DIALOGUE

a journal of mormon thought

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Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought is published quarterly by the Dialogue Foundation. *Dialogue* has no official connection with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Contents copyrighted by the Dialogue Foundation. ISSN 0012-2157. *Dialogue* is available in full text in electronic form at www.dialoguejournal.com and is archived by the University of Utah Marriott Library Special Collections, available online at www.lib.utah.edu/portal/site/marriottlibrary. *Dialogue* is also available on microforms through University Microfilms International, www.umi.com.

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Editor's Note: This issue features a focus on new voices contributing both articles and essays. We welcome William Davis, Benjamin Keogh, Craig Mangum, and Brooke Larson.

REASSESSING JOSEPH SMITH JR.'S FORMAL EDUCATION

William Davis

How much formal schooling did Joseph Smith obtain in his youth and early adulthood? Such a question might appear innocuous, but it is fraught with implications that extend beyond a simple historical account of his educational opportunities. The amount of Smith's formal education, or rather the various assumptions surrounding his presumed lack of it, has been enlisted by followers and detractors alike in order to frame Smith's life within the narratives of divinely-inspired prophet or deceptive fraud, perhaps most acutely in the context of attacking or defending the origin and authenticity of the Book of Mormon.[1] As

This essay has greatly benefited from assistance from the following people: Edward J. Varno and Betty McMahon of the Ontario County Historical Society, David Rodes, Sam Watters, Rick Grunder, H. Michael Marquardt, Connell O'Donovan, Brent Metcalfe, Dale R. Broadhurst, Michael Austin, and the anonymous reviewers for *Dialogue*. I am also particularly indebted to Dan Vogel's *Early Mormon Documents* and Richard L. Bushman's *Rough Stone Rolling*. Any errors are entirely my own.

1. Orsamus Turner's skeptical statement (1851) connects Smith's purported lack of education with one of several authorship theories: "there is no foundation for the statement that their [the Smith family's] original manuscript was written by a Mr. Spaulding, of Ohio . . . but the book itself is without doubt, a production of the Smith family, aided by Oliver Cowdery" (Dan Vogel, *Early Mormon Documents: Volume 3* [Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1998], 50–51). (Subsequent citations will use the abbreviation "EMD," followed by volume and page numbers.) By portraying Smith as being "a dull scholar," "lazy, indolent," "illiterate," and "possessed of less than ordinary intellect," skeptics could attribute the existence of the Book of Mormon to some alternative method or source. For "a dull scholar," see Christopher Stafford's statement, and for "lazy,

Dennis Wright and Geoffrey Wright observe, "Ironically, both perspectives use the Prophet's lack of formal education to strengthen their respective views."[2] Any attempt to isolate the amount of time Joseph may have actually spent in classrooms thus presents a challenge with deeper implications.

Furthermore, with the passage of time and the development of traditions, such representations become further entangled in cultural identities, transforming historical speculations into theological propositions that approach canonical certainties, interweaving Smith's humble origins with the cosmologies of either faith or disbelief. These depictions, when further coupled with fragmentary historical records, complicate the process of excavating below the weighted representations in order to determine with any precision what might have actually occurred. Given such circumstances, this essay attempts to step back from the entangled layers of critical and apologetic modes to reexamine the historical sources and the assumptions underlying competing claims. By retracing the locations and educational practices of the places where Smith lived in his youth and early adulthood, this review will seek to demonstrate that Smith's formal education was more extensive than passing speculations and shared cultural memory might suggest.

Before embarking on an analysis of Joseph's life in relation to his formal educational opportunities (i.e., time spent in a formal school setting, as opposed to the various and common avenues of informal educational practices in early nineteenth-century America), I want to

indolent," see the Manchester Residents Group Statement, EMD 2:194, 18. For "illiterate," see Pomeroy Tucker's account, and for "possessed of less than ordinary intellect," see Orsamus Turner's account, EMD 3:93, 49.

2. Dennis A. Wright and Geoffrey A. Wright, "The New England Common School Experience of Joseph Smith Jr., 1810–16," in *Regional Studies in Latter-day Saint Church History: The New England States*, edited by Donald Q. Cannon and Arnold K. Garr, Regional Studies Series (Provo: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2004), 237.

begin by exploring two important issues that will help to contextualize the interpretation of the incomplete array of historical references that address Joseph's formal education: first, the role of education in the Smith family home, and second, an analysis of some of the more commonly known statements regarding Joseph's limited education and abilities.

Smith Family Culture and the Role of Education

A review of Joseph Smith Jr.'s common school education necessarily begins with the importance of education within the Smith family home. Though this essay focuses on Joseph's formal schooling, as opposed to domestic education and self-improvement, the role of family culture nevertheless constitutes the foundation of early nineteenth-century educational practices. For instance, that his father, Joseph Sr., had been a professional schoolteacher was certainly one of Joseph Jr.'s greatest advantages.[3] So, too, was having a mother, Lucy, who had been raised in a household where her own mother, Lydia Mack, was also a schoolteacher.[4] Indeed, Lydia may well have influenced Joseph Jr. directly. Lydia and Solomon Mack lived in Tunbridge, Vermont, where they were in constant close reach of their grandchildren, from the time of Joseph Jr.'s birth in 1805 to the Smith family's move to Lebanon, New Hampshire, in either 1811 or 1812.[5]

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3. According to Lucy, Joseph Sr. was already teaching school in Sharon, Vermont, when Joseph Jr. was born. See EMD 1:253. Richard L. Bushman, *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005), 19.

