

# Mormonism and the Radical Religious Movement in Early Colonial New England

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## INTRODUCTION

MORMONS BELIEVE THAT forerunners prepared the way for the restoration of the Church of Jesus Christ in the latter days. This paper examines a special set of those forerunners, namely, the progenitors of the early converts to the LDS church, whose religious experiences took them through a refiner's fire so significant and revolutionary that it helped provide their descendants with the disposition to embrace a new, radical faith.

Religious scholars often ask why a person converts from one religion to another. In Mormon circles, several theories are proffered to explain why people join the LDS church. Most theories assume that a person must be "touched by the Spirit" and that "my sheep hear my voice," but they also include social factors. A popular missionary theory is that converts come more often from personal referrals than from cold calls. Mormon researchers have attempted to demonstrate the validity of this theory by claiming it takes about 1,000 contacts through door-to-door tracting to find one convert, while a personal referral of a friend or relative results in conversion about half the time.<sup>1</sup> Certain scholars have turned this common-sense insight into a formal theory of conversion. Rodney Stark, for example, claims converts to a religion such as the LDS church come mainly through a "huge, interlocking, kinship network" consisting of extended families, friendship circles, and neighborhoods.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Rodney Stark and W. S. Bainbridge, "Networks of Faith: Interpersonal Bonds and Recruitment to Cults and Sects," *American Journal of Sociology* 85 (May 1980): 1376-95.

2. Rodney Stark, "Extracting Social Scientific Models from Mormon History," *Journal of Mormon History* 25, no. 1 (1999): 174-94.

There is persuasive anecdotal evidence that Stark is correct with regard to the kinship ties among the first converts of the LDS church. Most of the first converts came via family lines, including spouses, brothers and sisters, cousins, in-laws, and uncles. Richard Bushman describes the conversions in the first months after the church was organized:

Five Whitmer children and three of their spouses were baptized . . . besides the parents. Eleven Smiths, six Jollys, and five Rockwells joined. . . . The most remarkable collection of kin was the offspring and relatives of Joseph Knight, Sr., and his wife Polly Peck Knight. . . . Two of Polly Knight's brothers and a sister, their spouses, and a sister-in-law . . . were baptized. Five of the Knight children, four of them with spouses, joined, plus Joseph Knight's sister, Mary Knight Slade, and five of her children.<sup>3</sup>

As the church spread, other families joined the extensive webwork of relationships. Over a two-year period, no less than thirteen Young family members joined the church, and through the Youngs, the Heber C. Kimball family. These two families were distant cousins of Joseph Smith and were well aware of their relationship to each other.

However, it becomes increasingly difficult to explain the further expansion of the LDS church strictly through kinship and friendship associations. Although obvious clusters of people joined the church, more is required to explain why these clusters identified themselves as Mormon even when they were quite distant from each other and had no common kinship connections. Additional explanations are also necessary to account for an increasing number of outliers or isolates who came into the church.

Stark recognizes that factors other than kinship and friendship ties are often at work in the conversion process. He notes that converts usually respond to the message because it resonates with their life orientation and does not require them to reject their so-called "religious capital." Rather, conversion to a new faith is easier when that new faith "maximizes their conservation of religious capital."<sup>4</sup> Converts are drawn to religions which fit within their pre-conversion frame of reference.

The kinship theory of conversion is persuasive, and I would like to push it in a direction not yet taken by scholars. I argue in this paper that an individual who is attracted to a strange religious orientation likely has a family history that corresponds in a marked way with that religious orientation. In fact, this orientation can be traced across a number of generations. The religious orientation is not necessarily directly experiential, but may have become almost archetypal in nature. In other words, personal and

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3. Richard L. Bushman, *From Puritan to Yankee* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), 151.

4. Stark, "Extracting Social Scientific Models," 184-85.

family histories have been so imprinted on people's lives that they feel a strange spiritual outlook in their soul. It becomes a part of a collective consciousness of a group of people that distinguishes them in a special way. I argue that spiritual orientation is often so strong it can be validated empirically over several generations.

People who joined the LDS church in its first years are prime examples of this theory. The LDS church message was so radical that it demanded a certain spiritual predisposition among its converts. I am proposing that the individuals who converted to the LDS church in the first years after it was established possessed a shared historical background and a radical spiritual orientation which had been cultivated and honed over a number of generations. These converts had been prepared by their ancestors over several generations to embrace their new faith and to help build the foundations of the Mormon church.

As an example, I turn briefly to the Protestant Reformation. We typically identify the Reformation with names such as Luther, Calvin, and Knox, but in 1962 George H. Williams drew attention to "radical" aspects of the Reformation.<sup>5</sup> Although this radical religious movement reflected social, economic, and political struggles, it was mainly a mystical-spiritualist attempt by fringe groups to overcome the worldly order which adherents felt had infected Christianity. Radical reformers anticipated the return of Jesus Christ and wished to prepare for God's kingdom on earth.

Members of these fringe groups were met by imprisonment, scourging, mutilation, and even hanging, but they persisted in their convictions. They professed a wide variety of beliefs and identified themselves as Familists (Family of Love), Ranters, Seekers, Anabaptists, Quakers, Muggletonians, and Antinomians, among other groups; however, they shared certain qualities. Winsor notes: "There was in all of them a strong and ardent element of enthusiasm and fanaticism, and in most of them a claim to a special divine illumination and guidance in the form of 'private revelations.'"<sup>6</sup>

The less radical were committed to being a "covenant people" and to building a church/state theocracy, while the more radical believed further that individuals can gain a personal knowledge of God, that they possess a spark of the divine, that they are able to exercise gifts of the Spirit, and that the gospel of Jesus Christ would be restored through divine intervention.

Latter-day Saints will recognize the similarity of these "radical" beliefs to their own convictions, but few are aware that these beliefs foreshadowed the gospel of Jesus Christ as proclaimed by Joseph Smith and had been professed by radical groups since the Reformation. The task of this study was

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5. George Huntston Williams, *The Radical Reformation* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1962).

6. Justin Winsor, *The Memorial History of Boston*, vol. 1 (Boston: James R. Osgood and Co., 1881), 169.

to determine the degree to which progenitors of early LDS converts were associated with these earlier radical religious orientations. I have relied on genealogical data taken from the LDS Ancestral Files to locate the religious practices and beliefs of several thousand progenitors of early Mormon converts.

It is important to stress that the methodology used in this study involved a complicated process of family historiography. Fortunately, the tradition of the LDS Church makes such a study possible because Mormon doctrine motivates its members to engage in extensive genealogical research. The data collected by millions of genealogical researchers are now readily available in LDS family history centers and through the internet, and the technology is now available to trace family lines.

#### EARLY LATTER-DAY SAINT CONVERTS

We began by determining who the early LDS converts were. On the surface, the problem was rather straightforward; however, the solution was more difficult. Although the LDS church has always been a record-keeping institution, membership data on early members are sporadic, impressionistic, and unreliable because records were often lost or otherwise destroyed. Dean May points out that the first systematic reports on LDS membership were published in 1879.<sup>7</sup> However, the minutes of the first general conference of the church, on June 9, 1830, approximately two months after it was organized, report twenty-seven members, while the minutes of the second general conference, which took place on September 26-28, report sixty-two members.<sup>8</sup> Larry Porter has also identified at least 139 names of individuals who were likely baptized during the so-called New York-Pennsylvania period.<sup>9</sup> By the beginning of 1831, the body of the Saints had moved to Kirtland, Ohio, because the first great surge in membership ranks occurred in Ohio in the fall of 1830 when Parley P. Pratt, Ziba Peterson, Oliver Cowdery and Peter Whitmer, Jr., converted a number of people associated with Alexander Campbell.<sup>10</sup> Their visit to Ohio came at a fortuitous time, because the local leader, Sidney Rigdon, had become dissatisfied with Camp-

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7. Dean May, "A Demographic Portrait of the Mormons, 1830-1980," in D. Michael Quinn, ed., *The New Mormon History* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1992), 121.

8. Most of these members belonged to one of three branches at Palmyra, New York; Coleville, New York; and Harmony, Pennsylvania. See Joseph Fielding Smith, *The Essentials of Church History* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1950), 97, 113.

9. Larry E. Porter, "A Study of the Origins of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the States of New York and Pennsylvania, 1816-1830," PhD diss., Brigham Young University, 1971.

10. Parley P. Pratt baptized 127 people in Kirtland on their first visit, and he claims that the number of members "soon increased to one thousand," although no evidence exists to

bellite doctrines and was seeking other means to restore “the ancient order of things” including “supernatural gifts and miracles.”

There is no single source that provides a complete list of early LDS converts. The most comprehensive catalogue of membership prior to the exodus to the Rocky Mountains was made under the direction of Susan Easton Black. It is based on primary and secondary sources, including minute books, journals, autobiographies, biographies, periodicals, and genealogical materials. Black compiled a fifty-volume list of information, including dates of baptism, concerning all known church membership prior to 1848.<sup>11</sup> Unfortunately, the Black materials do not provide the time of baptism for several thousand of these converts, including many of those who joined the church prior to 1835. It was necessary to engage in my own analysis to identify the baptismal dates of these converts. A number of valuable secondary sources is also available.<sup>12</sup> The so-called *Far West Record* is a compilation of the minutes of church-related meetings between 1830 and 1844; the appendix of that record lists biographical notes on approximately 375 names noted in the minutes, including several baptismal dates.<sup>13</sup> A four-volume *History of the Church* (a compilation of historical materials dictated by Joseph Smith) provides a chronology of church events during Smith’s life; in the text the prophet names more than 200 people as members of the church prior to 1835.<sup>14</sup> Milton V. Backman published a detailed analysis of the members of the Kirtland Branch, where the Saints lived until they relocated to Missouri in the latter half of the 1830s.<sup>15</sup> He identified more than 800 male members, their spouses, and parents. Additional sources included lists of members of Zion’s Camp, the Danites, marriage dates in Kirtland and Nauvoo, and the death notices in Nauvoo.<sup>16</sup> Almost all these materials gave little indication of baptismal dates, and it was necessary to conduct

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corroborate that claim. See Parley P. Pratt, *The Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt*, ed. Parley P. Pratt, Jr. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1964), 48. Lucy Mack Smith wrote to her father on January 6, 1831 that 300 hundred had been baptized in Ohio. See Ben E. Rich, *Scrapbook of Mormon Literature* (Chicago: Henry C. Etten, 1910), 543-45.

