John T. Clark: The "One Mighty and Strong"

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This article examines John T. Clark, a relatively little-known but influential figure in the rise of fundamentalism among the Latter-day Saints during the early twentieth century. By 1921, small groups of excommunicated polygamists had begun to congregate at homes, offices, industrial buildings, and even in open-air settings. While no identifiable leaders would emerge until the 1930s, these groups would eventually coalesce to form the fundamentalist movement. Several individuals, including Clark, became prominent within the informal gatherings, either because of their testimonies, convictions, publications, financial successes, or claims to priesthood authority.[1] Clark is unusual, however, because he was apparently never a polygamist. Rather, it was his doctrinal unorthodoxy and creative theological speculations that distanced him from the official LDS Church and made him an appealing figure to others whose ideas included the continuation of post-Manifesto polygamy.

The Beginnings of Unorthodoxy

John Tanner Clark left no personal papers, diaries, or autobiography, to my knowledge, so biographical background is sparse.[2] He was born January 4, 1865, in Provo, Utah, to John Clark and Alvira Jane Pratt Clark and raised in the LDS Church. He served a three-year mission on the Uintah Indian reservation and was apparently, for a time, a member of the BYU faculty, although no details seem to be available about his education, field, or the period of this employment. He married Alice Scow in 1896 in the Salt Lake Temple. However, they had no children, she died in 1898, and Clark apparently never remarried.

Intellectually keen, he served in World War I, developing a shield for ships that would explode a torpedo before it made contact with the

hull. Later he invented a puncture-proof automobile tire and a special rim. He formed the John T. Clark Mechanically Inflated Tire Company in 1913, but it never generated any income.[3]

Despite his evident early dedication to Church teachings, John was excommunicated in May 1905 at age forty, but not for involvement with plural marriage.[4] His Church discipline was, instead, for his claims that he was the "one mighty and strong" named in Doctrine and Covenants 85:7: "And it shall come to pass that I, the Lord God, will send one mighty and strong, holding the scepter of power in his hand, clothed with light for a covering, whose mouth shall utter words, eternal words; while his bowels shall be a fountain of truth, to set in order the house of God, and to arrange by lot the inheritances of the Saints whose names are found, and the names of their fathers, and of their children, enrolled in the book of the law of God." (For the historical context of this scripture and the various interpretations of it in the LDS Church and RLDS Church/Community of Christ, both mainstream and schismatic, see the preceding article by Bill Shepard, "'To Set in Order the House of God': The Search for the Elusive 'One Mighty and Strong.'")

Mormon Fundamentalism and the "One Mighty and Strong"

The activities and identity of the "one mighty and strong" play an immensely important role in the theology and expectations of many followers of the restoration including most LDS fundamentalists today. Of all scripture, no single verse is referred to more often by fundamentalists than Doctrine and Covenant 85:7.[5] Consequently, it is nearly impossible to comprehend the fundamentalist movement among the Latter-day Saints without understanding this concept of the "one mighty and strong." Mormon fundamentalists generally teach that Joseph Smith will return to fill the role of the "one mighty and strong,"[6] but many variant beliefs and numerous claimants also exist.

Three interpretations regarding the coming of the "one mighty and strong" can be identified in commentaries by Church leaders and fundamentalist writers over the years: (1) it was a conditional prophecy specific to circumstances in Jackson County in the 1830s and hence is no longer relevant; (2) it applies to the future visit of a personage to Jackson County who will be responsible for specific duties in that geographic area, such as setting in order the temple complex and assigning building lot "inheritances" there; and (3) it applies to a future "setting in order" of the entire

Church by a powerful figure raised up for that purpose. This last position is tenaciously held by nearly all contemporary fundamentalists.

Unlike every other reference to the "house of God" found in the Doctrine and Covenants, this third interpretation holds that the "house of God" mentioned in Doctrine and Covenants 85:7 is not a temple structure,[7] but instead refers to the entire Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which fundamentalists affirm is currently "out of order."[8] Fundamentalist writer Ogden Kraut described an impressively comprehensive role for this future "one mighty and strong": "The setting in order of the House of God will be a greater event than the Restoration. What failed in the beginning will succeed in the end. The miracles will be greater, the number of converts will be more numerous; the power and wealth of the Saints will be richer; and Zion—the New Jerusalem—will finally be built."[9]

Fundamentalists proclaim that, through the efforts of the "one mighty and strong," they will be vindicated and the practice of plural marriage restored.[10] Reportedly, also "set in order" would be Church finances;[11] the redemption of Zion and the return of the Saints to Jackson County, Missouri;[12] the establishment of fundamentalists in positions where they will preside over the First Presidency;[13] the restoration of divine revelation to guide leaders in the Church, which is now in apostasy;[14] the clarification of which priesthood ordinations performed since Heber J. Grant became Church president in 1918 have been valid;[15] and the implementation of the law of consecration throughout the Church.[16] In Jackson County, the one mighty and strong will accomplish his second duty by arranging "by lot the inheritances of the saints,"[17] probably after first designating the building site for the temple complex (the "house of God") that will be located there. That building site will establish "order" by delineating the reference coordinates used to survey all of the surrounding inheritance lots that will be assigned.[18]