4. A. Gary Anderson indicates that Lydia was "a young schoolteacher and a member of the Congregational church. She was well educated and from a well-to-do religious family. . . . Lydia took charge of both the secular and religious education of their eight children" (A. Gary Anderson, "Smith Family Ancestors," in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, edited by Daniel H. Ludlow [New York: Macmillan, 1992], 1361).

5. Lydia and Solomon moved to Tunbridge, Vermont, in 1799. See Donna Hill, *Joseph Smith: The First Mormon* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977), 29.

Education was deemed no less important on Joseph's paternal side of the family. In April of 1799, Asael Smith, Joseph Jr.'s grandfather, who also lived in Tunbridge, Vermont, wrote a message to his entire family, admonishing them all to live good lives. In his treatise, Asael urged his family to educate their children: "Make it your chiefest work to bring them up in the ways of virtue, that they may be useful in their generations. Give them, if possible, a good education."[6] Asael's message came two months after the birth of Alvin Smith, Joseph Jr.'s oldest brother, and may have been inspired by the new generation of grandchildren. Moreover, apart from parents and grandparents, older siblings got involved in the education of younger brothers and sisters.[7] After his training at the prestigious Moor's Charity School, Hyrum, Joseph's second oldest brother, would have been expected to share in the education of his younger siblings. Indeed, Hyrum's commitment

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Although the Smith family moved several times from the year of Joseph Jr.'s birth in 1805 to either 1811 or 1812, "all the moves were in a tiny circle around Tunbridge, Royalton, and Sharon, immediately adjoining towns, and probably never involved a distance of more than five or six miles" (Bushman, *Rough Stone,* 19). Thus, the Smith children's education in this period would have occurred under the watchful eye of Lydia. For a crucial and detailed historical account of the Smith and Mack families living in this region, see Richard Lloyd Anderson, *Joseph Smith's New England Heritage* Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2003, 25–37.

6. Quoted in Hill, *Joseph Smith*, 23 (spelling and punctuation modernized).

7. For instance, Gordon and Gordon describe the childhood education of Almira Hart Lincoln, who grew up in a home where "the oldest children always tutored the youngest, turning the home into a school" (Edward E. Gordon and Elaine H. Gordon, *Literacy in America: Historic Journey and Contemporary Solutions* [Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2003], 83). Education simultaneously involved the inculcation of good moral character "through the processes of imitation and explanation, with adults and older siblings modeling attitudes and behavior and youngsters purposely or inadvertently absorbing them" (Lawrence A. Cremin, *American Education: The National Experience, 1783–1876* [New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1980], 373).

to education would result in his becoming both a school trustee and schoolteacher in Palmyra.[8]

This family concern for education thus created a dynamic where the parents and the older children were actively involved in the entire family's instruction. Lucy would recall how she and her husband acted "together in the education and instruction of our children,"[9] and John Stafford (1805–1904), a neighbor to the Smiths in Manchester, New York, remembered how the Smiths "had school in their house, and studied the Bible."[10] Ever since the colonial period, the task of teaching children how to read and write typically began at home, and the responsibility belonged chiefly to the mother.[11] And even though Joseph Sr. had been a schoolteacher, the cultural expectation of raising educated, moral, upright children would have primarily fallen to Lucy. As education historian Lawrence Cremin observes, "the new literature on child-rearing involved the vastly expanded responsibilities of the mother," placing special emphasis on raising virtuous and principled citizens.[12] Thus,

8. Richard Behrens claims that following Joseph Jr.'s leg surgery in the winter of 1812–1813, Hyrum became "young Joseph's principal tutor since Joseph could not attend school" (Richard K. Behrens, "Dreams, Visions, and Visitations: The Genesis of Mormonism," *John Whitmer Historical Association* 27 [2007]: 177). In her Smith family history, Lucy mentions how Hyrum "was one of the trustees" in a Palmyra school district (EMD 1:374). After getting married, Hyrum had moved back to the Smith's former residence in the log cabin on Stafford Road in Palmyra, see Bushman, *Rough Stone*, 47. Mrs. S. F. Anderick, a former resident of Palmyra, claimed "Hyrum was the only son sufficiently educated to teach school. I attended when he taught in the log school-house east of uncle's [the Smith's log cabin on Stafford Road]. He also taught in the Stafford District" (EMD 2:208).

9. EMD 1:282.

10. EMD 2:122.

11. Cremin, *American Education*, 128.

12. Cremin, *American Education*, 65. Gordon and Gordon add, "the mother's role as primary tutor was of supreme importance. Though the literature of the

having both a mother and a father actively involved in his education, young Joseph would have been exposed to greater instructional resources at home than most of his rural peers.

The Smith family's emphasis on the importance of education provides a vital contextual framework for historical inquiry. Though sickness, relocation, and financial exigencies would constrain educational opportunities, Lucy and Joseph Sr. nevertheless engaged in a lifelong effort to provide their children with a solid foundation of instruction. The interpretation of historical accounts, particularly when confronting the lacunae in documentation, should therefore be mindful of Lucy and Joseph Sr.'s efforts and concerns. Interpretations that assume Joseph did not attend school whenever the historical documentation is silent runs counter to Joseph Sr. and Lucy Mack's conscientiousness and stated efforts to provide their children with a good education. Thus, as a touchstone for the examination of educational practices, the cultural values within the Smith home offer guidance in the exploration of Joseph Jr.'s formal common school education, from youth to early adulthood, from Royalton, Vermont, to South Bainbridge, New York.

