such poor land. When Patsoeuett heard that the Mormons had killed his brother, he had told the Indians to stop killing. He is not mad, but glad. It is not good to fight. It makes women and children cry. But let women and children play together. I told the Piedes, a great while ago to stop fighting and stealing, but they have no ears.⁵⁰

⁴⁶Ibid., 19 and 27 May 1849.

⁴⁷Ibid., 26 May 1849. See Young's letter of instructions, Young to Thomas Smith, 14 May 1849, Brigham Young Papers, Box 12, Folder 13, Church Historical Department.

⁴⁸Ibid., 14 June 1849.

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Ibid.

In reply, Young said he wanted the Saints to settle among them, and he tried to assure Walkara that the Mormons would be peaceful. The Mormon leader said, "I don't want to kill another Indian, but they [speaking of the Indians killed at Battle Creek] dared us to do it."⁵¹ The men Brigham Young sent to explore "Walkara's country" soon returned with a favorable report. Late in the fall of 1849, he sent 225 young people to plant a colony in the San Pitch Valley some 134 miles south and east of the original Salt Lake settlement.⁵²

Unlike the first settlement in the Salt Lake Valley, Manti, the first colony in the San Pitch Valley, was essentially a mission to cultivate peace with the Indians and to help them change their life-style from a hunting, food-gathering one, to an agriculturally-based one, believing that Mormon colonization would eventually reduce the Indians' supply of game. Once these local Indians were convinced to change their way of life, they were to be enlisted as missionaries, not only to declare to other Indians that the Mormons were their friends but also to tell them their lives would be enriched if they would adopt the Mormons' agricultural way of life. In a real sense, Manti was intended to be a Mormon "peace corps" for Chief Walkara's band and the surrounding Indians.

These extensive plans for the Manti colony are clearly revealed in the correspondence between Isaac Morley, president of the colony, and Brigham Young.⁵³ Soon after settlement, Morley used an analogy to state the purposes of their mission by saying:

We feel confident that no mission to the scattered sons of Joseph was ever attended with brighter prospects of doing good than the one in which we are engaged. . . . [They are like] a stone, from the quarry [which] needs polishing to become useful, and we believe there are some here that may be made, [with watchful care] to shine as bright gems in the Temple of the Lord, yes, stars that may spread their twinkling light to the distant tribes.

As an example of the fulfillment of his dreams, Morley declared that Walkara asked to be ordained so he could "spread the gospel to others" during his next trading expedition. Again reflecting on the purposes of the colony, Morley said:

Did we come here to enrich ourselves in the things of this world? No. We were sent to enrich the Natives and comfort the

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Milton R. Hunter, *Brigham Young the Colonizer* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1940), pp. 244-45.

⁵³For Morley's letter to Brigham Young, see those dated 20 February, 15 March, 13, 17, and 21 April 1850, found in Box 20, Folder 14, Brigham Young Papers, Church Historical Department. Some of Young's letters to Morley appear in the Manuscript History of Brigham Young under the dates from November 1850 through 1851. Other letters are scattered throughout his outgoing correspondence for the period.

hearts of the long oppressed. Let us try the experiment and if we fail to accomplish the object, then say, Boys, come away.⁵⁴

During the first winter, the Mormons tried to make their mission to the Indians succeed. Arriving late in November 1849, the settlers spent much of their energy trying to survive the winter by pitching tents, or building small log cabins, lean-tos, and other types of makeshift living quarters.⁵⁵ Since the winter was an unusually hard one, both the whites and Indians suffered from heavy snows and cold weather. Added to these troubles was an epidemic of measles, which caused deaths among both peoples.⁵⁶ Soon there was a shortage of medication, food, clothing, and livestock feed.

Fortunately, the Mormons and the Indians cooperated with each other during these hard times and formed strong bonds of friendship. While the snow was deep, the livestock found it nearly impossible to find sufficient feed. Many cattle died, and these animals were given to the Indians who found it difficult to find enough game. In addition, some Saints shared their meager food supplies with the Indians.⁵⁷ Some Indians, however, disobeyed Walkara and Arrapeen's promise that the Indians would not kill the settlers' livestock. The violators of this pledge, to the Saint's surprise and amazement, were shot by Walkara or his brother. Such action gave the local Saints confidence in Walkara's leadership and gave them hope that both sides could police their own and thereby maintain peace.⁵⁸ During the measles epidemic, the white settlers gave medication to their Indian friends, and fortunately, many of them recovered. Walkara, Arrapeen, and San Pitch all reported they believed that if the Mormons had not shared their medicine with them, many more of their children would have died.⁵⁹ Just before Christmas a wagon train was sent to Salt Lake for additional supplies, but on its return trip the oxen were unable to pull the wagons through the deep snow. However, the Mormons and the Indians cooperated in salvaging the needed food and clothing on hand-drawn sleds.⁶⁰

THE INDIANS AND THE PROVO COLONY

Meanwhile, the relationship of the Provo colony and the Indians of Utah Valley was a very different story, even though Young had fully expected the Provo Saints to establish friendly re-

⁵⁴Morley to Young, 17 April 1850, Brigham Young Papers, Box 20, Folder 14.

⁵⁵Hunter, *Brigham Young*, pp. 244-50.

⁵⁶Morley to Young, 15 March 1850, Brigham Young Papers, Box 20, Folder 14.

⁵⁷Morley to Young, 20 February, 15 March, 13, 17, and 21 April 1850.

⁵⁸Morley to Young, 17 April 1850.

⁵⁹Morley to Young, 15 March 1850.

⁶⁰Journal History, 15 March 1850 and 20 February 1850, contains letters from Morley to Young. On 12 April 1850, Young sent a "General Epistle to the Saints," Church Historical Department.

lations with the Indians as at Manti. From the beginning, the Indians irritated the pioneers by stealing their livestock. As a result, the Provo Saints nearly resorted to shooting Indians, especially after some natives had shot at Nolan, Thomas, and James Ivie; had killed several cattle; and had stolen some corn.⁶¹ But open warfare was avoided when a peace conference was held. From the Saints' point of view, the Indians had failed to keep their promises during the winter because they "still persisted in stealing, and were very saucy, annoying, and provoking, threatening to kill the men and take their women."⁶²

Hearing of these complaints, Brigham Young sought a practical solution by warning the colony at Provo to guard their property, secure their women and children inside the fort, and keep the Indians outside.⁶³ If we are going to have dominion over them so that they might share in the blessings of God, Young declared, you cannot treat them as equals and still expect to "raise them up to you." Much of the current problem he said, was caused by the Saints being

too familiar with them for the brethren have spent too much time smoking and chattering with them instead of teaching them to labor, such a course had encouraged them in idleness and ignorance, the effects of which we now feel.

Not abandoning his plans for having Provo establish friendly relations with the Indians, President Young frankly told them, "you must rid yourselves of these evils . . . a steady and upright and preserving course may yet restore or gain the confidence of the Indians and you will be safe."⁶⁴

Evidently, some Provo Mormons ignored Young's advice. Early in January, 1850, Richard A. Ivie, John R. Stoddard, and Jerome Zabriskie met an Indian named Old Bishop, accused him of wearing a stolen shirt, and proceeded to take it from him. But he drew his bow and Stoddard retaliated by shooting him in the head. Fearing the Indians' revenge, they dragged his body to the Provo River, filled it with rocks, and sank it near Box Elder Island. The Indians soon discovered the murder and demanded the criminals. When the Saints failed to turn the guilty men over to the Indians, the natives took revenge by stealing more livestock, driving their horses through the crops, and threatening to drive the Mormons from the valley. Angered by this retaliation, the settlers were likewise harsh in their treatment of the Indians. During

⁶¹Isaac Higbee to Brigham Young, 15 October 1849, Manuscript History of Brigham Young.

⁶²Ibid.

⁶³Young to Higbee, 13 October 1849, Manuscript History of Brigham Young.

⁶⁴Ibid.

this tense period, Old Elk, who had long been known for his hatred of the Mormons, came to the fort with the measles and asked for medication. Instead of helping him, Alexander Williams "took him by the nap of the neck and kicked him out."⁶⁵

Subsequently, Alexander Williams reported to Brigham Young that the Utah Indians had intensified their stealing of the livestock and were threatening to wage war on the settlement, but he didn't tell Young about the immediate cause of the troubles, the death of Old Bishop. Under these circumstances, Young repeated his previous counsel and said, furthermore, "there was no necessity for [killing Indians] if the Brethren acted wisely in their intercourse with them and warned the Brethren that if they killed Indians for stealing they would have to answer for it." Reemphasizing this point, Young asked,

Why should men have a disposition to kill a destitute, naked Indian, who may steal a shirt, or a horse and thinks it no harm, when they never think of meting out a like retribution to a white man who steals, although he has been taught better from infancy?"⁶⁶

Not satisfied with Young's reply, Isaac Higbee, leader of the Provo colony, presented his case against the Indians, saying they "had stolen 50 or 60 livestock . . . [and] were very saucy and threatened to kill more cattle and get other Indians to join them and help them kill the settlers in the valley." Higbee also claimed the Indians wanted to fight and called the settlers cowards "because they would not fight." Finally, he declared, "all the Brethren in [the] Utah Fort were agreed in asking the privilege of making war upon the Indians and defending themselves." Despite this last claim, all the settlers did not agree that fighting the Indians was necessary, a fact which was unknown to Brigham Young.⁶⁷

Thinking survival of the Provo settlement was at stake, Young consulted Captain Howard Stansbury, who had been conducting a geological survey in Utah Valley during the summer for the federal government. While there, Stansbury had had trouble with the same Indians and declared that in his opinion it was absolutely necessary for self-preservation to fight them. Since it would be impossible to call federal troops from Fort Hall, Stansbury offered Young arms, ammunition, and men "to serve without com-

⁶⁵Statement made by James Bean, 21 June 1854, inserted in Manuscript History of Brigham Young, January 1850.

⁶⁶Ibid., 1 January 1850.

⁶⁷Accounts of Higbee's plea can be found in the Manuscript History of Brigham Young for 31 January 1850 and in the Brigham Young Collection, Microfilm Reel 80, which is a copy of Brigham Young Papers, from Box 47, Folder 6, Church Historical Department.

pensation since they are being paid by the government" anyway.⁶⁹

After receiving this advice and offer of aid, Brigham Young, whose very nature was opposed to the shedding of blood, directed Daniel Wells to order the Nauvoo Legion to subdue the "hostile Indians" in the Utah Valley. Legion leaders were ordered to stop the depredations and, if necessary, to exterminate those who "do not separate themselves from their hostile clans and sue for peace." Furthermore, Legion leaders were cautioned to "exercise every principle of humanity comparable with the laws of war and see that no violence is permitted to women and children unless the same shall demand it."⁷⁰

After traveling to Fort Utah, the expedition discovered that the Indians had fortified themselves by using one of the abandoned log cabins and by dispersing themselves among the timber, behind an embankment, and in the snow and underbrush near the river.⁷¹ On 8 February, the Legion surrounded these natives but were unable to defeat them, though several Indians were either killed or wounded. After the first day's battle, the Legion leaders were unable to determine whether Indians from Spanish Fork and those to the south of the lake had joined the "hostiles," because additional livestock was taken during the night.⁷² To avoid further losses, fifteen men were dispatched to protect the livestock, the

⁶⁸Howard Stansbury, *An Expedition to the Valley of the Great Salt Lake of Utah: Including a Description of its Geography, Natural History, and Minerals, and an Analysis of its Waters: With an Authentic Account of the Mormon Settlement* (London and Philadelphia: Sampson and Lippincott Co., 1852), pp. 148–50. Drawings of Old Elk appear between pages 150–151. Stansbury reported that "After the [his] party left Lake Utah for winter quarters in Salt Lake City, the Indians became more insolent, boasting of what they had done—driving off the stock of the inhabitants in the southern settlements, resisting all attempts to recover them, and finally firing upon the people themselves, as they issued from their little stockade to attend to their ordinary occupations. Under these circumstances, the settlers in the Utah Valley applied to the supreme government, at Salt Lake City, for counsel as to the proper course of action. The president [Brigham Young] was at first extremely averse to the adoption of harsh measures; but, after several conciliatory overtures had been resorted to in vain, he very properly determined to put a stop, by force, to further aggressions, which, if not resisted, could only end in the total destruction of the colony. Before coming to this decision, the authorities called upon me to consult as to the policy of the measures, and to request the expression of my opinion as to what the Government of the United States might be expected to take of it."

