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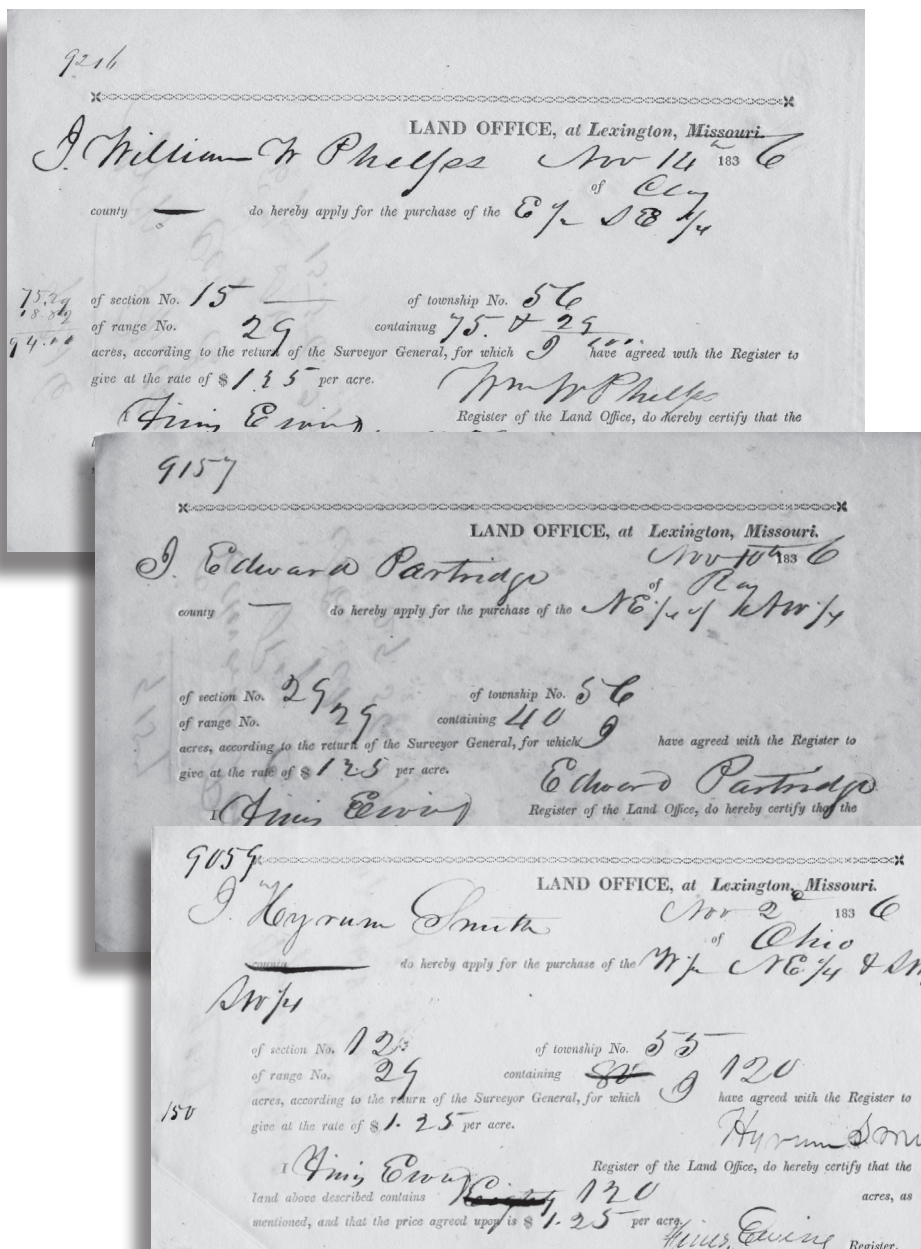


FIG. 1. Preemption applications. William W. Phelps, Edward Partridge, and Hyrum Smith filed these Missouri preemption applications in 1836. Each application is signed by the person making the preemption claim (*bottom right*) and the registrar, Finis Ewing (*bottom left*). Note that the acreage on Hyrum Smith's application is changed from 80 acres to 120 acres. Courtesy Church History Library.



# Mormon Land Rights in Caldwell and Daviess Counties and the Mormon Conflict of 1838

## New Findings and New Understandings

*Jeffrey N. Walker*

Persecution and the financial collapse in Kirtland in 1838 forced Joseph Smith to leave Ohio and headquarter the Church in Missouri, where thousands of Latter-day Saints had already settled. Once in Missouri, he and the other leaders faced the challenge of finding an affordable place for these newcomers to settle, as they previously had contributed their money and lands to help satisfy debts arising principally from the construction of the Kirtland Temple. Daviess County, Missouri, became a strategic settlement area for the Ohio Saints. Shortly after arriving in Missouri, Joseph and other leaders left Far West, Missouri, “to visit the north countries for the purpose of Laying off stakes of Zion, making Locations & laying claims [to land] for the gathering of the saints for the benefit of the poor.”<sup>1</sup> The “north countries” had yet to be fully surveyed, which allowed the Saints to settle on the land and qualify for preemption rights that did not require payment until the surveys were completed (fig. 1). After the surveying was finished, these same rights were an impetus for non-Mormon land speculators to force Mormons out of Missouri. The imminent vesting of these property rights further explains the frantic efforts to dislodge Mormons from their lands in Missouri altogether in late 1838. By examining preemption rights and land surveying practices, this article explains why Mormons settled in certain parts of northern Missouri and shows how some Missourians manipulated the situation for their own personal gain. The causes of Mormons’

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1. Joseph Smith Jr., *Scriptory Book*, May 18, 1838, MS, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City. See also Dean C. Jessee, *The Papers of Joseph Smith*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1989–92), 2:243.

## Jeffrey N. Walker

In 2005, as manager of the Legal and Business Series for the Joseph Smith Papers Project, Walker began exploring the 1830s legal and business dynamics of the Church in Missouri. He was forewarned that due to the devastations in the state during the Civil War, including the burning of most of the county courthouses, finding relevant legal documents would be challenging. With the assistance of researchers inside and outside the Church, Walker discovered a wealth of previously unknown legal documents kept by the federal, rather than the state, government. His article discusses the relevance of these documents to the 1838 persecutions of Mormons in Missouri.



forced expulsion from Missouri are multifaceted, but this additional information gives us a more complete perspective.<sup>2</sup>

### Land Rights on the American Frontier

The growth of the United States from its original thirteen colonies cultivated the competing concepts of federal and states' rights. From their inception the colonies collectively expressed hesitation to transfer sovereign

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2. The author is indebted to the groundwork done in exploring the difficult and often competing factors that led to what commonly is referred to as the 1838 Mormon War in Missouri. This includes the research done by Alexander L. Baugh, "A Call to Arms: The 1838 Mormon Defense of Northern Missouri" (PhD diss., Brigham Young University, 1996; Provo, Utah: BYU Studies and Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Latter-day Saint History, 2000); Stephen C. LeSueur, *The 1838 Mormon War in Missouri* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1987); Gordon A. Madsen, "Joseph Smith and the Missouri Court of Inquiry: Austin A. King's Quest for Hostages," *BYU Studies* 43, no. 4 (2004): 92–136; B. H. Roberts, *The Missouri Persecutions* (Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon and Sons, 1900); and others. The author is also indebted to Lisa Harrison and Dawn Harpster for their work exploring land rights in northwestern Missouri.

rights to the national government.<sup>3</sup> Led by the Jeffersonians, this philosophical stance remained the dominant view until after the War of 1812, when a shift to nationalism emerged. The “Great Triumvirate”—Representatives Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, and John C. Calhoun—led the post-war Congress to strengthen the national economy through a centralized system of improvements to the infrastructure of the federal government.<sup>4</sup> This included creating a new national banking system, expanding tariffs, and improving roads and canals,<sup>5</sup> as well as an aggressive plan to sell the vast accumulation of public lands to fund the growing national government.<sup>6</sup> These policies fractured the already fragile political parties and alliances. While the Great Triumvirate experienced some initial success in strengthening the role of the federal government, opponents of federalism struck an almost fatal blow with the formation of the Democratic Party and

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3. James Madison’s memorandum “Vices of the Political System of the United States” provides a useful recitation of the competing interests between federal and state rights. Robert Rutland and others, eds., *The Papers of James Madison* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 9:348–58.

4. See generally Merrill D. Peterson, *The Great Triumvirate: Webster, Clay and Calhoun* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987). As longtime Speaker of the House, Henry Clay is attributed as coining the phrase “the American System” that embodies this movement. George Dangerfield, *The Awakening of American Nationalism, 1815–1828* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), 207–8, 220–21.

5. David P. Currie, *The Constitution in Congress: The Jeffersonians, 1801–1829* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 250–89.

6. The Land Ordinance of 1785 represented the first attempt by the Continental Congress to address the disposition of public lands. This ordinance provided for the surveying of public lands into six-mile square townships, divided into thirty-six sections of one square mile, or six hundred forty acres each. Motivated primarily by the need to raise revenue for the fledgling government, the Land Ordinance of 1785 “laid the foundations for the public land system, followed in most essentials until 1862.” Henry S. Commager, *Documents of American History*, 7th ed. (New York: Appleton, Century, Crofts, 1963), 123. The 1785 ordinance led to the enactment of the 1787 Northwest Ordinance, which established the protocol for the admittance of new states to “share in the federal councils on an equal footing with the original States.” An Ordinance for the Government of the Territory of the United States North-west of the River Ohio (July 13, 1787), reprinted in *Statutes at Large of the United States of America, 1789–1873*, 17 vols., 1:52. The 1787 ordinance specifically prevented the states from interfering with the “primary disposal of the soil by the United States in Congress assembled, nor with any regulations Congress may find necessary for securing the title in such soil to the bona fide purchasers.” The Northwest Ordinance (July 13, 1787), reprinted in *Stats at Large of USA*, 1:52.

the election of Andrew Jackson as president in 1828.<sup>7</sup> His election marked another shift in federal-state relations. As the voice for free enterprise, states' rights, and laissez-faire government,<sup>8</sup> Jackson ironically expanded executive powers that increased the effort to reduce the federal debt by selling federal lands.<sup>9</sup> It is within this national struggle that Mormons entered with their efforts to build communities on the western frontier.

### Acquisition and Sale of Federal Lands

Virginia's cession of the Northwest Territory to the United States in 1784<sup>10</sup> began the national government's concerted efforts to obtain vast areas of land. This included lands acquired by treaty from the Indians beyond the Ohio River,<sup>11</sup> and land cessions from the colonies such as North

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7. Jackson's policy changes included a veto of the proposed Maysville Road bill. This veto put an end to most national support for roads and canals (May 27, 1830); a veto to recharter the Bank of the United States (June 10, 1832); and the Compromise Act of 1833 that reduced tariffs. An Act to Modify the Act of the Fourteenth of July, One Thousand Eight Hundred and Thirty-two, and All Other Acts Imposing Duties on Imports (March 2, 1833), 22nd Cong., 2d sess., ch. 55, sec. 1, *Stats at Large of USA*, 4:629. Glyndon Van Deusen, *The Jacksonian Era: 1828–1848* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1959), 52–54, 64–65, 76–79.

8. Modeling his policies after James Madison's, Jackson noted in his inaugural address that his administration would "be animated by a proper respect for the sovereign members of our Union, taking care not to confound the powers they have reserved to themselves with those they have granted to the Confederacy." William MacDonald, *Jacksonian Democracy, 1829–1837* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1906), 44. "The powers delegated by the proposed Constitution to the federal government are few and defined. Those which are to remain in the State governments are numerous and indefinite." James Madison, *The Federalist Papers* (New York: Penguin Books, 1987), 296.

9. MacDonald, *Jacksonian Democracy*, 253–54. Jackson's successful use of this policy eliminated the national debt during his tenure. Congress had previously authorized this process in 1790. An Act Making Provision for the [Payment of the] Debt of the United States (August 4, 1790), 1st Cong., 2d sess., ch. 34, sec. 22, *Stats at Large of USA*, 1:144.

10. *The Public Domain: Its History, with Statistics* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880), 67–69. New York was the first colony to cede its western lands to the national government in 1782. This action by New York served as a precipitating factor that resulted in Virginia's significant cession in 1784. Shosuke Sato, *History of the Land Question in the United States* (Baltimore, Md.: John Hopkins University, 1886), 36–37.

11. The United States Supreme Court explained in *Johnson v. M'Intosh* that once the Indians' rights were extinguished by treaty, the federal government implicitly became the free and sovereign owner of the underlying land. *Johnson v. M'Intosh*, 8 U.S. 543, 593–94 (1823).

Carolina<sup>12</sup> and Georgia,<sup>13</sup> as well as acquisitions from foreign nations such as France<sup>14</sup> and Spain.<sup>15</sup> Beginning in 1787 it was understood that these land acquisitions would eventually become states within the union.<sup>16</sup> Although statehood put an end to the question of federal sovereignty over the territories, it did not extinguish federal ownership of the land, which was jealously retained.<sup>17</sup> By 1829 eight new states had been formed in what

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12. An Act to Accept a Cession of the Claims of the State of North Carolina to a Certain District of Western Territory (April 2, 1790), 1st Cong., 2d sess., ch. 6, *Stats at Large of USA*, 1:106.

13. Articles of Agreement and Cession (April 24, 1802), in *American State Papers, Public Lands*, 2 vols. (Washington: n.p., 1834), 1:125–26.

14. “Treaty between the United States of America and the French Republic,” April 30, 1803, *Stats at Large of USA*, 8:200, 202, art. 3.

15. “Treaty of Amity, Settlement, and Limits, between the United States of America and His Catholic Majesty [of Spain],” February 22, 1819, *Stats at Large of USA*, 8:252, 256–58, art. 6 (for Florida).

16. The Northwest Ordinance, adopted by the Continental Congress in 1787, expressly provided for division of the territory it covered into states, as Virginia had stipulated. See the Northwest Ordinance (July 13, 1787), reprinted in *Stats at Large of USA*, 1:53; *The Public Domain: Its History, with Statistics*, 68–69. See also the earlier congressional resolution inviting the states to cede their Western claims for this purpose. “Resolution,” September 6, 1780, in *Journals of the Continental Congress, 1774–1789*, ed. Worthington C. Ford and others (Washington, D.C., 1904–37): 17:806–7. All this was in accord with Maryland’s request in making the cession of Western claims a condition of ratifying the Articles of Confederation. See “Instructions of the General Assembly of Maryland,” May 21, 1779, in *Journals of the Continental Congress*, 14:619, 621–22. The treaties by which Louisiana and Florida were acquired prescribed prompt incorporation of the inhabitants into the United States. “Treaty between the United States of America and the French Republic,” 202; “Treaty between the United States of America and His Catholic Majesty,” 256–58.

17. The federal government historically disposed of public lands, including setting aside one section in every township for schools and a percentage of the proceeds for building roads. See An Act to Enable the People of the Eastern Division of the Territory Northwest of the River Ohio to Form a Constitution and State Government, and for the Admission of Such State into the Union, on an Equal Footing with the Original States, and for Other Purposes (April 30, 1802), 7th Cong., 1st sess., ch. 40, sec. 7, *Stats at Large of USA*, 2:175. This included the First Congress’s grants to Revolutionary veterans. See An Act to Enable the Officers and Soldiers of the Virginia Line on Continental Establishment, to Obtain Titles to Certain Lands Lying Northwest of the River Ohio, between the Little Miami and Sciota (April 10, 1790), 1st Cong., 2d sess., ch. 40, *Stats at Large of USA*, 1:182. The Harrison Land Act of 1800 allowed settlers to purchase up to three hundred twenty acres within the Northwest Territory for \$2 per acre. Under the 1800 act the purchaser was required to pay 25 percent of the purchase price up front and the remaining in installments over four years. See An Act to Amend the Act entitled

were previously federal territories—Ohio, Tennessee, Indiana, Louisiana, Mississippi, Illinois, Alabama, and Missouri.<sup>18</sup>

Andrew Jackson recognized that the revenue generated by the sale of these public lands on the rapidly expanding western frontier could, in short order, eliminate the national debt.<sup>19</sup> By his fourth annual report to Congress in 1832, Jackson proposed that inasmuch as the goal of selling public lands to satisfy “the expenses of the [Revolutionary] war” had been met, these lands no longer needed to serve as a source of revenue, but rather could “be sold to settlers . . . at a price barely sufficient to reimburse” the government for its costs.<sup>20</sup>

Both the power to sell public lands and the establishment of the process for such sales rested securely in the U.S. Constitution.<sup>21</sup> The need to superintend the sale of public lands was recognized in 1812 with the establishment of the General Land Office (GLO) within the Department of Treasury,<sup>22</sup> which was authorized to subdivide the public domain into land

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“An Act Providing for the Sale of the Lands of the United States, in the Territory Northwest of the Ohio, and Above the Mouth of Kentucky River” (May 10, 1800), 6th Cong., 1st sess., ch. 55, *Stats at Large of USA*, 2:74. Under the Land Act of 1820 the amount of land available was reduced to eighty acres and the price set at \$1.25 per acre. The 1820 act also discontinued the use of credit, thereby requiring full payment at the time of purchase. See An Act Making Further Provision for the Sale of the Public Lands (April 24, 1820), 16th Cong., 1st sess., ch. 51, *Stats at Large of USA*, 3:566. See generally R. Carlyle Buley, *The Old Northwest: Pioneer Period, 1815–1840*, 2 vols. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1951), 1:102–8.

18. See David P. Currie, *The Constitution in Congress: The Federalist Period, 1789–1801* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 217–22.

19. In his first annual message to Congress in 1829, Jackson announced that he anticipated these funds would create a tax surplus. See James D. Richardson, ed., *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 1789–1897* (By the author, 1899), 2:450–51. This process to raise federal funds preceded the need for federal taxes.

20. Richardson, *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, 600–601.

21. “The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States.” U.S. Constitution, art. 4, sec. 3.

22. Passed on April 25, 1812, “An Act for the establishment of a General Land Office in the Department of the Treasury” empowered the GLO to “superintend, execute, and perform, all such acts and things touching or respecting the public lands of the United States, and other lands patented or granted by the United States.” Opinions of the Attorney General (hereafter Ops. Atty. Gen.), no. 66 (July 4, 1836), *General Public Acts of Congress, Respecting the Sale and Disposition of the Public Lands, with Instructions Issued, from Time to Time, by the Secretary of the Treasury and Commissioner of the General Land Office, and Official Opinions*



districts for the sale and disposition of public lands.<sup>23</sup> Under the direction of the president, the GLO created local land offices to implement its mandate of aggressively selling public lands.<sup>24</sup>

As waves of settlers moved west, these pioneers, often referred to as squatters, became an obstacle to the orderly sale of public lands. In response, the federal government severely limited the rights squatters would have to these frontier properties. The land policies adopted in 1785, and again in the Land Act of 1787, required competitive bidding on land in an attempt to discourage and often displace squatters. In 1807, Congress even gave the president authority to “employ such military force as he may judge necessary and proper, to remove from lands ceded or secured to the United States by treaty or cession as aforesaid, any person or persons who

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*of the Attorney General on Questions Arising Under the Land Laws*, 2 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Gales and Seaton, 1838), 2:103–4.

23. Earlier legislation attempted to manage the sale of public lands. Congress experimented with a number of efforts, including raising the minimum price to as much as \$2 per acre (An Act Providing for the Sale of the Lands of the United States, in the Territory Northwest of the River Ohio, and above the Mouth of Kentucky River [May 18, 1796], 4th Cong., 1st sess., ch. 29, sec. 4, *Stats at Large of USA*, 1:467; An Act to Amend the Act entitled “An Act Providing for the Sale of the Lands of the United States, in the Territory Northwest of the Ohio, and above the Mouth of Kentucky River” [May 10, 1800], 6th Cong., 1st sess., ch. 55, sec. 5, *Stats at Large of USA*, 2:74; An Act Making Provision for the Disposal of the Public Lands in the Indiana Territory, and for Other Purposes [March 26, 1804], 8th Cong., 1st sess., ch. 35, sec. 5, *Stats at Large of USA*, 2:279), lowering the minimum amount purchased from six hundred forty acres to three hundred twenty acres (Act of May 10, 1800, ch. 55, sec. 4, *Stats at Large of USA*, 2:74), then to one hundred sixty acres (Act of March 26, 1804, ch. 35, sec. 10, *Stats at Large of USA*, 2:281), to eighty acres (An Act Making Further Provision for the Sale of the Public Lands [April 24, 1820], 16th Cong., 1st sess., ch. 51, sec. 1, *Stats at Large of USA*, 3:566 [codified at 43 U.S.C. 672], repealed by An Act to Repeal Obsolete Statutes, and to Improve the United States Code, Public Law 547, *U.S. Statutes at Large* 46 [1930]: 1029), and finally to forty acres (An Act Supplementary to the Several Laws for the Sale of Public Lands [April 5, 1832], 22nd Cong., 1st sess., ch. 65, *Stats at Large of USA*, 4:503 [codified at 43 U.S.C. 673]), repealed by Federal Land Policy and Management Act, Public Law 94–579, sec. 703(a), *U.S. Statutes at Large* 90 (1976): 2789.

24. “The President of the United States is hereby authorized to remove and establish said [land] office[s] at any suitable place within the said district.” An Act Authorizing the President of the United States to Remove the Land Office in the District of Lawrence County, in the Territory of Arkansas (March 2, 1821), *General Public Acts*, ch. 257, 1:339.

shall hereafter take possession of the same, or attempt to make a settlement thereon.”<sup>25</sup>

In an effort to protect themselves from these laws, squatters formed claim associations. The primary purpose of these associations was to intimidate speculators, often referred to as claim jumpers, from bidding on land improved by a squatter. One historian explained, “These associations were makeshifts to tide the settlers over until Congress should enact a law which would give them proper legal protection, or until they were able to pay for their claims.”<sup>26</sup> While these associations were formed to protect squatters from the law, the associations were almost universally accepted by public opinion. As one newspaper observed, “It is useless to say anything in justification or explanation of combinations of this character, as they have become a part of the established common law of the West, and are based upon that fundamental element of democracy—popular will, and the first law of nature—self-defence [*sic*].”<sup>27</sup>

Within this setting the first universal preemption laws were enacted in 1830.<sup>28</sup> Preemption was the process whereby individuals secured a preference right to purchase public land they had improved and inhabited.<sup>29</sup> The leader of the movement was Thomas Hart Benton, one of the first two senators from Missouri (fig. 2). Shortly after his first election to the Senate, Benton introduced legislation aimed at protecting squatters, who composed

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25. An Act to Prevent Settlements Being Made on Lands Ceded to the United States, until Authorized by Law (March 3, 1807), 9th Cong., 2nd sess., ch. 46, *Stats at Large of USA*, 2:445.

26. George M. Stephenson, *The Political History of the Public Lands from 1840 to 1862: From Pre-emption to Homestead* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1967), 21.

27. *St. Peter's Courier* (Nicollet County, Minnesota Territory), April 26, 1855, as quoted in Stephenson, *Political History*, 21n6.

28. An Act to Grant Pre-emption Rights to Settlers on the Public Lands (May 29, 1830), 21st Cong., 1st sess., ch. 208, *Stats at Large of USA*, 4:420–21. The full text of the 1830 act appears in appendix A. While this was the first universal preemption law, it was not the first preemption law. “In the country northwest of the Ohio, and above the mouth of the Kentucky River, as early as May 10, 1800, and afterwards in Michigan Territory, in Illinois Territory, in lands south of Tennessee, in the Louisiana purchase, in Florida, and in Missouri Territory, in particular cases, and on special conditions, varying in each of those localities, pre-emption rights were granted by various statutes, notwithstanding intrusions on the public lands had been prohibited by the Act of March 3rd, 1807.” W. W. Lester, *Decisions of the Interior Department in Public Land Cases, and Land Laws* (Philadelphia: H. P. and R. H. Small, 1860), 355.

29. Lester, *Decisions of the Interior*, 355.



FIG. 2. Missouri Senator Thomas Hart Benton, a leading advocate for settler land rights. His efforts resulted in the enactment of the first national preemption law in 1830. Courtesy Church History Library.

much of his constituency.<sup>30</sup> Four years later the Pre-emption Act of 1830 was passed as the first of its kind to extend preemptive rights to “every settler or occupant of the public lands” who was in possession at the date of passage and had cultivated any portion of the land not to exceed one hundred sixty acres.<sup>31</sup> This law originally was limited to one year, but it was extended by subsequent acts on July 14, 1832; March 2, 1833; June 19, 1834; June 22, 1838; and June 1, 1840.<sup>32</sup>

Because of the historical objections to squatters, those filing for preemptive claims were concerned whether their filings would result in legally recognized rights. Squatters’

30. See William M. Meigs, *The Life of Thomas Hart Benton* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1904). Benton sponsored several bills during his first term that laid the groundwork for the enactment of the 1830 act. These efforts centered on a gradual reduction to the price of the land according to the number of years it was on the market. Once the land was reduced to twenty-five cents per acre, the land would be donated in lots of eighty acres to the actual settlers. Meigs, *Life of Thomas Hart Benton*, 165–69.

31. The Missouri Supreme Court in *Pettigrew v. Shirley*, 9 Mo. 683, 686 (1846), summarized the 1830 act as follows: “In 1830 (May 29), a new species of pre-emptioners is recognized by Congress. The proof of the pre-emption was still required to be made to the satisfaction of the register [registrar] and receiver, but the time of making the proof was construed to extend to the time fixed for the expiration of the law, and the lands to be affected by it were construed to be lands which had been in market for years, as well as those which had never been offered for sale. The provisions of this act were continued from time to time until the final expiration of the act of June 22, 1838.”

32. In *Isaac v. Steel*, 4 Ill. 97, 3 Scam. 97 (1841), the Illinois Supreme Court articulated that the extension of the 1830 act, “with a full knowledge of the construction placed on the one which it revived, congress must be supposed to have adopted that construction and sanctioned it, as no restrictive clauses are to be found in the last mentioned act. The same construction was also adopted by the community in general. . . . If the construction given to these acts should be thought not to be correct, it having been acquiesced in for so long a time, and so many titles obtained by virtue of it, and the laws themselves having expired by their own limitation, it would be useless now to disturb it.” See *Pettigrew v. Shirley*, 9 Mo. 683, 687–88 (1846).

anxieties were founded, in part, in the tentative nature of unconsummated preemption rights. Such rights could be lost either by settlers' failure to pay the required price or by the lapsing of the act awaiting extension.<sup>33</sup> The U.S. Supreme Court addressed this dynamic in *Lytle v. Arkansas*:

The claim of a preemption is not that shadowy right which by some it is considered to be. Until sanctioned by law, it has no existence as a substantive right. But when covered by the law, it becomes a legal right, subject to be defeated only by a failure to perform the conditions annexed to it. It is founded in an enlightened public policy, rendered necessary by the enterprise of our citizens. The adventurous pioneer, who is found in advance of our settlements, encounters many hardships, and not unfrequently dangers from savage incursions. He is generally poor, and it is fit that his enterprise should be rewarded by the privilege of purchasing the favorite spot selected by him, not to exceed one hundred and sixty acres.<sup>34</sup>

Congress faced these concerns every year or so in anticipation of the preceding preemption act lapsing. Timing further exacerbated this situation. Congress anticipated that preemptive claims could be granted and the final sale consummated within the span of the act or its extension, but this was not the case. Western expansion far outpaced the GLO's ability to manage the growth.

### The Preemption Process

The implementation of the preemption process was designed to be straightforward. Yet, implementation proved both complicated and time consuming. During the 1830s, the GLO published hundreds of circulars to clarify the process, while the U.S. Attorney General's Office issued an equal number of interpretative opinions.

First, a settler would go to the local district GLO and complete a short application that included an affidavit verifying that he was improving and occupying the land to which the preemption right was being claimed.<sup>35</sup>

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33. These concerns ultimately led to an entire overhaul of the preemptive system in 1841, referred to as the Distribution Act of 1841 (An Act to Appropriate the Proceeds of the Sales of the Public Lands, and to Grant Pre-emption Rights [September 4, 1841], 27th Cong., 1st sess., ch. 16, *Stats at Large of USA*, 5:453), as supplemented by An Act to Authorize the Investigation of Alleged Frauds under the Pre-emption Laws, and for other Purposes (March 3, 1843), 27th Cong., 3rd sess., ch. 86, *Stats at Large of USA*, 5:619.

34. *Lytle v. Arkansas*, 50 U.S. 314, 333–34 (1850) (applying the 1830 act).

35. The individual who wanted to assert a preemptive right must do so by “producing his proof of such right at any time within *one year* from the date of

(Figure 1 shows the preemption forms filed by Hyrum Smith and others in 1836.) Second, the president would set the sale date for all land sold under the act or its extension.<sup>36</sup> It was then the responsibility of the surveyor general over the subject area to have the land adequately surveyed and verified and the corresponding paperwork physically returned to the local land office.<sup>37</sup> The local land office would then publish notice that the surveys

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the act.” *General Public Acts*, GLO, Circular no. 495 (May 23, 1831). The settler was limited to “not more than one hundred and sixty [acres], or a quarter section.” *General Public Acts*, GLO, Circular no. 497 (May 31, 1831). Occupancy was defined: “Where a man finds a piece of land which no other possesses, and enters upon the same, this gains a property, and has a title by occupancy.” *General Public Acts*, GLO, Circular no. 505 (April 19, 1832). The U.S. Attorney General clarified this requirement noting that “occupant” or “settler” meant “the party shall have a direct personal connexion with the land claimed by him.” *General Public Acts*, Ops. Atty. Gen., no. 72 (March 29, 1837). The following was the form affidavit promulgated by the secretary of treasury for establishing a preemptive claim: “I [or we] do solemnly swear [or affirm] that the land above described is intended to be entered for my [or our] personal benefit, and not in trust for another; and that the same is intended for the purpose of cultivation, or [as the case may be] for the use of my [or our] improvement, situate on the — of section No. —, township No. —, range No. —.” This affidavit had to be made before a justice of the peace or other person legally authorized to administer oaths. *General Public Acts*, GLO, Circular no. 506 (May 8, 1832). Interestingly, incorporated churches were able to exercise preemption rights. See *General Public Acts*, GLO, Circular no. 520 (May 29, 1833). Further, preemptive rights could be sold. As the GLO explained, “Where A settled on and cultivated a tract of public land in 1833, and prior to the 19th June, 1834, sold his right to B, who continued to improve and occupy the same on that day, B is regarded as entitled to the benefits of the act.” *General Public Acts*, GLO, Circular no. 543 (October 21, 1834). Occupancy by proxy (one doing it for another’s benefit) was not permitted. See *General Public Acts*, Ops. Atty. Gen., no. 64 (June 21, 1836).

36. *Pettigrew v. Shirley*, 9 Mo. 683, 687 (1846). “The fourth section provides that the [1830] act shall not delay the sale of the public lands beyond the time appointed for that purpose by the President’s proclamation, and that the provisions of the act shall not be available to any one who fails to make the proof and payment required before the day appointed for the commencement of the sales of lands including the tract or tracts on which the pre-emption is claimed.” See *Smith v. Mosier*, 5 Blackf. 51, 55 (Ind. S. Ct. 1838), which notes that the president sets the date for the land that he has authorized to be sold; see also Benjamin H. Hibbard, *A History of the Public Land Policies* (New York: Macmillan, 1924), 105. Regarding preemption rights, Hibbard states that “under the direction of Congress land was ‘proclaimed’ by the President for sale.”

37. Surveying was a complicated process. Initial physical surveys were contracted out by the federal government to be done by trained surveyors. These surveys were done by range often before the creation of counties. While this general survey gave enough detail to know what section and range a claim was being

were complete and the scheduled sale would take place.<sup>38</sup> Such notice was required to be published within a reasonable time before the sale date.<sup>39</sup>

made in, the general survey did not provide sufficient detail about the particulars within the township where the land was located. Once the state legislature created a county, the responsibility to draw townships using these physical surveys fell to the surveyor general. These “township plats” identified the acreage to, at a minimum, one-tenth of an acre. See generally J. B. Johnson, *The Theory and Practice of Surveying* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1904), 176–79.

Once completed, these township plats had to be verified and then certified by the surveyor general’s office and sent to the local land office, referred to as the “return date.” The land could not be sold until the local land office had received back the certified township plats. “The law contemplates that payment be made for the lands claimed by the pre-emption right, at the period when the proof shall be filed.” *General Public Acts*, GLO, Circular no. 486 (September 14, 1830). “No payments, however, are to be received on account of pre-emption rights duly established, in cases where the townships are known to be surveyed, but the plats whereof are not in your office.” *General Public Acts*, GLO, Circular no. 488 (February 7, 1831); see also *General Public Acts*, GLO, Circular no. 589 (May 7, 1836). *General Public Acts*, GLO, Circular no. 607 (April 7, 1837) explained that payment should be refused on land where “the plats of survey of the land claimed were not at that time in your [registrar’s] office.” The sale was considered “substantially made when the proof is filed and the pre-emption admitted, and only awaits the coming in of township plats to be perfected.” *General Public Acts*, Ops. Atty. Gen., no. 64 (June 21, 1836).

Importantly, if the surveys were not returned before the end of the term of the act under which the preemptive right was asserted, such rights would be tacked onto the successor act. “In this way each person entitled to a pre-emption may make good his entry within the period of one year from the day wherein the plat of the township is returned to your office, unless the land shall previously be proclaimed for sale, in which case the pre-emption must be paid for prior to the day of sale.” *General Public Acts*, GLO, Circular no. 522 (July 2, 1833). The GLO further explained: “The intention of the act of 14th of July, 1832, being to grant an extension of time, wherein to establish and pay for their valid claims, to those who, although settlers and cultivators in the mode and at the time contemplated by the original act, were nevertheless de-barred from receiving its benefits by reason of the surveys, which were in process of execution within the legal term, not being officially returned and filed in the district land office until after the expiration of such term; it has been determined to be but a fair, plain, and satisfactory interpretation of the law, that the same remedial benefits are designed to be revived and extended to those who, under precisely similar circumstances, were unable to avail themselves of the act of 29th of May, 1830, *revived* by that of the 19th of June, 1834.” *General Public Acts*, GLO, Circular no. 610 (June 9, 1837), italics in original.

38. When surveys were not returned in a timely fashion, such notice had to be cancelled or postponed. See appendix B for an example of a postponement as proposed by the GLO.

39. What constitutes a reasonable time was not defined in the 1830 act and, therefore, was the subject of several GLO circulars. As explained by the GLO, “In



Third, if a settler failed to pay for the preemptive land by the specified sale date, his preemptive right lapsed, and the land could be sold to any other interested party.<sup>40</sup>

The implementation of this process proved to be thorny. The difficulty centered on the rapid influx of settlers on land for which the township surveys had not been completed and certified by the general surveyor's office (fig. 3). In these situations, the prospective settler chose the land he wanted to claim (up to one hundred sixty acres), began cultivating it, and then went to the local land office to complete a preemptive application. When such land had not been certified with a township survey (thereby determining to one-tenth of an acre the actual public land being purchased), the local land office registrar could verify only that the applicant had adequately occupied and cultivated the subject land and accept the application for it. This often was referred to as "proofing" the

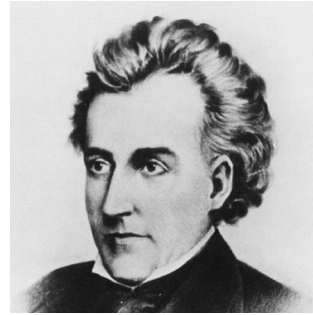


FIG. 3. Daniel Dunklin, who resigned as Missouri governor to accept the federal position as surveyor general for Arkansas, Illinois, and Missouri. As surveyor general, Dunklin directed the completion of the surveying of Caldwell and Daviess counties in Missouri. Courtesy Church History Library.

reference to all cases of this kind, you are explicitly to understand that, so soon as the [township] plats are received at your office, and the parties are advised by you of the fact, payment must be made without any unnecessary delay; and, if not made, the land will be regarded as subject to private entry." *General Public Acts*, Circular No. 503, GLO (February 8, 1832), emphasis added; see also *General Public Acts*, Circular No. 611, GLO (October 11, 1837).

40. "The right to enter pre-emptions within any tract of country offered at public sale *subsequent* to the date of the act, ceases at the time of the commencement of such public sale." *General Public Acts*, GLO, Circular no. 486 (September 14, 1830), italics in original. As the GLO advised, "Where the right of pre-emption exists to lands not at this date subject to private entry, and that will be offered at public sale prior to the 5th of October next, the evidence of claim under the act must be filed with you [the local registrar], and the purchase-money paid prior to the day of the public sale, otherwise the pre-emption will not be recognised." *General Public Acts*, GLO, Circular no. 506 (May 8, 1832). The GLO further clarified that "the provisions of the act [including the extensions thereto] are not available to any person or persons who shall fail to make the proof and payment required before the day appointed for the commencement of the sales of lands, including the tract or tracts on which the right of pre-emption is claimed." *General Public Acts*, GLO, Circular no. 535 (July 22, 1834).

preemption claim.<sup>41</sup> The registrar could not accept payment, as the exact price could be determined only after the township plats were received (fig. 4). Therefore, preemptive claims were general rights (for example, 40 acres) until the surveys were completed, whereupon they became specific rights (for example, 39.2 acres).

Once the verified survey was received by the local land office, the registrar published a notice of the receipt, thereby informing the settler that he must pay for the land by the predetermined sale date or be subject to having the land sold at public sale to any interested party (fig. 5). Unexpectedly, however, there was a persistent, and sometimes significant, delay in getting the verified township plat surveys back to the local land office. A settler could file an application for his land and then wait months, or sometimes even years, for the surveying process to be completed, thereby triggering the requirement to pay for the land.

This lengthy surveying process caused untold complications. Daniel Webster aptly articulated the problems in a January 29, 1838, speech on the Senate floor over the proposed extension of the Act of 1830 for two more years:

We are not now at the point when preemption rights are first to be granted; nor can we recall the past. . . . There are now known to be many thousands of settlers on public lands, either not yet surveyed, or of which the surveys are not yet returned, or which, if surveyed, are not yet brought into the market for sale.

The first question naturally is, How did they come there? How did this great number of persons get on the public lands? And to this question



FIG. 4. Cumberland Presbyterian Minister Finis Ewing, who persecuted Mormons in Jackson County in 1833. In 1836 he moved to Lexington, Missouri, where he became registrar of the local GLO. In that position, Ewing oversaw land rights (including preemption claims) in both Caldwell and Daviess counties. Courtesy Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

41. See, for example, *Gaines v. Hale*, 16 Ark. 9 (1855). "The pre-emptor was unable to make proof of settlement, as required by law, because the surveys had not been made, and the plats filed in the Land Office; the land was reserved from sale by act of Congress of 20th April, 1832, before the passage of the act of 14th July, 1832, extending the benefits of the act of 29th May to those who were unable to make proof, because the surveys had not been made."

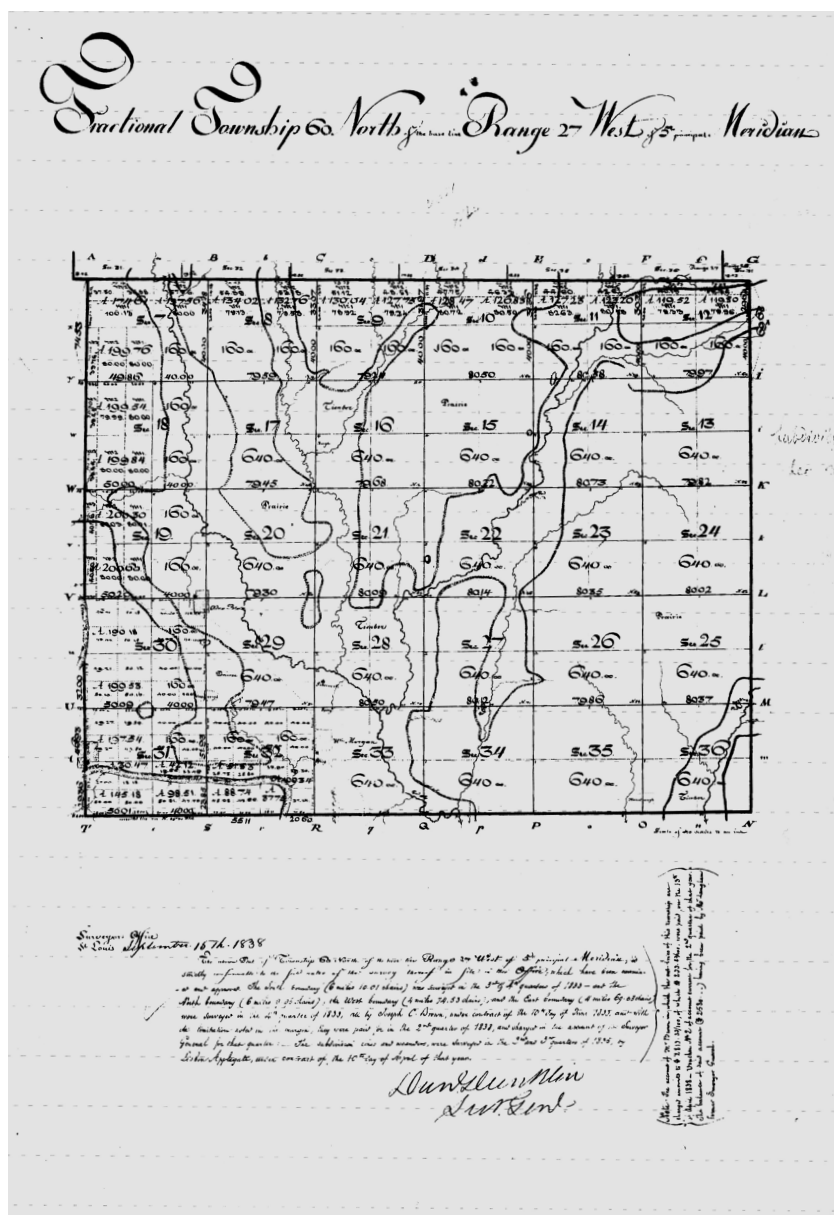


FIG. 5. Fractional township plat for Daviess County, Missouri, 60 North of the baseline Range 27 West of 5th principal Meridian. This survey was certified on September 15, 1838, by Surveyor General Daniel Dunklin. It was then sent to Registrar Finis Ewing to facilitate the consummation of preemption claims scheduled for November 12, 1838. Ewing published a notice for this sale on October 21, 1838. The handwritten text gives specific details about the claims, name of surveyor, and date of survey. Courtesy Church History Library.

it may be truly answered, that they have gone upon the lands under the encouragement of previous acts of Congress. They have settled and built houses, and made improvements, in the persuasion that Congress would deal with them in the same manner as it has, in repeated instances, dealt with others.<sup>42</sup>

The failure of plats to arrive at the local land office, thus preventing a sale to proceed, was “the worst bottleneck in the administrative system. . . . The end result was the cancellation or postponement of a number of public sales that had been advertised.”<sup>43</sup> Understanding these realities provides additional insight into the Mormon leadership’s decision to explore areas that had not been fully surveyed. In fact, these dynamics of the preemption process lay at the center of the Latter-day Saints’ 1838 expansion into Daviess County, Missouri.

### Mormons on the Missouri Frontier

Mormons first came to Missouri as missionaries in 1830. By summer 1831, Mormons had settled in Jackson County, and, reinforced by prophetic decree, Church members sought to build Zion there.<sup>44</sup> Joseph Smith laid out a city for the Saints, including a site on which to construct a temple. Throughout 1832, Mormons arrived to support the establishment of this new Church center, and by the end of that year nearly twelve hundred Latter-day Saints lived in Missouri.<sup>45</sup>

Such rapid growth proved dangerous, as the non-Mormon population feared losing political and economic standing.<sup>46</sup> Competing religionists

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42. *The Works of Daniel Webster*, 11th ed. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1858), 4:392.

43. Malcolm J. Rohrbough, *The Land Office Business: The Settlement and Administration of American Public Lands, 1789–1837* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), 260.

44. Smith taught, “Wherefore, this is the land of promise, and the place for the city of Zion. . . . Behold, the place which is now called Independence is the center place; and a spot for the temple” (D&C 57:2–3).

45. Richard Neitzel Holzapfel and T. Jeffery Cottle, *Old Mormon Kirtland and Missouri: Historic Photographs and Guides* (Santa Ana, Calif.: Fieldbrook Productions, 1991), 162.

46. Richard L. Bushman provides a useful discussion about the often competing factors that led to the expulsion of Mormons from Jackson County in 1833, including, but not limited to, the growing political power of Mormons, their stance on slavery, involvement with the Indians, and religious beliefs. Richard L. Bushman, “Mormon Persecutions in Missouri, 1833,” *BYU Studies* 3, no. 1 (1960): 11–20. See also T. Edgar Lyon, “Independence, Missouri, and Mormons, 1827–1833,” *BYU Studies* 13, no. 1 (1972): 6–7; William Berrett, *The Restored Church: A Brief History of the Growth and Doctrines of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day*

and early settlers<sup>47</sup> fueled the simmering discontent, which erupted in violence in July 1833 when a mob razed W. W. Phelps's home and printing office.<sup>48</sup> Such violence abated only briefly, eventually leading to the forced surrender and expulsion of virtually the entire Mormon community from Jackson County in November 1833.<sup>49</sup>

These displaced Saints found temporary refuge in nearby Clay County, immediately north and across the Missouri River. They sought help from the state government, and the Saints were advised to seek redress through legal channels.<sup>50</sup> Smith also organized a thousand-mile march with provisions and paramilitary support from Kirtland. However, none of these endeavors proved effective. Efforts to strengthen the Mormon community in Clay County were doomed as the initial kindness of the locals dissipated and was replaced by prejudice and enmity.

Desperate for a solution, Church leaders contemplated moving north to the unsettled Missouri frontier. Fearing the same persecutions might

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*Saints*, 15th ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1973), 157–58; Roberts, *Missouri Persecutions*, 73–75.

47. Joseph Fielding Smith aptly summarized, “Others taking part in this unlawful action were some of the judges, constables, sheriffs, military officers and the following clergymen: Reverends McCoy, Kavanaugh, Hunter, Fitzhugh, Pixley, Likens, Lovelady and Ewing. These ministers were Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, and of other sects located in Jackson County. Reverend Ewing had declared and circulated the statement that ‘Mormons were the common enemies of mankind, and ought to be destroyed.’” Joseph Fielding Smith, *Church History and Modern Revelation*, 4 vols. (Salt Lake City: Council of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1946–49), 2:182–83. Reverend Finnis Ewing took an active role in property disputes in Daviess County in 1838, having become by that time the land agent over the local land office in Jefferson City, Missouri.

48. Roberts, *Missouri Persecutions*, 85–97.

49. Milton V. Backman Jr., *The Heavens Resound: A History of the Latter-day Saints in Ohio, 1830–1838* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1983), 170–72.

50. Missouri Governor Daniel Dunklin suggested that Mormons take their complaints to the courts for redress. Governor Dunklin sent a letter dated October 19, 1833, to Bishop Edward Partridge and other Mormon leaders in Jackson County, advising them to “make a trial of the efficacy of the laws; the Judge in your circuit is a conservator of the peace. If an affidavit is made before him by any of you, that your lives are threatened and you believe them in danger, it would be his duty to have the offenders apprehended and bind them to keep the peace.” “History of Joseph Smith,” *Times and Seasons* 6 (May 1, 1845): 880. The Mormons retained four attorneys—Alexander Doniphan, David Atchison, Amos Rees, and William Wood—to seek legal assistance to return to their homes in Jackson County. Roger D. Launius, *Alexander William Doniphan: Portrait of a Missouri Moderate* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press 1997), 15.

follow, they sought legal help to establish a safe location to resettle. One of the Church's lawyers and also a member of the Missouri legislature representing Clay County, Alexander Doniphan<sup>51</sup> agreed that moving into the unsettled areas might alleviate the tensions between the groups.<sup>52</sup>

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51. Alexander Doniphan proved an invaluable friend of Joseph Smith and the Church. Even prior to Doniphan's intercession during the early days of the Mormon conflict in fall 1838, Joseph and Alexander had already become close friends, evidenced by Joseph and Emma naming their son born June 2, 1838, Alexander, after Doniphan. See Buddy Younggreen, "Joseph and Emma: A Slide-Film Presentation," *BYU Studies* 14, no. 2 (1974): 208. Doniphan joined the minority Whig party in Missouri in 1836 and was elected to the State House of Representatives for Clay County that same year, replacing his professional colleague David Atchison. Doniphan's election was virtually unanimous. He took his seat in the lower house for the Ninth General Assembly on November 21, 1836. Interestingly, he did not seek reelection. Launius, *Alexander William Doniphan*, 31–35, 41. While Doniphan worked on several pieces of legislation during this 1836 session, his work to find a "resting place" for Mormons proved to be his most notable effort. He was appointed to chair a committee in the House to consider the creation of new counties. On December 17, 1836, his committee presented its report and accompanying bill to the House, recommending, in pertinent part, the creation of Caldwell and Daviess counties. The House passed this bill on December 23 and the Senate followed on December 27. Governor Boggs signed the bill into law on December 29. Launius, *Alexander William Doniphan*, 39. See also *Laws of the State of Missouri, Passed at the First Session of the Ninth General Assembly, Begun and Held at the City of Jefferson, on Monday, the Twenty-First Day of November, in the Year of Our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Thirty-Six*, 2d ed. (St. Louis, Mo.: Chambers and Knapp, Republican Office, 1841), 38–47; *Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Missouri at the First Session of the Ninth General Assembly, November 29, 1836* (Bowling Green, Mo.: Office of the Salt River Journal, 1837), 86, 188–90, 217–19.