Representations

Furthermore, the survey of Joseph's educational experiences requires an examination of the claims, often inconsistent and contradictory, made about his level of literacy. The majority of such statements, whether favorable or unfavorable, constitute retrospectives deeply informed by his eventual prophetic and miraculous accomplishments. The contextualization of assertions therefore requires the recognition that historical depictions of Joseph's level of education rarely, if ever, present uncomplicated or unbiased accounts of Joseph's life, delivered for no other purpose than the enrichment of posterity. Addressing every

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period spoke of both parents acting as teachers, most books were written for women" (Gordon and Gordon, *Literacy in America*, 83).

claim about Joseph's education extends beyond the scope of this essay; nevertheless, in order to emphasize the need to interpret such statements in their cultural context, I will look at two of the most common representational claims that are invoked as evidence of Joseph's lack of education: Emma's assertion that Joseph could not dictate a simple letter, much less a text the size of the Book of Mormon; and Joseph's own statement that his education was limited to the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic.

In an 1879 interview, Emma Smith delivered her opinion on whether or not Joseph could have composed the Book of Mormon by famously declaring, "Joseph Smith . . . could neither write nor dictate a coherent and well-worded letter, let alone dictating a book like the Book of Mormon."[13] Emma's statement, some forty years after the event, is often, and unfortunately, interpreted as a literal and objective depiction of Joseph's writing and composition skills. Nonetheless, as his surviving letters, revelations, and journal entries well attest, Joseph could certainly write and dictate coherent letters and intricate texts.[14] In order to appreciate Emma's claim, we therefore need to reintroduce her comment to the cultural context in which it was given.

13. EMD 1:542. See also, Joseph Smith III, "Last Testimony of Sister Emma," *The Saints' Herald* 26 (Oct. 1879), 290.

14. For instance, observe Joseph's style in the opening section of an Oct. 22, 1829 letter to Oliver Cowdery: "Respected Sir, I would inform you that I arrived at home on Sunday morning, the 4th, after having a prosperous journey, and found all well. The people are all friendly to us, except a few who are in opposition to everything, unless it is something that is exactly like themselves. And two of our most formidable persecutors are now under censure and are cited to a trial in the church for crimes, which, if true, are worse than all the Gold Book business. We do not rejoice in the affliction of our enemies but we shall be glad to have truth prevail." (Spelling and punctuation modernized.) For an online review of Smith's written and dictated materials, see The Joseph Smith Papers, http://josephsmithpapers.org/. For the original letter, see "Letter to Oliver Cowdery, 22 October 1829," The Joseph Smith Papers http://josephsmithpapers.org/paperSummary/letter-to-oliver-cowdery-22-october-1829.

Emma's juxtaposition of Joseph's inability to write a "well-worded letter" with the production of a book of over five hundred printed pages reveals the assumptions she shared with her audience. Here, she is specifically invoking a parallel with introductory classroom exercises in nineteenth-century education: letter-writing was one of the earliest and most basic composition assignments children encountered at home and at school. By copying and composing short letters, children learned the style and format of basic correspondence, along with the skill of assembling cohesive paragraphs. For instance, one of the most popular letter-writing schoolbooks of the early nineteenth century was Caleb Bingham's *Juvenile Letters* (1803), which consists entirely of short, easy-to-read letters written by fictional children "from eight to fifteen years of age."[15] Thus, Emma's depiction of Joseph's writing ability presents two polar extremes: the expansive Book of Mormon text pitted against a simple "well-worded letter." In other words, in order to emphasize her opinion that Joseph could not have produced the Book of Mormon, Emma declared that Joseph could not compose at the level of a child receiving his first writing lessons in one of the most elementary forms of composition exercises. Emma's hyperbolic statement should be read with the same tone as, "he couldn't walk and chew gum at the same time," or more specifically, "he couldn't compose at the level of *Dick and Jane*, much less write a whole book." Yet, in spite of this dismissive characterization, Emma's facetious exaggeration need not be interpreted as an intentional misrepresentation. Her comment merely serves to highlight her emphatic belief that Joseph could not have created the work without divine assistance.[16] Thus, while Emma's comment provides insight into

15. See Caleb Bingham, *Juvenile Letters; Being a Correspondence between Children, from Eight to Fifteen Years of Age* (Boston: Caleb Bingham, 1803).

16. Later in the same interview, Emma states, "my belief is that the Book of Mormon is of divine authenticity—I have not the slightest doubt of it. I am satisfied that no man could have dictated the writing of the manuscripts unless he was inspired. . . . It would have been improbable that a learned man could do

her beliefs and sense of humor, a literal interpretation of her assertion obscures Joseph's actual compositional skills.

Joseph's self-representation of his educational opportunities appears in what Dan Vogel describes as "the earliest known attempt by Joseph Smith to record a history of his life."[17] Dictated in 1832, the statement reveals how the indigent circumstances of the Smith household "required the exertions of all that were able to render any assistance for the support of the family; therefore, we were deprived of the benefit of an education. Suffice it to say, I was merely instructed in reading, writing and the ground rules of arithmetic, which constituted my whole literary acquirements."[18] While this depiction may initially appear straightforward, several issues require a cautious interpretation of what precisely this statement means. I do not want to minimize the essential claim being made regarding Joseph's childhood opportunities. As this essay hopes to demonstrate, his chances to participate in formal education were limited and intermittent, with few chances to complete a full year of school without significant interruptions. Nevertheless, if we interpret "deprived of the benefit of an education" to mean "entirely denied an education," then Joseph's statement contradicts itself (i.e., if completely deprived, Joseph would not have learned basic reading, writing, and arithmetic skills). Thus, the statement requires further contextualization.