⁶⁹Stansbury to Young, 4 February 1850. Brigham Young Papers, Microfilm Reel 44, Box 20, Folder 16.

⁷⁰Special Order No. 1, issued by Daniel H. Wells to John C. Scott, 31 January 1850, Utah Territory Military Nauvoo Legion Correspondence, 1849 to 1863, microfilmed by the Utah State Archives (cited hereafter as Legion Correspondence). For Brigham Young's feelings about bloodshed and violence, see Ronald W. Walker and Ronald K. Esplin, "Brigham Himself: An Autobiographical Recollection," *Journal of Mormon History* 4 (1977):19–34. Relying on the *Journal of Discourses (JD)*, these authors say, "Young described himself as praying 'fervently' that he would 'never be brought into circumstances to be obliged to shed human blood.' (*JD*, 11:128) 'I wish to save my life,' he insisted, 'and have no desire to destroy life. If I had my wish, I should entirely stop the shedding of human blood. The people abroad do not generally understand this.'" (*JD*, 10:108).

⁷¹Sources for the details of the campaign are from the Legion Correspondence, the Manuscript History of Brigham Young, and the *Diary of Hosea Stout*.

⁷²George W. Howland, an officer from Stansbury's expedition, wrote to Wells about the details of the first few days of the campaign. See Howland to Wells, 8 February 1850, Legion Correspondence.

cannon was mounted on wheels. Orders were issued not to take any hostile Indians prisoner, but only those friendly Indians who would sue for peace, and place them under guard at the fort.⁷³ On the ninth, the expedition again failed to defeat the Indians, even though they captured the log house. During the night, the Indians fled. Frustrated by their failure to keep the hostiles surrounded until they surrendered, companies were organized and ordered to trail the Indians, "and if they shall come in and sue for peace grant it to them. If not pursue and slay them wherever they can be found. Let it be with them 'Extermination or Peace.'"⁷⁴

Guided by these instructions, one company of men followed a party of Indians to Rock Canyon where they shot several natives and discovered that several Indians like Old Elk had died from exposure and wounds while others had escaped on snowshoes over the mountain. Another company of the Legion went south of Utah Lake where they killed some Indians and took other prisoners. Still another company followed other Indians onto the frozen lake and shot some of them. Reconnaissance parties searched elsewhere in the Utah Valley, but failed to find any more Indians.⁷⁵

While this fighting continued, Wells directed Ebenezer Hinkley, Barney Ward, and Isaac Brown to inform the Manti colony and an exploring party camped along the Sevier River that the Saints were at war with the Utah Indians. Consequently, they should protect themselves from possible hostilities and search for other routes to the Salt Lake Valley.

While at Manti, these three men also discussed with Walkara the war the Saints were having with the Indians of the Utah Valley. When told the details of the fighting, he expressed "considerable excitement [because] a number of his friends [had been] killed by the mormons."⁷⁶ Despite this loss of his friends, Walkara did not seek revenge but remained loyal to the Mormons. He reportedly said, "let them fight it out all is wright . . . the Utah[s] are bad they wont take counsil, they have killed my son Battee I feel bad, I want they should make me some presents of guns, Blankets. . . ." Reaffirming his loyalty, he said, "I want to have the Mormons stay here and plant . . . and do us good, and we will be

⁷³Wells to John Brown, 9 February 1850, Legion Correspondence.

⁷⁴Wells to G. D. Grant, 9 February 1850, Legion Correspondence.

⁷⁵For details of this phase of the battle, see Howland to Wells, 9 February 1850; General Orders No. 2, 16 February 1850; Special Orders No. 1, 11 February 1850; Special Orders No. 3, 18 February 1850, Legion Correspondence.

⁷⁶Special Orders No. 2, dated 16 February 1850, sent these men to Manti and to the exploring party camped along the Sevier River. Morley's letter to Wells, dated 20 February, told about Walkara's reactions to the Mormons' fighting with the Indians in the Utah Valley (Legion Correspondence).

friends. . . .”⁷⁷ Following this declaration, Walkara sent “two men to Arapene’s tent . . . to tell him to stay home and not go to fight and . . . [to tell] all natives in the region round about to stay at home and not go to fight.”⁷⁸ Brigham Young was obviously pleased that the Manti settlement had succeeded in keeping Walkara loyal to the Mormons.

In a few days, Walkara proved his devotion to the Mormons by asking President Morley to lead him “down into the waters of baptism” and by urging his clan “to find where, they [could] wash away [their] sins.” After the baptismal ceremony, Walkara requested Young to give him “a good lot of bread-stuff, . . . some whiskey, as . . . it makes him feel good, . . . [and] a good quantity of Rice, without fail” in exchange for a good pony.⁷⁹ In a few weeks the crafty Ute chief, claiming that Brigham Young had promised him a white wife, requested a wife from among the Mormon women at Manti.⁸⁰ Young granted his demands for food, but refused to honor his petition for a Mormon wife. And as for the whiskey, the Mormon leader said it was

not good, . . . and good Mormons do not drink it only as a medicine and the council of our great chief to bro. Walker is not to drink whiskey and persuade his people not to drink it and he will have more of the great spirit in his heart.⁸¹

Meanwhile, at Provo, the Nauvoo Legion did not execute “to the letter” General Wells’ order either to force a peace settlement or to exterminate the rebellious Indians. Probably not more than forty Indians of the several hundred in the Timpanoges band who lived in family clans in Utah Valley died from wounds and exposure or were killed outright in battle.⁸² Some escaped across the ice to disperse among the Gosiutes near Tooele, later to trouble the Saints in that region. Others snow-shoed over the mountains at the head of Rock Canyon, and apparently reported their unhappy experiences to the Weber Utes led by Little Soldier. The present of these Indians from Utah Valley subsequently contributed to the Indian troubles of the Mormons near Ogden. Still other warriors and women and children were captured and taken

⁷⁷Morley to Wells, 20 February 1850, Legion Correspondence.

⁷⁸Morley to Young, 20 February 1850, Brigham Young Papers, Reel 44, Box 20, Folder 13.

⁷⁹Morley to Young, 15 March 1850, Brigham Young Papers, Reel 44, Box 20, Folder 13.

⁸⁰Morley to Young, 13 April 1850.

⁸¹The First Presidency to Isaac Morley, 24 March 1850, Brigham Young Papers.

⁸²Peter Gottfredson, *Indian Depredations in Utah*, 2nd ed. (Salt Lake City: Private Printing, 1969), p. 35. Gottfredson estimates that some eighty warriors were involved in the battle. Howard Stansbury also estimated that forty warriors were killed and about forty prisoners were taken into custody.

along with their livestock to Salt Lake City, where they were cared for by Mormon pioneers for a short time.⁸³

Believing it was virtually impossible to track down those hostiles who had escaped, Mormon military leaders, after consultation with Brigham Young, abandoned their plans to exterminate all hostiles. Furthermore, they ordered that the Indian prisoners be released, returned to their people, and instructed to say that the Mormons would "dwell in peace [with them] if they cease their depredations and refrain from stirring up the neighboring Indians to enmity with their statements." To insure the continuance of peace, the Mormons proclaimed that "the friendly Indian *Black Hawk* must be their chief and they must obey him."⁸⁴ As an inducement to end all fighting, the Mormon leaders promised to return their ponies "and again become their friends. We do not wish to continue the war with them, but merely teach them to do right." In case the hostile Indians who had escaped returned to their homeland, Wells instructed Bishop Higbee and Captain Conover not only to make peace with them but also to "ascertain their true feelings toward us, and be prepared to detect any hypocrisy, . . . [and] do not trust them too far."⁸⁵

In his evaluation of the war, Brigham Young was frankly disappointed in the failure of the Saints in Provo to maintain peace with the Indians, especially in contrast to the success of the settlers at Manti. He said he "felt much chagrined at the conduct of the settlers" at Fort Utah. Therefore, he directed Wells to commission the local leaders to negotiate the final peace arrangements because it was unfair for the Church hierarchy to ask the Indians to promise to behave better than the Saints did.⁸⁶

Brigham Young tried to help heal the breach between the Mormon settlers and those Indians who had survived the war by

⁸³Brooks, *Diary of Hosea Stout*, 2:362. Stout says that Wells returned from the "campaign to the Utah bringing some 26 women & children prisoners & 13 horses The women & children were distributed among the people who were willing to take & educate and civilize them and the Horses are going to be given to some of the friendly Indians." The escape of the Indians is described in the Nauvoo Legion Correspondence. See Wells letter, dated 14 February 1850; Wells to Young, 18 February 1850; Conover and McBride to Wells, 23 February 1850. See also the account in the "Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs for the Utah Superintendency, 1849-1858," microfilm copy, Brigham Young University. The Office of Indian Affairs investigated the charge that the Mormons were holding Indian women and children in slavery when they had been taken during the war to "exterminate" the Utah Indians. For the details, see Edward Cooper to A. S. Langhery, 10 September 1850; George E. Montgomery to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 26 July 1850; and Edward Cooper to Luke Lea, 10 July 1851. Cooper concluded after talking with seven or eight witnesses that the 50 to 100 war refugees were not held in slavery. Instead, the Mormons had taken them into their homes and were caring for them. The Indians were free to return to their people when they decided it would be the better choice.

⁸⁴This technique was a common practice. Indian agents frequently gave presents to certain Indians to make them powerful enough to become chiefs. In this way, they were able to intervene in local Indian politics.

⁸⁵Wells to McBride, 23 February 1850, Legion Correspondence.

⁸⁶Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 1 May 1850.

ordering that the final arrangements include the return of all property and prisoners by the Provo Saints. In March of 1850, all prisoners and some horses were returned to Chief Black Hawk with the instructions that the property and the refugees were to be returned to the owners and next of kin. Young also promised Black Hawk that if he would come to a conference, the remainder of the horses would be returned. Wells said, "We want to show the Indians that we are their friends and not their enemies. We do not want their horses, women, or children."⁸⁷ Remembering that giving food, clothing, etc. had promoted successful relations with the Indians at Winter Quarters and at Manti, Young declared that despite the limited provisions at Provo, the Saints "would have to feed them more or less until they can raise grain or provide for themselves and that we should set an example of civilized men."⁸⁸

War with the Indians of the Utah Valley neither taught the natives the lessons the Saints intended nor reduced the cultural barriers between them. In the last of May 1850, two Utes killed a pioneer in the mountains between Utah Valley and Sanpete. They were tried, convicted, and executed by the Mormons. Early in the fall of that same year, the Saints became infuriated when some Shoshone began taking crops and livestock. They scolded the natives, who retaliated by deliberately running their ponies through the unharvested fields.⁹⁰ The cultural conflict was evident, because the Indians, who gathered food from the fields, felt crops were public property until harvested. For centuries they had been gathering food and did not consider it theft. On the other hand, the Saints considered the fields and crops private property as soon as they cleared and planted them.

Tensions continued to rise in Ogden when an Indian was shot in a corn patch, and the natives demanded that the guilty person be given to them. Believing the incident had been an accident, the Saints refused. To satisfy their code of ethics, the Indians took revenge by raiding the village and killing a white man.⁹¹ General Wells sent companies from the Nauvoo Legion to settle the affair. However, seeing this situation as different from the troubles in the Utah Valley, Brigham Young cautioned Legion members to "be careful not to get into further difficulty with them if it is

⁸⁷Wells to Conover, 21 March 1850, Legion Correspondence.

⁸⁸Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 1 May 1850.