52. Some have characterized the Missouri legislature's actions as effectively creating an Indian reservation for Mormons, but since the Mormons were U.S. citizens, any such efforts would run afoul of constitutional principles. Thus, there is no reference to that effect in the legislation that created Caldwell County. Most historians dispute that any legal agreement to confine Mormons to Caldwell County was ever contemplated, at least by Mormons. "Mormon sources show an understanding not to relocate main groups in Clay or Ray, but there was no visible promise to be contained in Caldwell." Richard L. Anderson, "Clarifications of Boggs's 'Order' and Joseph Smith's Constitutionalism," in *Regional Studies in Latter-day Saint History: Missouri*, ed. Arnold K. Garr and Clark V. Johnson (Provo, Utah: Department of Church History and Doctrine, Brigham Young University, 1994), 31–32. B. H. Roberts similarly reasoned: "Of course the matter of Caldwell being a county created and set apart for 'Mormon' settlement, as also the agreement on the part of the saints that they would not settle in other counties, 'without the previous consent of the settlers already there,' had to be merely an understanding between the Missourians and the saints, as no such agreement



Doniphan sponsored a bill during the late-1836 legislative session that would allow the Saints to settle in the entire unincorporated territorial northern portion of Ray County (fig. 6).<sup>53</sup> This bill met with stiff opposition by the representatives from Ray County, resulting in a substantive compromise—the creation of two new counties in Missouri, Caldwell and Daviess, by the end of 1836. Caldwell County was informally designed to accommodate Mormons. This compromise also enlarged Ray by four townships (giving Ray twenty townships rather than the typical sixteen) and left Caldwell County with only twelve townships.<sup>54</sup>

Anticipating the creation of these counties and seeking to avoid the vicissitudes of persecution, Mormons began moving northward even before the official creation of Caldwell or Daviess counties.<sup>55</sup> Mormons built their

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could be enacted into law since it would be an abdication [sic] of one of the rights of citizenship under the Constitution on the part of the saints; and an assumption of unconstitutional power on the part of the Missourians, for them to forbid citizens of the state of Missouri or of any other state of the Union to settle where they pleased, since it is a part of the Constitution itself that 'the citizens of each state shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities of citizens in the several states.'" B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Century One*, 6 vols. (Provo, Utah: Corporation of the President, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1965), 1:419; but also see Walter B. Stevens, *Centennial History of Missouri: One Hundred Years in the Union, 1820–1921* (St. Louis, Mo.: S. J. Clarke Publishing, 1921), 108. Stevens explained: "Segregation was proposed as a remedy for the Mormon troubles in Missouri. . . . It was understood that the Mormons would be permitted to move in and organize the new county. . . . They were not to settle in any other county except by permission of two-thirds of the residents of the township in which they desired to locate." Doniphan also appeared to believe Mormons had made some kind of tacit agreement not to expand outside Caldwell County, as he is quoted in the *Kansas City Journal* more than forty-five years later saying that troubles in northwestern Missouri were caused when Mormons "commenced forming a settlement in Davis [sic] county, when, under their agreement, they had no right to do so." Launius, *Alexander William Doniphan*, 39.

53. Launius, *Alexander William Doniphan*, 39–40.

54. Nearly twenty-four miles square and situated to the north of Caldwell County, Daviess County was named after Colonel Joseph H. Daviess, a commander killed at the battle of Tippecanoe in Indiana in 1811 and a friend of Doniphan's father. Gallatin was established as the county seat. See *The History of Daviess County, Missouri* (Kansas City, Mo.: Birdsall and Dean, 1882), 235.

55. A review of the "Original Entries for Lands in Caldwell County" proves that a significant number of settlers had purchased or otherwise obtained land rights there before to the formal establishment of the county in 1836. While some of these settlers were of other faiths, the records indicate the vast majority of settlers were Mormons. My review of these records shows that 205 different settlers acquired property rights in what became Caldwell County before January 1837.

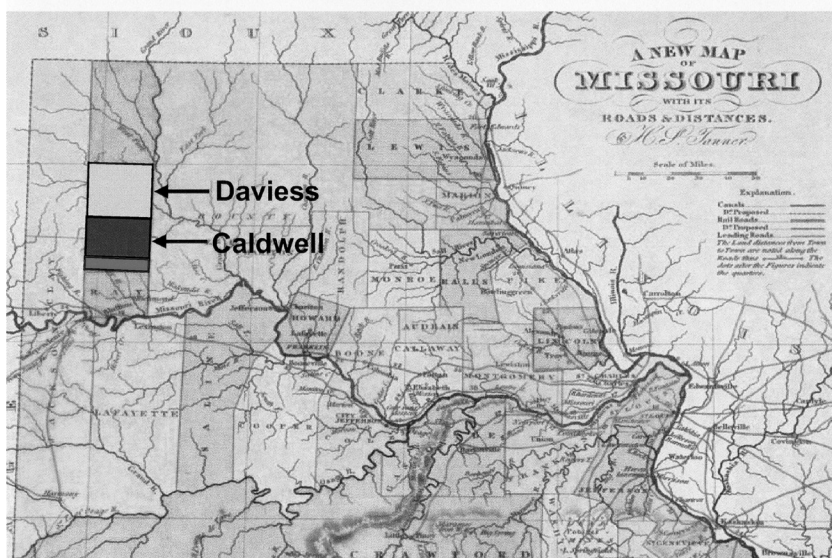
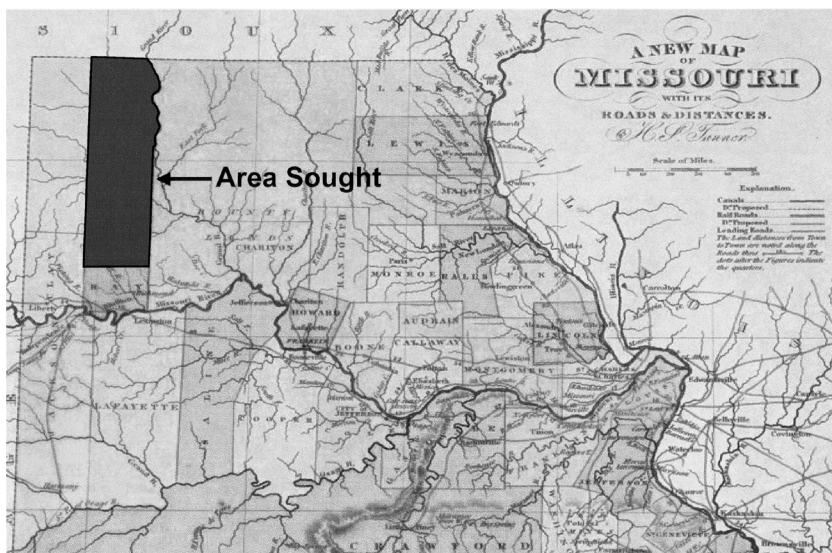


FIG. 6. 1836 Missouri map with superimposed outlines comparing the area Mormons originally sought to settle after being driven from Jackson County in 1833 and from Clay County in 1836 with the compromise establishment of Davies and Caldwell counties. This map also shows the four additional townships in Ray County that resulted from the compromise. Even before the creation of these new counties, Mormons had moved into both Davies and Caldwell counties. Courtesy Church History Library.

main settlement in Mirable Township (Caldwell County) and christened the town Far West. With the possibility of settling in northern Missouri and thereby avoiding further persecution, emigration to Caldwell County exploded. Between 1836 and 1838 “more than 4,900 of them lived in the county, along with a hundred non-Mormons.” The Far West area boasted “150 homes, four dry goods stores, three family groceries, several blacksmith shops, two hotels, a printing shop, and a large schoolhouse that doubled as a church and a courthouse.”<sup>56</sup> A second community emerged on Shoal Creek, sixteen miles east of Far West, called Hawn’s Mill.<sup>57</sup> By 1838, Hawn’s Mill was home to approximately twenty families, with another forty or more families settling on farms in the vicinity.<sup>58</sup> The pace of emigration to these settlements accelerated following the economic problems in Kirtland and Smith’s decision to move from Ohio to Missouri that spring.<sup>59</sup>

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Of these 205 settlers, 171 acquired their property in 1836, and almost all of this group appear to be Mormons. They acquired property predominately in (1) Mirable Township, where Far West was later established, (2) Rockford Township, directly south of Mirable, and (3) Rockford and the townships along Shoal Creek, which included the Hawn’s Mill community. Copies of the “Original Entries for Lands in Caldwell County,” Caldwell County Recorder’s Office, Kingston, Missouri, as cited in Leland H. Gentry, “The Land Question at Adam-ondi-Ahman,” *BYU Studies* 26, no. 2 (1986) 10n14.

56. James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976), 116–17. See also Robert Allen Campbell, *Campbell’s Gazetteer of Missouri* (St. Louis, Mo.: R. A. Campbell, 1874).

57. Named after Jacob Hawn (traditionally spelled “Haun,” but a review of applicable land records, as well as the marker on his grave evidences that he spelled his name “Hawn”), who built a gristmill on Shoal Creek. Jacob Hawn settled on approximately forty acres on Shoal Creek and entered his claim for this property on December 7, 1835, more than a year before the creation of Caldwell County. See “Original Entries for Lands in Caldwell County,” Caldwell County Recorder’s Office, Kingston, Missouri. His mill site became the center of the community commonly referred to as Haun’s Mill. Mormons settled along the east-west running Shoal Creek, building multiple mills around Hawn’s own mill. Consequently, this area comprised some of the most valuable lands owned by Mormons.

58. Alma R. Blair, “The Haun’s Mill Massacre,” *BYU Studies* 13, no. 1 (1972): 62–63; Beth Shumway Moore, *Bones in the Well: The Haun’s Mill Massacre, 1838; A Documentary History* (Norman, Okla.: Arthur H. Clark, 2006), 29, 39; [www.farwesthistory.com/haunsm.htm](http://www.farwesthistory.com/haunsm.htm).

59. An account of this three-month journey is in Kirtland Camp, Journal, March–October 1838, MS, in the handwriting of Elias Smith, Church History Library.

## Ohio Saints Relocate to Northern Missouri

The exodus from Kirtland was costly. Significantly in debt from the construction of the Kirtland Temple, the failure of the Kirtland Safety Society, and the expense of defending lawsuits, the Church was on the edge of financial collapse. While many have argued that the Saints left Kirtland to escape their financial obligations, the facts demonstrate a concerted and largely successful effort by Church leaders to satisfy obligations before their departure. To meet these obligations the leaders sold most Church properties. Many individuals also donated funds from the sale of their homes, farms, and businesses to pay Church debts.<sup>60</sup> The financial sacrifice by the Kirtland Saints was considerable, and it represented an unmistakable commitment to their religion and a social conscience of financial responsibility despite persecution.

Such sacrifice also meant that most of these people arrived in Missouri without sufficient financial means to purchase property. Journals recount the destitute condition of these Saints.<sup>61</sup> The plight of Saints from Ohio, coupled with the ongoing emigration of new converts (most of whom also arrived without financial means), placed significant pressure on Church leaders to find an affordable place for them to settle. From this perspective it seems logical that leaders looked to unsurveyed counties in northern Missouri for new settlements.

Smith, his family, and other key leaders left Kirtland for Far West on January 13, 1838,<sup>62</sup> arriving in March. The following month brought significant changes in Missouri Church leadership, including the excommunication of

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60. "Of the \$52,251.44 recorded debt of Joseph and the [Temple] Committee, \$47,062.83 was paid. There were no defrauded creditors, but rather paid creditors, 90% of whose claims were satisfied in a reasonably prompt time frame. And that payment came largely after the Saints had abandoned Kirtland and the Symbol of their sacrifice, the Temple." Gordon A. Madsen, "The Impact of Litigation against Joseph Smith and Others on the Kirtland Economy" (presented at the Mormon Historical Society 2005, Killington, Vermont), 17, copy in author's possession.

61. "Typical of Saints who faced the uncertainties of the exodus from Kirtland with little or no money or means was Truman O. Angell, the skilled temple carpenter. He and his wife and two small children left in a one-horse wagon. Their first day out of Kirtland, he had to spend his last money to repair the wagon, leaving him with 'a rickety wagon, a balky horse, not a penny in my pocket, a family to feed and a thousand miles to go.'" Karl R. Anderson, *Joseph Smith's Kirtland: Eyewitness Accounts* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1989), 238.

62. Manuscript History of the Church, B-1, 780, Church History Library.

former stalwarts Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer.<sup>63</sup> By May, Smith's focus turned to the anticipated arrival of a large contingent of Saints from Kirtland. On May 18, Smith and other key leaders, including Sidney Rigdon, David Patten, and Edward Partridge, left Far West "to visit the north countries for the purpose of Laying off stakes of Zion, making Locations & laying claims [to land] for the gathering of the saints for the benefit of the poor."<sup>64</sup>

Some claim that the basis for Mormons' expansion into Daviess County (the "north countries") was that Caldwell County had filled up to overflowing with Mormons.<sup>65</sup> A review of Missouri land sales, however, belies this conclusion. While Mirable Township, the location of Far West, had been substantially settled or claimed, most of the other eleven townships in Caldwell County remained almost entirely available through 1838 (fig. 7).<sup>66</sup> Consequently, the decision to settle the poor on unsurveyed land was not motivated by a lack of available real property in Caldwell; rather the decision stemmed from a need to find affordable land.<sup>67</sup> By the time Smith arrived in Missouri in early 1838, Caldwell County had been completely surveyed, including the return of township plats. Therefore,

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63. Donald Q. Cannon and Lyndon W. Cook, eds., *Far West Record: Minutes of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830–1844* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1983), 162–69, 176–78.

64. Smith, *Scriptory Book*, May 18, 1838. See also Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 2:243.

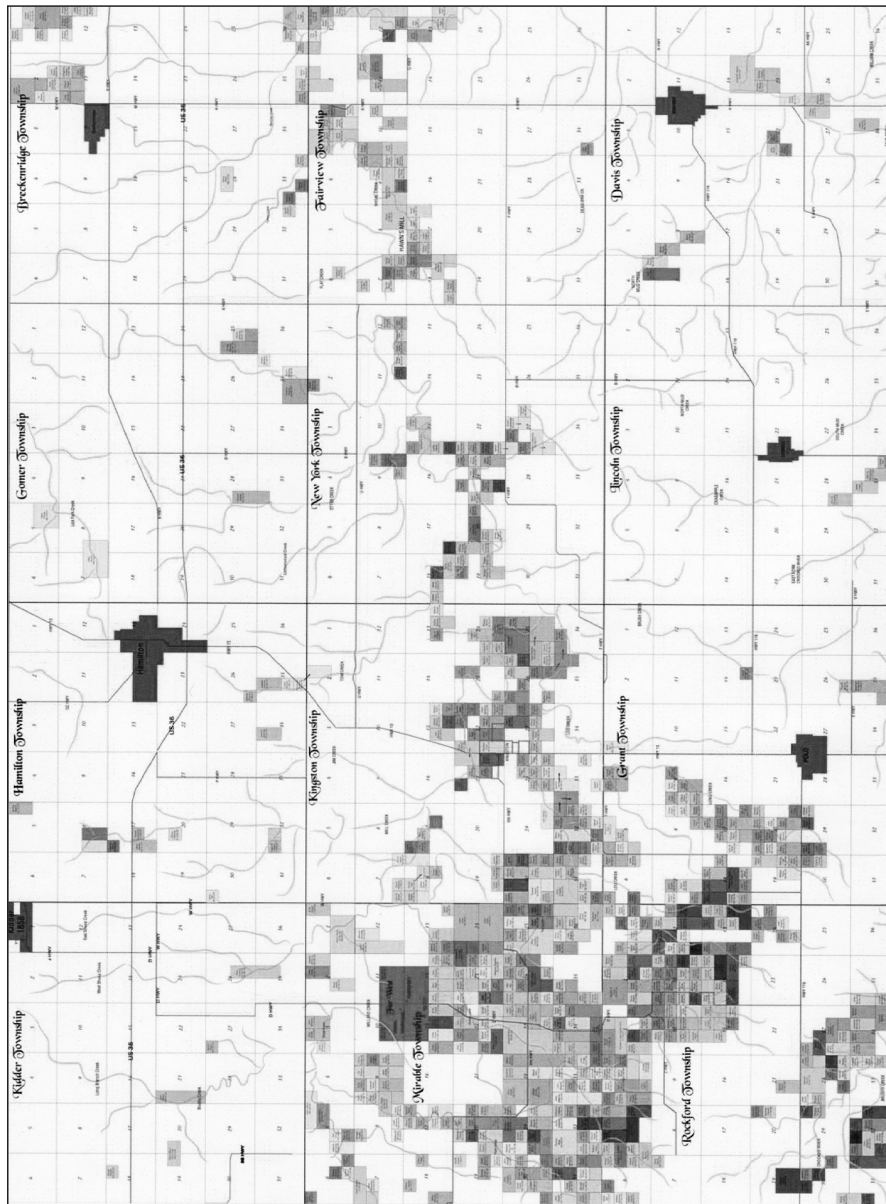
65. See, for example, Sidney Rigdon, *An Appeal to the American People: Being An Account of the Persecutions of the Church of Latter Day Saints; and of the Barbarities Inflicted on Them by the Inhabitants of the State of Missouri*, 2d ed. (Cincinnati, Ohio: Shepard and Stearns, 1840), 15; *Elders' Journal* 1, no. 3 (July 1838): 33.

66. A review of the "Original Entries for Lands in Caldwell County" demonstrates that through 1838 the only substantial settlement in Caldwell County took place in Mirable Township and Rockford Township, which was immediately south of Mirable. In addition, scattered settlements were made along Shoal Creek, ending with Hawn's Mill in Fairview Township. Based on these maps, conservative estimates would indicate less than a third of the county was settled by 1838 when Mormons began a substantial move into Daviess County. See illustration 8.

67. Interestingly, the Saints again explored the benefits of preemptive rights when looking for land in western Iowa in 1848: "This land is not yet in market. When it comes into market, the Saints, being the first settlers, will, by law, have certain pre-emption rights, and the first chance of purchasing the lands." Orson Pratt, "First General Epistle to the Saints throughout England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, and Adjacent Countries," *Millennial Star* 10 (August 15, 1848): 242.



FIG. 7. Original entry map of Caldwell County, Missouri, showing all patents that the federal government issued, mostly to Mormons, through 1838. This pattern shows that Mormons predominately settled in Mirabile Township (*far left center square*), where they founded Far West (*large dark rectangle*), and then east along Shoal Creek to Hawm's Mill in Fairview Township (*far right center square*). Therefore, most of Caldwell County was unsettled when the Saints started moving into neighboring Daviess County, not shown on the map. Missouri Land Records Office.





property in this county had to be paid for at the time of settlement.<sup>68</sup> It appears Smith's initiative to scout out communities in Daviess County was motivated by the realization that this land had not yet come onto the market because verified township surveys had not been completed. The law allowed impoverished Saints to secure preemption rights to their property without having to pay until the township plat surveys were completed. Because of the backlog on these surveys, new settlers anticipated working their land and generating the income necessary to purchase the property (at \$1.25 per acre).

Mormons in Caldwell and Daviess counties actively participated in this government program of preemption.<sup>69</sup> As discussed herein, Joseph Smith and other Church leaders were aware of the preemption process and encouraged the Saints to utilize this option as they moved to Missouri.<sup>70</sup>

Details about these possibilities had generally been communicated to the departing Saints in Ohio. Writing to her brother Levi on February 19, 1838, from Kirtland, Hepzibah Richards, the sister of Willard Richards, explained:

Since I wrote last the state of things has remained much the same. Less excitement at times. The members of the Church are leaving as fast as possible. A steamboat is to be chartered about the middle of March which will take off a great many families. They are driven out of this place [Kirtland] as truly as the Saints were driven out of Jackson county four years ago, though in a different manner. There they were driven by

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68. The township plat for Mirable Township (location of Far West) was completed on January 15, 1835. Township Plat for Mirable Township, Church History Library. Furthermore, various preemption applications filed by Saints in 1836 in Caldwell County all show that the property description to the tenth of an acre and the calculations of paying \$1.25 per acre are noted on the applications. These references prove that the surveys for these lands had been completed and the settlers were required to pay for their land at that time. See, for example, Caldwell County, Missouri Preemption Applications, Church History Library.

69. See appendix C for a list of references in the Mormon redress petitions that specifically mention loss of preemption (duplicates) rights.

70. Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon wrote to Steven Post, a member of the Second Quorum of the Seventy residing in Kirtland: "As to this, there are thousands gathering this season The road is full companies of presently 10, 20 & 30 <wagons> arrives, some almost daily One company which is the com[.] is close here with one hundred wagons John E. Page report says is comming less than one hundred miles of this place, with 64 wagons and the road is litterly lined with wagons between here and Ohio, The work of the gathering is great. all the saints should gather as soon as possible, urge all the saints to gather immediately if they possibly can." Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon to Stephen Post, September 17, 1838, Church History Library.

force of arms; here by persecution, chiefly from the dissenters. People who go from here to Missouri by water take passage at Wellsville [Columbiana Co., Ohio] about 100 miles south of here, on the Ohio river; you can find it on the Atlas; then follow on down the Ohio and up the Missouri river quite to the western part of the State of Missouri. There are thousands of acres of good land which have never been in the market; people take up lots and settle on them, then petition for preemption rights, which are always granted. The probability is it will never come into the market, and if it does, it will be sold cheap.<sup>71</sup>

During his May 1838 trip to the “north countries,” Joseph Smith met with Saints who already had moved into Daviess County<sup>72</sup> and, under his direction, organized the city of Adam-ondi-Ahman. This location was to be a central gathering place for the anticipated influx from Kirtland as well as for converts from other areas.<sup>73</sup> Known as the Kirtland Company,

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71. Selections from Letter of Hepzibah Richards, February 19, 1838, cited in *Journal History of the Church*, February 19, 1838, Church History Library, also available on *Selected Collections from the Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 2 vols. (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 2002), vol. 2, DVD 1, microfilm copy in Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. After a series of meetings between March 6 and 17, 1838, in Kirtland, Ohio, the remaining leaders made the decision to move the entire body of the Church residing in Kirtland and surrounding areas to Missouri. See Joseph Smith Jr., *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2d ed., rev., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1971), 3:87–95.

72. Daviess County was both a beautiful and a promising land. As one writer described: “There is no county in the State to rank in advance of Daviess for agricultural advantages and grazing. The soil is from one to six feet deep, very rich, and productive—a soil that will not wear out. The formation of the surface of this country displays a natural drainage in its highest perfection. . . . The ascents and descents of the country are not so abrupt as to prevent the tillage of the entire surface of the land. The soil of the Grand River Valley, which runs diagonally through the county from northwest to southeast, is not surpassed by any other county in the Union. This county contains about two-thirds prairie and one-third timber lands; the timber being situated advantageous to the prairie, as if placed by human hands for the convenience of man.” *Daviess County, Missouri: Its History, Description, and Resources* (St. Joseph, Mo.: Joseph Stearn Printing, 1875), 1, as quoted in Reed C. Durham Jr., “The Election Day Battle at Gallatin,” *BYU Studies* 13, no. 1 (1972): 37.

73. For example, on July 28, 1838, Smith left Far West for Adam-ondi-Ahman to assist in the settlement of Saints from Canada, noting converts “are emigrating numerously to this land from all parts of the [country].” Smith, *Scriptory Book*, July 28, 1838. See also Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 2:262–63. Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon also discussed this gathering in their letter to Steven Post dated September 17, 1838. See footnote 70.

a mile-long wagon train of more than five hundred Saints left Kirtland on July 6, 1838, heading to Daviess County.<sup>74</sup>

Lyman Wight, one of the original Mormon settlers in Daviess County was a firsthand witness of the Mormon emigration:

Joseph Smith, together with many others of the principal men of the church, came to my house, and taking a view of the large bottom in the bend of the river, and the beautiful prairies on the bluffs, came to the conclusion that it would be a handsome situation for a town. We therefore commenced surveying and laying off town lots, and locating government lands for many miles north of this place. This beautiful country with its flattering prospects drew in floods of emigrants. I had not less than thirty comers and goers through the day during the three summer months, and up to the last-mentioned date [last of October], there were upwards of two hundred houses built in this town, and also about forty families living in their wagons.<sup>75</sup>

At its height, Adam-ondi-Ahman alone boasted a population of fifteen hundred and more than two hundred homes.<sup>76</sup> By fall 1838, Caldwell and Davies counties had become home to roughly ten thousand Mormons.<sup>77</sup>

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74. An account of this three-month journey is in Kirtland Camp, Journal, March–October 1838.

75. *History of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints*, 8 vols. (Independence, Mo.: Herald House, 1967–76), 2:155–56.

76. Approximately seventy families from Adam-ondi-Ahman moved to Carroll County and settled DeWitt. These Saints modeled DeWitt after the design introduced by Joseph Smith for both Independence and Far West with homes and gardens within the town and large co-op farms outside of town. In late summer 1838 mobbers laid siege to DeWitt, preventing the Saints from harvesting their crops outside of town. This siege resulted in the abandonment of DeWitt in October 1838 and these Saints moved to Far West. It is beyond the scope of this article to discuss the preemption rights the Saints in DeWitt claimed or lost. See LeSueur, *1838 Mormon War in Missouri*, 30, 101–11.

77. Early Church leaders consistently estimated that there were “about 15,000 souls” driven from Missouri in 1838. See, for example, Memorial, Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and Elias Higbee, Washington, D.C., to the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the United States, January 27, 1840, photocopy of original in National Archives and Church History Library; “The Petition of the Latter-day Saints, commonly known as Mormons,” 26th Congress, 2d sess., H. Doc. 22 (December 21, 1840), 5. However, modern historians put the number closer to ten thousand. See, for example, Susan Easton Black and Richard E. Bennett, eds., *A City of Refuge, Quincy, Illinois* (Salt Lake City: Millennial Press, 2000), 6, 24.

## Missouri Land Sales in Late 1838

Although thousands of Mormons had settled new communities in Caldwell and Daviess counties in 1838, these inhabitants soon faced expulsion. The cause of that expulsion is multifaceted. From the uniqueness of Mormons' faith, both doctrinally and in practice, to their apparent disposition for allying with the Indians, their overall antislavery stance, and their rapidly growing political power and resulting voting blocs, the non-Mormon residents of Daviess and the surrounding counties grew increasingly uncomfortable with their Mormon neighbors. Much has been written in the defense of the motives of both groups.<sup>78</sup> Some have acknowledged that some Missourians enjoyed an unintended windfall of improved land from Mormons' removal.<sup>79</sup> However, a closer look at events leading to the infamous Extermination Order evidences that some Missourians carefully orchestrated the persecution in October and November 1838 specifically to gain control of Mormons' preemption rights. In fact, this appears to be central to the motives of these Missourians. They did not reap an unintended windfall; rather they orchestrated the deliberate taking of these rights.<sup>80</sup>

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78. See Baugh, "A Call to Arms"; LeSueur, *1838 Mormon War in Missouri*; Bushman, "Mormon Persecutions in Missouri, 1833"; Roberts, *Missouri Persecutions*. It is beyond the scope of this paper to provide further discussion on these aspects that contributed to the Mormon conflicts in 1833 and again in 1838. Suffice it to say that some commentators cast a broad net of blame on both Mormons and Missourians. Certainly blame can be found on both sides of the conflict. In terms of proportionality, however, the ultimate harm inflicted by Missourians on Mormons dwarfs any reasonable, comparable acts by Mormons. How can one compare the Battle of Crooked River with the Hawn's Mill Massacre? Or compare the burning of Jacob Stollings's store in Gallatin with the Extermination Order?

79. See, for example, LeSueur, *1838 Mormon War in Missouri*, 237–39.

80. Mormons living in Caldwell and Daviess counties were fully aware of the preemption rights to the lands they were occupying and cultivating. Pursuant to Smith's revealed direction (see D&C 123:1–6), the Saints prepared redress petitions after being expelled from Missouri. In late 1839 these petitions were taken to Washington, D.C., where 491 of them were presented. Additional efforts to obtain redress occurred in 1840 and 1842. A final attempt was made in fall 1843. More than 770 petitions were prepared. See Paul C. Richards, "Missouri Persecutions: Petitions for Redress," *BYU Studies* 13, no. 4 (1973): 520–43. For those petitions involving property losses in Daviess County, there are numerous references to the loss of preemption rights for cultivated properties. See appendix C for a summary of these petitions, as compiled in Clark V. Johnson, ed., *Mormon Redress Petitions: Documents of the 1833–1838 Missouri Conflict* (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1992).

By presidential mandate, the date for the sale of surveyed property under the extended Act of 1830,<sup>81</sup> which included the land in Daviess County, was set for November 12, 1838. As previously discussed, this date could be extended only in the event the verified surveys (the “township plats”) were not returned within a reasonable time of the sale date so appropriate notice could be given to the settlers who held pending preemption claims, requiring them to pay for their property. If the verified surveys were not returned, the preemptive rights were required to be extended to the next sale date pursuant to the anticipated next extension of the act. The citizens in Daviess County were aware of this sale date, as notice of the sale had been published in various local newspapers beginning in August 1838.<sup>82</sup> The only question was whether the returned township surveys would arrive in time to allow for the proper conduct of the land sales.

In mid-September 1838, the surveyor general’s office in St. Louis, Missouri, completed the township surveys for Daviess County subject to sale on November 12, 1838. These plats were certified and sent to that office by the surveyor general, Daniel Dunklin (former Missouri governor).<sup>83</sup> The plats were received by the local registrar, Finis Ewing, at the district office in Lexington, Missouri, on approximately September 24, but the public was not made aware of that receipt until it was published on October 21.<sup>84</sup> This, therefore, was the first date the Saints could have learned they would definitely be required to pay for their preemption claims by November 12.

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81. The 1830 act was extended by Congress on June 22, 1838. This extension granted preemption rights to all settlers who were occupying and cultivating land at the time the extension was passed.

82. Such notice to anyone with possible claims was published in the *Missouri* (St. Louis) *Argus* starting on August 5, 1838, and reprinted every week through August, September, and October. The *Southern Advocate* (Jackson) also carried a similar notice in September 1838 and then every week through November. Leland H. Gentry, “The Land Question at Adam-ondi-Ahman,” *BYU Studies* 26, no. 2 (1986): 55n34.

83. Daniel Dunklin, as surveyor general, noted the surveys were “examined and approved” in St. Louis on September 15, 1838. These surveys were started by Joseph C. Brown and completed by Lisbon Applegate. See Township Surveys for Daviess County, September 15, 1838, Church History Library.

84. The delay in publishing this notice is somewhat suspect. While beyond the scope of this paper, evidence exists that Ewing helped orchestrate the taking of Mormons’ preemptive rights in Daviess County. The returned surveys had been received by the local land office in Lexington and published in the *Southern Advocate* (Jackson), October 21, 1838, 4. This notice informed the public that payment for preemption claims would be due by November 12, 1838.

It appears more than a coincidence that A. P. Rockwood reported on October 24, 1838, that the Saints' mail had stopped coming to Far West.<sup>85</sup>

Before the publication of the October 21 notice, and as the predetermined sale date of November 12, 1838, moved perilously close, Mormons anticipated that the sale date likely would be moved to the following year. Consequently, by September 1838, Mormons in Daviess County had agreed to buy out their non-Mormon neighbors' preemptive rights and possessions. This option was confirmed by General H. G. Parks in writing to General David Atchison (fig. 8) on September 25, 1838: "On to-morrow, a committee from Daviess county meets a committee of the Mormons at Adam-on-diahmon, to propose to them to buy or sell, and I expect to be there."<sup>86</sup> Joseph Smith wrote on September 26, 1838, "The mob committee met a committee of the brethren, and the brethren entered into an agreement to purchase all the lands and possessions of those who desired to sell and leave Daviess county."<sup>87</sup> Shortly thereafter allegations arose that Mormons were burning homes and farms in Daviess County. Hyrum Smith

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85. Rockwood notes, "Last night the Mail came and brought papers but not a single letter to any person it is supposed they were stoped by some evil minded person or persons, it is nothing unexpected to us that it is stoped, hereafter letters from you to us may be verry irregular. But from us to you they may be more regular as we can send them out of the City before we mail them. I wish you all to be verry particular in acknowledgeing letters that are sent that we may know what you have receivd." Albert Perry Rockwood, Journal, October 24, 1838, in handwriting of Phinehas Richards, Church History Library.

86. *Document Containing the Correspondence, Orders, &c in Relation to the Disturbances with the Mormons* (Fayette, Mo.: Boon's Lick Democrat, 1841), 33.

87. Manuscript History of the Church, B-1, addendum note U, 7. As soon as the agreement was reached, the high council of Adam-ondi-Ahman was immediately called, and Elders Don Carlos Smith, George A. Smith, Lorenzo D. Barnes, and Harrison Sagers were appointed to go to the churches in the south and east and raise men and means to fulfill the contract. "The mob left many houses burning, which they had set on fire before they had fled. These houses belonged to the Mormons, they having purchased the pre-emption rights from the people of Davies county." John Greene, *Facts Relative to the Expulsion of the Mormons or Latter Day Saints, from the State of Missouri under the "Exterminating Order"* (Cincinnati, Ohio: R. P. Brooks, 1839), 21. "After the mob had departed for Carroll county, the inhabitants of Daviess that had belonged to the mob, began to make proposals to the Saints, either to sell or buy. Two committees were appointed for this purpose, one on each part; after some arrangement in relation to the matter, the committee on the part of the Saints agreed to buy out all the possessions which the mob had in Daviess county, and purchases were making of their lands and crops (the land consisted in pre-emption rights, as the land in that part of the county had not as yet come into market) every day, and payment made until there were some twenty-five thousand dollars worth of property bought from the mob



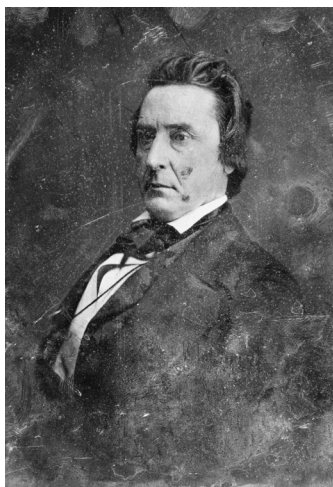


FIG. 8. David Atchison. Mormon leaders retained Atchison, a Missourian, as an attorney for the Church. In fall 1838 he brokered a deal between Mormons living in Adam-ondi-Ahman and local Missourians, allowing Mormons to buy land owned by those of other faiths who wished to sell and move out of the county. Unfortunately, mob members broke the agreement and laid siege to Mormons before driving them from their homes. Library of Congress.

later testified, referring to the October burnings allegedly perpetrated by Mormons, that “the houses that were burnt, together with the pre-emption rights, and the corn in the fields, had all been previously purchased by the Mormons of the people and paid for in money and with waggons and horses and with other property, about two weeks before.”<sup>88</sup>

### The Land Grab

Yet some Missourians were not appeased by the purchase of their land and possessions (or commitment to do so) by Mormons. These Missourians had no apparent intention of leaving Daviess County. The tenuous peace Mormons thought they had brokered was violated before it could be fully consummated.

By the third week in October these Missourians knew that the surveys had been properly returned and that Mormons’ preemption rights probably would be paid, thereby giving Mormons title not only to their preemptive claims, but also to the newly acquired claims from their neighbors. Some Missourians were determined to thwart this outcome. For example,

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in improvements and crops.” Rigdon, *Appeal to the American People*, 26–27. See also “The Petition of the Latter-day Saints,” 7.

88. “Missouri vs. Joseph Smith,” *Times and Seasons* 4 (July 1, 1843): 248. Hyrum Smith’s entire testimony appears on pages 246–56.

Sashel Woods,<sup>89</sup> a Presbyterian minister and a leader in the military attacks on DeWitt, Adam-ondi-Ahman, and Far West,

called the mob together and made a speech to them, saying that they must hasten to assist their friends in Daviess county. The land sales (he said) were coming on, and if they could get the Mormons driven out, they could get all the lands entitled to pre-emptions, and that they must hasten to Daviess in order to accomplish their object; that if they would join and drive them out they could get all the lands back again, as well as all the pay they had received for them. He assured the mob that they had nothing to fear from the authorities in so doing, for they had now full proof that the authorities would not assist the Mormons, and that they might as well take their property from them as not.<sup>90</sup>

The ensuing weeks evidenced the implementation of Woods's strategy by the Missourians.<sup>91</sup> The siege of DeWitt, the Battle of Crooked River, and the Hawn's Mill Massacre proved that any peace Mormons thought they had purchased had been lost. According to Hyrum Smith, some Missourians were "doing every thing they could to excite the indignation of the Mormon people to rescue them, in order that they might make that a pretext of an accusation for the breach of the law and that they might the

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89. Sashel Woods was a Cumberland Presbyterian minister and considered Finis Ewing his mentor. Reverend Ewing's animosity toward Mormons propelled him to be one of the key players in orchestrating their expulsion from Jackson County in 1833; see footnote 47. Ironically three ministers, Cornelius Gilliam, Samuel Bogart, and Sashel Woods, "led much of the opposition to the Saints." LeSueur, *1838 Mormon War in Missouri*, 247.

90. Rigdon, *Appeal to the American People*, 30–31. "It was during this time that the people of Daviess made sale of their lands and other property to the Saints, all the time saying to their particular friends, that they intended, as soon as they got pay for their lands and other property, to drive the Saints off, and take it by force from them. They declared that they were fools if they did not do so, seeing that the law could not be enforced against them for so doing." Rigdon, *Appeal to the American People*, 29. "The tiger spirit of the mob had grown upon its food. As the brethren left De Witt, Sashiel Woods called many of the mobocrats together and invited them to hasten into Daviess County to continue their work there. He said that the land sales were coming on, and that if the 'Mormons' could be first driven out the mob could get all the land entitled to preemption; besides, they could get back without pay the property already bought from them by the Saints. It was a welcome invitation, and, taking their artillery, this horde, with appetites whetted for their base and cruel work, departed for Adam-ondi-Ahman." George Q. Cannon, *Life of Joseph Smith the Prophet* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1964), 262.

91. Certainly Woods was not alone. Concurrent with his efforts, "Cornelius Gilliam was busily engaged in raising a mob in Platt and Clinton counties, to aid Woods in his effort to drive peaceable citizens from their homes and take their property." Rigdon, *Appeal to the American People*, 31.

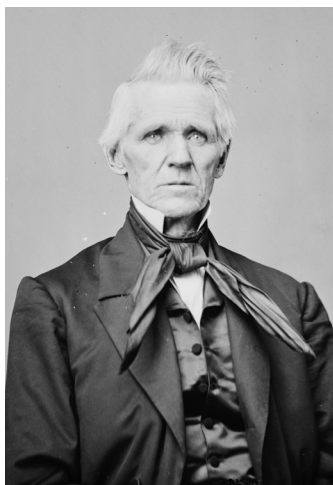


FIG. 9. Judge Austin A. King, who presided over a “Court of Inquiry” against Mormon leaders to determine whether there was sufficient evidence to hold them for trial. This hearing began on November 12—the exact day the Daviess County preemption land sales started—and lasted two weeks, preventing the Mormons from completing their preemption claims. Library of Congress.

better excite the prejudice of the populace and thereby get aid and assistance to carry out their hellish purposes of extermination.”<sup>92</sup> That goal was furthered significantly by Missouri Governor Lilburn W. Boggs’s issuance of the infamous Extermination Order, on October 27, 1838, just six days after publication of the notice of sale.

The process of driving Mormons from Missouri is telling of Missourians’ motives. By November 1, 1838, massive numbers of troops forced a Mormon surrender at Far West. “The city was surrounded with a strong guard, and no man woman or child was permitted to go out or come in, under the penalty of death.”<sup>93</sup> Mormon travel throughout the northern counties was restricted from that point forward.<sup>94</sup>

In addition to the travel restrictions, General John B. Clark of the Missouri militia commenced the process of systematically arresting key Mormons. By early November, Clark had arrested over fifty Church members.<sup>95</sup> These men were not only ecclesiastical leaders, they also were the most prominent landowners in Daviess County. They were taken to Richmond to appear before Judge Austin A. King (fig. 9). A preliminary hearing, or

92. “Missouri vs. Joseph Smith,” 246–47.

93. “Missouri vs. Joseph Smith,” 250.

94. “On his [General John B. Clark’s] arrival there [Far West], he placed guards around the town, so that no person might pass out or in without permission. All the men in town were then taken and put under guard, and a court of inquiry was instituted, with Adam Black on the bench.” Rigdon, *Appeal to the American People*, 46.

95. Madsen, “Joseph Smith and the Missouri Court of Inquiry,” 97.

“court of inquiry,” as it was then called, was conducted over two weeks to determine whether there was sufficient evidence to bind over (hold for trial) any of the arrested men.<sup>96</sup> It seems hardly a coincidence that the hearing began on November 12—the exact day the Daviess County preemption land sales started. These sales continued for the statutory two weeks, which ran exactly concurrently with the preliminary hearing. Those critical two weeks were the Mormons’ final opportunity to exercise their preemption rights. But during those two weeks, all Mormons in northwest Missouri were either in the midst of their preliminary hearing or “fenced in by the gentiles”<sup>97</sup> at Far West—with travel and communication restricted.

One of the purposes behind the restriction on travel is revealed through its results. Although the import of this restriction has been obscured by time, the nineteenth-century Mormons understood what had happened. Parley P. Pratt stated:

The Anti-Mormons were determined the Mormons should yield and abandon the country. Moreover the *land sales* were approaching, and it was expedient that they should be driven out before they could establish their *rights of pre-emption*. In this way their valuable improvements—

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96. At the conclusion of the preliminary hearing, twenty-nine people were released outright. Twenty-four of the remaining were bound over for trial. All but ten of these individuals were released on bail, leaving Smith and other Church leaders as the sole remaining prisoners. Madsen, “Joseph Smith and the Missouri Court of Inquiry,” 98.

97. Mormons used this phrase to describe the sieges to their cities, particularly Far West. This phrase appeared as commentary in some of the deeds Mormons were forced to execute in conveying their lands to the Missourians. For example, in a warranty deed dated November 15, 1838, with eight grantors—Austin Hammer, Samuel Zimmer, James Huntsman, Issac Ellis, John Pye, John York, David Norton, and Elias Benner—to Willis G. Casper as grantee contains the following language in the text of the deed: “All being Latterday Saints now living in Caldwell County in Missouri and being fenced in by the Gentiles commanded by John B. Clark who is murdering our People and so we are going to leave the County & State, we do for the good of the poor.” Copy of this deed in Church History Library. Interestingly, three of the grantors, Austin Hammer, John York, and Elias Benner, had been killed sixteen days earlier at the Hawn’s Mill Massacre. There was no signatory line for Elias Benner, while Austin Hammer’s and John York’s signatures were made by an “X.” Signing with an “X” is a legally recognized signature for people who are illiterate. Neither Hammer nor York were illiterate, as they had filed applications for their land at the Lexington Land Office on November 26, 1836, and had signed their names on these applications. See Austin Hammer and John York, Preemption Applications, Church History Library.

the fruit of diligence and enterprise—would pass into the hands of men who would have the pleasure of enjoying without the toil of earning.<sup>98</sup>

Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and Elias Higbee also articulated this fact in their report to the United States Senate and House of Representatives on January 27, 1840. They acknowledged the persecution against the Saints, first in Jackson and then in Clay, Caldwell, and Daviess counties, was rooted in that

they were a body of people, distinct from their fellow citizens, in religious opinions, in their habits, and in their associations; and withal sufficiently numerous to make their political and moral power a matter of anxiety and dread to the political and religious parties by which they were surrounded, which prejudices arose not from what the Mormons had done; but from the fear of what they might do, if they should see proper to exercise this power.

They continued:

In addition to this, the Mormons had either purchased of the settlers or the General Government, or held by Pre-emption rights, what were regarded the best lands in that region of the Country. The tide of speculation during this period of time ran high; and the cupidity of many was thus unlawfully aroused to possess themselves of these lands, and add to their wealth by driving the Mormons from the country, and taking forcible possession of them; or constraining them to sell through fear and coercion at prices merely nominal and of their own fixing.<sup>99</sup>

Even those outside the Mormon community acknowledged this motive. In an article published in the *New Yorker* dated October 13, 1838, the editor succinctly wrote:

The latest accounts from the Mormon neighborhood in Missouri directly assert that all the trouble is occasioned by the “world’s people”

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98. Parley P. Pratt, *Late Persecution of the Church of Jesus Christ, of Latter Day Saints* (New York: J. W. Harrison, 1840), 149; italics in original. “If the Saints who fled DeWitt hoped they would escape their tormentors, they hoped in vain. Sashiel Woods urged the troops who had surrounded the town to hurry to Daviess County, because the pre-empted lands would soon go on sale and must be secured by Missourians.” Marvin S. Hill, *Quest for Refuge: The Mormon Flight from American Pluralism* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1989), 89.

99. Memorial, Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and Elias Higbee, 8–9. The memorial further notes, “And let it be here observed, in passing, that Judge Adam Black had before that time sold the improvement and pre-emption claim on which he then resided [in Daviess County] to the Mormons; had received his pay for the same; that through his instrumentality the Mormons were broken up and driven off; and that he now unlawfully retains both their money and the improvements.” Memorial, Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and Elias Higbee, 13.

about them, who covet the fine lands on which they have settled, or wish to frighten or drive them from the country before they have taken up any more in the fertile country surrounding their settlement. Of course, this interferes with the trade of the Preemptioners, who are determined to eject them, either by their own force, or by stirring up the State against them.<sup>100</sup>

William Aldrich, a Mormon resident in Daviess County, noted in his redress petition that he “was als[o] deprived of the privilege of Proveing if my Preemption being under the spetial order of General Clark which prohibited [them] from leaving Farwest in Caldwell Co.”<sup>101</sup> Likewise, Joseph Younger, another Mormon resident in Daviess County, claimed loss for his “perremtions Rights five hundred dollars Being cept under gard whil the Land sales at Lexinton was going on.”<sup>102</sup> Jabis Durfee similarly explained that he had gained a preemption right in Daviess County upon which he had built a house and mill: “I resided on said tract of land untill October AD. 1838 which—entitled me to a Preemtion right on said land: according to the laws of the United States: Whereas I was prevented from proving up said right and entering said tract of land in consequence of an order from Governor Boggs authorising an armed force to drive me with others from the State.”<sup>103</sup>

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100. The article continues: “The Columbia [Missouri] Patriot distinctly asserts that such are the true causes of all the trouble. A committee of the citizens of Chariton county have been among the Mormons, to investigate the truth of the accusations against them, and they declare them wholly unfounded. Jo. Smith and Rigdon have given bonds of \$1,000 each to keep the peace. They have further sworn to the following certificate: ‘We hereby certify that we have learned that a Mr. Nathan Marsh has certified that the people some time called Mormons have ingratiated themselves with the Indians, for the purpose of getting the Indians to commit depredations upon the people of this State, which certificate of Marsh (as represented to us) is utterly false. We have never had any communication with the Indians on any subject; and we, and all the Mormon Church, as we believe, entertain the same feelings and fears towards the Indians that are entertained by other citizens of this State. We are friendly to the Constitution and laws of this State and of the United States, and wish to see them enforced. Joseph Smith, Jr./Sidney Rigdon.’” “The Mormons,” *New Yorker* 6 (October 13, 1838): 59.

101. Johnson, *Mormon Redress Petitions*, 414.

102. Johnson, *Mormon Redress Petitions*, 386–87.

103. Johnson, *Mormon Redress Petitions*, 442. Dated January 18, 1840, Jabis Durfee’s redress petition notes, in part, “I moved into Davies County State of Misouri in December in the year of 1837 and settled on the North West Quarter of Section No eighteen in Township fifty eight North and Range—twenty Seven West. I improved said Quarter by cultivating a portion of the soil and building a house in which I lived also a mill. I resided on said tract of land untill [sic] October AD. 1838 which—entitled me to a Preemtion right on said land: according to the laws of the United States: Whereas I was prevented from proving up said right



His brother, Perry Durfee, echoed this complaint that he was taken prisoner and “was prohibited from entering my preemption which I held in Davis Co.”<sup>104</sup> Perhaps Willard Richards articulated it best, declaring the entire hearing at Richmond as nothing more than “a lie out of whole cloth.”<sup>105</sup>

Once the time for the holders of preemption rights to exercise them had elapsed, the key actors in the preceding months’ anti-Mormon activities immediately purchased nearly eighteen thousand acres of Daviess County land.<sup>106</sup> Based on estimates as to the number of Mormon families then living in Daviess County, it appears most of that land purchased previously had been settled and improved by Latter-day Saint occupants.<sup>107</sup> These were strategic purchases. For example, Adam-ondi-Ahman and many other tracts in the vicinity were purchased by Sashel Woods, his sons-in-law Jon Cravens and Thomas Calloway, and Woods’s fellow Cumberland Presbyterian minister, George Houx.<sup>108</sup> Within two months the town’s name was changed to Cravensville.<sup>109</sup> Other tracts also were strategically chosen. The Original Entry Map for Daviess County substantiates these Missourians’ strategy to take the most valuable improved Mormon lands. For example, Cravens and Woods purchased Jabis Durfee’s claim

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and entering said tract of land in consequence of an order from Governor Boggs authorising an armed force to drive me with others from the State.” Johnson, *Mormon Redress Petitions*, 442. From this description, Durfee’s property can be found on the Original Entry Map for Daviess County, Missouri, Church History Library. As the foregoing maps document, Sashel Woods and Jon Cravens purchased Durfee’s property on November 23, 1838. This undoubtedly was a strategic purchase, as no other property surrounding Durfee’s was bought at that time. The reason for selecting this property by Woods and Cravens is obvious—the mill.

104. Johnson, *Mormon Redress Petitions*, 443.

105. Rough Draft, Manuscript History of the Church, 1838–39 draft history, 30, MS, Church History Library.

106. A review of the “Original Entries for Lands in Daviess County” shows that between November 21 and December 31, 1838, thousands of acres were bought. Mormons did not purchase a single acre. See “Original Entries for Lands in Daviess County.”

107. On September 18, 1838, General Atchison wrote to Governor Boggs that from “the best information I can get there are about two hundred and fifty Mormon families in Daviess County, nearly one half of the population.” *Document Containing the Correspondence, Orders, &c*, 27. With entries averaging between forty and eighty acres for each family, this would have amounted to between ten and twenty thousand acres of Mormon landholdings in Daviess County.

108. See “Original Entries for Lands in Daviess County.” This document shows these men obtained the patent rights for most of Adam-ondi-Ahman on November 28, 1838, and the rest on December 18, 1838.

109. Cravensville, Missouri, Plat Records, Church History Library.

along with his home and a mill for \$1.25 per acre on November 23, 1838, the first day following the lapse of Durfee's preemption rights<sup>110</sup> (figs. 10 and 11). Interestingly, Cravens and Woods purchased no property adjacent to the Durfee site. The two men surgically purchased a mill site—the most valuable of all property in the frontier. This mill site was so ideal that it continued as such for more than fifty years<sup>111</sup> (fig. 12). Cravens ultimately sold half (forty acres) of Durfee's property (eighty acres), which he purchased for \$100, to McClain Wilson in 1866 for \$1,225,<sup>112</sup> thereby reaping a very substantial profit (fig. 13).

Cravens and Woods were not alone. Other prominent figures in the Mormon War acquired significant property holdings in Daviess County, including Wiley C. Williams (aide to Governor Boggs), Amos Rees,<sup>113</sup> William Mann, William O. Jennings, Jacob Rogers,<sup>114</sup> and others. Most of these individuals had not been residents of Daviess County prior to the land sales, indicating they were speculators who profited from Mormons' misfortune.<sup>115</sup>

*The Daily Missouri Republican*, published in St. Louis, aptly summarized the effect of the Mormon conflict in its December 13, 1838, editorial:

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110. Johnson, *Mormon Redress Petitions*, 442. See note 103.

111. The following are copies of the *Illustrated Historical Atlas of Daviess County Missouri* (Philadelphia, Pa: Edward Brother, 1876), 35 (copy in author's possession). This document shows the existence of the mill that Durfee originally built in 1837.

