

“My Father’s Business”: Thomas Taylor and Mormon Frontier Economic Enterprise

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SHORTLY AFTER MORMON PIONEERS ARRIVED IN UTAH in July 1847 Brigham Young planned for an anticipated population explosion by exploring the region and locating sites which could support new settlements and industries. Parley P. Pratt of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles led one of the first such expeditions to southern Utah, charting Young’s “corridor” to the Pacific Ocean of prospective settlement sites. Near present-day Cedar City, Pratt’s party discovered a huge iron deposit, which they named Iron Mountain, containing some two million tons of iron ore. The deposit has been described by one authority as “the most remarkable deposit of iron ore discovered on [the American] continent.”¹

Church leaders believed the providential discovery was the beginning of an inheritance: an industry to support the influx of new converts and a sure means of securing Mormon economic independence. Apostle Wilford Woodruff, on a mission in Great Britain in January 1850, received word to “gather up all the Saints in the Eastern Country and bring them to Zion to Establish Iron foundries.”² England was the world center for the iron trade at the time, and modern iron-making techniques and machinery were developed in Staffordshire. Mormon elders in England championed the cause of iron with special zeal, touting the industry at English mission conferences and in the columns of the mission paper *The*

1. J. S. Newberry, Columbia School of Mines, New York, in Robert W. Sloan, ed. and comp., *Gazetteer of Logan, Ogden, Provo, and Salt Lake City for 1894* (Salt Lake City: Herald Printing and Publishing Co., 1894), 59-61. Newberry is also cited as an authority in the 2 Aug. 1881 edition of *Deseret Evening News* on iron mines.

2. Wilford Woodruff, *Wilford Woodruff’s Journal*, 9 vols., ed. Scott G. Kenney (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1985), 3:527 (7 Jan. 1850).

Millennial Star. The relationship of iron to the church in England was still evident decades later when historian Edward Tullidge observed:

Natively [the Mormons] are a manufacturing people rather than an agricultural, and our territory resembles Great Britain in its resources of iron and coal and the class of industries which properly belongs to her. The majority of the British Mormons are from the manufacturing and mining districts of England, Scotland, and Wales.³

Back in Utah, Apostle George A. Smith “felt that we [we]re free when I heard that Iron & Coal was found in abundance within 15 miles of each other in Iron County.” He believed that having to purchase necessary iron goods made the Mormons “slaves to Missouri and Illinois,”⁴ two Mormon bywords for Babylon. In July 1850 Brigham Young sent a party of 167 Mormons to southern Utah, dubbed the iron mission, to establish the iron industry.

Thomas Taylor was one of the British converts for whose future success Mormon elders were planning and a man who would play a central role in nineteenth-century Utah’s traumatic experiment in iron. Born on 26 July 1826 at Oldham, Lancashire, England, he was raised a hundred miles north of Ironbridge, Staffordshire, “the cradle of the Industrial Revolution.” One of seven children born to dairy farmers James Taylor and Sarah Whitehead, Thomas was baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints by his brother James whose commitment to his new faith had made him the leader of Mormonism’s local missionary efforts. Younger brother William soon joined them in baptism.

By the 1850s the center of England’s iron industry was moving south from Staffordshire to Black Country. Many of Lancashire’s young men followed the foundries to Birmingham, but the Taylor brothers emigrated to Zion in 1848-49. Thomas originally settled with wife Elizabeth in Salt Lake City, where she bore him the first of eleven children.⁵ In 1855 they moved to Lehi where the ambitious Thomas soon became a leading citizen. Taylor and his brothers began farming sugar beets on the Fotheringham farm. He established “T & W Taylor,” one of the town’s first mercantiles, was elected city recorder, founded the Lehi Dramatic Club,⁶ served the church as branch clerk,⁷ and was ordained a seventy by Jede-

3. Edward Tullidge, *The History of Salt Lake City* (Salt Lake City: Edward Tullidge, 1883).

4. Woodruff, 4:75 (6 Oct. 1851).

5. Thomas Taylor Family Group Sheet, LDS Church Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.

6. Richard S. Van Wagoner, *Lehi: Portrait of a Utah Town* (Lehi, UT: Lehi City Corporation, 1988), 123-27.

7. *Deseret News*, 16 Aug. 1854. Taylor wrote that grasshoppers were doing considerable damage to crops, that the city wall was progressing, and that the tithing store was built.

diah Grant during one of his famous Reformation visits in 1857.⁸ That February, thirty-one-year-old Taylor entered into his first polygamous marriage with Catherine Dallin, a woman of the same age.⁹

While Taylor worked to establish his inheritance in Zion, Mormon leaders continued to expand Mormon settlements for emigrants who followed on the Taylor brothers' heels in droves. But iron was not to be their occupation, as the brethren had hoped. Early iron-making efforts met limited success because pioneers were capital-poor, ignorant of iron-making techniques (despite English contacts), and the iron deposits while close by today's standards were too isolated for the limited transportation facilities of the 1850s.

Brigham Young also had his hands full with non-Mormon ("gentile") emigrants seeking another of the earth's treasures: gold. The 1849 California gold discovery brought them through the territory en masse. Some staked their claims in Utah as merchants to make their fortune off passers-through. Young viewed merchants as carpet-baggers and profiteers: only slightly higher than Satan's angels. He believed non-Mormon merchants' agitation and interference were at least in part responsible for the Utah War of 1857-58.

Despite Young's vocal criticisms, Thomas Taylor traded actively with the "enemy." His Lehi store was near (and succeeded because of) the U.S. army's detachment at Camp Floyd, twenty miles to the southwest. That Young knew about Taylor's actions is unknown. Young believed that if Mormons bought and sold that it should be Mormons who profited. He set up branches of Zion's Mercantile Cooperative Institution (ZCMI) in settlements throughout Utah. Young chose Lehi as one of the first sites for his cooperative store. The Lehi Cooperative soon drove several Lehi stores out of business and eventually bought out the last, T & W Taylor, in May 1869.

Thomas Taylor for his part had removed himself from active involvement in the business in 1862 and had left William to oversee daily operations. Taylor fathered four children in Lehi between 1855 and 1860. All other children were born in Salt Lake City.

Perhaps Mormon leaders forgave Taylor for his merchandising sins or were punishing him for them: they called him on a mission to his native land in 1862. His career of daily service to the church was to occupy, in various ways, the next several years.

In England, Taylor's enterprising spirit shined anew. He was made president of the Manchester proselytizing district; he also corresponded actively with the *Millennial Star*. His sermons were full of a missionary's

8. Andrew Jenson, *Church Chronology*, 2d ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1914), 58 (Thursday, 21 May 1857).

9. Thomas Taylor Family Group Sheet.

zeal for the Mormon gospel and his reports and relationship to priesthood leader and English Mission president George Q. Cannon were appropriately obsequious.¹⁰

Rising star Elder Taylor sailed for Copenhagen on 19 March 1864 to aid Jesse N. Smith, president of the church's Scandinavian mission, with emigration business.¹¹ Brigham Young called and quickly rescinded a call appointing Taylor successor to Smith.¹² Taylor instead returned stateside to oversee the vital New York side of the emigration business.

The Mormon emigration was a mammoth undertaking. Mormon economic historian Leonard Arrington has estimated that 38,000 emigrants were brought to Utah by the church's Perpetual Emigration Fund. Some 10,000 of those were assisted between 1864 and 1866, the years Taylor was responsible for emigration.¹³ Taylor's call revealed the high respect in which he was held by superiors. Still emigration agents were fellow-laborers in the harvest, and Brigham Young viewed them as volunteers who worked for tithing credit alone.

Taylor's work was performed as he admitted at "considerable sacrifice." Arrington noted that no church teams were sent from Utah in 1865. Yet Taylor was able to get 150 pioneers across the frontier despite the oversight. He personally outfitted forty-five ox teams, three to a wagon, and 2,000 pounds of freight. Total cost according to Taylor was over \$20,000. In accordance with Young's volunteer policy, Taylor was told that he had to defray the costs himself. Perhaps anticipating this development, he had placed some of his own cows with the wagon train. He hoped to sell them at a profit in Utah. Taylor later complained, "One of the authorities counselled me to put the cows into his care contrary to my judgment. They cost some \$13,000. There came on a terrible storm and within 30 days they were all dead."¹⁴

So impressed was Young with Taylor's capacity for sacrifice that he sent him down in 1866 to oversee emigration once more. Taylor remonstrated, but Young promised, "If you go you will make more money than if you stay at home." The prophet's assurances lead Taylor to believe that Young would assist him in the emigration and give him official license to

10. See Taylor's letters in the *Millennial Star*, 8 Aug., 27 Sept., 25 Oct., 29 Nov., 9 Dec. 1863, 3, 9 Jan., 13, 18 Mar. 1864.

11. *Journal History*, 19 Mar. 1864, archives, historical department, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah (hereafter LDS archives).

12. Andrew Jenson, *History of the Scandinavian Mission* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1927).

13. Leonard J. Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom: Economic History of the Latter-Day Saints, 1830-1900* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1958), 97.

14. Thomas Taylor, Lawsuit prospectus, Thomas Taylor Papers, Special Collections, Marriott Library, University of Utah (hereafter Lawsuit prospectus).

keep the profit.¹⁵

Unfortunately the previous year's troubles were not only replayed, they were redoubled. New York-based railroads attempted to cheat Mormons by jacking-up prices. Taylor negotiated a longer but cheaper route. The Saints travelled by steamer to Connecticut, by train to Montreal, by cattle car to Port Hope, by steamer to Port Huron, then on to Quincy, Illinois. Trains took them across Missouri, steamers to Nebraska, and finally wagons brought them to Utah. The *History of the Scandinavian Mission* recorded the insults and abuse suffered by the persecuted troop, as well as the illness and death. Slow travel forced Taylor on to Salt Lake City to bring forty-four additional mule teams to aid the beleaguered pioneers.¹⁶

The return trip for Taylor was no doubt more excruciating than the one down, when he stayed in some of the country's finest hotels in the company of Brigham Young, Jr.¹⁷ But Taylor attempted to make the best of things. Like the previous year he packed freight along, hoping to cash in when he got home. Young refused to send any money to assist Taylor, but the church did send wagons and teams that year. Taylor estimated his cost to be \$12,000; he felt cheated again, and later recalled:

When I arrived in Salt Lake City after finishing with my arduous duties, I found the freight for which I had paid and was held responsible for locked up in the Tithing Office. I was informed by B. H. Schittle that prest. Young said it could not be taken away until the hauling over the plains was paid for on purpose that I could have the money to use for the emigration business, but it was all to no avail. He said most emphatically, well, you can't have that freight until you pay for it again. Then I paid for it again. When I asked him what I should have for my service, telling him that I had made besides that for the Church over twenty thousand dollars he replied that when we send men on missions we don't pay them neither do I allow them to pocket the money they make while gone on missions and I will charge up the expenses of the Emigration to your account, and he did so.¹⁸

Heavily in debt, Taylor returned to Salt Lake City. He also returned to business to make up his loss. He remained, despite his unhappy emigration experiences, a stalwart church member. He took an additional plural wife, Mary Boardman, in Salt Lake City on 1 December 1866.¹⁹ Mary was born in Manchester, England, the area over which Taylor had presided as district president during 1863-64. She bore him four children between

15. Ibid.

16. Jenson, *History of the Scandinavian Mission*, entry for 1865.

17. Brigham Young to Brigham Young, Jr., 8 Feb. 1866, Brigham Young Papers, LDS archives.

18. Lawsuit prospectus.

19. Thomas Taylor Family Group Sheet.

1868 and 1876. In June 1867 Thomas received with his first wife Elizabeth the second anointing, the highest ritual available to Mormons which guaranteed their exaltation in heaven. Taylor was also drafted by general authorities to accompany them on speaking tours where he trumpeted the virtues of "cooperation."