⁸⁹Ibid. Reported in "Fourth General Epistle," dated 12 April 1850.

⁹⁰Lorin Farr to Brigham Young, 16 September 1850, Brigham Young Papers, Reel 44, Box 20, folder 13. See also C. C. Canfield to Daniel H. Wells, 16 September 1850, and Lorin Farr to John Fullmer, 17 September 1850, Legion Correspondence.

⁹¹Farr to Fullmer, 17 September 1850.

possible to avoid it [, but] let them understand, that they must quit their stealing if they want to live in peace.”⁹² Leaders of the Nauvoo Legion took this advice seriously. In a few days the Legion surrounded a band of Indians near Ogden, took some hostages, and then discussed their grievances with the Indians. Soon they reached an agreement which included the provision that the band of Utah Indians who had migrated to the Weber Valley after the recent war in the Utah Valley would return to their homeland.⁹³

Peace was restored, but it was not permanent. During the summer of 1851 some Shoshone near Ogden again began taking livestock and crops. The local Saints responded quickly by surrounding a band charged with the theft. During the powwow an Indian drew a knife and was shot. The word soon spread and other natives intensified their molestations to avenge his death. As a result, the settlers requested Governor Young send the Nauvoo Legion to again stop the Indian depredations.⁹⁴ Young sent a reprimand, saying the Snake Indians had always been friendly to the Saints:

There may be some among them who will not listen but will steal, now what if they should? Does it become us to make a wanton attack upon the nation and take their property in retaliation, . . . instead of exercising and giving heed to the wisdom which superior intelligence should dictate?⁹⁵

Now that we have this problem, Young asked, “how shall we heal the breach?” Answering his own question, he said of the Indian horses taken during the recent confrontation, “restore their property, and make ample satisfaction for killing one of their tribe, give them presents, and explain how it happened, tell them you did not intend killing him and would not, only to save your own lives.”⁹⁶ Finally, Young frankly stated, “Do not the people all know that it is cheaper by far, yes hundreds and thousands of dollars cheaper to pay such losses, than raise an expedition . . . to fight Indians.”⁹⁷

Meanwhile, the Mormon relations with the Indians near Tooele became even more strained than those near Ogden. As

⁹²Wells to Eldridge, 18 September 1850, Legion Correspondence.

⁹³Wells to Eldridge, 20 September 1850, Legion Correspondence.

⁹⁴Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 10 July 1851.

⁹⁵Young to Lorin Farr, 11 July 1851, Brigham Young Papers.

⁹⁶Ibid.

⁹⁷Ibid. The tone of the letters Brigham Young wrote before June 1852 to Luke Lea, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, was essentially the same as the idea expressed in this quotation. Finally, on 8 June 1852, Young again expressed this idea when he said, “In many of the settlements while in their infancy, and while provisions and clothing are yet scarce, it was and is a severe task to carry out the uniform policy of this the [Utah] superintendency ‘that it is better and cheaper to feed and

early as 1849, the Indians near Tooele had begun taking livestock. This practice continued intermittently for the next two years despite the efforts of the local residents to make a settlement with the Indians.⁹⁸ Finally, in 1851, believing all peaceful overtures had failed, Young directed General Wells to send twenty men to Tooele where they were to chasten the guilty Indians, recover the stolen property, and make them "understand that they must leave off their depredations."⁹⁹ Thirty Indians were subsequently captured, but most of them escaped before any peace agreement was reached, and livestock losses continued.¹⁰⁰ Exasperated by the situation, Wells sent a large company of men to track down the Indians and "if possible to let no hostile escape."¹⁰¹ But he warned them to act on the defensive and not give the Indians the opportunity to commit depredations. He cautioned them, saying:

If we pursue the same course that people generally do against the Indians we may expect to expend more time and money in running after Indians than all the loss sustained by them. . . . The frontier settlements will have to learn to obey counsel and guard with vigilance and build forts . . . and try to deal wisely with the Indians who have been raised to stealing and moreover are poor ignorant and degraded.¹⁰²

REMOVAL REQUESTED

Plagued by many Indian difficulties near Mormon settlements, Brigham Young, like many other frontiersmen, believed one good solution to these "Indian troubles" was to remove the natives away from most of the white settlers. In making this proposal to Congress, he asked, "Do we wish the Indian any evil?" Then he answered, "no we would do them good, for they are human beings, though most awfully degraded." Thinking of his own experiences in trying to alter the Indians' way of life, Young declared, "We would have taught them to plow & sow, and reap and thresh, but they prefer idleness and theft." For the good of the Indians, for the prosperity of civilization, and for the safety of the mail routes, he argued that Congress should remove the In-

clothe the Indians, than to fight them.' Thousands of dollars worth of means both public and private have been expended annually in this Territory in pursuance of this policy, and with the exception of a few expeditions, which were obliged to be made to suppress Indian hostilities, when unfortunately the above indicated peaceful policy failed to accomplish its generally successfully and always desirable results."

⁹⁸See the entries in the Manuscript History of Brigham Young for those reported Mormon troubles with the Indians during this two year span of time.

⁹⁹Ibid. Reports in the Manuscript History for the first six months of 1851 show an increase of Indian troubles at Tooele. This quotation comes from Wells' orders to G. D. Grant, dated 12 February 1851, Legion Correspondence.

¹⁰⁰Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 14 June 1851.

¹⁰¹Wells to Grant, 13 June 1851, Legion Correspondence.

¹⁰²Wells and Ferguson to Grant, 14 June 1851, Legion Correspondence.

dians from the interior of the Great Basin to a region near the Wind River Mountains, or "on the snake river, where [there] are fish and game or on the eastern slope of the Sierra Nevada, between the Northern and Southern route to California, where no white man lives, and forests and streams are plenty."¹⁰³

After removal, he argued that Congress should not simply leave them to fend for themselves, but should send them teachers, farmers, and missionaries to teach them agriculture, science, and religion. Finally, Young concluded that the Indians "would improve faster, being thus removed from their hunting grounds, knowing as many of them now do, the value of bread, than they would be instructed in this region, where they have been accustomed to hunt, and long remembered exploits would be brought to mind by daily observation."¹⁰⁴ This plea to remove the Indians from the territory was not the last one Brigham Young made, for he and other Mormons continued their request that the government extinguish the Indians' rights to the soil and remove them to some other territory.¹⁰⁵ The request was finally granted in 1868 as the government created a reservation for many Utah Indians.¹⁰⁶

Between 1835 and 1851, Brigham Young certainly experienced a great variety of association with many different native American tribes while he had lived in Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois; had led the epic Mormon exodus; and finally had colonized the Great Basin. During this formative period, Brigham Young, the Mormon Prophet, colonist, and governor, preached sermons to the Indians; performed sacred religious rites for them; smoked their peace pipes; negotiated agreements with them for settling on their land; bartered guns, ammunition, and food in exchange for their children, furs, hides, and horses; gave them tobacco, food, and clothing to alleviate their suffering; and established colonies to aid them in making a transformation of their hunting, fishing, and food-gathering habits to a more reliable agricultural economy patterned after the Mormon life-style. But he also found it necessary to engage in open conflict with those Indians in the Basin when it seemed that peaceful means had failed to settle Mormon differences with them.

These experiences, along with his belief in Mormon scripture and his observations of how other Americans had dealt with In-

¹⁰³Young to John M. Bernhisel, 20 November 1850, Brigham Young Papers. Excerpts from the letter may also be seen in the Manuscript History of Brigham Young.

¹⁰⁴Manuscript History of Brigham Young.

¹⁰⁵Ibid.

¹⁰⁶Some of Brigham Young's correspondence with the Commissioners of Indian Affairs, with other public officials, and with Utah's delegates in Congress asks that government officials make treaties with the Indians which would extinguish Indians' rights to the land.

dians, influenced Brigham Young to formulate what he thought was a workable and practical philosophy of Indian relations. He said,

If we can secure the good will of the Indians by conferring favors upon them we not only secure peace for the time being but gradually bring them to depend upon us until they eventually will not be able to perceive how they can get along without us.

He further stated that he wished the natives would

become perfectly dependent and be obliged to come to us for food and clothing, whereas if we drive them to take care of themselves it begets an independent and self reliance among [them] which ... [would prove detrimental to us as a people].¹⁰⁷

This philosophy, in the absence of government-sponsored Indian reservations, guided Brigham Young's relations with the Indians during the remainder of his life as he colonized several hundred settlements in Utah, Idaho, Wyoming, Nevada, California, Arizona, and New Mexico. Likewise, this philosophy influenced even his less direct associations with the Indians during Mormon conflicts with the mountain men, Indian agents, government officials for Indian affairs in Washington, non-Mormon immigrants passing through the Great Basin (as the Mountain Meadows Massacre exemplifies), non-Mormon territorial officials, and the army which came to Utah to suppress the alleged "Mormon rebellion." Even after Brigham Young's death, this great colonizer's views on Indian relations continued to have an impact on Mormon-Indian affairs for decades to come.

¹⁰⁷These quotations come from a scrap of paper in Brigham Young's papers. Although not dated, they succinctly express Brigham Young's philosophy of Indian relations.

From the Rumors to the Records: Historians and the Sources for Brigham Young

Ronald K. Esplin

In western New York, before he knew the Mormons, Brigham Young and a circle of friends sought earnestly for religious truth. In 1860 Hiram McKee, one of this circle and now a minister himself, wrote Brigham Young a warm letter of concern. McKee wrote to call his former friend to repentance, not for following a different path to God, but for his alleged notorious personal wickedness.

I have often thought of you. . . . I have not forgotten your advise, counsel, prayrs, My confidence was great in you, in view of your deep piety, and faith in God. You was one of my early spiritual friends, and guides, and I have often enquired in my mind, I wonder if Brigham enjoys as much piety now as then, or wheather ambitious, and love of power, . . . did not hold some sway in that mind, that was once so humble, contrite and devoted.

“Now Brother Brigham,” he continued, “before the allseeing God who in the judgment will judge us can you lay your hand on your heart and say that your hope of heaven is [now] as good as then. Think before you answer. . . .” After reviewing scriptural ideas on sin and judgment, McKee arrived at the heart of what troubled him: “How can you stand in that day with the cries of your worse than murdered women rising up, your daughter murdered by your Danites . . . , how answer for the murder of the man found in the meat market” and also for “hundreds of others.”

. . .my brother don't think me unkind when I confidentially write you thus plain for you was my friend in the dark hour of sin and prayed for my conversion and gave me good counsel . . . and now . . . how important to have a plain friend to admonish and stir up your mind. . . . It is from no unkind feelings I entertain, no[r] any

base design, that I write but purely to have you enter into an impartial examination of yourself. . . .¹

Within a few days of receiving this letter, President Young dashed off a hasty note to be carried by Captain Walter Murray Gibson, a world traveler lately visiting in Salt Lake City, who could “plainly and truthfully give you much information.” Expressing thanks for the “very welcome, and kind-hearted letter,” Young promised that at his earliest convenience he would personally reply at length “and disabuse your mind upon many points derived by you from the adverse prints of the day.”

One week later he wrote a lengthy response to the “very friendly, frank, and interesting letter,” endeavoring, he said, to reply with “at least an equal degree of kindness and frankness.”

I also vividly remember the scenes, feelings and experiences of the times to which you kindly allude, when we were fellow seekers after the truths revealed from Heaven. . . . You state that in Oswego [New York] you deemed me sincere in my efforts to secure salvation, and exemplary in my conduct and conversation. I daily examine my desires, efforts and views by the best light I can obtain. . . . I feel that I am and ever since have been as honest a seeker after truth as I was during our acquaintance. . . .

Young affirmed that he continued to keep his gaze fixed upon Salvation’s Port “to steer my bark safely to anchor in ‘heaven’s broad bay.’” and that he had not adjusted his actions to worldly ambitions:

. . . facing the storm of villification, slander, abuse, and persecution of the most vile and cruel character, [since joining the Church] until this moment, is very strong proof that I do not trim my sails to catch the popular breezes of the world’s cliques and circles.