Joseph's description of "reading, writing and the ground rules of arithmetic" invokes a common, formulaic phrase in early nineteenth-century America (indeed, it remains common today, often expressed as "the three R's"), which operates as a shorthand depiction of the most basic, fundamental level of education that early Americans hoped to achieve in an education system. Gideon Hawley, the first New York Superintendent

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this; and, for one so ignorant and unlearned as he [Joseph] was, it was simply impossible" (EMD 1: 542).

17. EMD 1:26.

18. EMD 1:27 (spelling and punctuation modernized).

of Common Schools, invoked this formula in the process of working toward a standardized curriculum in his 1819 publication, *Instructions for the Better Government and Organization of Common Schools*, in which he writes, "in every common school the course of study to be pursued must necessarily embrace *reading, writing* and *arithmetic*. These are the first rudiments of education. . . . Reading, writing and arithmetic, as they are the means of acquiring all subsequent knowledge, may justly be considered the necessaries of education. . . . Nothing short of these will constitute a common school, or satisfy the lowest requisites of the school act."[19] The phrase, however, does not provide a detailed account of the actual training and material children encountered in classrooms.

In the process of learning how to read, children studied grammar, the basics of rhetoric and composition, geography, short passages on history, and other potential subjects (depending on the skills and interests of the instructor). We also know from various historical accounts that Joseph owned several common school textbooks that were published and available during his school years, such as Lindley Murray's *English Reader* (1799), Charles A. Goodrich's *A History of the United States of America* (1822), and Thomas T. Smiley's *Sacred Geography* (1824).[20] Thus, Joseph's description of "reading, writing, and arithmetic" elides a rich variety of topics and exercises that actually occurred in classrooms. Joseph's enlistment of this formulaic phrase therefore functions as a rhetorical device to convey his limited educational opportunities to his readers, without going into the unnecessary detail of outlining every topic, every skill, or every assignment he encountered. Put another way, the rhetorical effect of Joseph's depiction would have been defeated, obviously, if he had said, "I was merely instructed in reading, writing,

19. Gideon Hawley, *Instructions for the Better Government and Organization of Common Schools* (Albany, N.Y.: State of New York, 1819), [3] (emphasis in original).

20. For a list of Joseph Smith's books, see H. Michael Marquardt, "Books Owned by Joseph Smith," https://user.xmission.com/~research/about/books.htm.

arithmetic, basic rhetoric, composition, geography, and history," though such a catalogue would have more accurately depicted the curriculum he would have encountered in common school classrooms.

Joseph's representation of his educational achievements requires further recognition of how this depiction functions within the context of his entire narrative. Joseph's 1832 history was not an indifferent account of his life. Rather, the account represents his first attempt to construct a narrative that centers on his divine prophetic calling. As Vogel aptly observes, "The History was begun in the midst of challenges to Smith's authority, primarily initiated by Bishop Edward Partridge in Missouri, which evoked Smith's introduction of the office of president of the high priesthood. It is therefore not simply an autobiographical sketch, but an apology setting forth Smith's credentials as leader of the church."[21] As part of this project, Joseph's reference to his humble beginnings, contrasted with his rise to prominence as God's chosen instrument, evokes the commonplace trope of the humble individual who, against all odds, rises to greatness—a popular framework of biographical representations in both secular and religious maelstroms of early nineteenth-century America.[22] Thus, the formula of "reading, writing, and arithmetic," as a representation of the bare minimum level of education one might receive, acts as a counterpoint to the lofty heights to which God would come to elevate Joseph's life and work. Nevertheless, setting such rhetorical effects aside, we do not receive a detailed account of Smith's educational

21. EMD 1:26.

22. This framework remains a popular narrative formula today. For instance, using Abraham Lincoln as a point of reference, Richard L. Bushman situates Smith's life and accomplishments within this same trope: "Reared in a poor Yankee farm family, he had less than two years of formal schooling and began life without social standing or institutional backing. . . . Yet in the fourteen years he headed the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Smith created a religious culture that survived his death . . . published the Book of Mormon . . . built cities and temples and gathered thousands of followers" (Bushman, *Rough Stone*, xx).

experiences, and are left to wonder about the actual time he spent in school and the lessons he learned. By retracing his life and experiences, this essay therefore aims to further the discussion surrounding Joseph's background, education, and training.