11. Available at [www.myfamily.com](http://www.myfamily.com), or as part of a computer software package known as LDS Family History, Suite 2.

12. May points out that the first systematic reports on LDS membership were published in 1879. See May, 121.

13. Donald Q. Cannon and Lyndon W. Cook, *Far West Record: Minutes of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: 1830-1844* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1983).

14. Membership is noted by labels such as Sister Newel Knight, Brother David Whitmer, Bishop Edward Partridge, Elder Brigham Young, etc. See Joseph Smith, *The History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, comp. B.H. Roberts (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1902).

15. Milton V. Backman, Jr., *A Profile of Latter-day Saints of Kirtland, Ohio and Members of Zion’s Camp: 1830-1839* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1983).

16. Backman, App. I. See also Lyndon W. Cook, *Nauvoo Deaths and Marriages: 1839-1845* (Orem, Utah: Grandin Book Company, 1994).

my own search of ordinance data, particularly through the LDS Ancestral File. I have been able to identify approximately 1,400 members who were likely baptized prior to 1835.

I have chosen to focus on converts baptized before 1835, before British converts began to join the church. Therefore, any reference here to LDS converts means persons who joined the church between 1830 and the end of 1834. Two additional criteria were set for selecting my sample of early Latter-day Saints. First, it is crucial to give attention to those who made a mature, deliberate decision to be baptized, and so my sample only includes those converts who were at least fifteen years of age when they were baptized. Second, because I wished to trace the genealogical lines to the beginning of the colonial period in America when the expression of religious radicalism was strong, I included only early LDS converts for whom the LDS Ancestral File provides at least one sixth-generation progenitor.

These criteria neglect a number of early converts, particularly women, even though I checked the "Family Group Record" of all male members to determine if and when wives and children were baptized. Ancestral files are incomplete even for men who played a crucial role in the formative stages of the church, including William E. McLellin, Ziba Peterson, Charles C. Rich, and Sidney Rigdon.

I found 583 early LDS converts who satisfied my criteria.<sup>17</sup> Although the baptismal dates of ninety-three of these converts are disputed, contextual information indicates that they were baptized during the time in question.<sup>18</sup> The total sample represents approximately 40 percent of the church membership during that time.<sup>19</sup> I will give special attention to the sixth-generation ancestors of early LDS converts, because this group represents the first generation that could have been born in early colonial America. Their average birth date was 1646.

#### PROGENITORS OF EARLY LDS CONVERTS

If I had been able to identify every progenitor of every early Latter-day Saint convert, I would have doubled the progenitors in each generation. Consequently, two second-generation progenitors would multiply to four third-, eight fourth-, sixteen fifth-, and thirty-two sixth-generation progeni-

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17. The names of these LDS converts are available on request from the author.

18. The numbers of LDS converts in this study by year are: 1829-30 (103); 1831 (98); 1832 (110); 1833 (142); 1834 (37); date disputed (93), for a total of 583 converts.

19. An exact count of church membership during the first five years does not exist. The sample size was determined by extrapolating the sample size from the New York-Pennsylvania period. Porter has identified 139 names of converts during this early period of the church; 56 satisfied my criteria for inclusion in the study, representing 40.3 percent. See Porter, "A Study of the Origins." This percentage places church membership in the beginning of 1835 at about 1,500.

tors. The ideal number of sixth-generation progenitors for the 583 Latter-day Saints in the study would be 18,656. In fact, we see in Table 1 that 56 percent (10,492) of all possible sixth-generation progenitors were found. Of course, the percentage of progenitors identified increases with the fifth (64 percent), fourth (77 percent), third (90 percent), and second (99.7 percent) generations. This is a remarkable outcome of the study and is a testimony to the extensive genealogical work so many Latter-day Saints have done.

We also see in Table 1 that about 30 percent (3,086) of sixth-generation progenitors were born in Europe, but only about 3 percent of the fifth- (224) and fourth- (113) generation progenitors were born in Europe, while almost no third-, second-, or first-generation progenitors were born in Europe. In other words, almost all the progenitors of every generation after the sixth were born in North America. In addition, few of these progenitors were born outside New England. In fact, 60 percent (349) of the LDS converts themselves were born in New England.

If we break down the data for the sixth generation, we find more specific information. Table 2 shows that 6 percent (655) of the sixth-generation progenitors were born and died in Europe; 23 percent (2,431) were born in Europe and migrated to America; 68 percent (7,170) were born in America (including New England, New York, the mid-Atlantic and the south); and

Table 1  
LDS Progenitors Identified by Birthplace and Generation

Where Born	1st Gen.	2nd Gen.	3rd Gen.	4th Gen.	5th Gen.	6th Gen.
Europe	1	6	25	113	224	3,086
Outside New England	232	273	356	408	458	375
New England	349	884	1,712	3,079	5,333	6,795
Unknown Birthplace	1	—	—	—	—	236
Total	583	1,163	2,093	3,600	6,015	10,492

Table 2  
Birthplaces of Sixth-Generation LDS Progenitors

	Progenitors' Birthplace	Percentage of Total
Europe	655	5.6
Europe but Migrated	2,431	23.2
New England	6,795	64.8
New York	293	2.8
Mid-Atlantic	51	0.5
South	31	0.3
Birthplace Unknown	236	2.2
Total	10,492	100.0

2 percent (236) have unknown birthplaces. Of those sixth-generation progenitors who were born in America, 95 percent (6,795) were born in early colonial New England. Of those 5 percent (450) born elsewhere in the colonies, 3 percent were born in New York (293), another 1 percent (51) were born in the mid-Atlantic region, and only 0.3 percent (31) were born in the South. Thus, almost all the sixth-generation progenitors of the early LDS church converts were either born in New England or moved to New England from Europe, and they apparently remained in New England through the fifth, fourth, third, and second generations, until their descendants joined the church in the 1830s.

Let us put these figures into context. New England was never dominant in terms of America's colonial population. Approximately 30 percent of the population of the colonies lived in New England, while the majority lived in the mid-Atlantic and southern regions. In fact, Virginia contained more inhabitants than all the New England colonies combined. However, few early LDS converts and their progenitors came from the mid-Atlantic or south.<sup>20</sup>

When placed in the context of the general New England population, the raw number of sixth-generation progenitors is striking. The U.S. Bureau of the Census estimates that approximately 22,800 British settlers were living in New England by 1650.<sup>21</sup> One might be tempted to conclude, on the basis of the 9,091 sixth-generation New England progenitors who have been identified in the middle of the seventeenth century, that 40 percent of the entire population were progenitors of LDS converts. This would be faulty reasoning because of the overlap in names; i.e., one early LDS convert would likely have progenitors who were also progenitors of other converts. However, one does find 2,688 people who are progenitors of only one of the 583 LDS converts in this study, and no fewer than 4,541 different or unique names are found among sixth-generation progenitors. This means that at least 20 percent (4,541) of the 1650 population of New England (22,800) were direct-line ancestors of LDS converts, although the percentage could rise substantially higher as additional progenitors are identified (see Table 3).

#### NEW ENGLAND RELIGIOUS ORIENTATIONS AND THEIR LDS CONVERT CONNECTIONS

Earlier in this paper, I hypothesized that the progenitors of early LDS converts would exhibit a special "radical" spiritual orientation. The fact that almost all these converts shared a heritage reaching back to the earliest

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20. New York is an exception due to its historical significance in the westward migration from New England.

21. *World Almanac and Book of Facts* (Mahwah, N.J.: World Almanac Books, 1997), 378.

Table 3  
 Combined Birthplaces and Places of Death of Sixth-Generation Immigrant  
 LDS Progenitors Compared to Total New England Population in 1650

	Ply Col	Mass	Conn	RI	NH	ME	Totals
LDS Progenitors							
(15.3%)					1,390		
(49.4%)					4,494		
(24%)					2,189		
(7.4%)					675		
(2.2%)					197		
(1.6%)					146		
(100%)					9,091		
Unique Names	653	2,186	1,185	314	122	81	4,541
NE Population in 1650							
(4.4%)					1,000		
(64%)					14,600		
(18%)					4,100		
(3.5%)					800		
(5.7%)					1,300		
(4.4%)					1,000		
(100%)					22,800		

years of America's New England colonial history suggests in itself a special spiritual orientation. It indicates that the forerunners of early converts shared a two-century heritage in a country Latter-day Saints believe to be a land of promise, a land "choice above all other lands," a land "consecrated" for the restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ.<sup>22</sup>

While all religions in New England might be characterized as radical, three main levels of radicalism were found: Puritans, Separatists, and Radical Spiritualists.<sup>23</sup> My best estimate is that up to 85 percent of the population of New England was Puritan, 10 percent Separatist, and no more than 5 percent Radical Spiritualist. In this section I will describe these groups and examine the degree of association between LDS progenitors and these radical groups.

#### PURITANS

In some respects the term "Puritan" was applied to most radical religious groups in seventeenth-century England and New England.<sup>24</sup> In this

22. 2 Nephi 1:5-8.

23. I have borrowed the term "Radical Spiritualist" from Philip Gura, *A Glimpse of Zion's Glory: Puritan Radicalism in New England, 1620-1660* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1984).

24. Edward H. Bloomfield, *The Opposition to the English Separatists, 1570-1625* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1981), x.

study, however, we shall distinguish between Puritans, Separatists, and Radical Spiritualists. Puritans were dedicated to the goals of the Reformation in that they desired personal righteousness and a more constant level of morality in church and state, but they wished to remain within the boundaries of the Church of England. Puritans were also dedicated to the notion that scripture alone served as the guide to their faith and life. They rejected both the Catholic and Anglican traditions of ritual, church authority, and dogma, as well as the claims of more radical reformers that the scriptures were supplemented by direct revelation from God and an "inner light." Puritanism was closely bound with Calvinism and the vernacular Bible.