112. John and Ruhama Cravens, Warranty Deed to McClain Wilson, December 7, 1866, Church History Library.

113. For example, Wiley Williams and Amos Rees penned the following letter to General John Clark dated October 25, 1838, stating, in part: "We use on our way as expresus the Governor conveying the following information—that these wretched fanatics have thrown off all restraint and are destroying all before them—they have burned Galatin the County Seat of Daviess taken the goods from J. Stallings Store and burned the house they have burned the Villeage of Millport in Daviess and have burned almost every house from Galatin and Millport North with many others in other parts of the County and plundered the whole Country. . . . They have determined to attack and burn Richmond to night And we have but little doubt but that they will attempt it. . . . These creatures will never Stop until they are stoped by the Strong hand of force. And Something must be done and that Speedily There is no kind of doubt but that all the Alarm with much more that I have not time to write is true and you may act accordingly." Missouri State Archives. Mormon War Papers, 1837–1841, located at [http://www.sos.mo.gov/archives/resources/findingaids/fulltext/rg005\\_01-Bo1\\_F48-52.asp?rid=f48\\_f01-02](http://www.sos.mo.gov/archives/resources/findingaids/fulltext/rg005_01-Bo1_F48-52.asp?rid=f48_f01-02).

114. William Mann, William O. Jennings, and Jacob Rogers participated in the Hawn's Mill Massacre on October 30, 1838. Baugh, "A Call to Arms," 417, 418, 420.

115. See "Original Entries for Lands in Daviess County."

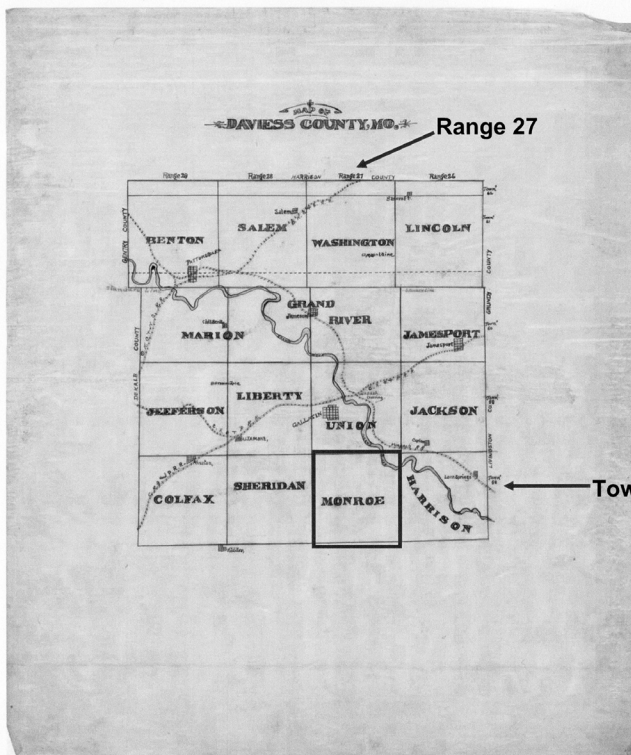


FIG. 10 (left). Original entry Map of Daviess County, Missouri, showing all the townships in that county. Property owned by Latter-day Saint Jabis Durfee was located at Township 58 North Range 27 West (Monroe). Durfee built a home and mill on this site. Courtesy Church History Library.

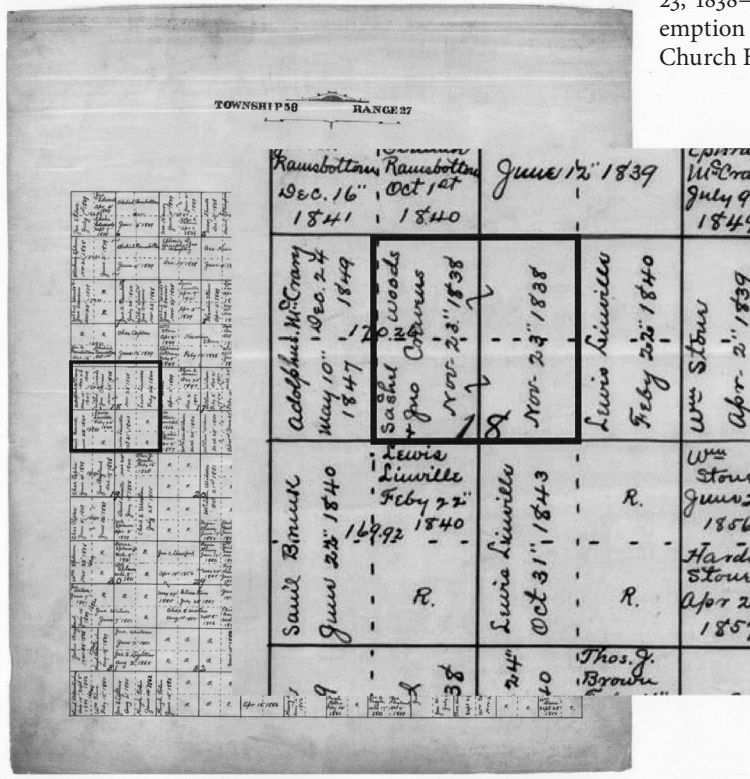
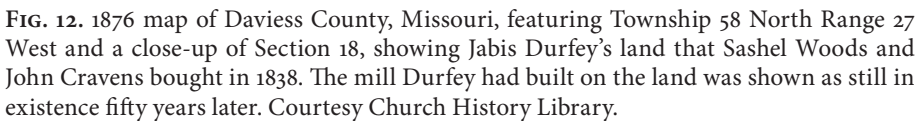


FIG. 11 (below). Map showing Township 58 North Range 27 West and a close-up on Section 18, where Jabis Durfee's property had been. Reverend Sashel Woods and his son-in-law John Cravens purchased Durfee's property on November 23, 1838—the day after the pre-emption rights lapsed. Courtesy Church History Library.





GENERAL WARRANTY DEED.—Printed and sold by Winchell, Elbert & Marsh, Hannibal, Mo.

**This Indenture,** MADE on the Seventh day of December, A. D. one thousand eight hundred and sixty six, by and between John Cravens and Ruhama his wife of the County of Daviess And State of Missouri parties of the First Part, and McClain Wilson of the County of Missouri, in the State of Missouri, party of the Second Part:

**WITNESSETH**, That the said parties of the First part, in consideration of the sum of One thousand two hundred and twenty five Dollars, to them paid by said party of the Second Part, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, do, by these presents, GRANT, BARGAIN AND SELL, CONVEY AND CONFIRM, unto the said party of the Second Part, his heirs and assigns, the following described Lot, Tract or Parcel of Land, lying, being and situate in the County of Daviess, and State of Missouri, to-wit: ALL that tract or parcel of Land known and designated as Lot number one of the north West quarter of Section eighteen in Township fifty eight of Range Twenty Seven containing eighty acres and eighteen hundredths of an acre

**STATE OF MISSOURI,**  
COUNTY OF DAVIESS.

I Robt. H. Grantham, Clerk of the Circuit Court and Ex-Officio Recorder within and for the County aforesaid, do hereby certify that the foregoing Deed together with the certificate of acknowledgment thereon, was received by me for record on the 8th day of Dec 1866, and that the same are truly recorded in my office in Book 0 for recording conveyances, on page 367 & 370

In Testimony Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my official seal at office in Gallatin Mo., this 10th day of December 1866

Robert H. Grantham, Recorder.  
By Geo H. Frost Deputy

will Warrant and Defend the title to the said Premises unto the said party of the Second Part, and unto his heirs and assigns Forever, against the lawful claims and demands of all persons whomsoever.

In Witness Whereof the said parties of the First Part have hereunto set their hands, and seals, the day and year first above written.

Signed, Sealed and Delivered in presence of us:

John and Ruhama Cravens  
McClain Wilson

SEAL  
SEAL  
SEAL  
SEAL

FIG. 13. This general warranty deed, between John and Ruhama Cravens (grantors) to McClain Wilson (grantee) dated December 7, 1866, shows that half of Jabis Durfey's property, which Sashel Woods and John Cravens bought in 1838 for \$100, was sold to Wilson three decades later for \$1,225. Courtesy Church History Library.

We have many reports here in relation to the conduct of some of the citizens of Daviess and other counties, at the recent Land Sales at Lexington—It is reported, said to be on the authority of a gentleman direct from Lexington, that at the recent land sales the lands of Caldwell and Daviess were brought into market, and that some of the citizens who have been the most active in the excitement against the Mormons, purchased a number of the Mormon tracts of land. Where the Mormons had made settlements and improvements, it is said, these citizens have purchased them for speculation. It is said, that the town of “Adamon Diamond,” a Mormon town in Daviess, in which there are several houses,—a very valuable site for a town—was purchased at these sales for a dollar and a quarter an acre. It is further said, that there is a company formed, embracing a number of persons, for the purpose of speculating in the lands of these people.<sup>116</sup>

While the causes of the Mormon conflict in 1838 may be multifaceted, the result was not. Some Missourians enjoyed a financial windfall by getting clear title to the Mormons’ lands in Daviess County. Whether this was the primary motive from the outset is still unclear, it is an undisputable fact that key Missourians involved in the Mormon expulsion immediately seized a financial reward.

## Conclusion

The nineteenth-century Mormons knew what had happened—and so did these Missourians who reaped the benefits. The Mormon tragedy in Missouri ended with a slow, painful walk to the Mississippi River, where the people crossed to Illinois to start rebuilding their lives. The optimism of Zion planted in Jackson County and the efforts to build refuge

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116. The editorial continued: “I should not have felt authorised to allude to these reports, for I know nothing of the source from whence they come, but for the fact, that the same matter was incidentally alluded to yesterday in the Senate. Many other things are said in connection with these sales, but for the present I do not feel authorised to give them. This matter should receive the attention of the committee on this subject, for it may lead to a better understanding of the causes of these disturbances. I look upon it as a matter of the greatest importance, how the committee on this subject may conduct this inquiry. The character of the State and the reputation of every citizen is involved in it, and it is due to all that a full investigation and impartial report should be made.” Letter to the Editor, *Daily Missouri Republican*, December 13, 1838, 2.



communities in Caldwell and Daviess counties were transferred to the founding of the “City of Joseph.”

Yet Mormons did not forget the sorrows of Missouri. While popular history has painted the persecution as religiously motivated, the facts suggest a more base reason: greed, in its most ugly and insatiable form, to “have the pleasure of enjoying without the toil of earning.”<sup>117</sup> Such efforts stain some of the earliest land records of northern Missouri. The façade of legitimacy was nothing more than “a lie out of whole cloth.”<sup>118</sup> Nearly two years after their forced departure, Mormons petitioned the federal government for redress and put the reality of their losses into perspective:

The Mormons, numbering fifteen thousand souls, have been driven from their homes in Missouri; property to the amount of two millions of dollars has been taken from them or destroyed; some of their brethren have been murdered, some wounded, and others beaten with stripes; the chastity of their wives and daughters inhumanly violated; all driven forth as wanderers; and many, very many, broken-hearted and penniless. The loss of property they do not so much deplore, as the mental and bodily sufferings to which they have been subjected; and, thus far, without redress. They are human beings, possessed of human feelings and human sympathies. Their agony of soul for their suffering women and children was the bitterest drop in the cup of their sorrows.<sup>119</sup>

Examining the orchestrated loss of Mormon land as recorded on Daviess County abstracts is academically important, but it cannot provide an adequate understanding to the totality of these tragic events.

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117. Pratt, *Late Persecution of the Church of Jesus Christ*, 149.

118. Rough Draft, Manuscript History of the Church, 30.

119. “Petition of the Latter-day Saints, commonly known as Mormons,”

12–13.

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## Appendix A

### An Act to Grant Pre-Emption Rights to Settlers on the Public Lands (May 29, 1830)

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled,* That every settler or occupant of the public lands, prior to the passage of this act, who is now in possession, and cultivated any part thereof in the year one thousand eight hundred and twenty-nine, shall be, and he is hereby, authorized to enter, with the register of the land office, for the district in which such lands may lie, by legal subdivisions, any number of acres, not more than one hundred and sixty or a quarter section, to include his improvement, upon paying to the United States the then minimum price of said land: *Provided, however,* That no entry or sale of any land shall be made, under the provisions of this act, which shall have been reserved for the use of the United States, or either of the several states, in which any of the public lands may be situated.

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted,* That if two or more persons be settled upon the same quarter section, the same may be divided between the two first actual settlers, if, by a north and south, or east and west line, the settlement or improvement of each can be included in a half quarter section; and in such case the said settlers shall each be entitled to a pre-emption of eighty acres of land elsewhere in said land district, so as not to interfere with other settlers having a right of preference.

SEC. 3. *And be it further enacted,* That prior to any entries being made under the privileges given by this act, proof of settlement or improvement shall be made to the satisfaction of the register and receiver of the land district in which such lands may lie, agreeably to the rules to be prescribed by the commissioner of the general land office for that purpose, which register and receiver shall each be entitled to receive fifty cents for his services therein. And that all assignments and transfers of the right of pre-emption given by this act, prior to the issuance of patents, shall be null and void.

SEC. 4. *And be it further enacted,* That this act shall not delay the sale of any of the public lands of the United States, beyond the time which has been, or may be, appointed, for that purpose, by the President's proclamation; nor shall any of the provisions of this act be available to any person, or persons, who shall fail to make the proof and payment required before the day appointed for the commencement of the sale of lands including the tract, or tracts, on which the right of pre-emption is claimed; nor shall the right of pre-emption, contemplated by this act, extend to any land,

which is reserved from sale by act of Congress, or by order of the President, or which may have been appropriated, for any purpose whatsoever.

SEC. 5. *And be it further enacted*, That this act shall be and remain in force, for one year from and after its passage.

21st Cong., 1st sess., ch. 208, *Stats at Large of USA*, 4:420–21.

## Appendix B

### Example of a Postponement by the General Land Office

#### NOTICE

Land Office at Palestine,  
September, 1834

Agreeably to instructions from the Commissioner of the General Land Office, notice is hereby given that the sale of lands in fractional townships 17, 18, 19, and 20, of range 10 west, of 2d P. M., advertised to take place at this office on the fourth Monday in November next, by proclamation, dated 7th of July last, is postponed. All persons having pre-emption claims to said lands are required to establish the same to the satisfaction of the register and receiver at Danville

*General Public Acts*, Circular no. 536, GLO (September 1, 1834).

## Appendix C

### Mormon Redress Petitions Mentioning Preemption Rights

The petitions involving property losses in Daviess County contain numerous references to the loss of preemption rights for cultivated properties. The following is a summary of those petitions that specifically mention this loss, as compiled in Clark V. Johnson, ed., *Mormon Redress Petitions: Documents of the 1833–1838 Missouri Conflict* (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1992). The spelling, punctuation, and grammar are retained from originals.

1. Crandell, Benjamin: "Loss in Davisse Ct. Mo. in 1838 & 1839—to One qr. sect. and intituled to a preemption wright \$800.00." p. 173.
2. Duncan, Homer: "for preemption write \$500.00." p. 192.
3. Lemmon, James: "To a Preemption wright with a right of Claim to a [illegible] on One qr. Sect at \$ [illegible]." p. 270.
4. Lemmon, John: "Davisse County in 1838 and 1839 To improvement imbraceing two (qr. Sect.) One in markit the other not and was intitaled to a preemptive wright, but was prevented from proving it up, by the mob imbodying themselves for that and other like purposes." p. 271.
5. Sloan, James: "I believe a Person of the Name of Tarwater is now living upon a Preemption right, which was purchased from him in Davis County, and paid for with my Property." p. 341.
6. Smith, John: "one premption rite on 160 acre \$300.00." p. 345.
7. Smith, Samuel: "I Samuel Smith made an improvement and obtained a preemption right upon 160 acres of land in Davis County Mo in 1837 on the first of Nov 1838 I was compelled to leave the county by order of general Wilson." p. 351.
8. Stewart, Urban V.: "I was driven by the threats of the Daviess Co Armed force to leave my possessions consisting of a preemption right to a quarter Section of land with 30 Acres under improvement and a good house." p. 356.
9. Stoker, Michael: "my bill of Damage against State of missouri in 183[8] viz pre emption Right with improve ment \$100.00." p. 359.
10. Aldrich, William: "I was als deprived of the privelege of Proveing if my Preemption being under the spetial order of General Clark which prohibited us from leaving Farwest in Caldwell Co." p. 414.
11. Best, Henry: "I moved into the State of Misouri in the Summer of 1837 and made A preemption right and Commenced to build A House in Davis County whare the Mob Came upon me acting under the Exterminating Order of Govonor Boggs and Drove me of by the forse of Arms." p. 420.

12. Decker, Issac: "Some time in the month of March A.D. Eighteen hundred and thirty Eight, he removed from the State of Ohio, to Davis County in the State of Missouri, with no other intent or purpose than to become a resident Citizen in good faith under the Laws of the Said State of Missouri, And with that intent he purchased a preemption right to Congress Land." pp. 439–40.
13. Durfee, Jabis: "I resided on said tract of land untill October AD. 1838 which—entitled me to a Preemption right on said land: according to the laws of the United States: Whereas I was prevented from proving up said right and entering said tract of land in consequence of an order from Governor Boggs authorising an armed force to drive me with others from the State." p. 442.
14. Durfee, Perry: "I was prohibited from entering my preemption which I held in Davis Co—and was compeld us to leave the state. . . . I moved into Davies County State of Misouri in the month of December in the year 1837 and settled on the South West Quarter of Section No five in Township No fifty eight North and Range No twenty seven West. I improved said Quarter section by cultivating a portion of the soil, and building a house in which I lived. I resided on said tract of land untill October 1838 which residence entitled me to a Pre Emption right on said land according to the law of the United States. Whereas, I was prevented from proving up said Right and entering said tract of land. in consequence of an order from Governor Boggs authorising an Armed force to drive me with others from the State." p. 443.
15. Hoyt, Mary Ann: "In March 1838 she moved to Davis County in said state, and there Bought a Preemption Right on 160 acris of Land, and from thence was driven to Diaman, and there Remained until the Governor of Missouri Raised the Militia under Command of General Wilson and Gave me his Exterminating order, and thereby Robed me of my Property and Preemption Right, which I Consider worth \$300.00." p. 469.
16. Marsh, Eliphaz: "I lived in Davis county Missouri in March 1837 and was entitled to a preemption right for eighty ackers of Land." p. 494.
17. Rogers, Noah: "That he Deponant who in the year 1838 moved into Davis Co Mo, & settled on a pece of Land & Cleard twenty Acres Expecting to have a preemption & Corn growing on said twenty acres & was compeld to leave it & form there to Adam ondiahm." p. 530.
18. Seely, William: "In the Last of March A.D. 1838 he moved with his family to the State of Missouri, and Stopped in Davis County in Said State of Missouri, that in Said County he purchased a pre-Emption right to a tract of Congress Land for which he paid \$200.00." p. 532.
19. Woodland, William: "In the year of 1837 he became a Citizen of Davis Co. Missouri. . . . I was on the place long enough to gain a preemption." p. 557.



20. Young, Phineas H.: "Also three pre-emption rights, to Congress Lands for all of which he paid the Sum of five hundrd and Eighty five dollars." p. 559.

In addition to these statements, many petitioners referenced the receipt that they received when they made their application at the Lexington Land Office as a "duplicate" of government or "Congress" lands as part of the preemption process. The following petitions make reference to lost land, evidenced by the words "duplicate" or "duplication."

1. Allen, Albern: "I gave up the Duplicates and the N. E  $\frac{1}{4}$  of S. W.  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 32 Township No. 56 Range 28 North of the base line and west of the 5th princpal Meridean also the NW.  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the South E  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 32 Township 56 Range 29 North of the base line of the 5th principal Meridian Also 80 Acres of which my Duplicate will Show Also 40 Acres I gave up my Duplicate and Cannot asertain the numbers which Land I had to leave after bieng taken prissoner and obliged to assine away My right and Compelled to leave the State by the Exterminating Decree of the Governer." p. 415.
2. Allred, Martin C.: "The Number of Acres of Land Entered and owned By Martin C. Allred was one hundred and Twenty as My Duplicates will show." p. 415.
3. Allred, William: "I then Entered in the County of Ray 353 acres of Congress Land I was then obliege to Leave my Land the Same Season. . . . I was obliege to Leave the State to Save my life & my family for which I was obliege to Sell part of my Land at any price they please to give. three of my Boys being on were Business were taken by the Militia & kept in there possesion Some few days the part of my Land that I Sold I was obliege to give up my Duplicates." p. 416.
4. Bozarth, Squire: "When I sold my land which was at a great sacrifice I had to part with a number of my duplicates, for it is a custom in Missouri for people when they buy land of those who enter it to exact of them their duplicates." p. 422.
5. Brady, Lindsey A.: "The number not Known in Consequence of Having to give up my Duplicate when on the highway was shot at by one & Chased by 5 and made my escape afterwards taken prissoner for One week & was Obligated to leave the state by the exterminating orders of the Governer." p. 425.
6. Brown, Alanson: "I then Removed to Daviess Co. and purchased, 80, Acres of Goverment land of the United States one Duplicate was taken from me by the Mob I there until the fall of 1838 under Continual threatning of my life if I did not leave the place although in the diferent Counties they repeatedly Said they had nothing against me only for my Religion." pp. 425-26.

7. Cole, Barnet: "Removed into the County of Coldwell entered there 40 acres of land in Township 55 Range 28 Section not known in Consequence of which I gave up the Duplicate further Deponent Saith not except that he left the state in Consequence Boggs exterminating order." p. 432.
8. Herrick, Amos F.: "And this deponent further says that on the 11th day of July 1836, he did in his own name & for his own use, enter forty acres being north east of the northeast qr. of section no. 28. Township no 54 north of the base line & west of the fifth principal meridian, range no 15. as described in the Duplicate. No 11607: & that in the same year he did purchase for his own use also forty acres, adjoining the other forty on the north, partly improved, with two houses on it, & smoke house & hatter shop: & also that he purchased the northwest quarter of section 13 in township 54 north, Range 16 west, & that he had peaceable possession of the two said forties & lived on them three years, & that in november & December 1837 & 1838 being threatened by Mobbers led on by Daniel Davis & Archibald Rutherford." p. 459.
9. Corrill, John: "Your petitioner further testifies that he acted as Agent, and entered some 2000 acres of land lying in Caldwell county for, and took Duplicates in the names of Joseph Smith Jun, Hiram Smith & Oliver Cowdery, and that the Duplicates for said land were deposited in the office of the Clerk of the county court of Caldwell." p. 434.
10. Daley, John: "In the year 1837 he entered 800 Acres Land at the Land office Lexington as will be Seen by Certain Duplicates in part accompanying this affidavit." p. 438.
11. Foot, Reuben: "And that this deponent was in actual and peaceable possession of the lands before discribed, and had in his possession Duplicates of said Entries from the aforesaid Land Office—And That he was by force and arms Compelled to give up said Duplicates to the Citizens of Mosourie. and that without his own free will—was exterminatd from the State of Mosourie." p. 450.
12. Grover, Thomas: "One hundred and twenty acres of the above I purchased from Government, the remainder from individuals most of the lands were under improvement with good buildings &c &c In the begining of November AD 1838 . . . The mob obliged me to give up my duplicates which I held for the lands which I had purchased from Government." p. 455.
13. Loveless, John: "In 1836 I mooved To Caldwell and enterd land and Settled on it 80 Acres of which my duplicate will Show I was Taken Prisner on my way To far West by the militia In the month of October or November." p. 491.
14. Martin, Moses: "He bought forty acres of congress land and received a duplicate for a deed that he built a house and made improvements on the land. that in the month of Oct 1838." pp. 494–95.

15. Murdock, John: "I entered forty acres of land the Duplicate of which I cause to accompany this as proof of the Same the in August or Sep following I entered annother forty in the Same office the No of which I have forgotten & the Duplicate was unlawfully arrested from me & being forced from the State have not had the opportunity of Getting the [con]tent out of the Office." pp. 502-3.
16. Patten, Charles W.: "I was compelled to give up my duplicates for the land I had bought with my money which Duplicates call for south east quarter of the south west qr. of township 56 also the N W qr. of the N W qr. Sect, 6 twnship 55 & range 29." p. 516.
17. Reed, Elijah: "In Oct or Nov 1837 I Entered two Forties of land in Said County at the Lexington office & in the Sumer of 1838 . . . I accordingly removed to this place in March the Duplicates of my land I have lost or misplacd So that I cannot Find them." pp. 523-24.
18. Thompson, Lewis: "A Citizen and in peaceable possession of the SW——SW——of Section No. 17. Township No. 56. Range No. 27. And was Compelled to leave the Same by Govenors Boggs Exterminat[in]g Orde[rs] exeuted by General Clark & others as will be Seen by the Duplicate to the above land refered to." p. 548.
19. Turner, William: "The enclosed duplicates will Show as to Turner's enteries at the Land Office at Lexington." p. 549.
20. Whiting, Elisha: "I had preveiously purchased an 80 of goverment land in the county of Caldwell for which I had paid my money. . . . We being insufficient to meet so large a band of ruffians, were obliged to submit: and for a trifling Sum to Sign away our duplicates." p. 552.
21. Wilson, Lewis D.: "I hereby certify that I purchased from Congress Two hundred and forty acres of land lying in Caldwell County and State of Missouri and Was compelled to leave the same on a c count of the order of the executive of the State. . . . I had consequently to part with the duplicates I had for the same." p. 554.
22. Carter, Simeon: "I Certify I had at that time one hundred & Sixty two acres of Land, the Same which I held the Certificates for. I further Certify that I was oblged to give up my Duplicates." p. 157.
23. Foot, Timothy B.: "In May 1837 I then and there Entered at the Lexington land Office Eighty acres in Section 32 Township 56 Range 28 and about one hundred and eleven acres in Section 5 Township 55 Range 28 on which I resided un[till] about the first of Nov. 1838. . . . I had to give a warrantee deed and deliver the Duplicates that I reciev'd at the Land office." p. 204.

## Field After Mowing

For wheat-wind murmurations, evening prayer,  
clover-addled cricket-song, furrows  
new-winnowed, meniscus-blue-moon,  
and somewhere the sound of water, seeping;

For killdeer eyes black-wet beads,  
bugs, tractor-turned shrew-burrow,  
chaffed necks and raw elbows chill,  
and all aloof, one stubble-skimming bat;

For the cloistered life abounding, the habit,  
of hearing. Stalk-snap, step, tread,  
for the wide sound of settling sky.  
For all unpaid owings—wonder, love.

—Justin L. Kennington  
*For Gerard Manley Hopkins*

*This poem won second place  
in the 2008 BYU Studies poetry contest.*

# In the Footsteps of Orson Hyde

## Subsequent Dedications of the Holy Land

Blair G. Van Dyke and LaMar C. Berrett<sup>†</sup>

Standing atop the Mount of Olives just prior to sunrise is a singular experience. Often there is a stillness about the spot that evokes deep thought and contemplation. Eyes are drawn across the brook-carved valley toward the Holy Mount where the temple stood in antiquity. Reflecting upon sacred events that unfolded in the Holy City is the natural result of standing on the Mount of Olives, particularly certain events in the life of Jesus and the ministries of Melchizedek, Abraham, Isaac, Isaiah, Lehi, Jeremiah, Peter, and Paul. And as a result of Orson Hyde's ascent up the Mount to dedicate Palestine, Latter-day Saints include him in this select group. On October 24, 1841, he dedicated the Holy Land for the return of Judah and the House of Israel generally.<sup>1</sup>

As important as Orson Hyde's dedicatory mission was, it was not the last time the Holy Land was dedicated in this manner. Historical records indicate that the Holy Land has been formally dedicated for the return of Judah and the house of Israel in at least ten other dedicatory prayers in this dispensation.<sup>2</sup> In the scriptures, repetition connotes importance.

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1. Orson Hyde's prayer can be found in Joseph Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2d. ed., rev., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1949), 4:456–59 (hereafter cited as *History of the Church*). This article is an expansion of information found in Lamar C. Berrett and Blair G. Van Dyke, *Holy Lands: A History of the Latter-day Saints in the Near East* (American Fork, Utah: Covenant, 2005).

2. It is important to note that numerous prayers have been offered in the Holy Land by latter-day apostles and prophets that, while sacred and significant, did not employ the language and wording typically found in dedicatory prayers. For the purpose of this article, a formal dedication would include explicit dedicatory

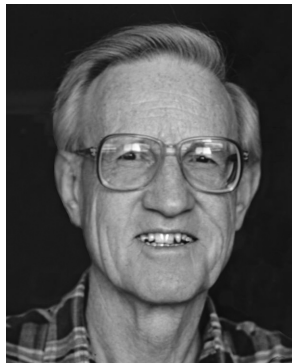
I met LaMar Berrett at a McDonald's restaurant in Evanston, Wyoming, in the spring of 1997. He was guiding a group of religious educators (of which I was a part) on a tour of the final one hundred miles of the Mormon Trail. Our conversation over Egg McMuffins quickly turned to the love we shared for the peoples and places of the Near East. I had just concluded my doctoral studies among the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which I pursued after participating as a student at the Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies. LaMar had recently retired from BYU after twenty-nine years of teaching in the College of Religious Education. During that time he had traveled to the Near East over fifty times.

Our acquaintance developed into friendship, and LaMar proposed that we collaborate to write a history of the Church in the Near East. We worked together constantly over eight years until *Holy Lands: A History of the Latter-day Saints in the Near East* was published in 2005. Our ongoing research of the dedicatory prayers offered in the Holy Land resulted in this article. We worked together until LaMar passed away on August 25, 2007. I have always felt, and LaMar shared the same feeling, that our meeting in Evanston was not happenstance. Rather, it was orchestrated to bless our lives and perhaps shed additional light on the history of the Church in the Near East.

LaMar Berrett was a pioneer in Latter-day Saint religious education in at least four ways. First, he was selected by Daniel H. Ludlow to direct the second Lands of the Scriptures Workshop (the first was led by Ludlow himself). The program was designed to take religious



Blair G. Van Dyke



LaMar C. Berrett



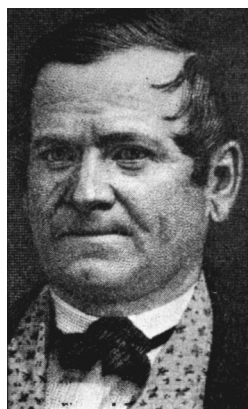
educators to the Holy Land and other sites of biblical import. Second, his research and preparation for these initial workshops resulted in his landmark book *Discovering the World of the Bible*, which has served as a traveler's guide to the Near East since its publication in 1973. Third, he led the second BYU Study Abroad group to Israel. They enjoyed nationwide television coverage, being the first tourists to cross the Allenby Bridge from Jordan into Israel following the 1967 Six Days War. LaMar moved the students into the City Hotel just north of the Old City. This became the first permanent home for BYU Study Abroad students in Jerusalem. Fourth, he was the general editor of *Sacred Places* (6 volumes). This series stands as the definitive work on Church historical sites from New England to Salt Lake City.

In some ways it is hard to believe that "In the Footsteps of Orson Hyde" will be the last in a long list of publications authored or coauthored by LaMar C. Berrett. I saw in his pursuit of research a perpetual "hubba hubba" that would not soon be extinguished. ("Hubba hubba" is a phrase familiar to any of the thousands of people who traveled with LaMar as their tour guide. It meant, "Hustle up! We have more to see and learn!") I was convinced he would live to be a hundred years old. Unfortunately, Parkinson's disease and related complications took him much earlier. My last conversation with LaMar took place just hours before he passed away. I was able to explain to him that this article had been accepted for publication. He could not respond, but I know he was pleased.

When compared to LaMar Berrett, I am not a pioneer. However, I love the peoples and cultures of the Near East and have committed much of my life to learning, writing, and teaching about this fascinating part of the world. I have lost count of how many times I have traveled to the Holy Land. Even so, Jerusalem, Haifa, Gaza City, Cairo, Amman, Damascus, Aleppo, and so many other places in the region capture my imagination over and over again. The Church's involvement in the Near East, from Orson Hyde to the present, has been an ongoing series of miracles associated with the latter-day restoration. I feel a deep respect for the pioneers of the Church who sacrificed so much to build the kingdom in this important part of the Lord's vineyard.

—Blair G. Van Dyke

The doctrines and principles that receive repeated treatment from the prophets are, by their very nature, consequential. Given this pattern, the spiritual conversion and subsequent physical gathering of Israel to Jerusalem and the building up of the city in the last days must be of great import: eleven separate apostolic dedications of the land have taken place since the restoration of the gospel. These repeated dedications indicate that what the Lord said about the land and its people anciently is still binding in the last days. It is “a land which the Lord thy God careth for: the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year” (Deut. 11:12)



Orson Hyde

The purpose of this article is not only to review the dedicatory mission and prayer of Orson Hyde and compare his experience with subsequent dedications of the Holy Land but also to explore the intended purposes of the various dedications. In order to understand the differences between the eleven dedicatory prayers, it is essential to appreciate the spiritual, sociocultural, and political settings in which the different prayers were offered. This analysis may partially explain why multiple prayers were offered by one, or as was the case in 1873, three Apostles in close succession. Ultimately, we must bear in mind that no other place on earth has been dedicated as many times as the Holy Land. This article will provide a historical framework and analysis from which we may more carefully consider this singular and, in large measure, little-known series of events in Church history.

### **Orson Hyde's Dedication and the Promised Blessings of Gathering**

After an arduous journey from Nauvoo, Hyde arrived in Jerusalem in October 1841. On Sunday morning, October 24, before the sun rose, he walked out of the walled Old City and ascended the Mount of Olives. There Hyde knelt in solemn prayer and dedicated the Holy Land for the return of Judah. As part of his prayer he pled that the land might become fruitful when possessed by its rightful heirs and that Jews would soften their hearts and gather as a people, accept the covenants of the restored gospel,

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language and the presence and approval of at least one member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles or First Presidency.

become a distinct nation and people, raise up Jerusalem as their capital, and embrace Christ as their king.<sup>3</sup>

Hyde's prayer was a call to gather. Who is included in that call? To many, the word "Jew" connotes a descendant of the ancient tribe of Judah within the House of Israel. This certainly was the way Joseph Smith and Orson Hyde used the word during the Nauvoo period when Hyde was called to travel to Palestine. In their minds, Hyde's mission to Palestine was focused on the Jews—meaning Judah.<sup>4</sup>

However, given the way many subsequent leaders of the Church have interpreted Hyde's prayer, the Lord likely had more in mind. The language contained in Hyde's dedicatory prayer was sufficiently broad in its wording to accommodate more inclusive interpretations regarding the promised blessing to gather to the Holy Land.<sup>5</sup> For example, Hyde prayed:

O thou, who did'st covenant with Abraham thy friend, and who did renew that covenant with Isaac, and confirm the same with Jacob with an oath, that thou would'st also remember their seed forever. . . . Their children are scattered and dispersed abroad among the nations of the

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3. Orson Hyde, *A Voice from Jerusalem, or a Sketch of the Travels and Ministry of Orson Hyde, Missionary of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, to Germany, Constantinople, and Jerusalem* (Liverpool: Parley P. Pratt, Star Office, n.d.), 29–32. See also Berrett and Van Dyke, *Holy Lands*, 13–27; Marvin Sidney Hill, "An Historical Study of the Life of Orson Hyde, 1805–1852" (master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1955); Howard H. Barron, *Orson Hyde: Missionary, Apostle, Colonizer* (Bountiful, Utah: Horizon, 1977), 113–41.

4. Richard D. Draper and Jessica E. Draper, "The Gathering of the Jews as Understood in the Nauvoo Period," in *Regional Studies in Latter-day Saint History: Illinois*, ed. H. Dean Garrett (Provo, Utah: Department of Church History and Doctrine, 1995), 141.

5. Latter-day Saint perspectives on the Jews and Israel are varied and have shifted from Joseph Smith's time to the present day. While a discussion of this subject goes beyond the scope of this piece, the fact remains that several views exist. This variance creates, according to John W. Welch, an "unsettled openness" on the subject, which may also "positively reflect the richness of a living religion." John W. Welch, "Three Views on Latter-day Saints and the Jews," in *BYU Studies* 34, no. 4 (1994–95): 110. While we have employed a universalistic interpretation to Hyde's prayer, we urge careful exploration of the spectrum of teaching and writing on the subject. See, for instance, Howard W. Hunter, "All Are Alike unto God," in 1979 *Devotional Speeches of the Year* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1980), 35–36; Arnold H. Green, "Gathering and Election: Israelite Descent and Universalism in Mormon Discourse," *Journal of Mormon History* 25, no. 1 (Spring 1999): 195–228; Grant Underwood, "The Jews and Their Future in Early LDS Doctrine," *BYU Studies* 34, no. 4 (1994–95): 111–24; Arnold H. Green, "Jews in LDS Thought," *BYU Studies* 34, no. 4 (1994–95): 137–64; Armand L. Mauss, *All Abraham's Children* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2003).

Gentiles like sheep that have no shepherd, and are still looking forward for the fulfillment of those promises which thou did'st make concerning them; and even this land. . . . Let the land become abundantly fruitful when possessed by its rightful heirs . . . Let them know that it is thy good pleasure to restore the kingdom unto Israel—raise up Jerusalem as its capital . . . Let that nation or that people who shall take an active part in behalf of Abraham's children, and in the raising up of Jerusalem, find favor in thy sight.<sup>6</sup>

Over time, many Church leaders have employed a pan-Israelite interpretation of Orson Hyde's prayer, particularly President Spencer W. Kimball when he dedicated the Orson Hyde Memorial on the Mount of Olives.<sup>7</sup>

### **The Significance of Dedicatory Prayers to Latter-day Saints**

To dedicate means to set apart for a holy purpose. Dedicatory prayers invoke the power of heaven upon the land or building being dedicated to more completely facilitate the accomplishment of God's designs. They also consecrate the hearts and minds of people associated with the furtherance of God's work there. The most ancient account in scripture of a dedicatory prayer is Solomon's prayer dedicating the Holy Temple in Jerusalem (1 Kgs. 8). Similarly, Latter-day Saints dedicate church buildings such as temples, meetinghouses, schools, and visitors' centers. They may also dedicate their homes. Furthermore, continents, regions, and countries are also dedicated under the direction of latter-day apostles and prophets.

So far as we know, Palestine was the first land to be rededicated in the history of the Church. However, Italy, Russia, China, Czechoslovakia, and the Philippines, to name a few, have also been rededicated by a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.<sup>8</sup> As a general rule, dedicatory

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6. Hyde, *Sketch*, 29–30; *History of the Church*, 4:456–57.

7. See, for example, Edward L. Kimball, *Lengthen Your Stride: The Presidency of Spencer W. Kimball* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2005), 348–50; Berrett and Van Dyke, *Holy Lands*, 429–30; Russell M. Nelson, "The Gathering of Scattered Israel," *Ensign* 36 (November 2006): 82 n. 28.

8. Italy was dedicated by Lorenzo Snow on October 29, 1850, and rededicated by Ezra Taft Benson in November 1966. Donald Q. Cannon and Richard O. Cowan, *Unto Every Nation* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2003), 34, 106. Russia was dedicated on July 24, 1903, by Francis M. Lyman and rededicated by Russell M. Nelson on April 26, 1990. Kahlile B. Mehr, *Mormon Missionaries Enter Eastern Europe* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 2002), 29, 184. China was dedicated by David O. McKay on January 9, 1921, and rededicated by Matthew Cowley on July 14, 1949. Cannon and Cowan, *Unto Every Nation*, 312, 348. Czechoslovakia was dedicated by John A. Widtsoe on July 24, 1929, and rededicated by Russell M. Nelson on February 6, 1990. Mehr, *Mormon Missionaries Enter Eastern*

prayers, like other priesthood blessings, are pronounced at the outset of significant work to be done in the Lord's kingdom—it is part of an ongoing work. Multiple dedicatory prayers do not suggest that previous prayers were not efficacious. Rather, they suggest that a new era of growth has begun, that a change in political circumstances has occurred, or that the servants called to accomplish the work require added strength in order to fulfill their duties.<sup>9</sup>

So it is with dedicatory prayers in the Holy Land. One does not lessen another. Quite the opposite, each prayer builds upon the former, creating even greater anticipation for the fulfillment of the promises decreed in the collective whole.<sup>10</sup> In Palestine, ten subsequent dedicatory prayers were offered over a sixty-year period of time (1873–1933). In every case, the presiding authorities of the Church assigned particular Apostles to travel to the region. In some instances, such as the 1873 prayers, a specific assignment was given to dedicate the Holy Land. In most cases, however, Apostles traveled to the region to establish a Church presence—or to tour, regulate, and revitalize the established mission of the Church in the region (known by one of three names over several decades: the Turkish,

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*Europe*, 48–49, 187. The Philippines were dedicated in 1955 by Joseph Fielding Smith and rededicated by Gordon B. Hinckley on April 28, 1961. Cannon and Cowan, *Unto Every Nation*, 327, 360.

9. A precedent for this principle may be found in dedicatory prayers offered in the Nauvoo Temple. On November 8, 1841, Joseph Smith dedicated the temporary wooden baptismal font located in the basement of the temple to ensure that work for the dead could begin in the temple at the earliest possible moment. Richard O. Cowan, *Temples to Dot the Earth* (Springville, Utah: Cedar Fort, 1997), 51. On October 5, 1845, the temple was nearing completion, with all work on the exterior finished. Brigham Young offered a dedicatory prayer on the building “thus far completed,” enabling the Saints to hold a general conference in the temple. On November 30, 1845, Brigham Young offered a dedicatory prayer on the newly completed attic story of the temple. Thereafter, this section of the temple was used for council meetings and for performing endowment ordinances, eternal marriages, and sealings. On January 7, 1846, a new altar located in the main attic portion of the temple was dedicated where eternal marriages were performed and families were sealed together. Brigham Young dedicated the entire, yet incomplete, temple prior to the departure of most Latter-day Saints to the West. The finished temple was dedicated by Elder Joseph Young in a private dedicatory service on April 30, 1846. The next day (May 1), Orson Hyde offered the public dedicatory prayer over the Nauvoo Temple. Don F. Colvin, *Nauvoo Temple: A Story of Faith* (American Fork, Utah: Covenant Communications, 2002), 245–51.

10. This principle occasionally applies to priesthood blessings given to the sick and afflicted. A compelling example may be found in two blessings the Savior pronounced upon a blind man who was healed in stages (Mark 8:22–25).

Armenian, or Palestine-Syrian Mission) and visit Saints who were members of small branches already in existence in the Near East. Then, while in Palestine, they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost to dedicate the Holy Land by offering—or in one instance, overseeing—a dedicatory prayer. For Latter-day Saints, these prayers indicate that many important events have occurred and will yet take place in that part of the world.

**The Rededications: Possible Intended Purposes and Content of Prayers**

The Holy Land has commanded a prominent place in Latter-day Saint perspective that began with Joseph Smith and continues today. Although the Holy Land is one of the most visible places of interest to Latter-day Saints, the ten dedicatory prayers that have been offered since Orson Hyde are little known. Furthermore, while some are familiar with the multiple dedications of Palestine by Latter-day Apostles, an analysis of each prayer in light of the others is, heretofore, unavailable.

A one-to-one comparison and contrast of the ten subsequent dedicatory prayers is not possible because we do not have the full text of any of these prayers, unlike Orson Hyde’s dedication. Figure 1 represents much of the information that we do possess. The categories emanate from our analysis of the available accounts of the ten different prayers and capture main points of emphasis when the prayers are considered collectively. While these prayers have many aspects in common, there are also many differences. What accounts for these differences? We believe that some

**FIG. 1**  
**Main Themes in the Dedications of the Holy Land**

	Date of Prayer	Bless/ Dedicate Land	Israel/Jews Gather	Welfare of Church	Missionaries	Prophecies Fulfilled	Confound Enemies	Soften Hearts	Rebuild Jerusalem
O. Hyde	10/24/1841	×	×	×		×	×	×	×
A. Carrington	3/2/1873	×							
L. Snow	3/2/1873	×							
G. A. Smith	3/2/1873	×	×	×		×	×		×
A. Lund/ F. Hintze	5/8/1898	×	×						
F. Lyman	3/2/1902	×	×						
F. Lyman	3/4/1902	×	×	×	×	×			×
F. Lyman	3/16/1902	×	×	×				×	
J. Talmage	10/18/1927	×	×	×	×				
J. Widtsoe	5/21/1933	×		×	×	×	×	×	
J. Widtsoe	5/31/1933	×	×		×	×	×	×	



of the differences between the prayers are due to the historical context and the intended purposes behind the five separate journeys to Palestine wherein dedicatory prayers were offered subsequent to Orson Hyde's dedicatory mission (1873, 1898, 1902, 1927, 1933). We will therefore review briefly the historical accounts of the five journeys and assess how circumstances may have determined, in part, the content of the different dedicatory prayers. In some cases, this analysis may provide clues as to why multiple dedicatory prayers were offered by the same Apostle within a very short period of time.

### **1873: Second, Third, and Fourth Dedicatory Prayers**

In 1872, the Saints were well established in the Salt Lake Valley, but Brigham Young continued to encourage new settlements throughout the Great Basin of the American West. Young was in the last five years of his life and he was not always in good health. Nevertheless, he pursued and directed several projects of major importance. For example, the trans-continental railroad had been completed in 1869, and Young made every effort to connect key Mormon settlements to Salt Lake City by rail. Also, the St. George Temple was under construction. It would become the first Latter-day Saint temple in the West, and Brigham Young felt a keen desire to see the building completed before his death. Finally, Young instituted a cooperative economic system known as the United Order.

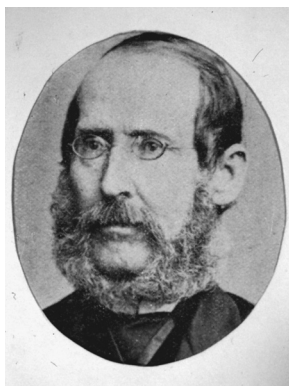
In the midst of these and other significant undertakings, Brigham Young assigned his First Counselor, George A. Smith, to travel to Palestine and dedicate that land to the Lord. Young instructed Smith not to go alone but to select a company with whom he could make the journey. He selected Apostle Lorenzo Snow (founder of Brigham City and architect of the United Order model that was being implemented throughout the Church), Apostle Albert Carrington (president of the European Mission),<sup>11</sup> Eliza R. Snow (Lorenzo's sister, general president of the Relief Society, and

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11. Albert Carrington was a graduate of Dartmouth College and was also trained in the law. His educational background led to his appointment as editor of the *Deseret News* and multiple terms of service in the Utah Legislative Council. Carrington presided four times over the European Mission. It was shortly after his first stint as a mission president that he was called as an Apostle by President Brigham Young on July 3, 1870. During his second term of service as mission president in Europe, he joined the company traveling to Palestine. At the time he was in Liverpool, England. Lawrence R. Flake, *Prophets and Apostles of the Last Dispensation* (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2001), 293–94.



George A. Smith



Albert Carrington



Feramorz Little



Clara Little (1873)



Thomas Jennings



Paul Schettler



Lorenzo Snow



Eliza R. Snow

key figure in the implementation of the United Order),<sup>12</sup> Feramorz Little,<sup>13</sup> Clara Little,<sup>14</sup> Paul Schettler,<sup>15</sup> and Thomas Jennings.<sup>16</sup>

The day the party left Salt Lake City, President Young presented Smith with the following letter signed by himself and his Second Counselor, Daniel H. Wells:

Salt Lake City, U. T.  
October 15, 1872  
President George A. Smith:

Dear Bro:—

As you are about to start on an extensive tour through Europe and Asia Minor, where you will doubtless be brought in contact with men of position and influence in society, we desire that you observe closely what openings now exist, or where they may be effected, for the introduction of the Gospel into the various countries you shall visit.

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12. Eliza R. Snow was called to preside over the Relief Society when it was reestablished in the West in 1866. A leader of women, teacher, and poetess, Eliza R. Snow was likely the most prominent woman of nineteenth-century Mormonism. Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, ed., *The Personal Writings of Eliza Roxcy Snow* (Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 2000). See also Jill Mulvey Derr and Karen Lynn Davidson, “A Wary Heart Becomes ‘Fixed Unalterably’: Eliza R. Snow’s Conversion to Mormonism,” *Journal of Mormon History* 30, no. 2 (Fall 2004): 98–128.

13. Feramorz Little was a nephew of Brigham Young and was a prolific business founder and manager, involved in, among other enterprises, saw mills, a hotel, the railroad, merchandising, and banking. After returning from Palestine, Little was elected mayor of Salt Lake City, serving three terms. Andrew Jenson, *LDS 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, 1901–36, 2:485–86.

14. Clara Little was the daughter of Feramorz and accompanied her father on the journey primarily to serve as the traveling companion of Eliza R. Snow. Clara was about twelve years old in 1873.

15. George A. Smith explained a major purpose of Schettler’s participation in the dedicatory party: “Elder Paul A. Schettler speaks six languages, and in attending to the financial business of the party, he had to make exchanges and was compelled to keep accounts in the currency of a dozen different nations, and even among the Arabs he could generally find some one who could speak in some one of the languages with which he was acquainted.” George A. Smith, in *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (Liverpool: F. D. Richards, 1855–86), 16:101.

16. Thomas W. Jennings was the son of William Jennings, a wealthy businessman in Salt Lake City. With such a father, Jennings could afford to join the dedication party of 1872–73 and likely helped finance the dedicatory mission. Andrew Jenson, *LDS Biographical Encyclopedia*, 2:500–505. See also Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Utah* (Salt Lake City: The History Company, 1890), 764–65.

When you go to the land of Palestine, we wish you to dedicate and consecrate that land to the Lord, that it may be blessed with the fruitfulness preparatory to the return of the Jews in fulfillment of prophecy and the accomplishment of the purposes of our Heavenly Father.

We pray that you may be preserved to travel in peace and safety that you may be abundantly blessed with words of wisdom & free utterance in all your conversations pertaining to the Holy Gospel, dispelling prejudice and sowing seeds of righteousness among the people.

Brigham Young  
Daniel H. Wells<sup>17</sup>

The only way that more import could have been placed upon the mission was if Brigham Young himself had journeyed to Palestine to rededicate the land.<sup>18</sup> As it turned out, the Holy Land was dedicated by all three Apostles: Smith, Snow, and Carrington. It would have been difficult to assemble a more prominent and committed group of Saints than these.

The company landed at Jaffa, Palestine, on February 22, 1873. Two days later they arrived at Jerusalem and established a camp “on the northwest side of the city, within a few minutes walk of Jaffa gate.”<sup>19</sup> The sprawling Ottoman Empire, of which Palestine was a part, was in serious decline at this time. For centuries, the empire had been an Islamic state that tolerated people of other faiths within her domain but perceived them to be infidels

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17. George A. Smith Papers, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter cited as Church History Library). See also Brigham Young, Papers, Brigham Young Letterpress Copybooks, 13:229, Church History Library; Eliza R. Snow, *Biography and Family Record of Lorenzo Snow* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1884), 496–97; B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1930) 5:474–75; *Correspondence of Palestine Tourists* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Steam Printing Establishment, 1875), 1–2 (hereafter cited as *Tourists*). *Tourists* was compiled by Eliza R. Snow and contains letters written by George A. Smith, Lorenzo Snow, Paul A. Schettler, and Eliza R. Snow as they traveled through America, Europe, Asia, and Africa in the years 1872 and 1873.

18. The welfare of the Jews had been on the mind of Brigham Young for decades. Under his leadership, a proclamation of the Twelve Apostles addressed to kings, presidents, governors, and the people of all nations was published on April 6, 1845, in New York City. In the document, a great work was described that had yet to be accomplished. Among other aspects of this work were efforts to restore, organize, instruct, and establish the Jews in concert with building Jerusalem in Palestine.

