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Deliverance

We watch anticipating—
Either with fear and trembling,
Or understanding and reverence—
As the deliverers,
Wracked with rhythmic spasms,
Travel through the valley of death;
Carried on by the power of their love
For the new life that can be freed
Only with this travail.

And whether aided
By amnihook or Roman spear,
The rush of blood and water
From the wound thus formed,
Seems a necessary part
Of deliverance.

—Alonzo H. Jones

amnihook: a crochet hook device used to rupture the membranes of a woman in labor
Mormons on the Warfront: 
The Protestant Mormons and 
Catholic Mormons of Northern Ireland

Claudia W. Harris

Although being Mormon sets members apart from their neighbors nearly anywhere in the world, in Northern Ireland that separation frequently creates unique problems for members of the embattled ward and branches. Without exception, Mormonism is scorned by all religious groups there. The Church is characterized as an oddity, as a non-Christian cult, as a polygamist group still sending young men out seeking brides for Utah harems. Ian Paisley hates Mormons more than he hates Catholics, if that is possible. Missionaries have repeatedly told me that whenever they encounter Paisley’s Free-Presbyterians they quickly excuse themselves because they are well acquainted with the invective which will soon follow. But knocking on any door in Northern Ireland could bring a decidedly unwelcome surprise. And to open that door to a stranger could be just as fearful. Many communities in Northern Ireland are no go areas for the missionaries just as they are for the security forces.

Irish Mormons suffer from the same problems their non-Mormon neighbors must endure—poverty, inadequate housing, twenty-five percent unemployment, and continual emigration of their youngest and brightest; but nothing else has as much impact as the conflict. In fact, social problems in the North have worsened during the last twenty years as a direct result of the ongoing conflict. Certainly the civil rights movement of the late 1960s brought fairer elections, better employment practices, and improved educational opportunities. But repressive police tactics against an initially nonviolent movement marginalized a large segment of society. Paramilitaries I’ve talked to were literally beaten into the belief that nonviolence doesn’t work. And now Northern Ireland has the highest percentage of prisoners in Western Europe. Bombings of businesses and factories

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and kidnappings of CEOs have decreased foreign investment and destroyed jobs, thus impairing further an already depressed economy. Despite the many difficulties, however, the Church is growing much more rapidly in the North than it is in the predominantly Catholic South, where religion and patriotism—being Catholic and being Irish—are intertwined, where leaving the Catholic Church is almost synonymous with defecting.

But it is not only in Southern Ireland where Church members are strangely at odds with their culture. The Church develops in its adherents attitudes about patriotism, law, and order, and individual rights that cause Northern members to stand out dangerously on the warfront. Since a high percentage of Northern Irish Mormons are members of the various security forces, they and their families are therefore prime paramilitary targets. Many Mormon names appear on the various death lists. Many Mormons are unable to reveal their addresses in ward and branch lists and must be home taught at the Church. Many Mormons must move house frequently, and sometimes only the very closest family members will know the new address. I have made it a practice not to record the address of anyone who could be a likely target; I also do not publish the name of any Irish person who is not already a public figure.

During each of my four extended research trips, spanning the seven years since the fall of 1983, I have stayed with members of the Church, North and South. Many enterprising Mormons participate in the healthy bed and breakfast industry in Ireland. My practice of staying with Mormons, which, incidentally, was suggested to me by a nonmember Atlanta friend, has not only lent depth to my research but has also given me ready access to individuals who have proven invaluable to my study of the interrelationship of theater to politics in Northern Ireland. Members of the Church have frequently provided me a useful but unexpected entré into the many political arenas on the island.

In Northern Ireland where the divisions among the often warring groups are particularly pronounced, the Mormon Church is a bright spot and one of the few institutions demonstrating any success in bridging the cultural divide. Even though a politically united Ireland might prove impossible, the Church united Ireland ecclesiastically in the spring of 1983 by creating only one mission on the island. That move brought members from the North and the South together in regional and area meetings which helped to decrease stereotyping and to increase understanding. Still very few friendships have developed between members of the North and South. Cultural differences continue to outweigh the similarities that Church membership fosters.
But alliances are more confusing outside the Church. Even a clear definition of the Northern Irish problem itself is elusive. Over the years, I have become quite suspicious of simple solutions, such as “Brits out!” Catholics claim that the frequently shouted expletive is merely a call to the British Army to leave the island, but Protestants interpret the statement as a demand that they leave as well, that they leave a country where they and their families have lived for generations.

What to call the place is also an issue. Northern Ireland is not recognized officially as a political entity by the majority on the island; in fact, the six counties that make up the North are included under the Southern constitution, although changing that aspect of the constitution is now hotly debated in the South. Knowing what to call the participants is even more difficult. Whether Protestant or Catholic, unionist or nationalist, loyalist or republican, or even British or Irish—any of these efforts to categorize also polarizes. The population in the North does not fall into these neat categories. The usual practice of identifying two distinct warring populations only describes the extremes and alienates the majority. Many Northern residents now reject all labels as being inappropriate descriptions, but still they frequently use Catholic or Protestant, as I do, to indicate background or culture or ethnicity rather than religion. Sometimes I wonder how I ever chose to study a place I cannot appropriately designate which has a problem I cannot clearly identify and which has participants I cannot adequately name.

In the North, Mormons are primarily converted Protestants while in the South, Mormons are virtually all converted Catholics. On my first trip to Ireland, I was frequently surprised to learn that members I knew well who were living very near one another on opposite sides of the border had never met. I am no longer surprised by the divisions, and my well-meaning attempts to bring my Northern and Southern Mormon friends together have proven fruitless so far. Mormon unity is far from perfect. Despite the obvious love and caring within the Irish Church, there are Protestant Mormons and Catholic Mormons; Irish members can readily recite the cultural roots of everyone in their congregation.

In addition, political divisions sometimes divide the Church just as they divide the country. The Derry branch met frequently in a hotel on the Protestant Waterside because of the repeated vandalism the building on the Catholic Bogside suffered. Bombs have been placed under cars in the parking lot, not randomly, but to target present or former members of the security forces who are also members of the Church. Derry, which is mostly Catholic, is on the western border of Northern Ireland. Catholics have now taken over
the walled city or Bogside, and Protestants have congregated primarily across the river on the Waterside. For a time, the Derry branch met alternately on each side of the River Foyle. When the meeting was in the church building on the Bogside, many Protestant Mormons didn’t feel safe in attending. And when the meeting was in the hotel on the Waterside, the Catholic Mormons feared for their lives. And a thriving congregation of two hundred dwindled to twenty.

One Saturday morning during the 1981 hunger strike period, the Derry branch president went to the chapel to prepare for the next day’s meetings; his wife went with him to practice the organ. To their horror they found feces spread on the walls, benches, and carpets, reminiscent of the dirty protest then taking place in the prison. During the dirty protest, the protesting H-Block prisoners emphasized their political status by refusing to wear clothing other than their own and wrapping themselves in blankets instead of dressing in the prison jumpsuit. In the ensuing battle of wills with the warders, other privileges were eliminated, even the chance to slop out the cells, so the prisoners spread feces on the walls of their cells. The individuals who broke into the Derry church building were evidently imitating the prison protest. On Sunday, the next day, Derry branch members met in the building which they had cleaned late into the night. Somehow word of the desecration had spread, and members they hadn’t seen for years came to help scrub the walls, pews, and carpet. But that renewed spirit in the branch didn’t survive. After several more, although less spectacular, break-ins, the branch boarded up the building and met continually on the Waterside.

The debate about what to do with the building became heated. Plans were made to sell it to a Catholic congregation, but at the final meeting, the new Protestant Mormon branch president decided to call off the sale. He told me he felt inspired that the branch should stay on the Catholic Bogside; he believed new members would come from the Catholic part of the community. Members who refused to continue to attend Church in the building were allowed to transfer to other branches. The branch president went to an excommunicated Mormon who had ties to the IRA; he asked him to find out what the IRA wanted the Mormons to do—sell the building or stay and repair it. The man reported back that the IRA had no problem with the Mormons, saying, instead, that it was the Catholic hierarchy the IRA had difficulty with. The branch president then asked for IRA help to eliminate the vandalism. Since that time the mischief has stopped, and the renovated Derry building is one of the nicest in Ireland. But unfortunately, the congregation hasn’t grown appreciably and remains at approximately thirty active members.
And yet, members sacrifice to send their children to BYU and rejoice if opportunities develop which allow the young people to settle in America, thus adding to the sad emigration statistics.

Politics encroaches on church affiliation in Belfast as well as in Derry. These two cities are the main population centers of the North. Derry with 90,000 residents is now 72 percent Catholic, an increase of 8 percent during the past ten years. Belfast with 330,000 residents is now only 62 percent Protestant, a decrease of 4 percent over ten years. Both cities were Protestant strongholds during the centuries of struggle for territory. In fact, the overall Protestant population in the North has decreased 1.5 percent where the Catholic population has increased 9 percent during the last ten years. A Catholic majority is a clear possibility early next century since 40 percent of the total population of Northern Ireland is now Catholic. So where Derry on the far western border has become predominantly Catholic, Belfast on the far eastern border remains predominantly Protestant, although the percentage has decreased.

Working in the security forces as prison warders, policemen, and part-time British soldiers causes special difficulties for Church members. A Catholic Mormon on the police force was warned by a former Catholic schoolmate that he was on an IRA deathlist. (Catholic judges and Catholic police officers and Catholic British soldiers are particularly targeted by the IRA; they are viewed as traitors who are participating in the British occupation of Northern Ireland.) This member and his pregnant wife sold their new home and moved to an outlying neighborhood; the wife quit her nursing job at the main Belfast hospital to further limit knowledge of their whereabouts. He continues on the force, however, and promotions have made him an even likelier target.

Why this man and others continue to risk their lives can be answered in several ways. Jobs, especially such high-paying jobs such as those in the security forces, are scarce in Northern Ireland. Also, Mormonism promotes support for government and law and order; Mormonism is in opposition to anarchy; in fact, a basic tenet of Mormonism is a belief in "order in all things." But the answer could be less obvious and more allusive than this. A basic paradigm for the Irish as well as for Mormons is sacrifice. Victor Turner in From Ritual to Theatre says, "Paradigms of this type, cultural root paradigms, so to speak, reach down to irreducible life stances of individuals, passing beneath conscious prehension to a fiduciary hold on what they sense to be axiomatic values, matters literally of life and death."

In my study of Ireland, I demonstrated martyrwish to be a cultural root paradigm there. Cloaked in allusiveness, charged with emotion, martyrdom passes beneath Irish consciousness to
that cultural value of a type of death which gives meaning to life. To risk their lives in what they believe to be the service of others would seem to be a natural role for these Irish Mormons in the security forces.

But Mormons find themselves in paradoxical positions; to love others and not to judge are values constantly confronted by the conflict. An especially difficult time was the hunger strike period. Here were young men using Christ as their model, and yet many Mormons believed the hunger strike to be a perversion of martyrdom. These dying hunger strikers had been convicted of killing their friends, neighbors, and co-workers. To treat the starving men or the other protesting prisoners as martyrs instead of criminals would have been impossible for an Irish Protestant Mormon. For an Irish Catholic Mormon, however, the issue is less clear-cut. I listened many times as friends tried to reconcile their sympathy for the hunger strikers with their belief in law and order and their abhorrence of violence.

Mormons are involved in varying degrees on all sides of the conflict, and frequently their behavior does not harmonize well with their Mormon beliefs. For instance, a Belfast Mormon prison warder was on a ward temple trip to London during the time of a spectacular prison breakout in September 1983 when thirty-seven men escaped from the H-Blocks. Soon after his return from London, the man told me in a matter-of-fact tone that if he’d been at the prison instead of the temple, he would surely have been involved in the beatings the eighteen recaptured prisoners received. He said the prisoners expected the treatment and even asked for it; in fact, they liked being beaten because it reinforced their view of themselves as persecuted. He claimed to be merely fulfilling his prescribed role in the symbiotic relationship between the prisoners and the warders. Resistance followed by punishment, he asserted, was simply the natural relationship between the guarded and the guards. He was elders quorum president at the time.

The beatings are well documented, but prisoners would dispute the claim that they ask to be beaten. On 16 May 1990, the court awarded Joseph Simpson £7,500 in damages from the British Government Northern Ireland Office. Simpson is a thirty-eight-year-old H-Block prisoner from Andersonstown in Catholic West Belfast. He claimed that prison officers had assaulted him when he was recaptured after the 1983 prison escape. His suit is one of many cases documenting abusive treatment. Stories of brutality are frequently recited for me by prisoners’ families and recently released prisoners from both sides of the cultural divide. One young man’s monotone recitation of sleep deprivation and systematic beatings was especially poignant because it was completely devoid of any
emotion. His mother explained that even then, six months after his release, his sleep was still disturbed, and he apparently had suffered permanent hearing impairment.

When I asked the Mormon prison warder if he did not at least respect the dedication of the hunger strikers, the singleness of purpose that had led them to die for a cause, he scoffed at the idea and told me that they hadn’t really fasted but had sneaked food. Despite the deaths of ten hunger strikers, he clung to his belief that they had eaten and not truly fasted. Discounting the sacrificial imagery became more important than reality. Now that the man is older and has been a bishop, he has softened somewhat. He insists that he no longer participates in the beatings.

Life in the H-Blocks has calmed considerably since the turbulent protest period of the late 70s and early 80s. Prisoners are quietly permitted the concessions that were the basis for the hunger strikes, and the present relationship between the warders and the prisoners is usually one of wary caution. Warders tell me that the job is now easy but dull, and since the prisoners are more content and cooperative, few beatings occur.

One stake conference in 1983, the large house where I was staying was full of members who lived some distance from Belfast. My generous hosts had invited them to stay over after the Saturday night conference meetings to save them the long trip home that night and the return to Belfast the next morning. On Sunday morning they treated me as a curiosity; everyone wanted to meet the American. Here they all were, ready for Church and yet talking about the conflict and how to solve it. But their solution was killing people. The discussion was a strange experience because I had met many of the people they thought should be done away with. But knowing and even liking the individuals these Mormons thought should be eliminated gave me an advantage. I could sit there and listen to these active Mormons talk about the benefits of dictatorships, of imprisonment without trial, and of shooting on suspicion alone, and not judge. I could appreciate the frustration of living in such lawless surroundings. And yet the killing is abhorrent to me, whoever does it—security force or paramilitary. The end can never fully justify the means.

A Mormon who had been an officer in the B-Specials, a now-disbanded, notoriously brutal branch of the British Army, berated me for an hour one afternoon. He was angry about Irish American support for the IRA and wanted me to tell America to stop paying for guns and bombs. He pointed out that only Northern Ireland had allowed American bases during World War II. (In contrast, the South had maintained a shaky neutrality which hid much covert
support for the Germans.) He told me that he had instructed the young men in his special unit not to attack the common Catholic but to go for the leaders, not to shoot just anyone but to kill John Hume. Again I had to remind myself that I was talking to a Mormon who supposedly shared my values.

Such discussions are the exception, however. For the most part, Irish Mormons are noted for their warmth and goodness. But the Irish often cynically dismiss this celebrated warmth as only overcompensation, as a surface effort to counteract all the bad press, or as a calculated effort to deceive. However, I do not find the Irish insincere; I experience the Mormons, at least, as quite genuine. And I have never participated in friendlier congregations. But then, the Irish do not generally see it as paradoxical that warmth can coexist with violence. In fact, my bringing up the issue that first trip in 1983 was greeted with laughter, especially from those who knew I was from Atlanta. How could I talk about murder and mayhem! When I tried to explain that what went on in Atlanta was either crimes for gain or crimes of passion, our situation was deplored: “But that’s awful, people dying for no purpose!”

My own views are constantly bombarded in Ireland with varying but compelling perspectives. I never feel physically threatened there although my beliefs and emotions suffer an onslaught. Overall the experience has been positive. The Irish resilience when faced with frequent and severe difficulty has taught me how to better deal with my own challenges. On each trip to Ireland, I develop a renewed appreciation for the value of life.

If objective truth were what I sought in Ireland, I would have been misled and frustrated. The incidents I’ve mentioned are stories my Irish friends have told me over the years; these are also the stories they tell themselves about themselves. Although customarily told with a rectitude and assurance that is uniquely Irish, the stories generally conflict with each other and meander in the telling and embellish the events. Despite the variations, most narrators insist vigorously that they have the facts, that their particular approach is the definitive truth. Luckily, I wanted to hear the commentary, to know how the Irish see themselves, to listen to the Irish presentation of self. Experiencing the differing views has usually been enjoyable and has always been instructive even though I might be aware of certain biases.

In A Colder Eye, Hugh Kenner discusses the illusiveness of the “Irish Fact” and compares Ireland to Homeric Greece: “Could it possibly occur to anyone to reject a narrative because it was inaccurate? For what could accuracy mean? Not only is what they’d need to match the tale against no longer there; the tale itself, once
told, is no longer there either; and as recent a past as yesterday afternoon is no more than what the speaker of the moment says it was, and only so long as he’s talking. Three different talkers, three different evanesing yesterdays, each one paced by a different sequencing of spoken flowers.” Kenner captures the embroidered Irish speech with his phrase *spoken flowers*.

But then accuracy in any setting is an illusion. In *Love’s Executioner*, psychiatrist Irvin D. Yalom explodes the prevailing view that a life can somehow be reconstructed through long ago events which a person might choose to reveal. Instead, Yalom demonstrates experimentally the impossibility of recapturing and recording the definitive history of even a single therapy hour. He asks, “Can therapists or historians or biographers reconstruct a life with any degree of accuracy if the reality of even a single hour cannot be captured?” While longing for an umpire or a sharp-imaged snapshot of reality, he exclaims, “How disquieting to realize that reality is illusion, at best a democratization of perception based on participant consensus.”

Margaret Atwood in *The Handmaid’s Tale* deals eloquently with the same issue: “It’s impossible to say a thing exactly the way it was, because what you say can never be exact, you always have to leave something out, there are too many parts, sides, crosscurrents, nuances; too many gestures, which could mean this or that, too many shapes which can never be fully described, too many flavors, in the air or on the tongue, half-colors, too many.”

Truth is cumulative, however; once all the stories are told and heard, a truer understanding of the culture is possible since metacommentary has developed. *Metacommentary* is the term Clifford Geertz uses for the story a group tells itself about itself, its presentation of self. Or in Yalom’s words, metacommentary is “a democratization of perception based on participant consensus.” But what is missing in Ireland is consensus; the narratives of Catholic and Protestant often dismiss important aspects of the other group’s presentation of self. Of course, the story or metacommentary will never really be completed; each era has the responsibility of retelling its own story. And as an audience for these narratives, I play a small role in the Irish process of metacommentary. Because I am from outside, I can talk to all of the various groups and they, in turn, can communicate with each other through me since they would not generally be able to approach each other directly. I become a useful conduit for ideas and questions back and forth, and when I share the various stories with an individual or a group, I can open a window onto the viewpoints of the opposing groups. Just listening to the competing Catholic and Protestant narratives has helped me understand what at first seemed inexplicable. This essay,
then, is yet another version of the Irish presentation of self, yet another version of the metacommentary, but from my own participant-observer viewpoint. Because it brings together many of the competing stories, this discussion can dispute erroneous ideas and can add to the cumulative truth. I have learned, for example, that what I might see as paradoxical in Irish culture, the Irish often see as a thoroughly reasonable approach. And Mormonism adds a rich gloss to the Irish experience; the aspiration to be as one in the gospel is continually frustrated by age-old animosities. What is Irish and what is Mormon or what is not Irish and what is not Mormon is confusing. So even though converted Irish Mormons develop a new presentation of self, old attitudes frequently surface when the conflict exposes cultural root paradigms; then the Irish metacommentary takes precedence over the newer Mormon metacommentary.

The story of a Southern Irish Church member who lives in Dublin demonstrates the struggle to develop a new unified Irish-Mormon metacommentary. When we talked in 1989, I had already known her for six years and had observed her increasing involvement in the Church against what seemed to me to be great odds. She lives on a public housing estate some distance from the chapel so just getting to meetings regularly is a triumph since she has many children but no car. Her husband is a nonmember as is her extended family. By 1989 she was teaching the Gospel Doctrine class in a humble but powerful manner. She talked glowingly of her experiences at the London Temple where had she gone recently for her endowment.

The incident that triggered our conversation was a letter she had received from my Dublin landlady, who was then working in Bagshot, England, which is near a large British Army base. The letter took over a month to arrive and had been opened and one page was missing. My landlady had innocently asked this woman, a neighbor, to get her house ready for my arrival. Coming from Bagshot to a woman whose family is sympathetic to the IRA, the letter apparently aroused suspicion, hence the censoring and delay until after I had already arrived. One Sunday when I gave her a ride home from Church, we sat in my car in front of her house and she told me in her soft voice how hard it had been for her to learn to love everyone, even the British. Like all politically involved Irish Mormons, she struggled against the feeling that she was deserting her country and her family by joining the Church. Although she has ceased any active role in the conflict, she understands and even applauds her family’s continued involvement and would naturally protect them if necessary. She is well aware of the ambiguity inherent in her situation.
When she was first being taught by the missionaries, she passed through central Dublin on her way to a Church meeting, and one of her friends gave her a silencer to pass on to another friend. She had thought nothing of taking that silencer out of her bag in Church when she was rummaging for a pencil. She said the missionaries had nearly fallen off the bench when they saw it. Even now when a member of the IRA is killed she becomes quite angry, "How could they!" But she is also saddened now when a British soldier is shot, "Oh, the poor love!" She recognizes that the gospel has changed her outlook on the conflict; however, she also recognizes that her politics often sets her apart from other branch members who are somewhat suspicious of her motives and her companions. My landlady confirmed this perception; they are neighbors and good friends and yet my landlady will not talk about the conflict with her, worrying lest she become involved unintentionally. With each new bombing, my landlady is ashamed she is Irish and apologizes to anyone she knows who is British. The differing reactions of these two women demonstrates the range in Catholic Mormon response to the conflict. Protestant Mormon reactions are also diverse, which shows the impossibility of clearly delineating the cultures.

But my own response has not been easy to resolve, either. In 1983, when I visited the Derry Branch the very first Sunday I was in the North, I was confronted by my own lack of understanding. The adult Sunday School class had five members that October morning; apparently, only five had dared to come to Church. We huddled together in the unheated hotel in one of the semicircular booths in the restaurant. The subject of the lesson was Section 134 of the Doctrine and Covenants—the often-quoted declaration of the Mormon attitude toward government which Oliver Cowdery prepared in the Prophet’s absence for inclusion in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants. Cowdery was attempting to counteract the characterization of Mormons as lawless. The teacher in Derry asked me to do most of the reading because the class enjoyed my accent. As I read aloud those words which I had heard so many times before, they suddenly took on a reality that made it almost impossible for me to continue. My usual calm, unflappable demeanor dissolved; my eyes filled with tears; and I had trouble breathing. In every way Northern Ireland is the antithesis of the ideal government outlined in Section 134. Even the most basic expectations of society are missing in Northern Ireland—government for all the people, courts which are fair, police you can trust, lawfulness as a principal value. I became aware that morning during the class discussion one reason why the missionaries are successful in the North: the people there yearn for the perfect organization prescribed by the Church.
The warm, loving nature and the spirituality of the Irish Latter-day Saints not only sets them apart from the larger Irish population but also gives them a unique position among other Mormons. The Mormon Church in Ireland has a distinctive charismatic flavor which permeates the membership. One elderly, recent convert believes that the Holy Ghost has unlocked his creativity; since joining the Church, he is now able to write poetry and plays, thereby fulfilling his lifetime dream at last. In Ireland, members seek for blessings; they revere their leaders; there is a trust and simplicity and willingness to do what is asked that is missing in many Mormon congregations. I once noted to a branch president there that, unlike American congregations, the Irish sing all the verses of the hymns, even if the meeting is running long; he looked at me with wonder and said, "The prophet told us to!"

The majority of Irish members fully dedicate themselves, making great sacrifices of time and money to the Church. When they were still on the old schedule of two separate meetings on Sunday, one of my Northern Irish woman friends would walk twenty miles back and forth each Sunday, pushing a baby in a pram. And her nonmember husband would walk with her, pushing a second pram. She has missed meetings only one Sunday in her twenty-five years as a member, the Sunday her father died during breakfast at her house. And her level of dedication could be echoed in thousands of different stories of other Irish saints. Some of the best examples of sacrifice as a cultural root paradigm are the lives of Irish Mormons. Many aspects of Mormonism fit easily within the overall Irish metacommentary.

Many Irish members view Mormonism as the only beacon of hope, as the only way to bring to an end the six-hundred-year undeclared war in Ireland. Truly the Church often seems to be the only organization there which is successfully bridging the cultural divide. And the struggle to develop a new all-encompassing metacommentary, to create a unique Mormon Irish presentation of self which could include all groups on the island in fellowship, that struggle is, for the most part, the primary concern of the Church members in Ireland. There may be Protestant Mormons and Catholic Mormons in Northern Ireland, but they meet peacefully in the numerous congregations and work together for common goals.
NOTES

3Kenner, 4.
7Yalom, 172.
The World of Men

He was just a little boy,
And his right eye was crossed,
So he squinted it and looked
At the world through the other one.
His hair was like dandelion seed,
And his father’s friends would tease,
“Where did you get that white hair?”
And he would reply with intended precision
(for even then he was passionate about truth),
But in a voice that squeaked,
“My hair is dark white.”

His father’s friends always knew what to do
When a horse needed shoeing or a car broke.
There was wiry Willard Mc Laws who could
Put a strap around a refrigerator
And carry it up a flight of stairs.
And Ed Gillespie, who at rodeos
Could pluck a bronc rider from the
Back of a bucking horse when the whistle blew.
And Shag Tate, that his father taught him
To say was the ugliest man in town;
And Minky, who’d been All-American
Halfback and called the boy Sour Puss.

He followed his father into their world,
Watched their arm wrestling,
And listened to their talk
About quarterbacks and deer hunts
And cutting horses and Chevrolets,
And the eternal argument over whether
Shag Tate was really uglier than Rufus Bevan.

The boy walked a little spraddle-legged
Like his father—though he was
Knock-kneed rather than bowlegged,
And he tried to wave at people on the street
Using two fingers the way his father did.
And at night in his prayers
He said God bless Minky,
And Ed Gillespie, and Willard Mc Laws.

—John Sterling Harris
When Our Enemies Are Also Saints: Response to Claudia W. Harris’s “Mormons on the Warfront”

James B. Allen

I find Claudia Harris’s essay both deeply disturbing and strangely comforting. For me it only strengthens the conviction that war is hell, civil war is a worse hell, and an undeclared civil war is the most frustrating of all political hells. The paper is disturbing because it highlights the terrible cost of this kind of conflict and the frustration of finding Church members on both sides. But it is comforting that Church members are able somehow to let the gospel transcend political differences and create what she calls a “new all-encompassing metacommentary.”

This paper has importance far beyond what it tells us about the Church in the Emerald Isle, for it focuses on a certain dreadful reality that has confronted Latter-day Saints at various times throughout their history, even though it has been noticed only in passing by historians. That reality threatens, however, to become a major concern as the Church expands in countries torn by civil strife. What is happening in Ireland may well be only a mild sample of what Church members might experience in many countries during the next few decades.

Harris’s paper also causes me to reminisce about my own visit to Northern Ireland just three years ago. I am descended from a Protestant Irishman who was converted to Mormonism and whose first wife (from whom I am not descended) was a converted Catholic Irish girl, so I have a bit of the Catholic-Protestant tendency in my own family. In Belfast, our first night, we found lodging at the home of a wonderful family named Corrigan, who not only treated us courteously and warmly, but also helped direct us to the Mormon church. The next morning before going to church, we drove to the center of town which was practically deserted because it was Sunday. We stopped at the stately old city hall where we took some pictures.

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From the time we crossed the border into Northern Ireland we had been apprehensive of any political activity, but up to this point we had seen no evidence at all of any such thing. However, just as we left the city hall, we suddenly saw a few men drive up rapidly, jump out of their jeep-like vehicle, plaster a sign on a nearby building, then drive away in a hurry. We wondered if they were IRA partisans, but we did not go over to read the sign because we noticed military personnel carriers coming down the street. If the first men we saw were part of the IRA, they were wise to get out of there in a hurry, and we, too, thought it wise to be on our way without taking time to read the sign. “How sad,” I wrote in my journal, “to see such things in what is such a peaceful-looking setting, and among such friendly, gracious people.”