Royalton, Vermont: 1809 to 1811/1812

Junius F. Wells, a member of the Mormon Church who purchased the farm where Joseph had been born, provides the first reference to Joseph's earliest formal education. When describing the Smith's family life in rural Vermont, Wells indicates that "during this period, Joseph, Senior, worked on the farm summers, and taught school part of the time winters. His son Joseph attended the school on Dewey Hill, and was taught his letters by Dea[con] Jonathan Kinney, the schoolmaster there."[23] Joseph Jr. was born in Sharon, Vermont, on December 23, 1805. Sometime between the months of March and December in 1808, the Smiths, who had been moving among several locations in the region, relocated to Royalton, Vermont, where they lived for approximately three to four

23. Mary Evelyn Wood Lovejoy, *History of Royalton, Vermont, with Family Genealogies, 1769–1911*, vol. 2 (Burlington, Vt.: The Town of Royalton and The Royalton Woman's Club, 1911), 646. Jonathan Kinney, Jr. (1790–1851), was a member of the First Congregational Church in Royalton. According to church records, he was elected deacon in 1829 (the writer of his genealogical sketch in *History of Royalton* claims 1833). Junius Wells's use of Kinney's title "Deacon" is therefore anachronistic, as Kinney was not yet a deacon when the Smith family lived in Royalton. Even so, Kinney, who turned twenty during the 1809–1810 winter term (the same term Joseph Smith would have been of appropriate age to start attending school), was of the typical age of young schoolteachers at the time, making Wells's claim plausible. For a list of the elected deacons, see ibid., vol. 1, 229. For Kinney Jr.'s genealogical sketch, see ibid., vol. 2, 844. Wright and Wright refer to him as "Jonathan Rinney," following Donna Hill's use of "Rinney" in her biography of Joseph Smith. Hill does not provide her source and the variant spelling appears to be either a typo or a transcription error. See Wright and Wright, "The New England Common School," 237; and Hill, *Joseph Smith*, 35.

years.[24] The exact length of their stay is uncertain. According to Lucy's account, the Smith family moved out of the area in 1811; according to tax assessment records, however, the move did not occur until sometime between May 1812 and May 1813.[25] In either case, Joseph Jr. would have grown from a three-year-old toddler to a five- or six-year-old child in Royalton, Vermont, prior to the family's relocation.

During that time in Vermont, it was typical for children to start school at the age of four. Ever since the General Assembly of the State of Vermont passed the Act for the Support of Schools in October of 1797, determinations regarding the formation of schools, allocation of funding, and selection of trustees in any given district were made "according to the number of children in such district between the age of four years and eighteen years old."[26] These ages were based on the *customary* ages of children attending school throughout the state, but they were not the *exclusive* ages of those who actually attended classes. In any given district, children might start school earlier than four or attend later than eighteen. Indeed, children throughout New England were known

24. The dates throughout this essay are based on Vogel's chronology. See EMD, Appendix B, "Chronology, 1771–1831," 5:377–456.

25. Ibid., 382. After Royalton, Vt., the Smith family moved to Lebanon, New Hampshire. As Vogel indicates, if Lucy's date for the move were 1811, then Joseph Sr.'s name should have appeared on the May 1812 tax assessment records in Lebanon. But it does not appear until the following year in May of 1813, suggesting that Lucy's memory was not accurate and that the Smiths moved to Lebanon sometime between May 1812 and May 1813.

26. Vermont, *Laws of the State of Vermont; Revised and Passed by the Legislature, in the Year of our Lord, One Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety Seven* (Rutland, Vt.: State of Vermont, 1798), 494, 97. The 1797 Act was still in force when the Smith family moved to Royalton. A reprint of the laws appeared the same year they moved into the town, see *The Laws of the State of Vermont, Digested and Compiled*, vol. 2 (Randolph, Vt.: State of Vermont, 1808), 181–86. See also Wright and Wright, "The New England Common School," 243.

to start school as young as two or three years of age.[27] Nevertheless, in order to have a common standard of funding for all the counties, the state used the census figures and school records to identify the population that customarily attended school and allocated funds accordingly.[28]

That children four years of age, and even younger, were attending common schools was not unusual.[29] Throughout the United States in

27. Memoirist Warren Burton (1800–1866) started school at three-and-a-half years old in New Hampshire; New York editor Horace Greeley (1811–1872) began school two months shy of his third birthday; social reformer Elizabeth Buffum [Chace] (1806–1899) started at two years of age and "could read very well" by the age of three; and Dr. Henry E. Spalding (1843–1912), future President of the Boston Homeopathic Medical Society and the Massachusetts Surgical and Gynecological Society, started school at two-and-a-half years in a farming community after he wandered "into the nearby district school and from that time he was a regular attendant." For Warren Burton, Horace Greeley, and Elizabeth Buffum Chace, see Carl F. Kaestle, *Pillars of the Republic: Common Schools and American Society, 1780–1860* (New York, N.Y.: Hill and Wang, 1983), 15. For Henry E. Spalding, see Rev. D. Donovan and Jacob A. Woodward, *The History of the Town of Lyndeborough, New Hampshire, 1735–1905* (Medford, Mass.: The Tufts College Press, 1906), 858.

28. Specific to Joseph's time in Royalton, local historian Mary Lovejoy asserts that 705 children "between four and eighteen years of age" attended school in the combined districts, in accordance with the Act of 1797. Lovejoy's phrasing for the ages of school children repeats, nearly verbatim, the language of the 1797 Act, without providing details regarding students younger than four or older than eighteen who might have also attended school (the ages were used for funding estimates, not attendance restrictions). The same year, at the start of the winter term of 1809–1810, Joseph Jr. turned four years old and would have been of an appropriate age to attend school. Lovejoy, *History of Royalton*, vol. 1, 295–96. For a review of how Royalton residents responded to the Act of 1797, see ibid., 293–94.

