

Bring 'Em Young

R. A. Christmas

for the late Leonard J. Arrington

According to one historian, Brigham Young had “a talent for mimicry”—a talent the Lord used to convince the Saints that Brigham was Joseph Smith’s successor, but that Brigham later used to poke fun at his fellow apostle John Taylor’s elegant voice, dress, and mannerisms. (Taylor loyally disliked him for that.)

“Brother Brigham” had a habit of keeping his back turned on folks who came to his office—which was rude and intimidating. He also reveled in telling church members brave enough to disagree with him that they might as well “apostasize and go to hell.” (It was either hell or California.)

President Young married several of Joseph Smith’s widows—you know, “to protect and care for them.” But over the years he tended to neglect them. Some had to petition him endlessly for maintenance and simple necessities, while he traipsed through the territory (with a favored wife in his carriage).

Note: If you happen to be leading some difficult people across a figurative

wilderness toward a “promised land,”
it’s likely that one day your faults and
flaws—your magnificent weaknesses—
will be “outed” from the page-tops,
perhaps by some pipsqueak poet
(in his private hell, or California).