And as for the charges against him, Young wished to

. . . further inform you that most of the crimes you mention as being charged to me were never before so much as *heard* of by me; and I can hardly persuade myself that you need my assurance, which you may implicitly rely upon, . . . that I am as innocent as a nursing babe of committing, counseling, in any way, having anything to do with such deeds—they are most excruciating and horrifying to all my feelings and natural organization.

Young then referred specifically to several of the alleged crimes, asserting that some, like the supposed murder of his daughter by the Danites, simply never occurred:

The “disclosures” you mention, as far as they have come under my

¹Hiram McKee to Brigham Young, 4 April 1860, Brigham Young Papers, Church Archives, Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah (hereafter cited as Church Archives). Some punctuation has been added.

notice, are a tissue of gross, death-designed lies, larded here and there with a little truth, when telling that truth does not militate against the effect of those lies concocted with the well known and express design to exterminate us from the earth.

In closing President Young strongly urged Brother McKee to visit him in Utah where he would have the "opportunity of learning our faith, conduct and conversation as they really are."² In a postscript Young alluded to the indictments made in anti-Mormon publications he had seen, but still maintained that many of the accusations in McKee's letter were "*entirely* new to me, I had never before heard of, and they are utterly and maliciously *false*, like the other exceedingly numerous lies that have been so widely and zealously circulated against us."³

This exchange is presented at length as a striking example of the light which a study of Brigham Young's personal papers can throw on a difficulty which he faced all his life. Few men in history have been as systematically villified in the press of their day as was Brigham Young. It is important to comprehend the reality of this problem, how it has prejudiced history's view of Brigham Young, and how it might be overcome. To begin, it is instructive to learn Brigham Young's own view of the problem from the primary sources, most of which are in the Latter-day Saint Church Archives, in Salt Lake City, Utah. His theology saw the press campaign as just one more evidence that the father of lies rails against truth, and the anti-Mormon publications were "all written at the instigation of the Spirit of the Devil." More directly, he placed the blame on politicians and editors who catered to the base emotions of the people. It made good copy, he realized, for the newspapers to charge an isolated and hated sect in the far West with the most heinous of crimes. "According to their version, I am guilty of the death of every man, woman, and child that has died between the Missouri river and the California gold mines," he remarked with characteristic hyperbole of his own. "Such are the newspaper stories. Such reports are in the bellows, and editors and politicians are blowing them out."⁴

To the question of why he and other Mormons didn't answer the stream of lies, Brigham retorted, "We might do this if we owned all the papers published in Christendom," but "who will publish a letter from me or my brethren? Who will publish the truth from us?" Even if it "gets into one paper it is slipped under

²Brigham Young to Hiram McKee, 26 April 1860 and 3 May 1860, Church Archives.

³Postscript in Young to McKee, 3 May 1860.

⁴Brigham Young, 26 July 1857 sermon in *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1855-86), 5:77 (hereafter cited as *JD*).

the counter . . . [and] never gets into a second," he concluded, while the lies are circulated widely and repeatedly.

The old adage is that a lie will creep through the keyhole and go a thousand miles while truth is getting out of doors; and our experience has proved this. We have not the influence and power necessary to refute the falsehoods circulated about us.⁵

On an earlier occasion Young wrote that he was

often made aware of the utter uselessness and folly of seeking to vindicate my character from such foul aspersions as are occasionally raised against me, from the simple fact that, although the foul aspersions can be bruited far and wide held to the fluttering breeze by every press and rolled as a sweet under every tongue, yet when the vile slander is fairly refuted and truth appears in the most incontestible manner it is permitted to lie quietly upon the shelf to slumber the sleep of death, or if by chance it should get published in some obscure nook or corner of this great republic be most religiously suppressed as tho in fear that the truth should be known and believed.⁶

It appears clear from his papers, that Brigham Young, for the most part, was not overly sensitive about his personal reputation, and on occasion used it to advantage. In addressing California-bound emigrants in 1863, for example, with a dramatic flair he introduced himself as the "notorious Brigham Young" who nonetheless wanted only "to live in peace with all mankind, and have the privilege of teaching men the way of life and salvation." Had his personal reputation been the overriding concern, he knew the answer: "Were I to renounce my religion," he told Governor Alfred Cumming, "I could . . . be honored, I could go abroad in the World and be respected, but I love my religion above all else." He told the governor in the same meeting, "I care nothing about my character in this world, I do not care what men say about me; I want my character to stand fair in the eyes of my Heavenly Father."⁷

Young's concern about the "adverse prints of the day" stemmed mainly from a practical recognition of the liability they were to the work of the Church; and from his own sense of frustration at not having the power to counter them. And here, God was his refuge. Confident he was engaged in God's work, he found peace of mind in leaving to God what he could not personally change. He wrote a few weeks before he died to a missionary son, that rather than answer all the falsehoods, his years of experience had brought him wisdom "to trust in God. This is His

⁵JD 13:177 (29 May 1870).

⁶Young to Jefferson Davis, 8 September 1855, Church Archives.

⁷Office Journal, 19 June 1863, and Minutes, 24 April 1859, Church Archives.

work, and He will take care of it, if He does not, we cannot.”⁸ This, too, was his defense in the difficult '50s, when he frequently commented that the “fellowship of my brethren and the friendship of my God, is dearer far dearer, to me” than all the smiles of the world, or sharply reminded an associate:

Your age and experience must be badly at fault if they have not taught you, long ere this, that I neither count the favors, nor fear the frowns of man, knowing firm well that the cause in which I am enlisted will ride triumphant over all opposition.⁹

President Young firmly believed, however, that man is the instrument for carrying out God's will. Where he had the opportunity to effectively counter the defamation, it was his duty. He responded gladly to an invitation by newspaperman James Gordon Bennett to defend himself in the New York *Herald* against certain charges. President Young thanked Bennett “for the privilege of representing facts as they are,” adding that he would “furnish them gladly any time you make the request.” In 1855, in response to charges stemming from the Gunnison Massacre, “contrary to my usual custom in regard to the various false Malicious and slanderous reports set in motion against my character by wicked and designing men,” he sent a detailed letter and report to the Secretary of War, Jefferson Davis.¹⁰ “For my own satisfaction and that of my friends as well as the relatives of the lamented Gunison,” the matter was, he concluded, “one calling for reply and vindication.”

While his written responses to calumny were infrequent, President Young apparently took every opportunity in verbal exchanges to counter the unfavorable image that predominated. Numerous travelers did visit Salt Lake to learn first hand about the Mormons, and he frequently hosted them and granted lengthy interviews to them. As he explained near the end of his life to Wilford Woodruff, when such visitors were “quite a tax” on his time and strength:

I am satisfied that such visits are, as a rule, productive of good results. Many a one who comes to Utah filled with all kinds of outrageous ideas with regards to the Mormons in general and Brigham Young in particular, . . . go away with feelings greatly modified, and often afterwards have a kind word for the people of Utah when they hear them assailed, and occasionally will smooth the way of any of our missionaries whom they chance to meet. This interviewing, then,

⁸Young to Lorenzo Dow Young, 15 June 1877, Church Archives.

⁹Young to John M. Bernhisel, 27 November 1851; and Young to Henry G. Sherwood, 29 May 1856, Church Archives.

¹⁰Telegram, Young to James Gordon Bennett, 10 April 1873; and Young to Jefferson Davis, 8 September 1855, Church Archives.

though sometimes disagreeable is too valuable a means of correcting false ideas, and removing prejudice to be discontinued whilst by the blessings of the Lord I am able to meet those who call on me and extend to them courtesies to which, in some cases, they are probably entirely unworthy.¹¹

Brigham Young was understandably sensitive about the continuing adverse publicity. Historians, of course, must deal with the basic question: Was President Young correct in blaming the problem on Satan-inspired editors who catered to public clamor regardless of truth? Or were the editors and correspondents right in charging the Mormons with repeated serious crimes? For the moment it is important to note two things. First, the papers of Brigham Young demonstrate that throughout his life he soberly maintained his innocence:

“Well, have you not committed wrong?” I may have committed a great many wrongs for want of judgment or wisdom—a little here and a little there. “But have you not done great wrongs?” I have not.

He was “as innocent as a nursing babe of committing, counseling, in any way, having anything to do with such deeds,” he told his friend McKee.¹² Since neither contemporaries nor historians have ever caught him in a web of lies, his own statements must carry considerable weight.

I am accused of a thousand evils, but I have never feared but one thing with regard to myself—and that is, that I should be left to do an evil that the people may truly blame me; while they cannot speak evil of me and tell the truth, it never harms me.¹³

Let the whole world believe otherwise, Brigham Young seems always to have had a clear conscience before his God.

Secondly, there are good reasons for accepting a widespread campaign of distortion as Young charged. For most of President Young’s period of leadership, Utah remained an isolated, remote hinterland to the eastern States. And even editors who were not anti-Mormon understood that lurid anti-Mormon tales made good copy. The Mormons were far enough removed, and with few enough friends and little enough media strength, that falsehoods could not be immediately countered. As long as Brigham Young made good copy, editors published freely with little fear of being called to account. Of course eastern newspapers had few resources to check the accuracy of western dispatches had they been so inclined. Editors borrowed each other’s copy, sharing the information

¹¹Young to Wilford Woodruff, 12 June 1877, Church Archives.

¹²*JD* 13:177 (29 May 1870); and Young to McKee, 3 May 1860, Church Archives.

¹³*JD* 10:191 (31 May 1863).

from sometimes anonymous correspondents hundreds of miles away.

It is helpful to learn that Mormons were hardly alone in their exasperation over the inaccuracies of printed accounts of Utah and the Mormons. After reading extensively on the Mormons and then making his own inspection of Utah, the noted French observer Jules Remy concluded:

Of those who have written on the Mormons, by far the greater number have derived their information from sources little to be relied upon. The historians and travelers who have been their guides, have either never inspected the facts on the spot, or have looked at them from the point of view of their own foregone opinions, and too often of their passions.¹⁴

Other non-Mormons in the West also reported their surprise at the total unreliability of the news. During the Utah War period, for example, when the number of correspondents might have militated against gross distortions, Captain Jesse Gove wrote from the army camp near Fort Bridger that he had lately received several eastern newspapers with stories about the conditions of the Utah Expedition. Were they accurate? "Just about as much like it is as a church is to a slaughter house," he explained to his family. Late that spring the army escorted the new governor, Alfred Cumming, and his wife Elizabeth, to their new assignment in Salt Lake City. In July Mrs. Cumming wrote home about the "New York & other papers" just received:

The *quantity* of news about Utah—but amid all the falsehoods, it is strange that *not one single truth* should be told—yet such is the fact. . . . The chief peculiarity of all these stories lies in the fact that there is not even a *foundation* for any of them.

Mrs. Cumming noted on another occasion her astonishment at meeting a Mr. Knight, "well known *in the States* as the man the Mormons *killed*, a few months since, under circumstances of peculiar atrocity."¹⁵

The significance of all this is that the mountain of inaccurate information about Young and the Mormons continues to constitute a serious impediment to understanding Brigham Young. After carefully examining the question, most would agree with

¹⁴Jules Remy and Julius Brenchley, *A Journey to Great-Salt-Lake City*, 2 vols. (London: W. Jeffs, 1861), 1:v.

¹⁵Otis G. Hammond, ed. *The Utah Expedition, 1857-1858; Letters of Captain Jesse A. Gove . . .*, Volume 12, *New Hampshire Historical Society Collections* (Concord, N.H.: New Hampshire Historical Society, 1938), p. 148; and Elizabeth Cumming as quoted in William Mulder and A. Russell Mortensen, eds., *Among the Mormons: Historic Accounts by Contemporary Observers* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967), pp. 312 and 315. Italics in original.

historian Dean Jessee, who concluded "So unfavorable was the popular reaction to Mormonism and its leaders . . . that the stream of historical sources . . . received a taint from which it has never been adequately purified."¹⁶ Unfortunately, until recently most writers have not recognized the pervasive distortion and have continued to use the biased sources uncritically or to quote from others who have so used them.