29. Citing Kaestle's study in common school education, Wright and Wright observe that very young rural children often attended school with older siblings: "Because there was no standard age for starting to attend school, many two- and three-year-olds were sent to school along with their older brothers and sisters" (Wright and Wright, "The New England Common School," 246). See Kaestle, *Pillars of the Republic*, 15. In his memoir, Rev. Warren Burton, who

the earliest decades of the nineteenth century, the average starting age for school children ranged from four to five years.[30] And though the

attended common school in Wilton, New Hampshire, recalled how a young classmate could not answer a question about the alphabet, because "he is but two years and a half old, and has been sent to school to relieve his mother from trouble rather than to learn" (Rev. Warren Burton, *The District School As It Was* [Boston: Carter, Hendee and Co., 1833], 48). Even so, Wright and Wright offer a conservative estimate for young Joseph's start: "An exact chronology is impossible, but it appears that Joseph began school in Royalton, Vermont, in 1810" (Wright and Wright, "The New England Common School," 238). If this date is true, however, the question then arises as to why Joseph's parents held him back from school, in spite of his eligibility to start earlier. Winter terms for common schools in small rural towns in the first decade of the nineteenth century often started on the Monday of the first full week in December. If this were the case for Royalton, winter classes in 1809 would start on Monday, December 4, a little over two and a half weeks prior to Smith's fourth birthday on Saturday, December 23. Thus, the winter 1809 term would have been the age-appropriate time for Smith to start. Even if the winter term started earlier, Smith, according to the conventions for reckoning age, was already nearing the end of his fourth year of age at the start of the 1809 winter term.

30. One of the first attempts to provide national statistics on school attendance appeared in Archibald Russell's *Principles of Statistical Inquiry* (1839). Because the data were fragmentary for his study, not only for education but for several other categories (manufacturing, agriculture, occupations, vital statistics, crime, etc.), Russell acknowledges that his essays "do not aspire to the character of a statistical treatise." Russell was a pioneer in social statistics, and this book, in spite of its self-admitted flaws, was nevertheless popular and "earned him widespread recognition in mid-nineteenth century America" (Peter J. Wosh, "Bibles, Benevolence, and Bureaucracy: The Changing Nature of Nineteenth Century Religious Records," *American Archivist* 52, no. 2 [Spring 1989]: 172). In order to determine the number and ages of schoolchildren, Russell turned to state school records, or made estimates based on state censuses and common cultural practices. In his review, Maine and Illinois reported students ranging "between the ages of 4 and 21," and "between 4 and 16 years of age," respectively. All the remaining states, when noted, reported ages between (or within) the range of five and twenty, with the New England states figured between five and fifteen. None of the ranges identify beginning students as being older than five years of age in any of the states included in the survey, suggesting that four and five

determination of such ages may have been arbitrary in each state, they often reflected the circumstances of the population, particularly in farming communities. In rural schools, according to historian Carl Kaestle, children "began at younger ages and enrolled in greater proportions than their urban contemporaries. By the age of four or five, and until the age of about fourteen, most rural children in the North . . . attended school at some time during the year."[31] Kaestle further suggests that "parents who sent very young children to school seem to have done so through a desire to have them out from under foot. . . . One can understand the desire of rural mothers with busy work schedules to be freed from the care of toddlers."[32] Thus, basing estimates on the customary ages of school attendance in Royalton, the following scenarios emerge: if the Smiths moved out of town in 1811, as Lucy suggests, Joseph would have been able to attend school for three, possibly four, terms (winter 1809–1810, summer 1810, winter 1810–1811, and summer 1811); if the Smiths moved in 1812, as tax assessment records indicate, Joseph would have been able to attend five terms (the terms noted above, along with winter 1811–1812). Accordingly, if he started school at the same age

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were typical starting ages throughout early nineteenth-century America. See Archibald Russell, *Principles of Statistical Inquiry; As Illustrated in Proposals for Uniting an Examination into the Resources of the United States with the Census to be Taken in 1840* (New York, N.Y.: D. Appleton & Co., 1839), iii, 217–31.

31. Kaestle, *Pillars of the Republic*, 15. School attendance at three and four years of age was not, however, limited to rural areas. For example, Josiah Holbrook, a Boston-based education reformer and promoter of the early lyceum movement, indirectly reveals the ages of schoolchildren in Boston in a critical essay on formal pedagogical methods in common schools: "Whoever will look at the nature and course of exercises and management, to which many children are subjected, from the time they enter a school-room *at the age of three or four years*, till they cease their school education, must be convinced that their tendency is to cramp, not to invigorate the faculties, either physical, intellectual, or moral" (Josiah Holbrook, "Abuses: Schools," *The Family Lyceum* [1833]: 102 [emphasis added]).

32. Kaestle, *Pillars of the Republic*, 15–16.

as his Royalton peers, Joseph could have received either one and a half or two and a half years of formal schooling, depending on the date of the Smith family's departure. The point is significant: prior to Joseph's departure from Royalton, he may well have obtained as much formal education as historians tend to attribute to his entire lifetime, if not more.