T & W Taylor, the last of Lehi's remaining mercantiles, had been bought out by ZCMI in May 1869.²⁰ The business was transferred to Salt Lake City where it operated on East Temple (now Main Street) between First and Second South.²¹ In the spring and summer of 1871 Taylor expanded his Salt Lake City home at 127 South 200 West into a hotel. The younger brother described the elder's house near the railroad depot as "like a little palace." Thomas invited William to serve as his *maitre d'* even though the brothers had argued over business in the intervening years. William felt that Thomas minimized his efforts to keep daily business operations going while Thomas was away, while Thomas viewed his brother as a burden. Sadly for both, the hotel failed and William returned to Lehi.²²

Thomas's ecclesiastical career met greater success. He toured often with Mormon leaders to speak to Mormon congregations in Utah provinces, and was ordained bishop of the Salt Lake Fourteenth Ward on 4 March 1872.²³ On 8 April 1873 he was made an assistant trustee-in-trust for the entire church.²⁴

In 1871, Taylor changed the name of his business to Taylor & Cutler.²⁵ His daughter married John C. Cutler, later governor of Utah, that April.²⁶ For a while Thomas was once again riding high, but William was not in such good spirits as the following report from his diary indicates:

During supper my brother Thomas entertained our company with a recital of his success in business when he made his start, how he was away for three years on a mission during the best time there was for making money, how he went into debt over \$20,000 to bring the emigration on his return, a debt which the church had to pay but which he had to carry. he named several persons who had failed while he through his industry, perseverance . . . had

20. *Deseret Evening News*, 26 May 1869.

21. See entry under "Taylor & Cutler" in *Salt Lake City Directory*, for 1867 and 1869, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City.

22. William Whitehead Taylor Diary, 1869-74, LDS archives. See also Hamilton Gardner, *History of Lehi* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1913), 434-35.

23. Woodruff, 7:62 (4 Mar. 1872).

24. *Ibid.*, 130 (8 Apr. 1873).

25. *Salt Lake City Directory*, 1873, Utah State Historical Society.

26. Taylor Family Group Sheet. John C. Cutler, Utah's second governor, served from 1905 to 1909 as a Republican. He was born in Sheffield, England (near Taylor's birthplace), and emigrated to Utah in 1864.

succeeded. he said he must give John [Cutler] credit for helping him. So much for making a fool of myself and family, for years of toiling early and late, turning in my stock and everything I could for years upon a mistaken idea of devotion to the interest of another. I believe this day that all I have done he fails to see . . . I was not remembered and I believe me and mine are not remembered for all we have done.²⁷

Perhaps William experienced some private satisfaction when he soon saw his brother encounter problems in the iron business.

Thomas Taylor first became involved in the iron mines in May 1873. Thomas and three of his men were arrested during an altercation at the Richmond Mine in Iron County, one of Taylor's first iron claims. Judge McGean jailed Taylor for the incident whose specifics are unclear.²⁸ However it probably had something to do with a lawsuit over the mine which engaged Taylor and Cutler, on one hand, and the influential Utah businessmen the Walker brothers, on the other hand, the following year. Taylor won the suit and threatened a counter-suit in retaliation.

According to his own recollection, Taylor's business woes began to escalate during the next several years. He was still carrying the emigration debt (\$20,000, by William's account; \$30,000, by Thomas's later reckoning) at 2-3 percent per month. Taylor mortgaged his home but was ultimately "broken up in business." In the spring of 1876, Taylor went to Brigham Young for relief but was refused. Young died later that year.²⁹

Despite the threat of impending bankruptcy, Taylor was able to continue adding to his iron holdings. The 26 February 1878 quit claim, which transferred foundries, machinery, and land from Leonard Hardy and George Romney to Taylor for consideration of \$1.00, was a bargain.³⁰ By adding the iron works to his existing iron claims, Taylor believed he had found the answer to his financial problems. Still he needed capital to develop and thus secure his claims.

Taylor turned to new church president John Taylor (no relation) to press the emigration claims which Brigham Young had refused. An arbitration committee which included L. John Nuttall, William Clayton, and James Jack reviewed Thomas's case. They declared settlement of \$12,784.50 in Taylor's favor. Despite this, John Taylor reneged. On 22 July 1878, Thomas wrote an angry letter to President Taylor and the Quorum of Twelve Apostles. Thomas laid out the details of his perceived abuse at the hands of Brigham Young and denied being in any way in debt to the

27. William Whitehead Taylor Diary, 25 Dec. 1873.

28. *Ibid.*, 27 May 1873.

29. Lawsuit prospectus.

30. "Quit Claim," Cedar City, Iron City, drawn from title search, in Utah State Historical Society. See n34.

church. Rather, he wrote, the church owed him.³¹

The brethren stalled. Thomas wrote the church presidency again on 25 September, complaining that word of the settlement had hit the streets and creditors were hounding him.³² The brethren finally came up with \$500 assistance.

In October another important event occurred with profound implications for the future iron industry. John Taylor gathered his colleagues and established the Zion's Central Board of Trade. The board was to administer all Utah Mormon industries according to principles of mutual cooperation.³³ The board, to which Thomas was called, gave a great deal of consideration to the development of an iron industry. But Taylor, in light of the emigration fiasco, was not going to pin his hopes on Mormon cooperation. He secured nine more Iron County claims on 2 January 1879.³⁴

With the arrival of 1879, Taylor, the church, and gentile interests led by the Walker brothers were jockeying for position to control southern Utah's potentially lucrative iron deposits. In January, Allen G. Campbell, another wealthy gentile industrialist, joined the fray by attempting to jump Thomas's claims.³⁵ Campbell's lawsuit argued that Taylor's claims measuring 600 feet were of illegal width and hence invalid. Campbell figured that financially unstable Taylor would be unable to engage costly and lengthy litigation. But Taylor was as irascible as ever. He undertook his own defense and requested Iron County records from Iron County recorder and stake president William Dame. But Dame was a careless record-keeper. Taylor travelled repeatedly from Salt Lake City to Iron County during the year to straighten out the mess.³⁶ John Taylor became aware of Thomas's problems and offered him \$300 assistance in exchange for 2/3 interest in his iron properties. Thomas, assessing his properties at \$15,000, declined the church president's offer.³⁷ The latter became angry because he reasoned that without church involvement the iron industry would be lost to the gentiles. Fortunately for Thomas, Judge Emerson of the Beaver District Court finally ruled in his favor on 8 December. Campbell appealed to the U.S. Secretary of the Interior, keeping the claims in litigation and preventing Taylor from fully developing his properties.

Despite persistent legal problems, Thomas pressed on. He added Ebenezer Hanks's iron holdings to his own on 8 January 1881.³⁸ Hanks, a

31. Thomas Taylor to John Taylor and Quorum of Twelve Apostles, Thomas Taylor Papers.

32. *Ibid.*

33. Woodruff, 7:159-61 (8-9 Oct. 1878).

34. Iron County Mining Records, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City.

35. *Deseret Evening News*, 8-12 Dec. 1879.

36. William Dame Papers, Utah State Historical Society.

37. Thomas Taylor reminiscence, Thomas Taylor Papers.

38. Iron County Mining Records. See n34.

merchant who had made his money freighting between California and southern Utah, had been heavily involved in development of the Iron County mines in the 1860s and 1870s. He had failed because he was unable to capitalize the business. Brigham Young counselled against involving eastern gentile capitalists, which ended Hanks's involvement. The final blow came when an executive embezzled a special levy against stockholders raised in hopes of keeping the company afloat.

When Taylor and Cutler secured Hanks's iron properties they did not want to make the same mistake their predecessors did in seeking to capitalize the concern within Utah. They bonded the properties to gentile investor A. G. Hollister for \$100,000. As he did when trading with the army during the 1850s, Taylor was putting his personal business interests above the good of the Mormon kingdom and the cooperation doctrine.

But in order to finalize the deal Hollister needed other Iron County property owners to bond their land also. Taylor accused President John Taylor of exerting influence to prevent the other property holders from bonding. Wilford Woodruff recorded in his 15 October 1880 journal entry a meeting of the Twelve and First Presidency during which they discussed with Henry Lunt a plan to secure Iron County coal and iron mines. The brethren appropriated \$5,000 for the purpose and proposed to control 2/3 interest to Lunt's 1/3.³⁹

Thomas also claimed that John Taylor interfered further by "getting up a company, thus hindering me from selling." The company was "got up" at the April 1881 meeting of the Zion's Central Board of Trade.⁴⁰ The board agenda's primary issue was iron. Board members appointed a committee of seven and instructed them to incorporate an iron manufacturing company. Oddly, for all of his unhappy dealings with the Mormon brethren, Thomas was included on the committee of seven.⁴¹ Perhaps he reasoned, in light of President Taylor's interference, that the powerful church presidency was a better business ally than foe. The committee was to present a plan for an Iron Manufacturing Company to the Board of Trade at the latter's October meeting.

With the frenzy of activity during the late-1870s and not so much as a nail to show for it, the Utah media as advocates of the community's interest began to ask, "Why no exploitation of Iron County's iron potential?" The 12 January 1881 *Deseret Evening News* attempted to answer that question. The report covered problems which had hampered development since the 1850s: lack of adequate quality fuel for smelting, inexperience of the concerned parties, and transportation difficulties. It also detailed Tho-

39. Woodruff, 7:597 (15 Oct. 1880).

40. Lawsuit prospectus.

41. From the published circular of the Zion's Central Board of Trade, *Deseret Evening News*, 20 Apr. 1881.

mas's struggles with Allan Campbell. To follow up, the *News* printed an editorial three days later signed cryptically, "one who is interested." The "interested one" demanded that iron be developed at full haste, principally to provide jobs for Utahns.

The April Board of Trade meeting appeared to meet the challenge, and the meeting engendered a series of triumphant newspaper reports.⁴² But wide publication of the board's plans also drew criticism. J. C. Cameron, mining engineer for a competing iron company, The Rose of Tintic Mining Co., raised concerns in a 2 August 1881 letter to the *Deseret Evening News*. Cameron argued that an iron industry should not be located at Iron City because the climate was unsuited to support a working population, water was scarce, and railroad transportation was not in place. He argued that a central site should be located at the town of Leamington because it was located on the Sevier River, enjoyed a more mild climate, and was central to iron deposits both in Iron County and in the Sanpete Valley.⁴³ Leamington was also center of The Rose of Tintic's operations. Cameron's objections were to be validated in the following years.