At 10 A.M. we were at the LDS chapel, where we attended sacrament meeting with eighty or ninety Belfast Saints. We enjoyed their meeting. We did not ask about politics; we simply felt it would be inappropriate for strangers to bring up anything that could cause tension.

After church we continued our tour of Northern Ireland and spent the night near Coleraine in a delightful old farm house operated as a bed and breakfast by its owner, a Mrs. King. We gained a perspective of time when we were told that the house had been built 302 years earlier—long before the United States was even thought of. Mrs. King was the most gracious hostess we met on our entire trip, and for breakfast the next morning she served plenty of juice, toast, old-fashioned Irish porridge, and cold cereal (if we wanted it—but who would in a place like this?). She also served eggs, sausage, and kippered herring. Who could ask for more? I mention all this not to make you hungry, but to emphasize how peaceful and at home we were beginning to feel in what we expected might be a tense and threatening environment. Most of the people we met that week seemed almost apolitical; that is, they were willing to talk about the tensions but seemed anxious just to have them over with.

The next day we were in Londonderry, when I suddenly gained a deeper awareness of the tension there. I called it Londonderry, and in Belfast (which is mostly Protestant) that is the right word. As we got closer, however, and finally into the city, I realized we had better start calling it “Derry,” for to the Catholics and especially the IRA, the prefix London is anathema. The city itself, with its ancient wall, showed all the signs of its long history as well as the signs of modern civil conflict. We stood on a hill inside the walled part of the city and had two young men show us where Catholic Bogside and Protestant Waterside are located. We saw
evidence of the vandalism Harris mentions. We saw graffiti on the walls and on the streets, barbed wire in strategic places, and heavily armed policemen and Irish soldiers with dogs patrolling the streets. Hardly five minutes went by without our seeing a well-armed patrol.

We spent a couple of hours walking around Derry, and the two young men (who attached themselves to us because they were anxious to get acquainted with some Americans) told us how dangerous it was for them to go into the Catholic part of town, especially alone and at night. In all, our brief time in Derry was fascinating but emotionally the most difficult of all the time I spent in Great Britain.

But enough of reminiscing; let us move on to other things Harris’s paper made me think about.

The Church is not the only one whose people frequently have been caught on opposite political sides. Such a split happens all the time and will no doubt continue to happen until the Millennium arrives. The Mormon experience, however, is of special moment to most of us here, for we have learned that the gospel of Christ is the only remedy for civil conflict, and that by teaching the gospel to the world, we are providing the formula for world peace. Thus people like me get a horrible feeling when we have seen situations where Latter-day Saints would be shooting at Latter-day Saints. As an eighteen-year-old Navy recruit at the end of World War II, I reconciled myself to the possibility that someday I might have to pull the trigger of a gun aimed at someone (something I am no longer sure I could do). I was never sure, however, that I could shoot if I knew the other guy was a Mormon. That’s how strongly I felt about brotherhood in the gospel. I also remember hearing the First Presidency of the Church justify the involvement of Latter-day Saints on both sides of the war by assuring us that, in the end, none of us would be held responsible for the killings; the leaders of the aggressor nations would be held responsible and punished for wars. That statement helped, of course, but deep down I also remembered the story of the Ammonites in the Book of Mormon and still had pangs of conscience.

My brooding has gone on ever since, and the more I study the history of any war or see Latter-day Saints involved on both sides of civil strife, the more I am convinced that much of what I was taught as a youth may have been too simplistic. During the American Civil War, for example, many Mormons leaned heavily toward the Southern cause, and Brigham Young himself, in effect, declared a pox on both sides. In this case no Utah Mormons enlisted on either side, but suppose some of the Southern Saints returned to
the South to fight for the Southern cause of states’ rights and self-determination, and New England Saints returned to fight for the preservation of the union? I can see how righteous Latter-day Saints, filled with the spirit of the gospel, could take either side. I would be hard pressed to make a moral judgement on who was “right” and who was “wrong” with respect to the political differences that began the shooting.

Modern wars, however, have made the moral problem even more complex. I suspect that most of us are familiar with the dilemma of the German Saints during World War II. On the one hand, they had been taught by Church leaders to honor, obey, and sustain the law, and to support their lawful governments. It was this emphasis, in fact, that preserved the Church during the Hitler regime, as Church members made clear their support for their government and Salt Lake City supported them in it. On the other hand, they read in the Book of Mormon about the need to resist oppression, saw examples of righteous rebels joining together to overthrow unrighteous regimes, and, after America became involved, they read leaflets dropped from American airplanes, perhaps piloted by Mormon pilots. The pamphlets encouraged them to join in underground efforts to overthrow the Nazi government. Helmut Huebener became active in the underground and was eventually both excommunicated by the Church and executed by the Nazis. Who can judge him as morally wrong for acting according to conscience, but who, on the other hand, can judge his fellow Saints as morally wrong for following the dictates of the Articles of Faith?

The question came even closer to my heart a few years ago when I talked with a student at BYU who was from Nicaragua. He was planning to go back, he told me, and he had no doubt that he would be involved in the civil war there. Sadly, I can’t even remember which side he was on; the thing that overwhelmed me was his telling me of Latter-day Saints he knew who were on either side of the conflict, and his belief that he would no doubt end up fighting, perhaps even killing, some of them.

But what should the Church do—not just with respect to making utterances on wars or civil conflict, but in supporting any political regime? We all remember how wonderful it was when our leaders promised the Communist regime of Eastern Germany that our people would be loyal citizens, and we were then able to send missionaries in and out of the country and to build a temple there. My good friend Doug Tobler has since reminded me, however, that with the recent overthrow of Communism the very thing that helped us then has hurt us to some degree since, for anyone who seemed
friendly to the former Communist regime has come under some suspicion from those who always opposed it. Such ironies will probably never cease. Neither, however, will the criticism of the Church cease for whatever stand it seems to take as crises arise—for it is easy to find right on any side, and more often neither side is wholly right nor wholly wrong. Whether in Europe, Latin America, Ireland, or elsewhere, we can hope that Church leaders will take positions that enhance the spread of the gospel, but we must recognize that in many ways their hands are tied. The Church today still has such an American image that no matter how we try to avoid it, many people around the world will link the Church with whatever they think of America in general.

These issues also remind me of the two most frustrating sacrament meetings I ever attended. On one occasion our well-meaning bishop invited an extremely right-wing political activist to speak. My politics have generally leaned toward the conservative side, but I have always tried to avoid using the Church for political purposes. In this case I was appalled as the speaker equated the gospel with almost every extremist conservative cause of the day. I disagreed with almost everything he said not just because he was relating the gospel to politics, but also because his politics made little sense to me. The speech was a marvelous lesson, however, in how difficult it is for people to separate the two—especially as I looked around and saw the bishop and other people smiling and nodding their approval. I sat there brooding, trying to figure out a way to leave the choir seats after the meeting without approaching the bishop or the speaker so I could avoid commenting on what was said. Suddenly I heard myself being called upon to give the closing prayer! I gave the shortest prayer I think I have ever given; I thanked the Lord for the gospel and asked that He bless us with the spirit of discernment, so we could learn to separate truth from error! A good friend, a Democrat, knew what I meant and thanked me for the prayer. But the bishop also thanked me for it—in words that indicated he saw something different in it than I intended.

At the other meeting, which came during the Vietnam War, the speaker, an air force pilot recently returned from Vietnam, spent all his time justifying the war. Among his justifications, tragically, was his report of a conversation with a certain General Authority who, he said, helped him resolve his initial hesitation about going over there by telling him that the Lord was in charge, and that this was the way Vietnam would be opened for missionary work! I'm not sure that he was quoting the Church leader correctly, but if anything helped make me antiwar this meeting did, for I just do not believe the Lord works that way! Who really knows what the Lord
is doing in any particular case—or if he is active at all in causing or ending wars? The use and abuse of free agency seems to be a more active force in creating our civil conflicts, and I think it tragic always to impute to God our own political biases. I like, on the other hand, what Abraham Lincoln supposedly said when he was asked if he was not happy that the Lord was on his side in the Civil War. Lincoln replied that he did not really know where the Lord stood, but he only prayed that he was on the Lord’s side.

How then should the Church respond to political conflict as it breaks out around the world? Should it tell its members to support their governments no matter what the nature of the regime? Should it openly encourage human and civil rights and therefore seem to be on the side of the dissidents in many parts of the world? Should it simply make no statement at all? The answers to such questions are indeed complex, but the end of Harris’s thought-provoking paper raises at least some hope that in the midst of civil strife, Latter-day Saints can find comfort in the gospel, even meet peacefully in their politically divided congregations, and, as she said, “work together for common goals.” Those common goals may not be political, but they can be the goals of the gospel. And, without sounding too simplistic, perhaps we can say that simply converting the world to the Church will never bring total peace so long as free agency and differing political views continue to exist. Even if the leaders themselves are well intentioned, their differing views could lead to civil conflict.

But the gospel (as taught by the Church but distinguished from the Church as an institution), I firmly believe, brings peace of mind and personal happiness even in the midst of turmoil, hope for a better future both in this life and the next, and a startling new meaning to the words of the Savior: “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you” (Matt. 5:44). Perhaps the unity of Church membership can help political enemies in war-torn nations realize that they are still brothers and sisters, that they really want to bless each other, and that their prayers for each other can go beyond politics. That is the hope Harris raises.
A Great Little Saint: A Brief Look at the Life of Henry William Bigler

M. Guy Bishop

*By great little persons, I mean individuals whose lives or actions have had important consequences.*
—Jerome G. Manis, 1989

Early on the morning of 24 November 1900, an elderly man died in St. George, Utah. He had never held high ecclesiastical office within the Latter-day Saint Church—of which he had been a member for over sixty years. He had never been elected to any office nor did he achieve anything but passing regional or national fame. Yet two days after his demise, a leading Salt Lake City newspaper, the *Deseret Evening News*, printed a large photograph of Henry William Bigler, and the accompanying obituary lauded the old pioneer as “one of the notable characters in the history of Western America.”

What fame Bigler did achieve arrived late in life. While a younger man, he was a rather invisible part of several events, a part that later earned him a place in Western and Mormon history. As a member of the Mormon Battalion during the Mexican-American War (1846–47), he marched across much of what later became the Southwestern United States. He was present at Sutter’s Mill in California during January 1848 when James Marshall made his nation-changing discovery of gold. In the following years, Henry Bigler played leading roles in activities which were more significant to his Mormon culture. He was among the first representatives of the Church to preach in the Hawaiian Islands, and he faithfully served as an ordinance worker at the St. George Temple from 1877–1900.

Of importance to historians, Henry Bigler was a dedicated diarist during the time he served with the Mormon Battalion, and he continued his diary entries for most of the rest of his life. During the

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last quarter of the nineteenth century when the existence of his diaries became known within the professional historical community, Bigler gained a measure of national recognition. The most famous American historian of the age, Hubert Howe Bancroft, corresponded with Henry Bigler on a number of occasions and seemingly put great stock in his record. According to Bancroft, Bigler was “a cool, clear-headed, methodical man” who made keen observations and diligently chronicled many important happenings in the American West’s history.⁴

Recently, Jerome G. Manis published an essay in Biography suggesting that the contributions of “Great Little Persons” are often ignored by biographers.⁵ In Bigler’s case, H. H. Bancroft clearly recognized Bigler’s accomplishments, particularly within the scope of California history. And while devotees of Western and Mormon history can quickly recall Henry Bigler and the 1848 Gold Discovery, few would recognize how the life history of a peripheral figure like Bigler can enhance the story of nineteenth-century Mormonism and of the American West.

By highlighting three periods of Bigler’s life which he detailed but which are generally lost in historical obscurity—his early Church experiences, two missions to Hawaii, and twenty-three years as an ordinance worker at the St. George Temple—this article seeks to elucidate the historical contribution of Henry Bigler and serve as a reminder that the biographies of other lesser-knowns wait to be written.

Like many of the unsung heroes of the early Mormon pageant, Henry Bigler’s most outstanding characteristic was his commitment to the Latter-day Saint cause. Time and again he answered the call to serve his Church, often at great personal loss. Modern social science explains Bigler’s actions by positing that the day-to-day behavior of most people is dictated by attitudes or beliefs. The stronger the intention or belief, the greater and more unshakable the commitment. Eric Hoffer names those with Bigler’s characteristics a “true believer”—a dedicated, self-sacrificing individual. Two recent observers of commitment have aptly labeled an individual like Hoffer’s true believer a “partisan.”⁶ Whether best designated a “true believer” or a “partisan,” Henry Bigler and others of similar mettle were vital to the Church’s beginnings.

The logical place to begin is with Bigler’s early Church experiences. As was the case for many other early Mormons, his was an experience marked by obstacles which he had to overcome before he could accept the gospel. In the fall of 1834 Mormon missionaries first came to Harrison County, western Virginia, where the family of Jacob Bigler, Henry’s father, lived in the small
community of Shinnston. Jacob’s spouse, Sarah Cunningham Bigler, was converted to the new religion. At that time, however, her stepson Henry could not believe Joseph Smith, Jr., to be a man of God. “I disliked the name of their Prophet,” Bigler recalled, “because there was a man living in our neighborhood whose given name was Jo, who was forever picking quarrels and wanting to fight somebody.”

While Bigler’s reason for immediately discounting Mormonism was a bit unique, an instant prejudice against the religion was not unusual. Leonard E. Harrington, a New Yorker who encountered Mormonism some five years after Bigler, observed that it was the doctrine which initially tempered his interest. “I was prejudiced against it,” Harrington wrote, “and it was sometime before I could sufficiently dispossess my mind of preconceived opinions to give the subject a fair investigation.” Henry Bigler would take three years before he could accept the fact that someone named “Jo” could be a prophet of God.

Since his wife had embraced the Latter-day Saint gospel, Jacob Bigler soon became interested enough to send to Church headquarters at Kirtland, Ohio, for a copy of the Book of Mormon. After reading some of it, he declared to his children that “no man of himself ever made the Book.” Following her father, Polly Bigler read the Book of Mormon and also became convinced of its truthfulness. She urged her brother Henry to study the book. Soon he also “believed it and obeyed the gospel,” seeking baptism at the hand of Elder Jesse Turpin in July 1837. Before the end of the summer, the entire Jacob Bigler family had accepted the message of the Book of Mormon.

Having joined an evangelic denomination, twenty-two-year-old Henry Bigler made his first attempt at spreading the gospel. “Soon after I joined the Church,” he wrote, “I went to see my grandfather Harvey to have a talk and try to have him to go and hear the Elders preach.” But Basil Harvey, who was himself an itinerant preacher, wanted nothing to do with the religion. Perhaps hoping to deflect the embarrassment of having had several of his grandchildren cast their religious hopes with the supposedly heretical Mormons, Harvey told young Bigler that none of this would have happened if his daughter (and Henry’s mother), Elizabeth Harvey, was still alive—a clear indication that he held Sarah Bigler responsible for the family’s conversion to Mormonism.

In 1838 Henry Bigler and other members of his family heeded Joseph Smith’s call to gather to the Latter-day Saint communities in western Missouri. At Far West he was ordained to the office of an elder. The Biglers arrived in Missouri just in time to be driven out
along with their fellow believers. By spring 1839, following their forced relocation to western Illinois, Henry Bigler was set apart as a seventy by Apostles Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball and was sent forth to preach. He and several others went to proselyte in the Ohio-western Virginia area.¹¹

His experiences shed light on early Mormon missionary activities and perhaps more importantly, upon the development of a young Mormon from an inexperienced, novice preacher into a skilled orator and defender of the faith. As Elder Bigler journeyed eastward with his companion, an equally green young man named Amos Lyon, the two had their first opportunity to preach. Since neither had ever spoken in public before, the Mormons made a poor showing. In Henry Bigler’s words, “At the close of the meeting we were advised [by those who heard them] to leave off preaching and go home for we were more fit to drive oxen.” Their preaching ability must have improved, for Bigler proudly noted the baptism of a man and his wife later that fall.¹²

Early in 1840 Henry Bigler lost his missionary companion to marriage, but he continued with his missionary work—alone. He “baptized a few” and in a demonstration of his increasing self-confidence, even got into a debate with a Baptist clergyman. Using a local colloquialism, Bigler observed that it seemed as if his rival “came out of the little end of the horn”—in other words, Bigler felt that he had come off the better man in the contest.¹³

Bigler served another mission in 1843–44. The primary purpose of this call was “to rebut John C. Bennett’s lies.” Bennett, once a close confidante of Joseph Smith, had fallen from grace due to his philandering and had subsequently published a virulent attack on the Mormon prophet. For this mission Henry Bigler was once again sent to the area where he had spent his youth—western Virginia. If Bigler’s experiences were common, early Mormon missionaries often labored in familiar areas. As he traveled eastward across Indiana, Henry Bigler was joined by Elder Alpheus Harmon. The two men continued on into Ohio without finding any success in their preaching. Winter was upon them now, and the cold and discouraged Elder Harmon announced that he had decided to return to Nauvoo. Henry Bigler determined to continue alone to Virginia. In this instance Bigler’s firmness in staying with his assignment may have saved his life—Alpheus Harmon froze to death while crossing the bleak prairie on his return trip to Illinois.¹⁴

Later, in the northwestern Ohio community of Lima, an exhausted Henry Bigler called at a “respectable looking house” seeking lodging for the night. The inhabitant reluctantly consented to let the Mormon preacher stay. He invited Bigler to talk religion,
but it soon became clear that his host only hoped “to use up Mormonism in less than no time.” Much to the host’s surprise, however, he found that Elder Bigler could not be swayed in his beliefs.\textsuperscript{15}

In July 1844, at Ripley, the seat of Jackson County, Virginia, Bigler learned of the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith. “I was in Virginia,” he recalled, “and here it was that I heard of the death of the Prophet and Patriarch.” His immediate response was anger. “I felt mad and could have fought like a tiger,” he wrote. Then, after calming down, Bigler “felt like weeping” and was overcome by a feeling of loneliness. The missionaries were soon advised to stop preaching “unless invited to do so and return home.”\textsuperscript{16}

In late 1845 the Nauvoo Temple neared completion, and soon the Latter-day Saints began to participate in the sacred endowment ceremony—an ordinance which Joseph Smith taught was crucial to their quest for postmortal glory. Henry Bigler received his endowment on 31 December 1845.\textsuperscript{17} Not many weeks later, mob pressure forced the Saints to abandon Nauvoo.

Henry Bigler’s activities of the next two years (1846–48) eventually brought recognition. Following the Saints’ exodus from Nauvoo, he joined with some five hundred other Latter-day Saint men to form the Mormon Battalion marching from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, to the Pacific shores.\textsuperscript{18} This trek and the succeeding months when Bigler worked in northern California for Johann Augustus Sutter earned him a place in recorded history. Of the several laborers employed at Johann Sutter’s sawmill at the moment James W. Marshall found gold, only Henry Bigler made a contemporary written record of the find. “This day some kind of mettle was found in the tailrace that looks like goald [sic],” he wrote. Years later Bigler’s diary entry would be used to accurately date the gold discovery.\textsuperscript{19}

In the decade following his Mormon Battalion and gold discovery experiences, Bigler was twice drawn a great distance from his Utah home in missionary service for his Church. While laboring in northern California as a gold-seeking missionary during the summer of 1850, Henry Bigler, along with nine of his associates, was called by Apostle Charles C. Rich to serve a mission in the Sandwich Islands.\textsuperscript{20}

Bigler was initially assigned to preach on the island of Maui with George Q. Cannon and James Keeler. During the months spent with these brethren Bigler developed a lasting relationship with Cannon. Even after George Cannon became a General Authority of the Church, he and Henry Bigler apparently maintained a rather close friendship until Bigler’s death. At Lahaina, Maui, Bigler, Cannon and Keeler immediately sought an opportunity to share the gospel. After securing permission from the Protestant Rev.
Townshend Elijah Taylor to use his pulpit at the Seaman’s Chapel, the missionaries prepared to deliver their message. Since thirty-five-year-old Henry Bigler was the oldest of the three and probably had the most missionary experience, he was chosen to speak. Either out of humility, forgetfulness, or insecurity, Bigler never recorded the subject of this sermon—a rare oversight for such a conscientious diarist. But James Keeler wrote in his diary that “Br. B. got up and told them that He would read a chapter in the acts of the apostles [and] then spoke on the first principals off [sic] the gospel off Christ.”

Bigler experienced the strong opposition that the Mormons faced from the more established Protestant and Catholic clerics. In March 1851 he wrote of a confrontation with the Reverend Daniel Toll Conde at Wailuku, Maui. In a Sunday sermon which the Latter-day Saint elders attended, Conde vigorously denounced the Mormons. According to George Cannon, he accused Joseph Smith of being a “notoriously bad character” who pretended to see angels, lived with many wives, and was a “very wicked man.”

Over a year later, on the island of Oahu, Henry Bigler had a similar encounter with the foes of Mormonism. At the village of Waialua on the northwest side of the island, he and Elder William Farrer faced the combined efforts of a Protestant missionary and a Catholic priest. The Protestant, Rev. John S. Emerson, accused Bigler of teaching “a distorted doctrine of the bible and [being] from the devil.” Later, Emerson attacked Henry Bigler and his religion on the plural marriage issue. Writing in his report for 1853, the Protestant clergyman noted confrontations with “two Mormon priests” over this issue.

I enquired . . . in respect to their doctrines, whether they believed in polygamy &c. & whether their prophet Brigham Young had not more than one wife. They denied that polygamy was an article of their creed; & also any knowledge of Brigham Young’s having more than one wife. . . . One month later one of the same men [Bigler] called on me with a new comers. To the latter . . . I again put the question, if they did not believe in polygamy & practice it. To which he said yes with greatearnestness [sic].

Now feeling that he had the upper hand, Rev. Emerson turned on Henry Bigler, reminding him that Bigler had only recently denied Mormon polygamy. Retaining his composure, Bigler replied, “O this is a new revelation, I did not know it before.”

While never a practitioner of plural marriage, Henry Bigler was a staunch defender of the principle. Not one to mention his intimate life even to the privacy of his diary, Bigler’s reluctance to take additional wives remains a mystery. Yet his commitment to his religion would seem to have made him a prime candidate. Perhaps
his advanced age (forty years old) at the time of his first marriage was the reason he did not take additional wives, or perhaps economic factors or, more likely, a personal hesitation to pursue additional wives kept him from practicing polygamy. At one point he even refused to have deceased women sealed to him vicariously. Bigler preferred to let relatives like his sister Emmeline Hess, cousin Bathsheba Bigler Smith, or father-in-law Moses Simpson Emett engage in the principle of plurality. Perhaps he found solace in Brigham Young’s 1871 proclamation stating “a Man may Embrace [plural marriage] in his heart & not take the Second wife & be justified before the Lord.”25 Whatever the case, Henry Bigler lived and died a monogamist.

In July 1854 Bigler and those that had come to Hawaii with him four years earlier were released from their missions and sent home. During their tenure in the Sandwich Islands almost three thousand Hawaiians had accepted their message. As Henry Bigler watched Honolulu disappear beyond the horizon, he may have recalled an observation made in his diary a few months earlier: “When we landed here in 1850 [we were] ignorant of the language and among strangers . . . but now we [are] surrounded by thousands who seem to love us and are Saints.”26

Back in Utah by 1855, Henry Bigler finally married and began life as a family man and farmer. Henry and Cynthia Jane Whipple Bigler took up residence in Farmington, Utah, where he sharecropped some land owned by Allen Burk. On 4 October 1856, their first child was born—a daughter named Elizabeth Jane.27

But just as Henry Bigler began to enjoy the roles of husband and father, his church called once again. On 28 February 1857 as he traveled from Farmington toward Salt Lake City, Bigler chanced upon Brigham Young along the road. The church president halted his carriage next to Bigler and told him to prepare for another mission to the Sandwich Islands. Young also requested that Bigler stop by his office in Salt Lake City and leave the names of all others whom Bigler knew spoke Hawaiian. This informal call not only demonstrated President Young’s confidence in Henry Bigler, but also may offer a view of how casually at least some mission calls were issued in the mid-nineteenth century.28

The sorrow Henry Bigler felt as he left his wife and young family to once again preach the gospel was great. Acknowledging to the privacy of his diary that this would be a hard trial, he was still willing to do “anything the Lord required . . . however great the cross mite [sic] be.” The ocean voyage to Honolulu was anything but pleasant for Henry Bigler. The missionaries traveled at the steerage fare, which required them to sleep in the ship’s hold and
spend their days on deck. The elements reaped havoc with Bigler’s physical condition, causing him to suffer horrendously. Of his situation Bigler wrote, “It is cold and disagreeable on deck and even in bed all night my legs [are] cold not having anything to cover myself with except my coat.” As a consequence of an infection brought on by such exposure, he was left permanently deaf in one ear.25

When the new elders arrived in September 1857, the current mission president, Silas Smith, decided to return home with several other missionaries. Whether the incoming missionaries had carried directions from Brigham Young to that effect or not remains unclear. But at a conference of the Sandwich Islands elders held just before the departure of Smith and the others, Bigler was nominated and sustained as the protem mission president.30 Why this appointment was handled as a temporary one is also unknown. Perhaps Silas Smith assumed he was released without specific instructions to that end from church authorities.

Although not a reflection upon Bigler’s efforts, Bigler’s presidency must stand as a period of disappointment in the history of the Church in Hawaii. By July 1855, less than one year after his first mission to the islands had ended, the ranks of the Church had swelled to 4,650. But during the next year the Church’s population began to shrink noticeably. A similar decline was also apparent among the Protestant congregations and seems to indicate a general rejection of Anglo-Christian values by the Hawaiians.31

In order to counter this trend among the native Saints, Bigler sought to institute a reformation similar to the one occurring almost simultaneously in Utah. Church members were encouraged to reaffirm their commitment, confess their sins, be rebaptized, and strive to live more fully God’s laws.32 The need of such a revitalization was pointed out in Henry Bigler’s diary. He sadly noted a Sunday meeting he conducted on Oahu which was attended by fifteen or sixteen people. In 1854 he had preached to the same congregation; it had had over sixty members in good standing, but now all had “dwindled away and withered up.” The enthusiasm for the Church was at such a low ebb that on one occasion Elder Bigler felt as if he were “preaching to the walls.”33

As the Utah War created fear and the tension in the capital of Mormonism, the Latter-day Saint efforts in Hawaii ceased temporarily. In November 1857 a letter arrived from Brigham Young directing all of the elders, with one or two exceptions, to return to Utah. Ironically, as the elders were about to abandon the Sandwich Islands, the reformation, which Henry had labored so hard to promote, began to bear fruit. On 7 January 1858, he attended a meeting in which many of the members were “melted down like
children” as they felt the weight of their sins. Twenty-two of the native Saints were rebaptized that day.34

Henry Bigler’s experiences from his two Hawaiian missions provide a great deal of insight into the mid-nineteenth-century Church in the Sandwich Islands. The difficulty of opening a foreign mission, learning the language, and establishing a church are well demonstrated during his first Hawaiian labors. The ordeal of trying to sustain the Saints’ nascent faith marked his second mission.

On 5 November 1874, personal tragedy invaded Henry Bigler’s quiet, peaceful life in Farmington, Utah, when his wife of nineteen years died. Cynthia Jane Bigler was only thirty-nine years old at her death. Bigler now faced a crisis like none he had known before. He became a single parent who was rather unprepared to deal with the grief of his children let alone his own sadness. His confused nine-year-old son Jacob “would follow [him] in and out of the house” wherever he went. Finally Bigler had to send three of his boys—aged nine, twelve, and fifteen years—to stay temporarily with friends and relatives.35

Bigler’s diary entries during this phase of his life poignantly reveal a very sad, lonely man wrestling with life’s challenges. Two days after Cynthia Jane’s death he wrote, “This has been to me a lonely day, I shall not attempt to describe my feelings.” On the day of her burial he lamented the sorrow of his son Charles, writing, “My poor boy how my heart ached for him.” While alone churning butter a few days later, Henry Bigler felt that “my wife was not dead but was in the other room and would soon be in to look after the churning and take out the butter.”36 His is a story not only of the American West and the nineteenth-century Church, but also of family life on the American frontier.