West Lebanon, New Hampshire: 1811/1812 to 1814/1815

Lucy Smith provides the next reference to her children's formal schooling in her history, *Biographical Sketches* (1853). In 1811, according to Lucy, the Smith family relocated approximately twenty-three miles southeast of Royalton, across the Connecticut River, to the town of West Lebanon, New Hampshire. About the same time, Hyrum began attending Moor's Charity School, originally called Moor's Indian Charity School, which was located on the same campus as Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire, approximately seven miles north of the Smith's new home in West Lebanon.[33] Though Moor's Charity School was technically a separate institution from Dartmouth at the

33. In his biography of Hyrum Smith, Jeffrey S. O'Driscoll notes that "documenting Hyrum's presence from school records is difficult. His name cannot be located in the records of 1811, and the rolls for the school years ending in 1812 and 1813 are missing. Records show a 'Hiram Smith' from Lebanon attending the session from August 1814 to August 1815. Hyrum Smith had moved from Lebanon to nearby Norwich, Vermont, by that time, but the record is probably referring to him" (Jeffrey S. O'Driscoll, *Hyrum Smith: A Life of Integrity* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2003], 17–18n26). The records indicate Hyrum was a "charity scholar," which meant his tuition and board were covered by annual rental income from lands owned and leased by Moor's and Dartmouth. In his *History of Dartmouth College*, Frederick Chase indicates how Moor's "had thirty scholars in 1780, eighty in 1794, forty-four in the fall of 1813, and sixty-one in the summer of 1814. Of these sixty-one about seventeen were charity scholars, carried upon the Moor's School share of the Wheelock rents." Frederick Chase, *A History of Dartmouth College and the Town of Hanover New Hampshire (To 1815)*, 2nd ed., 2 vols., vol. 1 (Brattleboro, Vt.: Dartmouth College, 1928), 634.

time, the distinction was largely in name only.[34] Hyrum's acceptance would have held the hope of a promising career, and upon the Smith family's arrival in West Lebanon, Lucy indicates that "as our children had, in a great measure, been debarred from the privilege of schools, we began to make every arrangement to attend to this important duty. We established our second son Hyrum in an academy at Hanover; and the rest, that were of sufficient age, we were sending to a common school that was quite convenient."[35] (It should be noted that Lucy's recollection here has minimal bearing on Joseph's education: her statement refers to challenges that occurred previously in Vermont, where Joseph had only recently started school.) Because Lucy did not specifically name the children who "were of sufficient age" to start school in West Lebanon, some historians have assumed Joseph Jr. did not attend school at this

34. Apart from training ministers for evangelical work among Native American nations, Moor's Charity School was often perceived as a preparatory school for Dartmouth and other institutions of higher learning. The last two years of Moor's curriculum dovetailed with the first year of Dartmouth's curriculum and entrance examinations (such as the study of the Greek New Testament and rhetoric). In terms of institutional identity, the primary reason Moor's Charity School and Dartmouth College were separate institutions in the early nineteenth century related to funding issues: Moor's relied heavily on donations from English and Scottish societies for propagating the gospel among Native Americans, while Dartmouth received state funding. The Scottish and English donors were concerned that funds for Moor's might be diverted to Dartmouth, so the two institutions kept separate financial records in order to maintain their subsidies. Moor's Charity School would eventually be absorbed officially by Dartmouth College in the early twentieth century (John King Lord, *A History of Dartmouth College, 1815–1909: Being a Second Volume of A History of Dartmouth College and the Town of Hanover, New Hampshire, Begun by Frederick Chase*, vol. 2 [Concord, N.H.: The Rumford Press, 1913], 232–44). See also Chase, *A History of Dartmouth College*, vol. 1, 239–48; 588–600.

35. EMD 1:260.

time.[36] Nevertheless, children in New Hampshire started school at the same ages children started in Vermont.[37]

Unlike Vermont and New York during this period, New Hampshire based school funding on overall population, rather than census numbers and school records for children within a particular age range.[38] As such, the state did not provide information in its laws reflecting the customary age for children to start school. Even so, memoirists and observers indicate that children in the state began school as early as two to three years of age.[39] During his tours through New England and New York from 1795 to 1816, Timothy Dwight, IV (1752–1817), President of Yale College, observed, "In Massachusetts, New-Hampshire, and Vermont, schools are everywhere established. They are often styled parochial schools. . . . To these little seminaries the children of New-England are universally sent, from two, three, four, and five years of age, to the period in which they have learned to read, write, and keep accounts. . . . I speak of the common schools only."[40] Within this context, the year the Smith family

36. Assuming the Smiths moved to West Lebanon in 1811, Bushman, for example, speculates that Joseph Jr. did not attend school but "remained at home" (Bushman, *Rough Stone*, 20).

37. Wright and Wright indicate that "it is apparent from available histories that the schools in Vermont and New Hampshire were similar because of their geographical proximity and shared history" (Wright and Wright, "The New England Common School," 242). Though the Smith family crossed state lines in their move from Royalton to West Lebanon, they remained in the same Upper Connecticut River Valley region.

38. From 1808 through at least 1830, state funding for New Hampshire schools (whether through state taxes, bank taxes, or the state "literary fund") was "divided among the towns in the ratio of representation" (American Education Society, "Common Schools," *The Quarterly Register and Journal of the American Education Society*, [Nov. 4, 1830]: 230–31).

39. Warren Burton and Horace Greeley attended New Hampshire common schools before their fourth birthdays. See footnote 27.