Thomas Taylor, who had invested considerable sums developing the Iron County site, contradicted Cameron in an 8 August rebuttal. The site was in fact suitable in climate with plenty of open land, water, and coal to make iron. Furthermore, Taylor's holdings had been offered to the committee appointed by the Board of Trade at "reasonable terms."⁴⁴ However, the only holdings Taylor was free to offer the company were the lands, buildings, and foundries. His iron claims which would have formed the backbone of the fledgling company's operations were still in litigation before the Secretary of the Interior.

The committee went ahead with its plans for an iron company in Iron County. Articles of Agreement for the Utah Iron Manufacturing Company of Utah were filed on 24 September 1881. Bishop Taylor was not listed among John Taylor, George Q. Cannon, and others as the company's principals. This omission suggests that Taylor had become suspicious of President Taylor's motives for forming the company in the first place. He later accused John Taylor of constructing an elaborate charade, a company "got up" purely with the purpose of stalling sale of the iron properties to keep them out of gentile hands. Newspaper reports detailing the following weeks' events seem to support this conclusion.

Thomas relinquished control of the Iron Springs properties to the Iron Manufacturing Company. He soon began looking elsewhere for facilities he alone would control. The 1 October 1881 *Southern Utonian*, a

42. Ibid. See also *Deseret Evening News*, 20 May, 12 Oct. 1881.

43. Ibid., 2 Aug. 1881.

44. Ibid., 8 Aug. 1881.

Cedar City newspaper, reported that Taylor had negotiated for the purchase of the main water ditches in Cedar City, "with the object . . . of erecting an extensive iron works in the immediate vicinity of the town, *entirely distinct from the Iron City project*" (emphasis added).⁴⁵ The 15 October edition reported that Taylor had succeeded "in bonding several individual interests in the water franchise at Cedar City as well as tracts of land. . . . In view of the Bishop's known connection with the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad this would indicate that he proposes to make Cedar a manufacturing point instead of Iron City." Railroad surveyors had descended on Iron City to acquire a piece of the action. Unnamed "railroad magnates" surveyed the region according to the *Southern Utonian* with the intent of "gobbling everything up."⁴⁶

Cedar City's citizens were behind Bishop Taylor in the struggle over the iron industry's location. The *Southern Utonian* described them as "rather jubilant over the prospective of iron smelters and mills that are going to be erected there next year." The paper further reported, "Bishop Taylor of Salt Lake is over at the mines superintending a force of men whom he has engaged to prospect some of the claims."⁴⁷ The *Deseret Evening News* also detailed Taylor's progress: he had secured U.S. patents to several claims, was dealing with "hamperers" to secure the rest of the claims," had commenced work on a large foundry, and finally commented, "he is determined to make iron. . . . He would like to get help in the enterprise, but he is going to make it anyway."⁴⁸ Wilford Woodruff's journal places John Taylor in the Cedar City vicinity in November 1881 without specifying the reason for his visit. It is reasonable to assume, however, that iron had something to do with his visit.⁴⁹

The 14 March 1882 *Deseret Evening News* carried another boosterish editorial with Thomas Taylor's signature. Utahns should "make our country the consumer of its own productions," he argued, voicing the official Mormon cooperative line, obviously for personal gain. Iron presented the key to the immediate employment of thousands of idle emigrants:

Our foundries and machine shops are growing institutions and no person who has the welfare of this country at heart will import machinery or other articles that can be as cheaply made at home.

For wagons, agricultural implements, stoves, castings of every description, malleable iron in its multitudinous uses, and other things. We have the

45. *Southern Utonian*, 1 Oct. 1881.

46. *Ibid.*, 5 Sept. 1881.

47. *Ibid.*, 19 Nov. 1881.

48. *Deseret Evening News*, 30 Nov. 1881.

49. Woodruff, 8:63-65 (1-8 Nov. 1881).

mechanics, experienced hands in the above branches, and these articles should be made here, and thus business for our young men would be introduced who have no taste for farming, teaming or common labor. But we should commence the manufacture of iron first and foremost. Every man of sense says so, and when we get to making our own iron, these other industries would spring up like magic, for iron could be so much cheaper than it could be brought here, and it would no longer be asked, what shall we do with our sons? There would be profitable employment for all.

By late 1882, Taylor's long-standing legal battle with Allen ("King") Campbell came to a successful conclusion and finally Taylor could proceed with his grandiose plans for a southern Utah iron industry. On 22 July the "celebrated" Campbell-Taylor cases that had been set for special hearing before the Beaver District Court on the 17th were postponed until September.⁵⁰ The same day in Washington, D.C., the Secretary of the Interior reversed the decision of the land commissioner's office which had canceled Taylor's claims at Campbell's request. According to the *Salt Lake Herald*:

The secret[ary] holds that the commissioner had no right to go behind the court in Taylor's favor, and says that an account of what appeared from some of the papers then submitted, it should have been different. the point of objection to the confirmation of the title to Taylor lay in the fact that the lodes were six hundred feet in width, but the secretary calls attention to the law of 1872, and amendments prior to the location which allows that width in an entry.⁵¹

The *Territorial Enquirer*, a Provo paper, elaborated upon the *Herald's* report:

Not far distant from the city of Cedar in Iron County is situated what is known as Iron City. This is a mining town, and from the amount of iron ore taken out at this place the name has been given. It is in this mining district that the mines of Thomas Taylor of Salt Lake are situated and because of their richness both in mineral and situation one Allen G. Campbell by name, known as King Campbell, in the South, has caused Mr. Taylor no end of trouble and difficulty. This Campbell and the clique to which he belongs, seems to have, by chance of circumstances, fallen into a heap of riches and not knowing how to dispose of this wealth, entered in the courts a suit against Mr. Taylor, claiming ownership of the mines he was then working. The case was brought up before Judge Emerson of the Third District Court, who sustained Mr. Taylor in his rights. Campbell not being satisfied with a just decision, entered the case before the commissioner of the Land Office, and

50. *Southern Utonian*, 22 July 1882.

51. *Salt Lake Daily Herald*, 23 July 1882.

ordered the entries made by Thomas Taylor to be set aside and canceled. Upon this subject the following dispatch has been received: [quotes the above *Herald* report]

The above decision should, we take it, have the effect of stopping the illegal claiming propensities of Allen G., but it may not. . . . we can easily see how even the shadow of a chance makes a clear case for him, and he enters the arena of contests, but always on the winning side. Moderation is suggested as an antidote for the fiery disposition of the "King."⁵²

Despite the Secretary of the Interior's ruling, plans to try the case in District Court proceeded as scheduled. The 26 August *Southern Utonian* reported that the Campbell-Taylor cases were definitely set for September. "As they involve the legal title to some very valuable iron mining claims in Iron County," it editorialized, "the suit will undoubtedly be looked upon with great interest by all who are interested in the material development of the southern part of our territory."

The case was finally tried on 23 September, five days late owing to the absence of Campbell's leading attorney. The judge's decision reiterated the Secretary of the Interior's conclusion. "The defendant has the best of the fight," observed the *Southern Utonian*. "The shrewd business-like tactics of Mr. Taylor's counsel being rather too much for the opposition."⁵³

With the district court's reiteration of the Interior Department's decision, Taylor's claims were more secure than ever. But for Taylor, the district court's trial was evidently viewed as a mere formality. Back in July, once the federal department ruled in his favor, Taylor once again put the properties on the block and found a buyer in Charles Walker of Poncha Springs, Colorado. The asking price was \$100,000.⁵⁴ The problem once again was that Walker was a gentile.

Taylor later reported an "incidental" conversation with George Q. Cannon, first counselor in the LDS First Presidency and John Taylor's right-hand man. "I told him of my intention of selling [the iron properties] to Mr. Walker who represented a rich company who would establish Iron Works, etc."⁵⁵ In light of past experiences, it seems unreasonable to assume that Cannon would receive the news of the sale of the properties to a gentile as good news. Perhaps Taylor naively clung to the idea that any development of the iron industry after such long efforts was good news, that Mormons would relinquish their long-held opposition to the intrusion of gentile capital. Or possibly he gave the information to Can-

52. *Territorial Enquirer*, 29 July 1882.

53. *Southern Utonian*, 26 Aug., 23 Sept. 1882.

54. Lawsuit prospectus.

55. *Ibid.*

non “incidentally” to stir up the competition. If the latter were the case, it worked. Cannon offered Taylor \$50,000 for 1/2 interest in the properties, which Taylor accepted. Taylor’s only stipulation was that his old adversary, President John Taylor, would not be brought into the enterprise under any circumstance. Deed for 1/2 interest was passed to Cannon on 5 September.⁵⁶

The Cannon-Taylor enterprise set immediately to work. On 21 October the Cedar City Council met to consider a petition stating the Cannon-Taylor intention

to establish iron works somewhere in Iron County, Utah territory, and commence with the erection of the same forthwith—that if said works should be built in Cedar City, it will be with certain inducement to construction of one or more railroads to your city, increasing value of property and bringing in a greater influx of population. Being informed that Cedar City owns suitable ground on the north side of the creek, we shall require about ten acres of land with right-of-way for water. If in your wisdom you can offer inducements to establish said iron works in your city, please let us know what the inducements are.⁵⁷

On 23 October the council reacted quickly to accept the potential boon for their community by granting the petition. They offered Cannon and Taylor \$500 worth of land for 1/10 the price, but stipulated that the property would revert to the city if iron works were not established within two years.⁵⁸

With all this activity, word of the new enterprise was bound to reach John Taylor. “Mr. [John] Taylor soon learned that Cannon had got an interest in my property,” Bishop Taylor recalled, “and determined that he would have an interest also, and that without paying me anything and forbid Mr. Cannon from going on with his arrangement with me, and thus held us several months.” By letting Cannon in, Taylor had made a deal with the devil. Cannon’s loyalties lay more clearly with John Taylor than with Thomas Taylor, and Cannon, according to Thomas, “was encouraging Mr. [John] Taylor by his silence at least to take this course.”⁵⁹

Cannon acted from the outset, as subsequent developments indicate, in the interests of the church. According to Taylor, two investors came forward with offers that would have made Cannon a significant and quick return on his investment. “At this time,” Thomas stated, “Mr. [William] Jennings would have formed a company to pay Mr. Cannon and

56. Iron County Mining records, warranty deed, 5 Sept. 1882. See n34.

57. Excerpts from Cedar City Council minute books, 21 Oct. 1882, Utah State Historical Society.

58. *Ibid.*, 23 Oct. 1882.

59. Lawsuit prospectus.

myself my price and would have bought us out . . . and offered to bond it for 90 days at \$125,000 and pay a bonus of \$10,000. Mr. C[harles] C. Walker wrote me and came to Salt Lake again."⁶⁰ But once again John Taylor forbade Cannon from entering into any arrangement that would have transferred control of the iron properties to gentiles. Thomas was so frustrated with the church president that he offered him \$10,000 simply to cease interfering. But John Taylor did not want the properties to go outside the community.

Thomas next claimed that because John Taylor was so intent on having the properties under Mormon control, he offered to sell out his own share to the church president at the same terms and price at which he had originally sold them to Cannon. The offer was accepted and the deed made out. The arrangement was pleasing to everyone, except God.