On a Sunday evening in November 1875, just five days short of the anniversary of his wife’s death, a messenger arrived at the Bigler home in Farmington with a letter from Brigham Young. Henry Bigler had been called to Salt Lake City to work in the Endowment House.37 He was a sixty-year-old widower with three dependent sons still at home. Yet, by the end of the year he had “commenced to labor in the holy ordinances of the Endowment.” His work at the Endowment House continued until 30 October 1876, at which time Brigham Young stopped the ordinance work there, saying, “If the people wish to receive their endowments and sealings they must go to Saint George and receive them in a Temple.”38 Consequently Henry Bigler moved south.

At St. George, Bigler served as an ordinance worker in the endowment ceremony, took a second wife (Eleanor Parthenia Emett), and reared another family.39 His years at the St. George
Temple offer a perspective from the eyes of a lay member involved with this most sacred of Latter-day Saint activities. The pride that he and his co-workers took in their callings is very clear.40 Most of these temple workers were in their later years and all had proven themselves as valiant supporters of the kingdom of God during earlier stages of their lives. Interestingly, several of the male temple workers—such as Bigler and John S. Woodbury—had served as missionaries to Hawaii. By the late 1870s, George Q. Cannon, another one-time Hawaiian missionary, was in the Church’s First Presidency, and he may have had some influence on these older brethren receiving the opportunity to spend their declining years in the warmth of southern Utah while still laboring for Zion’s cause.

Henry Bigler maintained correspondence with Cannon throughout these years,41 and there is no reason to assume that others of his former mission colleagues did not do the same. Since being a temple worker provided a small monthly stipend, assignment to St. George may well have been a Latter-day Saint version of old-age compensation for those who had given up much in the service of the Church when they were younger. At least such a hypothesis could clearly be applied to Henry Bigler.42

If, as Jerome G. Manis has suggested, the life histories of the less eminent can be successfully employed to “provide more comprehensive truths and richer understanding” of history than can be garnered solely from the lives of the powerful, rich, or famous,43 then Henry William Bigler stands as a verification of such a thesis.44

NOTES

2Deseret Evening News (Salt Lake City), 26 November 1900; for additional information, see Andrew Jenson, Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia: A Compilation of Biographical Sketches of Prominent Men and Women in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 4 vols. (Salt Lake City: Andrew Jenson History Co., 1920) 3:599.
3The Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, California, holds 13 Bigler diaries/journals which, with an autobiographical account penned in the mid-1840s and later, covers most of his life. These materials were gleaned from family members in St. George, Utah, by Juanita Brooks during the mid-twentieth century. Additional Bigler writings are located at Archives Division, Historical Department, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter ADHD); Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; and at the University of California, Berkeley’s Bancroft Library. Helpful references to the provenance of the Bigler material are found in Juanita Brooks, “Jest a Copyin’—Word f’r Word,” Utah Historical Quarterly 37 (Fall 1969): 387; and Ernest Pulipher, “A Few Personal Glimpses of Juanita Brooks,” Utah Historical Quarterly 55 (Summer 1987): 271; and the Juanita Brooks Collection, B-103, bx. 1, fld. 2, Utah State Historical Society Library, Salt Lake City.
A Great Little Saint


Bigler, Autobiography/Journal, 13, Mormon File, Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, California. Helpful with the Mormon incursion into western Virginia is the Manuscript History of the Virginia Connection, ADHD.


See Bigler, Copy of a letter to D. A. Brown, 27 June 1896. Notebook, Bigler Collection, Huntington Library.

See Bigler, Autobiography/Journal, 40; and Bigler’s Chronicle of the West: The Conquest of California, Discovery of Gold, and Mormon Settlement as Reflected in Henry William Bigler’s Diaries, ed. Erwin G. Guddle (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962). While Guddle has been the only twentieth-century scholar to publish material from Bigler’s diaries at any length, this version is highly selective, covering only a small portion of the rich information contained therein, and his frequent attempts to correct Bigler’s quizzing grammar along with numerous elisions in the text have seemingly shortchanged this historic chronology.

For Bigler’s account of the Gold Discovery, see “Diary of H. W. Bigler in 1847 and 1848,” The Overland Monthly X (July–December 1887): 233–45; and Guddle, Bigler’s Chronicle of the West, 87–93.


See James Keebler, Journal, 22 December 1850, ADHD; and George Q. Cannon, Journal, 22 December 1850, ADHD.


Waialua Station Report, 1853, Hawaiian Mission Children’s Society Library, Honolulu.


Bigler, Diary, Book B, 20 February 1854.

Bigler, LDS Journal, 4 October 1857, 222.

Bigler, LDS Journal, 28 February 1857, 223.

Bigler, Diary, Book G, 26 August–1 September 1857, Huntington Library.

Bigler, Diary, Book G, 4 October 1857.


Bigler, Book G, 11 October 1857. Apostasy was widespread among the Hawaiian Saints at this time, and Bigler hoped to stem the tide of internal unrest with this local reformation.

Bigler, Book G, 7 January 1858. R. Lainer Britsch has suggested that as the last mission president prior to the 1858 temporary abandonment of LDS Hawaiian Mission, Bigler failed to take the necessary steps among local Saints to insure the perpetuation of Mormonism during the interim until 1864.
when more elders arrived (see his Moramona: The Mormons in Hawaii, Mormons in the Pacific Series [Laie, Hawaii: The Institute for Polynesian Studies, 1989], 50).


41See Bigler, Autobiography/Journal, 29 [November or December] 1875, 276; 30 October 1876, 277.

42See Bigler, Autobiography/Journal, 6 March 1878. Bigler married twenty-nine-year-old Eleanor Emett on 6 March 1878. They had six children, giving Henry Bigler a total of eleven offspring (Family Group Records in possession of the author).

43See Bigler, Diaries, 1877–1900 passim, Huntington Library.

44See Bigler, Diaries, 1877-1900 and Bigler, Letter Copybook, Huntington Library.

45Henry Bigler listed the monthly stipends paid to each worker at the St. George Temple in 1886. For example, John D. T. McAllister, the temple president, received $208.33, David H. Cannon, a counsellor in the temple presidency received $125.00, and Henry Bigler was allotted $62.50. See Bigler, Journal (c. 1883–95), Huntington Library.


47A quick perusal of Davis Bitton’s Guide to Mormon Diaries & Autobiographies (1977) or other similar compilations will demonstrate that the source material does exist to undertake many biographical studies of lesser-known Mormons. May there be more of these life histories of the “Great Little Persons” of the Mormon past written.
“And God Said, Let There Be Lights in the Firmament of the Heaven”

R. Grant Athay

OUR MAJESTIC SUN

It is New Year’s morning. The sun has not yet risen at our winter home in the Sonoran Desert of Arizona. The air is clear and cold, and I eagerly await the warmth of the morning sun. As I wait, I resolve to share my knowledge of the sun—that marvelous source of light and energy introduced by the simple words, “And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so.” While conveying the message that God is the creator of heaven and earth, this brief, poetic account makes no attempt to emphasize the enormity and grandeur of that creation.

The sun’s enormity and grandeur are of great interest to me—solar research has been the central focus of my career as an astrophysicist. Beginning some forty years ago at an observatory located in the high mountains of Colorado where I daily focused a carefully designed and precisely crafted telescope on the rising sun, my pursuit of the sun has taken many turns. It has taken me to other mountain observatories in New Mexico, Arizona, California, Hawaii, the High Pyrenees, and the Swiss, German, and Japanese Alps. At other extremes, it has taken me to the deserts of Africa and to remote islands in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Recently these observation sites have been supplemented by powerful extraterrestrial observatories placed in orbit by rockets or carried aboard the space shuttle. In using the unique data collected from these remote observatories, I have worked with the world’s most powerful computers as well as the most recent scientific theories. Hundreds of colleagues in the U.S. and in foreign lands have shared and aided in these efforts. Some of my colleagues have flown as astronauts,

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and others have endured the intense cold on the high plains of Antarctica in order to carry out delicate observations of the sun without interruption night and day for several days. Still others have built large facilities in deep mine caverns for detecting neutrinos, the most elusive of all solar radiations, emitted from the very core of the sun and able to travel almost unimpeded through both the sun and the earth.

Hardly a day has gone by during these past forty years that I have not puzzled over the unsolved mysteries of the sun. While waiting for the sunrise and reflecting over the past years, I am still filled with awe by the beauty and majesty of this heavenly object. I am awed that this star of dwarfish proportions, compared to other stars, so effectively delivers light and heat to a small planet ninety-three million miles away. I am awed by the complexities associated with that delivery. The energy in the sun’s rays that I will soon enjoy started its journey several million years ago from the extremely hot, dense core of the sun. At that time the energy was mainly in the form of x-rays gradually diffusing toward the sun’s surface. In their outward diffusion the x-rays gradually softened, and by the time they reached the surface, they had been converted into the warm, gentle rays of light and heat so familiar to us. By current estimates this slow, tortuous journey from the center of the sun took about fifteen million years. Yet scarcely more than eight minutes is required for the journey from the sun’s surface to the earth.

We have learned a great deal about the sun, and we continue to learn at an accelerated pace; several volumes are required to document and explain this knowledge. Yet, much of what we observe about the sun still defies comprehension and gives rise to some sense of defeat. Many of the mysteries have only grown deeper and more baffling as we have learned more about them. In most respects the sun remains our teacher, and we are subdued by the knowledge that none of us fully comprehends the sun’s complexity. Nevertheless, in trying to understand the sun we have learned much about the universe in which we live.

The sun is one of our most valuable laboratories for studying the basic physical processes of the universe, as well as those of our own world. The sun displays a panorama of phenomena that cannot be duplicated on earth. On special days it is violently active and on other days relatively calm. Even at its calmest moments, however, it is restless and seething. By unraveling its mysteries, we enhance our knowledge of our environment.

It is a tribute to modern man that we have learned so much about the universe. Most of what we now know has been learned in the technological boom of the last few decades. Centuries of earlier
work was limited by a lack of knowledge of atomic and nuclear physics and of the basic laws of thermodynamics. On the planet earth we live in a protected, subdued environment. In interpreting the universe around us, we have been forced to open our minds to circumstances far beyond anything we have experienced. In addition, we have had to use every tool of modern science and technology and to invent new tools when the need arose. Thus, when we consider the achievement and potential of modern astronomy, we have much to be proud of. Pride for these achievements turns to humility, however, when we realize what prophets of old learned without the benefits of modern science and technology. Through faith in God and a desire to understand his creations, they advanced their knowledge of the universe far beyond the secular knowledge of their day.

Consider the following verses from the vision of Moses: “And worlds without number have I created . . . For behold, there are many worlds that have passed away . . . And there are many that now stand, and innumerable are they unto man . . . The heavens, they are many, and they cannot be numbered unto man . . . And as one earth shall pass away, and the heavens thereof, even so shall another come, and there is no end to my works” (Moses 1:33, 35, 37, 38). To interpret the meaning in these phrases, we must first define *earths, worlds,* and *heavens.* A common definition of *worlds* refers to human activities together with their environment. Similarly, in the Book of Moses, the term *earths* appears to refer to planets occupied by humans. This usage is consistent with the primary theme of the Book of Moses, which is man’s relationship to God: “For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39). Thus, we shall define *worlds* and *earths* as being synonymous. The term *heavens* clearly refers to the stars, star systems, and other objects in those portions of the universe in proximity to an earth or world. For those of us on earth, *heavens* refers mainly to our own galaxy and more specifically to the stars and planets in our own neighborhood of the galaxy. Lastly, we shall interpret *passing away* as a form of death, or at least changes of such proportions that a previous state ceases to exist.

With these definitions, the phrases quoted from Moses state several important facts. Planets and stars have finite lifetimes; they are born and they die. Many have already died and new ones have replaced them. Creation, therefore, is an ongoing process. Our earth and sun were not the first planet and star. They had ancestors, and when they die, they will have offspring. In the scenario revealed to Moses, humankind’s temporary occupancy of earth represents but a single family living in one generation of a family tree consisting
of innumerable other civilizations on other earths which have their own stars and heavens. Earlier generations have "passed away" and new ones have yet to emerge.

Moses' portrayal of a living, evolving universe in which all things have rhythmic life cycles is in perfect harmony with modern astronomy and astrophysics. What Moses learned through revelation, we have had to learn through observations and the gradual discovery of the physical laws that describe the behavior of matter in the universe—an effort that has involved thousands of scientists and engineers.

OASES IN THE UNIVERSE

During the early nineteenth century, the scientific world believed that the sun, the moon, and all the planets of the solar system were inhabited. Little was known about the nature of stars or the possibility of other planetary systems resembling our own, although the universe was looked upon as friendly and nourishing to life. We have since learned that life, as we experience it, could survive without external support in relatively few places in the universe. Other planets in the solar system either lack air and water or they have noxious atmospheres and impossibly severe climates. The sun is gaseous throughout with no solid surfaces and is far too hot for earth life to exist. Thus in this solar system, the planet earth is unique as an abode for man.

When we look among other stars for possible earths, we find that most are unsuitable. For another earth, we would need a single star to provide heat and light as well as a constant gravitational field in which to orbit. Most stars occur in clusters ranging from pairs to swarms numbering tens of thousands. None of these is a good candidate. In the complex and constantly varying gravitational environment of star clusters, there are no stable orbits where planets can survive for long periods of time by orbiting a single star. Nevertheless, among the twenty billion stars of our galaxy we still expect to find millions of possibilities for earth-like planets sprinkled throughout the galaxy and separated from each other by an average distance of several tens of light-years.

Even when we find isolated stars with steady gravitational fields, conditions are not necessarily suited for life. We are accustomed to thinking of our sun's steadiness and dependability and its beneficial supply of heat and light. However, the sun is also unsteady, dependable, and hostile to life. In fact, we survive in the solar system only because earth acts as an oasis which protects us from the lethal radiation that appears to be a natural property of most stars.
For reasons not fully understood, the sun reaches a minimum temperature just outside its visual surface. From that minimum of about 4,500 degrees centigrade, the temperature of the gas around the sun climbs rapidly to a million-plus degrees centigrade. This hot gas surrounds the sun in a tenuous corona which influences the entire solar system. The corona emits x-rays, faintly at times and brilliantly at others. It also emits energetic particles that, like subatomic bullets, spray the earth and other planets. Like the x-rays, these particles are sometimes weak and sometimes intense but are always deadly to life.

Most of these particles are stopped in the earth’s upper atmosphere. Very few reach the surface and fewer hit a human being. However, each particle that enters our bodies may kill cells in our tissues and organs and convert some to cancerous cells. Our bodies can tolerate some particle bombardment, but they cannot tolerate large, uncontrolled doses. As the radiation dosage increases, the rate at which cells die or become cancerous increases, leading, if safe limits are exceeded, to radiation sickness and death.

Solar particle radiation is highly sporadic and, at times, exceeds safe limits to anyone exposed to its full intensity. It is a concern for astronauts and for aircraft crews flying high altitude polar routes where exposure to solar particle radiation is much enhanced.

Since our first penetration of space in the 1950s by rockets salvaged from World War II, we have flown x-ray cameras and particle detectors beyond the earth’s protective shield. We now have firsthand knowledge of these lethal solar radiations and their variations. The x-rays and particles from the sun rise and fall in intensity with the sunspot cycle, which lasts roughly eleven years. Superimposed on this cyclic variation are short-lived flares of more intense radiation occurring most frequently near the peak of the sunspot cycle. From earth, we see the effects of the x-rays and particles as unusual displays of the Northern Lights, storms in the earth’s magnetic field, and disruptions to shortwave radio communications. All these phenomena originate high above us in the earth’s outer atmosphere.

Exactly why the sun has an active, hot corona, and how it accelerates energetic particles remains a mystery. However, the sun is not unique in this respect. X-ray cameras in space reveal that most stars have a hot corona surrounding them. Earth-based observatories detect cycles of activity on even very distant stars. These stellar activity cycles are similar in character to those of the sun, even to the occurrence of starspots and short-lived flares of more intense radiation. Therefore these stars probably produce energetic particles in addition to the x-rays that we observe. Indeed, these stars
may produce many of the mysterious cosmic rays that continuously bombard the earth just as energetic particles from our sun stream out beyond the solar system to bombard other stars and their planets.

Although we do not understand the specifics of the processes by which stars produce hot coronas and accelerate energetic particles, we have identified the essential ingredients of these processes. Those ingredients are ions, rotation, and internal motion. All stars possess the first two and most possess the third. All stars are hot enough to free electrons from the more easily ionized elements, such as iron and other metals. Some rotate slowly, others rapidly, but all rotate. A majority, as is the sun, are stirred by restless convection. In combination, these three ingredients act as a giant dynamo that generates magnetic fields. These magnetic fields, in turn, are pushed and carried about by the restless, ionized gases of the star. This buffeting of the magnetic fields provides the means for heating stellar coronas and accelerating electrically charged particles to high energies. The high temperature of the sun ionizes solar elements and supplies abundant free electrons and positive ions. Thus stellar activity cycles with their x-rays and energetic particles are a natural consequence of the most basic properties of stars. The cycles of activity consist of dynamo cycles in which magnetic fields are generated and decay. The magnetic fields are a form of energy, and some of this energy reappears as the energy of the corona. Both on the sun and on other stars, starspots are at the loci of unusually strong magnetic field concentrations, and it is over these starspots that the coronas shine brightest and are the most active.

In our universe stars provide the energy essential to life but, at the same time, produce harsh radiation that destroys life. Our sun is no exception. Just as a desert oasis provides water along with foliage which protects one from the heat of the midday sun, the earth provides necessary nutrients along with a protective atmosphere and magnetic field without which none of us could survive. Again, we recognize that, just as the ingredients of life are natural to the sun and earth, the harmful radiations are equally natural. Life in the universe is precarious, and, for life to exist elsewhere would require planetary oases similar to earth orbiting isolated stars of modest or weak coronal activity.

Along with the discovery that our sun has an unfriendly side caused by its corona, we are learning much about the sun’s interior.

BENEATH THE SUN’S SURFACE

Compared to the earth, the sun is a giant. Its diameter of 870,000 miles is over 100 times that of earth, and its mass exceeds the earth’s
by 330,000 times. However, our sun belongs to a populous class of somewhat dwarfish stars. Some supergiant stars are a hundred times more massive, some nearly a thousand times larger in diameter, and some a hundred thousand times more luminous. At another extreme, there are stars much smaller in diameter than the earth but more massive than the sun.

Stars produce prodigious amounts of energy. Energy flows through the solar surface at the approximate rate of 8,000 horsepower per square foot. Even as far away as the earth, the energy in sunlight is over 1.5 horsepower per square yard. In more graphic terms, the sunlight falling on a full-size horse standing in a sunny field at midday carries more power than two horses working at a normal rate.

Attempts to explain such vast amounts of energy ended in frustration until the first half of this century when Albert Einstein discovered a formal equivalence between energy and mass. Others probed the nuclei of atoms and experimented with nuclear reactions until it became clear that nuclear energy provided a promising explanation for the sun's power. Other possibilities had been considered earlier, including energetic chemical reactions, such as explosives, and the power of the sun's gravitational energy. These more conventional sources can produce sufficient energy for short periods of time, but they have limited reserves. The shrinking size of a star under the force of gravity does provide the main source of energy during the formative, youthful stages of stars but cannot supply enough energy for stars the age of the sun. Nuclear energy, on the other hand, is enormously more efficient and easily provides sufficient fuel to power the sun for several billion years. Furthermore, the hot, dense interior of the sun provides just the proper environment to stimulate and nourish the nuclear reactions.

The chemical makeup of the sun and stars is determined by a spectral analysis of the light those stars emit. Each atom and molecule, regardless of whether it is in the laboratory or in a distant star, leaves its own unmistakable "fingerprint" in the light spectrum. Throughout the universe, stars are composed mainly of hydrogen with only traces of heavier elements. The next most abundant element is helium, followed by oxygen, nitrogen, and carbon. Metal atoms are less abundant still. In the sun, 90 percent of the sun's atoms are hydrogen, about 10 percent are helium and all others combined make up less than 0.1 percent. The most common nuclear reaction in the sun is the fusion of hydrogen to create helium, the same process used in hydrogen bombs. In this process, about 0.7 percent of the mass in the hydrogen nuclei is converted into energy in accordance with Einstein's famous equation. The remaining 99.3
percent forms the mass of helium nuclei. Even though only a small fraction of the hydrogen mass is converted to energy, this reaction alone can sustain the sun for a billion years at its present level of power by fusing only about one percent of the available hydrogen into helium. In reality, even less consumption of hydrogen is required because of other nuclear reactions that occur along with the hydrogen-helium reaction. We expect the sun to use up much more than one percent of its available fuel during its life-span. Thus, the sun should continue in its present state for several billion years.

Once we know the source of the sun’s energy and its mass, radius, luminosity, and chemical composition, we can determine its internal structure. For the sun to remain in equilibrium, the energy produced by its internal nuclear reactions must equal the observed luminosity and must be carried to the surface at exactly the same rate that it is generated. Also, the pressure inside the sun must be high enough to support the weight of the overlying material. These factors—the rate of energy production, the rate of energy flow to the surface, and the pressure—are regulated by the temperature and density inside the sun. Therefore, the equilibrium requirements on the pressure and energy generation together with the observed size, chemical composition, mass, and luminosity enable us to determine the internal temperatures and densities.

At the center of our sun, the temperature rises to 20 million degrees centigrade (45 million degrees Fahrenheit), and the pressure rises to three billion tons per square inch. The enormous pressure compresses matter to a density about ten times that of solid lead even though it is made up mostly of hydrogen, the lightest of all elements. Because of the high temperature, however, even this very dense material is still a gas—each atom is free to race about at high speed among its very crowded neighbors. As a whole, the solar gas in the deep interior is still and moves only with the solar rotation.

Higher temperatures and densities accelerate nuclear reactions. As a result, most of the energy that escapes the solar surface is generated near the very center of the sun. During most of its journey to the surface, the energy diffuses slowly outwards in the form of radiation. But the hot solar gases are extremely opaque, allowing photons of radiation to travel only short distances before being absorbed and then reemitted. The reemission occurs in random directions, causing the photons to travel backwards nearly as often as forwards. Thus progress to the surface proceeds slowly.

For about the last quarter of the distance from the sun’s center to the surface, the gas becomes restless. A broad zone of convection sets in with hot, ascending columns separated by cool, descending plumes. This convection gives rise to a net upward flow of heat that
is much more efficient than the slow diffusion of radiation, thereby decreasing the time required for the energy to reach the surface. Nonetheless, the journey from the sun’s center to the surface requires approximately 15 million years.

Even though we can model the interior structure of the sun to successfully produce its observed bulk properties, we continue to seek new means for testing the model. Two very different tests are currently in use. One involves elusive particles known as neutrinos that occur as by-products of the nuclear reactions. A second involves sound waves generated by the turbulent action of the convection zone.

As their name implies, neutrinos are electrically neutral. They have little or no mass, at most a tiny fraction of the electron mass. They interact only slightly with the more common forms of matter, and almost all of them escape the sun without difficulty. For the same reason, however, they are very difficult to detect and not a great deal is known about their properties. But, we do know the rate at which nuclear reactions are occurring in our solar model, and, as a result, we can predict the rate of neutrino production. By measuring the neutrino flux, we have a direct test of the interior model.

The task of measuring solar neutrinos has been undertaken by physicists working thousands of feet underground in deep mines. By placing the neutrino detector in underground mines, they hope to shield the detector from other forms and sources of radiation that could influence neutrino detection. Their equipment includes large tanks containing thousands of tons of fluid in which a few neutrinos are detected each year. The neutrinos themselves are not detected directly, but in passing through the detector they produce intricate but detectable changes in the fluid. The rate at which these changes occur provides a measure of the neutrino flux.

Different nuclear reactions produce different species of neutrinos, but there is evidence that neutrinos can evolve into a different species in less time than it takes them to travel from sun to earth. Neutrino detectors generally detect only one type of neutrino, so observations need to be made with several different detectors. Although only one species of solar neutrino has been studied thus far, the results have created much excitement. The observed neutrino flux is less than half the amount predicted. Either the solar model is not quite correct or most of the neutrinos of the type detected have evolved into a different species and, in so doing, have escaped detection. We will not know the answer until we have a set of observations which includes the other species of neutrinos. When the answer does come, we will learn more about the solar interior or more about the fundamental nature of neutrinos themselves.
Whichever way the answer to the neutrino riddle turns out, we probably will not need to radically revise the interior model of the sun. The types of nuclear reactions that occur in the sun are extremely sensitive to temperature, so relatively small changes in temperature can substantially alter the flux of particular species of neutrinos. Also, other factors not accounted for in the models can alter the rates of particular reactions and their associated rates of neutrino production. As we fine-tune the model to agree with the measured neutrino fluxes, we may need to account for some of these secondary influences. Until we finally solve the neutrino problem, however, we will continue to be uneasy about just what goes on inside the sun.

The second means of studying the solar interior involves techniques similar to those used in terrestrial seismology. The convection of the gases and the intense flow of radiation in the sun produce a variety of wave modes including sound and gravity waves. Gravity waves propagate mainly horizontally, but sound waves travel in all directions. Those that go upward are reflected back by the hot solar atmosphere. As the reflected waves travel downward, the increasing density and temperature in the interior of the sun cause the waves to follow a curved path that eventually leads them back to the surface where they are again reflected by the hot atmosphere above. Thus, the sound waves are trapped within the outer mantle of the sun. The higher frequency waves are trapped in the layers nearest the surface, while the lower ones penetrate deep into the interior. As in an organ pipe, the trapped waves resonate at certain well-defined frequencies determined by the size of the enclosure and the speed of sound. The sun resonates especially to waves with periods about five minutes long. Hundreds of such resonances occur with measurable amplitudes that reveal the periodic fluctuations of the solar surface in both brightness and velocity.

Precise measurements of the frequencies at which the sun resonates provide information about how both the speed of sound and the rate of rotation vary with depth. Temperature determines the speed of sound, so measuring sound provides a measure of the interior temperature. Temperature measurements, in turn, serve as a check on the solar model. Studies of internal rotation are important for understanding such phenomena as the sun's dynamo action and the rate at which one layer mixes with another. Rotation studies are based on the fact that the rotation of the sun splits each resonance frequency into two closely spaced components whose separation is proportional to the speed of the rotating gas.

Precise measurement of the sun's resonance frequencies requires observations over long periods of time with as little interrup-
tion as possible. The days of midnight sun in summertime at the earth's poles have been used with moderate success, but improvements are needed. Solar physicists are currently building a network of six observing stations located at strategic longitudes around the globe and at sites noted for their sparse cloudiness. Identical instruments placed at each site will provide observations interrupted only by occasional periods of simultaneous cloudy weather at consecutive sites. Also, a joint U.S. and European satellite, currently in an advanced planning stage, will carry an instrument for measuring solar oscillation frequencies. The orbit will be such that the satellite will experience the long periods of uninterrupted sunlight ideal for the accurate measurement of frequencies.

By such techniques, and perhaps others yet to be discovered, we will gradually come to understand the primary structure and phenomena of even the deepest layers of the sun. Whatever happens in the interior of the sun will influence the surface layers in an observable way; therefore, interpreting surface phenomena correctly discloses events in the interior.

THE GENERATIONS OF THE STARS

The first step for understanding the universe is a reliable measurement of distances. The standard unit of distance in astronomy is the light-year, the distance light travels in one year through space. One light-year is approximately 6 trillion miles or 63,000 times the distance from sun to earth.

The distances to stars in our immediate neighborhood are measured by triangulation, the method used by surveyors to measure distances beyond the reach of their tapes. As a baseline for these measurements, we astronomers use the diameter of the earth's orbit, which is 16.6 light-minutes. By such measurements, we discover that the star nearest the sun is more than 4 light-years away and that some 100 stars inhabit space within 22 light-years from earth. The mean distance between these 100 stars is 7.6 light-years.