Although a psychological exploration of motives is beyond the scope of this article, it is easy to see why the mysterious yet dazzling and near-omnipotent characteristics of the "one mighty and strong" would work powerfully upon the imaginations of talented but ignored and marginalized figures. John T. Clark seems to have been such a person; but since the dawn of the twentieth century, dozens of men besides him have asserted claims to the identity and responsibilities of the "one mighty and strong."[19]

For example, Joseph E. Robinson, who presided over the California

Mission between 1901 and 1919, commented in October 1918 general conference: "We have had five such [claimants as the 'one mighty and strong'] in the California mission since I have had the honor to preside in it. They have come to naught, and dwindled away." Robinson continued:

> One in particular that I have in mind, who gathered about him quite a little body of honest people, God-fearing people, humble and contrite and repentant when they were shown the error of their ways, for I had the privilege of baptizing a goodly number of them. This man went on for years, pretending that sometime he would come as a mighty and strong one and set the Church in order. He said that the people would be tried in all things; so frequently he would be drunken with wine, that they might be tried in that way, and he reveled in the use of some drugs and tobacco, so that they might be tried in their faith because of this weakness. He took wives from some men and gave them to others, and then took them himself, and then turned them back to the original husband, that they might be tried in that way. And still they endured it because of their faith in some of his prophecies and the manner in which he interpreted the scriptures. When stricken and about to die, he was taken to a hospital, and several days before his death he told them not to bury him, but to watch over his body for three days and he would come and take it up again and establish them in their inheritance in Zion before God forever. They watched his body for six days, and then they buried him.[20]

John T. Clark's Claims

The charismatic John T. Clark was among the earliest to proclaim his identity as the "one mighty and strong." Part of Clark's confidence in asserting his identity as the promised "one" seems to have come from a patriarchal blessing he received indicating that he was chosen to fulfill several scriptures including Doctrine and Covenants 85:7.[21] In early 1905, Clark published a pamphlet containing his unorthodox beliefs and claims that he was the individual chosen by God to fill the role of the "one mighty and strong." Although I have found no contemporary evidence of specific reactions to Clark's claims or whether he gained a significant number of adherents, his activity was evidently noticed by Church members and became sufficiently disturbing to Church leaders that Clark was excommunicated in May 1905.

Undoubtedly, Clark's case contributed to the fact that six months later, the First Presidency (Joseph F. Smith, John R. Winder, and Anthon H. Lund) printed an official statement that explicated the context of Doctrine and Covenants 85 (which had been extracted from a letter Joseph Smith wrote William W. Phelps in 1832) and officially proclaimed that

the need for the "one mighty and strong . . . may also be considered as having passed away and the whole incident of the prophecy closed."[22] The First Presidency did not entirely foreclose the possibility that he could "be a future bishop of the Church who will be with the Saints in Zion, Jackson county, Missouri, when the Lord shall establish them in that land."[23]

In the decades following the publication of Clark's original pamphlet, he continued to promote himself as the "one mighty and strong." His ideas expanded; and seventeen years later in 1922, he dictated the manuscript of *The One Mighty and Strong* to Joseph White Musser, then age fifty, who acted as his scribe for the 165-page book.[24] Nathaniel Baldwin, a briefly affluent local radio manufacturer, contributed $750, underwriting the printing of five thousand copies. Baldwin also temporarily provided economic security for Clark by appointing him to the board of directors of his company. By November 1922, those directors were a veritable "Who's Who" of the fundamentalist movement: John T. Clark, Clyde Neilson, Daniel Bateman, Paul Feil,[25] former Apostle Matthias F. Cowley, John Y. Barlow, Israel Barlow, Ianthus Barlow, Albert Barlow, Lyman Jessop, Joseph S. Jessop, Moroni Jessop, Margarito Bautista, Leslie Broadbent, Joseph W. Musser, and Lorin C. Woolley.[26]

The first section of *The One Mighty and Strong* reprints the First Presidency's 1905 statement regarding the "one mighty and strong." A significant portion of the rest of Clark's book discusses Doctrine and Covenants 85:8: "While that man, who was called of God and appointed, that putteth forth his hand to steady the ark of God, shall fall by the shaft of death, like as a tree that is smitten by the vivid shaft of lightning." Clark argues that this passage could not be a reference to a bishop but instead predicts "the removal of a President of the Church in a very strange manner. . . . This strange way in dealing with a President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is not a savory dish to be altogether relished by individuals of high authority in the Church. . . . The falling of a President in a strange way is necessary in order to fulfill scripture and carry out the plan of salvation of the children of men in our day and time."[27] After the Church president dies in this "strange" manner, the "one mighty and strong" will take his place and set the Church in order, restoring, among other things, the practice of plural marriage. "It is inevitable that a President must fall," asserted Clark, "in order that the 'Mighty and Strong One' chosen of the Lord may be established at the head of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, in the place of the deposed and fallen

leader, in or that the house of God (His Church, 1 Tim. 3:15) may be set in order, as the Lord shall direct."[28]

Although Clark's main thesis is clear, *The One Mighty and Strong* consists of a pastiche of scriptural references and religious teachings organized only loosely into a rambling and repetitive message. Historian Lyle O. Wright assesses Clark's writings as "generally very disorganized, repetitious, and somewhat confusing."[29] Clark and his followers recognized the problems with the paperback, which prompted him to initially limit its distribution. Clark himself attributed the weaknesses of the book to a "lack of proof-reading." Baldwin refused to fund a second printing "unless he [Baldwin] could change some things in the book." Sometime between 1922 and 1930, while trying to decide whether to actively distribute the faulty copies, Clark had a vision in which "President John Taylor, (from the other side) came to me [John T. Clark] and said 'YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO!' Then striking his right clinched fist into his left hand said, 'AND WOE BETIDE THEM THAT OPPOSE YOU IN THIS WORK."[30] Clark obediently circulated copies of the book.