The Puritans were located largely in Massachusetts and Connecticut. We recall that the Massachusetts Bay Colony was started almost a decade after the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth, but quickly became the dominant force in New England. Massachusetts Bay settlers were intent on cleansing the Church of England, to purify it. Thus, they were known as the Puritans. Even though its landmass was no larger than that of Plymouth Colony, by 1650 at least 14,600 individuals lived there, in contrast to 1,000 in Plymouth Colony. In fact, 64 percent of New Englanders resided in Massachusetts at the time.

The Connecticut and New Haven colonies were also dominated by Puritans. Their inhabitants had fled the problems wracking Massachusetts, setting up communities of small, tightly knit groups of people who wished to establish theocratic polities. About 4,100 people lived in Connecticut/New Haven by 1650, which was 18 percent of the New England population. Here quite a different picture emerged. Connecticut was "a small, inconspicuous agricultural colony," isolated from the main currents of religious and political activity.<sup>25</sup> Its people did not fit the Massachusetts profile, with its extreme class distinctions; rather, each congregation was left to its own devices to form its individual character. Connecticut Puritans took pride in their independence: Their norms and politics coincided more nearly with those of the Pilgrims in Plymouth.

Given the great numbers of progenitors who lived in the Puritan colonies, we can assume that Puritanism played a substantial role in the religious orientation of these progenitors. It is clearly appropriate to draw connections between Mormonism and Puritan thought and beliefs.<sup>26</sup> Joseph Smith resonated well with Puritan beliefs, in part because almost all

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25. Charles McLean Andrews, *Connecticut's Place in Colonial History* (New Haven: Connecticut Society of Colonial Wars, 1923), 9.

26. See, for example, James R. Christianson, "Puritanism and Mormonism: Parallel Paths—A Parting of the Ways," in Donald M. Cannon, ed., *Regional Studies in Latter-day Saint Church History: New England* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, Department of Church History and Doctrine, 1988).

his sixth-generation ancestors were born in Puritan Massachusetts. However, such an argument fails to explain the population distribution of people who were attracted to the message of Joseph Smith. Given the overall population distribution of New England, we might have expected converts to come largely from the northern areas of New England, but in fact the number of progenitors born in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine was substantially under-represented. (Progenitors who did reside in New Hampshire and Maine came from communities which showed radical religious tendencies.) In addition, the progenitors were substantially over-represented in the thinly settled areas of Plymouth, Rhode Island, and Connecticut/New Haven.

It is instructive to examine the Massachusetts Bay Colony to determine where the LDS progenitors lived. Greene and Harrington claim the population of Boston was 14,300 in 1664, and the population of Massachusetts was 23,461 in 1665,<sup>27</sup> which suggests that up to 60 percent of the early Massachusetts population resided in the Boston area.<sup>28</sup> Yet we find that fewer than 14 percent of the Massachusetts progenitors were born in Suffolk County, where Boston is located, and fewer than 5 percent were born in Boston itself. Clearly, the progenitors of early converts were not concentrated in the center of Massachusetts; rather, they were primarily in Essex (1,550) and Middlesex (1,379) counties.<sup>29</sup> In addition, more than half the Massachusetts progenitors came from only ten towns. We find more progenitors living in the towns of Salem, Ipswich, Rowley, and Watertown than were living in Boston.

The Massachusetts county with the most progenitors of LDS converts was Essex, with 35 percent of all Massachusetts progenitors. In fact, 40 percent (233) of LDS had at least one sixth-generation progenitor from Essex County. This is of particular interest to us because much of Essex County was politically identified at mid-century with New Hampshire, where a radical religious element resided.<sup>30</sup> The courts of New Hampshire covered much of Essex County, so the political representatives were the same.<sup>31</sup> The area also deviated in tone and practice from mainstream Puritanism. First,

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27. Evarts B. Greene and Virginia D. Harrington, *American Population before the Federal Census of 1790* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1932), 13, 19.

28. This claim is supported by a survey of houses in various coastal communities at the time, which indicated that 60 percent of Massachusetts' homes were located in Boston. See G. D. Scull, "Historical Notes and Letters Relating to Early New England," *New England Historical and Genealogical Register* 38 (October 1884): 378-81.

29. The numbers of sixth-generation progenitors of early LDS converts born in or emigrating to counties in the Massachusetts Bay Colony were: Essex (1,550); Hampton (299); Middlesex (1,379); Suffolk (602); Other (402).

30. Scull, "Historical Notes and Letters."

31. Victor C. Sanborn, "Stephen Bachiler: An Unforgiven Puritan." (Paper prepared for the New Hampshire Historical Society, 1875, Part II, 178-204.) See also Scull, "Historical Notes and Letters."

many of its towns had been settled for economic reasons before the Massachusetts Bay Puritans arrived in the new world, and there was continuous competition between the Massachusetts Bay Company and other groups claiming coastal territories. Second, the major town in the area, Salem, tended toward Separatism, harboring the largest number of Antinomians outside of Boston, and in the 1640s and 50s, a good share of Gortonists and Anabaptists as well.<sup>32</sup> The Society of Friends also made its first inroads in the Salem area.<sup>33</sup> Third, Essex County was the location of the infamous witch trials of 1692, which is indicative of the spiritual agitation cutting through the communities.

A high concentration of sixth-generation progenitors of early LDS converts is found in Puritan Connecticut. Indeed, 53 percent (309) of all the early LDS converts in this study had at least one sixth-generation progenitor from Connecticut. While the colony of Connecticut could claim only about 4,100 inhabitants at the time, we find no fewer than 1,185 different last names among the sixth-generation progenitors of early converts and an astounding 2,181 different first and last names. This means that more than half the residents of early Connecticut were progenitors of early LDS converts, even after accounting for duplicate names.

Furthermore, these progenitors were clearly concentrated in a few Connecticut counties and towns. In fact, 50 percent of all progenitors were located in only five towns. The earliest permanent settlements in Connecticut were Hartford, Wethersfield, and Windsor, all in Hartford County. Thirty percent of all progenitors of LDS converts were located in the three towns of this county, which should not be surprising, because in mid-century it was by far the most populated county in Connecticut.

The most prominent group in early Connecticut comprised the followers of Thomas Hooker,<sup>34</sup> whose life in England paralleled that of other Puritan divines. While a minister at Chelmsford, England, Hooker had been "silenced for non-conformity." He spent three years in Holland as a dissenter prior to emigrating to New England, arriving in September 1633, where he joined his Chelmsford flock, most of whom had preceded him to Massachusetts.<sup>35</sup> He was disturbed with the turmoil in the Boston area and decided the group would settle away from Boston in the Connecticut Valley.<sup>36</sup> Hooker and the main body of believers arrived in what would

32. Carla Gardina Pestana, "Sectarianism in Colonial Massachusetts," Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1987, 18-19.

33. Carla Gardina Pestana, *Quakers and Baptists in Colonial Massachusetts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

34. Thomas Hooker is a direct-line progenitor of LDS converts Shadrach Roundy and Uriah Roundy.

35. G. H. Hollister, *The History of Connecticut* (New Haven: Durrie and Peck, 1855), 1: 22.

36. George Leon Walker, *Thomas Hooker: Preacher, Founder, Democrat* (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Co., 1891).

become Hartford in the fall of 1635. Included in the Hooker group were names which anyone interested in early LDS history would readily recognize. Settlers such as John and William Pratt, William Parker, William Partridge, Paul Peck, and Richard Webb were ancestors of a host of early LDS converts.

Almost an equal number of progenitors has been identified in Windsor. In October of the same year in which Hooker settled Hartford, the Reverend John Wareham brought a flock of about sixty souls to a place they named Windsor, just north of Hartford. Wareham had been an "eminent minister" in Exeter, England, who had lived briefly in Dorchester, Massachusetts, before moving with his people to Windsor.<sup>37</sup> Although Windsor was a small settlement with a population in the low hundreds at midcentury, large numbers of LDS progenitors were born there. No fewer than eighty-three of the 583 LDS converts in our sample had sixth-generation relatives born in Windsor. These converts included well-known names such as W. W. Phelps, Polly Peck, Edward Partridge, Sr., Luke Johnson, Orson Hyde, Lorenzo Snow, and many others. I found a total of 252 Windsor progenitors of those eighty-three early LDS converts, which means each convert averaged almost three progenitors from Windsor, suggesting intense family and communal connections of large numbers of progenitors of early Saints.

A third Hartford County group settled in Wethersfield, just south of Hartford. Here I found at least 162 sixth-generation ancestors born in Wethersfield who are direct-line, sixth-generation progenitors of seventy-four early LDS converts. Included among these were well-known names such as the Fisk family, Orson Hyde, Edward Partridge, Sr., the Joseph Smith, Sr., family, Lucy Mack, Daniel Wells, Frederick G. Williams, Wilford Woodruff, and the Young family.

New London County, where considerable numbers of progenitors were also located, maintained an independent, radical orientation similar to Rhode Island. It is the location of the first Anabaptists in Connecticut and the birthplace of the Rogerene movement.

New Haven Colony was established through the efforts of Theophilus Eaton and his brother, Reverend Samuel Eaton, along with Reverend John Davenport. The saga of Davenport is typical of those who set out to form their own colonial group in New England. After graduating from Oxford in 1615 he became a preacher in London. In 1624 he was "elected . . . to the vicarage of St. Stephen's," a large, wealthy, middle-class parish which had a clear Congregational orientation.<sup>38</sup> With the accession of Archbishop Laud

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37. Elias B. Sanford, *A History of Connecticut* (Hartford: S. S. Scranton, 1888), 20.