Triangulation gives reliable distances for tens of thousands of stars, which is a large enough sample to establish some of the basic properties of stars and determine how these properties are interrelated. Added evidence comes from studying compact clusters of stars which reside at such great distances from earth that all the stars in the cluster are effectively at the same distance. Cluster studies, added to those of the nearby stars, show that there are close relationships between a star's spectrum of colors and the star's absolute brightness. Absolute brightness depends on the star's total rate of energy radiation, and this remains the same regardless of the star's
distance from earth. The apparent brightness of a star depends on its absolute brightness and its distance from us. As the distance increases, the apparent brightness decreases in a known way—doubling the distance decreases the apparent brightness to a quarter of its former value. Thus, by carefully measuring a star’s spectrum, we can determine its absolute brightness, and if we then measure its apparent brightness, we can determine its distance. Similarly, the brightness of some stars pulsates, with periods ranging from fractions of days to weeks. Such stars exhibit a close relationship between the period of pulsation and absolute brightness; by measuring the period of pulsation and apparent brightness, we again have a reliable measure of a star’s distance.

These techniques, plus others, work equally well on stars in distant galaxies. By using a combination of techniques, we have learned that our Milky Way Galaxy is in the form of a giant disk measuring some 150,000 light-years in width and 50,000 light-years in thickness. Our solar system is located approximately 27,000 light-years from the galactic center. Roughly 140,000 light-years from us are two other galaxies named the Magellanic Clouds which are visible to the naked eye from the southern hemisphere. Another dozen galaxies are within 1.6 million light-years of earth and complete a local cluster of galaxies. Beyond these are other clusters, many measuring in excess of 10 million light-years in width and containing hundreds of galaxies. On a still grander scale, we see in all directions galaxies and groups of galaxies arranged in patterns extending as far as our best telescopes can see, which is several billion light-years.

Since distance can be expressed as light-years, distance is equivalent to time. A star located 50,000 light-years from us is seen today as it was 50,000 years ago and a distant galaxy a billion light-years away is seen as it was a billion years ago. We, therefore, cannot escape the conclusion that the age of our universe extends billions of years back in time.

Modern science was not the first to posit such an ancient beginning for the universe. The universe’s age was apparently known to the prophet Abraham. A quotation taken from the *Times and Seasons* states:

Eternity, agreeably to the records found in the catacombs of Egypt, has been going on in this system (not this world) almost two thousand five hundred and fifty five millions of years: and to know at the same time, that deists, geologists and others are trying to prove that matter must have existed hundreds of thousands of years;—it almost tempts the flesh to fly to God, . . . and see and know as we are seen and known!1
This quotation appeared in the same time period as Joseph Smith’s translation of the Book of Abraham, which accounts for the reference to “records found in the catacombs of Egypt.” In 1844, astronomers were just beginning to realize the vastness of our Milky Way Galaxy and what it implied in terms of ages. They knew little about the universe beyond our galaxy. Similarly, geologists were becoming aware that the earth, also, had a much longer history than they had previously supposed. Not until this century, however, did scientists begin to think in terms of billions of years.

What about our own star, the sun? How old is it? How much longer will it last? The answers to these questions come from diverse directions. Geologists set the age of the earth at approximately 4.5 billion years. Moon rocks gathered by astronauts and robotic lunar landings show the effects of exposure to solar particle radiation as it has accumulated over time. The total amount of dosage found in the moon rocks requires an exposure time of about 4.5 billion years at the current rate of solar particle radiation. We know that young stars are more active than old stars, and we infer that the sun radiated particles at a greater rate in its youth. Stellar youth is measured in millions of years rather than in billions, however, and even allowing for the increased activity of the youthful sun, the moon rocks still require a sun of the same age as the earth.

We also learn about stellar ages from their evolutionary patterns. Through spectral classification, we categorize young stars, middle-aged stars, old stars and the remains of dead stars. The sun is clearly in the middle-aged group. It is a normal star, albeit relatively inactive and somewhat dwarfish in size. In the life of a star, middle age begins after the formative phase of gravitational contraction has subsided and the nuclear fire has been ignited in the star’s core, and middle age lasts an exceedingly long time. There is little, if any, reason for pronounced change as long as the nuclear fuel remains plentiful. As we noted in the preceding section, the sun has sufficient fuel to burn steadily for several billion years.

Stellar death rates provide a measure of the average life-span of stars. We can determine death rates because some classes of stars brighten spectacularly in their death throes and are readily identified even in distant galaxies. In a galaxy of 20 billion stars we expect to see only a few stars die each year if the average star lives a few billion years. On the other hand, if the average life-span were much shorter, many more stars would die each year. By observing stellar death rates, we infer that stars of the same mass and absolute brightness as the sun have a life-span of several billion years. Thus, available evidence points to an expected life-span for our sun of several billion years.
Exactly where the sun is in its life cycle is not so readily determined. Its level of activity suggests that the sun has been middle-aged for some time. Stellar aging is accompanied by a decreasing rate of rotation, or spindown. The sun is a slow rotator, again suggesting a respectable age.

What about our sun’s ancestry? How many generations preceded it? Not too surprisingly, our galaxy is much older than the sun and approaches the age of the universe itself. Among star clusters within the galaxy, we find both young and old. The oldest group have ages of about 20 billion years. Star clusters in nearby galaxies indicate ages similar to those in the Milky Way Galaxy. Aside from determining the ages of star clusters, the primary means of measuring the age of the universe is through its expansion rate. Galaxies beyond ours are moving away from us. The more distant galaxies are receding at a higher velocity than those that are nearer. The expansion velocities are so regular and so universal that they suggest a common beginning to the expansion itself. The beginning of the expansion is ascertained by projecting the observed law of expansion backward in time until the universe becomes compact. This is the so-called Hubble time, currently evaluated at 17 billion years, which is compatible with the estimated ages of the older star clusters in our galaxy and in other nearby galaxies.

Both our galaxy and the universe are much older than the sun. Thus the sun was created in an already existing galaxy of stars. It is of a relatively recent generation, but not the most recent. There is other evidence that our galaxy is a birthing center for stars. Within the galaxy there is much tenuous matter distributed between the stars. Additionally, in regions of unusually dense interstellar clouds, we observe many very young stars. Most are in their youthful stages of high activity and rapid rotation. Some appear to be just emerging into an identity as a star. Numerous such birthing centers for stars are already known, and with the new infrared technology of recent years, more are being discovered.

Each new generation of stars forms from the ashes of earlier generations. Each generation consumes a little more of the plentiful supply of hydrogen in the universe, and, in so doing, creates more carbon, oxygen, silicon, calcium, iron, and all the elements with which we are familiar. Thus, a star’s chemistry reveals its history and its ancestry. Early-generation stars have only traces of heavy elements. Recent generations are much richer in the heavy elements fused by earlier generations that have lived and died since the birth of the galaxy. The sun’s chemical makeup suggests that it is of the fifth or sixth generation.
CONCLUSION

Once again an early morning hour finds me waiting for the rising sun's energy, energy that has been traveling over the previous millions of years. I wonder about earlier generations of stars whose demise created the elements of the earth, as well as those of the sun. The ashes of those same stars also supply the elements of which our bodies and all living things on earth are made. I am conscious that the warm gentle rays of the sun are vital to life, while the deadly x-rays and atomic bullets emanating from the sun's fiery corona would destroy life if we weren't protected on our earthly oasis. I marvel at all we have learned concerning the sun and the rest of the universe—all referred to in Genesis by the brief phrase "And God said let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven." But I yearn to know more, much more.

NOTE

'Times and Seasons 5 (1 January 1844): 758.
Welcome, Stranger

Whether you come from Little Rock or Pittsburgh, Nashville or Menomonie, the dogs of our town greet you just the same. The widow opens her window, calls them off, and they resume their idleness again. They know we all came strangers to this land we call The Island for lack of a better name, that cottonwoods drift seed on rich and poor alike, and in the fall spiders balloon strands of silk across the lawn it takes a slanted sun to see.

It takes a slanted sun to see our furrows, straight as our minds, the plow polished like a mirror when we get through. We came by this land hard. It was dog eat dog—get rid of the dog-eaters before they get to you. We snaked sage a long time to get the taproots out before we could afford to shut a door or window, so if the river’s high enough to irrigate but not too high to fish, we don’t have time to cotton to the likes of you.

We keep our guard up. We don’t have time. It was dog eat dog when someone like you left our town, published our sins—didn’t the world have troubles of its own? When he came back a stranger, we turned our backs, told him to move on. He moved on, all right, ran off with that wild girl who brushed her hair with sage, but you won’t find anyone who reads his novels here. We put our trash in dumpsters, white or black.

White or black, we choose our friends. Our enemies will find us out no matter what we do. We open our doors to let the cat out, put screens on windows against flies, lock them tight unless, of course, the river’s low, the fishing poor, and then

First place Chair of the 1991 Brigham Young University Eisteddfod Poetry Competition.
we might consider it’s okay to talk to you. But don’t expect no scandal. We put our best foot in our mouth, keep silent about the worst—it was some other woman that happened to,
some other woman, wild with sagebrush in her hair. What happened here was justice—a stranger hanged for stealing stock, for calling us bad names. He deserved it, coming here high-saddled just like that. Who burnt the schoolhouse down, you ask? I think it burnt itself, spontaneous, all that trash about which tree we came from, the counter-evolution smoldering in his desk. Any fool could see the smoke pour out the window from a mile away.

Smoke poured out the window every time he taught that stuff he learned back east. We could name a dozen other towns, just like us who did the same. Ask them. Their dogs bark too, and if the river’s too muddy to fish, they might take time to talk to you. You want law and order? That’s the price. What happened here was justice. Get the dog-eaters, hoist your ladder to the window of the girl you love and let her father shoot the dog for running off. Let her father shoot his mouth off to the neighbors. They know his own life’s not that good—he had it coming—they’ll sympathize with you. Unless, of course, you take up writing or the girl puts sagebrush in her hair. Then you best keep running. We spent too long snaking scruffy sage to get this good land clear. We’ll throw our white trash and our black in dumpsters, tell the widow lock her windows, sic the dogs on you.

Like I said, it was dog eat dog. Let her father shoot his mouth off—he had it coming. Smoke poured out the window. It takes a slanted sun to see how we snaked scruffy sage, how black or white we choose our friends. But if you stay here long enough and let your children marry right, we’ll drop our guard, forget you came a stranger. The river will clear up. The irrigating will be done, and we’ll take time to fish with you.

—Donnell Hunter
Couplets for an Only Son

Late at night if I'm awake too long
I steal inside his darkened room, alone,
Moved by a startling power, deep pulling need,
To see at growth, asleep, my growing seed.

I place his casual arm beneath the sheet
And feel the busy marrow where my fingers meet,
Where science says the platelets are produced,
The throbbing corpuscles stamped and then set loose.

I kneel, not for assurance against death,
But to feel the dampened molecules of his breath,
The life I witnessed blown into his lung
As it slips past his lips and sweetened tongue.

And feeling the blood within my own breast,
I reach down my hand and cover his chest.
I feel the vulnerable, insistent beat,
The heart, the blood, full-formed, complete.

Through my fingers, the message is quite plain:
I know that Abraham was certainly insane.

—Brad L. Roghaar

First place Crown of the 1991 Brigham Young University Eisteddfod Poetry Competition.
Rattler

I saw him there beside the road,
Coiled as if waiting to strike, but still,
And with head unaccountably low.
As I approached,
I heard no buzz of rattles
And saw the blood that smeared
That diamond tapestry of gray and brown
On a body thick as my arm—
Torn where the wheel had passed.
There were thirteen rattles and a button.

Surrounding in the dust,
The marks he’d made—
Ridges of loops and whorls—
A massive thumbprint—
A graceful calligraphy
Of accidental beauty
Written in thwarted escape
Or reptile agony.

With fading strength
He’d pulled himself
Into the formal coil
To await the final enemy.

—John Sterling Harris
The Age of Wonders

In those days there were marvels and I saw them:
The lombardy poplars along the street
That were even-spaced and all the same size;
The hollyhocks that made into ladies in petal gowns;
The six-sided tiles in the barbershop floor
That lay in straight rows in every direction;
The horse-drawn wagons of gravel that dumped
By turning the floor boards on edge
So the gravel sifted through;
Sam Lee, the blacksmith, who could shape
Red iron on an anvil with a hammer;
The seeds in apricot pits that tasted like almonds;
And baby rabbits were born without hair.

A horse could scratch his back by rolling over
And show he was old enough to ride;
Pine boards had a grain and could be split
Along their length but not across;
A dog’s nose was cold, a cow’s nose wet,
And a horse’s nose was velvet;
Wood shavings curled as they came from the plane;
A bicycle rim without its spokes lost all its strength;
Frost patterns on windows grew like fern leaves;
And I could bend a bar of plumber’s lead
With my bare hands;
The striders that skated on the water
Sank when I added soap;
Bert Weight could scribe a line
Across a piece of glass
Then break it absolutely straight;
And old Erb Matson could whistle two notes at once.

And thus I learned how the world was made
In forms and laws, results and beauty
From what the wonders were.

—John Sterling Harris
Book Reviews


Reviewed by Robert L. Millet, dean of religious education at Brigham Young University.

I was reared in a Latter-day Saint home in Louisiana, where most of my boyhood friends were Protestant. Just before leaving on my mission, I asked my father—a lifelong Southerner and member of the Church—a few doctrinal questions. One question was "Dad, what does it mean to be saved by grace?" He answered quickly, "We don't believe in that." "We don't?" I said. "Why not?" Without any hesitation he replied, "Because the Baptists do!" Some months ago a colleague of mine spoke to a Relief Society gathering on the topic of salvation by grace and the necessity of trusting more in the Lord and less in ourselves. He later commented to me that one sister remarked tearfully after the meeting, "This is too good to be true!"

Both of these experiences show that Latter-day Saints are sometimes not comfortable with the idea of being saved by grace. On one hand, the notion strikes too close to a belief of some in salvation by grace alone. On the other hand, many of us, well conditioned by American society, are committed to the proposition that we can literally do anything we set our minds to.

However, the scriptures, especially the Book of Mormon, abound in the language and logic of grace. Until recently, though, Latter-day Saints have made few serious efforts to discuss this timely yet weighty issue. In The Broken Heart: Applying the Atonement to Life's Experiences, Bruce C. Hafen directs our attention to those works and labors that Christ alone can perform, those aspects of the Savior's redeeming power that reach beyond deliverance from death or even forgiveness of sin, and those divine gifts and graces that enable us to engage with trust and optimism the disparity in our lives between the ideal and real. The book seems to build upon an address delivered to Church Educational System personnel in August 1988 and later published in the April 1990 Ensign. The title
of the book is an effort to tie man’s offering with the Lord’s. “The Broken Heart,” Hafen writes, “has a double meaning: first, the breaking of Christ’s heart at the moment of his death on the cross. . .; second, the broken heart and contrite spirit the Savior asks each of us to place before him on the altar of sacrifice. Through the breaking of his heart and ours in these two interactive senses, the full blessings of the Atonement are realized in our individual lives” (27).

Some Latter-day Saints are prone to doctrinal confusion about grace. “We may be saved by grace,” they concede, “but we are exalted by our works.” Bruce Hafen addresses such fuzzy thinking by suggesting that the grace of Christ is manifest in every aspect of the Atonement—in deliverance from physical death and deliverance from fallen mortality. That is, the Savior delivers us from both the grave and ourselves—from carnality as well as from our carelessness and inadequacies. In short, the Atonement is not just for sinners: “The Atonement not only pays for our sins, it heals our wounds—the self-inflicted ones and those inflicted from sources beyond our control. The Atonement also completes the process of our learning by perfecting our nature and making us whole. In this way, Christ’s Atonement makes us as he is” (29).

Hafen acknowledges early in the book that there is some risk associated with teaching that Jesus offers to compensate for our limitations if we rely wholly upon him—namely that many of us might choose to do less than “all we can do” (2 Ne. 25:23). On the other hand, he adds, “I sense that an increasing number of deeply committed Church members are weighed down beyond the breaking point with discouragement about their personal lives. When we habitually understate the meaning of the Atonement, we take more serious risks than simply leaving one another without comforting reassurances—for some may simply drop out of the race, worn out and beaten down with the harsh and untrue belief that they are just not celestial material” (5–6). This book has been written to offer hope. I find that it effectively accomplishes that objective.

In what I believe to be the most important contribution of this work, the author stresses that the Atonement is not merely retributive: it is not simply an offended God’s means for righting wrongs, an effort by Deity to regulate and restrict and regiment the wayward. Rather, the Atonement is rehabilitative: it is a gracious act on the part of an omniloving being, an offering made eagerly which seeks to aid us in our inadequacies, to make and remake us into what we could never be without divine assistance. Early in the book, Hafen comments:

I once wondered if those who refuse to repent but who then satisfy the law of justice by paying for their own sins are then worthy to enter
the celestial kingdom. The answer is no. The entrance requirements for celestial life are simply higher than merely satisfying the law of justice. For that reason, paying for our sins will not bear the same fruit as repenting of our sins. Justice is a law of balance and order and it must be satisfied, either through our payment or his. But if we decline the Savior’s invitation to let him carry our sins, and then satisfy justice by ourselves, we will not yet have experienced the complete rehabilitation that can occur through a combination of divine assistance and genuine repentance. Working together, those forces have the power permanently to change our hearts and our lives, preparing us for celestial life. (7–8)

Hafen restates and expands on the issue later in chapter 8, “Justice, Mercy, and Rehabilitation.” There he reformulates the question: “Suppose some of us do not repent and, as a result, personally satisfy the law of justice by suffering in payment of our own transgressions. Would that place us in the same position with respect to our salvation and exaltation as those whose payment is made by Christ through operation of the law of mercy? If it would, why not lead a sinful life, accept the punishment for it, and still achieve salvation by our own responsibility?” (148). No, Hafen contends, such is not possible, for “we would still, then, be unable to live the laws of the celestial kingdom. Our basic nature would still be whatever it was when we transgressed the law and we became, to that extent, an enemy to God.” And again, “The doctrines of grace and repentance are rehabilitative in nature. The great Mediator asks for our repentance not because we must ‘repay’ him in exchange for his paying our debt to justice, but because repentance initiates a developmental process that, with the Savior’s help, leads us along the path to a saintly character” (149).

Hafen organizes the book around two scriptural types, the tree of knowledge and the tree of life. Beyond the trees’ theological importance, “they also link our personal experience with the experience of Adam and Eve in ways that illuminate the connections between the Atonement and our own journey through mortality” (28). More specifically, the tree of knowledge represents the lessons of mortality, the bittersweet experiences through which we are required to pass as a vital dimension of the plan of salvation. The tree of life represents the restoration from sin and the renovation of human character, all of which comes through the mercy and grace of the Almighty. Hafen writes, “Neither tree—neither force—is sufficient unless completed by the other” (30). The tree of knowledge is associated with “all we can do” in mortality to regain the Eternal Presence, while the tree of life points toward those labors of the Lord which are beyond mortal capacity and power but are absolutely essential for our deliverance and ultimate celestialization.
Inasmuch as our trek through life is as tied to the two trees in the Garden of Eden as was that of our first parents, we must enter the "life cycle of Adam and Eve." The author suggests three ways we enter this cycle: sin, errors in judgment, and adversity. The first refers to a deliberate choice to violate the laws of God, the second to mortal frailties or limitations and the consequent pain associated with them, and the third to those trials and vicissitudes of life that are no respecter of persons. Hafen suggests that the Atonement of Jesus Christ enables us to meet and deal with each of these, not just with sin. The Good Shepherd thereby seeks to restore all of his "lost sheep," all of us who suffer under the burdens of disobedience, foolishness, or mortal circumstances or tragedies over which we have little or no control. The Atonement is not just for sinners:

The lost sheep are not just the people who don’t come to church... The lost sheep is a mother who goes down into the valley of the dark shadows to bring forth children. The lost sheep is a young person, far away from home and faced with loneliness and temptation. The lost sheep is a person who has just lost a critically needed job; a business person in financial distress; a new missionary in a foreign culture; a man just called to be bishop; a married couple who are misunderstanding each other; a grandmother whose children are forgetting her. I am the lost sheep. You are the lost sheep. (60)

Those of us in the U.S. have developed a preoccupation with excellence during the last two centuries. Books and tapes and seminars abound. Counsel, advice, directions, charts, schemes, and planners fill the earth. Organization and effectiveness are fine. But too much goal-setting, inordinate structure, and planning can cause us to focus on ourselves unduly—on our views, our desires, our abilities, and our strengths. Such things can, if unchecked, militate against a trust in God. In chapter 5, "Two Cheers for Excellence," Hafen expresses a similar concern. "I cannot help wondering," he writes, "what we are doing to each other in the Church these days, as we subtly but continually reinforce in one another the assumption that tangible and visible ‘rewards’ and ‘success’ are promised those who do what is right or even those who work their hardest. Where does that assumption come from? It certainly is not taught by the gospel" (94). In addition, "it is natural to assume that when we don’t appear to be doing ‘excellently’ the perfection process is not working. But the exact opposite may be true. Our moments of greatest stress and difficulty are often the times when the refiner’s fire is doing its most purifying work” (97). Rather than issuing a blanket condemnation of excellence programs, Hafen stresses the need for perspective, for identifying and complying with the Lord’s plan for us with at least as much zeal as we would pursue a personal
program of improvement, and for seeking the approbation of God, rather than man (98–99). About the approbation of man, he warns:

However, not only is popular opinion too fickle and fleeting to serve as a reliable guide for our self-worth, but others cannot possibly know enough about our hearts and the innermost elements of our lives to judge us fairly. Also, men’s standards of judgment are not sound, because they lack the perspective of eternity. Thus our dependence upon outward signs of success and our vulnerability to adverse judgments by others can divert us from establishing a relationship with the only One whose judgment ultimately matters very much. (102–3)

In chapter 9, Hafen discusses the higher blessings of the Atonement and emphasizes that “the Savior’s gift of grace to us is not necessarily limited in time to ‘after’ all we can do. We may receive his grace before, during, and after the time when we expend our own efforts” (155–56). He distinguishes between a preparatory stage of gospel growth where our sins are forgiven and we are pronounced clean and an advanced stage wherein those higher blessings of spiritual development—the means whereby we are, in time, transformed into the image of Christ—begin to have place in our lives. He writes that such doctrines as the law of Moses and the gospel of Jesus Christ, the doctrine of spiritual rebirth, and the concept of entering the rest of the Lord point well beyond cleansing the vessel; they in fact point toward filling it with divine power. Further, he stresses that too often we stop short of the perception and the privileges that might otherwise be ours. Thus “without some breakthrough in attitude that lifts us to the plane of the higher law, we may think of living the gospel as little more than a superficial adherence to external commandments. At that limited level, we may not even recognize the Savior when he comes into our lives hoping to lead us beyond the schoolmaster that brought us to him” (161).

After writing of the Atonement and its possible effects on our spiritual maturity and outlook, Hafen turns to a consideration of “Charity and the Tree of Life” (chapter 11), another section I feel justifies reading this book. His treatment of the principle and doctrine of charity is superb. He repeatedly distinguishes between what the world denominates as noble and selfless actions and what the scriptures identify as the highest and greatest gift of the spirit. Charity, the pure love of Christ, is a gift of the spirit. We do not develop charity on our own, any more than we become proficient prophesiers by practice or marvelous healers through seeking out and administering to all the sick. Charity is a gift, a grace: “To be sure, our own internally generated compassion for the needs of others is a crucial indication of our desire to be followers of the
Savior—clearly part of ‘all we can do.’ For that reason, we must be reaching out to others even as we reach out to God, rather than waiting to respond to others’ needs until our charitable instincts are quickened by the Spirit. But even then, charity in its full-blown sense is ‘bestowed upon’ Christ’s righteous followers” (195–96).

Charity is not bestowed, however, simply to motivate us to serve others, noble as such a cause is. Rather, Hafen reminds us, it is given to help us become like Christ (see Moro. 7:48):

The ultimate purpose of the gospel of Jesus Christ is to cause the sons and daughters of God to become as Christ is. Those who see religious purpose only in terms of ethical service in the relationship between man and fellowmen may miss that divinely ordained possibility. It is quite possible to render charitable—even “Christian”—service without developing deeply ingrained and permanent Christlike character. Paul understood this when he warned against giving all one’s goods to feed the poor without true charity [see 1 Cor. 13:3]. President [J. Reuben] Clark understood it when he warned [in “The Charted Course of the Church in Education” in 1938] against equating man-made systems of ethics with the gospel of Christ. We can give without loving, but we cannot love without giving. If our vertical relationship with God is complete, then, by the fruit of that relationship, the horizontal relationship with our fellow beings will also be complete. We then act charitably toward others, not merely because we think we should, but because that is the way we are. (196–97)

In short, social gospel programs, though ostensibly beneficial, are in the end woefully deficient:

Religious or ethical systems whose highest good is social justice do not necessarily provide the members of a society with the opportunity for personal, individualized development of true religious character. Indeed, such systems may impede the development of individual character by assuming that man’s nature is fixed—either good or bad—and that institutional religion as a change agent should devote its attention to healing broad-scale social ills rather than to personal development. The restored gospel has a loftier and longer range purpose than this, which is empowered by forces that can change and develop the individual to the point of also solving social problems in permanent ways through the aggregation of personal solutions. (197)

As with any work of this sort, there are always matters which could be discussed further, issues and questions over which the reader would enjoy a personal audience with the writer. I found certain aspects of the organization unusual and at times difficult to follow. For example, it is uncommon to have a twenty-three page introduction, followed by a brief (nine-page) prologue. In addition, though the concept of two trees—the tree of knowledge and the tree
of life—weaves its way through most of the book and serves as a type of organizing principle, occasionally I felt the connections to be strained. Along those same lines, the purpose of the epilogue (the last three pages), which basically restates in nonscriptural language the place of both trees in the plan of salvation, may be seen by some as irrelevant to the book. The epilogue seems anticlimactic, perhaps because I felt the chapter on charity had placed a touching capstone on all that had been said.

In the prologue, the author states that "this book applies the doctrines of the Atonement to some common elements of human experience. Thus it is more a practical book than a doctrinal one" (25). Further: “I make no claim to having fully researched and developed the theological issues this framework raises. I am acquainted enough with scholarly methods to have some idea about the scope and the rigor required to complete such a project, and I believe it is a project worth doing. But I have not done it here; that is a book for someone else on another day” (26). I personally found the book to be a sound and stimulating, doctrinal encounter. There are a few items, however, where some readers might desire further clarification. Hafen does not seem prone to draw sharp theological distinctions where others might. For example, in some places the author uses the words sanctification and perfection synonymously: “We know very little about this process of sanctification [he has just quoted Moroni 10:32–33], but it is clear that we do not achieve perfection solely through our own efforts” (17–18, italics added). Later in the book he explains that when we become just or are justified, “the demands of justice are then satisfied. This may be the ‘justification through the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,’ which ‘is just and true.’ (D&C 20:30.) Then as a second stage, we may be ‘made perfect’ or sanctified (in addition to receiving forgiveness of our sins) as a further manifestation of the Savior’s mercy” (166, italics added). Some Latter-day Saints might be more inclined to see justification as acquittal and exoneration from sin; sanctification as the means by which we are made pure and holy, free from the effects of sin; and perfection as the process by which we ultimately become whole and entire, prepared finally to be with and like God, all through the infinite grace and goodness of God. I find myself, however, less inclined to complicate matters by forming clear and fixed and systematic theological delineations, especially when it is not always evident what the Lord intended in particular scriptural passages.

In chapter 7, “Human Nature and Learning by Experience,” the author provides excellent insight into the rather sticky problem of the nature of man. He clearly restates the uniquely Latter-day
Saint position that Adam’s was a fortunate fall, that the act in Eden was not sin, but was as much a part of a foreordained plan as was the Atonement of Christ. Human agency allows men and women to chart their course and determine their fate; we are not only gods in embryo, but also perdition in embryo, depending upon our choices to follow either the Lord or Lucifer. Thus “whether man’s nature is good or evil depends ultimately on the man, or the woman, and on the divine or satanic influences to which they submit” (134). The difficulty here has to do with the effects of the fall upon humankind. As Latter-day Saints we do not believe in human depravity, in an “original sin” which entails upon the posterity of Adam and Eve as a result of the fall. In the language of the Book of Mormon, people are “lost, because of the transgression of their parents” until they put off the natural man and put on the atonement of Christ (Mosiah 3:19; 2 Ne. 2:21). Further, “because of the fall [their] natures have become evil continually” (Ether 3:2). In short, I have some question as to whether men and women are really neutral by nature.