The challenge for historians, then, is to use other primary materials to correct the systematic distortion of many nineteenth century sources relating to Brigham Young. That this is not merely a nineteenth century problem is evidenced by the fact that the most recent book-length study of Young has been perhaps most guilty of misunderstanding and misusing the tainted stream of sources. Biographer Stanley P. Hirshson used unchecked and uncorrected newspaper accounts as the main source for his *The Lion of the Lord: A Biography of Brigham Young*. Hirshson argued in his introduction that the key to understanding Young was not in the West, but in "the files of . . . great Eastern newspapers prosperous and wise enough to . . . send their best reporters to Salt Lake City. . . ."¹⁷ Furthermore, Hirshson seems unaware who his informants are. The author of some of the articles he relies so heavily on during the Utah War period, for example, is that same Mormon critic Captain Jesse Gove, who secretly served as a correspondent while complaining that all the other dispatches were filled with lies! Fawn M. Brodie, herself no great supporter of Brigham Young and the Mormons, criticizes Hirshson for being misled by an improper reliance on these anti-Mormon sources to concentrate exclusively on Brigham Young the liar and scoundrel, while ignoring his great accomplishments as a leader.¹⁸

Once while acknowledging "regret that my mission is not better understood by the world," Brigham Young nonetheless expressed optimism that "the time will come when I will be understood and I leave to futurity the judgment of my labors and their results. . . ."¹⁹ So far he could not be greatly pleased. Not only have some, like Hirshson, continued to print as truth old and unproven charges, even those who praise him have failed to perceive his virtues or his mission as he saw it. The accolades have come

¹⁶Dean C. Jessee, ed., *Letters of Brigham Young to His Sons* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1974), p. xxxviii.

¹⁷Stanley P. Hirshson, *The Lion of the Lord: A Biography of Brigham Young* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), p. x. If Jeffersonian scholars were to use this approach in writing a biography of Thomas Jefferson, that is, use Federalist newspapers as their main source, he would emerge as an anti-Christian, un-American tyrant conspiring to burn all the Bibles and corrupt all the morals of saintly New England.

¹⁸Fawn M. Brodie, *New York Times Book Review*, 9 November 1969.

¹⁹Telegram, Young to Bennett, 10 April 1873, Church Archives.

for his secular accomplishments, clearly of only secondary importance to Young. While refreshing, such applause is more reminiscent of the plaudits given him by literate travelers in his own day who acknowledged his tremendous practical skills, than it is suggestive of profound and balanced understanding of the man. This is not the kind of recognition he had in mind.

What do you suppose I think when I hear people say, "O, see what the Mormons have done in the mountains. It is Brigham Young. What a head he has got! What power he has got! . . ." It is the Lord that has done this. It is not any one man or set of men; only as we are led and guided by the spirit of truth.²⁰

Rather than such generalizations, he would have us assess his spirit, understand his guiding principles, perceive his overall vision, a task made possible by the survival of his papers. He was "making Saints," he often affirmed, not building cities or conducting migrations. His character, his honesty, his relationship with and standing before God, his keys and calling, faith and vision—these things most important to him have been largely overlooked by students of history.

It is time to rethink our approach to Brigham Young. Given full and accurate materials, the historian and biographer ought to be well-suited to assess Young on his own terms. Both within and without the Church are scholars more interested in understanding the historical past than in merely praising or condemning. When scholars probe the Mormon experience and the details of Young's leadership using the extensive manuscript collections that exist, we can expect exciting results.

Undoubtedly the most important repository in this regard is the Church Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.²¹ Archivists in the Historical Department have recently finished a major recataloging of most nineteenth century holdings, including the personal papers of Brigham Young and those dealing with his lengthy administration. Until this was done, some important materials were unidentified and many were not accessible. In Young's day the major holdings of the Historian's Office were arranged chronologically to facilitate the compilation of detailed "documentary" histories, the work of historians George A. Smith, Orson Pratt, and Wilford Woodruff. With different needs, the next generation of historians devised new arrangements of the material. Organization of the historical materials by subject assisted the men of Andrew Jenson's day in the compilation of branch

²⁰*JD* 14:81 (9 April 1871).

²¹The Church Archives is a division of the Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah.

histories and the preparation of biographical sketches of leaders. This arrangement served a useful purpose, but dispersing the papers of their life and their office obscured the contribution of men like Brigham Young.

In the late 1960s under Church Historian Joseph Fielding Smith, professionally trained archivists began applying modern archival procedures to the holdings of the Archives. Provenance (place of origin) and original order became controlling principles as they embarked on a recataloging program. One of the milestones in this recataloging was the recent completion of the Papers of Brigham Young, along with related collections detailing his role and activities in the nineteenth century. Once a collection of materials is dispersed, it is not strictly possible to return to original order or to determine provenance in every case. But with Brigham Young's papers, clerks' handwriting and filing notations often provided the necessary clues when other means failed. By knowing which clerk worked on specific assignments in the office, and by gradually piecing together the filing systems employed, it has been possible to assemble and arrange a huge body of Brigham Young materials. This work now provides historians access to Brigham Young materials without their having to survey the entire holdings of the Archives. It also permits the identification of pieces previously unknown, and provides entirely new significance to many documents.

For example, an index to filing topics in the 1850s makes it clear that "Balderdash" on the back of some letters is more than the personal response of a clerk to the content; it is an official filing category. Indeed, "Balderdash" and "Trash" both referred to file location 68 where such nonvital papers were kept. A seemingly useless list of names takes on meaning when placed with other such lists from the President's Office of people called on missions, especially when one notes the reason for the heading in red ink: "don't tell them they are missionaries." By careful comparison of clerks' handwriting, format, file notations, and content, archivists brought together reports, notes, and working papers which the historian would otherwise have seen only in isolation. The papers of losses and expenses incident to the 1853 Indian uprisings told little when filed under the names of the hundreds of men involved, but brought together as supporting documents for Brigham Young's requests for government reimbursement, they begin to detail the story of dislocation and property loss occasioned by the violence.

The bulk of the papers once belonging to Brigham Young and his "President's Office" are now arranged in 149 boxes oc-

cupying ninety feet of shelf space. This includes nearly 14,000 pages of outgoing correspondence in nineteen letterpress copy books, with another 2,100 loose letters—retained copies or drafts. Incoming correspondence is equally impressive, with nearly 14,000 different pieces of mail preserved. There are also one fiberdex box and four bound volumes containing copies of telegrams sent or received during the last fifteen years of Young's administration.

More than one-third of the collection consists of account books and the papers detailing Young's extensive business and financial affairs. There is a wealth of important detail buried therein, including important clues to Brigham Young's own life and personality. Family expense books, for instance, provide concrete information about the needs and organization of his extensive family. Accounts can also be used to verify anecdotes and stories handed down in reminiscences and family memory. For example, non-Mormon Alexander Toponce recorded several delightful stories of his business dealings with Brigham Young. ("One of the most satisfactory men I ever did business with. There was nothing of the cheeseparing skinflint about him," he said.) One of these involved selling President Young forty mules in 1873, and extending credit for half the \$3,000 agreed price. "From first to last," Toponce reported of that transaction, "I found Brigham Young the squarest man to do business with in Utah, barring none, Mormon Jew or Gentile."²² It is useful to find a record verifying the remembered transaction, attesting that Brigham Young bought forty mules and one horse from Toponce 9 July 1873 for \$3,000.

There are many thousands of pieces in the accounts series: invoices, bills, statements, agreements, receipts, drafts, promissory notes, etc. The series also includes approximately 450 books of accounts ranging from massive ledgers and daily journals, to small memoranda books, including Brigham Young's own accounting system and general office books, along with the books of businesses that he operated. It does not include, however, an additional forty-five linear feet of financial records—now housed in the Trustee-in-Trust record group—created by Young in his role as Trustee for the Church. Nor does it include the approximately twenty linear feet of immigration records created in connection with the Perpetual Emigration Fund and immigration system that he oversaw. In all these papers one can trace the concrete details of building the Utah commonwealth. For all the recognition of Brigham Young's practical skills, we have yet to appreciate his accomplishments as a businessman and financier. His ingenious cred-

²²Alexander Toponce, *The Reminiscences of Alexander Toponce: Pioneer, 1839-1923* (Ogden, Utah: Mrs. Katie Toponce, 1923), pp. 86 and 196.

it "banking" system for organizing Mormon resources in a non-cash economy is largely unknown. The master ledgers in his office served as a central bank, a pool of credits to be drawn upon for goods and services, priming the young economy for the benefit of all and permitting the combining of resources for major capital ventures.

Utah's political and Indian affairs during Young's two terms as governor can now be studied in greater detail. Separate series bring together many of the administrative papers for these two of Young's many activities, with additional information available in other parts of the collection. The Brigham Young Papers also contain sermons, minutes, diaries, reports, petitions, family papers, etc.

The archivists have also created or recreated other collections of papers related to the administration of Brigham Young. There are important materials in the collection of general minutes, the statements collection, the ecclesiastical court papers, and the Utah Territory collection (fifteen linear feet of which deals with the Brigham Young period), and numerous smaller collections. The Historian's Office record group contains office journals for the entire period of Brigham Young's administration, providing important detail. And the massive day-by-day compilation "Manuscript History of Brigham Young," completed by historians soon after his death, occupies another sixteen feet of shelf space and contains about 48,000 pages dealing with Brigham Young and his time.

The papers of men close to Brigham Young also add to our understanding of the Mormon leader. Of his clerks we have papers of George D. Watt, Thomas Bullock, and William Clayton, three of the nearly two dozen men who served at one time or another as clerks, along with some papers from many others. The papers of George A. Smith, Heber C. Kimball, John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, Daniel H. Wells, and other general authorities close to President Young cannot be overlooked, nor can the smaller collections of many other individuals. Dozens of diaries contain significant material about Brigham Young. And probably hundreds of the thousands of volumes of minutes of local congregations record details of Brigham Young's travels, sermons, and council meetings throughout the Territory.

Those who would understand the enigmatic pioneer must begin with these materials. They await those students of history willing to expend the time and energy necessary to master them. As we have seen, most students of Brigham Young have seen him through the eyes of a hostile press, rather than attending to thorough research in more reliable sources. Once scholars mine these sources for new answers and new insights, the twisted view of

contemporary critics will cease to dominate historical treatment of Young's life. The materials exist to bring him to life as a human being. Seeking to understand rather than apologize or attack, giving him life again with triumph and trauma, historians can perhaps come to see him as he was to his people.

Brigham Young anticipated that historians would be, in some sense, the stewards of his reputation, and he found comfort in leaving to them "the judgment of my labors and their results." He has also left many of the materials to aid in the task. Having handed to our generation the challenge and the resources, no doubt his appeal to us would be similar to the earnest request he made of his friend Hiram McKee, with whom we began: "avail yourself of so excellent an opportunity of obtaining correct information in relation to myself and those over whom I have been called to preside."²³ This issue of *BYU Studies* suggests that the appeal will be heeded, and that the future will come to know Young much better than the present through responsible, significant, insightful study of the sources. I submit that Brigham Young would be pleased to have himself and his people the subject of serious, dispassionate study and would only encourage its advance.

²³Young to McKee, 26 April 1860, Church Archives.

The Historians Corner

Edited by James B. Allen

In this issue we present two documents that make fine companions, even though they were never intended to be such. They both reflect certain aspects of the expansion of Mormonism that received special impetus with the mission of the Quorum of the Twelve to England in 1840. One letter reflects two American Mormons' impressions of England, while the other reflects an English Mormon's reflections of the journey to and arrival at the Promised Land. Both letters were written in 1840. Brigham Young and Willard Richards wrote their letter on 5 September 1840 and sent it to Joseph Smith with the first emigrant company they had officially organized. With that company was William Clayton, who wrote his letter on 10 December, almost immediately after his arrival in Nauvoo, Illinois. Together these letters provide some important reflections of the times as seen through the eyes of Mormons.