In 1930, eight years after the book's publication, Clark reflected on his decision to publish it despite the lack of editing:

> After having completed the pencil writing of the manuscript of the book entitled "THE ONE MIGHTY AND STRONG," in the spring of 1922 A.D. which was just off-handedly done and the same rolled up and placed away until I should feel like publishing it; and then in a short time afterwards, while thinking whether or not it was time to publish it, the Lord Jesus Christ came to me and said, speaking in a firm and positive manner, "PUBLISH IT; YOU SHOULD HAVE GONE ON AND PUBLISHED IT: PUBLISH IT: THERE IS NO REDEMPTION FOR THE LAMANITES: THERE IS NO RESTORATION OF THE FULLNESS OF THE GOSPEL: THIS MUST BE PUBLISHED FIRST."[31]

Clark's Other Prophecies and Teachings

In addition to the topics Clark treated in his book, he issued other prophecies and teachings that were never published. According to Joseph White Musser, a theme Clark often returned to involved "hidden records and other valuables in a mound near Alpine, Utah County, land owned by his father." He claimed that "it has been made known to him that he is to bring the records forth." Allegedly, "Pres. Wilford Woodruff blessed the spot where the records are and Pres. Young told of their being there.

Several men, it is stated, have lost their lives by interfering with the premises, and many others have become disabled temporarily."[32]

On several occasions, Clark led dozens of followers, including Harry Shewell (born 1903), Nathaniel Baldwin (born 1878), Lorin Woolley (born 1856), and Joseph Musser (born 1872), to Alpine, Utah, to this hiding place. Musser recorded on June 10, 1928: "Took John T. Clark . . . to Alpine to visit the place where the 'records' are supposed to be hid. John T. explained again that Pres. Woodruff had set the place apart. That almost untold wealth had been hid there by the early Mexican Indians and that the time was about right for the bringing of them forth."[33] In 1930, follower Harry Shewell recorded: "Brother Clark said that the Sealed Records were buried near the mouth of American Fork Canyon, and that there was a vast treasure buried with them. A lot of this treasure was in gold bars with the stamp of Spain of the year 1519 upon it."[34] Early in 1931, Clark also told his followers "that with the Records were the following: The Sword of Laban, the sixteen stones of the Brother of Jared, the Urim and Thumim [sic], a large pot of the most costly jewels and immense quantities of gold."[35]

In 1922 before he published his book, Clark had predicted that "a President of the Church will die suddenly as a result of swimming, and the one mighty and strong will be raised up in his stead to see the Church in order and lead the people back to Jackson County."[36] On May 6, 1930, he prophesied: "Heber J. Grant and Charles W. Nibley will be removed from their places by death and Pres. Ivins will remain to help carry on the work. Pres. Grant will make the announcement that [John T.] Clark is to succeed him as leader and is the one Mighty and Strong to lead the church out of bondage spoken of in 85th Sec. D&C and that the records are about to come forth through him."[37]

Later that month Joseph Musser wrote in his journal:

> [John T. Clark] saw one like unto the Kaiser of Germany, facing the north and proclaiming his power in the U.S. As they fought, he saw great chasms open up in the earth and whole regiments swallowed up. He saw the country swept clean to the base of the Rocky Mountains. 1,700,000 Lamanites were killed. Then the Japs [sic] (who are of the House of Israel) came in U.S. by way of Mexico and assisted the Lamanites until peace was declared and only the Righteous only were left in Zion. After this, work commenced in the building of Zion in Jackson County by the Lamanites, assisted by the Gentile Saints.[38]

Although Germany and Japan were both involved (along with several

other countries) in World War II, none of the details match this picture created by Clark.

John T. Clark also testified that he had "seen the Savior several times also Joseph Smith and his successors in office"[39] and that he [Clark] was "the most literal descendent of Jesus Christ on the earth today, and he also carries indial [sic] blood in his veins."[40] His mission was "to lead the people back to Jackson County and assist the Lamanites in building the Temple."[41]

Further indication of Clark's influence can be traced in the diaries of Musser and Shewell. During the summer and fall of 1930, Musser asked Clark to administer to his wife, Mary, who was ill with cancer.[42] In February 1931, Shewell "met at the Diamond Oil Co. Office with J. W. Musser, John T. Clark, and my father, Hal and had a word of prayer in behalf of the Oil Company."[43] They met again in March "in solemn prayer assembly."[44] Four months later, Musser wrote: "Last night I awoke—could not sleep. Arose and bowed to the Lord asking about . . . just who John T. Clark was, who is making so many claims. Today Brother [Peter] Westman came to office, introduced himself and without any preliminary proceeded to testify that John T. Clark, is one 'Mighty and Strong' spoken of. . . . He was very definite and had a marvelous spirit. Perhaps it was the Lord's answer to my prayer."[45]