19. Paul A. Schettler, “At Jerusalem,” *The Salt Lake Daily Herald*, April 13, 1873, 2. See also *Tourists*, 209.

and treated them as separate and unequal citizens.<sup>20</sup> Ultimate authority in the empire was held by Sultan Abdülaziz, who spurned Western thought and was a champion of Islamic ideals. There were hostile feelings from the Sultan toward many ideas and technologies from the Christian West. However, it was perceived by many (especially the young cadre of Ottoman leaders and thinkers of the day) that the backwardness of the Ottoman Empire was due largely to the scorning of Western civilization. These “Young Ottomans,” as they would come to be known, instituted a long-term movement toward maintaining the Islamic identity of the Ottoman Empire while embracing the philosophies and technologies that had made the West prosperous. In many instances these activists were banished from the empire but continued their efforts from places like London, Paris, and Geneva. Simply, the Ottoman Empire was crumbling, and the Young Ottomans were prepared to take their Islamic convictions and meld them into a new Westernized and, from their perspective, civilized nation. These deep social, religious, and political schisms only compounded the conditions of economic and cultural stress that prevailed in the empire as the Latter-day Saint contingent arrived in Jerusalem.<sup>21</sup>

Sunday morning, March 2, 1873, was cool and breezy in the Holy City. The Latter-day Saints, excepting Clara Little, who remained in camp, traveled by horseback to the Mount of Olives. Their guide brought with him a tent, table, chairs, and a carpet. The tent was pitched and at 10:00 AM the dedicatory meeting began. Elder Carrington offered a prayer wherein he dedicated “the ground, the tent, and the land of Israel generally.”<sup>22</sup> After this prayer, Carrington and Jennings stood outside the tent to keep watch

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20. The Catholic Church (including Armenian, Orthodox, and Roman branches) was part of the fabric of nineteenth-century Jerusalem. Several kinds of Protestantism emerged in the Near East during this century as well. Protestant missionaries entered the region with the general intent to shore up the existing Christian presence. Of these missionary labors, Latourette writes, “While in the nineteenth century Roman Catholic and Protestant missions multiplied . . . in the Near East, they won very few except from the existing Christian bodies. Now and then a Jew was converted and occasionally a Moslem. However, Moslem law and custom made accessions from Islam almost impossible.” Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, vol. 2, *Reformation to the Present* (Peabody, Mass.: Prince Press, 2003), 1210. See also James A. Toronto, “Early Missions to Ottoman Turkey, Syria, and Palestine,” in *Out of Obscurity: The LDS Church in the Twentieth Century* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2000), 340.

21. Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 40–128. See also Jason Goodwin, *Lords of the Horizons: A History of the Ottoman Empire* (New York City: Owl Books, 1998), 289–321.

22. George A. Smith, Journal, March 2, 1873, Church History Library.



Looking northeast atop the Mount of Olives. In the foreground is the Church of Ascension, a mosque since AD 1187, with the Russian Tower of Ascension in the background. A tent was pitched about one hundred feet northeast of the mosque wherein dedicatory prayers were offered by George A. Smith, Lorenzo Snow, and Albert Carrington. Courtesy LaMar C. Berrett.

since they had not brought their temple clothing with them.<sup>23</sup> The remaining members of the party then “engaged in divine worship” in the order of the Holy Priesthood on the mount.<sup>24</sup> The next prayer was offered by Elder Lorenzo Snow wherein “the same dedicatory sentiments were contained” according to President Smith.<sup>25</sup> Following the dedicatory prayer of Elder Snow, President George A. Smith offered another prayer. From his own journal we learn that he prayed “remembering the general interests of Zion, and dedicating this land, praying that it might become fertile, and

23. Albert Carrington, Journals, March 2, 1873, Church History Library. See also Zora Smith Jarvis, *Ancestry, Biography and Family of George A. Smith*, (Provo, Utah: BYU Press, 1962), 252.

24. “President George A. Smith’s Party,” *Millennial Star* 35 (April 1, 1873): 201. See also Eliza R. Snow, in *Tourists*, 260. We presume that engagement “in divine worship” on the Mount of Olives while dressed in temple clothing is a direct reference to a prayer circle. This order of prayer was instituted by Joseph Smith perhaps as early as 1842. From that time until May 3, 1978 (when Church leaders determined that this form of worship should be limited exclusively to the temple), prayer circles were commonly convened outside temples in meeting-houses and in homes under the direction of local and general leaders. D. Michael Quinn, “Latter-day Saint Prayer Circles,” *BYU Studies* 19, no. 1 (1978): 79–105. At the time of this dedicatory mission, there was of course no operating temple on earth. Indeed, by this time, an entire generation of Latter-day Saints had grown up without a temple.

25. George A. Smith, Journal, March 2, 1873.



the early and latter rains descend upon it, and the prophecies and promises unto Abraham and the prophets be fulfilled here in the own due time of the Lord.”<sup>26</sup> Eliza R. Snow recalls his dedicatory prayer as follows:

President Smith leading in humble, fervent supplication, dedicating the land of Palestine for the gathering of the Jews and the rebuilding of Jerusalem, and returning heartfelt thanks and gratitude to God for the fulness of the gospel and the blessings bestowed on the Latter-day Saints. . . . To me it seemed the crowning point of the whole tour, realizing as I did that we were worshiping on the summit of the sacred Mount, once the frequent resort of the Prince of Life.<sup>27</sup>

Other accounts of the dedication mention the promise that the land would be redeemed from its sterility and that its historic fruitfulness would abound.<sup>28</sup> Additionally, Smith prophesied that Jerusalem would be rebuilt as a result of a hastened gathering of the tribes of Israel in the last days.<sup>29</sup>

Following the dedicatory prayers, Lorenzo Snow prayed again. Then George A. Smith offered a benediction at 10:34 AM, and “all engaged felt greatly blessed of the Lord.”<sup>30</sup>

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26. George A. Smith, Journal, March 2, 1873. Following his return from Palestine to Salt Lake City, Smith spoke at the Tabernacle on June 22, 1873, and provided an account of his travels and his dedicatory prayer. He explained: “When on the Mount of Olives, with our faces bowed toward Jerusalem, we lifted our prayers to God that he would preserve [the Latter-day Saints] and confound [their] enemies. We felt in our hearts that Zion was onward and upward, and that no power could stay her progress; that the day was not far distant when Israel would gather, and those lands would begin to teem with a people who would worship God and keep his commandments; that plenty and the blessings of eternity would be poured out bounteously upon that desert land, and that all the prophecies concerning the restoration of the house of Israel would be fulfilled.” *Journal of Discourses*, 16:102.

Furthermore, we learn from Smith’s journal that part of the service on the Mount of Olives included the reading of the last two verses of Matthew 23 and the last two verses of Matthew 24. They also read the letter from Brigham Young and counselor Daniel H. Wells, dated October 15, 1872, directing them to dedicate Palestine (full text of this letter is included earlier in this article).

27. Eliza R. Snow, in *Tourists*, 260.

28. “President George A. Smith’s Party,” 201.

29. “George A. Smith,” *Contributor* 4 (May 1883): 312.

30. “President George A. Smith’s Party,” 201. After the dedicatory prayers were offered and the meeting was closed, the group returned to their camp, ate lunch, and then gathered in a tent for a sacrament meeting. Part of this meeting included the reconfirmation of Smith, Little, Schettler, and presumably Jennings by Elders Snow and Carrington. These four had been rebaptized in the Jordan River on March 28. Smith’s journal includes Jennings by name as one who was rebaptized but does not specifically name him when listing those who were reconfirmed.

From the historical account, what can we learn about the intended purpose and unique aspects of these rededications? George A. Smith, Albert Carrington, and Lorenzo Snow traveled to Palestine by assignment from Brigham Young to dedicate the Holy Land. As with Orson Hyde's mission, the principal point of the 1873 journey revolved around dedicating the land for gathering. Young believed the Jews must first gather to Jerusalem and at the Second Coming they would be convinced of the efficacy of the Atonement and believe in Christ.<sup>31</sup>

In Young's mind, the Jews *must* gather, and Apostles Carrington, Snow, and Smith could turn the keys to expedite their return to Palestine. In this light, the abbreviated prayers offered by Carrington and Snow were sufficient. Despite their brevity, Smith referred to them as distinct dedicatory prayers.

Smith's prayer, on the other hand, was lengthier and more detailed. Perhaps this difference can be accounted for in the letter that Brigham Young and Daniel H. Wells delivered to Smith dated March 15, 1873. The letter was very prescriptive, telling him to pray for the land, the return of the Jews, and ultimately the fulfillment of ancient prophecies and accomplishment of the purposes of God. Carrington and Snow did not receive these instructions.

In addition to these prescribed aspects of Smith's prayer, it is not surprising that he prayed that the enemies of the Church would be confounded. It was during this general time period that Brigham Young was falsely accused of being an accessory to murder and was unjustly jailed for a time. Also, the Church was embroiled in a series of lawsuits brought by anti-Mormons intended to break down the strict prohibition statutes then in place in the Territory. The transcontinental railroad was completed on May 10, 1869, forever changing the complexion of the population among the previously isolated Saints in the West. Furthermore, apostate groups like the Godbeites were opposing the leaders of the Church at every turn in Salt Lake City. Amasa Lyman, formerly a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, joined the ranks of this splinter group. This turmoil in the Church weighed heavily on Smith's shoulders. It is not surprising that his prayer contained a petition to confound enemies.

The dedicatory mission of 1872–73 stands tall in Latter-day Saint history. Not since the great missions to England of the 1830s and 1840s had so many high-ranking leaders traveled together abroad. Furthermore, this mission is additional evidence of the long-term interest of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the Holy Land. George A. Smith makes

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31. Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 11:279.

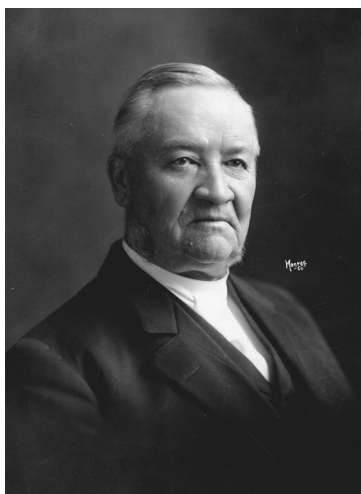
it clear in his journal entry that the three Apostles offered three separate dedicatory prayers. Elder B. H. Roberts said of apostolic dedications that they unlock a great work, “how great, men at present know not.”<sup>32</sup>

### 1898: Fifth Dedication

Twenty-five years passed before the Holy Land was dedicated again. Apostle Anthon H. Lund traveled with Ferdinand Hintze to Palestine and offered another dedicatory prayer. From 1873 to 1898, many important developments had transpired regarding the growth of the Church in the Near East. For example, in 1884, a Latter-day Saint missionary named Jacob Spori was sent from the European Mission to teach an Armenian named Hagop Vartooguian in Constantinople, who had sent inquiries about the Church to the European Mission office. Vartooguian believed Spori’s teachings and was baptized, becoming the first Latter-day Saint convert in the region.

Three years later, in 1887, Ferdinand Hintze was called to serve as the first president of the Turkish Mission, of which Palestine was a part. He served from 1887 to 1890, then again during a second assignment ten years later. Under his leadership, the focus of missionary work shifted from the large coastal cities of Turkey (like Constantinople) to the predominately

Armenian cities and villages of central Anatolia. Generally speaking, he was deeply loved by the Armenian Saints in Turkey. Regarded as the father of the Turkish and Armenian missionary effort, Hintze is one of the most significant figures in the history of the Church in the Near East.



Anthon H. Lund

In 1898, Anthon H. Lund had been a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles for almost a decade. Three years later (October 1901) he would be called to serve in the First Presidency as a counselor to President Joseph F. Smith. Lund was assigned by the First Presidency to tour Palestine

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32. B. H. Roberts, “The Rise and Fall of Nauvoo,” *Contributor* 8 (March 1887): 162.



*Front row, left to right: Ferdinand Hintze, Elder Anthon H. Lund, Nishan Sherinian. Back row, left to right: Philip Maycock, Andrew Larson. This picture was taken in Palestine on May 9, 1898. Courtesy Church History Library, © Intellectual Reserve, Inc.*

with Hintze and together explore the possibility of a Mormon colony in Palestine.<sup>33</sup>

By 1898, the Ottoman Empire was on the verge of collapse. Earlier in the century the empire had had no choice but to take out loans from the Western countries it so despised. The mass weight of retaining the autocracy of the Sultanate and adopting forms of Western bureaucracy was too great for the debt and in 1875 the Ottoman Empire declared bankruptcy. As one writer observed, “The Turks had lost the benefit of their old ways without mastering the advantages of the new.”<sup>34</sup> Interestingly, in December 1876, the Young Ottomans succeeded in drafting a constitution and calling an assembly of representatives under the watchful eye of Sultan Abdulhamid II. They met for the first time in March 1877, but war broke out with Russia six months later and the Sultan did away with the constitution and the assembly altogether. The Sultanate regained exclusive power, and the machinery of the massive empire continued to grind to a halt.

By 1898, the Ottoman Empire had lost large tracts of land to Britain, Russia, Greece, and France, while other regions were striving for their independence. With the land went some seven million Muslims, thus changing the demographic makeup of the empire. One result of this shift was that certain groups, heretofore submissive to Ottoman power, began to rise up. Armenian Christians spoke of an independent Armenia, which was viewed as a threat to the Ottoman Empire. In the mid-1890s, Ottoman Turks persecuted Armenians and, in many instances, massacred them. Conditions of instability prevailed.

In response, Hintze and other Church leaders supported the establishment of a Mormon colony. The immediate need for a colony was twofold: First, the Armenian Saints needed protection. Church members living in central Anatolian cities such as Aintab, Zara, and Sivas were in serious danger and needed to move. Second, immigration policies in the United States were becoming increasingly restrictive, making it very difficult for the Armenian Church members to leave the Ottoman Empire and join the body of Saints in the American West. Therefore, the First Presidency recommended that they be relocated to Palestine. In a letter to Lund and Hintze, the First Presidency wrote:

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33. See Anthon H. Lund, *Danish Apostle: The Diaries of Anthon H. Lund, 1890–1921*, ed. John P. Hatch (Salt Lake City: Signature Books in association with the Smith-Pettit Foundation, 2006), 40–41. See also Berrett and Van Dyke, *Holy Lands*, 243–63; Rao H. Lindsay, “The Dream of a Mormon Colony in the Near East,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 1 (Winter 1966): 50–67.

34. Goodwin, *Lords of the Horizons*, 309.

You are aware of the stringent laws which are being formulated from time to time in our land against the influx of certain classes of foreigners. The enactment of such laws may seriously interfere with the emigration of people from Oriental lands.

On this account, we feel led to endeavor to select a place of gathering for the Latter-day Saints in the Holy Land. We feel that it would be better for the people themselves, in view of their traditions and habits and their surroundings, as well as in view of the predictions of the holy prophets, that there should be a place of gathering selected at some suitable point in Palestine.

This is really the great object to be accomplished by you on the mission which is assigned, and we trust that you will give this your most earnest and thorough consideration; that you will make yourselves thoroughly familiar with every portion of the land that would be likely to furnish a suitable place for gathering.<sup>35</sup>

During their search for a site for a colony, Lund oversaw the fifth dedication of the Holy Land. Accounts of this dedication are comparatively sparse, but the following will provide an overview of the 1898 mission and prayer.

Lund and Hintze departed Salt Lake City bound for Palestine on December 30, 1897, and arrived in Jaffa on February 17, 1898.<sup>36</sup> Hintze was set apart by the First Presidency to serve as the new president of the Turkish Mission the day before they left.<sup>37</sup>

Through much of their travels in the Holy Land they had missionaries with them who were serving in the Turkish Mission. One of these missionaries was Elder Andrew L. Larson. He noted in his diary that the party ascended the slopes of the Mount of Olives on May 8, 1898. They found seclusion in a grove of olive trees near the base of the Russian Tower of Ascension. The group knelt and prayed, with Ferdinand Hintze as voice, and, under the direction of Elder Lund, Palestine was dedicated for the return of Judah and the house of Israel.<sup>38</sup>

35. Wilford Woodruff, George Q. Cannon, and Joseph F. Smith to Anthon H. Lund and Ferdinand F. Hintze, December 29, 1897, Wilford Woodruff Letterbook, 21:529–31, Church History Library.

36. Turkish Mission History, February 19, 1898, Church History Library. See also Berrett and Van Dyke, *Holy Lands*, 123; Lindsay, “Dream of a Mormon Colony,” 55.

37. Lund, *Danish Apostle*, 41.

38. Andrew Larson, Diary, May 8, 1898, Church History Library. See also LaMar C. Berrett and D. Kelly Ogden, *Discovering the World of the Bible* (Provo, Utah: Grandin Book, 1996), 44; A. J. Hansen, “Ferdinand Friis Hintze,” biographical sketch written in Rexburg, Idaho, May 10, 1928, 7; copy in possession of author.





Russian Tower of Ascension on the Mount of Olives. Ferdinand Hintze (under the direction of Anthon H. Lund) and Francis M. Lyman offered dedicatory prayers near the base of this tower. Courtesy LaMar C. Berrett.

For Ferdinand Hintze to act as voice for this prayer was uncommon. Nevertheless, he was authorized by Elder Lund and it was acknowledged to be a dedication of the Holy Land. Under the date of May 8, 1898, a note in the mission history records that “the Elders visited the Mount of Olives and there united in a dedicatory prayer.”<sup>39</sup> It is apparent from other records that Elder Lund considered Hintze’s prayer to be as binding as if he had offered it himself, and he was not the only one who thought this way. For example, Elder Francis M. Lyman offered a dedicatory prayer on the Mount of Olives approximately four years later on March 4, 1902. A few weeks after offering this prayer, Elder Lyman wrote a letter to President Joseph F. Smith dated May 5, 1902, wherein he stated, “I presume President Snow would be pleased to know that I

had traversed those sacred precincts where he and President George A. Smith together visited and prayed, as President Hyde had done, *and as President Lund did later.*”<sup>40</sup> This letter indicates that Lund discussed the 1898 prayer offered by Hintze under his direction with other members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and identified it as a distinct dedication of the Holy Land.

Besides the fact that an Apostle did not offer the prayer, what else sets this dedication apart from others? As with the 1873 expedition, Elder Anthon H. Lund and Ferdinand Hintze traveled to the Near East by assignment from the First Presidency (this time Wilford Woodruff, George Q.

39. Turkish Mission History, May 8, 1898.

40. Francis M. Lyman to Joseph F. Smith, May 5, 1902, Church History Library; emphasis added. See also Francis M. Lyman, “President Lyman in the Holy Land,” *Deseret News*, April 12, 1902, part 3, p. 17.

Cannon, and Joseph F. Smith). Their primary objective, however, was to search out a suitable location for a Mormon colony in Palestine.

A common feeling among Church leaders at this time was that a Latter-day Saint colony in Palestine would facilitate the gathering of Jews as prophesied in the scriptures (this feeling is evident in the letter written by the First Presidency to Lund and Hintze). Furthermore, Lund noted in his diary that George Q. Cannon believed the colony in Palestine “would be the inaugurating of the Eastern Zion.”<sup>41</sup> This perspective persisted into the first three decades of the twentieth century until colonization was no longer deemed practical or essential. With this context in mind, it is understandable that the prayer offered by Hintze and overseen by Lund focused on blessing the land and gathering Judah and Israel. As prescribed by the First Presidency, this was the fundamental purpose of the tour.

### 1902: Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Dedications

Only four years after Lund’s visit, Elder Francis M. Lyman traveled to Palestine in company with Sylvester Q. Cannon and dedicated the land three times. Following are accounts of the sixth, seventh, and eighth dedications of the Holy Land in modern times.

Lyman turned sixty-two in January 1902. He had served as an Apostle for just over twenty-one years. During that time he had several dreams regarding a future mission to the Holy Land. In these dreams, he was vis-



Francis M. Lyman

ited by men who shared a keen interest in the affairs of that land and was instructed by them.<sup>42</sup> In one dream, he visited the Holy Land with President Joseph F. Smith and the late George Q. Cannon. In another dream, he traversed Palestine with President Joseph F. Smith and Anthon H. Lund. The dream that moved Lyman most strongly took place in September 1901. In the dream, he stood before President Lorenzo Snow and President Joseph F. Smith. The two prophets discussed a very difficult and delicate

41. Lund, *Danish Apostle*, 40.

42. Lyman was familiar with Palestine. He had toured the Holy Land in 1886, as well as Egypt and Greece, to identify promising fields for proselytizing in what would become the Turkish Mission. Berrett and Van Dyke, *Holy Lands*, 46–49.

mission that needed to be performed in the Holy Land but were undecided as to who should fill the assignment. Lyman felt impressed to step forward and volunteer for the mission by saying, “I will undertake it and do the best I can.” To this President Snow said, “We don’t want to wear you out that way.” Lyman then replied, “I shall wear out and shall not rust out.”<sup>43</sup>

At the time of this last dream, Lyman was presiding over the European Mission. Shortly after the dream, he received an assignment from the First Presidency to tour the Turkish Mission. This tour took Elder Lyman to Palestine in 1902. To Lyman this calling was but a fulfilling of his prophetic dreams of the past. In fact, one of his prime objectives of the journey was to dedicate the Holy Land.<sup>44</sup>

On February 5, 1902, Sylvester Q. Cannon, son of George Q. Cannon and president of the Netherlands and Belgium Mission,<sup>45</sup> joined Lyman in Paris, and the next day the two sailed for Alexandria, Egypt, from Marseilles.<sup>46</sup> Sylvester Cannon served as Lyman’s guide and interpreter, speaking fluent Dutch, French, and German.<sup>47</sup> They arrived at Jaffa, Palestine, on February 26, 1902, where they were met by Albert Herman, president of the Turkish Mission.<sup>48</sup>

On Sunday, March 2, 1902, Elder Lyman, in company with mission presidents Cannon and Herman, retired to the Mount of Olives to offer a dedicatory prayer. Lyman was desirous to know on what part of the mount Elders Hyde, Smith, Snow, Carrington, and Lund had offered their dedicatory prayers, but such knowledge was unavailable.<sup>49</sup> As they searched for a suitable spot to pray, Lyman recorded that

43. Francis M. Lyman to Lorenzo Snow, May 5, 1902, Church History Library.

44. Francis M. Lyman to President Joseph F. Smith, May 5, 1902, Church History Library.

45. Sylvester Q. Cannon served in the Netherlands and Belgium Mission in 1899. In 1900, while still in his early twenties, he was called to serve as the president of that mission. See Flake, *Prophets and Apostles*, 474.

46. Lyman, “President Lyman in the Holy Land,” March 16, 1902, 12.

47. Francis M. Lyman to President Joseph F. Smith, February 1, 1902, Church History Library.

48. Lyman, “President Lyman in the Holy Land,” March 16, 1902, 12. President Albert Herman was a veteran missionary in the Near East by 1902. He arrived in Constantinople for his first stint of service on October 6, 1891. He introduced the gospel in Damascus, Syria, and was making good progress until he was banished by Syrian officials for preaching. Because of health concerns, his first mission was cut short. Almost ten years later, Albert Herman was called to return to the Near East to be the president of the Turkish Mission.

49. Lyman, “President Lyman in the Holy Land,” March 16, 1902, 12.

it seemed as if the elements all combined to prevent us. We could have ascended the Russian tower to have a good survey of the city and the hills of Judea, but the winds were so furious it seemed as if the tower, 200 feet high, would certainly be blown down. The mount is so occupied that we could not decide where a suitable spot could be had where we could be undisturbed. We felt clearly impressed to appoint Tuesday, March 4 for a second trip with the design to find a suitable place for us to appear before the Lord upon that sacred mount.<sup>50</sup>

Later that night, March 2, 1902, they retired to their rooms at the Casa Nova Hospice. Elder Lyman called Cannon and Herman to his room, where they knelt and prayed. During his prayer, Lyman dedicated the Holy Land for the sixth time. Cannon described the dedicatory prayer in his personal journal. He wrote that “apostle Lyman, in praying this evening, prayed fervently for the restoration of fruitfulness and prosperity to the land and the people, and pronounced a renewal of dedication and a blessing upon the land for the gathering of Judah and Israel.”<sup>51</sup>

Lyman was determined to dedicate the Holy Land on the Mount of Olives. In the early afternoon of Tuesday, March 4, Lyman, Cannon, and Herman ascended the Mount of Olives in search of a peaceful location where the dedication could be performed. They were drawn to a grove of cypress trees about fifty yards east of the base of the Russian Tower of Ascension. It was grassy, shady, and peaceful and would be forever identifiable as long as the tower would stand. Lyman wrote: “The more I thought of [this spot] as we came down, the more sure I felt in my spirits it was the very place.”<sup>52</sup>

Elder Lyman had a heavy Irish rug that he spread out on the grass between the trees. Lyman knelt on the rug with Cannon on his right and Herman on his left. As they prayed they faced west toward the Temple Mount, the temples of the most high on the western continent, and Church headquarters in Utah.<sup>53</sup> Elder Lyman began praying at 3:30 PM, and all present noted that a most profound silence and spirit of peacefulness fell over the Mount of Olives. This peaceful silence persisted throughout the duration of the prayer, which lasted a half hour.<sup>54</sup>

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50. Lyman, “President Lyman in the Holy Land,” March 16, 1902, 12.

51. Private Journal of Sylvester Q. Cannon, March 2, 190, Church History Library. See also Lyman, “President Lyman in the Holy Land,” March 16, 1902, 12.

52. Lyman, “President Lyman in the Holy Land,” March 16, 1902, 12.

53. Private Journal of Sylvester Q. Cannon, March 2, 1902. See also Lyman, “President Lyman in the Holy Land,” March 16, 1902, 12.

54. Private Journal of Sylvester Q. Cannon, March 2 and 4, 1902. See also Lyman, “President Lyman in the Holy Land,” March 16, 1902, 12; Sylvester Q. Cannon, “President Lyman’s Tour,” *Millennial Star* 64 (April 3, 1902): 213.

In his prayer, Lyman remembered the prayers of dedication that had preceded his and pled with the Lord that they might be fulfilled, causing the lost ten tribes to be gathered, with Judah returning to Jerusalem. He recalled the prophecies of Isaiah, the Savior, and others of the ancients and begged for a fulfillment of their words regarding Jerusalem. He noted Joseph Smith's prophetic feelings for scattered Israel and prayed for their fulfillment. Lyman blessed the land itself that fruitfulness would return. He then blessed scattered and gathered Israel and all the posterity of Abraham and supplicated the Lord for their best interests—particularly that the gospel would be preached in all nations. Additionally, he prayed for the rebuilding of Jerusalem, including the building of a temple. In conjunction with this plea, he petitioned that a temple also be built in the "Center Stake" of Zion on the western hemisphere. Finally, Lyman prayed for the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and all the missionaries throughout the world.<sup>55</sup>

In his letter to the First Presidency, Lyman described his satisfaction and frame of mind and spirit as the dedication was completed. He wrote that "our souls were full of gratitude and great joy. We felt that one prime object of our coming at this time was accomplished. We have been particularly light and joyous in our spirits ever since."<sup>56</sup>

The group left Jerusalem on March 8, 1902. After touring Galilee, they came to Haifa in mid-March. On Sunday, March 16, after sacrament meeting, Lyman, Cannon, and Herman ascended Mount Carmel near the western point of the mountain.<sup>57</sup>

In climbing the mount it was not Elder Lyman's design to dedicate the Holy Land again, but as he reached the summit he felt impressed to pray. In fact, as he approached the grounds of Kaiser's Watch, he was drawn to a grove of pine trees about seventy feet east of an obelisk. Elder Lyman knew "that it was just the very spot and occasion for us once more upon a sacred mount to supplicate the Lord, as we had done upon the Mount of Olives."<sup>58</sup>

55. Lyman, "President Lyman in the Holy Land," March 16, 1902, 12. See also Cannon, "President Lyman's Tour," 213; Private Journal of Sylvester Q. Cannon, March 4, 1902.

56. Lyman, "President Lyman in the Holy Land," March 16, 1902, 12.

57. This is the place where Germany's Kaiser Wilhelm was brought for a panoramic view of the city of Haifa and the Bay of Acre on October 25, 1898. A six-foot-tall obelisk stands on the site to commemorate the visit. Berrett and Ogden, *Discovering the World of the Bible*, 159. See also Francis M. Lyman, "President Lyman in Jerusalem," *Deseret News*, April 19, 1902, 4.

58. Lyman, "President Lyman in Jerusalem," 4. See also Cannon, "President Lyman's Tour," 228.

The group knelt facing Jerusalem, and Lyman prayed for over half an hour.<sup>59</sup> He supplicated the Lord for the necessities of Judah, Jerusalem, Zion, and all the children of Israel. Lyman explained that

the Lord gave us copiously of his Spirit, and it was a season ever to be remembered. We seemed to remember everything in connection with the work and purposes of the Lord. The spot where we prayed is known as the “Kaiser Watch” and will always be known if destruction does not overtake it. The day seemed as if arranged specially for the occasion.<sup>60</sup>

Sylvester Cannon recorded that Elder Lyman prayed for the lightening of burdens from the land and that fruitfulness may be restored. He also prayed that the people’s hearts may be softened and become more susceptible to enlightenment from the Spirit. Furthermore, he prayed for each member of the party separately and “dedicated us all to the Lord—our time and our talents from this time henceforth. It was a powerful blessing.”<sup>61</sup>

Their experiences in Haifa brought a close to their travels in the Holy Land, and they departed for other destinations in their tour of the Turkish Mission. Following the tour, Lyman and Cannon resumed their missionary labors in Europe. Shortly thereafter, Elder Lyman declared that his travel to the Holy Land was the “crowning journey for my life of travel.”<sup>62</sup>

It is evident from diaries and correspondence that Francis Lyman intended to dedicate the Holy Land as part of his assignment to tour the Turkish Mission. It is obvious from these sources that he was also determined to offer a dedicatory prayer on the Mount of Olives. Of his three prayers, the prayer offered on the mount was more comprehensive and panoramic in content than the other two. By drawing primarily from this prayer we can identify clues that may indicate his deeper intentions and feelings.

59. Regarding the location of the site of dedication, Elder Lyman recorded that within a grove of seven hundred young pine trees was the remains of “a raised foundation of stone and earthwork upon which the German emperor stood and viewed Mt. Hermon.” *Journal History*, March 17, 1902, 4. LaMar C. Berrett located this grove of pine trees and the remains of the small wall that Elder Lyman described in his correspondence. This spot lies seventy feet east of the obelisk. Berrett and Ogden, *Discovering the World of the Bible*, 159. Both Elders Lyman (1902) and Talmage (1927) offered dedicatory prayers at this site.

60. Lyman, “President Lyman in Jerusalem,” 4.

61. Private Journal of Sylvester Q. Cannon, March 16, 1902.

62. Francis M. Lyman to his son, John Lyman, May 5, 1902, Church History Library. Elder Lyman calculated that he had been gone for eighty-six days, traveled eight thousand miles, and spent a total of seven hundred dollars.



First, Lyman prayed for the welfare of the Church. The year 1902 was a tumultuous time for several reasons. The Church was in financial straits due to large debts. In 1899, Lorenzo Snow had received revelations indicating that obedience to the law of tithing would free the Saints from these debts. As Lyman prayed on the Mount of Olives, the Church was still struggling to release itself from financial bondage. Also, the Church had suffered bitter and ongoing persecution due to the practice of polygamy. Political powers were brought to bear against the Saints as never before. For example, in 1898, Elder B. H. Roberts was elected to the United States House of Representatives but was denied his seat in Congress because he was a polygamist. Anti-Mormons rallied to collect over seven million signatures nationwide in opposition to Roberts's seat in the House. The Roberts case took over one year to settle. In 1902, Apostle Reed Smoot was mounting a campaign to run for the United States Senate. Given Roberts's recent failure in the national political spotlight, Smoot's bid was particularly bold. These are just some of the struggles the Church was facing in 1902. Finally, Lorenzo Snow died on October 10, 1901, and Joseph F. Smith was in the first months of his presidency. These are likely reasons why Elder Lyman prayed for the welfare of the Church in two of his three dedicatory prayers.

Second, Lyman was in Palestine by assignment to tour the Turkish Mission. This purpose was evident in his dedicatory prayer offered on the Mount of Olives. He prayed that the work of Latter-day Saint missionaries throughout the world would prosper. This request was germane to Lyman's position as an Apostle and as president of the European Mission. More specifically, missionary work in the Turkish Mission at the time was very challenging. The Church enjoyed no recognition by the Ottoman Empire, and any persons who joined the Church were disenfranchised by the Ottomans and culturally, socially, and economically ostracized from their Armenian peers. Most members of the Church were impoverished. In every case, they were second-class citizens in the predominantly Islamic empire.

Furthermore, for missionaries, the Turkish Mission was remote and expensive, and usually one year's service in the mission was required before the difficult languages could be mastered sufficiently so that a missionary could speak and teach effectively. Under these circumstances Elder Lyman's apostolic blessing was unquestionably a boon to President Herman, the missionaries, and the Saints in the region.

Third, Lyman prayed that ancient and modern prophecies be fulfilled related to Judah, Israel, Jerusalem, and the city of Zion in the western hemisphere. Orson Hyde and George A. Smith were the only other Apostles to

offer dedicatory prayers specifically asking that Jerusalem be rebuilt. Additionally, only Orson Hyde and Francis Lyman prayed that a temple be built in Jerusalem. Finally, Lyman went beyond Hyde and included a plea that a temple be built in Jerusalem *and* the center stake of Zion in America in accordance with ancient and latter-day prophecies.

We conclude that this bold, unique, and prophetic spirit indicates Francis Lyman possessed a clear sense of his dedicatory mission long before it transpired. Like Hyde, Lyman experienced dreams wherein he toured Palestine with his peers in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and the First Presidency. Indeed, Lyman seemed to possess a kinship to Hyde. He was keenly aware of Hyde's mission and even desired to pray at the exact location where Hyde had prayed, if that site could be identified. Because of this preparation and kinship, it is understandable that Lyman dedicated the Holy Land in a way that was akin to Orson Hyde's dedicatory prayer in tenor, content, and scope.

Elder Lyman continued to feel deep impressions regarding the dedicatory mission after his return to mission headquarters in Liverpool. In a letter to Albert Herman dated June 10, 1902, Lyman wrote that "our tour through Palestine grows on me, and is of greater importance every time I think of it."<sup>63</sup>

### 1927: Ninth Dedication

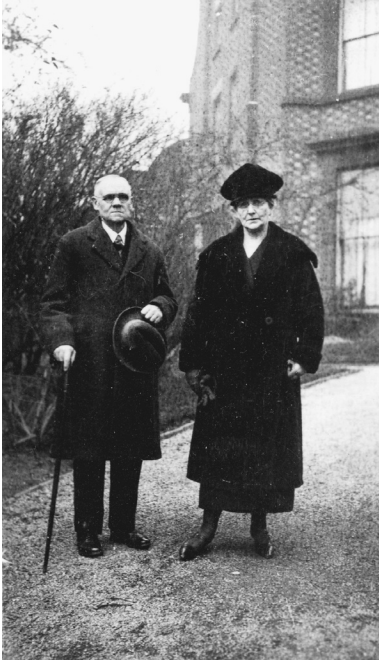
Twenty-five years passed before Elder James E. Talmage offered the ninth dedicatory prayer.<sup>64</sup> He received an assignment from the First Presidency to travel to Palestine to meet Joseph Wilford Booth, who was presiding over the missionary efforts in the Near East.<sup>65</sup> In 1921, the name

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63. Francis M. Lyman to Albert Herman, June 10, 1902, Church History Library.

64. James E. Talmage was born in Hungersford, England, on September 21, 1862. He was baptized at age eleven and emigrated with his family to America, where they settled in Provo, Utah. His initial mentor at Brigham Young Academy was Karl G. Maeser. His brilliant mind and ongoing pursuit of education led to his being named president of LDS College in Salt Lake City and later the University of Utah. He was called to serve in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in 1911. Flake, *Prophets and Apostles*, 439–41.

65. President Booth was the most prominent member of the Church in the Near East at the time. He was serving his third mission among the Armenians and ultimately served for a combined total of about seventeen years. He was born on August 14, 1866, in Alpine, Utah, and was an educator by training. He died on December 5, 1928, while serving as president of the Armenian Mission. He is buried in the Armenian Evangelical Cemetery in Aleppo, Syria. "From Foreign Fields," *Millennial Star* 89 (July 14, 1927): 444. See also James E. Talmage, "The



James E. Talmage and his wife, May Booth Talmage (sister of Joseph W. Booth). Courtesy Church History Library, © Intellectual Reserve, Inc.

of the mission was changed from the Turkish Mission to the Armenian Mission,<sup>66</sup> and Elder Talmage, who was serving as the president of the European Mission, was assigned to relocate the headquarters of the Armenian Mission from Aleppo, Syria, to Haifa, Palestine.

In 1927, at the time of the ninth dedicatory prayer, the Ottoman Empire was no longer in existence. It had been abolished following World War I. On July 24, 1923, a treaty was signed at Lausanne, Switzerland, that preserved the borders of the new Republic of Turkey basically as they exist today. As deliberations continued regarding the nature of the new nation, it was determined that the Sultanate would be eliminated but a member of the Ottoman princely line would hold the office of Caliph, which would be limited to religious affairs only. Soon the position of Caliph was also abolished. Elections were held for the Grand National Assembly, and they in turn elected Mustafa Kemal (later known as Kemal Ataturk) to be president of the new nation. The capital was moved from Istanbul to Ankara, located in central Turkey. All major government entities were secular in nature.<sup>67</sup> Following

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Armenian Mission," *Millennial Star* 89 (December 1, 1927): 760; Berrett and Van Dyke, *Holy Lands*, 137–38, 234.

66. In general terms, the reasoning behind the name change may be attributed to two fundamental issues. First, the people who had joined the Church in the Near East were almost exclusively Armenian. As missionary efforts in the region were reinstituted in 1921 following World War I, it was thought best to retire the title "Turkish Mission" and adopt a mission name that reflected the makeup of the members. Second, the Ottoman Turks had mercilessly driven and murdered the Armenian people during World War I. It is estimated that in the slaughter of 1915 over one million Armenians were killed. Hence, the Armenian Mission seemed to be a more fitting name.

67. Lewis, *Emergence of Modern Turkey*, 245–60. See also Goodwin, *Lords of the Horizons*, 301–21; Alan Palmer, *The Decline & Fall of the Ottoman Empire* (New York City: Barnes & Noble Books, 1992), 261–69.



Armenian Mission home selected by James E. Talmage and Joseph W. Booth located at 59 Allenby Street (now David Ben Gurion and Allenby streets) in Haifa. Courtesy LaMar C. Berrett.

World War I, much of the Ottoman Empire was carved up and the pieces controlled by the European powers. It is important to note that at this time Syria was placed under a French mandate while Palestine was placed under a British mandate.<sup>68</sup>

Elder Talmage arrived in Aleppo on Monday, October 10, 1927. President Joseph W. Booth was there to greet him in company with many of the Saints from Syria. Four days later, Talmage and Booth left Aleppo for Haifa via automobile. They arrived on Saturday, October 15, 1927.

On Monday, October 17, Talmage and Booth canvassed the city to find prospective quarters for a mission home. After examining several buildings they rented a house at the southeast corner of Carmel and Allenby streets (now David Ben Gurion and Allenby streets).<sup>69</sup> With the mission

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68. For further readings on the mandates over Syria and Palestine, consult J. C. Hurewitz, *The Struggle for Palestine* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968), 17–26. See also Elizabeth Monroe, *Britain's Moment in the Middle East, 1914–1971* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), 50–70; James L. Gelvin, *Divided Loyalties: Nationalism and Mass Politics in Syria at the Close of Empire* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998); Thomas Philipp and Christoph Schuman, eds., *From the Syrian Land to the States of Syria and Lebanon* (Beirut: Ergon Verlag Würzburg in Kommission, 2004).

69. Joseph W. Booth, “Something from Syria,” *Millennial Star* 89 (November 10, 1927): 714–15. See also Joseph Wilford Booth, *Journal*, October 17, 1927,

headquarters located, Talmage desired to dedicate the land and make further recommendations to the First Presidency regarding the timing and scope of the establishment of a missionary force at Haifa. He had made this a matter of careful thought and prayer. On the morning of Tuesday, October 18, 1927, Talmage invited Booth to accompany him to the top of Mount Carmel. Booth explained in his journal that they left

the carriage on the west side of the summit and walked through the trees to the East side, about two rods [one rod is 5.5 yards] in from the road, at a little break in the trees at the end of an old stone wall running along the crest of the hill to the S. E. and there in the grove of young pines we solemnly called upon the Lord in prayer. I was asked to lead in a preliminary petition which was followed by the reading of the following scriptures. Isaiah 35 ch, II Nephi 27—last parts and Doc. & Cov. Sec. 133, last half or nearly. Then with these books opened and spread before us we kneeled together and President James E. Talmage an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, offered a prayer dedicating the city of Haifa as a place for headquarters for the mission, and rededicating the land of Palestine and Syria to the preaching of the restored Gospel, and for the gathering of the Jews to their promised land. Special blessings were invoked upon the Saints of the Armenian Mission, upon the Armenian people who are the victims of the cruel conditions of these stricken lands, and upon the children of Judah who are gathering and who will gather to their latter day inheritance. Intercessions were also made for Sister Booth and myself, and for all the missions and missionaries of the Church with all the authorities of the Church and the Saints of Zion.<sup>70</sup>

The prayer lasted about fifteen minutes. Booth later explained that the prayer was the most sublime utterance he had ever heard.<sup>71</sup>

Talmage wrote that “immediately after our descent from the Mount Carmel I sent a cablegram to the First Presidency, reading: ‘Quickmere, Salt Lake City: Recommend six missionaries Palestine—Talmage.’”<sup>72</sup> The following Monday, October 24, 1927, Talmage noted in his journal the eighty-sixth anniversary of the dedication of the Holy Land by his apostolic predecessor Orson Hyde.

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L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; James E. Talmage, Diaries, October 17, 1927, Perry Special Collections.

70. Booth, Journal, October 18, 1927. See also Talmage, Diaries, October 18, 1927.

71. Joseph W. Booth, “Through Palestine,” *Millennial Star* 89 (November 17, 1927): 727.

72. Talmage, Diaries, October 18, 1927. The term “Quickmere” was the Church’s “call sign” for all telegrams sent to or from Church headquarters.

Like Francis M. Lyman before him and John A. Widtsoe after, James E. Talmage was serving as president of the European Mission when he was assigned to tour the Armenian Mission. A portion of his assignment was to move the mission home from Aleppo, Syria, to Haifa, Palestine. The focus on missionary work is evident in the dedicatory prayer that he offered in 1927. Prior to the prayer, he asked Joseph Booth to read a series of scriptural passages. One of them was Isaiah 35, wherein Isaiah prophesied that in the last days “the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose” (1). It also contains the promise that the “eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped” (5). Finally, Isaiah taught that a highway shall be established, “and it shall be called The way of holiness” (8) upon which those who see and hear the truth found in the latter-day restoration may travel and enjoy God’s richest blessings.

In his prayer one can sense Talmage’s desire to turn keys to facilitate greater interest among the people in the gospel message so that they might investigate, become converted, and join the Church. One can also readily observe his depth of concern for the Armenian members of the Church and their peers who had been severely persecuted for decades. Finally, Talmage’s blessing upon President Joseph Booth, his wife, and all the missionaries in the Church rounded out his dedicatory prayer. Again, missionary work was the driving force behind Elder Talmage’s visit to the Holy Land, and this purpose seems to have been a determining factor in the content of the dedicatory prayer.

### **1933: Tenth and Eleventh Dedications**

Joseph W. Booth, president of the Armenian Mission, died unexpectedly at Aleppo, Syria, on December 5, 1928. From that time to 1933, the mission was without a president and the work lagged. Under the direction of the First Presidency, John A. Widtsoe, Apostle and president of the European Mission, and his wife, Leah, were sent to Palestine to call a new mission president and revitalize the proselytizing efforts in what would then be called the Palestine-Syrian Mission. Widtsoe dedicated the land twice during this trip.<sup>73</sup>

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73. John A. Widtsoe was born on January 31, 1872, in Daloe, Isle of Froyen, Trondhjem, Norway. Elder Widtsoe’s father died when John was six, and at about the same time his mother joined the Church. Soon thereafter, they joined the Saints in Utah. Elder Widtsoe was an exceptional student, graduating with honors from Harvard in 1894. He married Leah Dunford in 1898. Elder Widtsoe distinguished himself as a world-renowned agriculturalist with expertise in dry





John A. Widtsoe

Elder Widtsoe oversaw the calling of Badwagan Piranian to serve as president of the new Palestine-Syrian Mission.<sup>74</sup> Piranian was an Armenian by birth but spent most of his life in continental Europe, Russia, and England, and he held Swiss citizenship. His wife, Bertha, and daughter Astchig accompanied him to the new mission. They moved into a home that served as the Palestine-Syrian Mission headquarters.<sup>75</sup>

Elder and Sister Widtsoe arrived in Palestine on Wednesday, May 17, 1933. On Sunday, May 21, Widtsoe presided over a sacrament meeting. Only the Widtsos and the Piranians

attended. During this meeting, Widtsoe taught the significance of dedicatory prayers and then dedicated the new mission home and the mission and rededicated the land of Palestine. He prayed

that the home may be blessed, purified, and sanctified, protected against all evil and that [those] who pass it or visit it may feel its influence—the influence of a dedicated house. It was dedicated to be a home and a place for mission meetings. At the same time in the prayer the whole mission was brought before the Lord. The Lord was petitioned to help move His work forward in these lands as never before, that the Spirit of God might find its way throughout the land and touch the hearts of all seekers after truth; that those who labor here may be the means of fulfilling the covenants between God and man, as well as to fulfill the prophecies of old. The land was rededicated, as was also the mission.

farming and irrigation. He was called to be an Apostle in 1921. Flake, *Prophets and Apostles*, 453–56.

74. Journal History, June 24, 1933, 4. On July 11, 1933, Elder Widtsoe wrote the following letter to President Piranian concerning the new name of the mission: “The First Presidency answered my letter about the change of the name of the Mission by saying that they would approve whatever we shall decide upon, but that if the word ‘Palestine’ could be included in the name of the mission it would please the people of the Church as well. We have therefore decided upon the name ‘The Palestine-Syrian Mission,’ which hereafter use in all of your official correspondence and printing. I trust this meets with your approval.” History of the Palestine-Syrian Mission, May 21, 1933, 75, Church History Library.

75. “Reorganization of Palestine-Syrian Mission,” *Millennial Star* 95 (August 10, 1933): 522–33.



The Palestine-Syrian Mission home located at 25 Garden Street in Haifa, where Elder John A. Widtsoe rededicated the Holy Land. Courtesy LaMar C. Berrett.

The blessings of the Lord were invoked upon the authorities of the Church of Christ in the latter days and the Lord was petitioned to help the truth enter the lives of the people and to bring about a new period of enlightenment among all nations.<sup>76</sup>

Ten days later, on May 31, 1933, Elder Widtsoe, Sister Widtsoe, and President Piranian ascended the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. There, looking down on the Holy City and the Garden of Gethsemane, Widtsoe prepared to dedicate the land again. He recorded his feelings on this occasion. He wrote:

In spite of steeples and domes, hospices and hospitals, Jerusalem, as all the world, needs the strengthening, enlivening, enlightening simple truths of the Gospel of Jesus of Nazareth, the plan of salvation of Almighty God. Oh Jerusalem! Jerusalem! The pleading voice of two thousand years ago crept into our souls. We gathered under a noble olive tree, on the Mount where the Master often taught, and prayed to God that the restored truth might be prospered for the good of men in the Promised Land.<sup>77</sup>

76. History of the Palestine-Syrian Mission, May 21, 1933, 77.

77. John A. Widtsoe, "The Promised Land—an Editorial," *Millennial Star* 95 (July 6, 1933): 442–43.

The content of the prayer offered by Widtsoe on the Mount of Olives was recalled about twenty years later by his wife, Leah. She noted that he

blessed the land for the return of the Jews, that they would come home to the land that had been promised them by God. The land was blessed that it would be restored to its former fertility and productivity, that the returning remnants of Judah would build up the land that it would again become a prosperous area. President Widtsoe blessed the people that their hearts would be softened towards the missionaries and they would become receptive to the gospel; that they would open their hearts to the restored truth in order that they could embrace the gospel. The Jews were promised that if they would accept Christ that peace would come to their land and their persecutions in the world would cease, and this land would be given to them as their inheritance as promised by the Holy Prophets.<sup>78</sup>

These two prayers by Elder Widtsoe at Haifa and Jerusalem constituted the tenth and eleventh dedications of the Holy Land, the last dedicatory prayers in this remarkable series of events. In both dedicatory prayers, Widtsoe prayed that the enemies of the Church would be confounded. The Church in Europe and in the Near East was usually viewed with suspicion. Articles in newspapers and magazines frequently reflected the perspectives of those who did not understand the Church or its mission. Persuasive anti-Mormon articles led many readers to believe that Latter-day Saints should be neither trusted nor respected. As president of the European mission, Widtsoe worked hard, as had his predecessor, David O. McKay, to improve the public's opinion of the Church, but the process was slow. In the Palestine-Syrian Mission, Widtsoe encouraged President Badwagan Piranian to "make friends with the newspaper people. We must secure more printed material; tracts are needed now. . . . Advertise—not pompously but consistently."<sup>79</sup> It is possible that his pleadings to confound the enemies of the Church emanated from his desire to make headway in the ongoing public relation battles he had fought in Europe and anticipated in the Near East.

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78. So far as we know, the contents of this prayer were not recorded at the time the prayer was offered. This recollection is taken from an interview with Leah Widtsoe conducted by Dale Tingey and may be found in Dale Thomas Tingey, "Recent Jewish Movements in Israel in Light of the Teachings of the Latter-day Saint Prophets" (master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1955), 49–50. For additional details regarding this dedication, see *Journal History*, July 29, 1933, 12. See also *Journal History*, August 12, 1933, 8.