As usual, these documents are published as near to their original form as practicality permits. They are edited only with minimal punctuation and bracketed information needed for clarity.

THE WILLARD RICHARDS AND BRIGHAM YOUNG 5 SEPTEMBER 1840 LETTER FROM ENGLAND TO NAUVOO

Ronald W. Walker

A visitor strolling down a Salt Lake City street in 1870 would have heard a clipped British accent almost as frequently as a flat-toned Yankee drawl, as a third of the people in Salt Lake County in that year were British-born.¹ Why had the English ground proven so fertile for the Latter-day Saints?

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Ronald W. Walker is a senior historical associate at the Church Historical Department.

¹U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of the Census, *Ninth Census, 1870, The Statistics of the Population of the United States*, p. 373.

An 1840 letter written by two prominent Mormon apostle-missionaries provides partial answers. Willard Richards had labored in England since 1837; Brigham Young disembarked three years later.² Together in 1840 they wrote back to Nauvoo of the jarring events which were transforming England.

Their letter is a significant document, for it provides a contemporary Mormon-American view of the life in hardship of early Victorian England. The English population doubled during the first half of the nineteenth century, while the Industrial Revolution in turn uprooted the nation's countryside and shifted the nation's population to the new cotton and iron mill towns of the Midlands and north. There in the congested squalor of his new environment, the English laborer found the certainties of his old lifestyle lost. Gone were his few acres of garden soil—replaced by sooty factories and workshops. The rhythm of agrarian life with its weekly pilgrimage to the Anglican church was only a memory. Moreover, during the late 1830s and early 1840s, unseasonable weather and the sputtering national economy depressed already difficult times. Richards and Young write convincingly of these conditions.

They also described the religious scene. Writing disparagingly of "monied *monopolizing* Priests," they joined critics both in and out of the Anglican establishment who despaired its mismanagement of temporal possessions, its secular power, its simony, nepotism, and the holding by some priests of clerical livings in plurality. Notwithstanding, the Mormons found that the Methodists, not the Anglicans, offered the greatest opposition. But even Wesleyanism presented an opportunity. Its growing political and religious conservatism lessened its attraction among laborers and made it easier for rivals like the followers of Joseph Smith to penetrate its flock.

All this helps to explain the British attraction of Mormonism. The Latter-day Saints with their promise of a better life in America, gathered some converts who sought a remedy to their harsh and difficult conditions. But even though Mormonism moved in the same reform current as at least a dozen major agitations and movements which stirred England through the period, its major appeal was profoundly religious. Religion dominated Victorian society, and the Saints' message of a restored and pure Bible Christi-

²For the story of the opening of Mormon missionary work in England, see James B. Allen and Malcolm R. Thorp, "The Mission of the Twelve to England, 1840-41: Mormon Apostles and the Working Classes," *BYU Studies* 15 (Summer 1975): 449-526. See also James B. Allen and Thomas G. Alexander, eds., *Manchester Mormons: The Journal of William Clayton, 1840 to 1842* (Santa Barbara and Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith, 1974).

anity, its claims of priesthood authority, its display of spiritual gifts, its millennial hopes, and its emphasis upon Sabbath observance, sobriety, temperance, and family solidarity appealed to many religious seekers. In short, the Church found converts in England because it promised salvation both for this world and for the world to come.

The original manuscript of the letter is located in the Joseph Smith collection in the LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City. The punctuation of the original in most cases has been retained, although some commas and periods have been altered to improve readability. Words marked out by Richards and Young in their letter have been deleted. With these exceptions, the document is printed as it was written.

Star Office, 149 Oldham Road
Manchester, Eng.
Sept. 5th 1840

To the first Presidency of the church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, viz, Joseph Smith Jun, Sidney Rigdon & Hyrum Smith,
Beloved of the Lord and of his saints:

We esteem it a great privilege to be permitted to address you on paper, while we are far separated from you in a land of Strangers, or perhaps we might say with propriety, the land of our forefathers: but be this as it may, it is, indeed, a land of strangers to us, only so far as we have began to become acquainted with the inhabitants by a few months or years travels among them. The time of our acquaintance is but short at the longest, but when we contemplate our absence from our homes & kindred, & especially from the Society of those who are over us in the Lord, whose faces we delight to look upon, & whose councils we are ever glad to receive, & rejoice in following the time seems to be prolonged; & while we remain in this situation we hope you will not think us burdensome, if we trouble you occasionally to read our thoughts & answer us a few questions, or many, even as many as is wisdom in God you should answer, for if we ask those which are improper it shall be on account of our ignorance, therefore we pray you forgive us. We desire not to council you in any but to be counseled by you, for it is the desire of our hearts to do the will of God in all things, & we feel our own weakness & insufficiency for the great work which is committed to us, & feel to place all our hope, strength, & confidence in Israel's God, who is sufficient for all things, & not do as many who profess to love the Lord & at the same time live in neglect of his commandments & his ordinances & despise the order of his council and government. No, we rejoice that the Church has a *Moses* in

these last days (and an *Aaron* by his side)³ of whom the Saints may enquire, as in days of old, & know the mind of the Lord. We by no means suppose you ignorant of our situation or the situation of the people here, or our proceedings, & yet as is common among men we presume it will not be unacceptable to you to read something from us also, concerning the circumstances by which we are surrounded. There are some things which we expect to find common amongst men of different nations, such as a disposition to believe error instead of truth, & love sin instead of holiness; also, a disposition, among a few of the honest in heart to believe the truth & rejoice in it when it is brought within their reach; & yet, such are the attendant circumstances with which people of different nations are surrounded & individuals of the same nations, but of different neighborhoods, that they require very different treatment or address in order to induce them to receive the truth, & even then will require very different degrees of time to accomplish or bring into exercise the same amount of faith. The man who has only read the histories of the people of England, which we had seen before we left America, is liable to meet with some disappointments, at least, when he comes to make his introduction amongst them. This may in part be owing to the historian, for it is generally the case that what we find in history relates more particularly to the higher classes, in the nations, for England, unlike America, is divided into classes; many indeed, but they may all be comprised in three, so far as we need designate at this time, (*viz*) Lords, Tradesmen, & mechanics or laborers, or, in other words, the highest, middle, & lowest classes, each of which have their particular customs, & manners but the histories we refer to, have more generally treated of those of the higher order, or, at least, we find an acquaintance that those histories are now more applicable to the higher & middle classes than any other. But, perhaps a part may be owing to the great changes which have taken place in the nation, within a few years, with regard to money matters, which has caused a mighty revolution, in the affairs of the common people.

A few years since, and almost every family had their garden, their cow on the common & their pig in the sty, which added greatly to the comforts of the household; but now we seldom find either garden, cow or pig.

As we pass around among the country cottages & see the stone walls which are thrown down but more commonly the hedges in a decaying & mutilated state it is very naturally for us to inquire what have you here? & what the cause of this destruction? & we generally get but one answer, "a few years ago I had a flourishing garden on the spot you now see & it was surrounded with this hedge which was planted by my own hand; I had a cow of my own which fed on yonder common—I labored on my masters farm, & had plenty of time, morning and evenings, to till my garden, in which I raised scarce enough for my family, & every year I had a good pig, plenty

³The "Moses" referred to, of course, was Joseph Smith. Young and Richards were possibly thinking of Hyrum Smith, Joseph's brother, in referring to an "Aaron," though Sidney Rigdon had been designated as a "spokesman" for Joseph Smith in 1830. But by this time Hyrum Smith was generally recognized as the closest person to Joseph, and his most intimate advisor.

to eat, & we were happy, but our Lords & masters have become more avaricious, & are trying to get all they can themselves, & will hardly let the poor live. You see my landlord has made my garden into a meadow, & feeds his own cattle upon it; the Lord of the manor fenced in the common, so that I had no place to keep my cow & I was obliged to sell her; I killed my pig to prevent its starving. The small farms are united & made into large ones, so we could get nothing to do on the land. I have been obliged to go into the factory, with my wife & children, to get a morsel of bread;" or, "I have taken to handloom weaving, to keep my wife & little one from starvation."⁴

By this brief sketch you will easily discover that the histories, which we refer to, were much more applicable to the times for which they were written, than for the present time, so that it is no wonder foreigners should be disappointed in visiting England at the present time, who may not have seen some very recent histories. It cannot be expected that we should give any thing like a history of all the changes in Old England, in one brief communication, & that in the midst of much confusion, arising from the preparation for the departure of the brethren, the getting up of the *Star*⁵ &c, &c, which is now crowding us, but you will see at a glance that the few changes we have hinted at would prove the cause of a multitude of effects.

Manufacturing is the business of England. The cotton mills are the most numerous, the weavers will get from 6 to 10 shillings per week, the spinners something more. The handloom weavers have to work hard to get 6 shillings per week. Now after paying 2 or 3 shillings rent per week—1 shilling for coal, beside taxes of *every kind*, we might say, for smoke must not go up [the] chimney in England without a tax, light must not come in at the window without paying duties, many must pay from 1 penny to 6 pence per week for water, & if we should attempt to tell all we should want a government list, after paying all taxes what think you will a family have left for bread stuff?

Add to this the tax on corn,⁶ which is a great share of the expense of the article, & what is left but starvation, leaving out of account all seasonings such as Peppers, Spices, &c which by taxation is four times the value it is in the United States—So you may well suppose that the poor are not troubled much with these things. The poor are not able to keep dogs, & if they were they would have to pay from 8 shilling to 1 L per head per annum, tax. There are taxes

⁴The destruction of the traditional open-field system of agriculture, with freemen sharing the commons, proceeded at an escalating rate throughout the eighteenth century and climaxed in the nineteenth. Between 1761 and 1801 alone, Parliament passed two thousand acts which enclosed three million acres. These enclosures brought efficiency and wealth to the gentry but destroyed the communal life of the village farmer, who was forced in fact to abandon his way of life.

⁵That is, the *Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star*, which the Mormon elders in England began to publish in 1840. Brigham Young was primarily responsible for the initial funding of the *Star* and other publications of that year.

⁶By "corn" the American missionaries meant "wheat" or grain as per British usage. The "corn laws" placed a tariff on imported grain and greatly benefited English agriculture by allowing products to sell at inflated prices. High grain prices in the market place, however, did not please an increasing urban, consuming nation, and in 1846, after tumultuous agitation and political crises, Parliament moved to allow grain to enter the nation without duty.

for living & taxes for dying, insomuch that it is very difficult for the poor to get buried any how, & a man may emigrate to America & find a grave, for less money, than he can get a decent burial for, in Old England. We scarce recollect an article without tax except cats, mice and fleas.

After what we have written we scarce need tell you that England is filled with beggars. They call at our doors, from 1/2 a Dozen to a Dozen per day. If we go in the streets they gather round us and it is hard to get rid of them without a penny, indeed, we do not try, so long as we can get a penny by buying or begging, for we remember that the measure we meet shall be measured to us again. Hunger & Rags are no curiosity here, & while things remain as they are what can we expect but theft, robbery, murder which now fill the land—Leaving out of the account, both as cause & effect the drunkenness & gambling, swearing & debauching—which are common on every hand?—

It will readily be discovered that the people have enough to do, to keep from dying with hunger without taking much thought for the improvement of the mind. Many of the people cannot read, a great many cannot write, children are admitted into the factories at 8 years old, working a part of the day & attending school a part till they are 14 years old & then work continually, though as yet we have been able to discover but very little benefit from the factory school, it is by Parliament compulsion on the part of the masters, & not of free will, of course the easier got over the better, the cheaper the master, the more money remains in pocket.