38. Rollin G. Osterweis, *Three Centuries of New Haven, 1638-1938* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), 9.

in 1633, Davenport was compelled to flee to Holland. One of his London parishioners, Theophilus Eaton, was a boyhood schoolmate who had become a prominent businessman. Under cover, Davenport returned to London where he and Eaton organized a company consisting mainly of his old wealthy parish, and in April 1637 they set sail on the ship *Hector*, intending to establish the most thoroughgoing theocracy in New England. After picking up additional followers, the group sailed to New Haven the next spring.<sup>39</sup>

While the New Haven population barely exceeded 800 by mid-century, and no more than 1,000 prior to annexation to Connecticut in 1665, the colony claimed no fewer than 530 sixth-generation progenitors of early LDS converts. Of course, many of the converts had duplicate ancestors, but nevertheless, approximately 43 percent of all the original settlers in New Haven colony were the progenitors of at least one early LDS convert.

#### SEPARATISTS

Separatists, who broke away from the Church of England altogether, formed the second level of religious radicalism in New England. H. S. Stout portrays them as "the most radical, unpopular Puritan faction of their age."<sup>40</sup> In England, Separatists and non-Separatists maintained strong differences, but there were important common elements. For example, both Puritans and Separatists relied heavily on Calvinist doctrine. However, the term "Separatist" refers to those who believed "the English Church was a false church and that it would never be reformed." The Church of England was seen as being "so tainted with Romanism that no true Christian could remain part of it."<sup>41</sup> The Pilgrims originated mainly from the village of Scrooby and had found the situation so intolerable in England that they moved first to Amsterdam<sup>42</sup> then to Leyden, Holland. They recognized that Holland was a temporary place of residence, and on August 5, 1620, a few members of their congregation joined certain "adventurers" and set sail on the *Mayflower* for the New World. The original Pilgrim colony at Cape Cod never thrived. By 1624 only 180 individuals lived in the colony, which was quickly overshadowed by Massachusetts Bay Colony.<sup>43</sup>

However, Plymouth Colony set the tone for certain religious traditions in New England which melded the differences between Puritans and Sepa-

39. Francis J. Degnan, *A New Look at Old New Haven* (New Haven, Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, 1992), 5.

40. H. S. Stout, "Puritanism," in Daniel G. Reid, ed., *Dictionary of Christianity in America* (Downers Grove, Ill.: Intervarsity Press, 1990), 966.

41. Bloomfield, x.

42. Marion L. Starkey, *The Congregational Way: The Role of the Pilgrims and Their Heirs in Shaping America* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., 1966), 17.

43. Greene and Harrington, 10.

ratists. We noted above that although the Plymouth Separatists failed to flourish in terms of numbers, they established the framework for Congregationalism which took hold in New England with both Separatist and non-Separatist bodies.<sup>44</sup> The Pilgrims claimed that every church was a unit, independent of all outside control, including the hierarchical officials of the church. Thus, when the *Mayflower* arrived at Cape Cod, the Pilgrim leaders concluded a compact, based on the Scrooby Church Covenant, wherein they declared:

We . . . solemnly and mutually . . . covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil body politic for our better ordering and preservation . . . for the general good of the colony, unto which we promise all due subjection and obedience.<sup>45</sup>

That covenant formed the basis of government for the small group by establishing the congregation as the ruling body over church members, and it set the pattern for other congregations in the colonies. When the Salem congregation was organized as a body of Puritans, the Plymouth influence prevailed, and that congregation also established itself as an independent covenant body.<sup>46</sup> By 1645, twenty-three churches had been organized in Massachusetts, and all had adopted the Congregational framework.<sup>47</sup> Although the differences between Puritans and Separatists were melded in New England, distinctions remained, particularly with regard to church/state matters.

Some connections between Separatists and the LDS church have already been established in the literature. For example, in 1920 B. Roland Lewis wrote an article for the *Improvement Era*, in celebration of the Tercentenary Celebration of the *Mayflower*, which extolled the contribution of the Pilgrims to American and Mormon thought. Lewis correctly suggested that Pilgrim thought has more in common with Mormon orientations than does Puritanism. A rewarding aspect of my own research has been finding such a high number of Pilgrim family lines tied to early LDS converts. It is possible to tie significant numbers of progenitors of early Latter-day Saint converts to those first Pilgrim refugees. In fact, at least 67 of the 583 Latter-day Saint converts in this study have progenitors who arrived on the *Mayflower*.

The large number of LDS converts connected with the *Mayflower* is especially significant because more than half its 102 passengers died that first

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44. Louise M. Greene, *The Development of Religious Liberty in Connecticut* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1905).

45. B. Roland Lewis, "The Pilgrims and the Utah Pioneers," *Improvement Era* 24 (Dec. 1920): 95-103.

46. Michael R. Watts, *The Dissenters* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 103.

47. William Warren Sweet, *Religion in Colonial America* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1942), 87.

winter, while several other “adventurers” returned to England within a short time. John Landis has determined that only twenty-two heads of household from the *Mayflower* exist from whom all descent can be traced without duplication.<sup>48</sup> I have traced early convert direct lines back to at least fifteen of these twenty-two heads of household.<sup>49</sup> Of course, many LDS converts claim multiple *Mayflower* ancestors. Mary Ann Kennedy, for example, had five *Mayflower* ancestors, while the fourteen converts who had links with John Howland, including the Pratt brothers and the Joseph Smith family (through Lucy Mack), would automatically be connected not only with Howland but also with Howland’s wife, Elizabeth Tillie (often spelled Tilley), and her parents, John Tillie and Joan Hurst Tillie, constituting four *Mayflower* progenitors.

We find in Table 3 that while the mid-century population of Plymouth Colony was only 1,000, an astounding 1,382 ancestors of early LDS converts are recorded. Naturally the number of progenitors cannot exceed the entire population. Duplicate names account for most of this anomaly. For example, the names John Garmsey, John Chase, and John Eddy were all ancestors of eleven early LDS converts, while Sarah Smith was an ancestor of ten converts. A more realistic figure would be the number of unique first and last names among the progenitors, which is 653. Even so, this figure suggests that almost two-thirds of all individuals living in Plymouth Colony in the mid-1600s were progenitors of early converts. If we look from another vantage point, we find that at least 45 percent (262 of 583) of the early converts in our study claimed relationship either to people born in early Plymouth Colony or to those who came from England to reside in Plymouth Colony.

To provide a picture of the Separatist world, I shall focus on a single town, Barnstable, which was settled by a group under the leadership of

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48. John Landis, *Mayflower Descendants and Their Marriages for Two Generations after the Landing* (Baltimore: Southern Book Co., 1956).

49. Early LDS converts are shown in parentheses: John Alden (Elizabeth Hathaway, Lucy Simmons, Noah Packard, Joseph Coe, Mary Ann Kennedy, the John Young family, Joel Hills Johnson, Julia Ann Johnson, Deleana Johnson, Cyril Call and Anson Call); Isaac Allerton (Mary Ann Kennedy); John Billington (Polly Chadwick, Anna P. Johnson, Martin H. Peck); William Bradford (Josiah Sumner, Elizabeth Hathaway); William Brewster (Daniel Avery, Rhoda Walker, Sarah King); Peter Brown (Olive Farwell and Isaac Freeman); James Childon (Sophia Bundy); Francis Cooke (Soloman Chamberlain, Jesse Baker, Lydia and Ira Ames, John Tanner, Titus Billings, Stephen Chase Noah Packard, Mary Ann Kennedy, Elijah Cheney); Edward Fuller (Lucy Mack and the Smith family, Frederick G. Williams, Ashael A. Lathrop); Stephen Hopkins (Stephen Chase, Titus Billings, Noah Packard); John Howland (Dimick B. Huntington, Lucy Mack and the Smith family, Orson, Parley Parker and William D. Pratt, Lyman Curtis, Emma Hale, Mary Ann Kennedy, Lyman Curtis); Thomas Rogers (Luke, John Jr., Lyman and Nancy Johnson, Chauncey Calkins, Sarah Webber, Elizabeth Hathaway); Henry Sampson (Mayhew Hillman); George Soule (Lucy Simmons); Richard Warren (Mary Ann Kennedy, Olive Farwell, Isaac Freeman, Solomon Chamberlain).

John Lathrop. As a minister in Yorkshire, England, Lathrop had established a clear record of public protest against the prevailing religious orientation. He decided that the Church of England had lost its way, so in 1623 he renounced his religious orders and declared he would henceforth espouse the cause of the religious "Independents." He moved the next year to London, where he succeeded Henry Jacob as the Pastor of the First Independent Church. In 1624 his church was formally banned by the government, and for eight years the congregation worshipped in secret. In 1632, John Lathrop and forty-three members of his parish were arrested on the improbable charge of practicing the teachings of the New Testament.<sup>50</sup>

While in prison Lathrop's first wife died, and he was released after two years on condition that he and his followers leave the country. He, his family, and many of his parishioners sailed for New England on the same ship as Anne Marbury Hutchinson, arriving in Boston on September 18, 1634. He then organized a church for his flock at Scituate in Plymouth Colony, where he remained for two years before the group moved to Barnstable in October 1639, apparently because of disputes over the proper mode of baptism.<sup>51</sup>

Barnstable was a rather small town compared with places like Boston, Charlestown, Hingham, and Ipswich, but 116 people born around the mid-1600s have been identified in that town alone as progenitors of early converts. Lathrop has long been identified as an ancestor of many Mormon leaders, including Frederick G. Williams, Oliver Cowdery, Hyrum and Joseph Smith (through Lucy Mack), Wilford Woodruff, as well as Orson and Parley Parker Pratt.<sup>52</sup> However, he was also the ancestor of a number of more ordinary early converts. It would take us too far afield to identify by name more than fifty of the early converts who are direct-line descendants of those in the congregation who accompanied John Lathrop to Barnstable, but that congregation clearly was an important feeder institution for early church converts.