Musser's confusion regarding John T. Clark's identity is surprising since Lorin C. Woolley had told Musser more than two years earlier that Clark was "in error in supposing he is the 'one Mighty and Strong, like unto Moses.'"[46] Also, a little later in 1929 Musser was reportedly "ordained a High Priest Apostle[47] and a Patriarch to all the world by a High Priest Apostle [Lorin C. Woolley]."[48] Nonetheless, for two years after this "ordination" and counsel, Musser continued to be attentive to Clark's teachings.[49] In any event, Musser evidently remained in contact with Clark's protégé Westman, for eight days after Westman had testified to Clark's identity as the one mighty and strong, Musser invited him and Clark to return to the office. There "Bro. Westman gave John T. Clark a blessing . . . pronouncing him the one 'Mighty-Strong.'" Immediately thereafter, Clark gave Musser a blessing that "greatly strengthened" him, although he records no details of its contents.[50] The three again met in November 1931 where they "supplicated the Lord in behalf of our company." Musser added, "A splendid spirit prevailed, and we felt the Lord had heard our prayers."[51]

Over the next few months, however, Musser realigned his allegiance away from Clark and toward Lorin Woolley, who was privately promoting a priesthood office that he claimed was greater in authority than the calling of the "one mighty and strong." Woolley's teachings would be published in 1933–34 by Musser and J. Leslie Broadbent, detailing the existence of a previously unknown super-powerful priesthood council called the Council of Friends.[52]

It appears that a competitive spirit existed among some of the followers of Woolley and Clark. One evening in May of 1932, a gathering of Woolley supporters apparently interfered with a prayer meeting scheduled by the followers of John T. Clark. Harry Shewell lamented: "It is exactly five months today since we started to meet, daily, at the Diamond Oil Company's offices to supplicate the Lord in behalf of the Oil Company and also the redemption of Zion. However, we couldn't hold our meeting tonight as the office was being polluted by the 'Old and Young Patriarchs' and their flock, or apostles, or something. Anyway, the Woolley crowd were deciding the destinies of mankind and we didn't care to interfere in the counsels of the 'High and Mighty.'"[53]

LDS Church leaders were obviously exasperated by Clark's claims, and Harry Shewell recorded that his own bishop "had definite instructions from Pres. Grant, through the Stake Presidency, to oppose Bro. Clark."[54] Individuals who sympathized with Clark were disciplined.[55] In 1931, Shewell recorded hearing an address in Shewell's home ward by J. Golden Kimball, one of the seven presidents in the First Council of Seventy. Kimball "spoke of meeting a certain man on the street the other day (this man was Bro. John T. Clark) who told him that he had seen the Savior and had shaken hands with Him and asked Him many questions etc. Bro. Kimball said that they always used to call a fellow 'nutty' who made such claims as that, and that is what he thought this fellow was, 'a nut.' He also added, concerning the man's having seen the Savior, that such things just don't occur."[56]

Clark's Death

Clark's influence did not last much longer, for he died in Provo on September 16, 1932, at age sixty-seven. Musser recorded in his journal: "He was under medical attention. He had claimed to be the one 'Mighty and Strong,' the one like unto Moses and the Indian Prophet and had created quite a stir. He was clean and apparently sincere and honest. But it

appears he was misled by the spirit he followed. There are among his followers now [those] who claim he will come back to do his work of setting the Church in order."[57]

Harry Shewell, a staunch follower, was "almost stunned" by Clark's death, because he had strong faith in Clark's mission and could not conceive of his death before it was completed. He recorded in his journal a remarkable dream that another follower, Ferd (sic) Olsen, had had the previous year. In that dream, John T. Clark died and "was brought back to life and fulfilled his great mission."[58] Believing that perhaps the dream was prophetic, Shewell, Olsen, and a third believer, Clyde Neilson, drove to Provo to visit the mortuary where Clark was being embalmed. Shewell recorded:

> Upon entering the room we saw his body lying upon a table, it was all covered but his head, and on the floor were two buckets full of blood and water etc. which had just been taken from his body, in fact the tubes were still connected to him. It was an extremely gruesome sight to thus behold the mortal remains of a prophet of Almighty God. We all stood around the table for a few minutes, and when I thought that the awful reality of Bro. John's passing had sufficiently reached the heart and soul of each one of us, I said, "Do you brethren still feel the same way about it? Shall we proceed with the administration?" They all answered that they were ready to. . . . In sealing the anointing I was mouth, and, among a few other words, I felt impressed to speak thus, "That the scriptures might be fulfilled, and that the many testimonies given us of Almighty God might also be fulfilled, by virtue and authority . . . we command you to come back to this life and finish your great mission, which is not completed."[59]

They waited for a few minutes, but nothing happened. Shewell then explained: "I told them that as I spoke, I felt that he would come back but not at that moment, but in God's own time, which would be soon."[60]