A few years since the spinners & weavers had “Turn outs” (as they now sometimes have in America) when their masters displeased them—but trade is now so dull, the masters care little for their manufactures, & have reduced the workmens wages to almost, the lowest extremity, & if their hands should turn out for more wages, they have nothing before them but destruction for there [are] thousands & tens of thousands who cannot get one days work in a month, or six months, so they continue to labor 12 hours in a day for almost nothing rather than starve at once. Their miserable pittance is mostly oatmeal & water boiled together, & they would be quite content if they could get enough of that, with sometimes a little Treacle, which is floor & molasses, or a little rancid butter, or skim milk made of whiting & water to a great extent if we mistake not, although they have to give from 3 to 4 pence per quart for it. Buttermilk is also a treat to the poor people and is easily increased in quantity by whiting & water.—There is no scheme which can be devised left unimproved to grind the face of the poor & this [word indecipherable] & we feel that the time has nearly come for the words of James to be fulfilled [“]go to now ye rich men weep & howl for the miseries which are come upon you[”] &c.⁷

⁷The quotation is from James 5:1. Throughout this whole section of the letter it is obvious that Young and Richards empathize with the common man, and especially with the poor whose lives were adversely affected by the rapid economic changes of the early nineteenth century. Many years later Brigham Young recalled his own efforts at charity. “Whenever I went from my office, if I neglected to take my pocket full of coppers to give to the poor mendicants which are everywhere to be met with, I would return to the office and take a handful of coppers from the drawer, and as I walked along would give something to such objects of pity and distress as I met, and pass on with-

Much has been said in history of the learning & neatness of the English people. Of the latter subject we have neither time nor disposition to say much, although we are now short of matter, but simply ask how can it be expected that neatness should be a very prominent trait in the habits of a people who are obliged to improve every moment to get a morsel of bread?—And as to learning such a thing as a news-paper is scarcely to be found among the common people, & if it was the English papers are filled with little else than “cold blooded murder,” “Horrid Tragedies” “Roberies” “Thefts” “Fires” “Notic[e] of the Que[en]s Dinner” or “Prince Alburts Ride out,” or [“]visit to the Theatre,” or [“]Rail Road accident,” “Hunting excursions[”] &c, &c, &c, which is caluelated to harden the heart & prepare it for far still greater wretchedness. Such is the poverty of the people that but few of the Saints can afford to take the Star we are publishing once a month, price 6 pence.⁸

Neither have the priests much more information than the people, indeed there are many of the common people whom they dare not meet in argument, although they have their livings, thousands upon thousands, & some of them own whole townships or parishes & will tell their parishioners & tenants if they allow any one to preach in their houses they will turned out of doors, or if they are baptized they will fare no better, & thus many simple souls who believe our message dare not be baptized, because they have not faith sufficient to screen them from the threats of an insolent priest or factory master, knowing they will worry them to the utmost if they displease him, our hearts mourn for such. It is apparently starvation on one hand & domination on the other. The Lord have mercy upon them.—Amen.⁹

We find the people of this land much more ready to receive the gospel, than those of America, so far as they do receive it, for they have not that speculative inteligence, or prejudice, or prepossession, or false learning, call it what you please, which they have there [in America]. Consequently we have not & labor with a people month after month to break down their old notions, for their priests have taught them but little, & much of that is so foolish as to be detected at a glance. Viewng the subject in this light we find ignorance a blessing, for the more ignorant of false notions the more readily they sense truth. The greatest opposition we meet with is from the Methodist. The Church of England would fain make themselves believe they are on the rock and cannot be shaken, therefore

out being hindered by them.” At the same time, it was the feeling of the elders that the Church would be built by converting such people. “We organized the Church,” Brigham Young continued, “and from that time we have been gathering the poor.” Sermon of 17 July 1870, *Journal of Discourses* (London: Latter-day Saints’ Book Depot, 1855–86), 13:212, (hereafter cited as *JD*).

⁸During this period the government taxed paper, newspaper advertisements, and newspapers themselves. It was not until after the abolition of these taxes in the middle 1850s and early 1860s, that the famous nineteenth century penny press began. Young and Richards hardly overstated the vacuous and sensational nature of the early British newspapers. For an examination of the popular tastes of the English reading public, see Richard D. Altick, *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public, 1800–1900* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957).

⁹Young later wrote that the threats of ministers and mill owners actually proved self defeating. “The Priest and leaders drive the people to us,” he wrote in November 1840,” so they can due nothing aganst the truth, but for it, it all helps to role the worke on to the final crices.” Young to Mary Ann Angell Young, Philip Blair Collection, Western Americana, University of Utah.

they trouble themselves little about these things, as yet, the more is to come.

Thus while we have not the learning and prejudice of the people to contend against as in America we have the influence of the monied *monopolizing* Priests & factory masters, & yet after all their influence, those who have received the word have generally received it very readily & the trouble of keeping up "church discipline" here has been small compared with our native country. But how, those who receive the word so readily will stand in the day of trial remains yet to be proved, as there has been nothing in this land as yet which need try the faith of any one.¹⁰ But of this we confidently hope that many have already received the word which will endure unto the end.

We have many things we would gladly say to you did time permit, & were we not afraid of wearying your patience, but, brethren, bear with us a little further, we beseech of you, for we want to tell you a little of what we have done, & ask a few questions, & for your patience you shall have our feeble prayers that our heavenly father will multiply his blessings unto you.

According to council we have gathered from different parts of England & Scotland a company of the Brethren & sisters who are now in Liverpool ready to sail for America on Monday next.¹¹ Most of them are very poor; those who had money have given most of it to help those who had need, as this was not sufficient; *we*, seeing the poverty & distress of some families, *have made use of our own credit*, among the brethren to carry them along with the rest.¹² It was the decision of the Council in July that Elder Turl[e]y should lead this company to Zion, & he goes accordingly.

Brethren, our hearts are pained with the poverty & misery of this people, & we have done all we could to help as many off as possible to a land where they may get a morsel of bread, & serve God according to his appointment; & we have done it cheerfully as unto

¹⁰While there were probably about as many people who left the Mormon Church as joined it between 1838 and 1840, the apostles nevertheless apparently felt that it was easier to keep the Church generally united in England than in America. Undoubtedly, they were remembering the earthshaking events of the past two years, when apostasy forced both Joseph Smith and Brigham Young to flee Kirtland, Ohio, for their lives, and when in Missouri many of the leading brethren, such as Oliver Cowdery and Thomas B. Marsh, had abandoned the Church. The nature of apostasy in America was much more threatening to the structure of the Church than the drifting away of members in England who had little influence anyway. At the same time, the problems with the Kirtland economy as well as the efforts to impose discipline during the Missouri persecutions were certainly more trying to the faith of the Saints than any problems faced by the English Saints during this period.

¹¹Though one small emigrant company under the leadership of John Moon had already sailed for America in June (see *BYU Studies* 17 [Spring 1977]: 339-41), and a few English Saints had migrated individually, this was the first emigrant company to be organized by the Church leaders in England. In effect, it began the official emigration of the European Saints, which resulted in the gathering of over 50,000 to America in the latter part of the nineteenth century. This particular company, led by Theodore Turley, finally set sail on Tuesday, 8 September.

¹²Later Young again acknowledged the poverty of the British immigrant-convert. It was mainly "the poor and the ignorant," he said, who found themselves gathered into the Mormon gospel net; see *JD*, 13:148. Subsequent study has proven the point. During the early 1840s only one of five British emigrants could be judged roughly as middle class. Thereafter the ratio steadily declined until by 1860 there were almost nine times more common laborers coming to America than farmers, shopkeepers, professional men, or clerks; see P.A.M. Taylor, *Expectations Westward: The Mormons and the Emigration of Their British Converts in the Nineteenth Century* (Edinburgh and London: Oliver & Boyd, 1965), pp. 149-51, 157.

the Lord, & we desire to ask you have we done right? Or is it a right principle, for us to act upon, to involve ourselves, to help the poor Saints to Zion?¹³

We have heard by the bye that Brothers Joseph & Hyrum are coming to England next season. Is this good news true? May we look for you?¹⁴

Shall we gather up all the saints we can & come over with them next spring?

Have we done right in Printing a hymn book?

Are we doing right in Printing the book of Mormon?

Are we doing right in staying here & leaving our families to be a burden to the C?¹⁵

We have sent some of our papers to America, is this Right?

When the Book of Mormon is completed, will it be fit[ting?] for any one to carry any of them to America?¹⁶

Shall we print the Doctrine & Covenants here or not? or will the D. & C. be printed & go to the nations, as it now is or not? or will it be reviewed & printed for the nation?¹⁷

Shall we send all we can to America next season & stay here ourselves?

What is the Lords will concerning Bro. Richards? Shall he take his family to America next season? or shall he tary here with them awhile longer? what shall he do?—¹⁸

We have lately visited a museum where we saw an E[gyptian] mummy. On the head stone &c are many ancient & curious characters, & we asked the privilege of copying them, but have not received an answer yet.

Shall we copy them & send them to you for translation?¹⁹

Finally, Brothers, how long must we be deprived the company of our Dear Brethren whom we Love for this works sake, & we feel that it is our privilege to love those who are willing to lay down their lives for the Brethren.

We need not say we send our love to you for that is always with you. Should you doubt it Time & works must declare it. We hope you will favor us with a letter, for we exceedingly desire council in these matters, & all others which the Lord may have in store for us.

¹³Though the Church was now officially encouraging emigration, and assisting in its organization, the official Church emigration agency, the Perpetual Emigration Fund, was not begun until 1849. Prior to that time there were various private efforts at financial help and organization.

¹⁴The Smith brothers, of course, never did go to England.

¹⁵"C" apparently refers to the Nauvoo High Council, or perhaps simply "The Church."

¹⁶Later the missionaries received a letter from Joseph Smith indicating that he was troubled by their conduct in England, and Young assumed that this censure pertained to their printing of the Book of Mormon and the hymnal without previous approval. At the time of publication, Young believed that such approval "did not seeme to be posable" and confessed "all I have to say about the matter . . . is I have don all that I could to doe good and promote the cause that we are in. I have don the verry best that I knew how. . . ." See Young to Mary A. Young, November 1840, Blair Collection, Western Americana, University of Utah.

¹⁷The first European edition of the Doctrine and Covenants was not printed until 1845, in Liverpool.

¹⁸In October 1840, Joseph Smith called all the apostles who were laboring in England home except Parley P. Pratt, who remained to preside there. He left the following April.

¹⁹No doubt this query was prompted by Smith's fascination with some Egyptian papyrus which had come into his possession in 1835 and which resulted in the publication of the Book of Abraham.

We would rejoice to see you in this country, & although your hearts would be pained with the poverty & wretchedness that prevails—you would see many things which would interest you, such as the ancient & curious workmanship of the churches, cathedrals, monuments &c which have stood, some of them a 1000 years or more & are now in a great state of preservation.²⁰

We remember the observation of Bro Joseph, “that we should hardly get over the nation before the Judgments of God would overtake the people,” & we fully believe it & are trying to do what we can to send forth the Gospel. One of our Elders has gone to South Australia, one to the East Indies & we expect one to start for Hamburg in Holland this week.—We want council & wisdom, & any thing that is good. Our motto is *go ahead*. Go ahead.—& *ahead* we are determined to go—till we have conquered every foe. So come life or come death we’ll go ahead, but tell us if we are going wrong & we will right it.—

Your Brethren in the Everlasting Lord.

B. Young
W. Richards

TO THE SAINTS IN ENGLAND:
IMPRESSIONS OF A
MORMON IMMIGRANT
(The 10 December 1840 William Clayton
letter from Nauvoo to Manchester)

James B. Allen

It was Tuesday morning, 8 September 1840, that William Clayton and 200 other cheerful Mormon emigrants aboard the good ship *North America* were towed out of Liverpool harbor, bound for the United States. Their good cheer did not last long, as that night a heavy gale gave the ship a “good rocking” and the hapless Mormons, most of whom had never been to sea, were soon more seasick than they had ever thought possible. They were quartered in the steerage compartment, which meant that they had no ventilation, light, or privacy, and all this only added to the stench and fearsomeness of that first dreadful night.