On 28 April 1883, John Taylor received a revelation on the matter:

You have asked me why your mind was confused and dull within the last two days. Verily thus saith the Lord, by the whisperings of his Spirit and the still small voice, that the arrangement which you have contemplated with my servant Thomas, is not acceptable to me. He should have listened to your offer which would have been profitable to himself and acceptable to me. When you rejected his offer you did right and my spirit was with you: but when you, in your zeal to show that you had faith in my word, accepted propositions and assumed responsibilities which were not in accordance with the order that I showed you, you did wrong, and I withdrew my Spirit. For it is forbidden my Presidency to go into debt unless I, the Lord, command it; for these things lead to confusion and bondage. Besides have I not shown unto you, my servant John, a way to raise a fund which should be at your disposal for the accomplishment of my purp[oses] and by which the rights and properties of my people should be preserved in all of these matters [i.e., Zion's Central Board of Trade]? You must abide by this principle. My servant, Thomas, does not understand fully this matter. Confer with him on this subject, and if he can see these things and follow council he shall assist you in the developments contemplated. For you, nor my servant, George Q. Cannon, cannot attend to these details; but if he, Thomas, cannot enter freely into this matter without restraint then you shall arrange with him according to wisdom, and withdraw from the consummation of the contemplated arrangement. . . .

Later on, God revealed:

And you shall be one in spiritual things, and also in temporal things in due time. And I will show unto my people and unto the world, that this world is mine, and that I created it by my power, and these and the gold and silver

60. *Ibid.*

and copper and brass and *iron* [emphasis added] and riches and precious things thereof, and all that pertains thereunto are mine. . . . and that they are, and can only be stewards over that which I have given them to possess.⁶¹

Thomas Taylor understood the admonition to enter “freely” and “without constraint” to mean that God wanted him to turn over all of the properties to the church without consideration of payment. In Thomas’s words: “I could not see it.”⁶²

Cannon was apparently “dumbfounded” at Thomas’s resistance: “[Cannon] plead with me to get up some kind of a company so as to let Mr. [John] Taylor in.”⁶³ The counselor finally convinced Bishop Taylor to enter into another company with the irrepensible president of the Mormon church, and articles of agreement were signed by President Taylor, Cannon, and Thomas Taylor on 30 June 1883. These articles proposed the formation of an iron company, the Iron Manufacturing Company of Utah, with 250,000 shares of stock valued at \$1.00 each. Thomas Taylor was to receive one quarter of the shares in return for his property, Cannon one-eighth for his, and President Taylor one-eighth if he would pay Thomas \$5,000 and use his influence to attract additional investors. The parties also agreed that Thomas would serve as salaried superintendent of the company with complete control of the business, that none of the shares were to be sold less than par, and that President Taylor would not sell his shares at all.⁶⁴

George Cannon and John Taylor immediately sold shares of stock, in spite of the agreement, to their sons, George Taylor and Abraham Cannon, and secured for them directorships in the new company. Consequently, four out of the seven directorships were in Cannon’s and Taylor’s hands, as well as control of the company. Despite the several violations of their agreement, Thomas Taylor continued working with the company for another year.

During the summer and fall of 1883 the company made progress. Regular directors’ meetings were held.⁶⁵ Taylor and Cannon formally deeded properties to the company on 7 September 1883.⁶⁶ Taylor went to

61. Fred C. Collier, ed., *Unpublished Revelations* (Salt Lake City: Collier Publishing, 1979), Part 85; excerpt from a revelation received 28 Apr. 1883.

62. Lawsuit prospectus.

63. *Ibid.*

64. Articles of Agreement for the Iron Manufacturing Company of Utah, Thomas Taylor Papers.

65. Abraham H. Cannon diary, 26 July 1883, 8, 10 Aug. 1883, Utah State Historical Society. See also *Deseret Evening News*, 4 Aug. 1883, which carried announcement of the Iron Manufacturing Company of Utah’s formation, and *Southern Utonian*, which acknowledged receipt of the IMCU’s bylaws and reprints an explanation of its purposes and practices.

66. Iron County Mining Records, warranty deed, 7 Sept. 1883.

Iron County in September and October where he supervised the laying of a foundation for a new furnace and other necessary buildings.⁶⁷ At the Board of Trade meeting on 10 October members were encouraged to take stock in the new company.⁶⁸ The company placed advertisements in several Utah papers to encourage Utahns to purchase stock.⁶⁹

On 4 December directors met at President Taylor's office and discussed a \$13,000 appropriation to purchase a railroad needed to transport coal between the coal mines and iron works.⁷⁰ President Taylor offered to purchase shares at a 50 percent discount on behalf of the church to finance the railroad. This again was in violation of the articles of agreement, a violation that Taylor was willing to overlook in order to advance the interests of the company. Two days later, after consulting Wilford Woodruff, president of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, John Taylor presented church funds to the company thereby enabling it to purchase the railroad.⁷¹ John Taylor asked for ex post facto permission from the body of the church at its general conference the next April.

During the winter, construction of the furnace was suspended while employees of the company worked to take up and move the railroad.⁷² The following spring a committee was appointed to go to Iron County and examine the progress of the iron works. Directors were not yet convinced that Iron Springs was the best location for the iron works.⁷³ Water, climate, and suitability for rail transport were all factors in the selection of the site. The principals of the iron company were, however, sufficiently optimistic to incorporate the Cedar and Iron Railroad Company on 14 April to manage the iron company's transportation needs.⁷⁴

The most serious problem was locating quality coal for coking. The location of coal mines thirteen miles from a rich iron source seemed at

67. *Deseret Evening News*, 5 Oct. 1883.

68. *Ibid.*, 10, 30 Oct. 1883.

69. For example, see the 12 Oct. 1883 edition of the *Southern Utonian*.

70. Abraham H. Cannon diary, 4 Dec. 1883.

71. Woodruff, 8:210 (6 Dec. 1883).

72. *Deseret Evening News*, 16 Jan. 1884, reporting Taylor's return from a five-week visit to the iron works; and *Southern Utonian*, 1 Feb. 1884, detailing Taylor's return on 31 January. Taylor held a meeting at the LDS chapel in Cedar City to request one hundred teams to haul the railroad from Pioche, Nevada, and promised the teams additional work on the Utah Central Railroad.

The IMCU ran into another problem during the winter when its claims were compromised by legal suit, which was quickly resolved in the company's favor. For details, see *Southern Utonian*, 6 Feb. 1884, and Abraham H. Cannon diary, 25 Feb. 1884.

73. Abraham H. Cannon diary, 8 Apr. 1884. L. John Nuttall's diary for 18 April 1884 reported that the committee consisted of Abraham Cannon, L. John Nuttall, Robert T. Burton, John Irvine, Moses Thatcher, Francis M. Lyman, Elias Morris, William Jennings, John C. Sharp, and Charles Barrell. See also Woodruff, 8:242-43 (17 Apr. 1884).

74. Abraham H. Cannon diary, 14 Apr. 1884.

first to make Iron County an ideal place for the inexpensive manufacture of iron. Unfortunately, the coal was inadequate because of high sulfur content which prevented it from reaching sufficient temperatures for coking. On 22 April 1884, the committee of the Board of Trade and directors of the IMCU directed Thomas Taylor and Richard Robertson, who had been hired because of his experience in iron manufacturing soon after the formation of the company, to "proceed to the examination of all the coal mines which have been discovered, and have such tests of the coal made."⁷⁵

The committee and directors met again on 1 May in Cedar City and decided to appoint a sub-committee consisting of Moses Thatcher and Erastus Snow to work with Taylor and Robertson in examining coal, and if the coal in Coal Canyon was useless, to report other possible coal sources and their relative distances from the iron mines. The Union mine at Kannarah was advanced at the meeting as such an alternative.⁷⁶

On 20 May the committee issued a verdict. Erastus Snow reported the results of Thatcher's and his investigation: "they found the best coal at Kannarah and in the greatest quantities—they also examined the Quitchem Pa Springs which appears to be the most available place for works being handy to the coal and iron also good water and plenty of it."⁷⁷

Directors also discussed the matter of firebrick for the iron works and directed Thomas to put his teams to work hauling the railroad from Bullionville, Nevada. They made no final decision concerning coal or the location of the iron works at this time, electing to delay a decision until they arrived back in Salt Lake City at which time they would send for Taylor with instructions on which site to locate the railroad.

These developments put Thomas Taylor's future in iron manufacturing in a precarious position. He still possessed coal mines in Cedar Canyon and land at Iron City with buildings, etc. If the suggestions of the

75. According to L. John Nuttall's diary for 21-22 April, the committee examined the church coal mine, IMCU mining properties, and the church's own iron claims. They "talked over the question of the proper place to locate the plant of the iron works where the iron could be made the cheapest. . . . Cedar City, Iron Springs, and Iron City were each spoken of—after which it was decided that the party start for Iron Springs tomorrow morning thence to Iron City and view the iron mines." The subsequent expedition visited the Blowout Mountain claim at Iron City and found the foundry adequate.

76. L. John Nuttall diary, 1 May 1884. Wilford Woodruff reported in his 5 May entry of his journal an interesting conversation with President John Taylor concerning the iron mines.

77. L. John Nuttall diary, 20 May 1884. See also William Whittaker Taylor journal, 20 May 1884, LDS archives. Whittaker, John Taylor's son, was not as active in the iron venture as were other directors. In July 1883 he recorded his election to the directorship with the comment, "I don't like the business but I [accepted] to accommodate father."

Thatcher-Snow report were carried out, Taylor's coal and land investments would be worthless. His reason for deeding over his iron claims to the IMCU was in part due to his hope that his coal and land holdings in Iron County would increase in worth. His only chance was to somehow abrogate the committee's findings concerning his coal and suggested site for the iron furnaces.

At the 29 May meeting directors listened to the details of a fierce quarrel between Taylor and his principal Robertson. Full details of the argument are not available, but it must have had something to do with the future location of the iron works and the suitability of Taylor's coal. Abraham Cannon confided to his journal that "matters which have developed of late with regard to Bishop Thomas Taylor have caused me to lose all confidence in his ability to successfully manage the Iron co. business, and I think it will be found necessary before very long to dispose of his services." This is the first indication of plans to "dispose" of the trouble-maker Taylor. Another meeting was held the same night where it was decided that the question of fuel was so serious that work at the mines would have to cease until the problem was resolved.⁷⁸

Directors met again on 20 June when they found the business "in a very unsatisfactory condition due in some degree to Supt. Thomas Taylor's unwise movements," according to Abraham Cannon. On 7 July directors decided to send samples of coal to experts in the east to answer the question once and for all.⁷⁹ The *Deseret Evening News* reported on 16 August that Taylor had been around town proudly displaying a piece of coke made from Iron City coal, announcing that experts had found it to be "excellent," and that he anticipated eastern experts could not find it otherwise. The *News* concluded by asking, "What is the next objection to the iron works?"⁸⁰

Despite Taylor's cheerleading, not everyone was convinced. Most importantly, directors of the IMCU met on 13 September to consider selling their share in the operation altogether. President John Taylor made no decision but to take the matter "under consideration for a short time." The company continued to meet during October 1884. John Winder and Abraham Cannon were, however, instructed to audit the company's

78. Details of these two meetings are found in Abraham H. Cannon's diary, 29 May 1884. The 13 June 1884 edition of the *Deseret Evening News* carried a notice of the iron works' temporary suspension.