#### RADICAL SPIRITUALISTS

The third level of religious radicalism in New England included those whose religious orientation was so radical that they were persecuted, ostracized, and usually expelled not only from England, but from the power center of New England. I will now examine the degree to which progenitors of early LDS converts were associated with these Radical Spiritualists.

Some observations related to geography are in order. The two geographical areas of colonial New England that might be considered the most

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50. Charles Henry Pope, *The Pioneers of Massachusetts* (Boston: Charles H. Pope, 1900), 202.

51. Elijah Baldwin Huntington, *A Genealogical Memoire of the Lo-Lathrop Family* (Ridgefield, Conn., 1884), 28.

52. Archibald Bennett, "Orson Pratt as a Genealogist," *Deseret News*, April 25, 1936, p. 2.

radical would be Rhode Island and New Hampshire. More than 20 percent of the early LDS converts in this study have direct-line progenitors either born in or immigrating to Rhode Island, even though it contained less than 8 percent of the New England population. From another vantage point, we find that among the 623 progenitors in Rhode Island there are 309 different names, constituting one-third of the entire population of the colony at mid-seventeenth century. In other words, substantial connections are found in Rhode Island between the early colonial residents and early LDS converts. When we turn to New Hampshire, we find the connections are not so substantial. Even so, fifty-eight early converts in this study have direct-line progenitors either born in or immigrating to that area. The New Hampshire population was clustered largely within four townships: Dover, Portsmouth, Hampton, and Exeter. We shall find that radical leanings have been identified in all these towns except Portsmouth, and the progenitors of early LDS converts were indeed centered in these more radical towns.

Various overlapping categories of radicals can be identified. First, certain heretical individuals gained the spotlight, and groups of people rallied around them; pertinent here are Roger Williams, Anne Marbury Hutchinson, and Samuell Gorton. Second, radical religious groups were transported to the colonies from England, e.g., Anabaptists and Quakers. Third, several Puritan congregations were radicalized in New England by oppressive actions taken by Puritan leaders; I will focus on the congregations of John Wheelwright and Stephen Bachiler. It should be clear that great overlap exists among the three categories, although they provide some framework for discussion.

#### *Heretical Individuals: Williams, Hutchinson, and Gorton*

Among those who called for radical change, none were more important for those interested in LDS roots than Roger Williams, Anne Marbury Hutchinson, and Samuell Gorton. They foreshadowed many of the claims made by Joseph Smith at the time of the organization of the church.

While as many as nineteen people, the first in 1624, were expelled from New England towns prior to Roger Williams's expulsion, he was the first to gain historical renown. The account of his expulsion is well known, so I will content myself with delineating certain aspects of his religious beliefs. He believed that the Antichrist had reigned for 1,260 years and had destroyed the original Church of Jesus Christ. In his eyes, the Anglicans, Puritans, and Separatists were no more legitimate than the church of Rome because they continued to accept the validity of ordinances such as infant baptism.<sup>53</sup> In Rhode Island, Williams made arrangements in 1639 for

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53. W. Clark Gilpin, *The Millenarian Piety of Roger Williams* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), 53-54.

Ezekiel Holliman to rebaptize him, although he was uncomfortable with the procedure and eventually declared it invalid. He believed that true ordinances such as baptism could only be restored by a special commission from God.<sup>54</sup> He believed God's plan was to restore the Church of Jesus Christ in its original pattern, and the church would only be restored through the millennial appearance of new apostles.<sup>55</sup>

In spite of his forbearing and magnanimous attitude, Williams was so resolute in his convictions that he was expelled. The hierarchy of Massachusetts expected Williams to go back to England, but he chose instead to travel into the wilderness and eventually settled with several of his "friends and neighbors" in what was to become Providence, Rhode Island. The group consisted of about twelve households, and at least twenty-nine early LDS converts claimed one or more heads of household as direct-line progenitors.<sup>56</sup> In other words, progenitors of LDS converts were in rich abundance in settling Rhode Island and establishing the spiritual and cultural norms that reigned in the area.

We turn now to Anne Marbury Hutchinson, a central figure of the so-called Antinomian crisis of the 1630s. Thomas Bicknell summarizes her life in the following way:

In matters of religion and theology Anne Hutchinson was a seer, a prophetess, "a Daniel, come to judgment [sic]." Three great spiritual concepts possessed her. She believed that the human soul could and did hold close communication with the Divine Over-Soul. She believed in direct and special revelations from the divine to the human, from God to her own soul. She also believed in a spiritual justification of the soul of man, with God, through faith.<sup>57</sup>

The debate that led to her conviction and expulsion from Massachusetts was related to grace and works. However, since beliefs were respected as matters of conscience, she could never have been expelled exclusively over this issue. Rather, her expulsion was ensured when she was asked in her trial why she was so certain of her position. She explained, "I shall give

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54. John Callender, *An Historical Discourse on the Civil and Religious Affairs of the Colony of Rhode-Island*, with annotations and documents ed. by Romeo Elation (1843; repr. New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1971).

55. Gilpin, 59.

56. LDS converts are shown in parentheses: Roger Williams (Eleazer Miller, Lucina Streeter, and Catherine Slauson); Stukeley Westcott (Erastus Wightman and Catharine Slauson); William Arnold (Lydia Ackerman, Celinda Ackerman, and Barnell Cole); John Greene, Sr. (Orson Pratt, Parley Parker Pratt, Anson Pratt, William Dickinson Pratt, Maria Sagers, Reynolds Cahoon, William Farrington Cahoon, Evan Molbourne Greene, and John Port. Greene); William Harris (Lydia and Celinda Ackerman); William Carpenter (Horace Morley, Lucy Diantha Morley, Laban Morrill, Martin Horton, Ann Eliza, Nancy F., and Sally Ann Peck); Thomas Olney (James William, Solomon, and Thomas Osborn Angell).

57. Thomas W. Bicknell, *Story of Dr. John Clarke* (Providence: T. W. Bicknell, 1915), 59.

you the ground of what I know to be true. . . . The Lord . . . by his prophetic office must open it to me." Her examiner, John Winthrop, pushed her on her meaning, asking how she knew, and she replied, "So to me by an immediate revelation." Thus was her fate sealed because she claimed to know by "the voice of his own spirit to my soul."<sup>58</sup>

The Puritans had taken a strong stand against the leaders of the Church of England who wished to retain certain ceremonial practices and rituals as well as certain theological beliefs from the Catholic Church. The Puritan fathers held firmly to the position that doctrines and practices could be acceptable only if they were validated through the scriptures. Nothing outside the Bible could be used in argument or debate. It was the rock of all knowledge, belief, and practice.<sup>59</sup> Anne Marbury Hutchinson, while rejecting the validity of custom and habit, claimed that her life had been guided not only by the scriptures but by God himself. She claimed that in difficult times "God came often to her," giving direction and meaning to her life.<sup>60</sup> She developed an intimacy with the Spirit that was profound but unsettling to those around her. Hutchinson advocated that the scriptures were powerful and helpful, but that an individual could develop a direct means of reaching God through the "indwelling of the Spirit," a notion that parallels the Latter-day Saint belief in the "Gift of the Holy Ghost."

Some of the negative attitudes of the Puritan hierarchy toward Hutchinson were also related to her claim to possess a gift of healing. The healing arts were connected in that day with witchcraft; the most famous incident of healing gone wrong was that of Mary Dyer who gave birth to a premature "monster child" while being attended by Hutchinson and a midwife friend by the name of Mrs. Hawkins. It was rumored that Hutchinson and Mrs. Hawkins were somehow responsible for the whole hideous event.<sup>61</sup> When Hutchinson was banished, Hawkins was one of those who went with her to Rhode Island. It was widely rumored that Hawkins was a Familist and a witch.<sup>62</sup>

The Hutchinson crisis is known generally as Antinomianism. Battis names 187 males who participated to some degree in the Hutchinson affair, with thirty-eight men forming a core group. The most severe punishment for conviction of Antinomianism was banishment. Within a few months

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58. Edwin S. Gaustad, ed., *A Documentary History of Religion in America to the Civil War* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1993), 133.

59. George E. Ellis, *Puritan Age and Rule in the Colony of the Massachusetts Bay: 1629-1685* (1888; repr. New York: Burt Franklin, 1970), 78-79.

60. Emery Battis, *Saints and Sectaries: Anne Hutchinson and the Antinomian Controversy in the Massachusetts Bay Colony* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1962), 50.

61. *Ibid.*, 177-79.

62. Charles Francis Adams, *Antinomianism in the Colony of Massachusetts Bay: 1636-1638* (New York: Burt Franklin, 1967), 188.

after the verdict against Hutchinson, at least thirty-four heads of household arrived, many with their families, in Rhode Island. Others were convicted but went elsewhere. For example, John Wheelwright took his entire congregation to New Hampshire. Progenitors of LDS converts travelling with Hutchinson included: William Coddington, one of the wealthiest men in the colony; John Coggeshall, a dealer of expensive fabrics; John Sanford; William Denison; Edward Hutchinson, Sr.; Francis Hutchinson; John Porter; Robert Porter; Philip and Samuel Sherman; John Underhill; Robert Potter; William and Thomas Wardell; and John Wheelwright,<sup>63</sup> which is a remarkable number considering that so few progenitors were located in the Boston area.<sup>64</sup>

In addition, several family members of direct-line progenitors were implicated in Antinomianism. Robert Harding is a good case in point. There are no direct-line descendants of Robert among early LDS converts because he moved back to London. However, Robert's younger brother Abraham, who was only a teenager at the time and living with Robert, was undoubtedly a family participant in the Antinomian crisis. He is the progenitor and namesake of Dwight Harding, who was baptized in 1831.<sup>65</sup>

In spite of the lasting visibility of Roger Williams and Anne Marbury Hutchinson, the most schismatic and controversial of the heretics was Samuell Gorton.<sup>66</sup> Gorton was called at various times an "arch-heretic," a "beast," a "miscreant," a "proud and pestilent seducer," and a "prodigious minter of exorbitant novelties."<sup>67</sup> Although he never identified himself with the Family of Love, he was often regarded as a Familist, because both "believed in mystical communion with the Holy Spirit."<sup>68</sup>

Gorton's life before immigrating was conventional, but after arriving in

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63. Battis, App. I.