Questions that may arise when sincere Latter-day Saints read this book include, When have I done all I can do? How do I know when I have done all I can do? Can I ever do all I can do? These are appropriate queries, answers to which are implied in The Broken Heart but which I wish had been stated more directly. In addition, a misunderstanding may arise in the minds of many Latter-day Saints regarding Nephi’s words “after all we can do.” Some may conclude (erroneously) that the Lord’s grace can be extended to us only after—meaning following or subsequent to—my doing all I can do. This notion is incorrect. The fact is, as Bruce Hafen seeks to show again and again, the Lord’s enabling power comes to us all along the way. I feel that “after all we can do” means instead “above and beyond all we can do, it is by the grace of God that we are saved.”

Nevertheless, The Broken Heart is an important contribution to our literature and one of the most penetrating books I have studied in some time. It deals with a subject that needs to be grasped by more Latter-day Saints. An understanding of grace is needed not only as we interact with members of other faiths who hold their own beliefs regarding grace, but particularly as we seek to come unto Christ through a deeper understanding and application of his Atonement. This is a book about hope, a book that extends hope. “Sometimes we say,” the author writes, “that no other success can compensate for our failures in the home. And while it is true that no other success of ours can fully compensate, there is a success that compensates for all our failures, after all we can do in good faith. That success is the Atonement of Jesus Christ. By its power, we may arise from the ashes of life filled with incomprehensible beauty and joy” (22). Certainly no message could be more vital, more central, than that.
Book Reviews


Reviewed by Glen M. Leonard, an editor, historian, and museum administrator living in Farmington, Utah.

Books about Joseph Smith abound. Some attempt a full-scale life. Many select an aspect of the Prophet’s spiritual career—his teachings, writings, revelations, or prophecies—or significant events, such as the 1820 vision or the 1844 martyrdom. A few focus on his ancestry, his family, or reminiscences of his associates. The Prophet appears in many other books and articles not directly about him but about Latter-day Saints individually and collectively. Thus when another volume about Joseph Smith appears, we need to ask where the volume fits on the shelf of studies of the Prophet and, then, what it contributes to an understanding of the young man whose brief earthly career now impacts the lives of more than seven million people.

Truman Madsen’s book is not biography, though it touches upon aspects of Joseph Smith’s character and personality. Nor is it primarily a collection of the Prophet’s ideas, despite numerous quotations from his discourses and writings. It is not history, although cast into a loosely chronological set of thematic chapters. Simply put, this latest look at Joseph Smith the Prophet is a compendium of faith-promoting reminiscences, combined with snippets of Joseph’s own words, all laced into an informed and informal commentary reflecting the insights of one who admires Joseph Smith’s humanity and affirms his prophetic calling. The book is a tribute as well as an attempt to profile the personality of Joseph Smith as a religious leader.

The book’s content is the product of extensive searching in the sources for the hundreds of anecdotes and little-known details that form the bulk of the eight chapters. Madsen uses quotations from Joseph Smith’s writings and sermons to illuminate the Prophet’s religious experiences, his everyday interactions, and his approach to doctrine. Madsen also draws extensively from published and unpublished diaries, recollections, reminiscences, and tributes. From these sources come the tantalizing tidbits that are the volume’s principal contribution.

*Joseph Smith, the Prophet* originated as a series of eight, hour-long lectures delivered during Education Week at Brigham Young University. These discourses attracted such interest that tape recordings of the lectures were marketed beginning in 1978. From that wider listening audience came repeated encouragements to publish the lectures and provide information on the sources.
It is not surprising that those listening to the tapes would seek documentation for the hundreds of tidbits shared in the loosely organized presentation. Madsen kept the attention of his listeners (as he will with readers) by sharing, one after another, anecdotes of the miraculous, curious, and humorous in Joseph's interactions with others. This amazing collection of "gee-whiz" data holds the reader's attention and, too often, tests even the well-informed student's credulity.

Readers will find themselves turning to the endnotes after each story to discover where this or that tantalizing tidbit had been tucked away. They will discover that many choice stories are original, first-hand reports from journals (or an occasional letter) written soon after the incident occurred. Most date from the Nauvoo period. Other sources contributing extensively to Madsen's compilation are the published accolades and reminiscences from the Young Woman's Journal, the Juvenile Instructor, the Contributor, and autobiographies of the Prophet's contemporaries. The magazine articles—mostly written as faith-promoting literature for youth—and the life stories share a common time and frame of reference. Created between about 1880 and 1930, they were testimonials of a dying generation of witnesses. These Latter-day pioneers were preserving for their sons and daughters selected experiences of the founding generation of the Church. They remembered discrete, personal interactions with a martyred prophet and wished their children to learn to know him vicariously. For many items, only one source records the experience or impression. The information is individual and personal. These single-source reports are historically unverifiable, yet in a spiritually motivating sense they offer incontestable witness.

Madsen molds these memories into themes that flow in broad patterns over time. The book begins with an examination of the First Vision and Joseph's personality—issues centered in the New York years. Next come insights into the revelations and persecutions of Ohio and Missouri. Finally, the book focuses on the themes of Joseph as temple-builder, teacher, and martyr in Nauvoo.

The published chapters are faithful to the spoken word of the lectures, which are only lightly edited to eliminate distracting references. The text thus retains the informality of a live presentation. In addition, though filled with information, the book will reward many readers best through a right-brain reading. They will find that the information is better felt than understood, better heard with the inner ear of inspiration. The anecdotes and tidbits are building blocks to feelings about Joseph Smith. In his concluding testimony, Madsen reaffirms this intention when he reminds his
audience that the person they’ve been getting to know through his lectures is best understood as a religious figure, a prophet of Christ.

In keeping with this framework, index entries about the Prophet are grouped under four headings: beliefs and opinions, personal characteristics, personal history and experience, and prophetic and other spiritual attributes. From these convenient summaries of the book’s thesis, we are reminded that in personal characteristics, Joseph Smith was athletic, charitable, cheerful, courageous, discerning, handsome, hospitable, humble, imaginative, kind to children, loving, neat, obedient, open-minded, solicitous for his family, and so on. He was also a leader, a good listener, and a student of the scriptures. His prophetic attributes included possession of every scripturally identified spiritual gift (healing, dreams, faith, tongues, prophecy, visions, etc.), and he was a deliverer of prophecy, a revelator, and a man who was divinely taught.

Madsen uses as his biographical models the Joseph Smiths recreated by Lucy Mack Smith, George Q. Cannon, and John Henry Evans. His bibliography credits as well the tributes by Hyrum L. Andrus and Helen Mae Andrus (They Knew the Prophet), Ivan J. Barrett (Joseph Smith, the Extraordinary), William E. Berrett (Joseph Smith, Symbol of Greatness), Truman G. Madsen (Joseph Smith among the Prophets), Edwin F. Parry (Stories about Joseph Smith the Prophet), and John A. Widtsoe (Joseph Smith: Seeker after Truth, Prophet of God). It is this genre of writing about Joseph Smith that best explains Madsen’s Joseph Smith, the Prophet. The purpose of Madsen’s campus lectures was to motivate his audience to understand, appreciate, and know the man Joseph and, through him, the Man Jesus.

As inspirational literature, the success of that effort must be judged by the responses of individual readers. For many, Madsen’s impressionistic generalizations and attention-getting anecdotes will contribute less to an understanding of Joseph Smith than the imperfect offerings of existing histories and biographies. While the amazing revelations of the little-known may captivate, they will not lead to a meaningful acquaintance with the Prophet, who challenged us all in his last months to discover him and his incredibly complex personal history.

Reviewed by Marvin S. Hill, professor of history at Brigham Young University.

There are those who are champions for what is called “traditional Mormon history,” who contend that such history should always be faith promoting; that historians should be selective in what topics they treat and what evidence they will accept. The assumption here is that we cannot finally know the past and that all historical interpretations are entirely subjective. Since one interpretation is as good as another, Church members should be careful to write the kind of history that will bolster faith and help the missionary effort abroad. Rodger I. Anderson has written a book which thus characterizes some of the work of two of BYU’s most honored historians: Hugh Nibley and Richard L. Anderson. He concludes that such work has little value for those who seek historical truth.

Rodger Anderson has criticized Nibley’s *Myth Makers* and Richard L. Anderson’s article “Joseph Smith’s New York Reputation Reappraised, I” for being too selective in their use of evidence. Rodger Anderson maintains that the testimonials collected against Joseph Smith and the Smith family by Philastus Hurlbut and Arthur B. Deming in the nineteenth century “are in fact largely immune to the attacks launched against them by Nibley, Anderson, and others,” (7) and that the Hurlbut and very late Deming reports provide an accurate representation of the “general opinion of his [Smith’s] neighbors in their true, essential form” (7). He adds that he will let others decide whether the conclusions of these neighbors of the Smiths are justified.

Rodger Anderson allocates a chapter of his study to an evaluation of the argument of Hugh Nibley in his *Myth Makers* that the testimonials against Joseph Smith and the Smith family collected by Hurlbut in Palmyra are so contradictory as to cancel each other out. Anderson quotes Nibley: “‘The whole structure of the anti-Mormon scholarship rests on trumped-up evidence’” (11). Nibley held that stories of money digging were so widespread in New York that they provided a source for Joseph’s enemies, who applied them to the Prophet. Rodger Anderson argues that the standardization of money-digging stories only proves that Joseph Smith followed approved methods of treasure hunting. Nibley said that there were so many witnesses brought forward by Hurlbut that they could hardly all have known the Prophet well. Rodger Anderson replies that an individual did not need to know Joseph well to
have heard him expound money digging lore. Nibley contended that if Joseph Smith were a disreputable character, those who claimed to know him must have been so as well. Anderson responds that one did not have to participate but only observe. Anderson holds that Nibley foregoes scholarly standards of evaluating sources to juxtapose contradictory statements. Some of Nibley’s quotations are far too late to be considered eye witnesses and are in fact “non-witnesses,” since some are historians, not observers. Nibley, he argues, cared more for refutation than for truth and thus failed to consider Mormon sources which lend support to much of what the Hurlbut witnesses said.

But Rodger Anderson reserves most of his criticism for Richard Anderson and his piece on Joseph Smith’s reputation in New York. While Rodger Anderson concedes that Richard Anderson’s work is “superior . . . to Nibley’s . . . in method and scholarly apparatus” (27), he contends that this work misrepresents the contents of Hurlbut’s affidavits, oversimplifies the possible interpretations of the evidence, and draws “invalid conclusions based on faulty premises” (28).

To Richard Anderson’s insistence that similar phrasing throughout the testimonies indicates Hurlbut’s wording rather than that of the witnesses, Rodger replies that similarities of phrasing may only mean that the witnesses were asked similar questions so that their answers were automatic. Rodger affirms that the affidavits accurately represented the views of these witnesses since they frequently swore to their accuracy before judges or justices of the peace. Jesse Townsend, who was one of many Palmyrans to provide a general statement against Joseph Smith, expressed similar views to Phineas Stiles in December 1833, so there is no question as to his negative perception of Joseph Smith (31).

Richard Anderson rejected conversations attributed to Joseph Smith by the Hurlbut witnesses because they may have been garbled. Rodger Anderson responds that it is equally likely that they were recalled accurately. Rodger Anderson finds support for Willard Chase’s recollection that being without financial means, Joseph had gone to Samuel Lawrence, one of his money-digging companions, saying that he knew of a silver mine in Pennsylvania on the bank of the Susquehanna River and that Lawrence might share in the profits if he would accompany him. Since Joseph had no money, Lawrence paid Joseph’s way, but the two found no silver mine when they arrived. Joseph’s expenses were paid, and he gained an introduction to Emma Hale. Rodger Anderson quotes Lorenzo Saunders (1884) in confirmation: “Sam Lawrence took . . . [Smith] over into Pennsylvania and introduced him to Emma
Hale. . . . Joe told Sam Lawrence that there was a silver mine over in Pennsylvania told him he might share in it with him; but behold he wanted an introduction to Emma Hale is the way it turned out. Sam Lawrence told me so” (47). Rodger Anderson criticizes Richard Anderson for rejecting the accuracy of Hurlbut’s testimonies recalling events nearly ten years before, while Richard himself accepts Wallace Miner’s recollections of events two generations earlier (50). Rodger Anderson admits that Hurlbut was biased but doubts that another investigator would have produced testimonies any different (57).

Rodger dislikes Richard Anderson’s arguments based on the interviews of William H. Kelley, an RLDS member who collected testimonies from Palmyrans in the 1860s. Richard Anderson found much in these testimonies that was more favorable to the Smiths than Hurlbut’s. Rather than seeing a shiftless Smith family who were devious and dishonest, Kelley’s interviewers recalled a poor but hard working family who were also good neighbors. Although Father Smith was described as a drinker, it was acknowledged that “every body drank them times” (92).

Rodger Anderson shows that Kelley distorted some of the interviews, since several witnesses subsequently corrected his version of their testimony in other publications. Rodger Anderson also contends that Kelley performed his own editorial revisions, since his cryptic notes at the time differ from his published account.

Thus Rodger Anderson raises some serious questions regarding Hugh Nibley’s and Richard Anderson’s total rejection of the Hurlbut testimonies, yet he may be too harsh in his assessment of their work. I would agree with Rodger Anderson that neither Nibley nor Richard Anderson gave sufficient attention to witnesses such as Lucy Mack Smith, Joseph Knight, and others who confirm Joseph Smith’s involvement in money digging. Now, most historians, Mormon or not, who work with the sources, accept as fact Joseph Smith’s career as village magician. Too many of his closest friends and family admitted as much, and some of Joseph’s own revelations support the contention. Rodger Anderson is likely to be right that Hurlbut represented the general views of the people he interviewed correctly, although I would question whether we can be certain that he was always careful in recounting details.

The real issue for Mormon scholars is how reliable Hurlbut’s, Deming’s, or Kelley’s witnesses are. There is the problem of lapsed time, which everyone has acknowledged. Just how Chase or Saunders, etc., can recall detailed conversations with people eight to fifty-five years afterward is a weighty question that cannot be brushed aside no matter how many of these late testimonies seem to
corroborate each other. That Lorenzo Saunders confirms Chase on the Samuel Lawrence story may be of no value. Most likely Saunders reread Chase in E. D. Howe’s book to get the details correct. At a Sunstone Symposium some years ago, Mark Hofmann spoke to me briefly regarding my support for the authenticity of one of his manuscripts. Several months later, Attorney Robert Stott wanted me to repeat what Hofmann had said on that occasion. I was only able to reply in a general way as to the substance of the conversation. I could remember none of the details after a lapse of only months. Richard Anderson rightly questions the dependability of belated testimonies gathered by Joseph Smith’s enemy several years after the events had transpired. However, Rodger Anderson correctly notes that Richard also made use of belated testimonies when they favored his point of view.

But there is another problem with these witnesses that Rodger Anderson tends to slight. Rodger is well aware that Hurlbut was sent to New York by anti-Mormons in Kirtland to get something on Joseph Smith. Yet he argues that Hurlbut faithfully carried out this assignment and came up with reliable evidence. To some extent this may be so, for even Richard Bushman makes rather extensive use of some of this testimony. Nonetheless, I would want supporting evidence from those closer to Joseph Smith in time and relationship before employing much of it. For the most part I have minimized its use in my work because of the enormous difficulties involved. I am not certain that Hurlbut’s witnesses were always in a position to know. Take, for example, the fifty people who make a general statement as to the doubtful reputation of the Smiths. Did they know the family well, and were they inclined to provide a fair appraisal? If the Smiths were so reprehensible, why did the Presbyterian church to which many of these witnesses belonged admit Lucy and her children to membership in 1824? There was nothing negative said about their character when they chose to leave the church in 1828. William Smith was probably right when he said that his family did not learn that they were bad folks until after the Book of Mormon appeared.

At least eleven of the fifty Palmyra witnesses—Roswell Nicholes, George Beckwith, George Williams, Peletiah West, Robert Nichols, Nathaniel Beckwith, Giles Ely, Durfee Chase, and the Reverend Jesse Townsend—were members of the Presbyterian church in Palmyra. They would be unlikely to speak kindly about the Smiths after they left the Presbyterian church. One must recall rumors that sometimes circulate in Utah regarding those who appear out of favor with the LDS church.

It should be noted too that Hurlbut collected testimonies from many of the town fathers far above the Smiths in social rank and
community status. George Beckwith was a wealthy merchant; Thomas Rogers, a banker; John Hurlbut, one of the first settlers; Joel and Levi Thayer, merchants who did a thriving business; George Williams and Giles Ely, storekeepers; Henry Jessup, a shoemaker; Thomas Baldwin, C. E. Thayer, Thomas Rogers, and William Parke, village officials. I would not interview these people if I wanted to learn firsthand about Joseph Smith, Sr., and his family. Some might have encountered Lucy and some of her children in church, but not the two Josephs, both of whom disapproved of the Presbyterians. Nonetheless, these Palmyrans affirmed that the father and son were “considered entirely destitute of moral character and addicted to vicious habits” (148). They may have been considered immoral for not coming to church and addicted to vicious habits for their drinking, to which Mormon sources attest. The Word of Wisdom had not yet been received, and most people drank. Yet these Palmyrans indicated that they could speak only of what the Smiths were “considered” to be. They probably did not know them well.

Thus, Rodger Anderson demonstrates that Hurlbut did not “trump up” all his evidence and that he accurately represented the views of a selected group in Palmyra. Yet Kelley’s counterinterviews may also represent the more tolerant opinions of some, even though Kelley did distort their comments at times in his published version. This slant only establishes his strong pro-Mormon bias, which is not surprising. If we had the benefit of Hurlbut’s original notes, we might find that he, too, allowed his bias to influence what he remembered. Lacking shorthand, both men very likely fleshed out their brief notes with what they could or would recall.

NOTE


Reviewed by Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, the director of the Institute of Religion, University of California, Irvine, and T. Jeffery Cottle, an attorney in Provo, Utah.

Tobler and Wadsworth’s The History of the Mormons in Photographs and Texts: 1830 to the Present is certainly the most important collection of historic Mormon photographs available to date. Although published in 1989, the sesquicentennial of the invention of photography, the book is essentially a translation of their 1987 volume, Der Weg zum Licht. We were pleased to see an English version of this book.

The book borrows heavily from an earlier work by Wadsworth, Through Camera Eyes (1975), the first major attempt to publish the photographic history of the Church and in many ways superior to the Tobler-Wadsworth effort, though the latter offers many more photographs. The similarities are especially notable in the chapter “Freezing Moments of Time.” However, the two works do contain inconsistencies. For example, in Through Camera Eyes the photograph of George Edward Anderson (91) is reversed from its appearance in the History of the Mormons (38).

Wadsworth provided the majority of the photographs for History of the Mormons from his twenty years of research. Historians have only recently come to share Wadsworth’s vision that photographs are historical “documents” that help illuminate the past. “My philosophy,” Wadsworth writes, “has been to get them preserved and protected before someone decides to throw them away” (8). His preservation of these treasures has been invaluable.

The current book is potentially a promised valley for the historian, but it does not achieve that potential. Attempting to absorb the book’s wealth of material is reminiscent of the experience of the pioneers who entered the Salt Lake Valley after the initial trailblazers: beautiful vistas are in sight with little more than a hastily cleared trail leading to them. The pioneers wanted to savor their travel into the valley, but the burdensome trail prevented them from doing so. In this book the images of the Saints are powerful. The daguerreotype of pioneer children (16) and the photograph of four generations of the F. D. Richards family (230) are compelling visual reminders of the real people of flesh and bone who are sometimes lost in the black ink of historical writing. But the flawed structure of the book—for example, inconsistencies between text and captions—and the failure to complete the adaptation from a German to an American audience presents serious impediments to enjoyment.
Minor revisions were made to the 1987 German version, but it is evident that minimal effort was given to prepare it for an American audience often more knowledgeable about Mormonism and certainly less concerned about German Mormon history and its “famous” German Mormons or German scholars. At first we were delighted that a history of the Mormons had broadened beyond the generally parochial view of the Church, but we soon discovered that this book, which includes the basic Mormon story, never gets out of the Black Forest as it moves beyond the Anglo-American story line. It ignores Africa, Asia, the Pacific Islands, and South and Central America. Its Eurocentric attitude is pervasive, as shown by the phrasing of its discussion of polygamy: “Though rarely preached and never practiced in Europe” (99). The narrow German context is also seen in the comparison of Joseph Smith and the German reformer Martin Luther: “In a guileless attempt, like Luther,” Joseph Smith ventured “to answer troubling personal questions” (51). Though helpful to a German audience, the Germanic perspective may puzzle American readers, who cannot be expected to know German history very well or to translate for themselves German quotations such as those from Busch and from Meyer found in footnote 17 (292).

Inherent in any photographic history is the struggle to combine text and photographs in a way that will not lose the reader, who must move between the photographs and the written word. Leading the reader from one page of text to another when several pages of photographs divide them is difficult. Help is sometimes provided in this book. For example, the reader is informed that a quote from Brigham Young that begins on page 99 is “continued on page 105.” In other places, though, the difficulty of following textual material among the photographs is considerable. For example, the text on page 105 continues on page 112 without any indication of such a long textual gap.

The history presented in the text includes several oversimplifications and errors of fact or source checking. An example of such inaccuracy is the authors’ explanation that “John D. Lee, a leading Mormon in the area, was hanged for his part in the [Mountain Meadows] affair” (147). They cite Arrington and Bitton’s The Mormon Experience as their source. But Lee is not mentioned on the pages specified in the footnote, and instead of describing Lee as “hanged,” Arrington and Bitton write that “he was executed by a firing squad at the site of the massacre.”1 Oddly, Tobler and Wadsworth relate the story correctly in a photograph caption on page 145.

While these problems may seem small, larger problems face the historian interested in using the book for research. The bibliog-
raphy and note sections are incomplete and contain inaccuracies, and there is no index. The bibliography has surprising weaknesses. For example, Wadsworth’s early work is not cited. Christian Anderson’s private journal, which is quoted only once (292), is cited as a source, but George Edward Anderson’s journal is not cited in the bibliography. There seems to be no rhyme or reason for deciding which materials were included in the bibliography. While we realize more attention is given to reference sections in books intended for scholarly dialogue than those for a general audience, editorial consistency is helpful to any reader. The bibliographic, footnote, and index sections in Wadsworth’s 1975 book are generally more complete and helpful.

The most fundamental problem with *The History of the Mormons in Photographs and Text* is that it is not a reliable source for the reader. For example, on pages 24–25 there are three photographs. The first photograph, of Mormon Apostle Erastus Snow, is identified as being located in the “LDS Church Historical Department daguerreotype collection.” For the other two photographs there is no source information provided. When the authors do include the source for the photographs, they are sometimes misleading. Is there a real difference between the “Mormon Church Historical Department” (65) and the “LDS Church Historical Department” (24)? Are the “Utah Historical Society, John F. Bennett Collection” (206) and the “Bennett Collection, Utah Historical Society” (97) the same collection? Those not already familiar with various collections will find these inconsistencies confusing.

The authors do not always identify the locations of photographs, a particularly regrettable omission in the case of George Edward Anderson, whose photographs are located in several institutions and in various private collections. The captions could include both the name of the photographer and the current location of the photograph. For example, the caption “George Beard, BYU Photo Archives” (185) contains the information necessary for a reader to locate the photograph. Thus every photograph should have been referenced at least with the location of the photograph.

Photographs of sites are sometimes misidentified. For example, in the Nauvoo photographs (91, 94–95, 113), the home labeled as John Taylor’s (91) is actually Sylvester Stoddard’s home, recently reconstructed in Nauvoo. The homes identified as Orson Pratt’s and William Law’s (112–13) are the homes of Aaron Johnson and Jonathan Wright.2 Tobler and Wadsworth have simply relied on the “faith-promoting rumors” of previous publications to identify these photographs. More problematic are captions that contain historical errors. For example, a tombstone (69) identified
as that of “Don Carlos Smith, aged 14 months, died June 15, 1829,” is actually that of Alvin Smith who died in 1828. Don Carlos died in 1841. In addition, the dating of some of the photographs is questionable, such as the Lucian Foster photograph of Brigham Young, taken in “Nauvoo in 1843” (112). Contemporary documents, such as Joseph Smith’s diary, indicate that Foster arrived in Nauvoo on 27 April 1844. Foster’s first business advertisement appeared in the Nauvoo Neighbor on 14 August 1844, and other contemporary witnesses verify that Foster’s photographic work in Nauvoo did not begin before April 1844. The quality of the photographic material demands better verification.

Photographic histories bear the burden of any type of history: authors must use reliable sources and cross-check them. While Tobler and Wadsworth have provided some significant historic photographs, they sometimes leave a difficult trail for others who want to locate these valuable materials. Their work could have benefited from the careful attention to detail exemplified by Martin W. Sandler’s American Image: Photographing One Hundred Fifty Years in the Life of a Nation, also published in 1989. Dedicated to exploring American history through photography’s unique medium, Sandler’s book provides an excellent model for photographic histories. Especially useful is Sandler’s “Photograph Sources” section, which lists all sources in a consistent format.

Because the Tobler and Wadsworth book lacks this thoroughness, its value to the historian who is interested in using these documents is decreased. As a popular history of the Saints, The History of the Mormons in Photographs and Text suffers from overgeneralizations and mistakes about the past. Despite flaws both major and minor, this volume remains the single most important collection of Mormon photographs, which makes it all the more regrettable that more care was not given to the critical details necessary to make a text accessible and reliable.

NOTES


Reviewed by Milton V. Backman, Jr., director of church history, Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University.

The restoration perspective has been employed in American life both as an ideal to be followed and as a guide for judgment. Illusions of Innocence is an excellent study of the restoration perspective in that it not only considers the restoration movement among Puritans, Baptists, Mormons, and “Christians” (referring primarily to movements led by Alexander Campbell, Barton Stone, and Benjamin M. Palmer), but also attempts to help us better understand the relationships between these traditions and the American experience.

Richard T. Hughes and C. Leonard Allen challenge the popular thesis that restoration evangelists (and many others) were responding to a mounting sense of social disorder. Although Hughes and Allen do not reject the view that social disintegration can intensify a belief in the need to restore an ancient order, they challenge those who focus their interpretations on a chaos or social disintegration theory. Hughes and Allen argue that if major restoration movements resulted almost exclusively from such disorders, their restoration pulse would subside when order was restored. The nineteenth-century movements explored in this work do not follow such a pattern.

A major theme of this book is that the quest to recover pure beginnings has been a major preoccupation in Americana. The authors see this impulse as a legacy of the Protestant Reformation and view Americans as associating democracy and free enterprise with the Creator’s intentions in the beginning. Two terms are used interchangeable by these authors to describe this impulse of recovery, primitivism and restoration. Hughes and Allen observe that Alexander Campbell, Barton Stone, and many other early American religious reformers were searching for principles and practices described in the New Testament that other Protestants had failed to recover. Although involved in a quest of emulation, they disagreed on whether this recovery was a process or an achievable reality. Some taught that the restoration was a continual process but faltered as they attempted to define essentials. Others eventually taught that they had recovered the essentials of the New Testament church.

Throughout this work there are references to Mormonism. One chapter, “Soaring with the Gods: Early Mormons and the
Eclipse of Religious Pluralism," concentrates on the rise of this movement. The authors aptly identify significant parallels and radical differences between Mormonism and other restoration movements. Hughes and Allen reason that Joseph Smith's quest for truth was more in harmony, in some respects, with the views of Roger Williams than with those of Alexander Campbell. Both Joseph Smith and Roger Williams believed in the disruption and vanishing of the true apostolic church and in a recovery which required divine intervention. (The authors might have noted that Roger Williams dated this disruption as occurring in the fourth century while followers of Joseph Smith held that the apostasy occurred earlier.) Both also sought a restoration of authority by heavenly messengers.

Similarities between Joseph Smith, Roger Williams, and many other restorationists become less significant, however, as differences are considered. While Williams died a seeker, Hughes and Allen correctly recognize that Joseph Smith taught the reality of a restoration. They also recognize that Joseph Smith, unlike most reformers of his age, emphasized that the restoration in which he was involved was more than a recovery of beliefs and sacraments described in the New Testament. It was a restitution of all things, of all essentials (doctrine, ordinances, and authority) spoken by the mouth of all of God's prophets since the world began.