At the funeral two days later, Harry's brother Harold "bore his testimony to the fact that Bro. John T. Clark was a prophet of the Living God." Another follower affirmed that "Bro. Clark's mission on this earth was not finished and that we would yet hear more from him."[61] The more pragmatic Olsen told Shewell about six weeks later: "Now that John was dead and things hadn't happened etc. that he couldn't see what else there was to do about it except forget it."[62] But even three years later, Shewell wrote a tract, *Who Is John T. Clark?*, outlining his reasons for believing that Clark would still come back to fulfill his mission.[63]

Clark's claims, his unfulfilled prophecies, and his significance have

faded. Still, he was emblematic of other would-be leaders who would discover a new identity in that 1832 scripture. Ignoring the circumstances which prompted Joseph Smith to write the original verses, they would isolate a passage into which they could read themselves, gather followers, foster hopes of fabulous wealth, and bask in a feeling of specialness. While the true identity of the "one mighty and strong" remains a mystery even today, expectations of his reality and his future responsibilities have beckoned eccentrics, puzzled historians, and buoyed up Mormon fundamentalists for decades. Doubtless this pattern will continue.

Notes

1. In addition to Clark, I include Nathaniel Baldwin (1878–1961), Lorin C. Woolley (1856–1934), and Joseph White Musser (1872–1954) among these influential earlier figures. Baldwin, after initially making a heavy personal and financial commitment, withdrew completely after about 1925, while Woolley and Musser went on to provide significant doctrinal and organizational developments for the nascent movement.

2. My research has uncovered the apparent existence of a publication entitled: *Letters and Sermons of John T. Clark: Regarding the Records of the Book of Mormon, the Root of Jesse,* which I have yet to locate. Clearly, there is room for additional research into the life of this fascinating man.

3. "John T. Clark," obituary clipping, n.d., from unidentified newspaper; photocopy of clipping in my possession.

4. Nathaniel Baldwin, Journal, May 18, 1905, Archives, Family and Church History Department, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter LDS Church Archives).

5. Gilbert Fulton, *The Most Holy Principle,* 4 vols. (Salt Lake City: Gems Publishing, 1970–75), 4:43, 244, 245, 256; Rulon C. Allred, *Treasures of Knowledge: Selected Discourses and Excerpts from Talks,* 2 vols. (Hamilton, Mont.: Bitterroot Publishing, 1981), 1:107, 154; 2:21, 39; Arnold Boss, "Spiritual Bondage," *Truth* 1 (October 1935): 58; Joseph S. Musser, "Mass Excommunications" (editorial), *Truth* 1 (March 1936): 135; "Priesthood Matters" (editorial), *Truth* 2 (October 1936): 73; "Slanderous Statements Refuted" (editorial), *Truth* 2 (January 1937): 120; "Men Not the Truth Change" (editorial), *Truth* 3 (July 1937): 26; "Comments on Conference Topics" (editorial), *Truth* 3 (May 1938): 203; "Economic Law of Heaven" (editorial), *Truth* 4 (November 1938): 105; "Let Principle Rule" (editorial), *Truth* 4 (April 1939): 210; "Magna Carta" (editorial), *Truth* 6 (October 1940): 105; Lorin C. Woolley quoted in "President John Taylor" (editorial), *Truth* 6 (November 1940): 136; *The Sermons of Joseph W. Musser, 1940–42,* edited by Nate Allred (Salt Lake City: Messenger Publications, 2005), 52, 90, 144,

176, 179; *A Selection of the Sermons of John Y. Barlow, 1940–49*, on *Fullness eBook Collection*, CD-ROM (N.p.: 2005), February 6, 1944, available at ebooks@thoughtfactory.biz. Leroy S. Johnson, *The L. S. Johnson Sermons*, 7 vols. (Hildale, Utah: Twin Cities Courier, 1983–84), contains 131 references to the "one mighty and strong": twenty-four occurrences in Vol. 1, nineteen in Vol. 2, eighteen in Vol. 3, twenty-six in Vol. 4, nine in Vol. 5, twenty-one in Vol. 6, and fourteen in Vol. 7. In contrast, a computerized search of the *Ensign* 1970–2000, published by the LDS Church, showed only one reference. Elder Mark E. Petersen, speaking in general conference on April 8, 1973, warned his listeners to avoid individuals who claimed to be the "one mighty and strong."

6. *Sermons of Joseph W. Musser*, 128–29; Joseph White Musser, Journal, November 28, 1920–March 6, 1944, restricted, LDS Church Archives, photocopy in my possession, entry of August 12, 1938; *The L. S. Johnson Sermons*, 1:233; Ogden Kraut, *The One Mighty and Strong* (Salt Lake City: Pioneer Press, 1991 paperback edition), 15.

7. See D&C 45:18; 88:119, 129, 130, 136; 109:8; 138:58. It might be argued that some of these verses refer to non-temple meeting houses, but in every case they refer to physical buildings in which religious meetings occur.

8. Lorin Woolley reportedly taught that even fundamentalist priesthood councils would be out of order prior to the coming of the "one mighty and strong" because "the 'one mighty and strong' would not come to set the Lord's house in order until all quorums of priesthood were out of order from the highest to the last quorum of deacons." Quoted in Barbara Owen Kelsch, *Louis Alma Kelsch* (N.p., n.d.), 83–84. See also Lynn L. Bishop and Steven L. Bishop, *The Keys of the Priesthood Illustrated* (Draper, Utah: Review and Preview Publishers, 1971), 286–88.