79. Abraham H. Cannon diary, 20 June, 7 July 1884. The 4 July 1884 *Southern Utonian* confirmed the suspension of IMCU business and related "fault-finding" with the superintendent, observing that means were still required to lay railroad tracks to the coal mines and iron works.

80. The 23 August *Southern Utonian* echoed the *News* in describing Thomas's trip to Salt Lake City and calling for an accounting as to why iron production was not proceeding.

books, perhaps in anticipation of its inevitable demise.⁸¹

Thomas Taylor was undaunted. On 26 October he wrote to the *Salt Lake Herald* regarding the question: "How are we getting along with the manufacture of iron?" In response, Thomas explained that plenty of iron ore was located within fifteen miles of Cedar City where he argued the iron works should be located; that coal was available close by so it would not require costly transportation of coal to the site. He then launched into a lengthy defense of the coal there, detailing his own efforts to test its quality. Besides, if the coal contained too much sulphur, he argued, he knew of means developed by other iron manufacturers to process high-sulphur coal in a way to make it usable. Taylor was still thinking of salvaging his Iron City properties and coal mine investments by arguing against moving the works elsewhere.

Directors remained unmoved. The office of superintendent of the IMCU was declared vacant on 8 November. On 4 December 1884, the company met, presumably for the final time. Shortly after the meeting opened, "Thomas Taylor abruptly left the room without answering a question which President Taylor asked him in regard to the business. He said that he felt that his presence was not necessary." According to Thomas, President Taylor had asked him to sell his stock in the IMCU to help raise funds to run the company. Taylor emphatically refused and threatened to take the directors to court. John Taylor countered with a threat of excommunication. Abraham Cannon reported, "Steps were taken in our meeting today to take care of our company's claims and other property which is now in a very loose and scattered condition. Legal aid will be called to our assistance, and all will be done that is deemed necessary to secure the company."⁸² When Bishop Taylor visited Iron County in February 1885 the local paper asked him why things lay at a standstill. He answered simply that "court matters in Salt Lake City have postponed the business."⁸³

The matter never reached the courts. On 18 April 1885 the company formally dissolved. George Cannon and John Taylor agreed to buy up the small stockholders and to transfer the whole of the property back to Thomas Taylor. In turn John Taylor and George Cannon would hold a \$55,000 mortgage on the properties and drew up a repayment schedule. All of this was done according to Thomas Taylor, "with the understanding that I would try to sell the property." Although the company dissolved in April, the official deeds were not made up until December. Meanwhile, Taylor made arrangements to move the iron works from Iron City to his

81. Abraham H. Cannon diary, 13 Sept., 4, 23 Oct. 1884. Wilford Woodruff's journal entry for 8 October described the Board of Trade meeting but omits any reference to iron production.

82. Abraham H. Cannon diary, 4 Dec. 1884.

83. *Southern Utonian*, 20 Feb. 1885.

properties in Cedar City, a move that the *Southern Utonian* called, "a move in the right direction."⁸⁴

When an interested party wrote to L. John Nuttall, John Taylor's secretary, in January 1886 enquiring about purchasing the railroad, he was told, "The iron company to which you refer has been disincorporated and the railroad and all the appurtenances are now in the hands of Thomas Taylor."⁸⁵ Cedar City fathers would have been pleased to see the railroad removed. The city council decided on 17 May 1886 to notify Taylor that his railroad was obstructing a city-owned right-of-way to Coal Creek. The next month the city marshal reported that Taylor responded to the news with "boisterous and threatening language and swore that he would shoot any man that undertook to clear said obstruction." Councilors ordered a survey of the right-of-way and commanded the marshal to proceed with the rail machinery's removal.⁸⁶ Thomas was at the end of his rope. He no doubt included the Mormon brethren in his cursing, believing that they were involved in the renewal of persecution aimed to counter his personal interests: a persecution which was shortly made apparent through more sensational means.

A little over a year after the iron company dissolved, Angus Cannon, president of the Salt Lake Stake and Bishop Thomas Taylor's ecclesiastical superior, received via church president John Taylor the report of a special investigation undertaken by President Thomas Jones of the Parowan Stake where Thomas's iron properties were located. The investigation reportedly uncovered evidence that Thomas "had been found guilty of lascivious conduct with certain young men." Without conducting their own hearing, the high council of the Salt Lake Stake suspended Taylor as bishop of the Fourteenth Ward and returned the matter to Jones for church trial under whose jurisdiction the alleged infractions had occurred.⁸⁷ The order of the church required that a person be tried by his or

84. Details for 1885 were drawn primarily from Thomas Taylor's reminiscence. These details are corroborated by *Southern Utonian* reports. A 20 February 1885 article reported that Taylor passed through Cedar City on his way to Salt Lake City. Taylor explained to the paper that "court matters" postponed further development of the iron properties. On 22 May 1885 the *Southern Utonian* reported that "a plan is on foot to move the works to Cedar City. This is a move in the right direction as the coal is near that place and five tons of coal are required for one ton of ore." Taylor's recollections are also corroborated by Iron City Mining Records (Utah State Historical Society). These records contain a deed recording the dissolution of the Iron Manufacturing Company on 18 April transferring company holdings to individual share-holders and another deed that transferred individual holdings back to Taylor. The records also contain a 24 December mortgage note made out by Taylor to William Preston outlining terms for repayment.

85. John Taylor papers, Special Collections, Marriott Library.

86. Details of 17 May 1886 and 30 June 1886 Cedar City Council minutes are in "Excerpts of Cedar City Council Minutes, 1879-1888," 81-82.

87. Angus M. Cannon diary, 26, 27 July 1886, LDS archives.

her *local* ecclesiastical superior(s) (in this case Angus Cannon). Salt Lake Stake leaders (and possibly John Taylor) probably wanted to avoid the publicity of a local church trial on such a sensational matter and concluded to relegate the business to Parowan. This was done "providing the president of the church approved." The action of the high council was relayed to President Taylor the next day.

Despite the decision to move the scandal away from Salt Lake City, the local rumor mill began to grind out details of the story in a matter of weeks. The antagonistic *Salt Lake Tribune* broke the news less than a month later on 22 August 1886 with the snide query, no doubt hoping to embarrass the church, "The [*Deseret*] *News* in its list of officials in the Mormon Church, gives the name of Thomas Taylor as Bishop of the Fourteenth Ward. Is it a fact that he is? Is the church organ sure that Taylor is even a member of the Mormon church at this date? And if not, why?"

Less than a week later the *Tribune* followed up the story by noting that Taylor's name had now been dropped from the list of authorities published weekly in the *Deseret News*. The next day, 28 August, the *News* carried an editorial notice—prematurely it would turn out—of the excommunication of Bishop Taylor for "unchristianlike and immoral conduct, and the contempt of the High Council," with the added observation that "the law of God, which demands the Saints shall preserve themselves in purity, must be enforced no matter who the guilty parties may be." The *Tribune* applauded the substantiation of the rumors, but went on to press the *News*:

The next part of the subject is, why was he cut off? Mere generalities are no answer. It is claimed before cutting off was done a careful examination of the charges was made and their truth conclusively established. If so he must be guilty of something. What is it? And should he be prosecuted in the courts? Or is there no law against sodomy, either, in this most unlawful of territories?

The *Tribune* report, characteristic in its enthusiasm to harass the Mormon brethren, by naming the crime revealed that the details of Taylor's disgrace had hit the streets. The *Tribune* twisted the knife deeper two days later:

We trust that the children of the Fourteenth Ward who have, once a week ever since they were born, heard Bishop Taylor bear testimony to the perfect truth of his religion, will reflect over what a liar and hypocrite he is and always has been, and from the present showing will learn the needed lesson, that no one should take another man's word concerning the human soul. What Saint knows whether there are not other human beasts bearing the same testimony?

On 15 September the *Tribune* carried more rumors, inconsistent with the last, about the case: that John Taylor and George Cannon had "swin-

dled" Taylor out of \$100,000 in mining properties and that President Taylor was himself responsible for spreading the "dirty stories," planning to replace Thomas Taylor with his son as bishop of the Fourteenth Ward. The report concluded sarcastically, "If anyone thinks we can't hire faithful young saints to swear to anything we wish, I would like to know what Deacons are good for anyhow."

The "deacons" in question were eighteen-year-old Simeon Simkins⁸⁸ who had been summoned to appear on 9 October 1886 before the Parowan Stake high council as a witness against Taylor. Simkins reported his relationship with Taylor thus: "Two years ago last Spring I worked for Thomas Taylor [in April 1884]. I went with Thomas Taylor to Iron City, that night we slept together he took my hand and put it on his Pienus [sic] he took a hold of my hand and rubed it up and down for about one minute. that was the only time I ever slept with him, (Ques) Did he accomplish his object (Ans) I do not know." Simkins, a Cedar City resident, would have been about sixteen years old when the alleged impropriety occurred.

The other witness was deacon Richard Williams. His testimony was as follows:

I started to Work for Thomas Taylor about two years ago last winter. I first went to Iron City from Cedar with him, when we went to bed he took my right hand and put it on his privates and rubed it with my hand, he let go of my hand and I took it off. Did not bother me any more that night, this took place about 24 Dec. 1883 [1884?], at this night when we went out to the place where we stoped Mrs. Roberts fixed him up a drink of wine which Taylor says he thinks made him act so, he bothered me a little for a night or two after for the same purpose but I refused. I told him I wanted him to quit it, he said yes that it is right Richard, he asked me to forgive him and I did so, he said he wouldn't do it anymore, (Question) did he accomplish his object for which he put your hand their, (Answer) I do not know. (Ques) about how long did he use it (Ans) about one minute.⁸⁹

Williams, eighteen at the time of the incident, later married, raised four sons and daughters, engaged in livestock, and served as a Cedar City councilman.

The *Deseret News* did not take the *Tribune's* attacks lying down. It editorialized on the way "foundationless and cruel reports" about the scandal were blowing events out of proportion and accused the *Tribune* of scandal-mongery. On 8 September a *News* editorial about the "cleansing of the church" carried this admonition: "If the Lord holds in his hand a sore scourge for application upon the wicked of this world, Justice, upon which His throne is seated, requires that He shall not pass by with impu-

88. Simeon is listed as fourteen years old in the Cedar City Ward Census, 18, Utah State Historical Society.

89. Excerpts from testimony in the "Report of High Council of Parowan Stake in the Case of Thomas Taylor," in John Taylor Family Papers.

nity those who bear His name who perpetuate similar evils for which he will condemn the nations."