Partly because practices described in the Book of Mormon were generally identified strictly with a post-Messianic church, Alexander Campbell condemned Mormonism for what he regarded as an amalgamation of beliefs and sacred rites from different ages. Prior to the birth of the Savior, Book of Mormon people believed in Christ, organized churches of Christ, ordained by the laying on of hands, and baptized with authority. Campbell viewed this combination as sheer confusion. Latter-day Saints, however, insisted that this blending was another evidence of the reality of the restoration of all things. As explained by Hughes and Allen,

to early Mormons...nothing...could be more consistent than to practice Christian baptism in a baptismal font resting on twelve oxen symbolizing the twelve tribes of Israel. Likewise, Mormons saw no inconsistency whatever in restoring at one and the same time the ancient Christian rite of baptism for the remission of sins and the patriarchal practice of polygamy; nor did they see inconsistency in their intention to worship in a restored "Jewish" temple built on the site of the Garden of Eden (146).

The authors draw extensively on the writings of Parley P. Pratt to describe early Mormon beliefs and compare them to those of the
Campbellites. Both Pratt and Sidney Rigdon were associated with the Campbellite restoration for some time, but there is an abundance of information from the pen of Pratt and little from Rigdon. The authors, therefore, compare Pratt’s views, rather than Rigdon’s, with Campbell’s. They do, however, note one major difference in the views of Campbell and Rigdon—Rigdon’s endorsement of communitarian living.

Although the chapter on Mormonism contains a proper reflection of many basic beliefs of early Latter-day Saints, there is an unusual emphasis on the doctrine of plurality of gods that might not be fully understood by some readers. Nevertheless, the doctrine is described as related by Joseph Smith in a sermon of 16 May 1843 (portions of which currently appear in Doctrine and Covenants Section 132). Commenting on this doctrine, Hughes and Allen conclude, “Restoration among Mormons, therefore, essentially meant soaring with the gods while others groveled on the earth” (149).

The authors demonstrate in this well-written work an exceptional understanding of many phases of the restoration movement. They have carefully examined major sources on the subjects they emphasize. While they attempt to be objective (and succeed in most instances), their bias in favor of the restoration movement as a process rather than a reality is evident throughout the work: they believe no organization can claim to have achieved an actual restoration. Nevertheless, they explore many controversial themes without writing in a negative, debunking tone.

This book is highly recommended for those interested in additional insights on the restoration movement. Hughes and Allen have made a significant contribution to a better understanding of the restoration theme in American history. They have also accurately and fairly represented Mormonism in relation to many other restoration movements of the early nineteenth century.

Reviewed by Ronald G. Watt, an archivist working in Salt Lake City.

This is a well-designed and carefully assembled book. The fourteen chapters are arranged in three sections: "The Apostolic Foundation," "Building the Kingdom," and "Looking Forward." The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints funded and published the book as part of sesquicentennial celebration of the church’s introduction into the British Isles. Apostle Russell M. Nelson wrote the forward.

Beginning with an article about Canada, the book next introduces the missionaries into Britain. The reader follows the missionary work throughout the British Isles, the emigration of the Saints to America, the struggle of the Church in Great Britain in the latter nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and finally the rebuilding and rise of the Church once again in the middle of this century. Maybe a better subtitle would have been "The Rise, the Fall, and the Rise of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints."

This book, which supersedes Richard L. Evans’s *A Century of Mormonism in Great Britain*, has sold well in Britain. No doubt it has helped the British Saints to better understand their Mormon heritage and helped as well the American Saints understand their British heritage.

The main problem of the book is the unevenness of the chapters, a common fault with a multiple-authored volume such as this. It is difficult to assemble such a volume unless the editors are very conscious of this danger and take great care to prevent it.

In the first section, "Apostolic Foundation," Larry Porter’s article on Canada and Malcolm Thorp’s articles on Preston and its Victorian background are the highlights. James Moss’s and Ben Bloxham’s chapters, both overviews of Mormonism in the British Isles during the early period have difficulties. Moss’s article tends to consist of quotes hung together with his own summaries. Although the editors are very careful to eliminate redundancies between the other articles, the Thomas Webster incident is related in detail in both these articles. Both articles, however, do explain well the tremendous growth of the early Church in Great Britain.

The best articles overall are in the second section on "Building the Kingdom" This title, though, is actually a misnomer. A
better name for the entire section is part of the title for Fred Buchanans article, “The Ebb and Flow.” Richard Jensen’s article on emigration explains the decline of the Church in Britain. Jensen does very well in detailing the mechanics of the emigration. Richard Cowan’s article is a well-balanced essay, giving an overview of the Church in Britain from 1841 to 1914. His title, “Church Growth,” is another misnomer; a better title would have been “Church Decline.” Also the editors are to be commended for finding authors who could write about the Church in Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. Ronald Dennis’s article on Wales is intriguing because he follows the Mormon and anti-Mormon publications that were printed in Welsh. It is an interesting story that possibly only Dennis, as a Mormon scholar trained in Welsh, could relate. The Brent Barlow article is less helpful, perhaps because Ireland has always been so cold to the gospel and there is little to report. The Fred Buchanan article on Scotland is the best in the book. He gives an excellent background, using statistics well and showing who was converted and why. His article is primarily about people, and he makes them come alive.

In the last section, “Looking Forward,” the first two articles, which are by Louis B. Cardon, are good historical essays. He uses primarily the Millennial Star to explain what happened to the Church from 1914 to 1950. In a way he has brought this period out of darkness for most Latter-day Saints, so we can all realize that this was the foundation period for the later growth. He also explains how the Church began to use public relations to develop a more positive image for Latter-day Saints in the British press. With the end of the war, Britain’s LDS church population was ready to expand—thus the story of the last two chapters: how the Church grew and how the programs are being used by the British members. The lack of documentation makes these two chapters rather weak. Moss primarily uses the Millennial Star, the Deseret News, and The Improvement Era as information sources to explain the building of the temple, the expansion of missionary work, and the development of Church programs in the British Isles. The Anne Perry article, deemed necessary by the editors, is more impressionistic than historical. But Perry, the only Britisher of the writers, does bring an interesting perspective to the book.

Too often Mormon historians try to relate only the Mormon story without providing the world or societal context that affected that story. The book lacks a chapter on the changes in Britain that helped the Church grow. For example, there could have been an explanation of the secularization of society, especially the secularization of the established religion. The twentieth-century Britisher,
generally, does not care much about religion. This change helped make the Church’s public relations effort successful with British newspapers, even with the yellow-press tabloids. The press in the nineteenth century was a religious press fighting for souls against what they saw as an ungodly group; the secular press today is more tolerant.

Another problem in the book is the lack of notes or a bibliography. While the notes and bibliography are available upon request at the Religious Studies Center at Brigham Young University, the editors opted for a condensed form of the note in the body of the text.

The other problems in the volume are minor. For example, the only place one can find something about the authors is on the dust jacket, and that is usually something that gets thrown away. The use of the day and month, such as, 23rd of January, is archaic. The picture on page 89 is labeled incorrectly: the second name was really “Darling,” not “Darlington.” The table on page 60 adds up to more than the stated 280, thus skewing the percentages slightly. A little more care would have prevented this mistake.

Nevertheless, the book accomplishes its ends. The editors set out to produce a volume that tells the experience of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints from its beginnings in Britain to the present day, and it does that reasonably well. The book does detail and celebrate the British Mormon experience.
In early nineteenth century Britain, forces of change seemed to be everywhere. Parliament passed the Reform Bill; at the same time, the lower classes, seeking beneficial changes in Parliament, became involved in Chartism. Meanwhile, the middle classes wanted to be rid of the Corn Law Tariff, which benefitted the landholding upper classes. Religion was not without its conflicting forces, either: the Oxford Movement, the Catholics, the Dissenters, and even the Methodists were all influential to some extent.

Into this melee, the late 1830s saw a new religion appear in Great Britain: Mormonism. The Mormon elders preached millennialism, baptism, emigration to the United States, and many other tenets. The story of Mormonism in early Victorian Britain previously found scattered in many publications is now available in one volume: *Mormons in Early Victorian Britain*, edited by Richard Jensen and Malcolm Thorp. This book emphasizes the period of 1840 to the late 1850s and thus fills that void.

Almost every article in the book was delivered at the Mormon History Association conference held at Oxford, England, in 1987. The editors have arranged the articles in rough chronological order from Robert Lively's sociological article to Ray Jay Davis's article on emigration laws. Although the resulting book tells the story of Mormonism in Great Britain during those years, it does not relate how the gospel first arrived, the experience of Wilford Woodruff in Herefordshire, or some of the usual stories that one hears. Instead, each article focuses on the story that each historian sees as significant. And each essay is worth reading.

The book has a nice mix of biographical, local, background, and general articles on Mormonism in the British Isles. This volume also balances articles written by historians trained in British history with articles by historians trained in American history. The British historians are lead by J. F. C. Harrison, one of the better Victorian scholars. The British historians are better at putting the Mormons in the framework of the British Isles than are the American historians, who tend to isolate Mormon history from the larger context. On the other hand, the article by British-trained Bernard Aspinwall on Scotland overemphasizes the Scotland part and almost forgets Mormonism. An article like this is needed, though, in order to
understand that Mormonism was not happening in a vacuum. Richard Poll's article tends to do the reverse for the Utah War period. It emphasizes the Utah part; the British story, which is still important, takes second place.

The newly discovered 1851 religious census, used by both Robert Lively and Susan Fales, provides some interesting basic facts. Lively's piece is well written, giving the reader some sociological reflections on Mormonism in Britain. Grant Underwood has an interesting article on the religious background in Britain. Ronald Esplin explains how Brigham Young and the Twelve Apostles developed their leadership skills. Malcolm Thorp's and D. L. Davies's articles are biographical. Thorp takes three "black sheep" of Mormonism—James Fielding, Timothy Matthews, and Robert Aitkens—and colors them a refreshing grey. Davies's subject, David Bevan Jones, has been portrayed in Baptist literature as a black sheep. Davies portrays Jones, a Baptist minister converted to Mormonism, as a sincere convert, who tried to follow the tenets of his adopted faith. Thorp draws from the rich Utah archives and Davies from the pamphlet collections in Wales.

Four articles, those by Joe Cotterill, Bernard Aspinwall, Andrew Phillips, and Susan Fales, are local studies. Cotterill's article is a short but well-described and analyzed essay with good sources. Phillips weaves an interesting piece describing the local congregations in Essex, the lack of emigration, and the adverse effect of leadership changes on branches. Fales should be commended for writing a demographic article. Although the article tends to be disjointed, the graphs are well placed and descriptive.

Two articles are more general. For the unenlightened, Paul Peterson's article is a bombshell. Some historians have thought the decline of Mormonism in Britain came from teaching plural marriage. But according to Peterson, the decline came about because of the "Reformation" of the 1850s. Many Mormons were not rebaptized and thus were not put back on the rolls. It was the rebaptism policy, not the excommunication of many Church members, that devastated the British Mission. Richard Poll's article, which discusses the retreat of the Utah Church from the British Isles, complements Peterson's study.

Richard Jensen and William Hartley deal with the development of the Church organization in Britain. Jensen's article on local Church councils raises at least one question. How did the branch presidents fit into the structure? Wouldn't strong branch presidents diminish the power of the branch council? Perhaps Jensen did not deal with this issue because the necessary sources were unavailable. Hartley focuses on one mission office, the pastor. He suggests that
the office of pastor was like the modern regional representative office. However, the apparent overlap between the different offices in the mission left me a little confused about the lines of communication and authority.

The last two articles, those by Ray Jay Davis and David J. Whittaker, are excellent additions. Davis’s study of the laws of emigration both in Britain and the United States is well researched and well written. Whittaker’s bibliographic article is a nice conclusion. More bibliographies like this one are needed.

The book has one shortcoming. Since it consists of a series of articles focusing on Mormonism, it needs one essay describing the British Mormon story from 1837 to at least 1860. If one knows the overall story, the various articles fit in nicely, but a novice in British Mormon history, would have difficulty getting a sense of context.

The book, nevertheless, fills an important gap in the story of Mormonism. The editors and authors are to be commended for putting together a group of articles that enlighten us on the period of early British Mormonism. Now it would be nice to have similar volumes on later periods of Mormonism in Great Britain.

Reviewed by Elouise Bell, professor of English and associate dean of honors and general education at Brigham Young University.

An old joke asserts that you can’t satirize BYU because BYU is its own satire. The gag presumes a reality already so incredible that deliberate caricature would be mistaken for factual report. But of course the joke exaggerates the truth. A wonderful piece of cartoon satire appeared in the Daily Universe less than two years ago: a beautiful young woman stands at the pulpit in a BYU ward, her yards of blonde tresses cascading out around her. The caption reads, “My hair is so full today that I just had to stand . . .”

Nevertheless, there is enough truth in the joke to merit thought. Satire does not flourish in the Mormon culture, and with good reason—it is dangerous. The only thing more dangerous than satire is its absence. The appearance of Neal Chandler’s book Benediction, therefore, is cause for celebration, a healthy vital sign, an indication that the patient may recover.

Three of Chandler’s fifteen stories are pure classic satires, their very names caricatures of the contemporary LDS culture: “The Only Divinely Authorized Plan for Financial Success in This Life or the Next,” “The Righteousness Hall of Fame,” and “The Last Nephite” (which manages to combine the spirit of the Three Nephite folktales with that of “The Last Gunfighter” movie myths). The title story, “Benediction,” is not true satire but instead a marvelously humorous story in which our anti-hero, Damon Boulder (the central figure in four of the pieces) triumphs with a satiric prayer, of all things. A satiric prayer may sound blasphemous, but it is in fact Damon’s shatteringly effective way of silencing the blasphemy of a gospel doctrine teacher who has just spent forty minutes reincarnating the Apostle Peter as Rocky Balboa.

If you’ve sat through a few too many Sunday School classes that smacked of Og Mandino or Successful Salesmanship Sells the Scriptures, you may find yourself cheering for this particular flinty Boulder. (Chandler’s fun with names is clever without being trite. While the Boulder-Petros-Rocky connection is a straightforward one, the name “Damon” gives us much more to think about, including the concept of “daemon” and of “demon” as well as Damon and Pythias.)

The book contains more than satire, however. We can begin to understand the scope of Chandler’s work if we step back and remind ourselves of how we mortals handle the thorny paradox of the ideal vs. the actual. The ideal is what we want, what we hope for,
what we believe should be, what we ought to do or be. The actual is what is, what we and the world are like, here and now. How do we deal with the gap between the two? If we tell ourselves that what we are and what we’d like to be are one and the same, we are deluded or self-righteous. (If we know the difference, but profess to others that they’re the same, we’re hypocrites.) If we say that the ideal is unimportant (when in fact we believe it is important), or if we say it is unattainable and therefore not worth attempting, or if we try to lower the ideal, we are rationalizing. When we acknowledge the disparity, yet continue to try to match our actions to our ideals, that’s called repentance. Sometimes, however, in addition to whichever course we take, the inevitable disparity between what is expected in life and what actually comes down the pike makes us laugh, or smile wryly, or chortle even as we wince. And that response is ironic.

In Chandler’s “Living Oracle,” for example, a young Damon (not named in the story itself) visits a Berlin cabaret hours after his release from his mission. This is an initiation account, in the tradition of James Joyce’s “Araby” or John Updike’s “A & P.” It’s all about disillusionment, as Damon and a fellow RM have one expectation after another thwarted. Just as the best line in a poem is often the title, here the insight of the story comes in a headnote, a gloss on the word “Release”: “(1) to liberate, to set free from bondage or obligation. (2) to give up, surrender or relinquish, to let go or drop. (3) [law] to lease again” (62). This is one of the weaker stories in the collection, because although Chandler takes us carefully to the explosion of the illusion, he fails to evoke the impact of what that event can mean to a young person. (“Ever wonder if maybe it means something?” (66) is not exactly an exit line calculated to keep us up nights.) But as an overture for the whole book, a quick preview of the life Damon (or any of us) will live as dreams collide with nightmares and ideals bump against actualities, it is an effective initial sounding of motifs.

Rachael Holbein has expectations in “Mormon Tabernacle Blues.” (Oh, what a title! Can you imagine such an album? Wouldn’t our culture be enriched by such a wonder?) Rachael expects her son, Roy, Jr., to be “her last, best hope of unblemished maternal victory” (79) after he comes home from his mission. Instead, she must watch him “slide slowly, steadily down into the sin of bachelorhood” (79). But if the son is a disappointment and her husband living evidence “that heaven had defaulted its end of the bargain” (77), it is her father who causes her most pain. The clash between ideal and real has produced, in her father’s case, a skeptic and a doubter, who reads Scientific American and makes out a last will and testament instructing Rachael to cremate his remains. Rachael, in a flash of
inspiration, invites the local science teacher (a fellow ward member) to straighten her father out. At a dinner made in the Cholesterol Kingdom, faith and doubt tangle (with faith getting tangled in the broccoli for good measure). This well-written little piece has surprises for the reader as well as for Rachael. The irony darkens after what we assume is the climax and moves into a deeper insight than we had expected, perhaps deeper than we had wanted. Such are the perils of irony, and of literature.

Other stories with sharp (and rather somber) ironic themes include “The Onlooker,” “Whole Life Premiums,” and “Roger across the Looking Glass.” “Roger” is clearly the most complex and fully developed story in the collection, a troubling portrait of a marriage seen through a veil darkly by a husband who cannot understand his wife’s pain, or his own. Though not long, this story has something of the richness of a short novel, with many strands implied, and an entire episode—his wife’s care of her dying mother—tantalizingly abbreviated into a couple of pages. “Roger” lays open the pain that results when ideals tyrannize actualities, when a person sacrifices what she is for what she is expected to be, and ends up being neither, but some tragic netherworld zombie. A later story, “Borrowing Light,” fails in trying to make the epistolary form carry the weight of how her mother’s tragedy affects Roger’s daughter. Despite its problems, “Borrowing” further confirms the notion that Roger and Ellen’s story has more potential than it has been given here.

Although “Roger” could have been a much longer story, trimming would have benefited several of the others, especially the satiric pieces. Timing is everything in comedy, and once readers have taken delight in the initial shock of the caricature, prolonging the effect is counterproductive. (Comics are told to “Get on and get off.”) Here, especially, less is more. Yet despite a touch of overkill, surely the stories that will find the readiest audience are these satires. In both “The Righteousness Hall of Fame” and “The Only Divinely Authorized Plan for Financial Success,” Chandler has great sport with our current Mormon equation of financial and spiritual well-being. When a friend suggests that the enterprise Carmen Snavely wants to goad husband Walter into joining might be a pyramid scheme, Carmen slaps down a dollar bill, points to the engraving on the back, and says, “Of course it’s a pyramid. . . . It’s God’s own plan. Thelm, put here in a free country with a free market and free enterprise. That’s what a pyramid is, it’s capitalism. . . . Honorable men . . . put it in the Constitution and on the back of that dollar bill so that every eye might see and every tongue confess the truth of what I’m telling you right now” (19). Carmen’s Walter has
a different perception of actuality, however. When fast-talking Brother Houston makes his pitch, Walter simply points out, “Young man, your fly is open” (20).

Of course, that’s what satire is about—pointing out open flies. Someone once said to Rudyard Kipling that truth was “a naked lady.” To which Kipling replied, “Yes, and a gentleman looks the other way!” To the satirist, however, looking the other way is the real sin. Seeing, and saying what one sees, are crucial steps in salvation. In Ursula Le Guin’s A Wizard of Earthsea, the hero Sparrow-hawk tracks down the destroying demon and realizes that the way to gain power over him is to speak the demon’s real name, which is his own name. He acknowledges the demon as a part of himself, he unites the two parts (the brightest and the darkest), and the threat is no more. As Le Guin writes, “A man who [knows] his whole true self cannot be used or possessed by any power other than himself, and [his] life therefore is lived for life’s sake and never in the service of ruin, or pain, or hatred, or the dark.”¹ Neal Chandler’s book is worth reading for the laughs. It’s worth rereading for the insights that unite the bright and dark sides of Mormon culture.

NOTE


Reviewed by William G. Hartley, assistant research professor in the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Church History, Brigham Young University.

In this sixth volume of the BYU Religious Studies Center’s Specialized Monograph Series, Ted Lyon provides a perceptive life study of his talented great-grandfather poet as well as a needed cultural history. The book is well organized, extensively researched, effectively written, handsomely packaged, and an important history/biography. What more could we ask of a book or its author?

When John Lyon (b. 1803) died in 1889 he was widely known through his work as territorial librarian, Endowment House superintendent, newspaper arts critic, and poet. The first LDS writer to publish a complete book of poetry, he reigned as Mormondom’s premier male poet (counterpart to Eliza R. Snow). Seven of his poems became early LDS hymns. Because his work has since slipped into obscurity, one purpose of this history, according to the author, is to give new life to this once famous man and rescue him and his poetry from “dark anonymity” (xiii).

The author breaks John Lyon’s life into six long chapters, averaging fifty pages each. Chapter 1 covers John’s life from birth in Glasgow to apprentice weaver at nine and through schoolless years to adulthood—twenty—one years that made him curious, hard working, and largely self-taught. Here the author splendidly recreates the early nineteenth-century Scottish social milieu—a must-read for anyone researching ancestors of that place and time.

The second chapter, “Weaving a Tale,” tells of John’s moving to Kilmarnock, marrying Janet Thomson, joining an intellectual fraternity that changed his life pattern, and studying night and day to learn how to write. Here is balanced coverage of both career and family. We follow his career as a “penny-a-liner” news gatherer and correspondent for small local newspapers (71), a career which shifted him from weaving cloth to weaving tales—he became a full-time writer and part-time weaver. His local-color reports often dealt with societal reform and extolled the common laborer, as did his poetry, which contained much Scottish dialect. After affiliating with the Baptists in the 1830s, he converted to Mormonism in 1844 and locally “preach[ed] and poeticiz[ed]” (108).

Chapter 3 focuses on John’s missionary labors (1849–53) soon after his wife bore their twelfth child. While he was conference
president in Worcester and then Glasgow, he walked 5400 miles, baptized at least 360 converts, kept a missionary journal for 1849, wrote 1000 letters, and penned 70 poems, of which 18 appeared in the Millennial Star. With mission presidency approval, he published 105 poems in the Harp of Zion (1853), the first recorded book of LDS poems, as a fund-raising project to benefit the Perpetual Emigrating Fund. (Of 5100 printed, fewer than 2000 sold.)

The publishing year of 1853 was also the family’s emigrating year, and Chapter 4, “Our Ain Mountain Hame,” gathers them to Zion and sets forth John’s fine description of the International’s voyage. Chapter 5 covers John’s Utah years, 1853–1889, including his poems, newspaper reviews, other prose, Endowment House employment, plural marriage, and cultural circles.

The final chapter evaluates John’s works, including Mormondom’s first serialized novel. Ted Lyon notes “His poetry may not be great, but much of it is good” (310). It served to teach, persuade, warn, cheer, and uplift the nineteenth-century Saints. Like other poet converts, John forsook the poetic modes and styles of the day “in order to create uniquely LDS poetry” (293). Today his Harp of Zion poems seem “didactic, trite, and formally and thematically weak” (294). Most of John’s poems explore, extol, and animate religious themes—fleeing Babylon, gathering to Zion, the Second Coming, assisting the poor, and praising specific leaders. Perhaps ten percent of the poems are humorous. Songs of a Pioneer, published posthumously, contains his Utah poetry.

A major contribution Ted Lyon makes is the ten-page list of John’s poems (Appendix A) identified by opening words, date, and place of publication.

The author’s sleuthing found some remarkable sources, and his pondering of the sources produced some keen insights. He analyzed John Lyon’s early poems to cull autobiographical details. He found and used several good firsthand accounts that mention John, including the journals of John’s friend William Gibson and of Elder Franklin D. Richards, and immigration accounts by Christopher Arthur, James Farmer, and Frederick Piercy. He also used Kilmarnock directories and parish registers, and LDS Worcester Conference, Glasgow Conference, British Mission, and Seventies records.

Some tantalizing finds surprise and reward the reader. Ted Lyon compared public versions of the International’s voyage (in the Millennial Star) with John Lyon’s and found the public account “eliminates most of the unpleasantries and normal problems” (176). Ted provides other tantalizing finds such as the fact that the Presbyterians in Glasgow held a monthly fast day (92) and the “paid
and lay members” of the Free Church of Scotland visited in homes, like LDS home teachers (93). In Utah, John’s seventies members and spouses (1854) held monthly fast and testimony meetings before such meetings became a general Church practice (224). The Church conducted endowments (1851) at the Council House before the Endowment House was built (221). Children were circumcised at the Endowment House when eight days old (229).

The book has a few minor problems. With only a few exceptions, the author uses the best secondary sources on the topics treated. However, he apparently did not use Paul Peterson’s study of the Mormon Reformation, Glen Humphries’s BYU Studies article about home missionaries, and the studies of plural marriage subsequent to Stanley Ivins’s “Notes.” The author admits that documents “are very scarce” (269) for John Lyon’s last twenty years. Five unpublished manuscripts that are not listed in the bibliography comprise the main source for Lyon’s early years. The annual city street directories, tax records, and the Eighteenth and Twentieth Ward records were not checked. The bibliography also contains a citation to “Church Records, LDS Family History Archives, Salt Lake City,” a citation too vague to be useful. Several passages contain undocumented information that is not general knowledge, for example, Glasgow having the “worst slums” in Europe (18), industrial revolution facts, a statement about posting wedding banns (63), Joseph Smith being burned in effigy in Clackmannan in 1842 (94), and a custom that fathers not baptize their children (104).

The author gives a few dubious “facts” or assumptions, such as John baptizing and, therefore, helping to convert at least 360 people (123)—he may not have converted all those people because English converts often had high officials do the baptizing rather than the missionaries who taught them. He jests that gulls did not come in 1855, but in fact they did. He says that John’s plural wife Caroline Holland was born in 1858 in Kanesville, which had already been renamed Council Bluffs by 1853.

Because I row in the family history river, I wish the author had given us a short postscript about the Lyon family after John’s death. How was his estate handled in his plural family? Did his children have and pass along any of the Scottish heritage? Did they stick with the faith of their father? And, given the scholarly careers of both John and Ted Lyon, is there not a cultural heritage coursing through the Lyons’ veins that merits mention?

This attractive book contains superb illustrations and maps. Should not the editors, however, give credits to the cartographers?
And could they not print in a back page a dust-jacket type summary about the author (because jackets disappear)?

The author concludes that “John Lyon willingly, joyously, filled his role as pioneer, pioneer prose writer, and poet” (325). I conclude that grandson Ted Lyon brilliantly filled his role as researcher, interpreter, and writer. This is an outstanding contribution to LDS history, writing, and literature, one of the best LDS nonfiction books to appear in recent times.

Reviewed by Michael Hicks, assistant professor of music at Brigham Young University.

A pioneer rakes brush, saws wood, drills wells, ploughs fields. His role in this world resembles that of a biblical prophet, who lays a highway in the desert, makes the crooked straight and the rough places smooth. Or, to put it in other terms, a pioneer edits the wilderness.

Such a person was Kenner Kartchner, a third-generation pioneer of the American Southwest who left some quite literate memoirs. These have been lovingly preserved and edited by his grandson, Larry Shumway, in the book *Frontier Fiddler*. That Kartchner was a pioneer/writer and Shumway the grandson/editor are facts that determine the strength and the weakness of this book. The strength comes in the direct, image-filled prose that pioneer life seems to have bequeathed Kartchner and that descendant Shumway refuses (wisely) to obstruct. The weakness is that the pioneer work ethic often leads Kartchner to eschew self-reflection and intimacy in his prose in favor of a rather detailed employment history. This penchant sometimes results in a mass of work-related anecdotes that Shumway appears reluctant to trim where other, nonfamilial, editors might (wisely) have been more ruthless.