9. Kraut, *The One Mighty and Strong*, 136.

10. Melissa Merrill (pseud.), *Polygamist's Wife* (Salt Lake City: Olympus Publishing, 1975), 150, a plural wife, wrote of her hopes regarding the changes to be effected by the "one mighty and strong": "Ultimately, we believed, plural marriage along with the United Order would be returned for all Latter-day Saints and we would receive the recognition and blessings we had earned. To be baptized, achieve the Mormon priesthood and be married in the temple is something for which we yearned for our children."

11. According to Joseph Musser, Journal, June 14, 1922: "Had a long talk with John T. Clark. Told me of conversation had with Loren [sic] C. Woolley a few days ago. Brother Woolley told him that at the time Pres. John Taylor received his revelation in 1886, at his father's home, and while surrounded with a halo of light, among other things, Pres. Taylor said in substance: At the time of the 7th President in the Church [Heber J. Grant], the Church will be in spiritual and fi-

nancial bondage, and then the Lord will raise up a deliverer as spoken of in the 85th Sec. of the Doctrine and Covenants."

12. Ogden Kraut, *One Mighty and Strong,* 15, took the position that Joseph Smith was the "one mighty and strong," arguing: "Since Zion was not redeemed during the Prophet's mortal lifetime, isn't it likely that the Lord would allow him to return at a future time to set things in order and to bring about the redemption of Zion?"

13. Musser, Journal, March 8, 1933: "It is strange that after being called to embrace the Patriarchal order of Marriage, I should be persecuted by my brethren for upholding the practice of it; that I should be cut off the Church, as they suppose they have done and ostracized. They little know that under the ordination I have received—that of Apostle and Patriarch in the Kingdom of God—that I am the Church, insomuch as I remain faithful (See D&C 84. Sec.) [sic]. The Church as an organization has gone astray and soon the hand of the Lord will be upon it, to bring back to order as written in the 85th Sec. D&C. Until this is done the Church cannot progress. It has surrendered the great principle that made for progress and without which it must die. The world is in turmoil as is the Church. No leaders who are inspired." See also Johnson, *Leroy S. Johnson Sermons,* 4:1377. These positions are consistent with those expressed in my personal conversations and correspondence with several Mormon fundamentalists.

14. Arnold Boss, "Spiritual Bondage," *Truth* 1 (October 1935): 58, wrote: "In the time of the 7th President of this church, the church would go into bondage both temporally and spiritually and in that day (the day of bondage) the one Mighty and Strong spoken of in the 85th section of the Doctrine and Covenants would come. . . . Since the official action taken which repudiated Plural or celestial marriage (at the general conference of October, 1890), there has been no revelation given through the heads of the church."

15. Fundamentalists believe that many of the priesthood ordinations that occurred in the early twentieth century were performed incorrectly and, hence, the ordainee did not actually receive priesthood authority. Musser complained in "Priesthood Ordinations," *Truth* 14 (June 1948): 12: "Our missionaries in the field; those acting as priests Elders and High Priests at home, operating without the Priesthood produce a serious and tragic problem, that, as we see it, only the 'one Mighty and Strong', (D&C Sec. 85) can unravel and bring order out of the chaotic condition the Church finds itself in." See also "Priesthood Ordinations," *Truth* 12 (July 1946): 39–44; *Messenger of the Fullness of the Gospel, Selections,* 2d ed., Vol. 1: 1994–2004 (N.p.: Messenger Publications, n.d.), 48–59.

16. Ogden Kraut, *The United Order* (Salt Lake City: Pioneer Press, 1983), 252–71.

17. Kraut, *The One Mighty and Strong,* does not mention the role of the "one

mighty and strong" in constructing the future temple in Jackson County. Joseph Musser, "Who Is the 'One Mighty and Strong'?" *Truth* 16 (October 1950): 130–34, acknowledges: "The second assignment could hardly be undertaken until the first is completed. Naturally the 'house of God' will have to be in order before the Saints can receive their inheritances." But apparently in Musser's view, the "house of God" mentioned in Doctrine and Covenants 85:7 has nothing to do with the temple to be built in Jackson County.

18. A review of an 1833 drawing of the plat of the City of Zion reveals that the "house of God" or temple, composed of twenty-four buildings, will occupy two full city blocks in the very center of the downtown area. This drawing shows additional blocks then stretching out in all four directions, each subdivided into private building "lots" or "inheritances." What is also obvious from the layout is that these surrounding blocks utilize the central temple plats as their point of reference. All property lines throughout the city parallel the sides of the temple site blocks. In other words, it appears that before any specific lots could be surveyed and assigned, the central temple plats would need to be accurately identified and precisely mapped out ("set in order," perhaps) or the property lines of all surrounding blocks, "lots," and "inheritances" might be skewed and geographically imprecise. See Richard O. Cowan, "The Great Temple of the New Jerusalem," in *Regional Studies in Latter-day Saint Church History: Missouri,* edited by Arnold K. Garr and Clark V. Johnson (Provo, Utah: BYU Department of Church History and Doctrine, 1994), 139–44; Joseph Smith Jr. et al., *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,* edited by B. H. Roberts, 2d ed. rev. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 6 vols. published 1902–12, Vol. 7 published 1932), 1:357–62.