If church leaders hoped to avoid embarrassment by moving the trial to Parowan, they did not succeed. The editors of the *Tribune* were not going to let rumors of a scandal involving leaders of the Mormon church lie. But when the paper first printed the rumors, the matter was technically a non-story. Official disciplinary proceedings for Taylor resulting in his excommunication did not take place in Parowan until 9 October, and word was not received in Salt Lake until six days later. The only official action taken by the Salt Lake Stake high council was suspension of Taylor's bishopric, not excommunication. Church leaders clearly jumped the gun when they ordained Joseph E. Taylor to the 14th Ward bishopric on 11 October. Even the *News* was premature in its announcement that Taylor had been cut off from the church.⁹⁰

On 22 September Thomas Taylor wrote President John Taylor and Angus Cannon a letter of repentance. He acknowledged that he had already cut himself off from the church, and begged the authorities not to cut him off forever:

I am ashamed to think that I have been so weak and I feel to cry God be merciful to me. I want to be humble and live so that I can purify my thoughts and words and actions, the very thought of the many testimonies God has given me makes me wonder how I could have departed from his precepts. Oh, help me to come back to his favor. I expect to have offended you greatly I humbly ask your forgiveness.⁹¹

The scandal of Bishop Taylor was soon supplanted by a larger one involving the affairs of John Q. Cannon, son of First Presidency counselor George Cannon.⁹² Thomas Taylor was summoned before a grand jury at Beaver, Utah, on 21 December 1886, possibly in response to suggestions like the one printed in the *Tribune* that he answer to civil courts. The same

90. Angus Cannon recorded Joseph E. Taylor's ordination as Fourteenth Ward bishop in his diary on 11 October 1886.

91. Letter dated 22 Sept. 1886, John Taylor Family Papers. Angus Cannon also mentions receiving "a very humble letter from Thomas Taylor," in his 25 September diary entry.

92. The 8 September 1886 edition of the *Deseret News Semi-Weekly* reported the details. John Nicholson was delivering a fiery sermon at the Tabernacle stand, which included the observation, perhaps based on the recent Taylor scandal: "There are some offenses, however of a grosser character that demand that they shall be cast out under any circumstances whatever. . . . There is upon him who misdirects the use of the powers of life that have been implanted in the nature of man, there falls upon him, more or less, a withering blight." In the middle of these pronouncements, John Q. Cannon, second counselor in the Presiding Bishopric and son of George Q. Cannon, approached the stand accompanied by Angus M. Cannon, and declared: "I have violated my covenants; I have sinned against the Lord. I have committed a grievous sin, next in our belief to the shedding of blood." He then admitted to having committed adultery, resigned his priesthood, and Angus M. Cannon submitted that he be excommunicated.

paper reported after the hearing, "the evidence before the grand jury elicited some disgusting things of Taylor, but there was no evidence of the crimes he was accused of, and consequently, no indictment was found."⁹³ Apostle John Henry Smith was subpoenaed to appear but could add nothing "only hearsay."⁹⁴

The question of Taylor's homosexual activity remains a mystery.⁹⁵ His repentance letter to President Taylor and Angus Cannon of 22 September 1886 is a clear acknowledgement of guilt, although Taylor does not specifically admit to homosexual activity. In fact a later statement accused church authorities of excommunicating him on a "trumped-up slander."⁹⁶ He cited the sloppy process by which the verdict of excommunication was finally rendered as evidence that presidents Taylor and George Q. Cannon manufactured the whole affair. Thomas also referred to false rumors circulated with intent to ruin him in a letter to the *Iron County News* four years later.⁹⁷

The exact reasons for the demise of the Iron Manufacturing Company are also in some dispute. Leonard Arrington has suggested that in addition to technical problems preventing development of the southern Utah iron industry in the 1880s, "external pressures," specifically the hounding of Mormon brethren by federal officials for polygamy, contributed to the company's downfall.⁹⁸ This interpretation cannot be completely controverted. Persecution of polygamists began in earnest in March 1882 with passage of the Edmunds Bill and intensified with formation of the Utah Commission. It is interesting to note that John Taylor's last public appearance before going into hiding for the rest of his life to elude prosecution was his Salt Lake Tabernacle appearance on 1 February 1885: six weeks before the iron company officially disbanded. But it is clear from

93. *Salt Lake Tribune*, 24 Dec. 1886. The 17 December 1886 *Southern Utonian* observed, "The Grand Jury are having quite a lengthy stay with us this time. It was understood on the street that the case of Thomas Taylor of Cedar City fame was being investigated by this body."

94. Jean Bickmore White, ed., *Church, State, and Politics: The Diaries of John Henry Smith* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books in association with Smith Research Associates, 1990), 9 (16 Dec. 1886).

95. From the primary sources available to me, I can draw no conclusion about Taylor's guilt or innocence. However, D. Michael Quinn has informed me that he has a copy of the full record of Taylor's excommunication trial in which Taylor admitted to a homosexual experience as an adolescent. I believe that Taylor was not "gay" in the modern sense, because "gay" and "homosexual" are largely twentieth-century conceptualizations with which Taylor would have been unfamiliar. Taylor was a polygamist with many children who probably engaged in sex with men on occasion. The documented homosexual encounters took place at isolated mining and railroading sites where his wives would have been unavailable to him.

96. Thomas Taylor reminiscence, Thomas Taylor Papers.

97. *Iron County News*, 26 Dec. 1890.

98. Leonard Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom: Economic History of the Latter-day Saints, 1830-1900* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1958), 346-49.

the details of the iron company's history that the company would have disintegrated regardless of whether John Taylor was free to publicly and actively pursue company administration. Perhaps Taylor's going underground was part of the reason he did not actively pursue litigation with Thomas Taylor over control of the iron company and decided to deal with the recalcitrant bishop in a more round-about way.

The *Salt Lake Herald* printed what amounted to the iron company's obituary on 26 October 1886. An "observer" complained about the continued neglect of the iron fields and thousands of dollars spent to no avail:

An effort was made four years ago by an enterprising citizen from the northern part of the Territory, who seemed to take up the business with a determination to put it through. Money and labor were subscribed by quite a number of citizens of southern and middle Utah; some eight to ten miles of railroad purchased, known in the flourishing days of Pioche as the Nevada Central; nearly \$1,000 dollars spent in grading up our rugged canyon in view of connecting the vast coalfields of the county by rail with this and Iron City, which lies about 22 miles west of us and in close proximity to the iron ore. But today as far as the iron industry is concerned we are quiet as a churchyard, and nothing left to remind us of our past hopes and anticipations, but the railbed above referred to, a few pair or railroad car wheels, a portion of a locomotive and tender and a few hundred feet of rails, all of which seems to be quietly laid away at least, until times brighten up and a little more enterprise is manifested for home industry among us.

But the case of Thomas Taylor did not die with his excommunication. He still dreamed of developing southern Utah's iron resources and added to it the pursuit of bringing the railroad from Los Angeles, through Iron County, to Salt Lake City. As expected, he locked horns again with his brethren, with the same unhappy consequences.

After John Taylor's death on 25 July 1887, the Quorum of Twelve locked in a power struggle over presidential succession. The struggle pitted a faction of apostles lead by Moses Thatcher and Heber J. Grant against George Q. Cannon. Thatcher and Grant could not see a way to fully fellowship their colleague because they believed he was guilty of conduct unbecoming a witness of Jesus Christ. Their accusations revolved principally around another mining venture, the Bullion-Beck Mining Company, and Cannon's meddling in the case of his son John Q.'s adultery. Mishandling of the iron mining venture was also mentioned in the Thatcher-Grant accusations: "his transactions . . . getting his stock at a discount and asking the people to pay par." Even quorum president and future church president Wilford Woodruff voiced doubts about Cannon's "mining schemes," believing at the time that "church funds should not go into mines."

Thatcher and Grant were concerned that Cannon had unlimited control of church business during the final exile and illness of ex-president John Taylor. To make matters worse, church auditing books mysteriously disappeared. Cannon defended himself by reading from his journal, citing John Taylor's 1882 iron revelation, and arguing that the auditing books were lost to remove them from the grasping hands of federal officials who were preparing legislation to confiscate church-held property. Eventually, Grant buried the hatchet and Thatcher removed his objections. The First Presidency was reorganized with Woodruff and his new counselors Cannon and Joseph F. Smith on 7 April 1889.⁹⁹

As for Thomas Taylor, he moved his family to Parowan in 1887 and retained enough good reputation to be elected to the city council from 1888-90, where he proceeded with his ambitious plans. Evidently, Taylor's recent excommunication was not an obstacle. Perhaps many in southern Utah believed that Taylor had been "set up." After all, he was an industrial hero, even savior, in the Cedar City vicinity for his mining and railroading efforts on the city's behalf.¹⁰⁰

The first of Taylor's notes for his mortgage debt to the church was to come due on 5 December 1888. In December 1887 he bonded the iron properties to a Californian capitalist. Expecting an imminent sale, he then wrote to George Cannon and William Preston, a secretary to the First Presidency, informing them of the deal and asking for a discount on the notes if he paid early, which was granted. The California deal fell through, but Taylor immediately interested a Kansan business syndicate to buy the lands for \$160,000. Taylor wrote again to Cannon and Preston for delivery of the mortgage notes. Receiving no word, he telegraphed LeGrande Young, Cannon's attorney, but still received no word. The Kansas men became impatient and left. A week later Taylor received a tele-

99. Details of the apostles' row are found in Heber J. Grant's journal, LDS archives. The 25 July 1887 entry reports voicing of doubts by Wilford Woodruff about John Taylor's "mining schemes," that the church's financial records should be audited, and an observation that Woodruff did not care for the way Angus Cannon had been running the Salt Lake Stake. On 5 October, Grant records similar reservations raised by Francis Lyman about Cannon's connection to the iron company, and Cannon's attempt to defend himself by reading John Taylor's iron revelation. On 11 August Grant discussed the mysterious disappearance—presumably at the hands of George Cannon—of the church's auditing books.

The apostles' dispute was of special importance to Wilford Woodruff who stood next in line for the church presidency. See 20, 23, 26 March 1888 entries in Woodruff's journal where Cannon is accused of "using church money for his son John Q., for embezzling church money. Then of paying large sums of church money on the iron mine." Woodruff felt that these accusations were "proved false" through Cannon's explanation. Woodruff, 8:488-91.

Further details of the dispute are found within entries for the same dates in John Henry Smith's diaries, in White, *Church, State, and Politics*.

100. Luella Adams Dalton, "History of the Iron County Mission, Parowan, Utah," Utah State Historical Society.

gram from Cannon authorizing Taylor to make the sale. Taylor angrily denounced this delaying tactic which he believed was designed to prevent his selling. One of the Kansas parties, however, took a bond for sixty days. The latter, after word from sources in Salt Lake City, believed that the title was somehow defective. Taylor once again accused the brethren of maliciously and deliberately stymieing him.

On 24 June 1888 Cannon telegraphed Taylor: "A reliable party want to bond the Iron and Coal Company property for six months. What will you bond it for? Please answer immediately." Taylor responded, "the property is bonded will write you," but later observed, "this was church scheming to make time until after the first note should become due which would be in six months and one day. Then if I should not meet the first payment, I should be in their power."

Taylor wrote an urgent letter to Cannon urging him to turn over the notes to his attorney. In reply, LeGrande Young telegraphed Taylor asking him to meet in Salt Lake City on 12 July. Taylor expected the Kansas buyer on the 19th, but the latter did not show because of, in Taylor's words, "meddlesome misinformation." When Young once again telegraphed Taylor urging more forcefully a meeting, Taylor replied that he would meet him on the 20th in Provo, en route to Topeka.