While Kartchner revels in recalling tiny details of ranching, mining, and store clerking—his vocational pursuits—he remains tight-lipped on matters of the mind and heart. Courtship, for instance, is entirely overlooked, the only reference to it coming in the following passage, which appears after nearly two hundred pages of blow-by-blow descriptions of his work (including building a room onto the family homestead for himself and his bride): “Culminating a beautiful romance of several years standing, the wedding was set for March 25, 1908” (186). One longs for some account of this evidently warm courtship amid the book’s blizzard of mundane details. Likewise all Kartchner writes of the birth of his first child is that it was “by far the most exciting event while [we were] living in Salt Lake City” (192). He dutifully gives birth statistics, then goes on to recount at length more humdrum events. Although he is obviously sensitive to language, Kartchner never mentions schooling except in a brief reminiscence of his math studies with Joseph Peterson (12–15). One cannot help but feel hidden ironies in every page of this memoir: here is a man who knows how to write a book but who never mentions reading one; he writes for his posterity but never of them.
The book is sometimes prone to moralize where it could more profitably meditate. Kartchner occasionally tries to instruct by precept rather than edify by simple storytelling. (He writes on the first page that his work was “impelled” by the hope it might provide examples from which others can “emulate” the good and “avoid” the bad.) He instructs us best when he simply ruminates. Two examples come to mind: one, when he reflects on his detachment from his father, who left on a Mormon mission at a crucial time in the son’s life (17, 43); the other when Kartchner mulls over the evolution of his attitudes toward the “outside” (non-Mormon) world during his adolescence, gradually coming “to respect the religion of any man, conscientiously pursued, and to appreciate more fully a nation founded in freedom” (58).

Between such passages as these, one finds a profusion of job-related episodes and digressions that can become tiresome to a disinterested reader. Several sections of the book (such as the one concerning Commodore Owens [111–14]) intrude into the narrative without dramatic or structural purpose and should have been cut. At such points in the text, the editor’s kinship to the author clearly disadvantages him. After all, editing an ancestor requires uncommon fearlessness: to delete a forebear’s words is something akin to kicking over a headstone. Nevertheless, probably the best tribute to a pioneer writer is to approach his manuscript as he would have approached a parcel of land to be cleared.

The actual extent of Shumway’s editing is unclear; he describes his editorial philosophy and methods in a mere two sentences (xiii), and there is virtually no annotation. But, although I think he could have cut more from this manuscript than he did, a light hand with this text was probably better than a heavy one. Kartchner’s style is plain, in the best sense of the word, with a pleasing balance of modesty and self-confidence. He avoids the sort of affectation that sometimes blurs an eye for detail. The margins of my copy of the book are strewn with arrows and asterisks marking especially nice passages, such as those concerning the Grand Canyon (62–65), a stampede of cattle (141–42), sheep-shearing (114–16), tree-climbing (212–13), and even eating (131). Kartchner’s instinctive musicality emerges in passages such as this comment on a hard-riding horse named Blue Dog: “It so happened that Blue Dog was one among the twenty to thirty head they were breaking, and, next to a ‘singer’ called Squealer, was the wickedest bucking horse of the lot. So, as well might be surmised, I wanted no part of the handsome Blue Dog” (25). Prose like this, with its strategic repetition and transformation of consonants, suggests how sonorous vernacular writing can be. And Kartchner relishes every
opportunity to describe the frontier "characters" he has known, like John Hance, an aged "tourist amuser" whose beard "waved in the canyon breeze and . . . vibrated accompaniment to his constant chatter. Now and then an unruly denture shook loose from excessive enunciation, only to be mashed back in place while he caught his breath for the next sentence. Loose in his pants pocket was a hundred-dollar gold note for frequent, 'accidental' exhibition as he fumbled for a match, pocketknife, or small change" (71, 72).

The Blue Dog excerpt, like much of Kartchner's memoir, also alludes to the frontiersman's spiritual kinship to the horse. Indeed, so much of this autobiography recounts with delight life among horses (not to mention mules, cattle, and like creatures) that it could aptly have been titled Frontier Cowboy. The meticulous recounting of ranching throughout the book might seem tedious at times but is needed to reinforce some of Kartchner's underlying purposes. For this book is meant to be, in part, a nostalgic tract on the beauties of cowboy life, which Kartchner feels have unjustly faded from memory. The vivid detail expresses how much there is to savor in such a life. And, he explains, if the book helps do that, "the writer will be glad it is written" (170).

He should be glad, then. Whether he really illuminates the art of fiddling, however, is another question. Most of Kartchner's accounts of fiddling concern its ability to earn him money or enhance his job connections. These accounts are useful, to be sure, since they show how inseparable much of music-making is from the bread and butter of workaday life. Nevertheless the title Frontier Fiddler may forecast more than the text can deliver in musical insight. The book taught me, a nonfiddler, some of the hidden vicissitudes of fiddling, such as how arduous breakdown playing can really be (38). It also reminded me of the almost supernatural wonder that surrounded the early phonograph (104). Moreover, Shumway, an ethnomusicologist and a fiddler to boot, has provided for the musicologically minded a list of his grandfather's repertoire and seventeen transcriptions of fiddle tunes, together with a brief essay on how Kartchner played them. More contemplation by Kartchner on the experience of fiddling, either aesthetic or technical, would enhance the book's worth to the musicians who might be drawn to its title.

This conclusion leads me to the essential question: who should read this book? Kartchner wrote the manuscript chiefly for his descendants. They should study and cherish it, for seldom are reminiscences so well kept, even if their scope here seems somewhat limited to an outsider like myself. Scholars who want to sharpen their vision of the Southwest at the turn of the century
should read it, as should those interested in cowboy life generally and in forestry work specifically (see 205–42). Musicians, especially fiddlers, should read it too, or at least parts of it, with the understanding that similar works have covered much of the same ground and only a little insight into the sociology of vernacular music emerges here. Students of Mormon history—among whom are some of the readers of this journal—should consult the book for at least two sections: “Trouble with the Church” (39–43), which describes Kartchner’s unpleasant confrontation with ecclesiastical “justice”; and “Sunday School Superintendent” (201–4), which recalls his pleasant months as a religious administrator in a small town.

The appearance of a book such as this is one of those unlikely events so routinely provided by small university presses. It is a book which has almost no discernable market but which deserves publication more than much of what passes for publishable nowadays. It does more for its readers than do many books, leaving in their minds some precious, indelible images from our regional past, colorful impressions not likely to be conveyed by secondary works.

Although Frontier Fiddler is a book about a pioneer, it is not a pioneering book. Yet it can occupy a clearing in our knowledge of the past much as a log cabin might, without airs or pretense. The book is rough but sturdy.

Reviewed by James Welch, university organist and carillonneur at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

Michael Hicks’s *Mormonism and Music: A History* is a veritable feast of information on a subject about which many people are passionate. Plenty of meaty courses are served up; even the appetizer/preface is a full course in itself. Some tasty trivia clears the palate between courses, and the epilogue is a wonderfully tart dessert. This engaging book leaves one with a satisfied but not-too-full feeling.

Of course, I know that tastes in food are about as disparate as tastes in music, and some may take issue with certain points presented by the authors. The book goes beyond a simple recitation of historical facts, but it is precisely the author’s bias and editorializing that make it such good reading. Hicks is unrestrained in his comments about many personalities, be they authors, composers, musicians, general authorities, or prophets. I hope all the quotations (some potentially but delightfully controversial) are given in context. They reconfirm the fact that music, because it is such a passionate and personal thing, always engenders strong feelings.

In the preface Hicks introduces his thesis with a discussion of the ironies involved in combining music and religion:

The asceticism at the heart of many religions implicitly calls their adherents to forswear music’s pleasures. But music is so much a part of man’s profoundest utterances that religion must rely on music’s effects. (ix)

Any history of a religion and an art will be a history of both aesthetic triumphs and petty disputes. For while the joining of religion and art has often led mankind to the summit of his potential in each, both religion and art as institutions have maintained a fundamental enmity. This is doubtless because they make similar claims and demands. Both clamor for people’s affection and allegiance. Both promise bliss (one in the next world, the other in this). Both claim to lead their adherents to a better state of existence. And both create disciples who commit themselves to peculiar notions of truth and orthodoxy. (x)

For me the crux of the book lies in the “three points of tension in the history of Mormonism and music” that Hicks identifies as the following: “the will to progress versus the will to conserve, the need to borrow from outsiders versus the need for self-reliance, and the love of the aesthetic versus the love of utility. The Book of Mormon
itself remarks that there ‘must needs be, that there is an opposition in all things’ [2 Ne. 2:11] and the musical life of Mormonism bears that out” (x). In each chapter covering a different period of the development of music in the Church, Hicks gives good examples of these conflicts.

Later in the book, Hicks summarizes the tension between art and music:

This then may be the essential conundrum for the Saints and their music as they push forward toward the Millennium: how to reconcile their thirst for progress with their fear of contamination. While the Saints once wondered how they could sing the Lord’s song in a strange land, they now wonder if they can sing a strange song in Zion. (229)

Hicks succeeds handily in weaving the topical and chronological approaches to his subject. More impressively he has provided a volume that is interesting to the general reader but is also detailed enough to be a reference work for the expert. In addition to being useful to Mormon scholars, the book will be valuable to students of American religion, since Hicks subtly includes a good deal of general church history and doctrine.

I would suggest that the reader study the preface rather carefully. After digesting it, skip to the epilogue (yes, dessert first!). Generally such a move would be considered cheating, but Hicks is not dealing with a dinner, or even a novel, so dessert will not spoil your appetite for the main course or the book’s ending. Instead, you will obtain a clearer picture of the direction Hicks is taking as he pulls together the book’s diverse themes. Hicks exposes everything from the loftiest texts to the most jangling doggerel; he finds the amusing, the inspired, and the petty in this musical history, but his final statement is like a convincing ending to a testimony given at fast meeting—even if we did wonder when the bearer first stood up just how orthodox and converted he was.

The book’s early chapters give us the least-known and perhaps the most impressive facts about music in any period of the Church. I am astounded that so much information from early Church times was actually recorded and preserved and that Hicks was able to find it. Obviously there was more to the pioneer spirit than just pushing handcarts across the plains. I gained an new appreciation for these early Saints who did not have their music handed to them as we do today. They had to create texts and tunes and see that hymnals were published despite the press of other matters—survival, for instance. Particularly, I am struck with the early members’ great fervor and spiritual zeal for church music. It
may well be that “while Mormonism would continue to produce new hymns, they would seldom achieve the vigor and intensity of the early hymns” (31).

Chapters 1 and 2, “The Genesis of Mormon Hymnody” and “The Early Hymnbooks,” give the setting for music in general at the time when the revelation was given to Emma to prepare a hymnal. It is fascinating to see the origin and metamorphosis of many of the hymn texts (see W. W. Phelps’s multitudinous “corrections,” for instance). Chapters 3 and 4, “Schooling the Tongue” and “Bands and Ballads,” give impressive information about the sheer amount and variety of music in the early days. Where did these people get the time to learn to play instruments? Where did they even get instruments? And if they could do oratorios in small rural communities, why can’t we do anything better than “roadshows” today?

Readers will be fascinated (and sometimes amused) by Hicks’s tracing of the Church’s reaction to changing tastes and styles. Chapter 5, “Going Forth in the Dance,” discusses dancing and emerging popular music, but the implications of the underlying social conflict are even more interesting. While the authorities “heatedly defended plural marriage and went into hiding to escape prosecution, they also allied themselves with non-Mormons in the national outrage against the waltz, mazurka, and polka” (85). Brigham Young knew that the railroad would bring both “progress and peril” (96) to the Saints, and even while he welcomed many musical elements from the outside world, his simultaneous attempts at retrenchment provide another example of the conflict between progress and tradition.

The chapters entitled “The Immigrant Professors” and “Homemade Music” lead us into “Modern Hymnody and the Church Music Committee,” which describes the hymnals of this century, including the newest hymnal from 1985. Chapter 9, “The Mormon Tabernacle Choir,” reveals that in its formative days this famous musical institution was hardly what it is now. It was marvelously human, even casual, and not very homogeneous. Somehow it is difficult to picture the director of the Tabernacle Choir with a discipline problem on his hands!

Hicks’s discussion of musical modernism in Chapter 10, “Mormon Classics,” starts to hit closer to home, for as students are trained away from “Mormondom’s parochial centers,” they are faced with reconciling the inherent conservatism of sacred music traditions with their religion’s yearning for progress. In this vein some space is given to such subjects as Elder Boyd K. Packer’s 1976 critique of “Mormon high culture” (184). This topic has been one of the hottest for Mormon artists to handle, but Hicks does so with
considerable tact. The final chapters, "From Rags to Rock" and "Noble Savages," bring various controversies up to the minute. "Ironically," according to Hicks, "the current tendencies toward anti-aestheticism have reinforced many church members' inclination toward popular music" (184).

Since all Church members participate in music, the book has great relevance for everyone. The historical, factual parts of the book are fascinating and informative, and Hicks's vocabulary is colorful ("the millennial glee of the Nauvoo Saints" [29]). Although the book is relatively short, the book's details, quotations, and references qualify it as the most complete single-volume work of its kind. The discussion of the place of music in the life of Church members of different periods is most thought-provoking. Finally, the tone throughout seems to be objective; if I were not a member of the Church, I think I would trust Hicks's information.

I give Hicks high marks for covering his subject, not only for the historical research (even though I could not begin to verify his sources, footnotes, and other references), but also for the way he treats the broader philosophical questions. This book is probably not one that Sunday School choristers will go to for trivia gems for use during hymn practice. It is, however, essential reading for anyone concerned with music and art in the Church. Highly recommended. And a twenty percent tip to Michael Hicks.
Hugh Nibley as Cassandra


Reviewed by Eugene England, professor of English at Brigham Young University.

Hugh Nibley is generally recognized as the finest scholarly defender of the Latter-day Saint faith of the late twentieth century. I hope that he will, before too long, be recognized for a much greater achievement: he is the finest lay (as opposed to officially called) prophet of the Latter-day Saint people. Apart from the Old Testament, Book of Mormon, and Latter-day Saint prophets he has learned from, he most perceptively describes our sins, most courageously and persistently calls us to repentance, and most accurately predicts our future if we will not repent.

But Nibley’s prophetic gift has been much like that of Cassandra (the Trojan King Priam’s daughter, who was blessed to be able to predict the future infallibly but cursed that no one would believe her). He has been uniquely insightful and yet essentially ineffective. His immense scholarship in support of the divinity of Joseph Smith’s mission and the historical authenticity of the Book of Mormon and Pearl of Great Price, scholarship that he claims is not very important to him or worth much to God, has won him great renown at all levels of the Church. This semiofficial recognition ought to have made his voice even more effective than, say, that of Lowell Bennion, who is his only peer as a lay prophet. But Nibley’s crucial message of repentance to our greedy, militaristic, and environmentally destructive society and his claim that fully living
the law of consecration, as we covenant to do, is our only hope are mainly ignored—perhaps simply unheard. On the other hand, Bennion's social criticism has gotten him severely criticized but has also been effective for change.

My new hope for some improvement in Nibley's strange and heartbreaking situation is based on the publication of Approaching Zion, which contains eighteen of his personal essays on education, politics, and society. In this book his central message is so clearly spelled out, so often repeated, and so well argued that readers will at last understand and, I trust, be convinced. In addition, the reissue of Since Cumorah, Nibley's great 1967 apologetic for the Book of Mormon, provides an opportunity for a new generation to see what most of the original readers seem to have missed: the last two chapters of the book—especially "Good People and Bad People," Nibley's first analysis of the "Nephite disease" (354) of greed and vengeance he claims modern Latter-day Saints have contracted—were greater achievements and more important to him than the apologetics in the preceding eleven chapters.

These two chapters are examples, though relatively minor ones, of Nibley's Cassandra-like blessing and his curse: tens of thousands cling to his every word about the scriptures but ignore his prophetic social commentary, which I believe is much more valuable and will outlast his apologetics. He has become his own best evidence for his claim that Latter-day Saints ignore or suppress prophetic statements that hit them where they live—in their prejudices or pocketbooks. He has so far had very little effect on the response of his readers to three major issues he has spoken much about, materialism, militarism, and pollution.

Nibley is master of a remarkably clear and readable prose, given that he indulges somewhat in densely textured scriptural quotation and paraphrase and learned allusions. He is widely read in classical and contemporary materials, but his social analysis is most heavily indebted to Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, the Old Testament and the Book of Mormon—sources he uses with proper respect for context of time and place. I find his arguments meticulously worked through, his central, repeated message frighteningly convincing, and his witty, fearless personal voice constantly satisfying, often exhilarating, even capable of an occasional moral and rhetorical tour de force:

What we read about in the Book of Mormon is the "Nephite Disease"—and we have it! We should be glad that we do not have the much worse diseases that infect some other societies, and that there is greater hope for us. But diabetes if neglected can kill one just as dead as cancer—after all, the Nephites were terminated. We can be
most grateful, therefore, regardless of how sick others may be, that God in the Book of Mormon has diagnosed our sickness for our special benefit, and prescribed a cure for us. It is into our hands that that Book of Mormon has been placed: after more than a century, many people still do not know of its existence. Plainly it is meant for us, as it reminds us many times; it is the story of what happened to the Nephites—and we are the Nephites: “It must needs be that the riches of the earth are mine to give; but beware of pride, lest ye become as the Nephites of old” (D&C 38:39). There it is in a nutshell: it is the fate of the Nephites, not of the Lamanites, Greeks, or Chinese, that concerns us; and that doom was brought on them by pride which in turn was engendered by the riches of the earth. (Cumorah, 354)

Nibley’s central message, which he amply demonstrates is the central burden of the scriptures and modern prophets, is that the main issue of mortality is economic (how God will “provide” the material needs of his children) and that there are only two, sharply divided, ways to resolve it—that of Zion (God’s) or that of Babylon (Satan’s).

God’s way essentially ignores worldly economics and striving for wealth; Satan’s way makes those things central. God gives his gifts for our mortal sustenance freely, assuring us that he provides “enough and to spare” (D&C 104:17) and that his way to make certain that all have enough is that “the poor shall be exalted, in that the rich are made low” (D&C 104:16). God asks us to recognize that he, not our own work or deserving, is the source of the gifts; that, in order to be saved, we share our gifts with whoever is poorer than ourselves until all are equal (“for if ye are not equal in earthly things ye cannot be equal in obtaining heavenly things” [D&C 78:6]); and that we share and become equal “not grudgingly” (D&C 70:14), cultivating charity as the highest virtue.

Satan teaches us that we live in a harsh world where we must work hard in striving for wealth (there is “no free lunch” and even education is to be measured only in increased income). What we thereby earn is our own to use however we wish, not to be shared freely (token tithing for “fire insurance” and occasional gifts to keep up appearances are OK) but to be amassed, consumed, and passed on to children. In Babylon the highest virtue is “justice,” which usually means mainly that you can do whatever it takes to get what you “deserve” and you must take vengeance on others for any “offenses.” In fact, Satan frankly warns he will use riches to seduce religious and military leaders. And with these riches they will reign with violence and terror until Christ comes.

Nibley claims that Latter-day Saints have essentially chosen Babylon. We still want to have it both ways and so continue to pay pious homage to Zion. We wrest the scriptures to avoid facing the absolute demand of God that we leave off our traffic with the world
and begin to approach Zion by living the law of consecration. Instead, we are eagerly satisfied with Satan's decoy, promoted by some Church leaders and professors and the very rich themselves, that if we are paying our tithes and offerings we are already living the covenant of consecration. Worst of all, we fawn over "The Brethren" but ignore our prophets when they call us to repentance for greed or pride:

If we ask what improvement has been made up to the present, there is no better standard to judge by than that given by President Spencer W. Kimball in a solemn and inspired message to the church on the occasion of the 200th anniversary of the nation ["The False Gods We Worship," Ensign, June 1976]. . . . First [he made] a general observation: "When I review the performance of this people in comparison with what is expected, I am appalled and frightened." . . . What is it that so frightens and appalls the prophet? Three things in particular: (1) The abuse of environment: . . . "I have the feeling that the good earth can hardly bear our presence upon it. . . ." (2) The pursuit of personal affluence: "When men have fallen under the power of Satan and lost the faith, they have put in its place a hope in the 'arm of flesh' and in 'gods of silver, and gold, of brass,' . . . that is, in idols." (3) Trust in military security: "[We are a war-like people]. . . . We commit vast resources to the fabrication of gods of stone and steel—ships, planes, missiles, fortifications—and depend on them for protection and deliverance. When threatened, we become anti-enemy instead of pro-kingdom of God. . . . What are we to fear when the Lord is with us? . . . We must leave off the worship of modern-day idols and a reliance on the 'arm of flesh,' for the Lord has said to all the world in our day, 'I will not spare any that remain in Babylon' [D&C 64:24]."

And how did the Saints, who never tire of saying, "The Prophet! The Prophet! We have a prophet!" receive his words? As might be expected, reaction has ranged from careful indifference to embarrassed silence and instant deep freeze. (Zion, 366–67)

It is in this editorial by President Kimball, which he refers to often, that Nibley apparently has found the most direct contemporary inspiration for his analysis of greed and its corollary evils, violence and pollution—and also the most disheartening evidence that any such message would be ignored by the Church.

Nibley claims (and documents well in Approaching Zion, his main essays written over the past twenty years) that, after some initial failures and successes, we have, since the death of Brigham Young, moved quite steadily away from obedience to the Lord's first commandment to this dispensation: "Seek not for riches but for wisdom" (D&C 6:7). He shows that this surrender to Babylon's voracious pursuit of wealth has brought two inevitable consequences: (1) a pious patriotism in support of and even direct
involvement in the military-industrial complex that fills the world with death and suffering in the name of "virtuous violence" (255) and (2) complicity in death-dealing industrial pollution of our once-pure mountain valleys, even welcoming, for the profits, chemical weapons and nuclear wastes into "Zion." Nibley traces in essay after essay how we have not only ignored God's first commandment to us, we have also ignored the connection between Christ's warning to Joseph Smith (recorded in his first account of the First Vision, rediscovered in 1969), "Behold the world lieth in sin at this time," and Christ's explanation in the Doctrine and Covenants, "It is not given that one man should possess that which is above another, wherefore the world lieth in sin" (49:20; italics added; Zion, 21–2).

We still build much of our lives on the delusion that it is a virtue to possess more than others and to keep it mainly for ourselves, not heeding Christ's warning that we thus fully join sinful Babylon.

Nibley is perhaps most challenging in his answer to the paradoxes raised by the previous claims: how did a people initially committed to the law of consecration, the Prince of Peace, and God-given stewardship over the earth and its plants and animals end up so far afield? His answer is psychologically astute, outrageously unexpected, and I think dead right:

Attempts to compromise on the law of God put one, as Brigham Young said, in an intolerable situation, a state of perpetual tension; one becomes defensive and self-justifying, and to clear his conscience all the way one assumes an aggressive posture. The result is that Latter-day Saints are perhaps the most rigidly opposed to the principles of sharing of any people in the world. (Zion, 470)

He claims that in the three evils President Kimball expressly warned about—"outspoken contempt for the environment, unabashed reverence for wealth, and ardent advocacy of military expansion"—"it can be shown with cruel documentation that Utah leads the nation, at least through its representatives" (Zion, 367). In another essay, with the unusual but effective device of simply quoting (with occasional comments) headlines from newspapers over a couples of years (471–78), Nibley provides that "cruel documentation." It is humiliating evidence that Utah, with its huge Latter-day Saint majority, is indeed by many relevant measures the worst state in the worst nation for uninhibited entrepreneurial greed and inequality, militarism, and disrespect for animal and plant life or even its own, originally God-inspired, architectural heritage and civic environments.

Nibley first came to this original and offensive insight—that Latter-day Saints are not only sinful in these important areas but the most sinful—over twenty years ago by studying the Nephites:
It would seem that church people are especially susceptible to the Nephite disease . . .: “The people of the church began to be lifted up in the pride of their eyes, and to set their hearts upon riches . . . and they began to persecute those that did not believe according to their own will and pleasure” (Alma 4:8). An aggressive and self-righteous bigotry was the best defense against uneasy consciences. (Cumorah, 358)

One of my friends in graduate school, very knowledgeable in American and Latter-day Saint history, once asked me, “How did the Mormons, who were in the nineteenth century the most radical challenge to America’s exploitive materialism and violent individualism, become, in the twentieth century, an extremely conservative people, quintessentially American in those values it once rejected.” I had no answer, but Nibley does: partly to survive under vicious attack, we accommodated to American values, which are those of Babylon, and, knowing better than other Americans the seriousness of our sin, we handled the intolerable tension with aggressive self-justification and defensive bigotry—even to the point of becoming “number one” in our sins!

What gives Nibley’s outrageous answer increased plausibility is his telling review of how we eagerly adopt traditional Christian capitalists’ scripture-wrenching and Satan’s time-tested decoys to aid our rationalizations. We quote as if it had scriptural force, “In the world but not of the world,” a palliative “invented by a third-century Sophist” (Zion, 164–65) for the same purpose that we use it: to justify trying to combine Babylon and Zion. We thus ignore its direct contradiction of the New Testament (1 John 2:16).

We often hear quoted in Church classes, as an excuse for unequal distribution of wealth, Christ’s statement, “The poor are always with us,” or its Old Testament source, “For the poor shall never cease out of the land” (Deut. 15:11). But we ignore the rest of the verse, which clarifies Christ’s meaning as well: “Therefore I command thee, saying thou shalt open up thy hand wide unto thy brother, to the poor.” Nibley comments, “[The poor’s] perpetual presence is not to make us indifferent, but it is a constant reminder that God has his eye on us” (Zion, 193).

Nibley shows how we even wrest our own modern scriptures:

The director of a Latter-day Saint Institute was recently astounded when [I] pointed out to him that the ancient teaching that the idler shall not eat the bread of the laborer has always meant that the idle rich shall not eat the bread of the laboring poor, as they always have. . . . He had always been taught that the idle poor should not eat the bread of the laboring rich, because it is perfectly obvious that a poor man has not worked as hard as a rich man. With the same lucid logic my Latter-day Saint students tell me that [the reason] there were
no poor in the Zion of Enoch [was] because only the well-to-do were admitted to the city. (Zion, 241)

Nibley’s analysis of our use of “decoys” to avoid facing our own sins also seems to me psychologically astute. He points out that we Latter-day Saints fulminate so much against the sex and substance-abuse sins of others partly as a smokescreen to hide our own much more serious failure to live the law of consecration (168). We are among the world’s most extreme anticommunists, partly to hide our own capitalistic sins. We cruelly condemn and punish blue-collar crime and juvenile delinquency and ignore or slap the wrists of the white-collar criminals in our midst, forgetting Brigham Young’s insight: “The loose conduct, and calculations, and manner of doing business, which have characterized men who have had property in their hands, have laid the foundation to bring our boys into the spirit of stealing” (Zion, 56).

According to Nibley, Satan’s favorite decoy is to spread the word that he is “a four-star horror with claws, horns, or other obvious trimmings,” to get us to “put the whole blame [for the world’s troubles] on sex” (Zion, 54) and then to come in person as “a very proper gentleman, a handsome and persuasive saleman,” offering what Brigham Young recognized as the greatest danger to Latter-day Saints, “becoming rich and being hailed by outsiders as a first-class community” (55):

The worst sinners, according to Jesus, are not the harlots and publicans, but the religious leaders with their insistence on proper dress and grooming, their careful observance of all the rules, their precious concern for status symbols, their strict legality, their pious patriotism. Longhairs, beards, necklaces, LSD and rock, Big Sur and Woodstock come and go, but Babylon is always there: rich, respectable, immovable. (54–55)

I certainly don’t mean to downplay too much the value of Nibley’s defense of the Book of Mormon in Since Cumorah. Using his wide-ranging linguistic skills and immense reading, he reviews the huge body of materials brought forth in recent years, from the Dead Sea Scrolls and Nag Hammadi library to the many additions to the Apocrypha and pseudepigrapha. Nibley uses an implicit null hypothesis: assume Joseph Smith made up the Book of Mormon, which is so large and diverse and absolute in its historical and religious claims that it should be very easy to falsify, especially with surprising new evidence that contradicts the common wisdom of his time; could you then account for the hundreds of things he got right?

It is hard for a careful reader not to agree that the null hypothesis indeed does not account for the available evidence
nearly as well as the opposite assumption, that the Book of Mormon is historical and inspired. And it is hard not to enjoy Nibley’s devastatingly witty satire of the scholars, from DeVoto to O’Dea and beyond, who dismiss the book with quite unscholarly religious prejudice—many without bothering to read it.