19. Kraut, *The One Mighty and Strong,* 83–100, lists James Strang, James Brighouse, Samuel Eastman, Paul Feil, LeRoy Wilson, John Tanner Clark, Benjamin LeBaron, Joel LeBaron, John Bryant, Elden Hollis, Sherman Russell Lloyd, Frank Miller, Jasper N. 7 [sic], Art Bulla, and Alfonzo Langford. See also Kraut, *One Mighty and Strong* (pamphlet) (Salt Lake City: Pioneer Press, August 1991), 9–11. The pamphlet is the published version of paper presented at the Sunstone Symposium, Salt Lake City, August 1991, which was expanded in his 137-page paperback with the same title printed later that same year.

20. Joseph E. Robinson, *Conference Report,* October 1918, 119–20. I have not been able to determine the identity of this individual.

21. Lyle O. Wright, "Origins and Development of the Church of the Firstborn of the Fulness of Times" (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1963), 35; Joseph Musser, Journal, June 10, 1928. It was not uncommon before about World War II for Church members to receive multiple patriarchal blessings. John T. Clark received several from different men.

22. First Presidency statement, *Deseret News*, November 13, 1905, reproduced in James R. Clark, ed., *Messages of the First Presidency*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965–71), 4:107–20. The quotation is from p. 117.

23. Ibid., 4:118–19. This future perspective is also preserved in the headnote to Section 85, 1981 LDS edition of the Doctrine and Covenants: "One mighty and strong *shall* give the saints their inheritance in Zion" (emphasis mine). This wording constitutes an official position on a definite future role for such a being.

24. Joseph White Musser, Journal, May 20, 22, 24, 1922; July 21, 29, 31; and August 4, 1922. Musser found Clark "humble and clear" and was "deeply impressed with [Clark's] claims" (May 24, 1922). Musser remained closely involved with Clark for much of the decade, and Clark's teachings undoubtedly influenced Musser's own doctrinal beliefs and scriptural interpretations. Musser himself can confidently be called the father of contemporary Mormon fundamentalism, both in establishing its organizational structure and in defining its primary doctrines. See Martha Sonntag Bradley, "Joseph W. Musser: Dissenter or Fearless Crusader for Truth?" in *Differing Visions: Dissenters in Mormon History*, edited by Roger D. Launius and Linda Thatcher (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1994), 262–78, and Brian C. Hales, "'I Have Been Fanatically Religious': Joseph White Musser, Father of the LDS Fundamentalist Movement," paper delivered at the Mormon History Association annual meeting, May 1992, St. George, Utah.

25. Paul Feil was initially a follower of Samuel Eastman. Eastman claimed in 1904 to be the "one mighty and strong" and was excommunicated in 1907. Following Eastman's death, Feil asserted that he was the "one mighty and strong" in a 1943 pamphlet, *Zion Standard Watchman*. At general conferences in the 1940s, he could be seen distributing his printed revelations. Wright, "Origins and Development," 34, 38.

26. Merrill Singer, "Nathaniel Baldwin: Utah Inventor and Patron of the Fundamentalist Movement," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 47, no. 1 (Winter 1979): 51. Singer also includes the name of former Apostle John W. Taylor as a director; however, Taylor died in 1916, several years before Baldwin's companies were formed.

27. John T. Clark, *The One Mighty & Strong* (N.p., 1922), 20–21. This book was republished in the 1990s by Willard E. Palmer, 835 Garfield Ave., Salt Lake City 84105. Apparently Clark was unaware of Oliver Cowdery's 1834 explanation to John Whitmer that the threat of being "smitten" was conditional: "Brother Joseph says, that the item in his letter that says, that the man that is called etc. and puts forth his hand to steady the ark of God, does not mean that any had at the time, but it was given for a caution to those in high standing to beware, lest they should fall by the vivid shaft of death as the Lord has said."

Cowdery, Letter to John Whitmer, quoted in Lyndon W. Cook, *The Revelations of the Prophet Joseph Smith: A Historical and Biographical Commentary of the Doctrine and Covenants* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985), 179.

28. Clark, *The One Mighty & Strong,* 56, 150.

29. Wright, "Origins and Development of the Church of the Firstborn," 35.

30. Preface insert placed in copies of the 1922 printing that were distributed after 1930; emphasis Clark's. See also Wright, "Origins and Development of the Church of the Firstborn," 35–36.

31. Preface insert. See also Wright, "Origins and Development of the Church of the Firstborn," 35–36.

32. Musser, Journal, May 16, 1922.

33. Ibid., June 10, 1928.

34. Harry Shewell, Journal, December 12, 1930, photocopy of typescript in my possession. According to Edward Leo Lyman and Linda King Newell, *A History of Millard County* (Salt Lake City: Utah Historical Society/Millard County Commission, 1999), 53–54: "From the beginning of the Mormon colonization of Utah Territory, rumors abounded of buried Spanish treasure and mines rich with gold and silver, and seekers after the hidden wealth were numerous. At the root of the rumors was a reported visit of an Indian to Brigham Young when the latter was in Fillmore in 1852. The Indian told Young of a silver mine in western Millard County that he believed had been worked by the Spaniards. Upon his return to Salt Lake City Brigham called and commissioned John Brown and several others to investigate the tale and 'take possession' of the mine and any others found." No silver mine was ever found.