Young arrived with Hiram B. Clawson in tow. Young and Clawson offered to bond the properties from Taylor, but stated that they would need fifteen days in which to inspect the properties before they gave him their final word. Taylor informed them that the properties were already sold, that he had purchased his railroad ticket for Topeka, and was confident that a capitalist in hand was better than two in the bush. They offered to reimburse his Kansas ticket as well as his Cedar City to Provo expenses, pay him \$100 cash, and sign a written agreement on the spot. Inexplicably, Taylor once again accepted.

"I returned to Cedar City to await for the experts," Taylor later wrote. "On July 30th at the request of Prest. Wilford Woodruff Mr. John R. Murdock of Beaver brought two men to Cedar said to be experts but they did not act like men who were going to buy my property or recommend any other party to buy." After they left, Taylor received no word from Clawson or Young. Taylor wrote them that their time was up. Clawson then telegraphed the message that they were having the coal analyzed and would want more time. Taylor assented and again waited in vain for some word. Taylor reportedly heard through Eugene Schoppman (another southern Utah resident) that Murdock knew Cannon did not intend to let the property be sold. The Kansas parties threw up their hands in disgust over Taylor's "changing tactics." Taylor prepared his case for a lawsuit on 24 July 1889:

This preventing me from selling my property to non-Mormons extends over

six years. What is my redress?

John Taylor and George Q. Cannon were so angry that I had got the property into my hands again that they encouraged the authorities to excommunicate me from the church upon a trumped-up slander, no charge was preferred, no trial had, I did not even treat the Priesthood with contempt. The publication was made by Taylor and Cannon on purpose to damage and ostracise me and has damaged me how much it is impossible to find out.

What more should I want for a charge for heavy damages.¹⁰¹

The following spring Taylor attracted some attention from Los Angeles businessmen about the prospect of stocking a railroad from southern Utah. Taylor trumpeted these latest developments in a prominently displayed letter to the *Southern Utonian*. "Some time hence I was informed that a certain Railroad Company was going to build a road through to California but was going to leave Southern Utah out in the cold."¹⁰² The railroad company was no doubt a precursor of the Saltair railroad company which incorporated in September 1891. Interests lead by Mormon apostles acquired salt processing plants by the Great Salt Lake and built a railroad from the city to the lake's shores to transport the product. Mormon brethren also invested in building the Saltair entertainment resort on the lake's shore. The Saltair railroad was the first link in an anticipated road to California which would have lead through Nevada rather than southern Utah.¹⁰³

Taylor wrote to the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce advertising the potential importance of a railroad for southern California's economy. He travelled to Los Angeles where he "met with better success than he expected," according to the *Los Angeles Times*. Taylor proposed an exact route for the road that would have lead from Los Angeles through Pi-oche, Nevada, and on to Iron City, Utah. The road would then have travelled to Cedar City and Beaver, along the Sevier River, through the Sanpete Valley, and north to join the already completed Denver and Rio Grande road twenty-five miles north of Fairview. Each stop would lead close to potential mining and agricultural treasure-houses which only lacked transportation as the key to open them to Californian markets. Taylor displayed ore specimens to enthusiastic Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce members who introduced him to interested capitalists.

Elated, Taylor returned to Iron County to prepare the way for construction. He petitioned for a right-of-way through Coal Creek Canyon.

101. I rely primarily on Thomas Taylor's reminiscence for most of 1889's history, with all of Taylor's accusations of unfair business dealings against George Cannon and other brethren. Hiram Clawson makes no mention of his part in the dealings in his journals.

102. *Southern Utonian*, 11 Apr. 1889.

103. Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, 392; and Articles of Incorporation of Saltair Railway Co., in Utah State Archives, Salt Lake City.

But other members of Cedar City had different plans for the canyon. During 23 and 30 September 1889 mass meetings residents discussed damming the creek. Agricultural interests pressed for the dam to supply more water to farmers. Bishop Andrew Corry, who believed there was already enough water, felt that the money should be spent elsewhere. Taylor, of course, opposed the plan which would have filled the canyon with water and destroyed his plans in that country. He motioned that a committee be formed to investigate the matter further. The following spring, a mass meeting was again convened. Bishop Corry had revered himself in the interim and explained, "There were many who might wish to get some water—of course many had sufficient water, but many had not enough." Cedar City residents decided to incorporate the Canyon Creek water and move ahead with plans for a dam the following year.¹⁰⁴

Taylor was not happy. Events of 1890 only added to his displeasure with certain parties who were impeding his progress. Andrew Corry, for example, intercepted businessmen whom Taylor had lured from Los Angeles to visit prospective railroad and mining sites in southern Utah. Corry drove them about for a fee, suggesting alternative sites to Taylor's, and giving advice on claim-jumping. He apparently even offered Iron City for sale and reported his dubious boosterism to the local press.¹⁰⁵ On 20 December an outraged Taylor responded to the same paper. He accused the interloper Corry of gross presumption in offering properties for sale which were not his to sell:

In 1890, I went to California to obtain the aid of capitalists to commence the building of a railroad from our coal land through Coal Creek Canyon to Cedar City.

The party asked me if the people were not opposed to progress and development. I answered that they were anxious to have capitalists invest here.

So I was to come home and get franchises and rights-of-way. I applied to the County Court, presented my application, quoted the law where County Courts have the right to grant rights-of-way for railroads. I urged an early answer which was promised. But instead of the court granting me right-of-way, they made an appropriation which was used to tear up my stake and obliterate my railroad survey; and a dam was put into the creek to turn it and wash out the best piece of canyon for building a railroad over, and when our representative of said county was remonstrated he chuckled and said that it was clear it would cost more to build the railroad. . . . Capitalists don't invest in properties with doubtful titles, nor buy into lawsuits, nor from jumpers of other people's possessions, nor property obtained under unfavourable conditions.

104. "Excerpts from Cedar City Mass Meetings, 1875-1891," 23, 30 Sept. 1889; *Southern Utonian*, 11 Apr. 1889.

105. *Iron County News*, 6 Dec. 1890.

. . . Now Mr. Corry I will give you timely notice to prepare your evidence that this thing must stop. others in their envy and greed for this property have prevented me from bringing capitalists to develop it, they have slandered me, and brought one of the purest and most virtuous families to shame and disgrace; and God being my helper, I submit no longer.¹⁰⁶

The next month Taylor was embroiled in a Nevada lawsuit over ownership of the Pioche railroad machinery that he planned to employ in his Cedar City/Los Angeles railroad concern. A man by the name of Godbe received some of the rail bed by contract. He attempted to claim part of the machinery as well by arguing that the contract referred to railroad and not to railroad bed specifically.¹⁰⁷ After winning the latest lawsuit, Taylor organized a new iron company, the Utah Coal and Iron Company, in partnership with his wife Mary.¹⁰⁸

As noted, Mormon apostles had their own plans for a California railroad which they were vigorously pursuing. The First Presidency had powerful and influential friends in James S. Clarkson and Isaac Trumbo. The brethren's plans threatened to derail Taylor's once again. On 27 August 1892, Taylor visited George Cannon's son Abraham, who now joined his father as a member of the Twelve. Abraham recorded the meeting in his diary:

In the afternoon ex-Bishop Taylor now of Cedar City, formerly of the 14th Ward in this city, came in to see me. He has been working for some years to get his iron mines in the hands of eastern or western capitalists so that he may receive financial aid therefrom. He says he has succeeded in doing so, and has got the Chamber of Commerce of Los Angeles committed to the plan of building a railroad through from the coast. Now, however, he is liable to fail if it is decided that the railroad which was included as being interested, is to be built. He feels that the brethren are trying to thwart him in his labors, but I told him that this was not the case, as they were doubtless unacquainted with his plans. He felt quite badly and was inclined to find fault with nearly everybody. He acts and seems to feel as if everyone's working against him. He is now on his way to the coast. I told him his greatest safety was in getting his road started first, because if he is commenced on any line it will doubtless have the effect to prevent starting of others.¹⁰⁹

Perhaps Taylor visited Cannon because Cannon had visited him a couple of months earlier on an apostle's tour through Cedar City. But

106. *Ibid.*, 26 Dec. 1890.

107. *Ibid.*, 31 Jan. 1891.

108. Iron County Mining records. A 7 May 1891 warranty deed transferred iron properties held jointly by Thomas and Mary Taylor to the newly-formed Utah Coal and Iron Company.

109. Abraham H. Cannon diary, 27 Aug. 1892.

Taylor was wrong if he thought that Cannon's visit grew out of personal sympathy. Cannon had reported of the earlier visit: "After meeting we paid a visit to ex-Bishop of the 14th ward in Salt Lake City, Thos. Taylor, who was cut off from the church some years since for lewdness with some boys, but has since been restored. He is, however, very dilatory in his duties."¹¹⁰

Despite Cannon's reassurances, he and his fellow apostles were in fact heavily involved in their own California railroad concern. On 1 June 1893 they decided to issue \$300,000 in bonds to capitalize railroad construction to Stockton, California. They also decided to buy coal mines so that they "would not be frozen out from lack of fuel." The brethren's motivation for the project was to provide work for their unemployed followers who were being seriously squeezed by the 1893 economic depression. Apostles also expressed a desire to preserve this last chance for industrial control in the hands of the church.¹¹¹

George Cannon travelled to San Francisco in September to forge the railroad deal with Clarkson. Under terms of the arrangement, responsibility for construction and furnishment of railroad ties fell to Cannon, while Clarkson and associates would supply iron and sell bonds. Clarkson pressed to begin the sale immediately. The apostles hesitated, however, when it was learned that G. P. Huntington had gotten word of the church's railroad interests and threatened to exert his considerable influence in Washington, D.C., against Utah statehood if the church proceeded with its railroad construction. President Woodruff, nevertheless, was impressed to urge sale of the bonds without interruption.¹¹²

In early December, Woodruff met with Summit County bishop (and later stake president) William Cluff whom he had recruited to act as an agent for the church to acquire additional Iron County coal mines and lands.¹¹³ At the 28 and 29 December apostles' meetings, the brethren decided to purchase the coal mine at the urging of Woodruff. George Cannon also presented the most recent developments in his negotiations with capitalists. Now Clarkson wanted the church to endorse the bonds so that they would receive 30 percent more on the bond market. The brethren also hoped to endorse this latter request.¹¹⁴

But apostles realized that Clarkson's and Trumbo's price for railroad negotiations was higher than they were willing to pay, and they enter-

110. *Ibid.*, 21 Mar. 1892.

111. *Ibid.*, 1 June 1893.

112. *Ibid.*, 27 Sept., 29 Nov. 1893.