64. Hutchinson had thirteen children who were slaughtered by Indians in 1643, except for the youngest daughter. She, therefore, has few descendants. LDS converts are shown in parentheses: William (Anne's husband) and Edward Hutchinson (John Port. Greene, Evan Melbourne Greene, Anson Pratt, Parley Parker Pratt, Orson Pratt, William Dickinson Pratt, Meritable Sawyer); John Coggeshall (Rhoda Walker, Alfred, Hulda, Ira, Rhoda, and Russell W. Fisk); William Denison (Catharine Slauson); Robert Potter (William Walker Rust); William Coggington (John Port. Greene, Evan Melbourne Greene); William Dyer (William Wines Phelps); William Wardell (Edmund Durfee, James Durfee, William Walker Rust); John Wheelwright (Olive Lowell); Richard Carder (Anna Knight, Esther Knight, Hyruna Knight, Joseph Knight, Newell Knight, Polly Knight, Vinson Knight, Ezekiel Peck, Hezekiah Peck, Polly Peck, Sally Ann Peck, Nancy F. Peck, Ann Eliza Peck).

65. Glen F. Harding, *A Record of the Ancestry, Family, and Descendants of Abraham Harding* (Ogden, Utah: Glen F. Harding, 1979).

66. Gura, *A Glimpse of Sion's Glory*.

67. Lewis G. James, *Samuell Gorton: A Forgotten Founder of Our Liberties: First Settler of Warwick, R.I.* (Providence: Preston and Rounds, 1896), 83.

68. Sydney V. James, *Colonial Rhode Island: A History* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975), 28.

Boston in 1636, Gorton suddenly acquired an orientation of disruption and protest. He was initially banished from Boston and moved to Plymouth; then in 1638 he was expelled to Rhode Island. In 1641 he found himself in Providence where he questioned every exercise of civil authority, causing even Roger Williams to wonder at his behavior. He then moved to Warwick, south of Providence, but had to fight off Indian and Massachusetts claims to the land. At one time a force of forty men sought him out and carried him and others to Boston for trial. There he was beaten, jailed, and persecuted because he emphasized the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.<sup>69</sup>

Gorton's theology conflicted directly with the most fundamental tenets of mainstream Christianity. For example, he challenged the prevailing notion of trinitarianism which, since the Nicæan Creed, had dictated that God, Christ, and the Holy Ghost were "of one essence." His beliefs about the Godhead were not the same as those found in Mormonism, but they helped open the way to a challenge of trinitarianism.

One aspect of Gortonism which did coincide with Mormonism was the belief that there is an essential divine spark in human nature. Every human soul possesses that spark; it is neither created nor will it pass away. It is eternal and everlasting. Gorton also anticipates Mormon theology in his belief that good and evil are in eternal conflict. The good and the bad are involved in every action; righteousness is movement toward life eternal, while sin is movement toward damnation. All humankind is participating in a moment of eternity. Gortonists did not look for future existence so much as they strove to attain the heavenly in every action and decision. Gorton believed heaven is not so much a place as a condition of the soul. Gortonists believed both men and women could partake of the Spirit.

Gorton and most of his followers are direct-line progenitors of many LDS converts. John Greene, Sr., the first of a long line of important leaders in Rhode Island, is a good case in point.<sup>70</sup> Greene's religious beliefs were not only consistent with those of Gorton, but his spiritual mysticism was strikingly similar to the universalism of Familists, who practiced a spiritually egalitarian form of Puritanism. Gortonists were universalists who argued, "Goe and preach the Gospell in every creature."<sup>71</sup>

Probably the closest disciple of Gorton was Randall Holdan, who established a permanent Gortonist settlement around Warwick Cove.<sup>72</sup> He has many connections with early LDS converts, including the Knights and

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69. Kenneth W. Porter, "Samuell Gorton: New England Firebrand," *The New England Quarterly* (September, 1934): 405-44.

70. Henry E. Turner, *The Greenes of Warwick in Colonial History* (Newport: Davis and Pitman, Steam Printers, 1877).

71. John L. Brooke, *The Refiner's Fire: The Making of Mormon Cosmology, 1644-1844* (New York: University of Cambridge, 1994), 46.

72. James, 31.

Pecks, Richard Waterman, John Warner, and William Wardell.<sup>73</sup> These and others provide substantial evidence that a good number of those engaged in the most radical movements of that day were the progenitors of many LDS converts.

### *Anabaptists and Quakers*

Although Roger Williams was an Anabaptist for only a few months, his companions became leaders in the establishment of Anabaptists in America. They were never a unified group. While the original congregation was in Providence, another group emerged in Newport under the direction of John Clarke, a man convicted of Antinomianism and one of the more highly educated colonists. Clarke and a small band of fellow believers established the settlement of Newport, Rhode Island, in 1639, and in 1644 the settlement formally established a "baptizing church." In response to Clarke's efforts, Massachusetts moved to make Anabaptistry illegal and curb the spread of Anabaptism beyond Rhode Island.<sup>74</sup> Rehoboth, in Plymouth Colony, for example, was becoming a hotbed for Anabaptist activity. It was akin to the independent spirit of Providence, Rhode Island, less than ten miles away. Echoing Roger Williams, John Browne of Rehoboth often professed "liberty of conscience" and the new mode of baptism. In 1648 at least fourteen Rehoboth residents were rebaptized within a few weeks. Anabaptists included John Hazel, Edward Smith, Obadiah Holmes, Joseph Torry, James Mann, William Deuell, and their families. With pressure from Boston, all except Hazel moved to Rhode Island and became leaders in the Anabaptist congregations of Providence and Newport.<sup>75</sup> Swansea, a tiny village within the boundaries of Rehoboth, on the border of Rhode Island, was known as an Anabaptist community.

Many of the progenitors of LDS converts were involved in radical activities in Rehoboth and Swansea. One of the important names connected with the LDS Church was Rehoboth resident Joseph Peck, ancestor of Polly Peck and other LDS Pecks. Large numbers of other early converts were also

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73. LDS converts are shown in parentheses: Samuel Gorton (Lydia Ackerman, Celinda Ackerman, Lebbeus Thaddeus Coons, Sr.); John Greene, Sr. (John P. Greene, Anson Pratt, Parley Parker Pratt, Orson Pratt, William Dickinson Pratt, Maria Sagers, Reynolds Cahoon, William Farrington Cahoon, Maria Sagers, Anson Call, and Cyril Call); Randall Holden (Anna Knight, Esther Knight, Hyruna Knight, Joseph Knight, Newell Knight, Polly Knight, Vinson Knight, Ezekiel Peck, Hezekiah Peck, Polly Peck, Sally Ann Peck, Nancy F. Peck, Ann Eliza Peck, Martin Horton, Clarissa Reed, John Reed); Richard Waterman (Lucina Streeter); John Warner (Micah B. Welton, Lillis Ballau, Alfred Fisk, Hulda Fisk, Ira Fisk, Rhoda Risk, and Russell W. Fisk); William Wardell (William Walker Rust).

74. Isaac Backus, *A History of New England with Particular Reference to the Baptists*, vol. 1 (1871; repr. New York: Arno Press and the *New York Times*, 1969), 126.

75. Richard Lebaron Bowen, *Early Rehoboth*, vol. 1 (Rehoboth: Rumford Press, 1945), 29.

connected with the town. In fact, 326 sixth-generation progenitors were born in Rehoboth and seventy-seven in the little village of Swansea. This is remarkable because the actual population of Rehoboth was certainly no more than 250.<sup>76</sup> Of course, it is impossible for 326 individuals to reside in a town of 250, but we can account for most of this difficulty in that only 117 unique names are found. For example, John Garnsey and Elizabeth Titus are each progenitors of eleven LDS converts; Mary Sly and Sarah Smith are each progenitors of ten converts.

In the 1640s, the Anabaptist zeal was increased by the infusion of missionaries from England, the most prominent being Mark Lucar, who arrived in Newport around 1648. He brought with him not only the new baptism by "dipping," but also the basic principles of so-called Particular Anabaptists, who believed that Christ's atonement was "particular" or individual in that it pertained only to the "elect." So-called General Anabaptists believed that the atonement was universal in nature.<sup>77</sup>

Gardner estimates that in 1650 there were sixty Anabaptist members in Rhode Island, while there were only eleven members in Massachusetts.<sup>78</sup> The connection of early LDS converts with the early Rhode Island Anabaptists is substantial. Among the eleven associates of Roger Williams in Providence, eight are direct-line ancestors of many converts.<sup>79</sup> One of these Anabaptist progenitors was Obadiah Holmes, who had experienced a profound spiritual awakening while living in England. Holmes accompanied John Clarke, Sr. and John Crandall to Massachusetts in 1651 on a religious mission, where they were apprehended, jailed, tried, and fined. Holmes was severely beaten as well. John Clarke had no family issue, but John Crandall was the progenitor of several converts. Stuckely Westcott, another progenitor, had been censured by the Salem congregation for telling them theirs was not the "true church."<sup>80</sup> He then removed to Portsmouth, Rhode Island, where his family committed itself to Anabaptism.

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76. *Ibid.*, 18.

77. Leon H. McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage* (Nashville: Broadman, 1987).

78. Robert G. Gardner, *Baptists of Early America: A Statistical History, 1639-1790* (Atlanta: Georgia Baptist Historical Society, 1983), 34.

79. Early LDS converts are shown in parentheses: Roger Williams (Eliazer Miller and Catherine Slauson); John Crandall (Celinda and Lydia Ackermann, Lebbeus T. Coons, Sr., David Crandall, Sanford Porter, and Louisa Tanner); Obadiah Holmes (Rhoda Fisk, Rhonda Fisk, Ira Fisk, Alfred Fisk, Huldah Louisa Fisk, Russell W. Fisk, Sterry Fisk, Martin Horton Peck, Hezekiah Peck, Ann Eliza Peck, Nancy Peck, Sally Ann Peck, Catherine Slauson, Cynthia Elizabeth Soule, Erastus Wightman, Benjamin Freeman Bird, Alpheus Gifford, and Keziah Pearce).