79. History of Palestine-Syrian Mission, May 21, 1933, 77, Church History Library.

Similar to the dedications offered by Carrington and Snow, Widtsoe's first dedicatory prayer, offered May 21, 1933, in Haifa, did not contain a petition that the Jews gather to the Holy Land: Widtsoe's purpose in traveling to Haifa was to organize the Palestine-Syrian Mission and set apart Badwagan Piranian as its president. The dedicatory prayer offered in Haifa emerged from these purposes. This focus is evident in a letter he wrote to Elder Rudger Clawson and the rest of the Twelve Apostles dated June 6, 1933. He wrote:

A number of people have been investigating the gospel for the last two years, through correspondence with the Liverpool office. Eight of these were deemed ready for baptism and were baptized two weeks ago. The Haifa branch has been organized . . . After having been in Palestine for some days, I feel very hopeful about the future of our work here, if we proceed wisely. Conditions have so shaped themselves as to make our message sound very good to ears that have been filled with sectarian nonsense. Let us pray that the work here may be successful.<sup>80</sup>

Ten days after this first dedicatory prayer, Widtsoe was in Jerusalem. From the same letter to Rudger Clawson, we learn that his time spent in the Holy City was different than in Haifa. He wrote, "The last few days we have been in Jerusalem. Contending sects have made it an unlovely, hateful place. I have sought out quiet places, away from shrines, to dream of the history enacted here, and yet to come. There is a need for us here, where few take religion seriously."<sup>81</sup>

It seems apparent that his time spent in Jerusalem was pensive, and his dedicatory prayer on the Mount of Olives reflected that pensiveness by including supplications that the prophecies related to Judah and Israel's gathering to Palestine be fulfilled. Such was not the case in Haifa. In Haifa his prayer focused more on immediate concerns, while in Jerusalem his prayer was more panoramic. Perhaps this is why he offered two dedicatory prayers within such a short period of time.

## Conclusion

Our analysis indicates that portions of the prayers subsequent to Orson Hyde's dedicatory prayer likely emanated from the intended purposes for which Apostles traveled to Palestine. Church leaders' pressing concerns at home and in the world generally and prophecies in ancient

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80. John A. Widtsoe to Rudger Clawson, June 6, 1933, Church History Library.

81. Widtsoe to Clawson, June 6, 1933.

and modern scripture were also factors that likely influenced content as well. These influences did not change the essential nature of the dedicatory prayers. Nevertheless, many of the subsequent prayers serve as a window into the religious, sociocultural, and political milieu of the day.

Orson Hyde's prayer and the ten subsequent dedications of Palestine have set the land apart, invoked the power of heaven upon that land, and consecrated the minds and hearts of people who are associated with furthering God's work there. Since these prayers were offered, missions were established for a time in Palestine, missionary work was conducted in the land, congregations have been organized into branches and reorganized when necessary, scriptures were translated, the State of Israel was established in 1948 opening a way for the Holocaust-surviving Jews throughout the world to gather to the Holy Land, and the land has blossomed and become more fruitful than it was when Elder Hyde knelt on the Mount of Olives in 1841. While much remains to be fulfilled, especially regarding the softening of hearts, and while the region continues to suffer from deeply perplexing conflicts, these eleven sincere prayers have only sought to bless this land for the ultimate good of all people, and these dedications can be seen to have efficaciously borne significant fruit in this important part of the Lord's vineyard.

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Images of Orson Hyde, George A. Smith, Albert Carrington, Lorenzo Snow, Eliza R. Snow, Francis M. Lyman, and John A. Widstoe, courtesy LaMar C. Berrett.

Images of Feramorz Little, Clara Little, Thomas Jennings, Paul Schettler, and Anthon H. Lund, courtesy LDS Church History Library, © Intellectual Reserve, Inc.

# Digging Up

Sarah and Abraham built altars  
and dug wells

One jutting bluntly to heaven,  
Pushing a prayer up, pulling something down  
One below, sinewing down to coolness,  
Pushing down a vessel, pulling something up

As she lay at night in her cooling tent  
did barren Sarah dream of digging, hand over hand  
through sand that falls in on itself in a silent stream  
Until she could awaken and grasp Abraham's hand in sleep?

And did Abraham shudder with premonition  
when he judged just how much body weight  
his newest potent pile of rock could accommodate,  
A terror shaken off only as Sarah brings him a ladle of water?

I suppose it's harder, and takes far longer  
to dig a well than to build an altar  
But then again, you have to grow the sacrifice,  
feed it and water it from the well for a very long time

So maybe it's about the same,  
Deep or high  
And maybe in the covenant drudgery of digging  
Sarah and Abraham unearthed a few stones for the holy table built elsewhere.

And maybe they found that  
When properly wedged together  
Still dark and wet and new to the sun  
They don't even try to wriggle free

But stay, poised forever,  
faces to God

—Joanna Applegarth Hancock

*This poem won second place in the 2007 BYU Studies poetry contest.*



# What Hymns Early Mormons Sang and How They Sang Them

*Michael Hicks*

Hymns eloquently portray the faith of those who sing them. In 1827, Alexander Campbell put it well: a hymnbook is “as good an index to the brains and to the hearts of a people as the creed book.”<sup>1</sup> In Campbell’s day and long thereafter, every new church needed a new hymnbook, and every old hymnbook came to need revision. Not only did hymnbooks pervade the early American printing industry, but they also became part of the American sacred canon, as necessary to worship as the Nicene Creed or sectarian articles of faith. They helped worshippers attain their distinctive religious identities in the New World. What Nathan Hatch calls “the democratization of American Christianity” relied as much on gospel song as it did on gospel.<sup>2</sup>

But while all hymns represent themselves equally in the index of a hymnbook, some hymns are sung far more often than others—and many hymns in a hymnbook are seldom, if ever, sung. A hymnbook actually may be more an index to the brains and hearts of its compilers than of the people who use it. Churchgoers know well that those who choose the hymns to be sung in church meetings redact a hymnbook, emphasizing hymns they prefer, hymns they think congregations want to sing, or hymns that suit particular occasions. It is this everyday reshaping of a hymnbook that more accurately indexes the brains and hearts of religious people than what merely lies between the covers of the book. So, if we want to understand early Mormons, we should want to know not just what hymns they published but what and how they actually sang.

## Early Mormon Record Keeping

Although we generally think of the Church in its more concentrated forms in New York, Ohio, and Missouri, we often forget that traveling elders held meetings and established branches in many regions. By the end of 1834, according to Matthew Crawford, the Church had organized 124 branches spreading not only through the three states just mentioned but also in Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, and even Canada.<sup>3</sup> In May of that year, W. W. Phelps observed how perplexing the image of Mormondom was becoming: “New churches are continually rising as the light spreads, and it is our peculiar privilege to hear, frequently, from different individuals, calling themselves our brethren, of whose names we have before never heard, and whose faces we have never seen, and learning of saints where we had not heard that the gospel had been preached.”<sup>4</sup> Consider how quickly the Church spread even in the Deep South: in February 1836, for example, Wilford Woodruff reported having established seven branches of the Church (memberships ranging from eight to thirty-one members apiece) in a single two-hundred-mile circuit in Tennessee.<sup>5</sup> How these branches held meetings likely differed from worship services in New York and Ohio, especially in hymn singing.

What records do we have of the thousands of meetings held in this far-flung church during the pre-Nauvoo period? Even in the centers of Mormon population, minutes of meetings exist mainly for conferences and priesthood councils, not for less formal meetings and certainly not for the home devotionals that probably took place every day.<sup>6</sup> Journals and diaries occasionally mention meetings but rarely suggest the meetings’ format and content. Most of the records we have from 1830 to 1838 yield precious little information about meetings: a few lines here and there, incomplete sentences, skimpy reporting, scant details. Surely, more records will resurface as Mormon historiography proceeds, but they will likely follow the bare-bones pattern of the records we know.

Still, when one considers the available minutes and personal records, a few trends emerge. The sources I have studied for the years 1830 to 1838—all the extant minutes as well as journals and autobiographies of nearly two hundred Latter-day Saints—mention on only fifty-eight occasions the names of the hymns sung.<sup>7</sup> Among those fifty-eight occasions, only twenty-eight different titles appear. And only sixteen of those twenty-eight hymns (57 percent) were published in the first Mormon hymnbook

(1835/1836).<sup>8</sup> This means that although that first hymnbook contained ninety hymn texts, I can find record (through 1838) of only 18 percent of them being sung. (Table 1 shows the occurrence of all the hymn names mentioned.)<sup>9</sup>

While the sketchy records yield only a small sample for us to consider, one can easily conclude the obvious: some hymns were more popular than others. Of the twenty-eight hymns identified by name, “Adam-ondi-Ahman” is mentioned ten times, “The Spirit of God” is noted seven times, “Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken” and “Now Let Us Rejoice” appear five times, “How Firm a Foundation” turns up three times, and five more (“Go On Ye Pilgrims,” “Hark, Listen to the Trumpeters,” “Ere Long the Veil Will Rend in Twain,” “How Precious Is the Name,” and “O Happy Souls Who Pray”) are mentioned twice each. In other words, two-thirds of the fifty-eight occurrences of hymn names from 1830 to 1838 are these ten hymns. More telling, perhaps, is that almost half of the hymns mentioned are the same four hymns (“Adam-ondi-Ahman,” “Spirit of God,” “Glorious Things,” and “Now Let Us Rejoice”).

Why are so few hymns mentioned by name? It is partly a matter of record keeping. Clearly, clerks and scribes differed on whether it was important to record the names of hymns sung. And even those who thought it important may not have known the name of any given hymn, even if they wanted to record it. The seemingly limited repertoire of hymns also results from the choices of the people leading them. Those who chose the songs to sing—and we do not know how many different people that might have been—could choose only songs that they knew and probably chose songs they preferred. Thus, biases in both record keeping and song choosing skew our results.

Consider, for example, that five different hymns on our list of fifty-eight were sung in the same meeting on August 17, 1835. Thankfully, the minutes record the names of all of them (and that one of them was sung twice). So careful an inventory of singing is rare; thus the list may not be representative. The minutes of that meeting say that Levi Hancock was appointed to “lead in singing” (a phrase that may become clearer below).<sup>10</sup> As a leader he could only “lead in” songs that he knew, and he probably chose those he liked or thought suited the meeting’s purposes. As it turned out, four of the five different hymns he led that day did not appear in the soon-to-be-published Mormon hymnbook. But he knew them, and that was enough to have them sung. Would anyone else have chosen any of those five hymns?

**Table 1**  
**Hymns Mentioned by Name in LDS Records, 1830–1838**

- listed in order of number of mentions (highest to lowest), then chronological
- all mentions are from the Far West Record, except where indicated
- all titles/first lines shown in *italics* did not appear in the first official LDS hymnal (1835)

<b>Adam-ondi-Ahman</b>	December 16, 1835† January 6, 1836 January 15, 1836** March 27, 1836** late 1836 April 24, 1837 June 11, 1837 March 15, 1838 April 28, 1838 June 28, 1838†
<b>The Spirit of God</b>	March 27, 1836** May 29, 1836*** July 25, 1836 June 28, 1838 July 6, 1838 August 29, 1838† September 16, 1838†
<b>Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken</b>	August 4, 1831 August 24, 1831 October 25, 1831 February 14, 1835* August 17, 1835*
<b>Now Let Us Rejoice</b>	March 27, 1836† Winter 1837–1838 June 28, 1838 July 6, 1838 October 5, 1838
<b>How Firm a Foundation</b>	April 21, 1834* March 17, 1838 April 7, 1838
<b>Go On Ye Pilgrims</b>	October 26, 1831 December 7, 1831
<b><i>Hark, Listen to the Trumpeters</i></b>	1834\$ February 14, 1835*
<b>Ere Long the Vail Will Rend in Twain</b>	September 10, 1834 March 27, 1836**
<b><i>How Precious Is the Name</i></b>	August 17, 1835* August 17, 1835* (sung twice that day)
<b>O Happy Souls Who Pray</b>	March 27, 1836** October 5, 1838
<b><i>My Loving Fellow Travellers</i></b>	December 7, 1831
<b><i>He Dies, the Friend of Sinners Dies</i></b>	April 27, 1832
<b><i>Age after Age Has Rolled Away</i></b>	July 7, 1834
<b><i>Awake My Soul in Joyful Lays</i></b>	July 14, 1835*
<b><i>When I Can Read My Title Clear</i></b>	August 17, 1835*

Table 1 (continued)

<i>Beyond These Earthly Scenes in Sight</i>	August 17, 1835*
<i>All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name</i>	August 17, 1835*
<i>There's a Power in the Sun</i>	December 16, 1835†
<i>There's a Feast of Fat Things</i>	December 16, 1835†
<i>Religion, Which the Soul Must Have</i>	February 9, 1836***
<i>How Pleas'd and Blest Was I</i>	March 27, 1836**
<i>The Towers of Zion Soon Shall Rise</i>	April 7, 1836
<i>Let Zion in Her Beauty Rise</i>	1838‡
<i>O God, Our Help in Ages Past</i>	April 7, 1838
<i>He Died, the Great Redeemer Died</i>	July 6, 1838
<i>Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed?</i>	September 16, 1838†
<i>The Gallant Ship Is under Way</i>	September 16, 1838†
<i>To Him That Made the Sun and Moon</i>	October 6, 1838

\* Kirtland Council Minute Book, \*\* Personal Writings of Joseph Smith, \*\*\* Wilford Woodruff's Journal,

† Journal History, ‡ Lewis Barney Autobiography, § William Cahoon Autobiography,

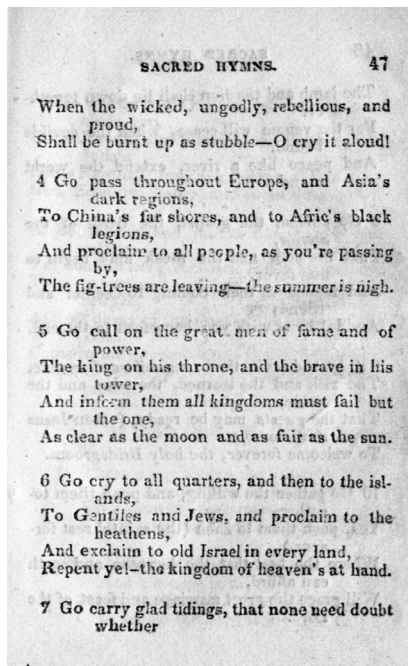
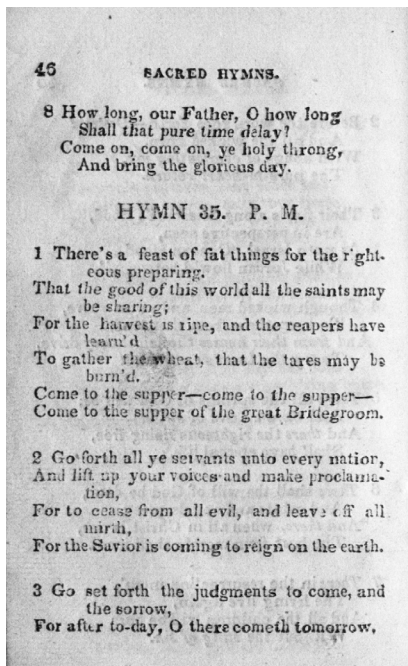
§§ Wandle Mace Autobiography

### Farewells, Love-Feasts, and "Adam-ondi-Ahman"

Many hymns Latter-day Saints published and probably sang were for gatherings other than church services, meetings likely without clerks or recorders. For example, the first LDS hymnbook has a section titled "Farewell Hymns." The well-established Protestant tradition of farewell hymns was that people sang them not so much in regular conference or council meetings but at special meetings held for ministerial departures (that is, "farewells"). That first hymnbook also contained sections labeled "Morning Hymns" and "Evening Hymns," common designations in Protestant hymnbooks of the day.<sup>11</sup> These hymns were for families to sing at home, not at church. Thus, the hymnbook included six of each, probably one for each day of the week except Sunday, when other hymns would be sung at church. Although one of the evening hymns in the 1835/36 hymnbook, "The Day Is Past and Gone," never appears in the records of meetings through 1838, William Smith, the Prophet's brother, recalled that it was his father's favorite evening hymn to sing during family devotionals: "Again and again was this hymn sung while upon the bending knees."<sup>12</sup> People also sang hymns at work, at home (for example, as lullabies), and certainly at funerals and baptisms. We have few records of such occasions. John Murdock wrote of his own baptism that "the spirit of the Lord sensibly attended the ministration, & I came out of the water rejoicing & singing praises to God, and the Lamb."<sup>13</sup> Was he singing hymns? Maybe. But since he used the generic term "singing praises," we cannot say with certainty.

Some Mormon gatherings, while religious, were not strictly devoted to worship or devotion. One hymn on the list, “There’s a Feast of Fat Things” (also known as “The Proclamation”) was intended primarily for the feasts for the poor in Kirtland. The New Testament mentions “feasts of charity” (Jude 1:12) held by early Christians, who probably based them on Jesus’ story of the rich man who threw a feast and invited—even compelled—the poor and disabled to attend (Luke 14:12–24). Some Protestants revived the tradition. Methodists often held such “love-feasts” in the early nineteenth century—at least once a year among smaller church populations and more frequently among larger ones.<sup>14</sup> In Kirtland the Latter-day Saints held such feasts, for which W. W. Phelps wrote “The Proclamation” in February 1835.<sup>15</sup> The song invited people to the actual feasts in the city and ultimately to the wedding supper of Christ (see Rev. 19:7–9):

There’s a feast of fat things for the righteous preparing,  
That the good of this world all the saints may be sharing; . . .  
Come to the supper—come to the supper—  
Come to the supper of the great Bridegroom.



The first two pages of “The Proclamation,” as it appeared in *A Collection of Sacred Hymns for the Church of the Latter Day Saints*, compiled by Emma Smith in 1835. Courtesy L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University.



In the song's twelve verses, Phelps calls on Latter-day Saints to gather everyone into their millennial community:

Go gather the willing, and push them together,  
Yea, push them to Zion (the saints' rest forever),  
Where the best that the heavens and earth can afford,  
Will grace the great marriage and feast of the Lord.<sup>16</sup>

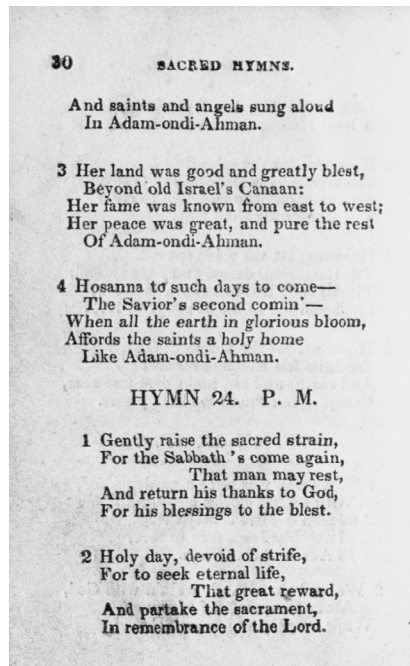
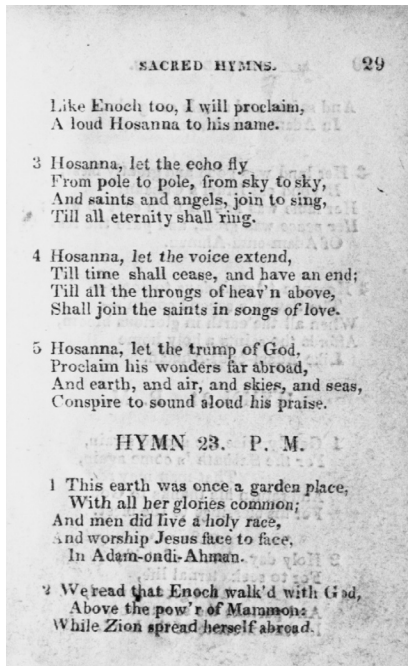
The song was sung at a Kirtland feast in fall 1835, a sixty-guest affair, about which Phelps wrote that it was the "greatest blessing feast I have [ever] attended."<sup>17</sup> Elizabeth Ann Whitney described a later Kirtland feast in words evoking the song: "This feast lasted three days, during which time all in the vicinity of Kirtland who would come were invited. . . . To me it was 'a feast of fat things' indeed; a season of rejoicing never to be forgotten."<sup>18</sup> Although the hymn ended up in the first Mormon hymnbook, it might not have been sung except at such feasts.

Another hymn on the list, "Hark, Listen to the Trumpeters," abounded with military and Old Testament references:

Hark! listen to the trumpeters,  
They call for volunteers;  
On Zion's bright and flow'ry mount  
Behold the officers.  
Their horses white, their armours bright,  
With courage bold they stand,  
Enlisting soldiers for their King,  
To march to Zion's land.<sup>19</sup>

Such a song appealed to Mormons in the paramilitary march known as Zion's Camp. William F. Cahoon wrote that "Hark, Listen to the Trumpeters" was "our favorite song" when that group marched.<sup>20</sup> From Zion's Camp, the song entered a February 14, 1835, worship meeting held in Kirtland where several brethren who had been on the march were blessed and the new Quorum of Twelve Apostles was chosen and ordained.<sup>21</sup> Although the hymn later became more popular as Mormons developed militias in Nauvoo and Utah, it may well not have been sung in other worship meetings of the pre-Nauvoo period. It did not appear in the first hymnbook.

If some hymns thrived in special circumstances, others had broad appeal. For instance, the hymn most often mentioned in our limited sample from this period is "Adam-ondi-Ahman"—mentioned ten times. This hymn celebrated the place where early Mormons would make a last attempt to gather and build a city in Missouri. Latter-day Saints believed this to be the site where Adam and Eve dwelt after being cast out of the Garden of Eden. It is also believed to be the place to which Jesus will return and where Adam's original language—from which the name "Adam-ondi-Ahman"



“Adam-ondi-Ahman,” by William W. Phelps, as it appeared in Emma Smith’s *A Collection of Sacred Hymns for the Church of the Latter Day Saints*. Courtesy L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University.

derived—will again be spoken by all faithful Church members.<sup>22</sup> Although Smith first referred to Adam-ondi-Ahman in 1832, he did not identify its location until 1838 (D&C 78:15; 116:1). But Phelps had already written a hymn about it in 1835.<sup>23</sup> The first verse went:

This world was once a garden place,  
With all her glories common;  
And men did live a holy race,  
And worship Jesus face to face,  
In Adam-ondi-Ahman.

Phelps goes on to acclaim “the Savior’s second comin’” when Saints will find a “holy home / like Adam-ondi-Ahman.”<sup>24</sup> The hymn was sung at the dedication of the Kirtland Temple in March 1836. For the next two years, Church members sang it often, most notably, perhaps, in a meeting held on June 28, 1838, to organize a stake of Zion at Adam-ondi-Ahman.<sup>25</sup> After the Saints were driven out of Missouri they surely sang the song less.<sup>26</sup> But by then it was indelible. Mormons revised, rewrote, and republished it for decades. It remains in the current hymnbook (1985, no. 49).

On the other hand, “Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken,” mentioned five times, occurred three of those times in 1831 and twice in 1835 but not thereafter. We can see why such a venerable Protestant hymn resonated with early Mormons. The words dwelt on Zion, the “city of our God,” which Latter-day Saints interpreted literally. They intended to fulfill the prophecy implicit in the text:

Glorious things of thee are spoken,  
Zion, city of our God!  
He whose word cannot be broken,  
Chose thee for his own abode.<sup>27</sup>

After the third recorded instance of singing the song (in a general conference of the Church in Orange, Ohio, on October 25, 1831), Sidney Rigdon arose and noted how God was unifying the hearts of his people: “And in this thing God has taught his children to sing a new song even about Zion which David Spoke of, &c.”<sup>28</sup> Despite its relevance to early Mormons, the song could easily get crowded out of their repertoire because it was not really a *new* song. It was perhaps too Protestant, too much a part of the Saints’ past and not their independent future, a future where newly written hymns like “Adam-ondi-Ahman” strove with old ones for a place in the canon.

Like “Adam-ondi-Ahman,” “Glorious Things” also remains in the current hymnbook (no. 46), though both hymns are rarely sung. That is not true of the second-most-oft-mentioned hymn in these early Mormon records, “The Spirit of God.” Phelps wrote the hymn for the Kirtland Temple dedication, at which it had its premiere. That first hearing, in the midst of the ecstatic manifestations of the dedicatory services—angels, visions, speaking in tongues, and so forth—led some to believe that the song had been given by God spontaneously to the temple choir.<sup>29</sup> The hymn was printed in the first hymnbook and has likely been sung at all LDS temple dedications since. That was certainly enough to make it a Mormon standard. But most other hymns mentioned by name in early Mormon records fared differently. While all five of the most oft-mentioned hymns appear in the current hymnbook, twenty of the remaining twenty-three titles do not.<sup>30</sup> It is fair to say that most hymns early Mormons sang have long since ebbed away.

## How and Who

As to how early Latter-day Saints sang hymns, it is important to understand first that hymn names refer only to texts, not tunes. What the Latter-day Saints (like their Protestant peers) called “hymns” were just

words copied by hand into journals or letters and eventually—for some of them—typeset in newspapers, broadsides, and hymnbooks. One could sing any hymn to any existing tune that fit it (or even a tune that did not quite fit).<sup>31</sup> How can we know what tunes were sung? Sometimes an epigraph on a hymn tells which tune to use. At other times one can deduce a tune because a hymn's words so clearly derive from those of a well-known song (with its own well-established tune). Occasionally, if a text has a peculiar structure (like “Adam-on-di-Ahman”), only one basic tune (and slight variations) will work. But all of these are special cases. Usually we cannot reasonably speculate on what tune was sung with a hymn's text, especially in any given locale. So when we consider early Mormon hymn singing, we can generally be certain about the words but not about the music.<sup>32</sup>

Surprisingly, we also know little about who actually sang the hymns in church meetings. We assume early LDS congregations sang each hymn in unison or harmony from start to finish, more or less as we do today. But I have seen no Mormon sources from 1830 to 1838 stating clearly that “the congregation sang” a given hymn. If there are any such statements to be found, they are rare indeed. Most of the minutes, if they mention singing at all, say only that “a hymn was sung” or that a meeting was “opened by singing” or “by singing and prayer.” By far the most common wording in *Far West Record* is the statement that a meeting was “opened by singing [a title] and prayer by [a person's name].”<sup>33</sup> From our modern perspective we read this statement as (1) a hymn sung by the congregation and (2) a prayer offered by an individual. But the statement “opened by singing [a title] and prayer by [a person's name]” could mean that before praying, the named individual sang. A few passages in *Far West Record* may connote this interpretation. On November 7, 1837, for example, Thomas B. Marsh was chosen as the “Moderator” of the meeting. The minutes then say that “after singing, the Moderator addressed the Throne of Grace in prayer.” A slightly later passage reads simply, “The Council was opened by singing by Prest Marsh” (June 23, 1838).<sup>34</sup> In the Kirtland Elders Quorum minutes, we read phrases such as “meeting was opened by [a person's name] by singing and prayer” (March 6 and 12, 1838).<sup>35</sup> Joseph Smith records this about an 1835 marriage ceremony: “After opening our interview with singing and prayer, I delivered a lecture.”<sup>36</sup> Erastus Snow also wrote that he closed a meeting by administering the sacrament, blessing some children “& after singing a hymn I dismissed [the congregation] with the blessing of the Lord.”<sup>37</sup> William McLellin wrote of a Sabbath service in March 1833, “I opened the meeting by singing and prayr and then spoke about half an hour.”<sup>38</sup> Meanwhile, as singing in tongues began to infuse Mormon meetings, one source notes that “Elder Brigham Young arose and in the Spirit

of God sung a song of Zion in a foreign tongue. After which he delivered a very animated address to his brother ministers.”<sup>39</sup>

We should understand such passages in the context of their time. Biographies and diaries of Protestant ministers from the late eighteenth through mid-nineteenth centuries commonly describe how ministers opened evangelistic meetings. First they would “give out,” “read,” “start up,” or “sing” a hymn.<sup>40</sup> Next they would pray. Then they would speak (“preach”). Descriptions of this three-part practice abound. One writer describes it nicely: “[a] homely, awkward frontier preacher, clad in ill fitting, homespun preacher garb . . . places his chair before him as his pulpit, and begins to read a hymn, in a soft and charming voice. After the singing of the hymn, comes the prayer, which is uttered with . . . eloquence and pathos. . . . And then follows the sermon on the text.”<sup>41</sup> In an 1802 account of a camp meeting, Jesse Lee noted, “The preachers were singing, praying, or preaching all night.”<sup>42</sup> Another diary entry by Lee shows that he experienced the three tasks of a preacher—singing, praying, speaking—as an almost mystical self-induction. About the opening of a meeting, he wrote, “As soon as I began to sing, I felt my soul happy in the Lord, and while I was praying, the power of the Lord was sensibly felt in the midst; but while I was speaking from the text, the Lord was more powerfully present.”<sup>43</sup> To understand these three aspects of a preacher’s duty, one should think more broadly on what it meant to be a preacher or a missionary: it was not just sermonizing but singing and praying aloud as well.

Descriptions not just of evangelistic meetings but also of public worship meetings from this period show that ministers sang, prayed, and spoke. In his diary for 1825, Free Will Baptist circuit preacher Abel Thornton recorded the standard practice in this way: “After opening the meeting by singing and prayer, Br. Asa Dodge preached to the people.”<sup>44</sup> A similar formulaic description fills the 1840s minutes of Methodist conferences. Those minutes commonly record that a particular individual opened the conference by “reading a portion of the scripture, singing and prayer” or that the conference was “opened by reading, singing and prayer by” a particular person.<sup>45</sup> Ministers’ descriptions of how they opened meetings make it clear that they sang in some form—with the “singing” possibly meaning “lining out” (see below)—then prayed.<sup>46</sup> One Methodist minister recalled of his youth in Missouri in the 1840s, “I would have gone a hundred miles to Conference if for nothing else but to hear the preachers sing.”<sup>47</sup>

Their own accounts show that, in evangelizing at least, Mormon missionaries often followed the pattern of Protestant circuit preachers. In March 1833, William McLellin wrote that, when preaching to potential

converts, “I sung considerable, then opened by prayr and addressed [the congregation].”<sup>48</sup> George A. Smith wrote descriptively of how he and his companion, Lyman Smith, conducted proselyting meetings in Ohio and Virginia. On June 6, 1835, for example, “As brother Lyman was the oldest, he agreed to preach first. . . . He read the 33rd Chapter of Jeremiah and prayed, gave out a hymn which he sung and then preached five minutes.” Two summers later, after being forbidden to preach in a local meeting-house, Smith stood on a pile of staves, “gave out a hymn and preached.” Later he held a preaching meeting of which he reported, “I read a long chapter, and two long hymns . . . and [preached] two and a half hours.”<sup>49</sup> Jonathan Crosby wrote that during his 1838 mission to Ohio, he and his companion visited a home where they “preached & sang to them half the night.”<sup>50</sup> Lewis Barney recalled that in late 1838, two Mormon elders set up a meeting that he attended. “At the opening services they sang the hymn, ‘Let Zion in Her Beauty Rise, Her Light Begins to Shine,’ after which they prayed.”<sup>51</sup> Wandle Mace recorded a similar meeting in the winter of 1837–38 when Parley Pratt and Elijah Fordham had come to the home of a Mrs. Dexter to administer to her daughter. “Together they sang [‘Now Let Us Rejoice’] to soft pleasant music. . . . After singing, Elder Pratt offered a prayer and then explained the principles of the gospel.”<sup>52</sup> Even when baptizing converts, a Mormon elder might sing. Wilford Woodruff wrote in 1838 that “after Singing a hymn I led a man down into the water and Baptized him.”<sup>53</sup>

Given these common practices, it seems reasonable that at least some early LDS worship meetings (especially conferences) followed the pattern we see in contemporaneous Protestant meetings. That is, when we read that a Mormon meeting was opened “by singing and prayer by” a particular person, that person might well have done the singing in addition to the praying. It would have seemed only natural for these “brother ministers” to follow a procedure they had practiced in their missionary labors and which was the standard practice in frontier Protestant churches.

## **Lining Out**

What then was the role of congregational singing? We may never fully know. But we have to consider that solo singing by a preacher and group singing by a congregation were often linked by the practice of “lining out” (or simply “lining”) the hymns. Although seldom discussed nowadays, probably the greatest debate in nineteenth-century American church music concerned this way of singing. And since phrases like “giving out”



a hymn or “leading in singing” often pertained to lining out, we should consider it as a possible practice in the early LDS Church.

As commonly done in Protestant churches of the day (and still done in some), lining out the hymns consisted of several steps. First, the hymn leader—usually the minister or someone he appointed—started singing a tune without words. Those who recognized it joined in heartily. Those who did not made a valiant attempt at singing along. The first category of singers sang slowly but emphatically—partly for the benefit of the second category—but they also embellished the tune, decorating it with grace notes and sliding tones to demonstrate their religious fervor. Those who did not know the tune, of course, dragged behind the already slow singing of those who did know it.

After the singing of the tune, the leader hastily chanted or sang one or two lines of the hymn text. The congregation then sang those lines back, setting them to the appropriate part of the tune they had just sung. As they finished, the leader chanted one or two more lines and the congregation sang them back. They continued this call-and-response singing until the hymn was completed (or the leader stopped leading)—always one or two lines at a time. The leader chanted quickly and precisely; the congregation sang slowly and loudly.<sup>54</sup>

Although lining out may strike us as awkward and tedious, it had practical origins. In 1645, Presbyterian reformers explained, “For the present, where many in the congregation cannot read, it is convenient that the minister, or some other fit person appointed by him and the other ruling officers, do read the Psalm, line by line, before the singing thereof.”<sup>55</sup> By the next century, not being able to read was often less a matter of literacy than of access; many churchgoers did not own hymnbooks (the standard pocket-size variety) and even those who did would seldom have the same collection or edition as their peers. So when a hymn was announced, even a literate congregation might have trouble getting to its words. William Warren Sweet wrote that, even in the early nineteenth century, “frequently no one in the congregation possessed a hymn book except the preacher, who gave out the verses, two lines at a time.” Only as a congregation learned hymns by repeating them often was it “able to sing them without the process of lining out.”<sup>56</sup>

Lining the hymns became known as “old way” or “usual way” singing. These two terms suggest what this style of singing meant to its practitioners. First, it was *old*—that is, traditional or original. Lining was to them the only true form of singing hymns, the way hymns were performed in biblical times (they believed) and again during the Reformation. Second, it was *usual*—the way most American Protestant congregations sang hymns

from colonial days through the mid-nineteenth century, especially if those congregations pursued “authentic” or “pure” Christian worship.

With such virtues to commend the old way of singing, an Ohio conference of Methodists resolved on August 29, 1834, “that all preachers in this conf be instructed to line their Hymns in all our publick congregations.”<sup>57</sup> On this matter, Methodists wanted to be in step with most reformist Christian groups—Puritans, Baptists, Reformed Presbyterians, Mennonites, Amish, and so forth—who perpetuated the practice in their revivals, camp meetings, and public worship meetings of the late eighteenth through mid-nineteenth centuries in America. Even as late as 1846, an American music historian wrote that “to this day, [lining the hymns] prevails over three-fourths of the territory of the United States.”<sup>58</sup>

But from the early 1700s on, many trained musicians objected to lining out and to that “screeching, dragging style that is too common in this country.”<sup>59</sup> They wanted singing that would not break up the tunes. Some even insisted that hymns never be sung by the untrained voices of a congregation but rather by trained choirs. Their bias was toward what was known as “regular singing,” sometimes called “continuous singing” or “singing by note,” in which singers sang only what was on a printed page of music (thus regulating the singing with written notes). Training singers to do that necessitated singing schools, community classes run by a musically educated teacher who could convey the “rules” of music (basic theory, proper tone production, and so forth).

### **Choirs and Regular Singing**

Most mid-nineteenth-century nonmetropolitan American congregations opposed regular singing, choirs, and musical instruments in church—all state-church practices that were inappropriate in the New World. As late as 1854, the antichoir members of an Ohio Methodist congregation heckled the choir whenever it tried to sing, hoping to “bring discredit on the singers by creating discord.” One heckler defended his tactics by arguing that “there could not be a revival of religion with a Choir tolerated in the Church . . . [because] choir singing originated with the devil.”<sup>60</sup> In another midwestern Methodist church in about the same year, members of the choir, weary of being condemned by some of their hearers, quit coming to meetings and let the multitude musically fend for itself. Of these schismatic meetings one writer recalled that “sometimes one [choir member] was present, and sometimes all; and sometimes the choir would sing, and sometimes there was no singing by any body in the church.”<sup>61</sup>

In 1840, a large group of Ohio Presbyterians publicly defended lining out by tracing it back to the Hebrews, the early Christians, and the Reformers. Their leader went on to explain, “It is often objected that the reading of the line interrupts the singing and ‘spoils the music.’ Well, the singing is indeed necessarily and temporarily interrupted; but edification is thereby promoted; and suppose the music [is] marred, or even ‘spoiled,’ what then? Is the chief end now to *worship the music*? This is idolatry, however refined.” Regular singing, he said, was “an outrage upon Divine institution, a violation of solemn vows, and a manifest insult to common sense.”<sup>62</sup> As late as 1862, the *Associate Presbyterian* called regular singing a “stupendous Babel” by which “persons may become infatuated by music” until “artistic display takes the place of decent and unified praise to God.” Once a church adopts singing by note, “an insuperable barrier is soon presented, and a large number in each congregation, not having suitable qualifications, are deprived of joining in.”<sup>63</sup>

In 1827, Alexander Campbell also taught against regular singing: “Psalm and hymn singing, like every other part of Christian worship, has been corrupted by sectarianism.” To learn hymns in a singing school, he wrote, was a “desecration” of the hymns. Although he produced a hymnbook for his followers, he objected to hymnbooks with printed music, arguing that he would “prefer to have an organ, or a fashionable choir as a means of my worship than the words of a hymn set to the notes of a tune on which to fix my eyes while engaged in the worship of God.” For Campbell, lining the hymns was the true order. Congregations should learn the hymns’ music by ear and therefore by heart.<sup>64</sup>

So the question, of course, is whether early Latter-day Saints lined the hymns. I have found no direct evidence that they did, other than the few suggestive references to “giving out” a hymn (which generally meant some form of reading the text aloud before singing it) or “leading in singing” (which seems to mean something different from beating time). Beyond those statements, there are four good reasons why, if early LDS congregations sang, they may well have wanted to line out their hymns. First, since Mormon converts came out of many other churches (or no church), they shared no common hymnody. If congregations were expected to sing, they expected at least some hymns to be lined out for them. Second, since LDS converts were clearly attracted to the idea of a “restoration” of the primitive Church, at least some of them would expect lining the hymns as a sign of authenticity; widespread and long-held tradition maintained that lining was the biblical standard. Such converts might have resisted anything that smacked of popery or the high Protestant traditions of European state churches. Third, while most LDS converts were probably literate (at least if

the Book of Mormon played a role in their conversion), they had no restoration hymnbook to sing from until the book compiled by Emma Smith. Even after that book appeared in 1836, it would have taken some time for it to proliferate among the communities of the Saints.<sup>65</sup> Fourth, while new converts kept joining, LDS authors kept writing new hymns. Each new hymn needed to be taught in some way to a congregation. Lining out was the tried and true method.

But regular singing had strong advocates in early Mormonism. Joseph Smith Sr. endorsed it, according to William Smith, who wrote that his father “was a teacher of music <by> note to a concidera[b]l[e] extent.”<sup>66</sup> That would likely bias Joseph Jr. toward regular singing, though he apparently did frequent camp meetings and Methodist services where the old way of singing prevailed.

### Things New and Old

In the end, it was the Lord’s instruction for the Saints to erect a temple that seems to have tilted the scales toward regular singing. A costly building for worship—the kind primitivists such as Alexander Campbell had vigorously opposed—seemed to require high-church traditions of formality, dignity, and aestheticism. Believing that such a temple needed a choir, Joseph Smith recruited a newly baptized singing teacher to organize one. The tension that must have surrounded such a move is suggested in Smith’s journal account of it. He wrote on January 4, 1836, that he met at the chapel “to make arrangements for a Singing School.” There, “after some altercation,” he wrote, “a judicious arrangement was made, a comittee of 6 was chosen, to take charge of the singing department.”<sup>67</sup>

A Mormon singing school bespoke a basic dichotomy in the early Church. The *Millennial Star* put it succinctly: “In this last dispensation God will send forth, by His servants, things *new* as well as *old*, until man is perfected in the truth.”<sup>68</sup> Those who had converted to Mormonism because of its “restoration” of ancient Christianity were, in principle, pursuing the old. Those same converts then had to accept, often suddenly, the very new—new doctrine, new Church organization, new ordinances, and new social habits. The dilemma became which of the old ways to preserve and cherish as authentic (and not merely habitual) versus which of the new ways to embrace as progress (and not just erosion). For many who had converted from reformist churches such as Campbell’s, from Methodism, or from any of the “seeker” traditions, the old way of singing denoted the genuine church. But the “new way” of singing—with choirs and singing schools—signified to others prophetic advancement, a step in building a

more orderly and beautiful kingdom of God. In singing as in doctrine, old ways suggested security, new ways, growth.

### Trained Musicians

In the fall of 1840, after proselyting in England for a few months, Brigham Young wrote to his wife that the missionaries had converted “a grate meny musisions.”<sup>69</sup> Meanwhile Wilford Woodruff wrote that at Herefordshire “church ministers are alarmed” in part at the “numbers of . . . musicians . . . [being] baptized.”<sup>70</sup> As they emigrated to Nauvoo, these musicians, trained in then-modern European styles (including regular singing), ensured the demise of any old way singing that might have existed in the Church. It is with that thought one should read the editorial on music published in the January 15, 1842, *Times and Seasons*, which praised “the laudable zeal manifested by some of our *musical* friends, to bring about a uniform and tasteful style of sacred singing.” Noting the “different prejudices and habits” of the Saints, the editorial celebrated “the improvements made, and the judicious order established within a few months past.”<sup>71</sup> As accounts of Nauvoo church meetings increasingly referred to hymns by their *numbers* in the hymnbook—not their names—it became clear that hymn singing now centered on the printed page. And as Mormonism entered its second generation, hymn texts gradually attached to specific tunes. Mormon hymnody was crystallizing, and by 1844 the first Mormon hymnbook with printed musical notation had appeared—not in Nauvoo, though, but in Vermont, the state where the Prophet had been born.<sup>72</sup>

Mormon hymn singing probably echoed that of many rural American churches that tried to domesticate their revivalist past. But Latter-day Saints may have felt a shift more abruptly since, just two generations after the American Revolution, well-schooled British converts were flooding into their community and taking over the sacred musical life of the Church. Not only did regular singing prevail, but choirs and singing schools also flourished alongside instrumental music; even British-style brass bands played in some worship meetings. One can only wonder how such blandishments might have discouraged American-born Saints who rallied to Mormonism for its restoration of the true Church.

Nevertheless, even in the mid-twentieth century, the Church Music Committee (heir to Joseph Smith’s “singing department”) attempted a rapprochement with the old way. In 1952, the committee recommended to the Presiding Bishopric that the leader of a meeting should *read* “distinctively and effectively” the first verse or at least the first line of each hymn that was

to be sung. The Presiding Bishopric approved the recommendation and on March 25, 1953, sent a letter to all bishoprics telling them to “revive” this practice.<sup>73</sup> But by all accounts, the recommendation never caught on.

## Conclusion

Now, looking back from the early twenty-first century, what can we confidently say about which hymns early Latter-day Saints sang and how they sang them? We can say what historians must always say about earlier generations: they were like us and not like us. Early Latter-day Saints were like us in that they valued musical worship and seem to have had favorite hymns. But they were not like us in several ways. Their seemingly favorite hymns seldom became ours. They sometimes sang hymns that never appeared in a Mormon hymnbook. In some meetings, the same individual may have sung a hymn, prayed, and spoken. Many Saints—especially those scattered in the branches of the Church—probably thought lining out was the “true” way to sing as a group. And at least some of those Saints probably wondered if choirs or singing schools could be approved by God.

A list of probabilities is as close as we may come to knowing what and how Latter-day Saints in the 1830s sang. But perhaps that is enough to uproot some of our common assumptions about hymn singing in the newly restored Church.

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An earlier version of this paper was read at the annual conference of the Mormon History Association, May 22, 2004, Provo, Utah. My thanks go to Lynn Carson, who long ago shared with me some of the hymn collation on which I have expanded; also to Ron Barney for pointing me to some of the sources I used.

1. From the preface to Campbell’s own hymnbook, first published in *The Christian Baptist* 5 (December 3, 1827): 105.

2. See Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1989), especially 146–61.

3. See Matthew A. Crawford, “Branches of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints: 1830–1834” (master’s thesis, Brigham Young University, 2007), 151–87. An excellent online overview of the establishment of branches may be found on <http://saintswithouthalos.com/n/branches.phtml>. See also Journal History of the Church, December 31, 1833, 6, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, also available on *Selected Collections from the*



*Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 2 vols. (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 2002), vol. 2, DVD 1, microfilm copy in Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

4. "Progress of the Church of the Latter Day Saints," *Evening and Morning Star* 20 (May 1834): 318.

5. See *Journal History*, February 1836, 1 (DVD 1).

6. For an account of the hymn singing and devotional that took place among the Smith family on shipboard to Kirtland, Ohio, see Lavina Fielding Anderson, ed., *Lucy's Book: A Critical Edition of Lucy Mack Smith's Family Memoir* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2001), 533–34.

7. This number, of course, does not include "overlapping" mentions, where more than one source mentions the hymns sung at the same meeting. As to my research process, for twenty years I have steadily researched Mormon musical history, and I have noted each hymn title in every source I could find from this period (1830–38) as well as the Nauvoo period (through 1846). I have gone through carefully, page by page: (1) all of the sources that Milton V. Backman Jr. compiled and Peter Crawley transcribed from this period and put online at <http://www.boap.org/LDS/Early-Saints>; (2) every source in the text and CD-ROM that accompanies Mark L. McConkie, *Remembering Joseph: Personal Recollection of Those Who Knew the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2003); (3) every time-relevant source in *Selected Collections from the Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*; (4) *History of the Church, Far West Record*, the *Journal History*, and all other extant official minutes, published or unpublished; (5) all LDS newspapers published through the end of the Nauvoo period; (6) many other journals, diaries, and autobiographies, published or unpublished and archived in the historical department of the Church, special collections at BYU, and so forth. (The full citations to these sources appear in notes above and below this one.) Mine should be taken as a thorough but not fully comprehensive count, since minutes or descriptions of meetings will doubtless still emerge.

8. Emma Smith, *A Collection of Sacred Hymns for the Church of the Latter Day Saints* (Kirtland, Ohio: F. G. Williams and Co., 1835). The hymnbook, while bearing the imprint date of 1835, did not come out until sometime in early 1836. I say this based on the statements of W. W. Phelps in journal entries (typescript in Harold B. Lee Library) for November 28 and December 2, 1835, in which he was still reading and correcting proofs for the hymnbook; also letters of Phelps excerpted in the *Journal History*, in which, as of November 14, he had written to his wife Sally that "the hymn book is not likely to progress as fast as I wish" (p. 1, DVD 1), and on April 2, 1836, Joseph Smith wrote that the Doctrine and Covenants (also dated 1835) was not yet bound—the hymnbook, of course, would have come after that book of revelations in priority. See also the brief essay on the hymnbook in Peter Crawley, *A Descriptive Bibliography of the Mormon Church: Volume One, 1830–1847* (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1997), 57–59.

9. On the list I have had to choose whether to use a title or a first line (when the two differ); some hymns are mentioned both ways. In at least one case, I used the more formal first line ("Religion, Which the Soul Must Have") for a hymn more commonly known by its nickname, "The Sectarian Cudgel."

10. Fred C. Collier and William S. Harwell, *Kirtland Council Minute Book* (Salt Lake City: Collier's Publishing, 1996), 124–29.

11. For an overview of this and other sections and themes in the first LDS hymnbook, see Mary D. Poulter, “Doctrines of Faith and Hope Found in Emma Smith’s 1835 Hymnbook,” *BYU Studies* 37, no. 2 (1997–98): 32–56. For a survey of Mormon hymn historiography before Poulter, see my essay “The Performing Arts and Mormonism: An Introductory Guide,” in David J. Whittaker, ed., *Mormon Americana: A Guide to Sources and Collections in the United States* (Provo, Utah: BYU Studies, 1995), 540–41.

12. William Smith, “Notes Written on ‘Chambers’ Life of Joseph Smith” (ca. 1875), in *Early Mormon Documents*, comp. and ed. Dan Vogel, 5 vols. (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1996), 1:487. This recollection may pertain to a period before the Church was organized.

13. John Murdock, Journal (1792–1864), typescript, 8, in Harold B. Lee Library, also at <http://www.boap.org/LDS/Early-Saints/JMurdock.html>.

14. Early Methodist conferences held love-feasts monthly, but this practice seems to have evolved into quarterly or semiannual feasts by the early nineteenth century. By the middle of the century, most Methodist congregations held only an annual feast. See Frank Baker, *Methodism and the Love-Feast* (London: Epworth Press, 1957), 41–42.

15. On the dates of the composition of “The Proclamation,” see William Wines Phelps, Diary, February 14 and 21, 1835, LDS Church History Library. The “proclamation” name probably comes from Exodus 32:5, where Aaron makes a proclamation to a feast; the phrase “feast of fat things” comes from Isaiah 25:6.

16. Emma Smith, *Collection of Sacred Hymns*, 46, 48.

17. W. W. Phelps, December 16, 1835, Journal History, 1 (DVD 1).

18. For this quotation and more on the feasts in Kirtland, see Mark L. Staker, “‘Thou Art the Man’: Newell K. Whitney in Ohio,” *BYU Studies* 42, no. 1 (2003): 114–15.

19. This song appears in many sources of the period, with slight variations in the text. This version appeared in Brigham Young, Parley P. Pratt, and John Taylor, comps., *A Collection of Sacred Hymns for the Latter-day Saints, in Europe* (Manchester: W. R. Thomas, 1840), 283.

20. William F. Cahoon Autobiography, in Stella Cahoon Shurtliff and Brent Farrington Cahoon, eds., *Reynolds Cahoon and His Stalwart Sons* (Salt Lake City: Paragon, 1960), 81. See also <http://www.boap.org/LDS/Early-Saints/WFCahoon.html>.

21. Joseph Smith Jr., *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2d ed., rev., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1971), 2:181–89.

22. See the August 2, 1838, entry excerpted from Samuel Tyler’s diary of the Kirtland Camp record reproduced in the Journal History, October 4, 1838, 15 (DVD 1).

23. See Phelps, Diary, June 3, 1835.

24. This is the text as it appeared in its first publication, *Latter Day Saints’ Messenger and Advocate*, June 1835, 144. By the time the first hymnbook was published, the opening words had been changed to “this earth.” Emma Smith, *Collection of Sacred Hymns*, 29.

25. *History of the Church*, 3:38–39.

26. The most significant singing of this song after 1838 was probably the following year, at the clandestine cornerstone laying of the Far West Temple. See Elden J. Watson, comp. and ed., *The Orson Pratt Journals* (Salt Lake City: Watson, 1975), 99–100. Revisions of the song would emphasize the future of the place more than its present.

27. Emma Smith, *Collection of Sacred Hymns*, 9.

28. See Donald Q. Cannon and Lyndon W. Cook, eds., *Far West Record: Minutes of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830–1844* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1983), 19–20.

29. Benjamin Brown, *Testimonies for the Truth* (Liverpool: S. W. Richards, 1853), 6.

30. The three others that appear in the current hymnbook are “He Died, the Great Redeemer Died” (no. 192), “O God, Our Help in Ages Past” (no. 31), and “Let Zion in Her Beauty Rise” (no. 41).