113. Woodruff, 9:274 (6, 8 Dec. 1893).

114. Abraham H. Cannon's diary, 28 Dec. 1893. Arrington describes in *Great Basin Kingdom*, 402, a church railroad and gold survey to southwest Nevada in the winter of 1893-94. He observes that the church put \$180,000 into the venture between 1894-96 with little return.

tained serious reservations about Trumbo's character (in particular). George Cannon's son Abraham started to explore the railroad through another avenue. On 19 April 1894 he reported a visit from J. H. Burfeind who proposed a southern Utah railroad proposal, a total package that would include control of iron, coal, sulphur mines, and other real estate. Cannon was impressed.¹¹⁵

The next week (24 April) Cannon met with W. H. Rowe, J. H. Burfeind, and Theodore Meyers (who formed a St. Louis capitalist cooperative) to explore the proposed railroad-manufacturing combination. Two days later, Cannon introduced the men to the First Presidency and apostles who were "struck favorably" and requested further investigation. George Purbeck, the project's financial director, presented church authorities with a written proposal in May. Abraham's brother Frank Cannon protested the arrangement on 25 May, arguing that the proposal left too much control in Purbeck's hands, but George Cannon was upset with his son for interfering.

In August Trumbo pressed his demand for a senatorship and railroad interests in exchange for help in obtaining Utah statehood. Frank Cannon disliked the apparent influence Trumbo held over the First Presidency; he was joined by many others in the church's rank-and-file. Apostle Cannon himself disapproved of this "corrupt fellow," and Apostle Brigham Young, Jr., deplored Trumbo's influence.¹¹⁶

Throughout 1894 and into 1895 President Woodruff continued to meet with Cluff and pursue capitalists about the latest church interests in coal, iron, and railroads. The brethren formed the Utah Company on 8 August 1894 as an investment concern to oversee stocking the railroads.¹¹⁷ George Cannon went to New York on 20 November 1894 to "see after railway finances" and again in late-January 1895, where he and son Frank made an alliance with the Union Pacific railroad in the Salt Lake-Los Angeles railroad plan. On 20 May 1895, George, Frank, and Abraham Cannon, Heber J. Grant, and a few others met with eastern capitalists in St. Louis to discuss the Los Angeles railroad. At the table were several "multi-millionaires." The Cannons tried to sell them \$500,000 in railroad bonds (as well as Saltair and Sugar Co. bonds), which efforts were taken under advisement. Abraham met with Meyers who advised him to trans-

115. Description of subsequent Cannon railroad dealings are from Abraham H. Cannon's diaries.

116. See Heber J. Grant's diary, 20 May, 22 Aug. 1895. See also Franklin D. Richards's diary, 14 Jan. 1896.

117. According to Woodruff's journal he met with various agents to discuss mining and railroads on 26 April; 18, 19, 22, 24-26, 29 May; 8, 10 August; 13, 18, 21, 24 September; 9, 11 October; 5 November; and 18 December, during 1894. In November Woodruff experienced anxiety over the "dark" state of affairs concerning Trumbo-related business matters in California.

act the railroad business independently of the Utah Company and also to accept the managership of the embryonic railroad company.¹¹⁸

In June, Meyers joined Abraham Cannon and J. H. Burfeind in Utah to tour the southern portion and drum up support for the mammoth project. During the visit, Cannon introduced Meyers to several of the area's ecclesiastical authorities and was able to secure their cooperation. He also received an unscheduled visit from Thomas Taylor "who gave vent to considerable abuse of the Authorities of the Church and Father [George Cannon] in particular." Furthermore:

he says that my visit to the city and to the South was calculated to defeat his plans for the construction of a road to San Diego, he having already secured the co-operation of influential and monied men to carry through his project. He says that the Authorities of the Church have persistently interfered with his arrangements, and they have followed him with a determination to ruin him, which he cannot understand.

Cannon concluded that Taylor was "insane" and assured him that the brethren's actions were beyond reproach:

The fact that he has said for twelve years past that he was just on the point of constructing a road, and he failed to do so up to the present time, is an evidence of his inability to accomplish what he has hoped would be done. The brethren living in Cedar City tell me that he has no association with the people, and is considered by them as a man unworthy of their respect and confidence.

The brethren ran into some trouble with Clarkson later that summer when they tried to cut him out of the Los Angeles Railroad enterprise.

Official Mormon interest in the LARR diminished with the ascendancy of Lorenzo Snow to the presidency. Snow was a fiscal conservative who did not agree with former practices of lending church resources to business ventures. At a 4 January 1898 apostles' meeting, the brethren discussed the imminent death of ailing President Woodruff. The record of the apostles' comments show them beginning to lean toward a policy opposing speculation with church money and a return of the resentment against George Q. Cannon. In the words of Franklin D. Richards, as reported by Heber J. Grant:

You will recall brethren, that the contract with Mr. Clarkson to build a railroad to the Coast was brought before us, and we did not approve of the church going into debt to such a large amount, and Prest Cannon was an-

118. Details about meetings with eastern capitalists, in addition to those found in Abraham Cannon's diary, are located in Heber J. Grant's diary, 20 May, 22 Aug. 1895.

noyed at our being unwilling to approve of his scheme, and this may be one reason he does not care to bring matters to our attention, as he fears we will not approve of them.¹¹⁹

The next day Lorenzo Snow commented that "there was the very best feeling existing between him and . . . Prest Cannon, but Prest Cannon knows that I do not approve of his methods of running into debt. Nearly all of his schemes where the church has run into debt has been a failure, and I have felt that the Lord did not approve of our running into debt personally or for the Church."¹²⁰

Henry Altman, a "gentleman from the East," offered to bond the Saltair beach property and railroad in April 1899. The brethren turned him down despite the fact that the church was roughly \$2 million in debt. Snow confirmed the decision to retain the enterprises but counselled the brethren against entering new businesses.¹²¹ The next year two other businessmen offered to lease the Saltair property and railroad; the brethren were willing only to offer them the management of the business.¹²²

Snow's opportunity to divest finally came in the fall of 1900:

President Snow spoke of the movement now on foot to build a railroad from Salt Lake City to Los Angeles and said that it looked very much as if the enterprise would be carried through. He said that the promoters desired the church put into the enterprise the Salt Lake and Los Angeles Railroad and Saltair beach property and take stock in lieu thereof. The brethren in expressing themselves upon the subject said they thought it a matter worthy of consideration as it was conceded that a new road running from Salt Lake to California would not only pay well but would be of great benefit to Utah. President Snow expressed the view that, if the church went into the enterprise, it might be wisdom to offer them the two properties referred to at a good fair price and take in payment, one third stock and two thirds cash. This being a preliminary talk only and no definite action was taken.¹²³

The San Pedro, Los Angeles & Salt Lake Railroad took formal possession of the Saltair Railroad on 7 July 1903.

Abraham Cannon had mentioned Thomas Taylor's concern over competition with Mormon brethren in the railroad business. But Taylor

119. Heber J. Grant diary, 4 Jan. 1898.

120. *Ibid.*, 5 Jan. 1898.

121. Stan Larson, ed., *A Ministry of Meetings: The Apostolic Diaries of Rudger Clawson* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books in association with Smith Research Associates, 1993), 49–51 (21 Apr. 1899). See also John Henry Smith's entry in his diary for the same date.

122. Larson, 128–30 (4 Jan. 1900); see also John Henry Smith's entry, same date.

123. Larson, 206–207 (13 Sept. 1900). See also Clawson's 22 November 1900 entry which states: "Apostle Reed Smoot reported that the articles of incorporation of the new railroad to Los Angeles had been signed and there was no question but that the road would go through."

did not ultimately let the prospect hinder his plans. He had formed the Utah Coal and Iron Company with his third wife Mary on 7 May 1891. (He had divorced his first wife soon after his excommunication.¹²⁴)

On 15 January 1894, Taylor petitioned the Cedar City Council to grant him a right-of-way and depot grounds for railroad purposes.¹²⁵ A mass meeting of Cedar City's residents was called to address the issue. But no mass meeting is recorded to have taken place until 3 March 1896 when Robert W. Heybourne petitioned for the right-of-way. With the church out of the railroad and iron business, Taylor also managed to renegotiate his mortgage notes held by the church for another year in December 1899.¹²⁶

Exactly one year later, Taylor visited Los Angeles to advance his railroad and iron interests. Taylor accompanied by wife Mary and daughter, Clara Nelson, traveled to Los Angeles to arrange the sale of his Iron County properties to the San Pedro, Los Angeles, and Salt Lake railroad company. He also hoped that the mild climate would help his ailing health.

Ironically, Taylor died in the street outside the railroad terminal. The cause of death was listed as Bright's Disease. As his obituary noted, he was on the verge of achieving his life-long ambition of building a mining/railroad empire. With the church under Lorenzo Snow clearing out of the business, and national pressure on the church to curtail its temporal affairs, Taylor might have finally gained the breathing space he needed to make his dream a reality.

In the end, John C. Cutler, Taylor's son-in-law and later governor of Utah, oversaw the transfer of Taylor's holdings to none other than a conglomerate made up of Taylor's old nemesis Allen Campbell and the Walker Brothers.¹²⁷ With this turn of events newspapers were once again editorializing on Utah's iron producing potential and begging for development.¹²⁸

The 19 April 1902 *Deseret News* exulted that the iron holdings had thus been kept out of the hands of the out-of-state Colorado Fuel and Iron Company. But the company did eventually buy out the properties.¹²⁹ Now-church president Joseph F. Smith testified during the Reed Smoot congressional hearings in 1904 that he was president of the Salt Lake and

124. Thomas Taylor Family Group Sheet.

125. "Excerpts from Cedar City Council Minute Book, 1891-96," 15 Jan. 1894.

126. Iron County Mining Records, 8 Dec. 1899.

127. Iron County Mining Records, 1 May 1902, Degree of Distribution, made by the Fifth Judicial Court, Utah State Historical Society. A 25 July agreement between Cutler and LDS church president Joseph F. Smith cleared the church's mortgage on the iron properties.

128. *Deseret Evening News*, 19 Apr. 1902.

129. Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, 408-409.

Los Angeles Railroad, "a small concern."¹³⁰ This last remnant, the S.L. & L.A.R.R., was sold to a Salt Lake syndicate comprised of Nephi Clayton, Charles Nibley, and J. E. Langford in May 1906.¹³¹

The story of Thomas Taylor reads like a modern prime-time television soap opera. Elements of big business, cloak-and-dagger scheming, and sexual titillation delighted tabloid scandal-mongers of the day, and provide an admittedly sensational slant on Utah's history for modern Utahns. But Taylor's biography raises serious questions about how we understand early economic development within the "Mormon Kingdom" and the West. Mining and railroading were the first "big businesses" requiring huge conglomerates of organized capital to succeed. Nineteenth-century Mormons, with their socialist orientation, were ill-adapted to take advantage of mining and railroading resources which fell within their reach. Mormons embraced capitalism too lately.

Taylor's experiences highlight an era in which Mormonism moved from the socialist temporal kingdom to the uneasy embrace of American capitalist enterprise. The transition is as inconsistent and significant as the church's turn-of-the-century accommodation of other aspects of mainstream American culture. The fact that the tale of Thomas Taylor has only recently surfaced suggests that similar lives remain hidden. Utah's economic history, our understanding of how the twentieth-century Mormon kingdom came to be, remains only partially discovered.

130. *Reed Smoot Case*, 1:82.

131. *Ibid.*, 408.