80. Oliver Payson Fuller, *The History of Warwick* (Providence: Angeli, Burlingame & Co., 1875). Progenitors are: Stukely Westcott (Catharine Slauson and Erastus Wightman); William Clarke (Emer, Martin and Preserved Harris); and Thomas Clarke (Anson Pratt, Orson Pratt, Parley Parker Pratt, and William Dickinson Pratt).

The Massachusetts Anabaptists were far fewer in number than the Rhode Island Anabaptists, and the identities of the most early members are unknown, although some known Anabaptists have connections to early LDS converts.<sup>81</sup> There is some record of mid-seventeenth-century Anabaptist influence in New Hampshire, mainly through the influence of Hanserd Knollys, a notable English radical who spent a few years in the colonies. Knollys was an ordained minister in England, but he renounced his ordination in the early 1630s because he did not feel he had received a clear call and commission from Christ to do the work. He then sought counsel from John Wheelwright and, following several discussions and a period of time in seclusion, Knollys declared he had experienced a profound spiritual manifestation which filled his "soul with joy and peace in believing" so that he again commenced his work, but with a conviction of Antinomian doctrines of salvation and Anabaptist principles.<sup>82</sup> Met with much oppression, he left England and eventually served as minister of Dover, New Hampshire. Undoubtedly, members of his congregation were receptive to his heresies, including some of the earliest settlers, namely, Thomas Roberts and William and Edward Hilton who had arrived in 1623. In fact, Roberts eventually became a Quaker.<sup>83</sup>

While Anabaptist impulses had already manifested themselves as an outgrowth of the Antinomian crisis, the Quaker movement did not gain visibility until the 1650s. The Quaker movement originated about 1644 in Leicestershire, England, when a certain group of piously disposed people formed an association centered on George Fox. By the early 1650s, a full missionary effort was under way.<sup>84</sup> The message of George Fox was that Christian churches had departed from the primitive purity and simplicity, but the "day of the Lord was at hand." God was pouring his spirit upon the earth, and those touched by his spirit were to dedicate themselves to preaching his everlasting gospel to all of God's creatures. God "did not dwell in temples made with hands," but in individuals through "that inward light, spirit, and grace, by which all might know their salvation and their way to God." This inner light was available to every one of God's children, for "Christ had died for all men to profit rather than for the elect." In

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81. John George, for example, was baptized in 1665. He is the progenitor of Clarissa, John F., and Olive Boynton.

82. B. R. White, *Hanserd Knollys and Radical Dissent in the 17th Century* (London: Dr. Williams's Trust, 1977), 5-7; John N. McClintock, *History of New Hampshire* (Boston: B. B. Russell, Cornhill, 1888), 41.

83. John Scales, *History of Dover, New Hampshire* (Manchester, NH: John B. Clarke Co., 1900), 91. LDS converts are shown in parentheses: Roberts (David Cluff, Mary Thurston Rand, and Heber C. Kimball); William or Edward Tilton (Mary Thurston Rand).

84. James Bowden, *The History of the Society of Friends in America*, vol. 1 (New York: Arno Press, 1972), 29-30.

this respect, Fox argued a universalism that was akin to that of the General Baptists and the Mormons two hundred years later.<sup>85</sup> Followers gathered without liturgy or prearranged preachers, believing that the light of God would come in silence or that God would inspire those who speak with his inner light.

Worrall claims the number of Quakers in certain parts of northern New England grew faster than did the population in general.<sup>86</sup> Essex County, Massachusetts, was a hotbed of Quaker activity as well as certain settlements in New Hampshire and Maine. Stories abound regarding persecutions and whippings. Progenitors of certain LDS converts, such as the Wardells, are a good case in point. William Wardell was fined for entertaining a Quaker missionary,<sup>87</sup> while Eliakin Wardell's wife went naked into the Newbury Puritan meeting house to shame the Puritans for stripping women to the waist and whipping them through town. (In Dover, three Quaker women had been stripped to the waist, tied to the back of a horse-drawn cart and whipped with ten lashes as they passed through each township on their way to Boston.)<sup>88</sup> The Coffins, who later adopted Quakerism in Nantucket, were exposed to Quakers while they lived in New Hampshire. All these people are ancestors of Mary Thurston Rand, an early LDS convert.

By 1658 over thirty individuals in Salem were engaged in Quaker meetings. The Salem Quakers represented a wide range of social lines and occupational pursuits although the lower social ranges were more heavily represented.<sup>89</sup> Local authorities, wishing to quell the movement, dealt harshly with the Quaker missionaries circulating through New England. The primary strategy authorities used was to harass those involved although fines, imprisonments, and whippings were also common. In 1655 Massachusetts passed a law that anyone who "entertained" a Quaker would be fined. Early LDS progenitors Richard Swaine and John Heard were two of those so punished.<sup>90</sup> Other progenitors, such as William Marston in Hampton, New Hampshire, were apprehended and their dwellings searched to determine if they were harboring Quakers. Marston was once fined £20 for having two Quaker tracts in his home.<sup>91</sup>

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85. Melvin B. Endy, *William Penn and Early Quakerism* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1973), 55, 193.

86. Arthur J. Worrall, *Quakers in the Colonial Northeast* (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1980), 71.

87. *Ibid.*, 28.

88. Hamilton Hurd, *History of Rockingham and Strafford Counties, New Hampshire, with Biographical Sketches of Many of Its Pioneers and Prominent Men* (Philadelphia: J. W. Lewis and Co., 1882), 807-9.

89. Pestana, "Sectarianism in Colonial Massachusetts," 30-31.

90. Starbuck, 15-16.

91. Bowden, 153.

In 1658 persecution reached such an extreme point that Quakers were banished from the colony and informed they would suffer the pain of death if they returned. In 1659 a group of Salem, New Hampshire, and Maine Quakers converged on Boston and were arrested and imprisoned. The court took harsh action and executed the leaders, William Robinson and Marmaduke Stephenson, as well as Mary Dyer, the mother of the so-called monster child which Anne Marbury Hutchinson had helped deliver in 1637. (Dyer had converted to Quakerism after moving to Rhode Island and then to England.)<sup>92</sup> Such actions inspired more direct confrontation as well as active persecution. By 1670 there were fifty-seven Quakers in Salem. At least twenty-five of these were progenitors of early LDS converts, and almost all converts had multiple direct-line connections with them.<sup>93</sup>

Southeastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island also witnessed unusual Quaker growth. By the turn of the eighteenth century, it has been estimated that half the population of Rhode Island had declared themselves Quakers. We recall that large numbers of these were progenitors of LDS converts. Nantucket also played a significant role in Quaker history, and certain LDS converts traced their direct-line ancestors to many of its early settlers. During the summer of 1659 a number of people from Hampton, New Hampshire visited Nantucket as a possible place to settle and decided to organize a group to buy all rights and interest in the island. They included Tristram Coffin, Sr., Peter Coffin, Richard Swaine, John Swaine, Christopher Hussey, and Stephen Greenleaf.<sup>94</sup>

### *Radicalized Puritan Congregations*

Several Puritan congregations were radicalized at the time because of events which occurred in their respective communities. Some of these congregations were radicalized in England and subsequently came to New England, while others were radicalized in New England itself. Certain of these congregations were central in the lives of many progenitors of early LDS converts, and, consistent with the general findings of this study, their

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92. Dyer is a progenitor of William Wines Phelps.

93. LDS converts are shown in parentheses: Joseph Boyce (Polly Chubuck, Joshua Bufum, his wife, and daughter Cassandra, Elias Hutchings, and Lyman Curtis); William King and his wife (Mehitable Wells); John Marston (Laban Morrill); William Marston (Mary Thurston Rand); Samuel Shattuck and his wife (Josiah and Thomas Butterfield, David Nelson, as well as Polly, Archibald, Elizabeth, Ira J., John M., and David Wyman Patten); John Smith and his wife (Betsy Taylor Putnam and Vilate Stockwell); Lawrence Southwick and his wife as well as Daniel Southwick and his wife and John Southwick and his wife (Polly Chubuck); Lawrence Southwick and his wife (Elias Hutchins and Lyman Curtis); Henry Trask and his wife (Lyman Curtis).

94. LDS converts tracing their direct-line ancestors to one or more of these individuals include Samuel Jones Rolfe, Mary Thurston Rand, Lydia Chamberlain, and Dwight Harding.

stories were played out on the fringes of the New England colonies. We have already discussed the congregations at Plymouth and Barnstable, and now we will focus on the congregations of Stephen Bachiler and John Wheelwright.

While the main focus of migration of those expelled from Massachusetts was Rhode Island, New Hampshire and Maine were also recipients of Anabaptists, Antinomians, Quakers, freethinkers, and others.<sup>95</sup> Migrations to New Hampshire and Maine were confined to the Piscataqua River area along the coast and focused on four towns (Hampton, Exeter, Dover, and Portsmouth), as well as on a fifth town across the river from Portsmouth at Kittery, Maine. All these towns fell within a radius of ten miles, so the territory was confined to a small area. By 1639 approximately 1,000 English had settled there. Our discussion will focus on the settlements of Exeter and Hampton.

The most important religious immigration into Exeter was made by a congregation led by John Wheelwright, the brother-in-law of Anne Marbury Hutchinson. Wheelwright began service as a vicar in Belsby, England. After serving eight years, he was released because of his nonconformist views. Having no permanent appointment in the clerical profession, Wheelwright sailed to the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1636.