31. For an example of this, see the setting of “Now Let Us Rejoice” in J. C. Little and G. B. Gardner, *A Collection of Sacred Hymns for the Use of Latter Day Saints* (Bellows Falls, Vt.: Blake and Bailey, 1844), 12–13.

32. I am more cautious in linking texts to tunes than Kurt Kammeyer in his website <http://www.earlyldshymns.com> and the several books of “original tunes” he markets there. Nevertheless, this site gives some interesting and plausible suggestions of appropriate tunes—although it is all necessarily based on published tunes, not orally transmitted ones. And oral transmission was certainly the norm in this era.

33. See, for instance, Cannon and Cook, *Far West Record*, 151, 153, 159, 163, 191, 193, 198, 208, and 209.

34. Cannon and Cook, *Far West Record*, 121, 189.

35. Lindon W. Cook and Milton V. Backman Jr., eds., *Kirtland Elders’ Quorum Record, 1836–1841* (Provo, Utah: Grandin Book Company, 1985), 40–41.

36. In Dean C. Jessee, ed. and comp., *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, rev. ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 2002), 132. I should note that the record of meetings of the Seventies (in *Journal History*) for this period contains no references to singing but often describes the person who prays then speaking to the group.

37. Erastus Snow, “Sketch Book No. 1” (Journal, 1818–December 1837), image 61, *Selected Collections*, vol. 1, DVD 31.

38. Jan Shipps and John W. Welch, eds., *The Journals of William E. McLellin, 1831–1836* (Provo, Utah: BYU Studies; Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 99.

39. Collier and Harwell, *Kirtland Council Minute Book*, 95.

40. These terms are used so frequently and without explanation that one cannot be sure of their exact meaning or how much nuance might distinguish one’s connotations from another’s. But my reading of many primary and secondary sources leads to my giving the terms an essentially common meaning.

41. William Warren Sweet, *Circuit-Rider Days in Indiana* (Indianapolis: W. K. Stewart, 1916), 23. See E. M. Marvin, *The Life of Rev. William Goff Caples, of the Missouri Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South* (Saint Louis, Mo.: Southwestern Book and Publishing Co., 1870), 178, on this practice in 1864.

See also C. A. Malmsbury, *The Life, Labors and Sermons of Rev. Charles Pitman, D.D., of the New Jersey Conference* (Philadelphia: Methodist Episcopal Book Rooms, 1887), 20, 67, 100–101, 157; these pages discuss both the format and the eloquence of Pitman's singing of the hymns before he preached.

42. Jesse Lee, *A Short History of the Methodists in the United States of America* (Baltimore: Magill and Clime, 1810), 284.

43. Minton Thrift, *Memoir of the Rev. Jesse Lee with Extracts from His Journals* (New York: N. Bangs and T. Mason, 1823), 86.

44. Abel Thornton, *The Life of Elder Abel Thornton* (Providence: Office of the Investigator, 1828), 83.

45. Such records are found in Sweet, *Circuit-Rider Days*, 225–65.

46. One variant of lining out was simply to begin singing into a large crowd during a camp meeting. Often preachers did this just to calm the confusion when people were overcome by the “jerks” or other strange physical demonstrations, often accompanied by shouting and moaning. This leading out in singing would gradually draw a congregation into its spell. Soon the congregation would begin to sing along, though still in a rowdy, freestyle collage of self-expression. See, for example, Frances Trollope, *Domestic Manners of the Americans*, ed. Donald Smalley (1832; New York: Vintage, 1949), 171, 174. See also Charles A. Johnson, *The Frontier Camp Meeting: Religion's Harvest Time* (Dallas: Southern Methodist University, 1955), 141. On some occasions any member of a congregation might start singing a hymn and hope that the rest—or some fraction of them—would take up the song. See the anonymous *Brother Mason the Circuit Rider; or, Ten Years a Methodist Preacher* (Cincinnati: H. M. Rulison, 1856), 18–19, 23–24, 32–33, 135.

47. Marvin, *Life of Rev. William Goff Caples*, 168. Consider also, for example, the many laudatory references to the singing of Rev. Thomas Stewart in W. G. Stewart, *A Memoir of the Life and Labors of the Rev. Thomas G. Stewart* (Philadelphia: Collins, 1858), 143–44, 166–67, 173, 198–99.

48. Shipp and Welch, *Journals of William E. McLellin*, 103.

49. These quotations are from George A. Smith, *Memoirs* (scans of holographs in *Selected Collections*, vol. 1, DVD 32), June 6, 1835, 62, Summer 1836, 93, and [August] 1837, 100, respectively.

50. “Autobiography of Jonathan Crosby,” microfilm of holograph, 18, in Harold B. Lee Library, also online at <http://www.boap.org/LDS/Early-Saints/JCrosby.html>.

51. Lewis Barney, *Autobiography*, typescript online at <http://www.boap.org/LDS/Early-Saints/LBarney.html>; also available in Lee Library. See also *The Life of Lewis Barney as Written by Himself: September 8, 1808–November 5, 1894* (Duncan, Ariz.: Clifford Page Sanders, 1988), 18.

52. Wandle Mace, *Journal*, typescript, 7, online at <http://www.boap.org/LDS/Early-Saints/WMace.html>; also available in the Lee Library.

53. Wilford Woodruff, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal, 1833–1898, Typescript*, ed. Scott G. Kenney, 9 vols. (Midvale, Utah: Signature Books, 1983–84), 1:222 (January 16, 1838).

54. Among the many published discussions of the practice's history, see especially Henry Wilder Foote, *Three Centuries of American Hymnody* (Hamden, Conn.: Shoe String Press, 1961), 373–82; Johnson, *Frontier Camp Meeting*, 123, 195; Alan Lomax, *Notes to The Gospel Ship: Baptist Hymns & White Spirituals from the*

*Southern Mountains* (New York: New World Records, 1977), 1. The latter recording has some excellent recorded examples of the practice. The most ample technical descriptions of the technique are in Beverly Bush Patterson, *The Sound of the Dove: Singing in Appalachian Primitive Baptist Churches* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 52–53 and 85–167; see also Nicholas Temperley, “The Old Way of Singing: Its Origins and Development,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 34, no. 3 (Fall 1981): 511–44.

55. From the Presbyterian “Directory for Worship,” quoted in David Steele, *Continuous Singing in the Ordinary Public Worship of God, Considered in the Light of Scripture and the Subordinate Standards of the Reformed Presbyterian Church; In Answer to Some Letters of Inquiry Addressed to the Writer* (original date unknown, ca. 1870), online at [http://www.covenanter.org/Steele/continuous\\_singing.htm](http://www.covenanter.org/Steele/continuous_singing.htm).

56. William Warren Sweet, *Methodism in American History* (New York: Abingdon, 1961), 151. Lining out also deepened the experience of singing a hymn. Few things mattered more to a minister than for a congregation to apprehend a hymn’s meaning, as suggested in the Methodist Discipline’s instruction to preachers: they were to *stop* the singing “often” to ask if the singers had comprehended what they sang, saying: “Now! Do you know what you said last? Did you speak no more than you felt?” “Of the Spirit and Truth of Singing,” in *The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America* (Philadelphia: Henry Tuckniss for John Dickins, 1798), 122. Beyond enhancing the hymns’ meaning, lining out also symbolically bonded the leader with the congregation. Each hymn became a unifying ritual with the rhythm of a slow, meditative dance.

57. From the Journal of James Gilruth for that date, published in William Warren Sweet, *Religion on the American Frontier, 1783–1840: The Methodists* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1946), 393.

58. George Hood, *A History of Music in New England with Biographical Sketches of Reformers and Psalmists* (Boston: Wilkins, Carter, and Co., 1846), 200.

59. *Brother Mason the Circuit Rider*, 230.

60. From the autobiography of James Jackson McIllyar (1816–1907), cited in Wallace Guy Smeltzer, *Methodism on the Headwaters of the Ohio: The History of the Pittsburgh Conference of the Methodist Church* (Nashville: Parthenon, 1951), 212.

61. See *Brother Mason the Circuit Rider*, 157–58, 278.

62. From Steele, *Continuous Singing*.

63. The quotations are from the article by “M. R.” entitled “Ancient and Modern Mode of Singing the Psalms,” *Associate Presbyterian* 4 (September 1862): 462–66.

64. The statements by Campbell are quoted in Dale A. Jorgenson, *Theological and Aesthetic Roots in the Stone-Campbell Movement* (Kirksville, Mo.: Thomas Jefferson University Press, 1989), 198, 206–7.

65. See Crawley, *A Descriptive Bibliography of the Mormon Church: Volume One, 1830–1847*, 59.

66. William Smith, “Notes,” 489.

67. Jessee, *Personal Writings*, 152; italics added. When this passage was prepared for publication in the official Church history, the word was changed from “altercation” to “discussion.” For a larger discussion of the early history of choirs

in the Church, see Michael Hicks, *Mormonism and Music: A History* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 35–54 and 91–108.

68. “Our Father Adam,” *Millennial Star* 15 (November 26, 1853): 780; italics in original.

69. Brigham Young to Mary Ann Angell Young, November 12, 1840, Philip Blair Papers, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City.

70. Wilford Woodruff to Ebenezer Robinson and Don Carlos Smith, October 7, 1940, *Times and Seasons* 2 (March 1, 1841): 331.

71. “Music,” *Times and Seasons* 3 (January 15, 1842): 664; italics in original.

72. See the discussion of this work in Hicks, *Mormonism and Music*, 30.

73. See the memo from the Presiding Bishopric to the Church Music Committee, October 31, 1952, and the letter from the Presiding Bishopric to Bishops and Counselors, March 25, 1953, both in the Church Music Department Subject and Correspondence Files, LDS Church History Library.



# An Epistle of the Twelve, March 1842

*Josh E. Probert*

On March 20, 1842, ten members of the Twelve Apostles composed a long epistle to the Saints in Europe providing directives for immigration. The document reveals the way the Twelve planned to move converts from Europe to the Nauvoo area and the way resources would be provided for the Nauvoo Temple and Nauvoo House. The document also provides a window into the broader contours of Church governance during this formative time and the larger responsibilities of the Twelve after their return from their mission to the British Isles.

The epistle was signed by the members of the Twelve then in Nauvoo: Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, William Smith, Orson Pratt, John E. Page, Lyman Wight, Wilford Woodruff, John Taylor, George A. Smith, and Willard Richards. Parley P. Pratt was in England, and Orson Hyde was in Jerusalem at the time. Willard Richards and William Clayton both created handwritten drafts of the epistle, which are now kept in the Church History Library in Salt Lake City. Richards's copy may have been used when the epistle was transcribed into Joseph Smith's journal contained in the Book of the Law of the Lord, while Clayton's may have been used when the epistle was printed in the *Times and Seasons* on April 1. The epistle was printed with slight variations as a broadside to be taken by John Snider to Parley P. Pratt in Liverpool, England, where the epistle was published in the *Millennial Star*.<sup>1</sup> The broadside measures 47.5 x 30.5 cm and presents the letter in four columns. The broadside is exceedingly rare, as only one is

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1. *Times and Seasons* 3 (April 1, 1842): 735–38; *Millennial Star* 3 (June 1842): 17–20; “An Epistle of the Twelve, To the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, in Its Various Branches and Conferences in Europe, Greeting,” Church

known to exist. It is also housed in the Church History Library. The text appearing on pages 125–31 is that of the broadside.

### **Contents of the Epistle**

After an opening salutation, the Twelve discussed the relation of temporal salvation to spiritual salvation, seeing the two as interrelated. The gathering was a temporal process that required physical resources and planning, and it would bring spiritual blessings as converts learned to be united. The Twelve instructed those who had production skills to come to Nauvoo and build factories and workshops, which would in turn provide more jobs for more immigrants, who would in turn bring more skills, and the cycle would continue. As cash was short, the Twelve urged the Saints to use goods to facilitate a transatlantic trade system whose flow of goods would raise money to cover immigration costs. The Twelve also counseled the Saints in Europe to send whatever material goods they could to the United States with John Snider or another elder to aid with the construction of the Nauvoo Temple and Nauvoo House. The Twelve included the revelation to John Snider from Joseph Smith and assured the Saints in Europe that the construction of these two buildings was urgent and that Nauvoo was the center place for the gathering. There the European Saints would hear the Prophet's teachings firsthand.

The following five themes emerge from the text: First, one senses the boundless confidence of the Twelve. They cast their errand in cosmic scope. Second, the epistle echoes the concern for the poor often expressed in early Latter-day Saint scriptures and sermons. Third, the epistle reveals a theology of suffering in that the Twelve established a positive correlation between suffering and exaltation and included the Saints of the 1840s in the group who endure “the great tribulation,” seen in vision by John the Revelator.<sup>2</sup> Fourth, the letter reveals the importance of the physical in the spiritual quest of Latter-day Saints. The Twelve, like Joseph Smith,

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History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, copy available in L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University.

2. The epistle states that when John the Revelator saw the martyrs as recorded in the book of Revelation, the martyrs included Latter-day Saints of the 1840s. John had promised that those “who had been slain for the word of God” and those who were “beheaded for the witness of Jesus” (Rev. 6:9, 20:4) would be vested in white robes, be crowned, and reign with Christ (Rev. 20:4, 4:4, 6:11). Therefore, both ancient Christians and nineteenth-century Latter-day Saints made sense of suffering by making it part of their soteriology. Later, the “Word and Will of the Lord to the Camp of Israel” would call Joseph Smith’s death “needful” that “he might be honored” (D&C 136:39). And C. C. A. Christensen would in 1865 paint

rejected asceticism. The body was to be attended to at the same time as, if not before, spiritual things. Fifth, the letter reveals that Nauvoo had become the central place of Mormon settlement—it had become the “cornerstone of Zion” (D&C 124:2).<sup>3</sup>

## Background

At the time the epistle was written, Joseph Smith was relying on the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles more than ever before. After the Twelve earned the Prophet’s trust through their unified work in the British Isles from 1839 to 1841, Smith raised their authority in the ecclesiastical structure of the Church, giving them administrative authority inside the stakes of the Church—power they previously held only outside of the organized stakes.<sup>4</sup>

Furthermore, many of the temporal affairs of the Church were transferred to the Twelve. The August 16, 1841, conference minutes report “that the twelve should be authorized to assist in managing the affairs of the Kingdom in this place.” Willard Richards’s diary is rich in its brevity: “Conference: business of the Church given to the Twelve.”<sup>5</sup>

Overseeing immigration was specifically mentioned in the directives to the Twelve—a formidable assignment. Conversion and immigration

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the words of St. Ignatius “The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church” on a register of the *Mormon Panorama* depicting the gunfire in Carthage Jail.

3. On the centrality of Nauvoo in the 1840s, see Glen M. Leonard, *Nauvoo: A Place of Peace, a People of Promise* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 2002), 81–82.

4. Ronald K. Esplin, “Brigham Young and the Emergence of the Twelve to Mormon Leadership, 1839–1841” (PhD diss., Brigham Young University, 1981; Provo, Utah: BYU Studies, 2006), 189–92; James B. Allen, Ronald K. Esplin, and David J. Whittaker, *Men with a Mission: The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in the British Isles, 1837–1841* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992), 314–15. Joseph had other duties: on June 18, 1840, he said, “The time has now come, when he [Joseph] should devote himself exclusively to those things which relate to the spiritualities of the Church, and commence the work of translating the Egyptian records, the Bible, and wait upon the Lord for such revelations as may be suited to the conditions and circumstances of the Church.” Joseph Smith, Memorial to the High Council, Letterbook 2, 148–50, Church History Library; see also Joseph Smith Jr., *The History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2d ed. rev., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1971), 4:137.

5. Nauvoo Minutes, August 16, 1842, and Willard Richards, Diary, expanded version, August 16, 1841, both cited in Allen, Esplin, and Whittaker, *Men with a Mission*, 315–16; see also Joseph Smith Papers, Journals Series Vol. 2, ed. Andrew Hedges and Alex Smith, forthcoming.

were exciting in the abstract.<sup>6</sup> But the actual enactment of the gathering faced huge, real-world obstacles. Leaders had to charter ships, secure food and clothing, and arrange transportation in the United States, all with scarce funds. And once emigrants were with the main body of the Church, leaders helped them find housing and employment, all while fulfilling other Church obligations. Because of the vastness of the project, how to move people from one continent to another and what to do with them when they got there were perpetual concerns of Church leaders for the majority of the nineteenth century.

The most significant challenge Brigham Young and the other Apostles faced in overseeing immigration was the poverty of European converts. The majority of these converts were working-class poor in the British Isles, where poverty had become rampant. Beginning in 1837, the nation encountered a severe depression, and “industry came almost to a standstill.”<sup>7</sup> And with another financial crisis in 1839, bullion specie was scarce, and the reserves in England’s banks were only beginning to replenish by 1842.<sup>8</sup> Conditions were so severe that starvation was not uncommon.<sup>9</sup> George A. Smith wrote of this situation, including its effect on the Saints living in the Staffordshire Potteries:

Of the more than 450 Saints in this District not more than one third of them have full Employment. Many of the Rest Not more than two or three Days per Week and Many have no work at all. Times are growing harder Every Week. Some are turned out of Employ because they have been baptised by the Latter Day Saints.<sup>10</sup>

Heber C. Kimball, who had been in England in 1837, recorded the dramatic change that he saw upon his return in 1840.

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6. This excitement was not without reason: from 1840 to 1846, an estimated 4,800 converts to Mormonism sailed out of Liverpool to the United States. Leonard, *Nauvoo*, 80.

7. James B. Allen and Malcolm R. Thorp, “The Mission of the Twelve to England, 1840–41: Mormon Apostles and the Working Classes,” *BYU Studies* 15, no. 4 (1975): 511.

8. Edward S. Kaplan, *The Bank of the United States and the American Economy* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1999), 159.

9. Allen and Thorp, “Mission of the Twelve to England, 1840–41,” 511. For more on the demographics of English converts, see Malcolm R. Thorp, “The Field Is White Already to Harvest,” in Allen, Esplin, and Whittaker, *Men with Mission*, 323–44.

10. George A. Smith, “History,” December 5, 1840, cited in Allen and Thorp, “Mission of the Twelve to England,” 512.

I was asking some of the brethren what made the peopl look so bad. They said becaus they ware famished for the wont of food. Say they to me thare are hundreds that are starving for the wont of food and other things. I thought thare was misery a nough in Preston. It is nothing to compare with manchester. I asked them if they thought the brethren went hungry. Yes manny of them have not to eat. Times are so hard they cant quit work. Therefore they have to go hungry. Thare has been such a change here in two years as never was known by the oldest men in this land.<sup>11</sup>

The financial condition of the Church and its members in the United States was not good either. The depression from 1837 to 1843—called “the only depression on record comparable in severity and scope to the Great Depression of the 1930s”—greatly affected the Saints living in the United States.<sup>12</sup> In addition to being without homes or jobs after the expulsion from Far West, many Latter-day Saints had lost money with the failure of the Kirtland Safety Society and the Panic of 1837.

Four months after sending the epistle to Parley P. Pratt in Liverpool, a number of the Saints declared bankruptcy, including the Prophet himself.<sup>13</sup> Joseph Smith thus understood the difficulty of the situation not just administratively, but also personally. His journal for December 24, 1841, kept by Willard Richards, reveals his involvement in the Twelve’s plan. It reads, “While conversing with Brigham Young and N. K. Whitney about sending an Agent to England. to establish a cheap & expeditious conveyance for the saints & merchandize to this place. President Joseph said in the name of the Lord we will prosper if we go forward in this thing.”<sup>14</sup> A few days later, Joseph met with members of the Twelve in respect to “the mission of John Snider. & the European conferences.”<sup>15</sup>

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11. Heber C. Kimball to Vilate Kimball, May 27, 1840, cited in Allen and Thorp, “Mission of the Twelve to England,” 512.

12. Milton Friedman, *A Program for Monetary Stability* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1959), 10.

13. Peter Crawley, *A Descriptive Bibliography of The Mormon Church, Volume One: 1830–1847* (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1997), 185–86, citing *History of the Church*, 4:286–87, 400, 402–4, 409–10, 412–13, 600; *Millennial Star* 26:72; Robert B. Flanders, *Nauvoo: Kingdom on the Mississippi* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1965), 58 n. 2, 144–210; Dallin H. Oaks and Joseph I. Bentley, “Joseph Smith and Legal Process: In the Wake of the Steamboat Nauvoo,” *BYU Law Review* 3 (1976): 735–82. An abbreviated version of the last is Dallin H. Oaks and Joseph I. Bentley, “Joseph Smith and Legal Process: In the Wake of the Steamboat Nauvoo,” *BYU Studies* 19, no. 2 (1979): 167–99.

14. Dean C. Jessee, ed., *The Papers of Joseph Smith*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1989–92), 2:344–45.

15. Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 2:345.

John Snider<sup>16</sup> had been appointed as a member of the Nauvoo House Association and was called by revelation to assist in the construction of both the Nauvoo Temple and the Nauvoo House (D&C 124:22–23). After being called to work generally on the Nauvoo House, Snider received a specific call to go to England that paraphrased portions of section 124. He was familiar with England, as he had accompanied Heber C. Kimball and others there in 1837. The revelation calling Snider to England is cited below in the epistle. Snider waited until the spring to leave, hoping for financing to come from Church sources. On March 26, 1842, after receiving “final instructions from the President” and a blessing from Brigham Young, Snider left for England.<sup>17</sup>

The plan for a transatlantic flow of goods was never realized, although the model likely contributed to the later formation of the British and American Commercial Joint Stock Company, founded three years later.<sup>18</sup> The Perpetual Emigrating Fund, formed in 1849, can be seen as a more refined, actionable outgrowth of this plan. Nevertheless, as stated, the epistle is valuable in that it reveals the ways that the Twelve were already directing the affairs of the Church soon after Joseph Smith had given them authority to do so. These included bringing immigrants to the United States, providing for the poor, providing materials for the construction of the Nauvoo Temple and Nauvoo House, and providing goods for the Mormon settlements altogether. The document is valuable in that it reveals these specifics and provides insights into the broader thinking of Church leaders at the time.

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16. John Snider (1800–1875) was a native of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and was converted in 1836 through the work of Parley P. Pratt. For years, scholars and family historians have spelled his last name *Snyder*, which appears to be based in a census record. Yet every original document that mentions him and every signature of his in the LDS Church History Library collection, including share certificates in the Nauvoo House Association, use the spelling *Snider*. Therefore, the contemporary spelling is being used.

17. Jesse, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 2:373.

18. Crawley, *Descriptive Bibliography*, 186, 313.

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## An Epistle of the Twelve,

*To the church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints,  
in its various Branches and Conferences in Europe, Greeting:*

BELOVED BRETHREN, We feel it our privilege, and a duty we owe to the great and glorious cause in which we have enlisted, to communicate to you, at this time some principles, which, if carried into effect, will greatly facilitate the gathering of the Saints, and tend to ameliorate the condition of those who are struggling with poverty, and distress, in this day when the usual means of support seem to be cut short, to the laboring classes, through the depression that every where prevails in the general business mart of the civilized world.

Our situation is such in these last days; our salvation, spiritually, is so connected with our salvation, temporally, that if one fail, the other necessarily must be seriously affected, if not wholly destroyed. God has made us social beings: he has endowed us with capacities for enjoying each others society and it is our duty to bring those powers and privileges into exercise, so far as we can obtain, and for this, it is our duty to strive by all lawful and expedient measures within our reach. While we remain in this state of existence, we need food and raiment; habitations and society; and without these, our enjoyments must be greatly limited, and the real object of our existence diminished, if not wholly destroyed. Though the saints should possess all the common gifts of the spirit of God, and yet remain destitute of these comforts so much needed for the sustenance of their bodies, they would be comparatively miserable; but when they arrive at that state of perfection, and are clothed upon with the more special gifts and power of increasing the widow's oil and meal, or of receiving their food from the Ravens, like Elijah,<sup>19</sup> they will not need to bestow so much attention on every trifle of the passing moment, as they now do: and until that period arrives, they will recollect that to be in the exercise of the fulness of spiritual blessings, they must be watchful and careful to provide things honest in the sight of all men, for the sustenance and comfort of these frail perishable bodies.

That we may be instruments in the hands of God of thus promoting your present and future, temporal and spiritual welfare, we write you at the present time. Many of you are desirous of emigrating to this country, and many have not the means to accomplish their wishes, and if we can assist you by our prayers and our councils to accomplish the desires of your hearts

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19. Elijah's experience is recorded in 1 Kings 17:4–16.

in this thing, so far we will rejoice and be satisfied. You not only want to emigrate to this section of the earth, but you desire also to have some laudable means of comfortable subsistence, after you arrive here, and this also is important. How then shall these things be accomplished, and your souls be satisfied? We answer, by united understanding, and concert of action. You all, or most of you, have trades of different kinds of business to which you have long been familiarized, and in which you would like to continue for the purpose of procuring a subsistence; and a great proportion of your occupation is such, that no employment can be had in this city, or vicinity; for instance, there are no cotton manufactories established here, and many of you know no other business. You want to come here, and when here want to continue your labors, in your accustomed branches of business; but you have no means to get here, and when here there are no factories; and yet factories are needed here, and there would be ready market for all the fabrics which could be manufactured.

Now comes the concert of action; if the church will arise unitedly; if the brethren will individually feel that the great work of the Lord is depending on themselves as instruments, to assist in carrying it forward; and will unite all their means, faith and energy, in one grand mass, all that you desire can speedily be accomplished. A short time only will elapse before you yourselves will be astonished at the result, and you will feel that your desires are more than realized. While the saints are united, no power on the earth, or under the earth can prevail against them; but while each one acts for himself, many, very many, are in danger of being overthrown.

God has promised all things, to those who love him and keep his commandments; then why be afraid that one should get a little more than another, or that one should gain, for a little moment, what another might lose; when Jesus has promised that the faithful shall be one with him, as he is one with the Father, and shall possess all things in the due time of the Lord; not by stealth, not by force, not by the sword, but by the gift of the Father, through faithfulness to his commands; and the more they shall suffer, while they work righteousness on the earth, the greater will be their reward, the more glorious their kingdom, the more extended their power, when they shall arrive in celestial paradise.

Knowing and feeling these things as we do, and having respect unto the recompence of reward to be revealed hereafter, regardless of all necessary privation and labor to accomplish what our master has given us to do; and desiring not to possess the kingdom alone, but that all the honest in heart should be united with us in the great and glorious work of building

up Zion and her stakes, we call upon you, dear brethren, to unite with us, all with one accord, to do, what? To do the very things you desire should be done; to convey you to the place where we are, and then put you in possession of all the means you may need for your support; so that you may enjoy the fulness of the blessings belonging to the sons and daughters of Zion's King.

Had we means, we would not ask your aid: we would gladly send the ship of Tarshish<sup>20</sup> to bear you across the great waters; we would bring you to our homes, to our fire sides; we would provide you habitations, lands and food, when you arrive among us: our hearts are large enough to do all this, and a great deal more. But we have not the means; we have to labor for our own subsistence, as well as attend to those things which are laid upon us of the Lord, and which concern the whole church as much as ourselves. It is not the will of heaven that any one should be put in possession of all things, without striving for them. Where much is given, much is required; and he who has but one talent must be as diligent in the use thereof, as he that has ten, or he will loose [*sic*] his talent and his blessing; and it becometh him who hath but one, five, or ten, to appropriate it in the most economical manner possible, or he will not have enough to bring him hither: and that he who hath but five pounds may have enough and to spare to him who hath but one, or in other words, to *HELP* the *brethren* to accomplish with a *little*, what otherwise would require *much more than they can command*, is the object of this Epistle.

Had we the means, we would send vessels of our own, laden with flour, meat, fruit, and all sea stores necessary for the comfort of the brethren on the water, so that they would have nothing more to do than go on shipboard and land at New Orleans; from thence we would take them on our Steamers, and bring them to this place, for this is the best place for the saints to stop at, at the present. There may be other places where individuals might have the prospect of adding at once more rapidly to their pecuniary interest, than they could here; but we can only say it is the will of the Lord that the saints build Nauvoo, and settle therein or in the vicinity; and we know assuredly, that those who give heed to every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord, will be richer, eventually, and not far distant, than those who may seem to prosper more by following their own inclinations.

Brethren we wish not to control you or your means, it is not for our peace or interest; nay, rather, it is a source of labor, trouble and anxiety to have ought to do with the pecuniary business of the church, which we would gladly avoid, could we do it, and do our duty; could we do it and the

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20. On the ship of Tarshish, see Isaiah 60:9 and 2 Nephi 12:16.

things desired be accomplished, and we stand guiltless where God placed us; and for this reason we desire to make such arrangements as will most tend to leave the business in your own hands, or in the hands of those whom you shall select: men of your own acquaintance, in whom you can repose confidence that they will execute their trust in righteousness: and that our plans may be understood by you, and carried into execution, we have sent unto you our beloved brother, Elder John Snider, the bearer of this Epistle, and other Epistles also previously written by us to you; and we beseech you, brethren, to receive him as a servant of the Most High, authorized according to the order of the kingdom of heaven, and assist him by all lawful means in your power to execute the mission entrusted to him; for great events depend on his success; but to none will they be greater than to yourselves.

Our authority for thus sending brother Snider to you is found in the Law of the Lord, page 36, as follows: “Nauvoo, December 22nd 1841.” “The word of the Lord came unto Joseph the Seer, verily thus saith the Lord, Let my servant John Snider take a mission to the Eastern Continent, unto all the conferences now sitting in that region; and let him carry a package of Epistles that shall be written by my servants, the Twelve, making known unto them their duties concerning the building of my houses, which I have appointed unto you saith the Lord, that they may bring their Gold, and their Silver, and their precious Stones, and the Box Tree, and the Fir Tree, and all fine wood to beautify the place of my sanctuary saith the Lord; and let him return speedily with all means which shall be put into his hands, even so, Amen.”<sup>21</sup>

In this Revelation, the brethren will discover their duty, in relation to the building of the Temple of the Lord in Nauvoo, and the Nauvoo House: and we call upon them with united cry to give heed unto the things written and help to build the houses which God hath commanded, so that Brother Snider may speedily return with means to strengthen the hands of the laborers, and adorn and beautify the Tabernacle of Jehovah.

Brethren while you are thus preparing to send up your offerings to this place, if you will act in concert with our well beloved Brother, Elder Parley P. Pratt, and the regularly constituted authorities of the church in England; and collect as great an amount of Cotton, Linnen, and woolen Goods; Silks, Cutlery, Hardware, &c. &c. &c., even all the varieties of Goods which might be useful in this country, and which can be obtained by the brethren in this time of moneyed scarcity, and forward the same, to us by Brother Snider, or your own agent in company with him, or

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21. The revelation is also found in Jesse, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 2:343–44.

otherwise, and at other times, we will pay you for those Goods in lands, in or out of the city; in houses, cattle, and such kind of property as you may need; and with the goods we will purchase lands &c., flour, meat and all things necessary for a sea voyage, which can be had cheaper here than in England, and charter ships, and forward the same to England, or such places as emigration may require, and bring back in return a ship load of emigrants, at a cheaper rate, than they can now emigrate; while at the same time, those, who remain, can continue to collect and forward merchandize as before, which will give us the means of continuing our purchases here, of keeping ships passing and repassing, and of building manufacturing establishments, ready for the brethren when they arrive in our midst.

While the great depression of the moneyed institutions continues as it now is, the people are compelled to resort to all laudable measures to effect those exchanges of property which are necessary to accomplish their designs in removing from one place to another, and from one kingdom to another; and by a faithful execution of the plans proposed above, much, very much, may be effected in emigration without the aid of cash, or with very little, at the most; and goods may be obtained to advantage for houses and lands which the brethren may have to dispose of, and in payment of debts due them: when it would be impossible for them to sell for cash at any price; or get their pay for debts due them even at a great discount; and thus thousands and tens of thousands may be made to rejoice in this land of plenty, while, were it not for a concert of action, they might remain where they are for years, or never have the opportunity of appearing among us, on this side the great waters, until the morning of the first Resurrection.

But brethren we want to see you here! we long to see *all* here who *want* to be here and none others, for we desire the increase of those who love God and work righteousness, that Zion's cords may be lengthened,<sup>22</sup> and her stakes strengthened; though the country is free to all who will abide her laws, and we have no disposition to cast out any from our midst who will submit thereto. For many particulars in relation to the times and course of emigration, and many other important items connected with the general and particular interest of the church, we would refer you to our former Epistles: and to enter into a particular and minute detail of all items referred to in this Epistle, would be impossible. Brother Snider will enter into the subject more minutely, and with the assistance of the Presidency among you, will unfold the subject so that no one need misunderstand.

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22. Here *BYU Studies* corrects the broadside's spelling "leugthened," perhaps caused by the typesetter turning the n upside down.

The brethren need not suppose that this thing is of our own imagination, simply; or that the result thereof, if fully carried into execution, will be of doubtful character. We have been guided by the spirit of the Lord in our deliberations concerning the matter; and have been instructed, by the Prophet of the Most High, even Joseph, the Seer and Revelator for the church, whose instructions to us, are as the voice of the Lord, and whose admonitions we ever regard as true and faithful, and worthy the confidence of all who profess the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We have been with him in prosperity and adversity, in sickness and health, in public and private, in all situations where man may reasonably associate with each other, and know that his words are true, his teachings sacred, his character unsullied among men of truth; and that he is what the church acknowledge him to be, a man of God, and the spokesman of the Most High unto his people: and we bear this testimony unto the world, calling on all the honest in heart to uphold him by their faith and prayers, that he may live long, enjoy much, and accomplish great things for the kingdom which he has been the honoured instrument of establishing on the earth in these last days, even that he may lead a great multitude into the celestial kingdom.

That the saints may enjoy the teachings of the Prophet; those teachings which can be had only at this place so that they may go on from knowledge to knowledge even to perfection, they want to come up hither: and that the plans before suggested may be facilitated, let some individuals of capital come immediately and build Factories, individuals who have the means, understand the business, and are capable of superintending the concern thereof. There is every natural advantage at this place for facilitating such an order of things; water, wood and coal in abundance; and it only wants the hand of the laborer to bring them forth in form suited to their several uses, and while the gold and the silver is secreted by the hands of unprincipled speculators, let us go forward and accomplish without gold or silver, that which might be more easily and expeditiously done with.

Let the brethren ever remember the admonitions we have so often given, that Zion is not to be built up without labor, fatigue and trial of the faith of many; that when John saw the great company on Mount Zion, he saw those, who had come up through great tribulation; he also saw those who had endured great tribulation after they had arrived, and before the kingdom was completed.<sup>23</sup> The saints of this day are of the number John saw, and those, and those only who are willing to endure tribulation, as good soldiers, without murmuring, will eventually find their names enrolled in the Lamb's book of life, and obtain an inheritance in the Holy

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23. Here the Apostles refer to Revelation 7:14.



city. To all those, who are desirous of sharing in the poverty and sufferings incident to new countries, and the children of the kingdom, we would say, come up hither, and help us to bear the burden and you shall share in the riches glory and honors of the kingdom. And those who, are not willing to suffer afflictions, losses, crosses and disappointments with the people of God, may as well stay away and be destroyed, as to come here and perish; for perish they must who can not abide a celestial Law, and endure to the end in all meekness, patience and faithfulness.

Inasmuch as Elder Levi Richards<sup>24</sup> has asked for council, we would recommend him to return to Nauvoo, as soon as circumstances shall render it convenient.

Praying that you may be blessed with wisdom, intelligence, and perseverance in every good word and work, so that you may accomplish your desires, and help to roll on the great work in which you have enlisted, we subscribe ourselves your brethren and fellow-laborers in the kingdom of patience, Amen.

BRIGHAM YOUNG, Pres't.

HEBER C. KIMBALL,

WILLIAM SMITH,

ORSON PRATT,

JOHN E. PAGE,

LYMAN WIGHT,

WILFORD WOODRUFF,

JOHN TAYLOR,

GEORGE A. SMITH,

W. RICHARDS, Clerk.<sup>25</sup>

To ELDER PARLEY P. PRATT, or the Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in England.

City of Nauvoo, Hancock county Illinois,

March 20, 1842.

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24. Levi Richards (1799–1876) was a teacher, mechanic, and physician, born at Hopkinton, Middlesex County, Massachusetts. Richards was a missionary in England from 1840 to 1843 and again from 1848 to 1853. He was the brother of Willard Richards.

25. Parley P. Pratt, to whom the letter is addressed, had remained in England to supervise the mission and printing office, and Orson Hyde was on his mission to Jerusalem; thus, the signatures of these two members of the Twelve are missing.

# Story Problem

From the deep well of his striped bib overalls  
Father would pull his pocket knife

and score the candy bars—  
always two, always something

with nuts and stretchy caramel  
and covered in thin skins of chocolate.

He'd divide each sweet sentence  
into six carefully equal phrases.

Much later, with five loves of my own,  
I recall his diligent portioning,

his steadying the knife-holding hand  
with the palm of his other,

and leveling his eyes  
before making the final divisions.

He'd disregard what he knew  
of the hour's bone-picked child,

disallowing any inclinations to oversize  
the portion meant for her

or to undercut the portion  
for the chronically grumbling one.

For the fortunate one, he was always  
more than fair.

—Marilyn Bushman-Carlton

*This poem won honorable mention  
in the 2007 BYU Studies poetry contest.*

# Selling the Soul of Science for a Pot of Message Evangelizing Atheism in *The God Delusion*

Steven C. Walker

Bestseller lists for the past two years chart a swelling tide of interest in a long-standing backwater: atheism. Nothing so tame as old-fashioned agnostic doubt, the new wave floods readers with outspoken scientific atheism. Sam Harris's *The End of Faith* (2004) was the earthquake that triggered a tsunami swollen by urgent tributaries from Daniel C. Dennett's *Breaking the Spell: Religion as a Natural Phenomenon* (2006) and Marc D. Hauser's *Moral Minds* (2006), swelled all the more by Harris's reprise *Letter to a Christian Nation* (2006). That atheist tidal wave has yet to crest—Carl Sagan hectors us from the grave in *The Varieties of Scientific Experience* (2006), Lewis Wolpert castigates religion as one of his *Six Impossible Things before Breakfast* (2006), and Christopher Hitchens decries “how religion poisons everything” in *God Is Not Great* (2007). There is getting to be so much scientific atheism that Victor J. Stenger sounds redundant with *God: The Failed Hypothesis* (2006). For all the flotsam crowding their antitheological surfaces, these atheist spokesmen sound, bottom line, a lot alike: science is the sole reliable truth source, so if scientists cannot find him, God is not there.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Sam Harris, *The End of Faith: Religion, Terror, and the Future of Reason* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2004); Daniel C. Dennett, *Breaking the Spell: Religion as a Natural Phenomenon* (New York: Viking, 2006); Marc D. Hauser, *Moral Minds: How Nature Designed Our Universal Sense of Right and Wrong* (New York: Ecco, 2006); Sam Harris, *Letter to a Christian Nation* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006); Carl Sagan, *The Varieties of Scientific Experience: A Personal View of the Search for God*, ed. Ann Druyan (New York: Penguin, 2006); Lewis Wolpert, *Six Impossible Things before Breakfast: The Evolutionary Origins of Belief* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2007); Christopher Hitchens, *God Is Not Great: How*

The most vociferous if not obstreperous apologist for scientific atheism has to be British evolutionary psychologist Richard Dawkins in his most recent diatribe, *The God Delusion*.<sup>2</sup> It is clear from the first page why it is the bestselling standard-bearer for current atheism—this intense defense, far from abstruse treatise, is a rip-snorting read. Dawkins knows his scientific bailiwick backward and forward, parading it so sure-footedly his confidence downplays some dramatic missteps outside his expertise into the minefield of theology. This is high-risk territory, made riskier for this interloper by his scanty religious awareness; yet Dawkins manages some deft moves in his argument for atheism. He is a vivid and, at his best, a witty writer—I cannot remember when I have chuckled so much with any book of philosophy, let alone one so insistently insulting: “This sounds terrific,” Dawkins says about my view of creation, “right up until you give it a moment’s thought” (55).

He is, moreover, surprisingly often right—I say surprisingly because people who are as sure as Dawkins that they are always right are usually wrong. Cocksureness does not obscure some shrewdly compelling arguments on the well-trodden turf of Dawkins’s expertise, as with his point about the improbability of more complex beings (meaning God) appearing early in a process: “*Any creative intelligence, of sufficient complexity to design anything, comes into existence only as the end product of an extended process of gradual evolution*” (31). That is a likely notion: if we are persuaded we are in a process that is getting more complex, things were probably simpler earlier. That is why “the designer hypothesis immediately raises the larger problem of who designed the designer” (158). Even on the subject of God, where Dawkins’s scientific agility degenerates to plodding incomprehension, he manages some telling insights: “Omniscience and omnipotence are mutually incompatible. If God is omniscient, he must already know how he is going to intervene to change the course of history using his omnipotence. But that means he cannot change his mind about his intervention, which means he is not omnipotent” (78). How can God know everything that will happen and simultaneously be able to change it? Though this question has been of little concern to most theological illuminati, Dawkins raises the conundrum intriguingly.

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*Religion Poisons Everything* (New York: Twelve, 2007); Victor J. Stenger, *God: The Failed Hypothesis: How Science Shows That God Does Not Exist* (Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus, 2007).

2. Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006). All italics in quoted material are in the original.

So the atheist spokesman is occasionally adept at theology, generally astute on science. But from so insightful a scientist, from so compelling a writer who knows and cares so much, I had hoped for more. Specifically, I had hoped for more of what seemed to be the inherent strengths of the scientific viewpoint: more objectivity, more balanced fair-mindedness, and above all more openness to possibilities. That hope sank as I read these atheism defenses. These scientists are superlatively good at their way of seeing; problem is, that way is better at deciding what cannot be than at discovering what is, and that is lethal when one tries to think theologically. Looking at the universe from this atheist view feels like cramping everything through a telescope or microscope—wonderfully focused on what can be seen, but drastically restricted by the frame.

I am not suggesting Dawkins is small-minded—anything but. He just keeps his energetic mind on too tight a scientific leash. Dawkins distrusts imagination so much I sometimes wonder if he has any. This distrust limits his perspective, almost as if he is color-blind to theology. He focuses so intently on the black and white of material reality he cannot perceive the slightest tint of theological color. Old-school psychologist William James in *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1905) has far less problem imagining the perspective of the believer.<sup>3</sup> James, with a modicum of imaginative empathy, was able to comprehend what Dawkins may never see: religious evidence may be real evidence; personal evidence of God may be more directly experiential, however much less measurable, than scientific evidence.

For Dawkins, religious thinking—all religious thinking, no matter its quality—is *ludicrous*, a term he applies lavishly:

The ludicrous idea that believing is something you can *decide* to do is deliciously mocked by Douglas Adams in *Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency*, where we meet the robotic Electric Monk, a labour-saving device that you buy “to do your believing for you.” The *de luxe* model is advertised as “Capable of believing things they wouldn’t believe in Salt Lake City.” (104)

That is clever, as Dawkins often is—genuinely funny. But I am too close to Salt Lake City not to notice more cleverness here than substance. Dawkins in this witty diatribe runs unfortunately afoul of William James’s century-old central argument that faith is, at its core and at its best, precisely what Dawkins laughs at—willed decision. James’s thoughtful

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3. William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature* (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1905).

analysis develops this point more substantively, more scientifically, and far more persuasively than Dawkins's mocking dismissal of it.

It is a significant irony that an evolutionary psychologist fails to consider the crucial Jamesian juncture—human will—in the evolution of psychology. It is doubly ironic because the early-twentieth-century crisis of faith, the wake of skepticism that followed nineteenth-century Darwinism itself, was triggered by Freudian psychology. Freud relegated the supernatural to human psychology in much the same way that Dawkins and his cohort of current evolutionary psychologists relegate the numinous to natural selection. That historical lens makes recent evolutionary psychology appear, as Yogi Berra would say, like *déjà vu* all over again. It seems obtuse if not disingenuous for Dawkins and crew not to notice that the science of psychology that prevailed from last century's science-religion confrontation was more inclusive of divinity than Freud, more in the mode of Carl Jung's inscription over his door: "Bidden or not bidden, God is present."

Excommunicating God from the psychological universe at this late date in Darwinian history requires a certain scientific sleight of hand. Dawkins's scientific credo demands (as he thinks all scientists demand, scientists like William James notwithstanding) not just evidence but his kind of evidence: evidence must be observable. By him. He rules out as observation, *de facto*, anything he has not observed or, even more closed-mindedly, anything he cannot imagine observing. Dawkins cannot admit the possibility that another mind could have real experience if he himself is not capable of the experience. He invests much of his argument in the subjectivity of human thought, insisting—I think rightly—that we delude ourselves readily with the machinations of our malleable minds. The underlying problem for him as for me is that our perceptions are not reliable; we can trust only half of what we see, nothing of what we hear, so even less of what we think.

Unless, in Dawkins's mind, we think scientifically. Any kind of thinking within that realm works well enough. Thinking certified as science sounds suspiciously in Dawkinsian epistemology like a kind of scientific faith: "At an intellectual level, I suppose he [physicist and cosmologist Fred Hoyle] understood natural selection. But perhaps you need to be steeped in natural selection, immersed in it, swim about in it, before you can truly appreciate its power" (117). Seeing scientifically for Dawkins is not just another way of seeing, not even the best way of seeing: it is the only way of seeing. Never mind that he readily concedes that scientific seeing, like all our seeing, comes down to human observation and interpretation. Dependent though it ultimately is on unreliable bodily sensation and less reliable



mental construction, the scientific quality of that observation makes it for him sacrosanct.

It is not just the logic that is bad here; it is the science. Dawkins should have learned from his predecessor Francis Bacon that “by far the greatest impediment and aberration of the human understanding” arises because “things which strike the sense outweigh things which, although they may be more important, do not strike it directly.” We cripple our view when our contemplation “ceases with seeing, so much so that little or no attention is paid to things invisible.”<sup>4</sup> Harvard psychologist Daniel Gilbert in *Stumbling on Happiness* pinpoints that scientific blind spot: “Westerners have had a special reverence for conclusions that are based on things they can see.” It is evident that if only tangible reality is seen, what it might contain is missed, and so is what it might become. Dawkins severely underappreciates how much the scientific brain is involved in the act of seeing itself: “The brain and the eye may have a contractual relationship,” continues Gilbert, “in which the brain has agreed to believe what the eye sees, but in return the eye has agreed to look for what the brain wants.”<sup>5</sup>

Scientific atheists really should have seen that. “Constructing models,” Dawkins instructs us, “is something the human brain is very good at. When we are asleep it is called dreaming; when we are awake we call it imagination or, when it is exceptionally vivid, hallucination” (91). Yet when those mental models are Dawkins’s models, scientifically approved models, this dreamily imaginative hallucination of human thought suddenly transcends into *science*, synonymous for him with truth. That mental hubris may spawn the self-righteousness that smirks from Dawkins’s prose. No religionist I know—not even the most fundamentalist preacher—would claim the kind of exclusivity for religious thinking just because it is religious that Dawkins claims for scientific thinking only because it is scientific. Science for him is self-evidently true, not mere “opinion or belief” (366). Rather it is “something that they [the poor benighted believers], when they have understood your reasoning, will feel compelled to accept” (366). Dawkins and his atheist fellows may be the only coterie of thinkers anywhere, certainly the only sane ones, that privilege their way of thinking to the point they cannot give credence to other thought.

I would have thought before reading *The God Delusion* or *The End of Faith* or *God: The Failed Hypothesis* that a scientist would be quicker

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4. Francis Bacon, *Novum Organum* (1620), trans. by Peter Urbach and John Gibson (Chicago: Open Court, 1994), 60.

5. Daniel Todd Gilbert, *Stumbling on Happiness* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), 163, 167.

than a believer to apprehend that though there are better and worse ways of thinking, there is no infallible way of thinking—even if it thinks itself divinely sanctioned, and even, heaven help us, if it thinks itself scientifically self-evident. Most ways of thinking—whether scientific or religious, idealistic or pragmatic, legal or logical, psychological or philosophical, mathematical or metaphorical, hyperbolic or hallucinogenic or however otherwise demented—have weaknesses as well as strengths, with limitations that allow concentration in particular areas.

Science is superbly focused on the world of physical fact. That need not be a problem unless a scientist somehow convinces himself physical fact is all there is. The crippling limitation of materialistic focus is manifest in how many scientists have persuaded themselves that the world of physical fact is the total extent of reality. Christopher Hitchens rules out scripture as “chiefly spiritualist drivel, as one might [apparently with no awareness of the self-fulfilling prophecy of such expectations] expect.”<sup>6</sup> Daniel C. Dennett dismisses the whole of theology as “intellectual conjuring tricks or puzzles rather than serious scientific proposals.”<sup>7</sup> Sam Harris excludes the entirety of religion from the realm of right thinking: “The problem with religion—as with Nazism, Stalinism, or any other totalitarian mythology [except, of course, for science]—is the problem of dogma itself.”<sup>8</sup> Christopher Hitchens takes this reductiveness so far as to persuade himself that the only legitimate thought is modern thought: “Religion comes from the period of human prehistory where nobody . . . had the smallest idea what was going on.”<sup>9</sup>

I have an autistic grandson who is absolutely brilliant in the spheres he can relate to, quite strikingly more tenacious, thorough, and reliable of mind than I or even Dawkins. His inherent limitations—disabilities, really—in other areas remind me of these atheists’ inability to comprehend anything they cannot subject to their senses. The most crucial questions of life for many of us, such fundamental human issues as “Am I in love?” “Is my life making me happy?” “Is there anything more beautiful than a baby’s smile?” “Am I my brother’s keeper?” “Is God really there?” seem to escape Dawkins and like-minded atheists altogether.

Their refusal to admit into their world anything other than what can be measured by their calipers looks a lot like fear of uncertainty, like mental anal-retentiveness, like orderly minds ruling out of consideration

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6. Hitchens, *God Is Not Great*, 113.

7. Dennett, *Breaking the Spell*, 241.

8. Harris, *Letter to a Christian Nation*, 43.

9. Hitchens, *God Is Not Great*, 64.

whatever they cannot order. As nearly as can be discerned from the blurriness of their argument, their privileging of the scientific viewpoint is primarily a matter of overlooking an important point: science can be a hostage to the unreliabilities of observation, as can any other view, and may be more vulnerable than less materialistic perspectives.

Secondarily, their shared blind spot may be a matter of the expectation that evidence be communal as opposed to individual—they think the best human thinking is not unique genius but groupthink, consensus science think. And they think we should all think like them. Worse, they think if we are really thinking, we *will* think like them. They are persuaded that any reliable experience must be repeatable—that is to say, their experiment, their reiteration of the experience, must produce for them the same results it produced for you, or your experience is illegitimate. This seems to me, as the Church Lady on *Saturday Night Live* used to grin, “convenient.” My results can never be valid except when they echo scientific results. That of course makes scientists’ external observations inherently valid and my internal observations automatically invalid because scientists cannot replicate them. It seems obvious everywhere in these atheist polemics, as Dawkins is fond of parodying, that “there are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, / Than are dreamt of in *your* philosophy” (364). The thing that surprises me most about this view is its narrowness. Evident in the central premise of their atheistic argument and everywhere in its scientific details is the pointed fact that these observers are missing things that other people see.