²⁰While Richards had observed England’s historical sites for several years, the experience was a new one for the recently arrived Brigham Young. Only two weeks following his landing at Manchester, in April 1840, he visited Worcester’s cathedral church of Our Lord and the Blessed Virgin Mary, whose origins extended into Saxon times. During the first week of December, several months after writing this letter, Young visited the Tower of London, Westminster Abbey, Buckingham Palace, St. Paul’s Church, London Bridge, and the British Museum; see Elden Jay Watson, ed., *The Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 1801–1844* (Salt Lake City: Smith Secretarial Service, 1968), pp. 72–73 and “Diary of Brigham Young, 1840–44,” 3 to 9 December 1840, Church Library-Archives, Salt Lake City.

This was only the beginning of their troubles. Though they enjoyed some pleasant days, and even did some effective missionary work while crossing the ocean, they were plagued by disagreements with passengers and crew, storms, constant illness, a fire aboard the ship, and death—six children being buried at sea. After arriving in New York harbor they made their way by riverboat, canalboat, and lake steamer to Chicago, Illinois, then overland to the Rock River, and finally by flatboat down the Rock and Mississippi rivers to the Mormon settlement of Nauvoo. They arrived there on Tuesday, 24 November, exactly eleven weeks after their departure from Liverpool. But the spirit of this group of Saints was indomitable. As William Clayton wrote a few days later to his friends in England: "I once could not have believed that it was possible for me to endure the toils I have endured; but to the praise of God be it spoken, all I have endured never hurt or discouraged me, but done me good."

Clayton had left many close friends in both Penwortham and Manchester, England. His home was in Penwortham, and his missionary labors, completed just before he emigrated, were in Manchester. Neither he nor his friends would be content until he reported to them on his voyage and, most important, on what he found among the Saints in far away America. They, too, after all, were about to emigrate, and his letters could provide the first reliable information from one of their own emigrants about what they could expect. Though a few Saints had migrated earlier, William Clayton's group was the first emigrant company to be regularly organized by the Council of the Twelve, most of whom were in England in 1840 and who inaugurated the vast Church immigration program there. Had the emigrants arrived safely? Would Clayton advise others to come and, if so, what could they expect from the voyage? Was the New World, and Nauvoo (still called Commerce by some), all they had hoped for? And, perhaps most important of all, had William Clayton met the Prophet and, if so, what manner of man was he?

On 29 November, only five days after his arrival at the gathering place of the Saints, Clayton wrote to his friends in Penwortham. Eleven days later he wrote to Manchester. The letters were similar in tone, though each contained different details and the Saints in each town were instructed to transmit their letter to those in the other town. Together these letters constitute a choice description of the experiences and feelings of one of the first Mormon emigrants from England. The letter to Penwortham was published in 1944 in Volume 5 of *Heart Throbs of the West*, pp. 373-380. The letter to Manchester, where Clayton had worked for two

years as a missionary and branch president, has not been published before and is reproduced below. The original is located in the Church Archives in Salt Lake City.

The reader will find several items of interest and importance in this tender yet powerful letter: the deep feelings Clayton had for the Saints in England, which was probably typical of the Mormon spirit of the times; comments on the hardships of the journey; the determined faith of the Saints; brief comments on the new country, and words of advice to prospective emigrants. But perhaps as important as anything else to the Saints in England were Clayton's comments on Joseph Smith, the prophet, whom they had never seen and yet whose words had brought them to a dramatic turning point in their lives. Clayton's immediate attachment to the American prophet and his powerful conviction of the divinity of Joseph Smith's mission is an important central theme in this letter to his friends in Manchester, England.¹

Commerce, Dec 10th /40 [1840]

Beloved brethren and sisters, we are at length arriving at our journey's end, and although we are about 1000 ml.² distant from each other I do not forget you. Many many times have I pondered upon those happy times we spent in each other's company, & often my heart has filled when I have reflected upon those whom I have left behind. There are many names in Manchester which are exceeding dear to me & forever will be. The immense distance which is between us does not even so much as slacken a single cord of love & happy shall I be to see your faces again. I feel as though I had lost something, but I hope I shall not be long before I see you again. It would be a small matter for me, to cross the sea to see you, but I must wait the will of Heaven. I pray that you may all be found faithful & stedfast when the Lord comes. At the time I left you I knew little of the toils and difficulties of travelling neither could I if any one had told me. We have had some hard times, and been exposed to trouble of various kinds. I once could not have believed that it was possible for me to endure the toils I have endured; but to the praise of God be it spoken, all I have endured has never hurt or discouraged me, but done me good. We have sometimes had to change our food entirely & live on food we had not been used to. We have sometimes been almost suffocated with heat in the old ship, sometimes almost froze with cold. We have had to sleep on boards, instead of feathers, and on boxes which was worse. We have

¹For details on Clayton's missionary work in Manchester and his voyage to America, see James B. Allen and Thomas G. Alexander, eds., *Manchester Mormons: The Journal of William Clayton 1840 to 1842* (Santa Barbara and Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith, 1974).

²Here Clayton undoubtedly meant 10,000 miles.

been crammed together, so that we had scarce room to move about, & 14 of us had to live night and day for several days, in a small cabin (composed of boxes) about 2½ yards long, and 4 feet wide. We have had our clothes wet through with no privilege of drying them or changing them, we have had to sleep on a bed of hay out of doors, in very severe weather, and many such things which you can form no idea of. Yet after all this we have been far more healthy & cheerful than when at home; and we have enjoyed ourselves right well. The Lord has preserved us from sickness, not even so much as suffering us to take cold, and we are now at our journey's end. far more healthy and looking better than when we left England. I can assure you brethren and sisters, that if you will be faithful you have nothing to fear from the journey the Lord will take care of his saints. We had some old people in the company and they are equally as healthy as the young people. We left England about 6 weeks too late, and this was considerably worse for us. It cost more money and was not so pleasant travelling. We remained at New York, a few days and then took steam boat to West Troy, hence by canal boats to Buffalo, about 460 miles from New York. We remained at Buffalo a few days, and we were obliged to be separated. The fare to Chicago was double the amount we expected (on account of its being late in the season) & we were forced to leave some behind. The Lord sent the presiding Elder from Kirtland³ to Buffalo just in time to meet us and he immediately offered to take all who were willing to go to Kirtland. We felt it hard to part yet it was all well for there are as many here as can get into houses this winter. Amongst those who went to Kirtland were Bro. Greene & family, Sister Alice Whiss and Eliza Prince, Matthew Clayton & wife, Jane Harris, Joseph Jackson & wife Saml. Bateman & family. These from Manchester. Bro. Featherstone, Jane Fylds & Martha Shelmerdine from Stockport, Geo Naylor & family James Crompton & wife from Bolton. All the Greenhalghes remained at Buffalo, a little while this being their choice. The brethren & sisters felt much at parting but we expect to see them in spring. We then proceeded to Chicago which is something above 1000 miles from thence we went to Dixonville about 110 miles. At this place we purchased a boat bottom, and after it was ready we floated down Rock river into the Mississippi, and down the latter river to Commerce. We were about 11 days coming from Dixon to Commerce, and it was in this distance we suffered most from the cold. I shall not state the particulars as you will get them from Penwortham. We are pleased with the appearance of the country it is exceeding rich and beautiful. There is plenty of food of many kinds. We have had the privilege of conversing with Joseph Smith Junr. and we are delighted with his company. We have had a privilege of ascertaining in a great measure from whence all the evil reports have arisen and hitherto have every reason to believe him innocent. He is *not* an idiot, but a man of sound judgment, and possessed of abundance of intelligence and whilst you listen to his conversation you receive intelligence which expands your mind and causes your heart to rejoice. He is very fa-

³This was Hiram Kellog, who was an old friend of Theodore Turley. Turley was the elder in charge of this group of immigrating Saints.

miliar, and delights to instruct the poor saints. I can converse with him just as easy as I can with you, and with regard to being willing to communicate instruction he says "I receive it freely and I will give it freely". He is willing to answer any question I have put to him and is pleased when we ask him questions. He seems exceeding well versed in the scriptures, and whilst conversing upon any subject such light and beauty is revealed I never saw before. If I had come from England purposely to converse with him a few days I should have considered myself well paid for my trouble. He is no friend to iniquity but cuts at it wherever he sees it, & it is in vain to attempt to cloke it before him. He has a great measure of the spirit of God, and by this means he is preserved from imposition. He says "I am a man of like passions with yourselves," but truly I wish I was such a man. His wife seems an excellent woman. Bro. Kimball's wife is well, but his children have been sick the youngest especially. They are pretty comfortable at present. Bro. Turley's family are well. Also Bro. Clarke's. I was with Sister Young on Sunday evening. She and family are well. There has been much sickness here a little while ago, but there is little now. There has been a great influx of saints this year. Commerce (or rather Nauvoo, is a large city. The houses are built of wood, and each house has an acre of land to it. There is space left for streets apparently from 10 to 15 yds wide. There are houses belonging to the saints for several miles round. There are a great many saints, who are in general poor on account of being driven. There are some who are not good saints and some very good ones. Joseph says, that when he is out preaching he always tells the people not to come here for examples, but to set them and to copy from the Saviour, who is our pattern. It is not until corn is gathered into the barn that thrashing and sorting commences. If I were in England I would raise my voice and testify that Joseph is a man of God, and a prophet, that the book of Mormon is true, and this is the work of God, which will roll forth unto the ends of the earth and gather together all the good there is in the earth. Brethren and Sisters rejoice for the Lord is God and will deliver his saints. Stand firm by the truth like men and women, and be not afraid to come to this land, but dont for a moment suppose that all will be peace & ease when you get here. These are days of tribulation, and we must endure our portion. I dont know yet whether I shall come to England next spring, but this is as the Lord will.⁴ I want you to send me word particular who are coming next spring, and how the work is rolling on. I long to be in the vineyard but I want to labour in England. There are a great many whom I should like to mention but I cannot lest it should hurt some for I do love all the saints and want to do them good. I do hope that the Lord will reward Mother Hardman and all that family for the kindness they have shown me. There are others whose names are precious to me, & I would give a great deal to see them. If you see bro. Jos. Fielding tell him that I have been with both his sisters several times. They are both well and their families. I have got very intimate with

⁴Clayton longed to return to England and complete the mission that was interrupted when he was instructed by the apostles to emigrate. He finally returned late in 1852, though certain unfortunate circumstances kept him from remaining more than a few months.

his youngest sister & her husband, she is a lovely woman and so is Sister Clarke. But I can feel a stronger attachment to those I have left behind than any I have yet found. Give my love to all the saints. They have my love and my prayers. I could rather weep than write about them. May the Lord preserve you all so that none may be lost. Bro. John Moon¹ sends his love to all the saints. They are not yet arrived here. They are about 7 or 800 miles from here. They expect to be here in spring. They have been 6 months on the way and have suffered a great deal. Sister Poole and children are well. She wrote this week. One thing let me say. It would be well for all who come to bring their working tools with them. Iron work, clothing, Pots are dear in this Country, but you will hear more of this from the other letter. May the Lord bless my dear brethren and sisters and children and permit me to see them soon in the flesh for I long to see them. Be faithful dear brethren and sisters and stand firm by each other. I remain, Yours as ever

Wm. Clayton.

Copied Jan 26th 1840 By Wm. Hardman No 4. Halliwell St. Manchester in compliance with the request of Elder Clayton as contained in a post-script of the above letter. And from several passages in this letter I can but infer that there is a letter at Preston or Penworthen which we are to see, if so, and you have got it, I can assure you we shall feel extremely grateful if you will favour the saints in Manchester with a copy of it. May the Lord bless you all with unity and love and save you into his celestial kingdom is the prayer of your brother in the

New & Everlasting Covenant
Wm. Hardman

¹John Moon was the leader of the first small group of Mormons to leave England in an organized company, even before the apostles officially organized the emigration program. The letter he wrote at the end of his voyage was published in an earlier "Historians Corner" (*BYU Studies* 17 [Spring 1977]:339-41). It is significant that Clayton actually beat Moon to Nauvoo, though Moon left England three months earlier.

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