However, Nibley is perfectly clear that, entertaining as they may be, scholarly “proofs” for the Book of Mormon are “beside the point or of very minor significance in comparison with what the book actually has to say” (Cumorah, 338). And his condemnation of anti-Mormon scholars is mild compared to his dismay at Latter-day Saints, including apologist scholars, who seem satisfied to call the Book of Mormon “inspired” but miss the much more important fact that it is “inspiring”: “It claims to contain an enormously important message for whoever is to receive it, and yet until now those few who have been willing to receive it as the authentic word of God have not shown particular interest in that message” (338).

Nibley shows that that message includes not only warnings about the Nephite disease and its sources in greed and pride but a highly specific ethic of pacifism that contradicts much present-day popular Latter-day Saint thought: peace can be worked out after provocation if people will talk “sense instead of heroic cliches,” if leaders will be “willing to humble” themselves, and if subjects will be “willing to have compassion on a hereditary foe.” For instance, the good sense that the Book of Mormon model, Gideon, talks is actually a version of the old anathema, “Better Red than dead”: “It is better that we should be in bondage than that we should lose our lives (Mosiah 20:22)” (Cumorah, 341–42).

Nibley takes literally Moroni’s claim, “He that smiteth shall be smitten again, of the Lord. Behold what the scripture says—man shall not smite, neither shall he judge” (Mormon 8:19–20; Cumorah, 346):

The good people never fight the bad people; they never fight anybody: “It is by the wicked that the wicked are punished; for it is the wicked that stir up the hearts of the children of men unto bloodshed” (Mormon 4:5). We are apt to forget when we read about the heroic resistance of the Nephites to the overwhelming Lamanite power and the noble deeds of the 2,000 youths during the long war, that the gallant Nephites had brought the war upon themselves and were being punished by God. (348)

In 1967 Nibley clearly hoped that things would change as it became clearer to Latter-day Saints how closely the Nephite/Lamanite world resembled our Cold War polarized world—and that they would turn to the Book of Mormon to avoid the Nephite mistakes. But Approaching Zion contains essay after essay lament-
ing just the opposite—increasing devotion among Latter-day Saints to seeking riches, with pious quasi-religious rationalizations (“I will get wealthy so I can serve the Church better”) and increasing inclination to “pass by the poor” and to justify violence, even vengeance, against the “bad guys”—exactly the sins that led to the Nephite destruction.

A recent evidence of Nibley’s failure to be heard, even by his own scholarly disciples, was the publication of *Warfare in the Book of Mormon*, a collection of twenty-two essays devoted to showing parallels between the accounts of warfare in the Book of Mormon and information recently discovered about warfare in the ancient world. Most of the authors, though they are his colleagues and editors, apparently have forgotten his insistence that “the ultimate test of the Book of Mormon’s validity is whether or not it really has something to say” (*Cumorah*, 399) and seem never to have been able to actually hear what he claims that something is. I realize that many scholars are sincerely trying to do the basic groundwork in languages, archeology, etc., that can provide what they see as an airtight basis for understanding the text before venturing on interpretation. But that the book was given as a direct ethical and religious message to modern people of whatever education and interpretation is unavoidable. We should use the scholarly insights being developed but also use basic rational and spiritual helps for interpretation—such as consistency with the central teachings of Christ. And we should listen, I believe, to what the scholar who has done his homework has to say.

Instead, most of these writers seem to assume that the warfare passages are in the Book of Mormon mainly so apologists like themselves can prove the Book of Mormon is historical, and when, very rarely, they do try to analyze the content, they continue to participate in the “Good guys/bad guys” illusion. One claims that the book provides guidance by which to recognize “agnostic ideas . . . contrary to divine principles” (264) and a challenge to defend “those principles in modern society,” and that it suggests the right way to do so, apparently by bloodshed.

One essay even deals with the most powerful Book of Mormon teaching of the nonviolent ethic (besides Christ’s “Sermon on the Mount” to the Nephites), the account of the rigorously pacifist, death-accepting Anti-Nephi-Lehites, and recognizes the unique way that through them “the message of the Prince of Peace truly brought peace to peoples who were otherwise enemies” (123). But the author seems unable to make any application of this ethic to the Nephites or to modern life.
Nibley’s lone essay stands, I believe, as a rebuke to the rest of the book:

It’s always the wicked against the wicked in the Book of Mormon, never the righteous against the wicked. . . . When they [Lamanites and Nephites] fight, it is because they are both rebellious against God. Otherwise, there is going to be no fight. (131–32)

We claim defensive strategy today in Europe, Latin America, Africa, the Near East, Southeast Asia, and elsewhere, showing the flag; but armies don’t exist to sit still. Their threatening presence and the power to destroy invite combat; it is a challenge to action in the medieval sense. (139–40)

[Mormon, after his people threaten vengeance,] resigns as their commander and says he will have nothing more to do with them. He utterly refuses to avenge his enemy, for the one thing the Lord had absolutely forbidden them to do was to seek vengeance and build up hatred. . . . President Benson is right—he says it all applies to us. That’s why I don’t like the wars in the Book of Mormon. They make me ill. (143–44)

One disciple who has clearly been able to hear Nibley is Don Norton, editor of Approaching Zion. In his foreword he identifies Nibley’s central message, “in no place do the scriptures, including the voices of our modern prophets, assent to the goal of amassing the goods of the earth,” and he predicts that the book will be “controversial” and “thoroughly sobering” (x) to Latter-day Saints. Even though Norton lets Nibley repeat some of his messages, with little change, through several essays, there is sufficient change in the evidence and anecdotes that I did not get irritated and actually found the cumulative effect of such repetition indeed sobering.

My one criticism of Norton is that he left out one of Nibley’s major addresses that seems to belong here, “Leaders to Managers: The Fatal Shift,” which was given as the BYU commencement address in April 1983 when Nibley received an honorary degree (published in Dialogue, Winter 1983). I watched faces turn ashen on the stand as some people realized he was talking about them and the place they managed:

Where would management be without the inflexible paper processing, dress standards, attention to proper social, political, and religious affiliation, vigilant watch over habits and attitudes, etc. that gratify the stock-holders and satisfy Security? . . . If management favors vile sentimental doggerel verse extolling the qualities that make for success, young people everywhere will be spouting long trade-journal jingles from the stand. . . . If management must reflect the corporate image in tasteless, trendy, new buildings, down come the fine old pioneer monuments.
The Church was full of men in Paul’s day teaching that gain is godliness and making others believe it. Today the black robe [of graduation] puts the official stamp of approval on that very proposition. . . . Most of you are here today only because you believe that this charade will help you ahead in the world. . . . Babylon is where we are. (21)

But the Cassandra curse seems to have held: Nibley received no rebuke, but neither is there any evidence that anyone changed from a manager to a leader or stopped using BYU as a way to seek greater wealth. Most of us remain as obtuse as the BYU business professor who recently asked, “If Nibley knows so much about management, then why isn’t he rich?” The answer, of course, is “That’s why.”

Nibley not only implies that BYU business and law students have sold out to the devil (Zion, 81–2), but that most of the other students have also (105). He denounces Utah’s Congressional delegation in general (246, 480) and specifically decries their promoting militarism, restricting freedoms, and taking antienvironmental stands (442, 472, 476). He calls “those . . . how-to-get-rich books” (236) by rich men that are extremely popular at Deseret Book (which even publishes some) a major seduction toward Babylon, citing them as especially conducive to speculative cruelty rather than the spirit of Zion (358).

What is most amazing—and more evidence of Cassandra-like courage but also irrelevance—is that Nibley delivers his uncompromising jeremiads, with no apparent effect, negative or positive, in the very centers of the Latter-day Saint establishment: BYU commencement, the Cannon-Hinckley Club in Salt Lake, even to gatherings of General Authorities at the LDS Church Office Building. Here is a sample from “Law of Consecration,” which was given at Church headquarters and is a good essay to start with for the best summary of Nibley’s message and methods:

Are we wasting our time talking about the law of consecration? From the days of Joseph to the present, there has been one insuperable obstacle to the plan, and that is the invincible reluctance of most of the Brethren. When Brigham Young proposed it to the Brethren at Winter Quarters, he could not move them; only one of two of the apostles would listen to him. The rest announced their intention to follow their own plans and get rich.

The dilemma the Saints found themselves in is nowhere better illustrated than in the experience of my grandfather. . . . For some years he managed the United Order sheep and lumber companies in Cache County. Then almost overnight . . . the best lumber was gone. So Charles W. Nibley cast his eyes toward Oregon. . . .
With his partner, David Eccles, he tore into the woods, wiping out miles of unsurveyed forest, acquiring vast stretches of it through manipulation of the Homestead Act, easily paying off government agents. . . I can tell you the tricks, because he told them to me and laughed about it. . . . He moved into sugar. . . . But there was a child labor law in Oregon, which made beet thinning expensive, and the unions also wanted a share in the take. Nibley frankly made his fortune on stolen timber and child labor. The moral issue? Obviously, the enemy was the government and the unions; it was they who put restraints (which he interpreted as crippling) on his boundless free enterprise, denying men their God-given free agency. It became a standard doctrine among the Latter-day Saints. They pushed this by the conciliation of bishops and well-to-do stake presidents. In his journal he writes, “It has become the custom in the church to give the high seats in the synagogue to men who have made ‘money.’” (469–70)

Nibley’s main point is that making money as a goal always entails “compromise with principle.” He cites as a final example his grandfather’s borrowing two million dollars to finish the Hotel Utah and figuring to pay it off in two years by building “the largest and finest bar in the West in the basement. . . . President [Joseph F.] Smith went through the ceiling; which was it to be, the Word of Wisdom or fiscal soundness? The dollar won” (470).

I’m afraid these last examples make Nibley sound like a fearless but mean-spirited, carping iconoclast. He is far from that. No one is more completely devoted to the gospel, the Church, and to the Brethren as what he calls “the chosen servants of God.” He humbly lives a consecrated life and plainly speaks what he sees, but without judging his fellow Saints, as individuals, or evil-speaking those in authority. His meek spirit is perhaps best revealed in his discussions of charity, the lack of which he sees as “the fatal weakness” of the Nephites and the greatest danger to modern Latter-day Saints. His aversion to seeking wealth is based on his seeing from the scriptures that such seeking is the “first step in the Nephite disease” (Cumorah, 392–93) and that it always ends in vengeance and cruelty—wreaked on plants, animals, the earth itself, and finally humans:

[Utah’s fawning over the rich] is marked by an undisguised contempt for anyone without money. My own experience from talking with many transients has shown that nowhere in the nation are tramps more evilly treated than in Utah. So much for the stranger within thy gates. (479)

Nibley fits quite well with Judith Shklar’s definition of a liberal as one who thinks that cruelty is the worst thing humans do
(cited in Richard Rorty, *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity*, xv). He thinks that cruelty has an economic base and a clear solution: flee Babylon, with its frantic seeking of riches and success and approach the humble and charitable Zion of our Lord Jesus Christ.

At the end of the video prepared by F.A.R.M.S. about Nibley’s life, which focuses exclusively on his contributions as our foremost apologist, he is asked by the interviewer what his untiring scholarship has taught him. He dismisses it all as quite ephemeral, and then this Latter-day Saint high priest, the only time that I have seen tears in his eyes, distills the wisdom of his life, gleaned straight from the scriptures: “Repent and forgive,” he says, “Repent and forgive.”

But Nibley, who knows the Cassandra story well, has long recognized that though repentance is the central message of Christ, it is not a popular doctrine. “In my thirty-five years at BYU,” he writes, “I have heard only one sermon (given by Stephen L. Richards, incidentally) on repentance. And it was not well received” (*Zion*, 301).
Afterword

EDITOR:

Some years ago, when I first came to Provo and was asked to teach a Sunday School class of eleven- or twelve-year-olds, I was surprised when I discovered a lesson which had been taught to me many years before as a boy in the Washington D.C. Ward. The plot of the story ran like this—a player on a baseball team had been taught in church that honesty pays and that no matter what the situation Latter-day Saints should adhere to the principle. The young player’s faith in this principle was sorely tested when he was engaged in a critical baseball game in which, as I recall, his team was behind. He hit a long fly ball over the outfielder’s head and circled the bases to slide into home plate a fraction behind the ball, and he knew he had been tagged out. The umpire, however, had difficulty judging the play, for the dust at home plate was thick. The player wanted to be called safe for the sake of his team but remembered his Sunday School teaching and told the umpire he was out, and so the play was called. The player had let the team down, and he felt some regrets at doing so but continued to play as his team fell further behind. When he came up to the plate in the ninth inning with the bases loaded and the team still behind by several runs, he knew he needed a home run to win the game. Again he hit a long fly and circled the bases, sliding in home ahead of the ball. Once more the umpire was unsure of his call, but when the player said he was safe, the umpire believed him because of his previous honesty. The moral of the story was clear enough—honesty always pays, and in the end it will benefit not only the moral character of the individual, but also the team.

It may be naïve, but somehow I have thought as a historian that I should adhere to the principle of honesty and that if I followed the evidence which I found through historical research and argued from it, all of it whether I liked it or not, that in the end I would be a better historian. Also, maybe in the end, as the story promised, I would be able to help the team, too.

It would seem from Gary Novak’s piece in a previous issue of BYU Studies on naturalism and the Book of Mormon that we are no longer to adhere to this simple Sunday School morality when writing
history and make complete honesty our standard. Rather, we are to select only that evidence which supports the team. I will get back to that point later. It would almost seem from Novak that nothing I have done has helped the team, that my work has been deceptive and calculated to undermine the faith.

But Novak has not demonstrated anything here except his misunderstanding of my purpose and arguments and his inability to draw conclusive inferences from the text. His logic is faulty, being circuitous. His thesis runs like this—the first New Mormon historians were Fawn Brodie and Dale Morgan. She wrote a biography of Joseph Smith in 1945 in which she labeled Joseph a fraud, and Morgan wrote an unpublished study of Mormonism which also questioned its truth. They were avowed atheists and thus approached Mormon history from a naturalistic viewpoint. The New Mormon historians employ naturalistic arguments, hence they must be atheists too. The inevitable conclusion to which this dubious logic leads appears in Novak’s comment upon my work: “Social stress theories of revelation, the cultural connections of teachings in the Book of Mormon with the Calvinism of Joseph’s immediate environment—all involve implicit assumptions about such questions as the existence of God.” Novak accuses me of being an atheist but offers as proof only his interpretation of the meaning of some of my passages.

Novak’s argument is filled with nonsequiturs. It breaks down logically because he does not prove that Brodie had the kind of influence on me or any other New Mormon historian that he claims. After introducing Morgan, he says nothing about Morgan’s influence at all. Rightly so, for Morgan’s book came out long after the time with which Novak is dealing and had no influence on the New Mormon History. But Novak ignores such inconsistencies in order to argue guilt by association.

Novak’s simplistic contention that the New Mormon History began with Brodie and Morgan depends upon dogmatic declaration, not proof. Historian Robert Flanders is cited in support of the idea that Brodie was a catalyst, but Novak misrepresents what Flanders said. Flanders argued that the New Mormon historians had gotten away from the old polemics, from attacking or defending the Mormon faith. In this regard Flanders said Brodie was a “transitional” figure whose work was used by subsequent historians as a “referent point.” It is important to notice that Flanders did not say that these New Mormon historians approved of Brodie’s work, only that they reacted to it. In actuality Leonard Arrington’s Great Basin Kingdom, published in 1958, was more of a catalyst than Brodie’s volume, and Arrington differed sharply from Brodie in leaving open the possibility of a divine origin for Mormonism: “The true
essence of God’s revealed will, if such it be,” he said, “cannot be apprehended without understanding of the conditions surrounding the prophetic vision.” Arrington was no Brodie, assuming dogmatic opposition to the divine in Mormonism, but a loyal Latter-day Saint, leaving the question of revealed truth in Mormonism for others to decide. He became the Church historian after writing his book. The New Mormon History did not begin with Brodie but was in part a reaction against her work by a later generation, using new sources from the Church archives with full approval of the General Authorities and asking different questions from those of Brodie or Morgan.

Novak’s inferential logic breaks down further when he fails to show that all naturalists are atheists. To be sure, a dictionary definition of naturalism is that it is a view of the universe which excludes the divine, and this may be why Novak employed the term. But the definition is too sweeping. Not all those who employ naturalistic arguments are atheists. In fact it could be argued now that the use of naturalism in geology, archaeology, anthropology, botany, history, and many other disciplines is so universal that it implies no statement at all about one’s religious beliefs.

The Puritans were employing naturalistic arguments by 1700 but were not atheists. They distinguished between primary and secondary causes. Thomas Jefferson was denounced in New England in 1798 as an atheist, yet he had appealed to nature and nature’s God in his Declaration of Independence. And Daniel Boorstin has shown that Jefferson was not an atheist. Medical doctors in Provo employ naturalistic assumptions in their work, yet some are bishops and stake presidents. Should we label them atheists? In fact, B. H. Roberts, Hugh Nibley, and Richard Bushman in their major works also employ environmental and naturalistic arguments. Does the logic hold true for them?

Novak and others who argue this way cannot or do not wish to understand that the secular emphasis of Brodie and Morgan went out in religious studies in the 1940s. When I began my graduate training in American religious history at the University of Chicago, questioning one’s religious faith was considered bad taste among faculty and students. One of my professors, Sidney E. Mead, startled a class of students of diverse backgrounds and beliefs one day by challenging them to consider the question: “Why couldn’t Mormon have appeared to Joseph Smith?” He wanted to make the students aware of their own secular or sectarian biases.

I believe that Novak’s and others’ difficulty in dealing with my work and that of other new historians is that they approach it from a dualistic mind set which sees gospel truth on one side and secular and Satanic things on the other. From this perspective they approach the historical past with just one question in mind—does
it prove the gospel true? Brodie had a similar mind set, only in reverse. She asked the same question but was convinced history proves it to be false.

To identify my work or that of other major New Mormon historians with Brodie’s or Morgan’s is an enormous distortion employed by those who wish to silence points of view other than their own. Fawn Brodie was excommunicated from the Church and was a self-confessed disbeliever. The argument here is one of guilt by assumed association and involves substantial malice. The New Mormon historians are a large, diverse group of people. Most of them are active and believing Latter-day Saints, some of whom teach at Brigham Young University. The New Mormon historians deserve a fairer and more accurate evaluation.

Rather than attempting to write a more convincing history, their opponents have relied upon name calling or a misapplication of certain hermeneutical arguments which contend that no objective history is possible. Novak cites these arguments in his text and footnotes, but there is a certain irony here. While doubting the merits of the historical method, Novak would defend a religion whose principal claim to authority depends upon its historicity. While wanting historians to prove Mormonism, Novak adopts a philosophy which says proof is impossible. Furthermore, while depending upon a philosophical viewpoint which would say that it is impossible to know another man’s mind, Novak claims to know my mind better than I do.

Novak’s comments on my views begin with his assertion that my attitudes toward Fawn Brodie’s biography are ambivalent. Although I wrote two major criticisms of her biography, he affirms this ambiguity because I wrote that she had written a powerful book which retains its authenticity. I was thinking here only of her considerable influence upon American historians and of how much of what she wrote still persuades them.

It is obvious from Novak’s own quote that I considered her book seriously flawed. I said that she was still preoccupied with questions from her Mormon past—was Joseph Smith really a prophet?—a question she could not finally answer although she believed she could. I also said that the work was flawed due to its secular bias, that in trying to treat a religious subject from a secular viewpoint Brodie misrepresented Joseph Smith. Thus my criticism was largely based upon my objection to her cynical view that if Mormonism could not be true (her starting assumption), it must be a grand, deliberate fraud. Clearly stated in my article in Church History and consuming most of the pages of the text, my objection could not have escaped Novak unless he misunderstood the piece.
In effect, my criticism of Brodie was written in light of the changing attitudes toward religious history cited above. I said that Brodie’s secular bias had distorted the way she treated Joseph Smith’s “visions, his gold digging, his Book of Mormon, his and his family’s alleged irreligion, his history, his witnesses and his polygamy.” My criticism of Brodie insisted that by failing to take religion seriously she missed a major part of the character of Joseph Smith. I criticized Brodie because she was obsessed with environmental explanations of Mormonism and saw it as mimicking other movements and copying their ideas. She ignored those forces that came from within which were not borrowed and which gave it merit as a genuine religious movement with its own inner dynamics. I argued that it deserved reconsideration on those grounds. All of these criticisms are ignored by Novak. It seems of no worth to him that I tried to create a more favorable view of the Church among professional historians. Apparently one must argue that the gospel is true or risk being labeled an atheist.

Novak contends that I agree with Brodie on the origin of the Book of Mormon but does not quote me to that effect. His logic on atheism is faulty because faith in God does not depend upon faith in the historicity of the Book of Mormon, as important as that is in Mormon thought. Some in the Church have expressed doubts as to its historicity but still accept it as a divine revelation and scripture. Christians outside the Church may doubt its historicity but believe in the Bible and in God. But Novak ignores the fact that I said in my earliest publication that I did not agree with Brodie that Ethan Smith’s theme in View of the Hebrews and that in the Book of Mormon were identical. Brodie overlooked their differences. Novak also ignores my critique of the Spaulding theory. He must skip much to make his argument seem plausible. Unlike Brodie, I have not discussed the origin of the Book of Mormon except to review what Joseph Smith and others have said about it. But Novak infers that my comments about its contents imply a final answer as to the scripture’s naturalistic origins. In this he misreads what I have said.

In saying that the Book of Mormon was of a “romantic disposition” in its plot and characters, I only meant that it is dualistic in its conceptions of issues and people—they are either good or bad. Since Latter-day Saints believe that Mormon edited the records, this dualism could originate from Mormon rather than from the original authors. But my comment says nothing about the book’s origin; that is Novak’s assumption. In saying that the view of man in the book is negative and Calvinistic, I was characterizing its point of view, as historians of ideas do, not making a statement about authorship. I might have characterized it as Pauline, or even psalmist. Since Hugh
Niblcy contends that theological issues regarding the nature of man go far back into human history, I did not believe my comment implied anything about the date of the material.

Novak handles ideas ineptly when he quotes my passage, "there was certainly more continuity between the money-digging religious culture and the early Mormon movement than some historians have recognized," and remarks that Hill "much like Brodie, . . . has also linked the Book of Mormon with . . . Joseph Smith's 'magical world view.'" The Book of Mormon is not mentioned in this passage and is not linked to anything. Using this kind of analysis, a person can find whatever he or she wants in a passage. But in saying that the money-digging culture had a religious side, I really differed sharply with Brodie, borrowing on some arguments made by Richard Bushman and Ronald Walker. Brodie saw money digging as irreligious, I do not. Brodie saw it as evidence Joseph Smith was a fraud, I do not. Again, Novak imposes his single question upon my writing and comes up with a Brodie-like conclusion.

That the Book of Mormon addresses some theological and other issues discussed in America in 1830, as Grant Underwood, among others, has argued, seems evident. But Brodian conclusions are not in order here. For one thing it could be argued that the text is prophetic and Blake Ostler has suggested that there might be elements of both ancient and 1830 American culture in it. But I would not exclude the possibility also that one finds what he knows in the text—that an Americanist will find Americanisms and Egyptologist Egyptian elements, and so on. As Hugh Niblcy has argued, it is very difficult to claim finality in such matters. I meant what I said when in criticizing Brodie for assuming she had final answers when other explanations might be possible. When it comes to the ultimate truth of our religious claims, no historian can provide a final answer.

Thus there is room for religious faith. I do believe, however, that there are areas the historian can deal with in Mormon history and can, blessed with the rich sources that we have in church archives, advance some interpretations which have the likelihood of accuracy. I am not as skeptical as certain hermeneuticists and think there is grave danger in any Mormon historian adopting their perspective: the possibility that we can say anything with validity beyond our own cultural mind-set is then wiped out and with it hope that we have a true history to tell the world. It is indeed paradoxical that any Mormon would advance such a relativistic theory and assume that doing so is in the interest of the Church. This theory reflects, I think, what amounts to an intellectual crisis in Mormonism in which all are involved, albeit some without awareness. But that is a matter to be taken up at another time.
Novak affirms that my suggestion that social stress provides a stimulus to revelation excludes the divine. I thought it was agreed long ago by Mormon writers like James E. Talmage that divine revelation comes in response to human need and human inquiry. Joseph Smith himself tells us that many factors in Palmyra brought him to a point of confusion and caused him to take his concerns to the Lord. Novak seems to believe, wrongly in my view, that we must now insist that Joseph’s human needs had nothing to do with his vision. It seems to me that all revelation comes from God through man and this requires human involvement, if only in trying to convey the message to others. If vision comes in response to acute individual need, during anxiety or stress, it is no less a revelation. Novak again reads Brodie’s assumptions into my work without substantial grounds. Novak and others like him keep bringing Brodie into the discussion so much that I wonder just who it is that is influenced by her arguments. I have long since dismissed her.

If ever there was a piece of intellectual history which suggests the merits of certain hermeneutical criticisms of history, it is this one. Novak and those with his dualistic world view pay little heed to a text, reading in what they wish to find and ignoring the rest. Thus, I indicated in one of my early criticisms of Fawn Brodie that I was adopting her secular perspective simply to show other historians that even in her own way of thinking her conclusions did not follow. This objective is ignored, and Novak criticizes me for sharing her assumptions. In point of fact the problem is Novak’s assumptions. He never gets beyond his dualism. Novak is welcome to his assumptions, but no one should mistake his work for scholarship. The scholar’s job is to understand another man’s thought on his own terms, to tell us what it is the other man thinks he is doing. That must be the starting point before any fair evaluation can be assessed. Beginning such a task requires someone with an entirely different mind set.

I like Novak’s appeal to the Old Testament as a model for what our Church history should be. I agree that such a history might be a considerable improvement upon what we now have. But Novak once more handles ideas ineptly. He says that we should do what the Hebrews did and carefully select our sources to support the faith. It is just this tendency on the part of the traditional historians to select sources too carefully that spurred on the New Mormon historians. Be that as it may, he overlooks the enormous difference between the Old, or indeed the New Testament version of history and that written by most Mormon traditionalists. The Hebrews put all their failings and more into their history, depicting their most honored leaders as men of passion, vanity, lust, and deceit. The Hebrews told
us that Moses killed a man, that Jonah was an arrogant prophet who
demanded that his prophecies be fulfilled, that David the King and
Chosen One was lustful and murderous, that Abraham was deceitful
to the pharaoh regarding Sarah. Likewise in the New Testament we
learn apostles Peter and Paul disagreed bitterly over how much of
the Jewish law was mandatory for Christian believers. And Paul
went so far as to ignore the apostles in Jerusalem during the first
three years of his mission.

Against this model, some traditionalist Mormon history does
not fare well, for its purpose seems to be to screen out human foibles
rather than, as with the Hebrews, to show that even the best fall short
of the glory of God. Richard Bushman challenged us some years ago
to begin to write more in the style of the early New Englanders
where God’s controversy with the Saints is stressed. If this style
were adopted the yawning gap between what we say of our early
people and what is actually found written in their diaries, letters, and
journals could be bridged without the fundamentals of the faith
being jeopardized. This history would be more accurate and per-
haps school us into a more charitable attitude toward ourselves and
others. By all means, let some follow the Hebrew example and
select sources the way they did. Then one of the reasons for the New
Mormon History would be neutralized and the fissure between it
and the traditional Mormon rendition could be partly bridged.

But the matter of Novak’s approach to my scholarly views
involves more than what would make a good history. There is the
problem of questioning the religious faith of myself and others
which pervades this entire piece. There was a time when the dean
of a certain college said that he would not allow anyone to question
the faith of another faculty member. Yet the questioning began long
ago and continues still. When I first came to this university as a
faculty member, some in the religion department and others were
decrying members of the political science department for lack of
loyalty to the nation, calling them “Communists.” The term was
used indiscriminately as Novak’s “atheism” is used here, but that
did not stop the accusations. Damage was done. Some who were
among the accused then are the accusers now, seemingly acting out
the scenario of an earlier day. Then as now the accusations were ad
horrendum, that is, the very worst that could be imagined at the time.
I would wonder whether the ad horrendum type of argument is
praiseworthy and best represents the Latter-day Saint people.

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Mormon Bibliography 1989

Scott H. Duvall

ARTS AND LITERATURE

Criticism


Music


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**Personal Essays**


**Poetry**


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