35. Shewell, Journal, January 15, 1931.

36. Musser, Journal, May 24, 1922. No Church president has died while swimming.

37. Ibid., May 6, 1930. Heber J. Grant died of old age on May 14, 1945, followed by Charles W. Nibley, who passed away on December 11, 1931, at age eighty-two. George Albert Smith, president of the Quorum of the Twelve, succeeded Grant, not Clark.

38. Ibid., May 25, 1930.

39. Ibid., May 24, 1922.

40. Ibid., May 16, 1922. See Ogden Kraut, *Jesus Was Married* (Genola, Utah: Pioneer Publishing, 1969), 79–99, for a discussion of this concept.

41. Musser, Journal, May 16, 1922.

42. Ibid., August 4 and September 30, 1930.

43. Shewell, Journal, February 5, 1931. Diamond Oil was one of the companies that employed Joseph Musser.

44. Musser, Journal, March 15, 1931; Shewell, Journal, March 14, 1931.

45. Musser, Journal, July 15, 1931; spelling standardized.

46. Musser, Journal, March 31, 1929.

47. According to fundamentalist doctrine, the highest priesthood office is that of a High Priest Apostle. Musser wrote: "There is an apostolic order designated as the 'Apostleship of the Twelve,' which must be subordinate to the 'High Priest' Apostles." Joseph W. Musser, *A Priesthood Issue* (N.p., 1948), 10. To date, a review of LDS scripture and all known historical sources has failed to identify even one reference to this described lofty calling. Wilford Woodruff used the term in a discourse on December 21, 1856: "Let the *Twelve Apostles*, and the *Seventy Apostles*, and *High Priest Apostles*, and *all other Apostles* rise up and keep pace with the work of the Lord God, for we have no time to sleep. . . . I want to see brother [Orson] Hyde, who is President of the Twelve, walk into all these Quorums and attend their meetings, and we will back him up. . . . It is for the Twelve to rise up and carry off the load." *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (London and Liverpool: LDS Booksellers Depot, 1855–86), 4:147; emphasis mine. While this is a genuine reference to "High Priest Apostles," Woodruff's "High Priest Apostles" are subordinate to the Twelve Apostles. It appears that Woodruff was speaking of high priests and seventies and "all other" individuals who were "apostles" by virtue of their having received a special witness of Christ's reality and divinity, rather than of men who had been formally ordained to different levels of apostolic authority in the Melchizedek Priesthood. Only one office of apostle has ever been described by priesthood leaders. Brigham Young, April 6, 1853, *Journal of Discourses*, 1:134, explained: "The keys of the eternal Priesthood, which is after the order of the Son of God, are comprehended by being an Apostle. All the Priesthood, all the keys, all the gifts, all the endowments, and everything preparatory to entering into the presence of the Father and of the Son, are in, composed of, circumscribed by, or I might say incorporated within the circumference of, the Apostleship."

48. *Journal of Joseph White Musser* (N.p., 1948), 11. This published work is an autobiography and should not be confused with the holograph journals also cited in this article.

49. See Musser, Journal, August 25, December 29, 1929; February 23, March 31, May 6, 15, 16, 25, July 27, August 4, 6, 7, 8, 11, September 30, October 23, December 10, 1930; January 14, March 14, 15, July 15, 17, 23, August 12, November 23, 1931; May 7, September 6, 18, 1932.

50. Musser, Journal, July 23, 1931.

51. Ibid., November 23, 1931.

52. Joseph White Musser, *New and Everlasting Covenant of Marriage* (N.p., 1933), 75–82; Joseph White Musser and J. Leslie Broadbent, *Supplement to a New and Everlasting Covenant of Marriage* (N.p., 1934), 91–128; Joseph White Musser and J. Leslie Broadbent, *Priesthood Items* (N.p., 1934), 13–54.

53. Shewell, Journal, May 19, 1932.

54. Ibid., June 29, 1931.

55. Ibid., June 28, September 3, 1931; January 4, February 11, March 9, 1932.

56. Ibid., August 2, 1931. LDS theology holds that while prophets and other righteous men and women can see God (see, e.g., D&C 67:10, 76:23, 88:68, 93:1, 110:2, 101:38), Clark's claims of informal familiarity with the Savior undoubtedly troubled Elder Kimball. After seeing the Lord, Isaiah and Moses were overcome (Isa. 6:5; Moses 1:9–10), which seems to be the more common response to such a rare and transcendent experience.

57. Musser, Journal, September 16, 1932. For the Indian prophet, see 2 Nephi 3:23–24.

58. Shewell, Journal, September 16, 1932.

59. Ibid.

60. Ibid.

61. Ibid., September 18, 1932.

62. Ibid., November 7, 1932.

63. Harry Shewell, *Who Is John T. Clark?* (N.p., 1935). See also W. A. Hudson, *Believe It or Not . . .* (Salt Lake City: n.pub., 1953).