In Boston he was warmly received although he was sympathetic with his sister-in-law's views and held a conviction that anyone who knew God and his gospel had received that knowledge through the gift of the Holy Spirit. In his inaugural address at Boston, he discussed the nature of faith. Wheelwright explained that faith represents a union between the believer and the Holy Ghost. This proclamation brought adulation from those assembled although Governor John Winthrop stirred uneasily because he felt such claims had no scriptural footing.<sup>96</sup>

The Antinomian crisis had so infected all the churches of Massachusetts that the General Court proclaimed a fast to ease the tensions and injudiciously invited Wheelwright to deliver the sermon at the end of the fast. His remarks only further inflamed the crisis. He was subsequently tried for possessing "Antinomian and Familistic" beliefs, found guilty of "sedition and contempt," and punished with "disfranchisement and banishment."<sup>97</sup> In July 1638, Wheelwright and his banished friends arrived in New Hampshire, purchased land on the banks of the Swamscot River, and settled the town of Exeter. The town contract was signed by thirty-four heads of households, including many progenitors of LDS converts.<sup>98</sup>

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95. McClintock, 49.

96. Battis, 114.

97. Hurd, 244.

98. Everett S. Stackpole, *History of New Hampshire*, vol. 1 (New York: American Historical Society, 1945), 44. LDS converts are shown in parentheses: John Wheelwright (Olive Lowell);

The settlement at Hampton dates back to 1638, when Reverend Steven Bachiler and a group of followers settled the area. Bachiler was already elderly, aged seventy-one, when in 1632 he arrived with his family in America. He had been a minister in England, but was inclined toward Familism. In 1604 he had been "ejected" as vicar and excommunicated from the church.<sup>99</sup> Many of his parishioners followed him when he fled to Holland. After a number of years, they came to Massachusetts and settled in Lynn, Essex County, but his independent spirit created difficulties with the church, so in 1636 he and his followers moved to Ipswich. Finding further difficulty, they moved the next winter to Yarmouth and again after one year to Newbury.<sup>100</sup> The congregation was growing increasingly restless about their conflicts with other Puritans, so in 1638 approximately fifty-six followers settled outside the boundaries of the colony, in Hampton, New Hampshire.<sup>101</sup> Bachiler was Hampton's first minister and is said to have given the town its name.

At least twenty LDS converts have progenitors who settled in Hampton with Bachiler.<sup>102</sup> During the next summer a number of others joined the settlement, including Robert Page Jr., John Philbrick, William Marston, and William Parker, all of whom have multiple direct-line ancestry with LDS converts.

#### SUMMARY

In this paper I have asserted that the progenitors of early LDS converts possessed a radical spiritual heritage, and this spiritual orientation was

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Thomas Wight (Newell Knight, Hyruya Nahaum Knight, Esther Knight, Anna Knight, Joseph Knight Sr. and Jr., Polly Knight, Vinson Knight, Thomas Baldwin Marsh, Ann Marsh, Esther Peck, Ezekiel Peck, Hezekiah Peck); William Wentworth (Andrew Lee Allen, Hjulda Chapman, Elezer Freeman Nickerson, Freeman Nickerson, Levi Stillman Nickerson, Uriel Chittendon Nickerson, Moses Chapman Nickerson); Samuell Walker (Amanda Melissa Barnes, William Walker Rust); Darby Field (Mary Thurston Rand, Lydia Smith, Sarah York); Edmond Littlefield (Aaron Cheney, Amasa F. Cheney, Olive M. Cheney, Selah Cheney, Lydia Clisbee, and Waldo Littlefield); John Cram (Lydia Chamberlain); William Wardell (William Walker Rust, Edmund Durfee, James Durfee); Robert Smith (Andrew Lee Allen, Sarah York).

99. Victor C. Sanborn, "Stephen Bachiler: An Unforgiven Puritan." (paper prepared for the New Hampshire Historical Society, 1917); Philip Mason Marston, "The Reverend Stephen Bachiler: Saint or Sinner?" (published privately by the Society of Colonial Wars in the State of New Hampshire, 1961).

100. Charles E. Batchelder, "Rev. Stephen Bachiler, Puritan Emigrant," in Frederick Clifton Pierce, ed., *Descendants of Rev. Stephen Bachiler, of England, A Leading Non-Conformist, Who Settled the Town of New Hampton, N.H. and Joseph, Henry, Joshua and John Batcheller of Essex Co., Massachusetts* (Chicago, Ill.: W. B. Conkey Co., 1898).

101. Joseph Dow, *History of the Town of Hampton: From Its First Settlement in 1638 to the Autumn of 1892* (Hampton, N.H.: Peter E. Randall, 1889), 8.

102. LDS converts are shown in parentheses: Bachiler (Heber C. Kimball, Thomas Jefferson Butterfield, Josiah Butterfield, Mary Thurston Rand); John Browne (Thomas Gates, Sr., and Jr.,

strong enough to manifest itself through several generations. The specific spiritual orientation emphasized here is the belief that one can gain a personal knowledge of God, possess a spark of the divine, and be able to exercise gifts of the Spirit; that the gospel of Jesus Christ would be restored; and that his children are a covenant people who would live within a theocracy.

The basic data of this study came from an analysis of the direct-line ancestral files of 583 Latter-day Saints who converted to the church prior to 1835. I have confirmed that almost all these converts come directly from New England and that their families had lived in New England for several generations. In fact, almost all identified sixth-generation progenitors (10,492) of these 583 converts were either born in New England or emigrated to America. These progenitors represent at least one-fifth of all the individuals living in colonial New England in the mid-1600s.

Various degrees of religious radicalism were found in New England: The Puritans were the least radical, while the Radical Spiritualists were more radical than either the Puritans or the Separatists. All the religious orientations in early colonial New England were represented among the LDS progenitors; however, we did not find a proportionate distribution among them. We found that Massachusetts, which was dominated by Puritans, was dramatically under-represented, with less than half the progenitors located there, while almost two-thirds of the population was centered in that area. In addition, few progenitors were found in Suffolk County and Boston, the center of Puritanism. Rather, those in Massachusetts professing Puritan beliefs were more likely to reside in a limited number of towns and religious communities in the marginal areas of Massachusetts, particularly

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Lucinda Gates, Jacob Gates, Jabez Brunson, Seymour Brunson); Robert Pucke/Tucke (Mary Thurston Rand, Daniel Sanborn Miles, Lydia Smith, Sarah York); Thomas Jones (Levi Ward Senior Hancock, Clarissa Hancock, Thomas Hancock, Jr., Solomon Hancock); Robert Saunderson (Cyril Call and Anson Call); James Davis (Edson Barney, Royal Barney, Philania Barney, Asa Lyman); Richard Swaine/Swain/Swan (Samuel Brown, Lydia Chamberlain, Mary Thurston Rand, Sarah York); Abraham Perkins (Mary Thurston Rand); Francis Peabody (Benjamin Kimball Hall, Levi Hall, Brigham Young, Eunice Clark Young, Joseph Young, Lorenzo Dow Young, Nancy Young, Rhoda Young, Fanny Young, John M. Young, Susannah Young, Phinehas Howe Young, and Louisa Young); John Higgins (Andrew Lee Allen, Alpheus Amulek Harmon, Oliver Harmon, Cilia Kent, Sarah King); Thomas Moulton (Samuel Brown, Mary Arey); John Moulton (Heman Tilton Hyde, Mary Thurston Rand, Aaron Cheney, Amasa F. Cheney, Olive M. Cheney, Selah Cheney, William Walker Rust); Miriam Moulton (Thomas Jefferson Butterfield); William Palmer (Jonathan Harriman Hale); Issac Perkins (Daniel Sanborn Miles, Mary Thurston Rand); William Fifield (Mary Thurston Rand, Lydia Smith, Sarah York); Moses Cox (Mary Thurston Rand, Andrew Lee Allen); Daniel Hendrick (Heber C. Kimball); Thomas Chase (Hyruna Knight, Nahamu Knight, Esther Knight, Newell Knight, Anna Knight, Joseph Knight, Sr. and Jr., Polly Knight, Aaron Slade, Ann Slade, Benjamin Slade, and Clark Slade); John Cross (Benjamin Andrew); William Sargent (John Boynton, Eliphalet Boynton, Clarissa Boynton, and Laban Morrill).

Essex County. Large numbers of progenitors also resided in a few towns of Connecticut/New Haven where the Puritans resembled Separatists.

In contrast, we found that Separatists and Radical Spiritualists were substantially *over*-represented among the progenitors. Almost two-thirds of Plymouth Colony were progenitors of LDS converts in our study. Such religious radicals as Roger Williams, Anne Marbury Hutchinson, Samuel Gorton, John Wheelwright, Stephen Bachiler, and Hanserd Knollys and their followers played a significant role in the family histories of early LDS converts. Radical religious groups, such as the Antinomians, Familists, Quakers, Anabaptists, and Gortonists were central to the lives of many ancestors of LDS converts. Indeed, a substantial proportion of progenitors is associated with higher levels of religious radicalism.

The basic assumption of this study is that those who joined the Mormon church in its first years, as well as their progenitors, shared radical, spiritual experiences. While the sixth-generation progenitors of early LDS converts manifested these shared experiences, I have not traced these connections through the fifth, fourth, third or second generations.

Some scholars maintain that the eighteenth century was more important in shaping religion in America than was the seventeenth century. Jon Butler, for example, urges us to abandon the notion that Puritanism was the crucial force shaping the so-called "American religion."<sup>103</sup> His argument suggests that those radical religious forces of early colonial America may have been lost by the time the LDS church was established in 1830. Narrowly speaking, this appears to have been the case because Puritanism, Separatism and other forms of colonial radicalism were lost as social forces in the second half of the colonial period.<sup>104</sup> However, the successive generations of LDS progenitors tended to remain in New England until the nineteenth century, and it is not only possible but probable that elements of this radicalism persisted in individual families and towns for several generations and influenced the choices people made when they decided to join a church which declared that its similar spiritual beliefs were central to the "restored" gospel of Jesus Christ.

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103. Jon Butler, *Awash in a Sea of Faith: Christianizing the American People* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990), 2-3.

104. See, for example, Bushman, *From Puritan to Yankee*.