Their science gets in the way of their theology so dramatically that the most persuasive argument for atheism may come from the least credentialed scientist, Sam Harris, in his *Letter to a Christian Nation*. Harris trumps Dawkins’s god of science with the god of reason: “The conflict between science and religion is reducible to a simple fact of human cognition and discourse: either a person has good reasons for what he believes, or he does not.”<sup>10</sup> Harris states that more tellingly than he thinks: it really may come down to what a person “believes.” Ultimately it is hard to trust Harris’s reason any more than Dawkins’s science, because both seem equally solipsistic: “The core of science is not controlled experiment or mathematical modeling; it is intellectual honesty. . . . One is either engaged in an honest appraisal of the evidence and logical arguments, or one isn’t.”<sup>11</sup> What Harris seems to mean is that we can take his logic on faith

10. Harris, *Letter to a Christian Nation*, 66.

11. Harris, *Letter to a Christian Nation*, 64–65.

because he thinks it is honest. Harris, for all the strength of his case against religious rationalizing, is very nearly blind to scientific irrationality.

Compared with more comprehensive theological studies, even those of a light caliber of argument like J. B. Philips's *Your God Is Too Small*, this atheist science seems too small. The myopia that makes for keen-eyed close-ups does not serve well at a distance; the worldview simply does not include enough. Richard Dawkins is fully capable of realizing, for instance, that elimination of a premise does not establish a competing premise: I admire his conclusion that evidence that the world was not created by chance does not prove intelligent design. Yet it does not occur to him, by precisely the same logic, that the establishment of a premise does not necessarily eliminate a competing premise: evidence of evolution does not disprove God's creation.

Dawkins thinks so habitually in terms of either/or that he thinks all scientists think in this mode. "What the religious mind then fails to grasp," he pontificates in a typical proposition, "is that two candidate solutions are offered to the problem. God is one. The anthropic principle is the other. They are *alternatives*" (136)—as in black and white, his italics shouting at us, no room for wishy-washy gray. Thinkers with a broader perspective disdain that kind of dilemma, never referring to it without its faithful sidekick word—*false* dilemma. The reason dilemmas are often false is because Dawkins is not the only mortal who has trouble perceiving shades of grey. Desperate for certitude, we pose exclusive alternatives without it occurring to us (except the carefully logical—legal experts, for instance) that *either/ors* include possibilities of *neither/nors* and, most interestingly in light of Dawkins's arguments, *both/ands*.

Fallacies litter the logical trail of *The God Delusion*. "If [fill in the blank with any behavior, as Dawkins does] wasn't positively useful for survival until reproduction, natural selection would long ago have favoured individuals who refrained from it" (164). However reliable that sort of circular reasoning may be for Dawkins as scientific thinking, it is embarrassing for other thinkers, including other scientific thinkers. For him, the context of science inoculates his thought against fallacy and makes his thinking seem immune to human error. That produces a disorienting tilt to Dawkins's mental disposition: nonscientific kinds of thinking are subjected to the strictest standards of logic, but science thinking, apparently for no better reason than because it is about science, is for him legitimate even when illogical.

Fallacy is not a glitch in Dawkins's argument: it is the way he thinks. Each chapter showcases this: whether it is yet another incarnation of begging the question in "Why There Is Almost Certainly No God," or its

false dilemma form in “How ‘Moderation’ in Faith Fosters Fanaticism,” or its hasty generalization disposition in “Cargo Cults,” or its equivocation aspect in “Childhood, Abuse, and the Escape from Religion,” or its straw-man configuration in “The Poverty of Agnosticism,” or its *post hoc* mode in “Psychologically Primed for Religion,” or in general its false analogy format—his most frequent fallacy and the one in which he is most fluent (my personal favorite is his chortling application of the “Celestial Teapot” analogy)—Dawkins’s scientific thinking about theology comes down again and again to oversimplification.

We understand what he is getting at when he makes a statement like “The only difference between *The Da Vinci Code* and the gospels is that the gospels are ancient fiction while *The Da Vinci Code* is modern fiction” (97). Yes, yes, Dawkins, there may be fictive elements in both texts. But a more comprehensive thinker would wish to qualify any simplification that gross, might even want to point out that there are in fact more differences than similarities between the books, might stretch so far in the direction of accuracy as to indicate that in direct contradiction to his simplistic homogenization, these books are about as different as it is possible for books to be. When Dawkins strains his slight case into statements as untenable as “The God of the Old Testament is arguably the most unpleasant character in all fiction” (31), the only arguable conclusion that any reader who has read any fiction at all can reach is that Dawkins has not.

It is intriguing that Dawkins’s version of the scientific view turns out to be more liable to limited thinking than religious perspectives. People whom Dawkins castigates as superstitious are actually more likely than he to be able to see as causation of life either God or natural selection or both. There are few creationists I have met, even in the deep American South, who have not at least wondered, on seeing evidence of evolution, as to whether that might be the means whereby God created the universe. Dawkins and crew for all their scientific erudition seem congenitally incapable of considering so much as the possibility of the existence of a God who could have created the universe, let alone any kind of related corollary that he might somehow be directing evolution. Even Bible Belters, not always regarded as models of expansive thinking, think more inclusively.

That calculated limitation characterizes *The God Delusion* and its clones. Dawkins grasps scientific concepts so cogently that his misapplication of them elsewhere may come as a shock to readers, as shocking as if someone were to declare on the basis of “The Emperor’s New Clothes” that kings never wear clothes. Dawkins can appreciate the glories of science so thoroughly as to work up missionary zeal about them: “I think about how much the poor fundamentalists . . . are *missing*. The truths of evolution,

along with many other scientific truths, are so engrossingly fascinating and beautiful; how truly tragic to die having missed out on all that!" (283). Tragic indeed—that anyone can see so expansively within his confined scope and yet never have had cross his mind even a shadow of the possibility that he may be rejecting, through a deliberately delimited scientific range of vision, truths at least equally fascinating and beautiful.

The problem, I think, is that for him there is no outside. His compartmentalization of perspective, his "my world is all the world there is" conviction, shows up again and again in his argument. Consider, for instance, his argument about feelings: "I don't want to decry human feelings. But let's be clear, in any particular conversation, what we are talking about: feelings, or truth. Both may be important, but they are not the same thing" (353). Certainly not. Neither, though, are they mutually exclusive. Even if we should buy into Dawkins's implied syllogism that there can be no truth in feeling, no feeling in truth, that schizoid division of our hearts from our heads might still be unwise. Maybe we do not have to divide, let alone choose between feeling and truth as he has; maybe we shouldn't.

Dawkins fears human imagination because of the tricks our minds can play on us. But I keep thinking maybe a little theological imagination on his part, the slightest capacity to think beyond his scientific rut, might make him a richer, even a more reliable thinker. "Polls suggest that approximately 95 per cent of the population of the United States believe they will survive their own death," he states. "I can't help wondering how many people who claim such belief really, in their heart of hearts, hold it" (356). This is not the only or even the most dramatic passage in *The God Delusion* where Dawkins directly informs us that he cannot believe we believe. We believers, on the other hand, readily conceive that he does not believe. This one point is a small statistical sample, but suggestive: perhaps one expansive effect of faithful thinking is to enable a person to credence the internal experience of others, to imagine somehow that the insights of someone who sees differently than we do might in some way have some value, if only for them.

The possibilities Dawkins misses are provocative. What if faith evolved, as every single thing in Dawkins's universe evolves? What if faith evolved not as the mental aberration for fooling ourselves that Dawkins assumes it to be, but for a function? What if faith had a real function, a purposeful function like every other thing that ever evolved, according to Dawkins's reiterated catechism, not excepting the appendix and male pattern baldness and PMS? What if that evolved function were to help us see things we could not otherwise see? After all, eyes did: our aural and kinetic senses are adequate for orientation and even navigation, and touch



is more precise for discernment than vision. But eyes, though they could be considered as extraneous as some construe faith, allow us to perceive things ears and even fingers cannot. What if faith were a kind of spiritual eye, never meant to displace reason nor to replace the material observations of science, but intended as a complement to them? What if faith evolved to enhance human perception, allowing us to see more?

Meanwhile, blissfully immune to what-ifs unless they are his hypotheses, Dawkins sticks to his locked-in scientific values as securely as a fly to flypaper. He is visibly proud of his elevated position, condescending to us primitives in the colonies. Dawkins considers himself smarter than nonbelievers even in the face of the clear fact that he cannot himself detect any intellectual dimension at all in the faith we think so much about. He assumes that because he has not thought about it, it has not been thought about. His position is even shakier than that: he does not think it is possible to think about faith, at least not in the only way that counts—scientifically: “If ever there was a slamming of the door in the face of constructive investigation, it is the word miracle. Once you buy into the position of faith, you begin losing . . . scientific . . . credibility.”<sup>12</sup>

Dawkins can be obtusely arch, positively gloating over the limitations of his view. He gleefully indicts the circularity of reasoning in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*: “Purgatory must exist, otherwise our prayers [for the dead] would be pointless” (360). But here as everywhere Dawkins hangs himself on his own petard of scientific bias. The linchpin of his anticreationist argument is what he terms “the anthropic principle” of creation, which comes down to the astonishingly simplistic argument that “we exist here on earth. Therefore earth must be the kind of planet that is capable of generating and supporting us” (135). Perhaps only Dawkins with his scientific nose in the air could stumble over how much more tautological his “we’re here because we’re here” argument looks than the Catholics’ “we wouldn’t pray if it didn’t work” argument.

Time and time again Dawkins allows his scientific viewpoint to limit his view. No wonder believers do not accept as definitive his theological declarations—he obviously does not think the field of theology exists. For those of us who believe the unexamined religious life is not worth living, his thinking verges disturbingly in the direction of “take it on scientific faith.” His mindset seems constitutionally incapable of any kind of religious perception, his worldview excluding religious experience to the extent that I seriously wonder if he has had any. He evidently has not even thought much about God, though he gets quite belligerent about that:

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12. David Van Biema, “God vs. Science,” *Time*, 168 (November 13, 2006): 54.

“What expertise can theologians bring to deep cosmological questions that scientists cannot?” (56). I would have thought *theological* expertise.

I would have thought everybody, believer and unbeliever alike, would expect God to be thought about if he is to be examined, even scientifically examined. The fact that Dawkins has thought as thoroughly as he has within the constraints of his scientific creed is not map enough for the theological territory he wanders into. It is not nearly enough that he has considered carefully the nonpossibilities of God. Dawkins demonstrates himself in his own conceptual terms to be someone from the “Middle World” (369), his mind convinced through its earthy experience that objects—our washer and our dryer, say, or God and science—cannot occupy the same space. What that limited model leaves out is that there may be levels of being and dimensions of seeing in which neutrinos can pass through solid walls (369) and scientists can actually conceive theology.

For all his astute insight and energetic scientific discipline, Dawkins is, in a word, reductive. My father on his deathbed said a single word, a summary of his life experience as a believer: “more.” Richard Dawkins says over and over in his *God Delusion* argument: “enough.” When we try to tell him there may be more to creation than process, he insists that intelligence only complicates the issue—the *why* does not matter, the *how* is enough. When we propose that agnosticism is a stronger logical position than atheism on the basis of what everyone agrees is inconclusive evidence, he concludes that existing evidence is, for him, evidence enough. When we try to suggest that Occam’s Razor is a superb tool for determining the relative efficiency of theoretical explanations but less effective as a discoverer of life’s fulness, he insists happiness is a will-o’-the-wisp of our imagination, scientific understanding enough. When we point out that our mature experience of God does not really have all that much in common with his theory of the evolution of God, which he likens to childhood imaginary friends like “Binker” (348), he shrugs: close enough. When we hint that it appears to us sometimes that scientists could be the worst group in the world to look to for ethical, let alone moral, insight, he assures us that sufficiently moral for his purposes, purpose enough for his life, is—I kid you not—“a good lunch” (100).

Despite those studied limitations, Dawkins is right on the money about some of his conclusions. Undeniably, religious narrow-mindedness and the destructive perversions that it engenders—from crusades to holocausts, from inquisition to fundamentalism—plague mankind. Yet obvious as that disastrous religious narrow-mindedness is, I just do not see how scientific narrow-mindedness can be its cure. Dawkins focuses so restrictively on the religious dark side that he fails to recognize that faith

provides many with light to guide manifestly positive lives. It is intriguing that his failure to find religion in any way illuminating does not upset believers as much as believers' disbelief in his views upsets Dawkins—we seem less compelled to convert him than he to convert us. Dawkins's assumption there is no God does not disturb me. Why does my conviction there is a God, my personal experience of a relationship with a God he is convinced is not even there, so incense Dawkins?

Could it be frustration at missing things others see? I play tennis with an aging cohort, their eyesights fading. My vision is still 20/20, which I am persuaded permits me to see tennis evidences my colleagues cannot. The resulting contested line calls, very much like my readings of *The God Delusion*, render me incapable of understanding how someone who has failed to see a thing can be surer of what he has not seen than someone who has seen it. Seeing things that are not there, as Dawkins warns, is for us unreliably perceiving humans a definite problem. But a bigger practical problem is not seeing things that *are* there. Far fewer car accidents are caused by hallucination than by failure to observe.

I do not suppose Dawkins could ever agree that I have seen what I have seen, even though I am perfectly willing to agree he has not seen what he has not. Even as agenda-driven a thinker as this deliberately blindered scientist might be, I would hope he might agree that negative evidence can be less persuasive than positive evidence. Even a scientist might admit, were he willing to think about it beyond his usual dismissive range, that the experience of a person who claims to have experience with another Person does more to establish the existence of that Person than the lack of experience of another person does to deny it.

All of which is to say that I find both the matter and the manner of *The God Delusion* and its closer atheist cousins fascinating. This book was a genuine page-turner for me, a rare accomplishment for theology, made more intriguing by the engaging phenomenon of a nontheologian theologizing, impressive in its way as a dog dancing. The writing is lively and compelling, and Dawkins struggles so admirably hard to find the truth that he stumbles on some. As much as he overlooks outside his range of concern, Dawkins is almost as infallible as he thinks on almost everything he examines within his scientific purview: if his world were all there were, he would be absolutely right about the world. And he quarrels with such charming vigor—though the argument for atheism has been put more persuasively, it has never been presented more engagingly. So I am genuinely disappointed this fine thinker and fine writer and obviously fine person allows his science to stultify his theology, to wither his version of the transcendent to something essentially reductive. For all the brilliance

of his scientific insight, Dawkins's dismissal of God ultimately comes down to not much more than

As I was going up the stair  
I met a man who wasn't there.  
He wasn't there again today.  
I wish, I wish he'd stay away.<sup>13</sup>

*The God Delusion's* obsessiveness about divine nonbeing tends, in short, to undercut its claims. It is hard not to feel, in the face of such fervent protestations, that Dawkins, Harris, Dennet, Hauser, Wolpert, Stenger, Sagan, and Hitchens protest too much.

Most believers I have met are better scientists than these scientists are theologians: they simply have not had enough experience with God, not even theoretical mental experience, to comment helpfully on the subject. They are theological equivalents of entomologists who have not bothered to observe an insect. To those who are persuaded of the existence of God, their perspective will seem simplistic—not just color-blind, incapable of perceiving depth and texture, but myopically missing altogether what matters most. It is clear to me that these scientific atheists omit God from their mental universe because God does not matter to them, and even more clear that that omission is up to them. But their choice—a forced choice between God and science—looks from here like a Dawkinsian false dilemma, unnecessarily exclusive, unwisely limiting. Religious folks, notorious though we are for our exclusivism, seem more large-minded and less dismissive, less prone to throw the baby out with the bathwater. Though God matters as much to us as science matters to scientists, we are considerably less disposed by our priorities to dispose of science.

I love the vision of possibilities that opens up for the astute atheist Richard Dawkins through his scientific faith: “The power to imagine the alien world of a bat or a rhino, a pond skater or a mole, a bacterium or a bark beetle, is one of the privileges science grants us when it tugs at the black cloth of our burka and shows us the wider range of what is out there for our delight” (373). Would that Dawkins could apply that fine principle outside his science compound to what for him proves too alien to imagine: the mind of a believer. My perspective, unlike the bat's or the bark beetle's, alas, is not for Dawkins an enriching alternative view of reality. Insofar as my view does not match his view, my life experience is for him delusion.

I like Richard Dawkins. I like his feisty defense of essentially indefensible ground. I admire the quixotic nobility of his championing unlikely

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13. Hughes Mearns in *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*, 3d ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 336.

causes. I stand in awe of his capacity to generate not just affection but ardor for views that strike a lot of people as repulsive. I respect the passion with which he tries to persuade us that passion is not an issue, the conviction with which he attacks faith: “Science flings open the narrow window through which we are accustomed to viewing the spectrum of possibilities. We are liberated by calculation and reason to visit regions of possibility that had once seemed out of bounds or inhabited by dragons. . . . Even better, we may eventually discover that there are no limits” (374). Dawkins’s farsighted vision of such magnificent potentialities makes me want to carry him off his scientific soccer pitch on my shoulders.

Meanwhile, back in *The God Delusion*, as in *The Varieties of Scientific Experience*, *God: The Failed Hypothesis*, *Breaking the Spell*, *Moral Minds*, *Six Impossible Things before Breakfast*, *God Is Not Great*, and *The End of Faith*, the actual working out of those possibilities in practice results in a disappointingly stunted perspective. These brilliant authors’ science is for them such a compelling framework, such an incomparable paradigm, such a superb mental construction that they cannot think outside it and they all think alike inside it. Determined not to find God, Richard Dawkins and his coterie of atheists have seen from their carefully controlled scientific viewpoint precisely what they expected to see, precisely what they want to see. I doubt their view will be enough for wider viewers of all kinds. There is more, as many faithful scientists have recognized. There are far larger views of life than mine, but even from here it is apparent that Dawkins and his atheist sidekicks miss much. For such a comprehensive collection of nothing-is-impossible evolutionary biologists and not-even-the-sky’s-the-limit astrophysicists, atheists leave a lot out of life.

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## The Current State of Primary Historical Sources Online

*Richard Hacken*

As a vital first step in substantiating and documenting historical details, there can be no substitute for a primary source derived from as close and contemporaneous an observation of a given event as possible. A historian unable to consult authoritative and honest voices from the past can verify little but is left to tinker with tradition and supposition. Until quite recently, the main mode of examining a primary source has been one on one—one scholar face-to-face with one original document in one physical space. Historiography has been slowed by travel expenses, time constraints, vagaries in obtaining permission, and other logistical difficulties standing between a historian and a source, wherever it may be housed. The steps of human progress in the arts and sciences of transcription, publication, photography, photocopying, and microfilming have been precursors to digitization, the latest boost that virtually places a document's image or essence before the critical eye of the scholar.

The vast majority of primary sources must, of course, still be sought *in situ*, be they locked away in a private stash or a public institution, at a monastery, in a special collection, a library, an archive, or another locale. We are at the very beginning of an imagined golden age of international online access. Even if some concerted and cooperative push à la Google Book—linking academia, museums, archives, and the corporate world—were applied to documents, letters, manuscripts, and other primary sources, it would still take decades before the numbers and varieties of sources available on your scholarly workstation were to reach a positive tipping point. To complicate matters, a largely invisible struggle now rages between fee-based documents on the one hand and sources with free and open access on the other. This review applies to open-access websites.



For ease of use, for preservation of materials, and not least for public relations, it is to the advantage of an institution to digitize historical sources unique to its own holdings. The most characteristic and rare documents will likely form a high priority on the digitization queue. As a local case in point, the Harold B. Lee Library has already added hundreds of nineteenth-century Mormon publications (books, hymnals, periodicals, etc.), along with pioneer and missionary diaries, to its digital collections and will be further augmenting these and other holdings unique to BYU.

As we look at this process worldwide, however, we see that funds and personnel vary greatly from one collection to the next. For a crass comparison, weigh the resources of Stanford University, which for years has been utilizing a Swiss-made robot scanner capable of digitizing over one thousand pages an hour,<sup>1</sup> against those of the St. Catherine Monastery on the Sinai Peninsula, which has hired a young Bedouin to operate a digital camera on a tripod inside an eight-by-eight-foot tent in the desert.<sup>2</sup>

One of the most practical questions for the historian or interested amateur is the following: How can I find which primary source documents are available to me online? All the digital labors are wasted if the results are hidden or extremely difficult to locate. One means of finding readily available, non-subscription-based historical documents has opened up through the so-called "Open Archives Initiative." This initiative, with the acronym OAI, offers a search engine called OAIster (pronounced "oyster"), whose slogan is to "find the pearls." This database<sup>3</sup> retrieves online documents from around the world: hundreds of institutions have made their digital sources OAI-compliant, that is, open and readable to the OAIster database. The Harold B. Lee Library online collections are among these searchable items. Thus, if you were to enter the search terms "Utah" and "history" and "sources" in the subject field of the OAIster search page, you would find links to a number of online documents offering primary sources for Utah history. One of them, cosponsored by the Lee Library and the Utah Academic Library Consortium, entitled "Trails to Utah and the Pacific: Diaries and Letters, 1846–1869," incorporates a large number of online diaries, maps, photographs, and illustrations. This important resource from the pioneer and immigrant era is now a constituent part of the Library of Congress's American Memory project.

In turn, American Memory, a major repository of online manuscripts, photographs, newspapers, sound files, and other means of documenting American history, has a customized search mechanism. At the time of this review, a search for "Nauvoo" in "American Memory" pulled up nearly a hundred online diary entries, transcriptions from issues of the U.S. Congressional journal, photographs, and other digital objects.

The search methodology used above—starting with OAIster and leading to “Trails to Utah and the Pacific” and then serendipitously backward to American Memory—is typical for current detective strategies of finding historical sources online. No single website can grant easy access to all the relevant sources that are online, not all the sources online are relevant, and most relevant sources are not yet online. “Too little, too early” sums up the situation.

General search engines help find a known web portal but will not, in most cases, satisfy those seeking individual historical source documents. Where OAIster gave us fourteen focused, digital documents for the terms “Utah,” “history,” and “sources,” the same search in Google produces around 1,500,000 hits—the vast majority of which are irrelevant (pointing to analog rather than digital sources) and unfocused. As a result, resorting to “niche” web portals is currently a wise tactic. By “niche” web portals we refer to such websites as AMDOCS: Documents for the Study of American History; American Memory; Avalon Project: Documents in Law, History and Diplomacy; Digital Scriptorium (medieval and Renaissance documents); EuroDocs: Online Sources for European History; Gallica (French national digital library); Internet Ancient History Sourcebook; National Library of Canada Electronic Collection; Scripta Sinica (Chinese full text sources); World War I Document Archive; and similar sites that concentrate on given topics, geographical areas, or time periods while largely limiting themselves to primary source documents. The above list is just a sampling of web portals that have come online recently (since the mid-1990s) as guides to locating and linking digitized historical documents.<sup>4</sup>

Some criteria of quality and reliability worth considering when choosing and using an online version of a source document deal with digital provenance (Does the document come from a trustworthy provider, preferably the holder of the original?),<sup>5</sup> reliability (How helpful is the metadata? How correct, legible, and true to the original is the facsimile, transcription, or translation?), and stability of access (Can you count on the permanence and constant updating of the server where the document is posted?). The above-listed websites, sponsored by national and university libraries, or other critical and steady providers, were chosen for their careful adherence to these criteria.

An article in the *Wall Street Journal* last year remarked that the Internet provides “new troves of resources almost daily.”<sup>6</sup> One exciting result of the advent of digital scanners, according to the reporter, is the “growing amount of primary sources such as journals, letters, photographs and other original documents.” However, this excitement is mitigated

by the warning: “Now, if only it were all true.” Erroneous transcriptions, typographical errors, or even consciously crafted counterfeits can be posted on websites. Due diligence is essential in locating and verifying the reliability of online sources. Five websites recommended in the *Journal* as efficient for searching through primary historical documents are ProQuest, a subscription database; the scanned items at the Library of Congress; the Avalon Project from Yale’s Law School; a wax-cylinder sound recording site at the University of California at Santa Barbara; and the EuroDocs portal on the server of the Harold B. Lee Library.<sup>7</sup>

EuroDocs, compiled and tended by myself, offers links to digital facsimiles, transcriptions, and translations of mostly West European primary historical sources. The main page points to forty-six separate web indexes for countries and city-states of Europe, as well as to sites for “Prehistoric and Ancient Europe,” “Medieval and Renaissance Europe,” and “Europe as a Supranational Region.” Most of the links are to external sources, but within the scope and linkage of EuroDocs are a number of digital treasures connected to BYU. Jesse D. Hurlbut of the French and Italian Department has assembled DScriptorium, an online image collection of medieval manuscripts. The Spain page features facsimiles and transcriptions of previously unpublished, late-sixteenth-century letters of King Philip II held in the L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library. In cooperation with an international research center housed in Turin, and initially as part of a sister-city relationship between the 2002 and 2006 Winter Olympic venues, we have begun to digitize accounts of American travelers to Italy—from Henry Adams to Washington Irving, from Harriet Beecher Stowe to Mark Twain. Monaco’s history—from a barren rock fortress protecting the marine interests of the Holy Roman Empire to a principality sheltering high rollers and billionaires—is being documented online with BYU efforts in league with European archives. A number of EuroDocs pages point to the World War I Document Archive, a high-traffic attraction on the BYU Library server, among whose sources are found hundreds of locally re-imaged transcriptions of Austro-Hungarian documents on the 1914 outbreak of war. The library was also fortunate to get ownership of complete copies of the original Eisenhower communiqués, a collection of dispatches documenting the Allied advance across Europe after D Day in 1944, so that these typescripts and their searchable transcriptions could become a part of the HBL’s digital collections.

Obviously, we are only seeing the initial baby steps of a promising future for online historical documents. Likely areas of advancement will come in the documentary reproduction of local, regional, and family histories. As the volume of valuable historical materials increases online,

the finding aids and specialized search engines will undoubtedly become more sophisticated, intuitive, and precise. Plans are already underway for a “semantic web” that will utilize principles of artificial intelligence to dispatch “intelligent agents” into cyberspace to find, focus, classify, winnow, and display the sources we seek. Such a vision of the future will require historians not only to be consumers of electronic sources but also to be producers of computer ontology, to be describers and suppliers, to be tool-smith participants in the coming digital age of historiography.

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1. John Markoff, “The Evelyn Wood of Digitized Book Scanners,” *New York Times*, May 12, 2003, C8.

2. Suzanne Muchnic, “Saving a Treasured Trove, Ever So Slowly,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 5, 2007, E1.

3. Given the pervasive presence of Google and other quick and effective search engines, I will not provide URLs (Web addresses) for OAIster and other websites, but will encourage you to discover them by name online.

4. Another history Web portal with search capabilities for primary documents on an international scale is the WWW-VL History Central Catalogue (WWW-VL stands for World Wide Web Virtual Library).

5. The websites of various national archives provide dependable sources of documents, as do “online collections” or “digital libraries” found on the websites of academic libraries and archives.

6. John Letzing, “Changing History,” *Wall Street Journal*, February 13, 2006, R10.

7. Letzing, “Changing History,” *Wall Street Journal*, February 13, 2006, R10.

# Online Genealogical Research Resources

*Howard C. Bybee*

More than three million Internet sites offer their services to genealogists and family historians for research. This truly exhausting array of Internet sites makes online genealogical research more convenient and more confusing for beginners and professionals. Keeping up with innovations can easily distract an Internet researcher. Individuals, family organizations, corporations, nonprofit organizations, libraries, and governments continually create more online content, much of it useful for family history and genealogical research. What we used to call genealogy has morphed into family history, and the web serves as both the scholarly publisher and the vanity press for primary and secondary sources used by genealogists and family historians of every degree. Researchers are spending more on subscriptions and document downloads and less on travel and copy orders, and governments have discovered a revenue source for supporting their archives and record repositories by charging for downloaded digital copies of vital records and by licensing companies to scan and publish documents on the Internet. Competition is keen for digital rights, creating a competitive atmosphere between Internet publishers, both fee and free. Keeping up with proliferating websites is a challenge to the professional and amateur researcher, who must discover, sift through, and subscribe to a growing array of resources in order to write family history.

Genealogists collaborate naturally because of the feeling that everyone belongs to “one great family,” which will be joined, eventually, into a single family tree. The newest sites have adopted wiki-like, user-contributed content operating models such as those found at Geni.com, Footnote.com, Ancestry.com’s World Tree, OneGreatFamily.com, and FamilySearch.org. These sites and others recruit volunteers to index, comment on, upload,

collaborate, and correct data. The policy of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to digitize and index microfilmed records and offer them for free contrasts with commercial models, either pay-per-view or subscription. There are sites offering a blend of both models: limited free access, broader access by subscription, and digital document download for an additional fee. Some tension exists when the sites see one another as competitors, the fee sites looking askance at the free sites and vice versa. Each fears the other will corner exclusive digital publication rights to documents. The competitive business model often leads to dispute and contention, even in the benevolent pursuit of deceased ancestors.

This review describes a sample of commercial, free, governmental, societal, individual, and library sites—a microcosm of representative research sites for genealogy and family history. It is not by chance that these sites have proliferated. From the founding of the New England Historical and Genealogical Society in the fall of 1844 to the soon-to-be-released new Family Search, the work has grown steadily, because it must, under divine decree. The best is yet to come. There is no greater work. Family history *is* history.

### **Generations Network**

The Generations Network, formerly MyFamily.com, Inc., best known for its flagship site Ancestry.com at <http://www.Ancestry.com>, offers a growing set of Internet sites focused on family history links. The company declares, “The Generations Network of products and services provides the tools that enable people to discover who they are and where they come from.”<sup>1</sup> The Generations Network currently offers twelve websites, each serving a segment of the genealogical research process. From its launch in 1997, Ancestry.com has grown in ten years from a modest Internet presence to its twenty-first-century stature as the most visited online genealogical site in the United States. The company claims to be the largest genealogical research site in the world. Ancestry.com provides over five billion names in approximately twenty-three-thousand-plus databases, serving mostly the U.S. genealogical community. Their international offerings have recently added sites for Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, Germany, Italy, France, and Sweden, with more to follow. With these sites in foreign languages, the user base now extends around the globe. MyFamily/Generations Network bought <http://www.Genealogy.com>, a

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1. The Generations Network “Corporate Overview” <http://www.tgn.com/default.aspx?html=overview>.



large competitor, in April 2003, and Genealogy.com remains an important paid subscription site for genealogical research. Both sites sell products popular with genealogists, mostly CD databases, software, books, and maps. The site <http://www.RootsWeb.com>, a free site in the Generations Network family, connects professionals and novices by offering instruction, message boards, web links, family trees, mailing lists, and a search engine for finding a name and related resources on the site. RootsWeb.com hosts numerous genealogical websites and projects. MyFamily.com, now a separate site among the rest and not the parent company, describes itself in this way: "By offering a variety of easy-to-maintain family websites, MyFamily.com gives families all over the world a unique venue for keeping in touch and strengthening relationships."<sup>2</sup> MyFamily.com helps individuals to create private websites "in just 3 minutes" for communicating with family and friends by sharing photos, posting news, creating a family tree, sending email, or chatting.

Because Ancestry.com has metastasized into country-specific fractions for the United Kingdom, Canada, Germany, Australia, France, Italy, and Sweden, with other country-specific sites under development, the company now offers a premium subscription covering all sites, and lower rates for subscriptions to its former, mostly U.S., resources. The subscriber base exceeds eight hundred thousand people, according to company press releases. Annual subscriptions are considered costly by some in comparison to other sites, but considering the ever-growing content, plus the savings in travel expense, not to mention reduced copy costs and ease of accessibility, subscriber numbers seem to say that the value in the subscription price is equal to the cost. While the company's rush to post data sometimes results in errors, such as the spelling errors in the online census indexes, built-in customer feedback mechanisms correct the databases over time. For example, when my family name was misspelled "Byler" in the 1930 census, I had to use a first name search, limited by state and county, and then sift through the hits. I sent corrections through the Comments and Corrections link provided by Ancestry.com, which were added to the search index so that searchers can now find the record when searching with the correct spelling. The correction system is not perfect: the spelling in the index has not been corrected, but at least a note attached to the search result leads a searcher to the correct image.

As with all online research, searching Ancestry.com requires practice. A broad search of all resources launches from the initial page. By clicking on "All databases," searchers can drill down to individual databases using

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2. <http://www.tgn.com/default.aspx?html=overview>.

an alphabetical file structure, or browse databases grouped by record type. There is also a database keyword search engine for quick results in finding specific databases. Ancestry.com offers instruction, research guidance, printable forms, links to numerous other sites, and enough depth to occupy unending hours of genealogical research. It is safe to say that without the richness of Ancestry.com databases and its dedication to family history research, the genealogical universe would be impoverished.

### **Proquest—HeritageQuestOnline.com**

The site <http://HeritageQuestOnline.com> is part of ProQuest Information and Learning, a company that provides “serious researchers with high quality information solutions, illuminated through authoritative discovery aids, and unlocked through powerful enabling technologies.”<sup>3</sup> They have a varied name history, beginning as University Microfilms Inc. (UMI), acquired by Bell and Howell Information and Learning, then a name change to ProQuest Information and Learning, and now partnering with CSA (“a worldwide information company . . . headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland”<sup>4</sup>) to provide microform research collections and online databases to libraries. HeritageQuestOnline offers five main databases:

(1) U.S. federal census images from 1790 to 1930 are accessed through partial indexes. The bitmap census images are sometimes more readable than grayscale images found at Ancestry.com, and vice versa, so researchers often consult both for the best results when searching the census. Ancestry’s indexes are more complete, but spelling errors are common in those indexes, so searching HeritageQuestOnline may succeed where Ancestry produces no results. HeritageQuestOnline indexes are not complete for every year and list head of household, not every name.

(2) Twenty thousand digitized, full-text, searchable local and family history books, in three categories (people, places, and publications), comprise the second database at HeritageQuestOnline. Books may be downloaded in small portions. The books database draws from ProQuest’s genealogy and local history microfiche collection. This collection was originally on microfiche and is in the process of being transferred to the website. BYU has a copy of the microfiche and makes it available to the public.<sup>5</sup>

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3. <http://www.proquest.co.uk/promos/product/proquestupdate.pdf>.

4. <http://www.csa.com/aboutcsa/company.php>.

5. The Lee Library copy is located in the HBLL Religion and Family History Department. Though not all the titles from the fiche collection are online,

(3) *PERSI*, Periodical Source Index, compiled by Allen County Public Library, Fort Wayne, Indiana, covers more than 1.9 million articles in four categories: people, places, how to's, and periodicals. *PERSI* cites articles from thousands of periodicals held at the Allen County Public Library, which claims to be the second largest genealogical library after the LDS Family History Library in Salt Lake City. Searches are performed using personal names, geographical terms, search terms, or periodical title. Search results provide an article title and where to find it, but not the actual article. Articles can be found in local libraries, via interlibrary loan, or directly from Allen County Public Library for a fee.

(4) The Revolutionary War database presents selected records from pension and bounty land warrant application files. This description is taken from their website:

On the rolls of this microfilm publication are reproduced selected genealogical records from an estimated 80,000 pension and bounty-land-warrant application files based on the participation of American military, naval, and marine officers and enlisted men in the Revolutionary War. Most of the records are dated between 1800 and 1900. The files are part of Record Group 15, Records of the Veteran Administration.<sup>6</sup>

The Revolutionary War database consists of digital images of original documents proving marriage, financial condition, service in the military and many other important conditions and events in the person's life. They form a rich collection of historical documents for any family historian fortunate to find relatives in the database. Because they are partial files, it is advisable to request copies of the full files from the National Archives.

(5) Freedman's Bank database is a mainstay of African American genealogical research. Freedman's Savings and Trust Company, 1865-74, provided banking through twenty-nine branches for freed slaves following the Civil War. Depositors' personal information and signatures from fifty-five volumes are contained on twenty-seven microfilm rolls which have been digitized and made searchable on *HeritageQuestOnline*.

*HeritageQuestOnline* keyword searches usually offer additional fields for focusing the search, and the user can browse periodical titles in *PERSI*, census images, book titles, and Freedman's Bank locations. The site is

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researchers should check the *HeritageQuestOnline* website when a reference from the HBL online catalog refers to a CS 43 call number, to see if *HeritageQuestOnline* has digitized the title.

6. "Read more about Rev War," at <http://persi.heritagequestonline.com/hqoweb/library/do/revwar>.

spare and well presented, making it easy on the eyes. It offers help screens, “about” links, and “What’s new” links for the user on some pages.

HeritageQuestOnline is available through libraries which usually offer access at home to patrons with a library card. In Utah everyone with the Internet can access it from home through Pioneer, Utah’s Online Library, using their local library card, via [www.pioneer.utah.gov](http://www.pioneer.utah.gov). BYU students, employees, and retirees have access at home using BYU identification codes. HeritageQuestOnline is an important, expanding, and widely available resource for local history and genealogical research.

### **USGenWeb and WorldGenWeb**

The site <http://www.USGenWeb.com> links thousands of free county-level websites maintained by volunteers who create and maintain online genealogical research resources—query boards, lists of local record sources, state and county histories, digitized books, transcribed records, research tips, maps, and links to Internet resources. USGenWeb sponsors the nationally recognized Tombstone Project, where volunteers gather, preserve, and post tombstone transcriptions. From the home page [www.usgenweb.org](http://www.usgenweb.org), researchers select a state, then a county link. Resources vary in scope and depth, but something useful usually appears. RootsWeb, part of The Generations Network, hosts USGenWeb and its derivative site, WorldGenWeb.

USGenWeb sites are particularly useful for historical geographical information when performing locality surveys for an ancestor. Knowing the geography helps locate vital records to document birth, marriage, and death, and for filling in historical background when writing family histories. In addition, local libraries and historical societies found on USGenWeb provide information often found nowhere else. On-site volunteers may research for free. Researchers cannot ignore the USGenWeb sites when beginning research and will return regularly to find additions to these growing databases. A query to a volunteer on USGenWeb brought me a digital photo of a relative’s tombstone via email, a real savings in gas and time.

### **FamilySearch.Org**

Potentially the most powerful source on the Internet, FamilySearch.org at <http://www.familysearch.org>, operated by the LDS Church in Salt Lake City, currently offers online access to Ancestral File (AF), International Genealogical Index (IGI), Pedigree Resource File (PRF), and

several other proprietary databases. The Church promotes family history as a religious tenet, in order to provide temple ordinances to deceased relatives, and so the databases are offered free to all. Ancestral File was an early attempt to create a database of unique records for each person and family, but it was closed to further growth when electronic merging created errors in the database. Its successor, Pedigree Resource File, an ever-growing database of user submissions, accumulates numerous family trees submitted over time, without merging. The result is a collection of duplicate genealogies of great worth, but which are difficult to maneuver. The online version is open to anyone and is used by genealogists to collect and share useful data. Because these are user-submitted files, the information must be verified by anyone who collects it from PRF. The International Genealogical Index provides information about temple work to members who have registered with FamilySearch.org using their membership number and confirmation date. Others are allowed to see only the genealogical information. This database grows from Church temple records as the work is cleared and performed. The IGI has been populated with duplicate records of varying accuracy, resulting in wasted time and duplicated effort by thousands of researchers and temple workers, and the records must be verified to determine accuracy, but they provide a good beginning point, many clues, and collaborative contacts.

In order to eliminate duplication, facilitate research, and increase interest in family history, FamilySearch.org has begun releasing new online databases that utilize all the previous databases plus church membership records. The release has begun with small temple districts and will progress slowly until all districts are part of what has been termed “new” FamilySearch.org. This effort promises to deliver powerful online software for building family trees, creating family histories, increasing collaboration, streamlining temple work, eliminating duplication, and providing access to vast amounts of genealogical information for members and nonmembers alike. In concert with FamilySearch databases, microform collections are being digitized and indexed for quick delivery and retrieval via the Internet. Online instruction will accompany these offerings. The potential is almost overwhelming, providing free access to more than 2.5 million rolls of microfilm, hundreds of thousands of published family histories, and documents from the Church History Library. Collaboration with all Church institutions and Family History Centers worldwide will create a far-reaching network for genealogical research. We all look forward to the realization of this vision.

## United Kingdom Sites: Genuki and ORIGINSNetwork

For a full description of Genuki (<http://www.genuki.org.uk/big>), read the ten-year anniversary article by one of the founders.<sup>7</sup> The following description is extracted and paraphrased from this article: Offering fifty-five thousand pages in 2005, Genuki is the oldest and largest site devoted to British Isles genealogy. It aims to be a virtual reference library—both a genealogical handbook and directory—of other sites about British Isles genealogy. The searcher will find links to local societies, record repositories, maps, gazetteers, libraries, and more, all listed by individual countries in the British Isles—England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Channel Islands, and Isle of Man. Users are guided through the tree by subject lists, leading to link after link. Because it is staffed by volunteers, information is free. It is an important noncommercial site for British Isles research. Genuki provides information relating to primary sources, not compiled genealogies or family histories. The content is distributed to many different servers, maintained by many volunteers who make up Genuki, and provides links to thousands of sites about British or Irish ancestry.

The Origins Network at <http://originsnetwork.com> (formerly Origins.net), founded in 1997, pioneered the provision of genealogical database services on the web and offers access to ancestral information via British Origins, Irish Origins, and Scots Origins, each being a separate site where the researcher can select from a list of record types to focus a search. The key to successful commercial sites such as Origins Network is exclusive digital rights negotiated with data owners, libraries, archives, churches, and any organization that has a large quantity of historical documents. Researchers will find digitized books, census and vital records for birth, marriage, death, wills, probate, maps, and reference works.

## Norway Archives

The Digital Archives at <http://www.digitalarkivet.no> is a free public service from the National Archives of Norway consisting of transcribed source material. The site is in both Norwegian and English, and reading the “About the Digital Archives” link from the home page is helpful.<sup>8</sup> Norway feels that the national archives should be widely available and has been online since 1998. The site invites other institutions, organizations,

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7. <http://homepages.gold.ac.uk/genuki/org/ancestors31.pdf>.

8. <http://digitalarkivet.uib.no/cgi-win/WebFront.exe?slag=vis&tekst=introduk-eng.htm&spmaak=e>.

and private persons to contribute digitized material on a site called “The Digital Inn.”

As noted earlier in this review, online collaboration has become a strong force for building site content, commercial or nonprofit. Searching country sites requires basic language skills for the target area. The interface may be in English, but the records, transcribed or imaged, most likely will contain non-English terms. Searching can be challenging as is the case with the Norway Archives. Begin a search in a census using first names, then narrow the search by using the family name, the date of birth, or place; each subsequent search progressively narrows the results. It is an interesting approach and takes practice. This site is unadorned and well organized, partly because it is free and annoying advertising is absent. No distractions accompany the search result or navigation within the site.

### France Genealogy

The portal at <http://www.france-genealogie.fr>, launched in May 2003, is a collaboration directed by the French Archives (*Archives de France*) and the French Genealogical Federation (*Fédération Française de Généalogie*), and there is no English version. The *Guide des ressources* links to ten categories: federated associations, nonfederated associations, publishers/vendors, libraries, archives services, bookstores, maps, notices and guides, individual sites, and online archives. Through the links under these headings, genealogists are pointed to various French genealogical resources. It is a useful site if you know French, especially for locating contact information for archives if planning a research trip to France. Be aware before planning a trip to France that about 80 percent of the French archival records have been filmed by the Family History Library and many French professional genealogists spend several weeks a year researching in Salt Lake City. The site links to NOMINA, a federated search site that searches four nongovernmental archives and institutions covering over thirteen million individuals. Another search tab links to national, regional and local databases. There are tabs for a “tool box” and for news releases. Here researchers may link to all the French archives and to the *Fédération Française de Généalogie* and other important French research sites.

### The Encyclopedia of Genealogy

The Encyclopedia of Genealogy at <http://EoGen.com>, a wiki that explains genealogical tools and techniques, is not a source for ancestral research. It defines terms, methods, record types, and research methods for all countries and is becoming a comprehensive reference work



for genealogists at all levels. Look to the Encyclopedia of Genealogy to provide explanations about how to look up your family tree and explanations of terms found in genealogy research, including obsolete medical and legal terms. It describes locations where records may be found, and how to research Italian, German, Polish, French-Canadian, Jewish, Black, Indian, and other ancestors. The Encyclopedia of Genealogy is a reliable, free, expanding, genealogy reference manual, and it provides many links to relevant Internet research sites.

### **Stevemorse.org**

One example of a popular and useful site created by an individual is <http://stevemorse.org>. Stephen P. Morse, PhD, a computer professional and amateur genealogist, researched his own Russian Jewish origins and found that many Internet sites contained useful data but were difficult to use. His website “started out as an aid for finding passengers in the Ellis Island database. Shortly afterwards it was expanded to help with searching in the 1930 census. Over the years it has continued to evolve and today includes over 100 web-based tools divided into twelve separate categories ranging from genealogical searches to astronomical calculations to last-minute bidding on e-bay.”<sup>9</sup> The search forms are named by the database searched and are listed and linked on the website home page, followed by a variety of tools and instruction useful to genealogical researchers. Stevemorse.org provides powerful search forms, databases, and instruction that facilitate online genealogy research, and it has become a standard in the online community.

### **Cyndislist.com**

The best-known genealogy portal on the web, <http://cyndislist.com>, offers more than 264,800 links to family history. The site describes itself as

- A categorized & cross-referenced index to genealogical resources on the Internet.
- A list of links that point you to genealogical research sites online.
- A free jumping-off point for you to use in your online research.

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9. <http://www.rootsweb.com/~nvcnngs/springseminar.html>. See also <http://stevemorse.org/onestep/onestep.htm>. For a full article about Steve Morse and his genealogical search forms, connect to <http://www.stevemorse.org/mensch.html>. More information is on the website under Miscellaneous at the bottom of the main page. I thank Stephen Morse for his email correspondence with me.

- A “card catalog” to the genealogical collection in the immense library that is the Internet.
- Your genealogical research portal onto the Internet.<sup>10</sup>

Cyndislist.com offers a main index, topical index, alphabetical index, and a “no frills index.” The home displays the main index, searchable with Google. The index appears as an alphabetical list of main categories, accessed by clicking an alphabetical list. This site leads to virtually all the important genealogical sites on the Internet, about 10 percent of all relevant sites, if we believe the statistics. Patience is required at the outset, and it is easy to become distracted by the richness of the information. Search it methodically whenever in need of guidance.

### Up and Coming on the Internet

**WorldVitalRecords.com.** This site was founded in 2006 by Paul Allen and “several key members of the original Ancestry.com team.” Allen’s goal in founding WorldVitalRecords was to make family history research more affordable. WorldVitalRecords has partnered with Everton Publishers (which includes the Genealogical Helper and Everton’s Pedigree Files and Family Group Sheets), FamilySearch, Quintin Publications, and the Statue of Liberty–Ellis Island Foundation, among others, in order “to make wonderful genealogical content available at an affordable price.”<sup>11</sup>

WorldVitalRecords offers three reasonably priced memberships, new databases daily, collaborative research, and more. They offer newspapers, vital records, court records, land records, probate records, Idaho 1880 state census, LDS records, and immigration records. The search engine is adequate and fast, and images are good quality. Certainly ambitious and not without promise, WorldVitalRecords is quickly meeting its goals.

**Geni.com.** The site <http://www.Geni.com> was “founded by former executives and early employees of PayPal, Yahoo! Groups, Ebay, and Tribe.” In Geni, you create a family tree and invite all your relatives to join you. “Your tree will continue to grow as relatives invite other relatives. . . . Each family member has a profile which can be viewed by clicking their name in the tree. This helps family members learn more about each other and stay in touch. Family members can also share photos and work together to build profiles for common ancestors.”<sup>12</sup> While I have no extensive experience with the site, I am intrigued by the concept, which, my

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10. <http://www.cyndislist.com/faq/whatis.htm>.

11. <http://www.worldvitalrecords.com/about.aspx>.

12. [http://www.geni.com/company/about\\_us](http://www.geni.com/company/about_us).

young acquaintances have informed me, resembles facebook.com. Perhaps such ventures will take hold and lead to useful genealogical connections.

**Footnote.com.** Footnote.com launched in early 2007. It was formerly iArchives, which specialized in document digitizing. It negotiated a contract with NARA, U.S. National Archives, for digitizing historical documents of interest to many researchers. Under the new name Footnote, the company offers collaborative services, document images, a powerful search engine, and the ability to annotate their records and upload personal records. This site offers small town newspapers, numerous historical documents, rare photos, UFO investigations, and native American documents, all from the National Archives. In addition, users can upload images of their own original sources and share them publicly. Users can also create a “story page” using their original sources. Footnote is growing rapidly through paid subscriptions and free collaboration services. It is a very interesting site to navigate and worth revisiting often.

## Summary

This review looks at a few of the thousands of genealogical sites on the Internet. Using the major search engines to find your family name, locate research tools, or find advice about writing a family history or just about anything genealogical is very useful and should not be ignored. Many search results lead to sites discussed in this article, such as Ancestry.com or FamilySearch.org, but small personal or association sites and useful tools also show up in search engine results lists. While it may be impossible to keep up with proliferating websites, it is an exhilarating challenge to have so many resources at our fingertips.

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Patrick Navas. *Divine Truth or Human Tradition?  
A Reconsideration of the Roman Catholic–Protestant Doctrine of  
the Trinity in Light of the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures.*

Bloomington, Ind.: AuthorHouse, 2006

Reviewed by Gary P. Gillum

Nestorius, Patriarch of Constantinople (382–451) and one of the leaders of Assyrian Christianity, responded to the Western church and its discussions about the Trinity and subsequent creeds with the following: “The Word of God became flesh, so that in him humanity might be transformed into divinity and the nature of humanity renewed.”<sup>1</sup> For Nestorius and the Nestorian Church, God was clearly not a separate species, but a true Father in Heaven that man could eventually become like, as children of any father are wont to do. Rome’s insistence on a non-scriptural Trinitarian God was so antithetical to what the church in Constantinople subscribed that a Great Schism between East and West eventually occurred in the eleventh century.<sup>2</sup>

Centuries later, Joseph Smith clarified the nature of the Godhead when he had his vision of the Father and the Son, explaining that nature more fully in the King Follett Discourse of April 1844. Much later, in a conference address given October 6, 2007, Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles powerfully and unequivocally reiterated the stand that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has taken with regard to the Godhead and the Trinitarian doctrine espoused by Western Christianity. Among other things, he declared that “it is self-evident from the scriptures that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are separate persons, three divine beings.” Further,

we believe these three divine persons constituting a single Godhead are united in purpose, in manner, in testimony, in mission. We believe Them to be filled with the same godly sense of mercy and love, justice and grace, patience, forgiveness, and redemption. I think it is accurate to say we believe They are one in every significant and eternal aspect imaginable *except* believing Them to be three persons combined in one substance, a Trinitarian notion never set forth in the scriptures because it is not true.<sup>3</sup>

Meanwhile, the intervening centuries have seen many challenges to the Trinitarian doctrine from the seventeenth-century Socinians, Unitarians, and others during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, both Latter-day Saint and otherwise. However, the most recent and significant of these attempts to challenge the doctrine comes from graduate student Patrick Navas in his monumental *Divine Truth or Human Tradition? A Reconsideration of the Roman Catholic–Protestant Doctrine of the Trinity in Light of the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures*. This is a volume to be reckoned with by anyone with Trinitarian beliefs. The subject is thoroughly explored in 560 pages with a profuse amount of footnotes. An “amateur” who speaks with the authority of one who has a doctorate in theology, Navas has erred only in giving the reader more than enough information on the topic—and in not providing a bibliography or subject and scripture indexes. It is a tome worthy of a second edition with wider distribution and a bibliography and indexes added.

Many of his points align with those of Elder Holland—an Apostle most likely unknown to Navas, but with whom he would empathize. Here are some of Navas’s more interesting points:

The doctrine of the Trinity . . . is a doctrine of *inference*, a theological *formulation* based on a certain *interpretation* of Scripture—the result of a certain attempt to synthesize scriptural information (perceived in a certain way), not a direct scriptural teaching or explanation. (74–75)

[There are many truths] that as Christians we can have absolute confidence in based on the clarity and consistency in which they are presented to us in the Bible. When we consider a matter like the Trinity (and other post-biblical doctrinal developments<sup>4</sup>), how can we entertain the same confidence? (76)

Navas then quotes James R. White from *The King James Only Controversy*:

There is nothing wrong with tradition, as long as we do not confuse tradition with truth. As soon as we become more attached to our traditions than we are to truth, we are in very deep trouble. . . . As soon as we make our tradition the test of someone else’s standing with God, we have elevated that tradition to a status that is unbiblical.<sup>5</sup>

Wayne Grudem, author of *Systematic Theology*, makes an interesting statement that is unusual for a theologian: “Where Scripture is silent, it is unwise for us to make definitive pronouncements.”<sup>6</sup> And: “The sufficiency of Scripture also tells us that God does not require us to believe anything about himself or his redemptive work that is not found in Scripture.”<sup>7</sup>

Indeed, it disturbs this reviewer that for many centuries the test of a Christian's "real" faith is whether he believes in the various creeds of Christianity—and hence the definition of a Christian—which excludes members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, who have no creed.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, it is instructive to note that a study of the liturgical year of the Roman Catholic, Anglican, and Lutheran Churches shows many "Sundays after Trinity," which are celebrated throughout the calendar year, so pervasive has the doctrine of the Trinity become in Western Christianity. President Thomas S. Monson, in his October 6, 2007, conference talk mentioned an oft-quoted phrase that "the door of history turns on small hinges, and so do people's lives."<sup>9</sup> It is unfortunate that the small hinge of Nestorian teachings did not become as important as the slightly larger hinges of various councils during the fourth through twelfth centuries. Much of our subsequent Western culture has been built on their philosophy, albeit mingled with scripture.

One of Joseph Smith's chief contributions to society was the restoration of continuing revelation and the eschewing of any kind of systematic theology—which is how the fourth-century Christian theologians were able to devise such a doctrine as the Trinity. Primal peoples are more in tune with the principle of revelation than so-called civilization. Frithjof Schuon, a writer who has spent a lifetime attempting to discover the proto-religion that is behind all religions, provides an interesting perspective:

The red man has no intention of fixing himself on this earth where everything, according to the law of stabilization and also of condensation (petrification, one might say) is liable to crystallize; and this explains the Indian's aversion for houses, especially stone ones, and also the absence of a writing which, from this perspective, would fix and kill the sacred flow of the Spirit.<sup>10</sup>

Frankly, if any Christian body should believe in the "traditional" doctrine of the Trinity, it should be The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, for the Book of Mormon passages in 3 Nephi 11:27 and 2 Nephi 31:20–21 come closer than any passages in the New Testament or Hebrew Scriptures in proclaiming such a creed:

And after this manner shall ye baptize in my name; for behold, verily I say unto you, that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost are one; and I am in the Father, and the Father in me, and the Father and I are one.

Wherefore, ye must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men. Wherefore, if ye shall press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father: Ye shall have eternal

life. And now, behold, my beloved brethren, this is the way; and there is none other way nor name given under heaven whereby man can be saved in the kingdom of God. And now, behold, this is the doctrine of Christ, and the only and true doctrine of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, which is one God, without end. Amen.<sup>11</sup>

After all the debates are over, however, it is well to remember one incontrovertible historical and nondenominational fact. In the words of Elder Holland, “If one says we are not Christians because we do not hold a fourth- or fifth-century view of the Godhead, then what of those first Christian Saints, many of whom were eyewitnesses of the living Christ, who did not hold such a view either?”<sup>12</sup>

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1. Nestorius, *Le Livre d'Héraclide de Damas* (1910), quoted in Christoph Baumer, *The Church of the East: An Illustrated History of Assyrian Christianity* (London: I. B. Taurus, 2006), 1.

2. Specifically regarding the doctrine of *filioque*.

3. Jeffrey R. Holland, “The Only True God and Jesus Christ Whom He Hath Sent,” *Ensign* 37 (November 2007): 40–41, emphasis in original.

4. During my seven years of training for the Protestant ministry, many of these other so-called traditional doctrines made me waver in—and eventually discard—the “faith of my fathers”: original sin, a black-and-white choice of heaven or hell, infant baptism, paid ministry, *creatio ex nihilo* (creation out of nothing), and the inerrancy of scripture. In addition, some time after my conversion to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, my father, still a Protestant, told me that he had never believed in the Trinity as a doctrine: his church of choice always depended upon the minister of a given congregation. Yet the doctrine of the Trinity has a rich tradition and has been believed by many sincere and brilliant men and women through the ages.

5. James R. White, *The King James Only Controversy: Can You Trust the Modern Translations?* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1995), 17; as quoted in Navas, 84.

6. Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1994), 500; as quoted in Navas, *Divine Truth or Human Tradition?* 93.

7. Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 131; as quoted in Navas, *Divine Truth or Human Tradition?* 93.

8. See my articles “Christology” and “Creeds” in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed. Daniel H. Ludlow, 4 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 1:272–73, 1:343. Also available online at <http://www.lib.byu.edu/Macmillan>.

9. Thomas S. Monson, “A Royal Priesthood,” *Ensign* 37 (November 2007): 59. Another quote by Philip Sherrard is not so charitable: “We must . . . remember man’s



seemingly inexhaustible capacity for being taken in by a lie, and so for turning his life into a kind of illusion.” “Modern Science and the Dehumanization of Man,” in *The Underlying Religion: An Introduction to the Perennial Philosophy*, ed. Martin Lings and Clinton Minnaar (Bloomington, Ind.: World Wisdom, 2007), 90.

10. Frithjof Schuon, *The Feathered Sun: Plains Indians in Art and Philosophy* (Bloomington, Ind.: World Wisdom, 1990), 67.

11. A reasonable interpretation of *God* in the last sentence is *Godhead*.

12. Holland, “The Only True God,” 41.

Matthew S. McBride. *A House for the Most High:  
The Story of the Original Nauvoo Temple.*

Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2007

Reviewed by Stanley J. Thayne

This work,” states the author, “is an attempt to provide a glimpse—to paint a picture in broad strokes—of the Nauvoo Temple experience using primarily the words of the Nauvoo Saints” (xiii). As far as telling the story in the participants’ own words is concerned, McBride’s attempt is an objective achieved. It is achieved not only with “broad strokes,” however; McBride’s descriptions often provide a rather detailed and intimate portrait of the temple builders and the Saints whose sacrifices funded the building. In other ways the “broad strokes” analogy is fitting. McBride does not provide a detailed analysis of temple symbolism or architecture—the narrative is generally more descriptive than analytical—and he gives only the barest outline of temple ceremony itself (quite intentionally, of course, due to the sacredness of the subject). But McBride covers his ground. What the book may lack in depth is made up for in breadth. McBride has basically taken every imaginable contemporary textual source related to the Nauvoo Temple and has linked them together chronologically with an easily flowing narrative. *A House for the Most High* is a treasure trove of primary source material and is an enjoyable read at the same time.

Though not primarily analytical, the narrative is not purely descriptive either. McBride does provide some analysis of his sources by identifying in his introduction seven “recurring themes that encapsulate the Nauvoo Temple’s importance, both in its effects during the Nauvoo period and in its lasting impact on the Church” (xv). These themes, ranging from the economic to the spiritual to the symbolic, are summarized basically as follows: (1) the impact the temple and Nauvoo House, as building projects, had on the Nauvoo economy; (2) the role the temple played in promoting Nauvoo’s prominence in national media; (3) the temple’s influence in the formation of key elements in Latter-day Saint doctrine and theology; (4) the role temple custodianship played in the succession crisis after Joseph Smith’s death; (5) the function of the temple as a “sieve” to separate

the “faithful” from those who came to view Joseph as a fallen prophet; (6) the influence of the temple on Church organization, particularly on the creation of the ward unit and on the formation of the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo; and, finally, (7) the temple’s symbolic significance as a monument to the Saints’ tremendous sacrifice for and dedication to their faith (xv–xvi).

In laying out these themes, McBride seeks to tell the story of not only the construction of the visible temple—the actual building itself—but also the development of what President Boyd K. Packer calls the “invisible temple”—the “doctrines, covenants, and ordinances associated with Latter-day Saint temple worship” (xiii–xiv). It is this ideological aspect of the temple that McBride sees as the motivating force behind the temple’s construction. Because the invisible temple is the vital center of Latter-day Saint worship, McBride argues, an understanding of its development is requisite to any real understanding of the building itself. Thus, along with descriptions of quarrying, lumbering, stonework, and interior decoration, McBride also describes the development of such doctrines as baptisms for the dead, celestial marriage, and the second anointing, which were established in Nauvoo in connection with the temple. He recreates both the body and the spirit of Mormon temple worship.

The book is organized chronologically rather than thematically. McBride moves through periods of temple construction and related issues, with chapter titles such as “The Walls Rise,” “The Death of Joseph,” “The Ascendancy of the Twelve,” “Setting the Capstone,” “Endowed with Power,” and “Monument to a People.” After a final chapter, “The Temple’s Fate,” he concludes with an epilogue titled “The Temple Resurrected,” documenting efforts involved in the purchase, reclamation, and the beginning phases of the rebuilding of the Nauvoo Temple (though he leaves the bulk of that story for another telling). The chapters are divided with subheadings that make for easy browsing and facilitate quick tracking of information. Though the author occasionally identifies some of the aforementioned themes throughout, they are more often left implicit for readers to identify and interpret on their own. The sources are often left free to speak for themselves, as McBride quotes liberally with large text blocks appearing on nearly every page. What McBride offers is an organizational structure and ordering of texts that would take years, perhaps decades to assemble. His work is the culmination of much searching, gathering, and organizing, and it reflects a great love for the subject.

McBride demonstrates a broad awareness of the archaeological data that has been gathered on the temple, as well as an understanding of the scholarship that has been done relevant to temple building and the Saints’

experience with the temple. He makes ample use of footnotes to cite such works, though his footnotes are dominated by primary sources and supplementary quotations. What sources he is not able to fit into the text or the notes are provided in an appendix of eyewitness descriptions of the temple, taken primarily from contemporary newspapers and other travelers' accounts. A useful bibliography of all primary and secondary sources is also provided.

To those familiar with Church history, much of McBride's narrative will be familiar. Certain events such as the "Bogus Brigham" incident (279–84) and efforts such as the Sisters' Penny Subscription Fund for the Nauvoo Temple are well known to many. But there is much in the narrative that will be new to most readers, such as the French Icarians' efforts to purchase and restore the temple after the Saints left and after it had been gutted by fire (a group of Icarian workers was nearly killed inside the temple when the walls were toppled by a tornado) or the secondhand accounts given by the supposed temple arsonist just before his death, along with several refutations of that admission (353–64).

Most readers will find the book to be a nice overview of a story of which they know only the basics, now fleshed out in great detail and told primarily in the authentic voices of the Nauvoo Saints themselves. It is a fine achievement of a dedicated researcher and one that has already been adorned with honors, being awarded Best Book for 2007 by the John Whitmer Historical Association. I recommend it to anyone who wishes to better understand Nauvoo and its temple as it was experienced and described by the Saints who lived there and who sacrificed to build it.

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James L. Kugel. *The God of Old: Inside the  
Lost World of the Bible.*

New York: The Free Press, 2003

Reviewed by Scott H. Partridge

As we moved into the twenty-first century, the political climate in the United States was enlivened by the announcement that a Mormon was an active candidate for the presidency of the United States. As might be expected, Governor Mitt Romney's religion was a primary topic of editorial comment. Many writers suggested that he faced an uphill battle against those who might agree with his conservative values—which are at times virtually indistinguishable from those of evangelical Christians—but who were less enthusiastic about his religion.

Although Mormons consider themselves Christians, many other Christians disagree. In addition to polygamy, the idea of extrabiblical revelation, Mormons' unorthodox views on human nature and, possibly most important of all, Mormons' non-Trinitarian conceptions of the Godhead are particularly upsetting to other Christians. "If you can't sign on to the Nicene Creed . . . then you're outside the boundaries of traditional Christianity," says Joseph Laconte, a senior fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center.<sup>1</sup>

Certainly Latter-day Saint doctrine regarding the nature of God differs from that of traditional Christians, whether Protestants, Catholics, or Orthodox. The Nicene Creed states, "We believe in one God, the Father Almighty . . . and in one Lord Jesus Christ . . . being of one substance with the Father."<sup>2</sup> From this flows the idea that God is omnipresent and omniscient, that he has no body and exists everywhere simultaneously. In contrast, Mormon doctrine has traditionally held that "the Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's; the Son also; but the Holy Ghost . . . is a personage of Spirit" (D&C 130:22), and "each occupies space and is and can be in but one place at one time, but each has power and influence that is everywhere present."<sup>3</sup> So Mormons and traditional Christians, and especially Mormons and Evangelicals, have long been at an impasse over

the proper understanding on the nature of God, both sides marshalling proofs, tests, and scholarship to bolster their case.

Additional light on a proper historical understanding of the nature of deity is cast in *The God of Old: Inside the Lost World of the Bible* by James L. Kugel, Starr Professor of Hebrew Literature at Harvard University and Visiting Professor of Bible Studies at Bar-Ilan University in Israel. Kugel, a Jewish scholar, gives insights that should be of interest to both Mormons and traditional Christians. He has authored a number of widely acclaimed books on biblical scholarship, including *The Great Poems of the Bible* (1999) and *The Bible as It Was* (1997). In 2001, he was awarded the prestigious Graweneyer Prize in Religion. In his scholarly activities, he divides his time between Jerusalem and Cambridge, Massachusetts.

In *The God of Old*, Kugel writes that the God of contemporary Judeo-Christianity and Islam—all powerful, all knowing, invisible, and omnipresent, the God that has been a staple of Western thought for centuries—is not the same as the God of most of the Bible, the God who appeared to Abraham, Moses, and other biblical persons. That God was not invisible or abstract. He appeared to people in a world in which the spiritual and the material often overlapped, and Kugel suggests that this way of seeing, far from being a primitive relic of a simpler age, actually reflects a sophisticated but profoundly different understanding of how God interacts with people. As Kugel writes in the introduction:

We like to think that what our religions say nowadays about God is what people have always believed. Even biblical scholars sometimes shy away from the implications of their scholarship when it comes to these basic questions [of how the ancients understood God]. . . . Much of what people believed then would only embarrass us now. . . . On the contrary, the God of Old has something to tell us not only about where our faith came from, but about its most basic reality today. (xii–xiii)

Kugel's field is the study of ancient texts, and he writes that through many years of study he has learned that the ancient

authors, although they are writing . . . for some definite purpose, often end up telling more than they set out to. Especially if a text is of any length or substance, it can open a window onto the inner world of the person who wrote it, revealing something crucial about how that person saw and understood things in general. Such information is often far more valuable than whatever it was the author had consciously set out to write about. The reason is that the author himself, and all the things he thought were obvious or took for granted, are by now long gone. (1)

Kugel's previous books are centered on the Bible's history. In those works, he shows that the stories of Genesis, Exodus, and other books have not,

in times past, been understood to mean what many believe today. In this book he enters the spiritual world of the ancient Israelites to see God through their eyes and on their own terms.

The God of Old was not invisible or an abstraction. He appeared to people—often when not expected or sought out, and sometimes he was not even recognized. Kugel calls this “a moment of confusion” (5) in which an encounter with God is at first mistaken for a meeting with an ordinary person. God was always there, but standing just behind the curtain of ordinary reality.

Among those things that stand in sharp contrast to the writings of later times is the fact that in the ancient scriptures people have to seek God out. In contrast to earlier biblical texts, later and current thinkers insisted that God is everywhere, omnipresent and omniscient. Kugel asks the question, “If so, why is he so hard to find?” (51). The search for God became the central theme of much religious literature, and people did not pray for help so much as for contact. This is illustrated in Psalm 13 when David wrote as follows:

How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? how long shall mine enemy be exalted over me? Consider and hear me, O Lord my God: lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death. (58; Ps. 13:1–3)

Kugel continues in noting that a change occurred as the biblical period went on. God became bigger and more remote. The same God who spoke face to face with Moses became perceived as a huge, cosmic deity—so huge as to surpass our own capacities of apprehension. To quote Isaiah: “Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?” (Isa. 40:12). Kugel’s comment on the change was noted in two key paragraphs:

This is the God . . . of later Judaism and Christianity—ungraspably big and far off, who rules the whole world . . . from His great remove in time and space. So much did this become our way of conceiving of God that the “other” God, who speaks to Moses . . . became an embarrassment to later theologians. It is, they said, really the great, universal God that these texts must have meant, the one who is omniscient and omnipresent and utterly unphysical. If they did not describe him as such, well, they meant to—perhaps the Bible was just putting things in terms that were easily grasped by ordinary people.

But this, it seems to me, is not the conclusion suggested by the material examined thus far. Instead, a rather different way of approaching things suggests itself. Perhaps we would do better to think



of the great omnipresent and omniscient God as a kind of model, like the models that scientists use as a way of talking about something that is not otherwise easily imagined or conceptualized. If this is so . . . then perhaps this other God, the theological embarrassment, should invite our renewed attention. He too is a model—or, I would rather say a *report*, a report on the way things look, on the way it happens. (63–64; italics in original)

Even though Kugel stresses words designed to tell us that God is somehow still “out there,” a distinct being in the universe, he still describes him as one who can, in some unexplained way, nevertheless have access to our innermost thoughts. In this regard he quotes Psalm 139:

O Lord, You search me out and know me. You know when I sit around or get up, You understand my thoughts from far off. You sift my comings and goings; You are familiar with all my ways. There is not one thing I say that You, Lord, do not know. In front and in back You press in on me and set Your hand upon me. Even things hidden from myself You know, things that are beyond me. (64; Ps. 139:1–6)

Kugel concludes from this psalm:

Are not the indicated words designed to tell us that God somehow is still “out there,” a distinct being in the universe, but one who can, in some unexplained way, nonetheless have access to our innermost thoughts? It is for the same reason that I would hesitate to say that God is omnipresent in this psalm—if He were everywhere, then there would be no need for Him to understand anyone’s thoughts from far off. He would be right there. (66)

Modern readers, Kugel notes, feel some discomfort at all this. They question the idea that God can appear, for they feel that he has no body or physical substance that can be viewed. Therefore, there is a tendency to disregard scriptural passages that say that he does and to discount numerous passages in which humans see God. To them, these passages cannot mean what they seem to be saying. “Even today’s hard-nosed biblical scholars—bent on studying biblical texts in their original historical context and without theological blinders—sometimes have a tendency to shy away from this God-who-appears” (99).

For example, “Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, and they saw the God of Israel. . . . They beheld God, and they ate and they drank” (Ex. 24:9–11). Kugel continues on to cite numerous passages in which God was seen, noting that within the Holy of Holies there was a specific place above the cherubim-gilded covering of the ark in which God said, “That is where I will meet with you” (Ex. 25:20). He assumes from this that there would be times when God was not above

the ark and was some other place. Kugel also discusses the incident in Exodus 33 in which God appeared to Moses:

Then Moses said: "Show me, I beg, Your glory [physical being]." He said: "All My goodness I can cause to pass before you, and I can proclaim the name 'the Lord' before you. But I am compassionate [only] with whom I choose, and merciful [only] with whom I choose." [Moses remains silent.] He said: "You cannot see My face, for no one can see Me and live." [Moses still remains silent.] The Lord said, "All right, here is a place next to Me to stand, on this rock. While My glory passes by I will put you in the cleft of the rock and cover you with My hand until I have passed. Then, when I take My hand away, you can see Me from behind, but My face will still not have been seen." (131; Ex. 33:18–23)

In reference to this incident, Kugel notes that philosophers and theologians from late antiquity through the Middle Ages and beyond have considered that this obvious attribution to God of a physical body was considered a source of scandal, and they ingeniously struggled to somehow read it in nonphysical terms.

For Latter-day Saints, the conclusion reached by Kugel that, according to the ancient scriptures, God was a personage with a body who could only be in one place at one time—but who had the power to know what was happening throughout all of creation—fits in nicely with the restored gospel. When a young Joseph Smith had his First Vision in the Sacred Grove, he wiped the slate clean and learned more about the nature of the Godhead than had been devised in seventeen centuries of reasoning and discussion.

The book itself is beautifully written with an impressive number of sources, and Kugel takes us back to biblical times with his scholarship and clearly and carefully suggests conclusions based on the evidence. His style is straightforward with an occasional wryness that makes it a pleasure to read.

In his concluding chapter entitled "The Last Look," he makes the following comment in regard to the ancient scriptures to which he makes reference in his book. "These texts seem to be trying to tell us something, something rather sophisticated, about God's very nature—and that something has little to do with the great, omniscient, and omnipresent deity of later times. To gain some apprehension of their understanding, it is necessary to accept them as . . . an account of God's nature written down long, long ago" (193).

Kugel adds an endnote from G. Scholem that expresses the modern implication of the development of the Nicene Creed long centuries ago:

The philosophers and theologians [of medieval times] were concerned first and foremost with the *purity* of the concept of God and determined to divest it of all mythical and anthropomorphic elements. But this determination to . . . reinterpret the recklessly anthropomorphic statements of the biblical text and the popular forms of religious expression in terms of a purified theology tended to empty out the concept of God. . . . The price of God's purity is the loss of his living reality. What makes Him a living God . . . is precisely what makes it possible for man to see Him face to face. (105; italics in original)

Joseph Smith would certainly agree with these sentiments, as would contemporary Latter-day Saints. What today's Evangelical critics of Mormonism might make of this interesting confluence of serious scholarship and LDS theology would be interesting to see.

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1. John J. Miller, “Evangelicals for Romney,” *National Review*, December 18, 2006, 40.
2. Philip Schaff, ed., *The Creeds of Christendom*, 6th ed., 3 vols. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 1996), 1:28–29.
3. Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966), 319.

Colin Kidd. *The Forging of Races: Race and Scripture in the Protestant Atlantic World, 1600–2000*.  
Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006

Reviewed by Armand L. Mauss

Race, it should be clear by now, exists as a property of *our minds*, not of *their bodies*. It is a bogus scientific category rather than a fact of nature, and belongs not so much to the realm of objective biology as to the quite distinct realm of human subjectivity” (18, italics in original). Thus concludes the prologue to this very substantial exploration of the origins and consequences of the notions about race that permeated the culture of most of the Protestant world, including that of the Latter-day Saints, until very recent times. Colin Kidd is a professor of modern history at the University of Glasgow and has written several other books on the historical construction of ethnic identities in Scotland and Britain. His general approach is clearly in line with the “social constructionist” epistemology at the basis of the social sciences during the past half century. In this book, he explains in detail how the arguments over biblical exegesis, and between theologians and Enlightenment secularists, have been implicated in the construction of “racialist” definitions of “the Other” (13). Colin Kidd distinguishes, as I do, between “racialist” and “racist.” The former term conveys the assumption that race plays a salient, or even determinative, role in human nature and destiny. The latter term goes beyond that general characterization to imply invidious distinctions, prejudice, and discrimination based on attributions of race or racial characteristics. In either case, of course, the precise definition of “race” can be variable and is highly problematic.

The scope of the book is “Protestantism within the Atlantic world” (52) during the past four centuries, by which the author means western Europe and North America, with reference mainly (though not exclusively) to the English-speaking world. He does not explain why the Catholic world is not included in his purview, but my own assumption is that the Catholic Church has traditionally maintained greater central control over the creation and promulgation of doctrine. By contrast, as Kidd demonstrates,

doctrinal speculation, argument, and conflict over racial definitions (as over other questions) has always been rife among Protestants, even within the various Protestant communions. This proliferation of theories, furthermore, began as soon as Europeans discovered the varieties of human “Others” in the world and well before black slavery itself became an issue in European and American experience. Otherness was eventually implicated in slavery, but for most of this period the Otherness of slaves lay in their pagan origins, not in their color or race. Ham’s descendants were simply the chief perpetrators of paganism in the world, according to the unfolding Protestant ethnology.

The book has nine chapters, plus twenty-five pages of endnotes and a satisfactory index. The first chapter is a relatively short prologue, “Race in the Eye of the Beholder.” The final chapter has only six pages but provides a good summary. Chapter 2 is an introduction dealing with the general question of how race came to be a problem in scriptural exegesis. Chapter 3 explains the struggle over how to deal with race in the construction of Protestant Christian orthodoxy. Chapter 4 considers the impact of the Enlightenment upon both the construction of race and the authority of the Bible. Chapter 5 focuses on the nineteenth-century crisis of faith resulting from the European discovery of so many “Other” peoples not mentioned in the Bible or readily subsumable under biblical geography or the tripartite biblical ethnology (descendants of Noah through Shem, Ham, or Japheth).

Chapter 6 considers the nineteenth-century “racialization” of religion, as various scholars attempted to reconcile biblical geography and ethnology with the discoveries of philologists pointing to an ancient Indo-European language spoken by a people dubbed “Aryans.” Superior cultural and religious differences came to be ascribed to these “Japhethite” Aryans, which distinguished them from the “Shemite” Hebrews. The most “Aryan” of all eventually came to be known as the Teutonic peoples, who (after the Reformation) were by blood and temperament more inclined toward Protestantism, as contrasted with the gullible and easily led Catholic Celts. Of course, it did not take long for such racist thinking to be pressed into the service of Protestant imperialism.

Chapter 7 considers four special expressions of “racialized religion”: Mormonism, British Israelism, the Christian Identity movement, and (more tenuously) Theosophy. Chapter 8, on black counter-theologies, is an intriguing look at black “vindicationism,” an African American inversion of “Eurocentric” or white scriptural hermeneutics. First arising during the late nineteenth and the twentieth centuries within the African Methodist Episcopal tradition, this motif expressed itself eventually in the more

recent black liberation theologies of James H. Cone and Cain Hope Felder, as well as in black Judaism and in the black Nation of Islam.

Certain crosscutting themes recur throughout the book. One is the intellectual struggle to figure out how to apply the geography and ethnology of the Bible to the increasingly distant and exotic “Other” peoples coming to the attention of Protestant scholars and theologians—especially those peoples discovered in the Americas. Another theme is monogenesis versus polygenesis: must it be assumed that all peoples on the earth descended ultimately from Adam (through Noah and his three sons)? Or are these Others best accounted for by assuming that there were other pre-Adamite creations outside the Bible’s creation narrative? If the latter, then how would the Christian doctrines of the Fall, inherent sinfulness, Atonement, and redemption apply to them? A third theme addresses the need to find biblical justifications for African enslavement in the stories about descent from Cain or from Ham through Canaan. Yet a fourth theme traces the transformation of the quest to understand the Others into a theory of racial superiority and European hegemony.

The argument over monogenesis versus polygenesis was implicated in nearly every controversy during the four centuries in question. Most of the time monogenesis was considered the orthodox biblical position, based largely on Genesis 10 and Acts 17:26–27. This position allowed scholars to hold that God had only one program for all peoples—one human nature, one gospel, one Fall, one Savior, and one Atonement. Yet, if all are children of the same God, why were “races” as such not mentioned in the Bible? Why was there no apparent explanation for the variety of peoples, and no justification for slavery (which increasingly seemed necessary)? The arrival of the Enlightenment broke the biblical monopoly on theories of origin, but ironically the more secular scholars of the Enlightenment were more likely to embrace polygenesis, and thus to make room intellectually for a slavery rationale.

Later, when Darwinism came along, the good news was that it pre-empted the argument over single versus multiple origins and established monogenesis as the eventual orthodoxy for science as well as for theology. The bad news, though, for the theologians, was that Darwinism in effect hijacked the monogenesis position by eliminating altogether the need for a biblical Creator and undercutting any of the Bible-based rationales for slavery that had developed among Christians. Darwinism was resisted by convinced polygenesis advocates, who were mostly secular, as well as by theologians. To some extent, both religious and secular scholars eventually found some common ground in the two different creation accounts of Genesis, one of which came to be accepted by some

theologians as pre-Adamite: “The pre-Adamite conjecture offered the only obvious solution to the vexed problem of reconciling nineteenth-century scientific developments with the basic features of the Mosaic story found in Genesis” (163). All of this left intact the various slavery rationales, whether religious or secular.<sup>1</sup>

Chapter 7 is the one likely to be of greatest interest to LDS readers, since it considers Mormonism as a form of “racialized religion” (226–37). Against the extensive historical background and context of this study, it is difficult to gainsay such a characterization of traditional Mormonism. In the interest of full disclosure, however, I should note that in his treatment of Mormonism Kidd relies heavily on my own work, especially my most recent book.<sup>2</sup> He argues that Mormonism was influenced by the same biblical myths about marks and curses as was Protestantism itself, and that in addition, both British Israelism and secular Teutonism found expression in nineteenth-century Mormon teachings about “special” blood, lineage, and invidious racial comparisons.

This thorough study should convince both Mormons and non-Mormons that there was little or nothing about race or lineage in early Mormonism that was unique. It was virtually all imported from the Atlantic Protestant heritage. Any basis for the idea that Mormon racist practices were founded primarily on divine revelation rather than biblical interpretation seems all the more doubtful in light of this and other careful historical studies.

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1. The biblical rationales are treated in much greater detail in other recent works: Stephen R. Haynes, *Noah's Curse: The Biblical Justification of American Slavery* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); David M. Goldenberg, *The Curse of Ham: Race and Slavery in Early Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003); and Benjamin Braude, *Sex, Slavery, and Racism: The Secret History of Noah and His Sons* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 2005). *Noah's Curse* and *The Curse of Ham* are reviewed by Stirling Adams in *BYU Studies* 44, no. 1 (2005): 157–69.

2. Armand L. Mauss, *All Abraham's Children: Changing Mormon Conceptions of Race and Lineage* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 2003).



Douglas Thayer. *The Conversion of Jeff Williams*.

Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2003

Reviewed by Daniel Kay Muhlestein

**T**he *Conversion of Jeff Williams*, winner of an Association for Mormon Letters Best Novel Award, is an intriguing book written by Douglas Thayer, the author of the novel *Summer Fire* and two collections of short stories, *Mr. Wahlquist in Yellowstone* and *Under the Cottonwoods and Other Mormon Stories*. Thayer's recent book is a coming-of-age novel narrated by Jeff Williams, a seventeen-year-old San Diego native who spends the summer in Provo with his seriously ill cousin, Christopher.

Three related plot lines run through the novel. The first explores Jeff's relationship with Christopher and Christopher's well-heeled parents. Jeff is initially reluctant to spend the summer with his Provo relatives. He admires their wealth, but he misses the beach, his erstwhile girlfriend, and his parents' more relaxed approach to religion. As the summer progresses, however, Jeff becomes less infatuated with money, learns to love Christopher, and begins—for the first time in half a decade—to pray with real intent. When a massive pulmonary embolism strikes Christopher, Jeff struggles valiantly to save his cousin's life. And after Christopher dies, Jeff experiences shock, grief, and a deeper appreciation of the gospel promises of rebirth and resurrection.

The second plot line in the novel revolves around Jeff's relationship with his hard-working, soft-spoken father, Frank. Because of a chance encounter with one of Frank's high school acquaintances, Jeff meets a number of people who are able to tell him many of the particulars of his father's life before he moved from Provo to San Diego, including his boyhood activities, his military service, and the successive tragedies that claimed the lives of his father, his best friend, his mother, and his two younger brothers. Chastened and inspired, Jeff begins to view his father

in a new light, and he looks forward to sharing his discoveries with his dad—a meeting of minds and hearts that is temporarily interrupted by Christopher’s death.

The third plot line is less a series of linked actions than a cluster of related memories, as Jeff reflects back over his childhood and adolescence, analyzing who he is and why he has made the choices he has made. Many of Jeff’s ruminations concern girls, dating, and teenage desire, and he thinks long and hard about why he has been able to keep his hands to himself when so many of his friends have strayed into sin, concluding that his relationship with his mother is probably the determining factor. *The Conversion of Jeff Williams* thus describes a triple epiphany in the life of its narrator—religious, familial, and moral—with the last of the three being remembered rather than enacted.

For a Utah reader, one of the most tactile joys of *The Conversion of Jeff Williams* is Thayer’s sense of place. He knows Utah County intimately, and he recreates Provo and its vicinity with precision and care. Utah Lake, Mount Timpanogos, and Provo Canyon are all described, as is the beauty of the setting sun: “The sunsets in Utah Valley were sometimes incredible. The clouds turned purple, gold, yellow, orange, and became great walls of light that reflected off Timpanogos and the high east mountains until the sky seemed to be full of fire” (29). Almost every major landmark in Utah County is described, including BYU, the MTC, the temple, the cemetery, and of course Provo itself.

Often, however, the enjoyment that comes from reading Thayer’s descriptions of the Wilkinson Center, the CougarEat, and University Mall is the simple pleasure of recognition rather than the complex pleasure of symbolic significance. Only when Thayer juxtaposes the oldest parts of Provo to Jeff’s aunt’s upscale neighborhood does the landscape itself begin to reverberate with meaning, small lively neighborhoods standing in stark contrast to “the vast enclosed space, the unused and unnecessary, the pastels and whites, and so much silence” of the Lowery mansion (175). Even then, as Jeff nears his religious epiphany, he thinks of the “Promised Land” less in terms of the Twelfth North bridge of his father’s childhood than of his own comfortable, unassuming home in San Diego. And at the end of the novel, it is to San Diego that Jeff returns. The Utah setting that initially looms so large is thus ultimately reduced to the status of an aching, absent presence, a father’s house that has long since burnt to ashes. And the most important symbolic landscape in the novel becomes an endless stretch of freeway under a distant Nevada sky.

Of course, characterization, not setting, is the real heart of a coming-of-age novel. Although Thayer uses several minor characters to forward

his plot, *The Conversion of Jeff Williams* revolves around the lives of two related families: the Williams family of San Diego and the Lowerys of Provo. For most of the novel, Jeff lives in Provo with Christopher, and during that time Thayer uses the Lowery family principally as a foil against which to display the characteristics of both Jeff and Jeff's parents. The Williams family is working class; the Lowerys are rich. Jeff's father works with the Boy Scouts; his uncle Richard is a stake president. Jeff's mother is a nurse who helps pay the bills; his aunt Helen spends her days snipping roses and doing genealogy. Jeff is a faithful but unenthusiastic latter-day warrior; Christopher appears to be the very *crème de la crème* of a chosen generation—handsome, athletic, smart, personable, righteous.

The Lowerys are not static characters, however. Christopher undergoes a series of important transformations. Mr. and Mrs. Lowery are humanized by tragedy—the novel is bracketed by the deaths of their three sons. And by the end of the book, the most obnoxious examples of Lowery pretentiousness have been safely eliminated. To his credit, Thayer has as much charity for the Lowery family as he does for the Williams family, and he tries hard not to hold the Lowerys' wealth against them.

In spite of his charity for them, Thayer's discussion of the Lowery family contains a surprisingly effective critique of Mormon materialism. Richard Lowery is, after all, an ex-seminary teacher who strikes it rich by hawking church tapes, family planners, and motivational programs through multilevel marketing. He is also an absent father who speaks and prays in clichés and views the priesthood as yet another path to power. Like her husband, Helen Lowery is obsessed with appearances. She always wears dresses, white or pastel, never pants. She jumps from house to house, each more extravagant than the last. She seems determined to recreate the oeuvre of *The Great Gatsby* but lacks the panache needed to do so, producing a kind of recycled materialism that is too pathetic even to be crass—as though buying expensive suits at University Mall were somehow the epitome of urban chic. In spite of (or perhaps because of) her wealth, Helen's life is often an exercise in trivia, endless hours spent picking flowers and bullying the gardeners. In short, the Lowerys are *nouveau riche*, Mormon style, the kind of people who would own a Porsche without knowing quite how to pronounce its name. And to insure that readers do not somehow miss the point, Thayer highlights the most tasteless aspects of their extravagance—art that is unabashedly Latter-day Saint kitsch, a stable of unused cars, a mansion that is a clumsy imitation of temple splendor.

Of course Thayer's critique of Mormon materialism is Horatian rather than Juvenalian, and it is initially counterbalanced by the narrator's lack of maturity. Further, Thayer seems a little uneasy about exploring one of

the most important implications of Richard's call to become a General Authority: the tangled connections among wealth, power, family pedigree, and Church callings. Thayer's hesitation is not surprising. The apparent links among money, family, and authority in Mormon culture are a sensitive and complicated topic that can presently be raised only obliquely in Mormon literature and art. And though Thayer does not fully explore the issue, he at least acknowledges it.

Jeff's father is depicted as a genuinely positive character, an earthy alternative to the showy materialism of the Lowery family. Frank Williams is hardworking, close-lipped, and just eccentric enough to be likeable. He loves his family and serves others—all without flash or drama. The more Jeff learns about his father, the more he admires him. And at the end of the novel, Jeff begins the same journey from Provo to San Diego that his father had traveled a generation earlier. Father and son are thus united in a hero's quest of mythic proportions, the son becoming his father's double across space and time.

Nevertheless, for much of the novel Frank Williams remains a strangely elusive figure. Although he is the ultimate subject of the novel, the final object—that is to say—of his son's search for understanding, the particulars of Frank's life are described only indirectly, filtering down through multiple hazy narrators. His missionary experience, his military service in Korea, his loss of family and friend, and his archetypal journey West are all obscured by time, space, happenstance, and indirect discourse—a silent movie forever wrapped in fog. Just as Jeff must struggle to understand his father, so also must the reader.

Jeff's mother, on the other hand, is a vivid, engaging character from beginning to end. An ex-army nurse, she is smart, sassy, and surprisingly sexy. She has what Zora Neale Hurston once called the "big voice" of subjective authority. She is also frequently a hoot, whether she is discussing skinny-dipping, household chores, or sleeping in the nude. As Jeff recalls,

When I was fourteen, I told Mom that I'd read in a magazine named *Body* that the healthiest way to sleep was without anything on and that was the way I was going to sleep from now on.

"Oh? Very interesting, Jeff. From what I've heard, most boys ought to sleep in a suit of body armor."

"Very funny, Mom."

"Yes, well, forget about sleeping raw. You'd probably take a chill and catch a bad cold."

"Sleeping raw?"

"Yes, that's what it's called, or at least used to be. Now how about going out and getting the lawn cut before your father gets home—unless of course you plan on stripping down and taking a nap first." (163–64)

The most important character in *The Conversion of Jeff Williams* is of course the narrator himself. Indeed, the success of the novel turns on how well Thayer depicts the mind and heart of his seventeen-year-old protagonist. Thayer skillfully records Jeff's teenage interest in women, sports, and automobiles. He describes Jeff's jaded response to countless lectures on moral purity with particular wit: "I wanted to say that maybe there should be a chastity merit badge just for Mormon Eagle Scouts, but I didn't" (134). He also describes Jeff's religious epiphany with both tenderness and candor, acknowledging the uncomfortable but essential fact that Jeff's conversion is as much an expression of wish-fulfillment as faith: "I felt no sudden surge of joy. It was a simple understanding. It would do for me, I knew. I didn't think about Jesus at that moment. . . . Thinking of him wasn't necessary. I'd approached him by wanting to live forever" (226). Such a combination of authorial honesty and charity is both rare and worthy of praise.

From an aesthetic standpoint, however, Jeff is not an entirely satisfactory character. Although he tells his story in first person, Jeff's language is not the language of a seventeen-year-old boy—Eagle Scout or not. The rhythm of his thoughts is too regular to reproduce the chaotic process of a mind in action; his sentences, too perfectly ordered and balanced:

I curled up; I closed my eyes. All I wanted to do was sleep, fall into sleep. . . . Perhaps my crying was also because of what I knew in my flesh, blood, and bones about death now, that I was not excused from death, and that this understanding must change my life. Yet, laying there in the dark room, I wasn't sad or frightened. I was young and loved. (217–18)

Recreating consciousness is tricky business, of course, and not every text can be expected to match the brilliance of John Updike's "A & P," Sherwood Anderson's "I Want to Know Why," or Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*. But at a strategic point in the novel, Thayer comes close. Midway through the book, he momentarily introduces a second, more mature narrator, an older version of Jeff Williams, who can look back on his former consciousness with both insight and generosity:

I didn't connect that discovery about myself to anything in particular—to my parents, the way I'd been brought up, or to my Mormonism because it valued work, practicality, and usefulness. I simply understood that there was something fulfilling about the hard work. . . . I understood that there are things you have to pay for if you want them. (106)

It is unfortunate that Thayer does not develop this narrator more fully. He has much to offer the novel, and he would have served as a useful counterpoint to his younger self.

Just as Jeff's diction is polished and balanced, so also is his consciousness filtered and strained. He sees, he feels, he desires, he fears; but he does

so through a thick layer of Victorian gentility that obscures rather than highlights the essentials of his experience. Even when Jeff is ogling sun-bathers, he only skates obliquely across the surface of desire, transforming passion into voyeurism, ardor into prudent fun: “I went to the beach to surf but also to watch girls. . . . I liked to see their tanned, lotioned bodies glistening in the sun. . . . I could talk to them and sit by them on their blankets eating their food but not touching them, girls I’d never known or even seen before” (96). It is not that Jeff does not acknowledge his adolescent lust. It is, rather, that his acknowledgment is so thoroughly censured that it seems barely worth readers’ attention. He describes not how he truly thinks and feels but rather how he *thinks* he should think and feel, libidinal drives dressed up—so to speak—in their Sunday best. And though discretion may be the better part of valor, the ease with which Jeff translates his emotions into acceptable language and imagery takes much of the bite out of the novel. This is not to say that Thayer should have written the Mormon equivalent of D. H. Lawrence’s *Sons and Lovers*—or even Levi Peterson’s *The Backslider*—but it is to suggest that his subject matter could have benefited from a little less fastidiousness.

In that respect, *The Conversion of Jeff Williams* is symptomatic of the genre of Mormon fiction within which Thayer writes. Among those writers who—in the words of Richard Cracroft—attempt “to write honestly and well . . . and to probe the lives of faithful men and women confronting a Sophic society,”<sup>1</sup> there is a natural tendency to undersell the allure of sin, just as there is a countervailing tendency among Sophic writers to soft-shoe its consequences. Re-creating temptation without leading the reader astray is an arduous task, and most writers of faithful Mormon realism prefer to risk too little rather than too much. In the process they produce small triumphs rather than large ones. In the final analysis, such is the case with *The Conversion of Jeff Williams*: it is a muted triumph, among the best of its kind.

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1. Richard H. Cracroft, “Attuning the Authentic Mormon Voice: Stemming the Sophic Tide in LDS Literature,” *Sunstone* 16 (July 1993): 56.

Guy L. Beck, editor. *Sacred Sound: Experiencing Music in World Religions*.  
Waterloo, Ontario, Canada: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2006

Reviewed by Greg Hansen

Guy L. Beck's scholarly and innovative book explores religion through music. It elevates and emphasizes the critical role of musical activity in religious life. Rather than discussing music as an aesthetic supplement to religion, Beck's book takes the approach that music is not incidental in religious practice but is a sacred treasure central to the growth and sustenance of world religions. *Sacred Sound* promises to be a milestone in the growing cross-disciplinary study of religion and music and includes a CD of musical examples.

The project is divided into six sections, each one treating a major world faith: Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, and Buddhism. Each essay is written by a different expert in that religion. Beck states that he assembled the book partly to fill his need for a textbook and audio anthology for the classroom. His focus is primarily on vocal music, especially chants, hymns, and sacred songs that have been memorized and passed down through generations to the present and are still a vital part of the transformation of lives in religious communities.

The book is innovative in its approach. Beck states:

One of the principal axioms in the academic field of religious studies has been that religion is a universal part of human culture and civilization. . . . A particular religion, including its cultic and social dimensions, is ideally perceived as a kind of artistic creation in total human response to the presence of the sacred or divine. . . . Scholars in the field of religious studies stress that other religions can be understood or apprehended by outsiders without the necessity of faith, commitment, or cultic participation. Such empathetic understanding is without regard to race, gender, nationality, social standing, or religious affiliation. (3)

Each section discusses the origins, ritual context, personal context, technical forms, current trends, and future of the music for that particular faith. The book's scholarship is impeccable, the research exhaustive, and



the information relevant. The chapter “Christianity and Music” contains audio examples that reflect a balanced and significant set of musical material: “Kyrie,” “Sanctus,” “Agnus Dei,” “A Mighty Fortress,” “Salve Regina,” “I’ll Praise My Maker,” “Holy Holy Holy,” “All Things Bright and Beautiful,” and “Amazing Grace.”

Of special interest to a *BYU Studies* audience may be the treatments on chant and music in early Christianity, ritual context in public liturgy, the background leading to our present Christian hymns, and the evolution from oral tradition to hymnal and songbook. The context of how the present form of worship in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints evolved from the Christian tradition is evident, though not explored specifically. Being intimately familiar with mostly Christian religions, I can only assume the accuracy of the other treatments are as well done as this section.

As a contribution to the emerging field of ethnomusicology, the book stands well on its own. It is less about presenting new information than it is about the emphasis and understanding of diverse religious musical traditions, gathered into one volume. But it is this very emphasis that is also its weakness. Studying religion only through its music, in a context lacking the necessity of faith, commitment, or participation, is like a purely clinical analysis of a kiss between two lovers; the experience itself is far more than a biological description of the attraction of a species. The accompanying CD is comparable to the book in its need for greater spirit and passion. If Beck’s purpose was to inform and educate from an academic standpoint, he has succeeded. If Beck desired to help readers empathetically understand world religions, then he may have missed the mark. The direction taken for the book, though innovative, overemphasizes one part of the world religious experience by focusing on a single aspect of it, thereby removing much of the enlightenment, life, and passion that Beck claims religious music is all about. Relatively expensive for a paperback book and CD, those with no professional or personal relevance to the book’s subject may want to investigate further before purchasing it.

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*American Women Modernists: The Legacy of Robert Henri, 1910–1945*, edited by Marian Wardle (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Museum of Art; New Brunswick N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2005)

Robert Henri (1865–1929), painter and teacher, left a legacy of adventurous individualism. His women students carefully heeded his prescient and courageous advice to interpret the experiences of their personal lives in a national and characteristically American art. After studying with Henri, these women scattered away from his Philadelphia and New York City art schools to experiment. They filled canvases, sculpted clay, wove textiles, etched, printed, built furniture, and made photographs. They carved frames for their work, set tiles into haunting imagery, and designed sets and costumes, all the while grappling with the early-twentieth-century limitations placed on women. Through a series of seven essays and expansive illustrations, *American Women Modernists* illuminates the social and artistic challenges these pioneering women faced in a male-dominated art world and explains how the artists influenced modernism's evolution.

Painting their experiences in the West—in California, Utah, and Washington, for example—Henrietta Shore, Minerva Teichert, and Helen Loggie typified artists whose distinctive work honored Henri's philosophy. Henrietta Shore's stylized subjects—large cactuses and succulents filling a canvas, farm workers whose rhythmic picking appears animated—documented a colorful and vibrant West. Henri's prophetic advice to Minerva Teichert to paint her "'birthright'—the story of her Mormon west" (7) resulted in a treasured record revering the West's

strength and wildness. Helen Loggie etched her connection to the natural world in northwestern Washington in such detail that Henri's influence, as with so many of the artists represented here, sings in her renderings.

A charismatic and talented instructor who was gifted in stirring the imagination of his mostly women students, Robert Henri encouraged them at a time when other male artists and instructors disdained and marginalized them. He advised his students to pursue any subject they wished and pointed out that "it is not the subject that counts; but what you bring to it" (108), giving these women critical license to respect themselves and their individuality.

*American Women Modernists* fills a critical gap in early-twentieth-century American art history by crediting women artists whose bold, experimental industry has largely gone unrecorded until now. The book redefines the traditional characterization of modernism and in so doing clarifies its meaning to include more of the diversity it originally claimed. In her essay "Modernizing Women," Lois Palken Rudnick explains that these women artists, through their dedication to their work and their often independent lifestyles, "made themselves felt and heard by both working with and against male hegemony" (166). Continuously challenged with narrow definitions of "feminine" and "masculine" subjects, modern women artists took to heart Henri's instruction to "go down to the docks, to prize fights, to the slums, and paint what [you see] there" (118). In complying with Henri's direction, the women shaped and advanced American culture with lyricism, daring assertion, and confidence.

—Kathryn J. Abajian

*Mapping Paradise: A History of Heaven on Earth*, by Alessandro Scafi (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006)

Alessandro Scafi, who lectures at universities and museums in Bologna, Italy, and in London, England, draws upon his 1999 doctoral dissertation at the University of London for much of the content of this volume. In this thoroughly researched and beautifully illustrated book, Professor Scafi explores the cultural history of maps that attempt to represent the Garden of Eden as a location in space and time. He retraces the history of map-making from the very early Christian era through the modern period, with particular emphasis on medieval and early modern examples. Moreover, he clearly demonstrates how cultural attitudes about the function of maps have changed over time.

Most of the maps examined here made no attempts to display mathematically accurate relationships between landmarks and must be regarded as concept charts rather than as cartographic models of an objective geographic reality. This allowed early mapmakers to represent the known world as linked entities appearing in both space and time but also in a purely contemplative or allegorical arena. For instance, the *mappa mundi* displayed continents and bodies of water relative to each other and the four cardinal points (with east usually at the top). At the same time, the history of the world as it proceeded from Eden in the East toward Jerusalem, then to Rome in the West, was overlaid on the same map. In some cases, superposing the map onto the body of the crucified Christ allowed yet another layer of meaning for eschatological interpretations.

Scafi repeatedly points out that the question of whether the Garden

of Eden should appear on a map at all stemmed from a problematic translation from the Hebrew Bible. The ambiguous word מִקְדֶּם (*miqedem*) as a modifier of the name of paradise was translated in the Septuagint as “eastward” but in Jerome’s Vulgate as “from before the beginning.” Hence, the early interpreters of the Bible sought to represent Eden as both a place and a time.

In *Mapping Paradise*, the author also examines in detail the various theories over the centuries as to the location and accessibility of Eden. He mentions briefly the Jehovah’s Witnesses among the modern proponents of a literal Garden but makes reference to neither Joseph Smith nor Adam-ondi-Ahman. The unquestionable strength of the volume remains in the analysis of pre-Enlightenment representations of Eden in the world.

—Jesse D. Hurlbut