40. Timothy Dwight, *Travels in New-England and New-York*, 4 vols., vol. 4 (London; Edinburgh: William Baynes and Son; Ogle, Duncan & Co.; H. S. Baynes

moved to West Lebanon becomes irrelevant with respect to schooling: Joseph Jr., who turned six in December of 1811 and seven in December of 1812, would have been old enough—indeed, much older—than children "of sufficient age" to start school in New Hampshire.[41]

The winter of 1812–1813 would, however, bring a traumatic interruption to young Joseph Jr.'s formal education. Whether or not he started school that winter term, he certainly would not have finished it. During the winter, a typhoid epidemic "swept through the upper Connecticut Valley and left 6,400 dead in five months."[42] Young Joseph was not spared the fever. The story is well-known: the infection spread through his body, eventually locating in his lower left leg and causing a bone infection. The Smiths summoned medical doctors from Dartmouth and the decision was eventually made to cut the infected bone from Joseph's leg. Though the operation was successful, Joseph would have been bedridden for the next several months, waiting for the wound to heal.[43]

Joseph's experience would, of course, affect his formal schooling. His attendance during the winter term of 1812–1813 would have been abruptly cut short by his infection and surgery. He almost certainly missed the 1813 summer term as well, not only because of convalescing at home,

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and Co. (Edinburgh), 1823), 287. Dwight's depiction of common schools as "parochial schools" is part of his wider vision of New England's religious exceptionalism: although common schools were technically nondenominational, they nevertheless served as part of God's teleological plan for New England; thus, all common schools were, to use his term, "parochial schools."

41. As Vogel has noted, Joseph Sr.'s name does not appear on the May 1812 tax assessment records in West Lebanon, suggesting that the family arrived in New Hampshire *after* 1811. Furthermore, according to Jeffrey S. O'Driscoll, Hyrum Smith's "name cannot be located in the record of 1811" for Moor's Charity School, providing additional evidence for the timing of the move. Thus, Joseph Jr. was most likely six years old, soon to turn seven, when he started school in West Lebanon. See EMD 5:382. O'Driscoll, *Hyrum Smith*, 17n26.

42. Bushman, *Rough Stone*, 20.

43. Ibid., 21.

but due to a possible trip to Salem, Massachusetts, with his Uncle Jesse. "When he had so far recovered as to be able to travel," Lucy recorded, Joseph Jr. "went with his uncle, Jesse Smith, to Salem, for the benefit of his health, hoping the sea-breezes would be of service to him."[44] Thus, for the 1813 school year, Joseph's educational improvement would have been limited to reading books, family devotionals, and domestic education.

Lucy's history suggests Joseph returned to formal schooling in the winter of 1813–1814, after approximately a full year of recuperation. Immediately following her account of Joseph's surgery, Lucy indicates that, "Having passed through about a year of sickness and distress, health again returned to our family" (her 1845 manuscript reads, "After one whole year of affliction we were able once more to look upon our children and each other in health").[45] Young Joseph, though continuing to convalesce and recover, was apparently no longer bedridden. Thus, from the time of his return until the Smith family's move to New York, Joseph may have experienced one of the longest periods of sustained formal education in his lifetime: because he would remain on crutches until the Smith family's move to New York, Joseph would have been prevented from performing heavy farm labor for the remainder of the

44. EMD 1:268. See also Wright and Wright, "The New England Common School," 238. Interestingly, Jesse Smith's extremely detailed and precise business ledger, currently in possession of the LDS Church History Library, does not indicate a trip to Salem during the summer of 1813. Joseph's trip to Salem, of whatever length and whenever it actually took place, would have offered its own form of practical education. Salem was a major port city of trade: merchant ships brought exotic cargo from all over the world, and its bustling shops were packed with a rich panoply of merchandise and patrons. Yet, such excitement would have been counterbalanced by a hostile British navy patrolling along the seacoast, seizing ships, impressing sailors, and threatening invasion. See Hill, *Joseph Smith*, 36; Dan Vogel, *Joseph Smith: The Making of a Prophet* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2004), 18; Fawn M. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History: the Life of Joseph Smith, the Mormon Prophet*, 2nd ed. (New York: Vintage Books, 1995; repr., First Vintage Books Edition), 8.

45. EMD 1:268.

family's stay in the Connecticut Valley, allowing him full participation at school in both winter and summer months.[46] In such a compromised physical condition, school attendance, reading, meditation, and domestic chores would have been the extent of his activities.

Norwich, Vermont: 1814–1815 to the Winter of 1816–1817

Sometime between May of 1814 and March of 1816, the Smith family moved back across the Connecticut River to Norwich, Vermont, situated approximately two miles west of Dartmouth. The exact time of their arrival is yet again uncertain.[47] Furthermore, records are silent regarding the Smith children's school attendance, though Wright and Wright observe, "When considering this period in Joseph's life, it seems consistent to assume that his mother would have again encouraged him and his siblings to attend public school."[48] During their stay in Norwich, the family was plagued with a series of crop failures, which left the

46. For Smith's length of time on crutches, see Vogel, *The Making of a Prophet*, 18; Bushman, *Rough Stone*, 21; Hill, *Joseph Smith*, 36. When she recounted the family's move to New York in the winter of 1816 to 1817, Lucy mentioned that Joseph "was still lame" (EMD 1:274).

47. According to Vogel, "probably in the late spring or early summer of 1814, the Smiths returned across the Connecticut River to Norwich, Vermont" (Vogel, *The Making of a Prophet*, 19). In addition, Vogel notes that tax assessment records indicate the Smiths moved out of Lebanon between May 1814 and May 1815, though he also observes, "exactly when they arrived in Norwich is less clear, although it was certainly before the birth of Don Carlos [one of Joseph's younger brothers] on 25 March 1816." Vogel suggests Lucy may have misremembered the dates of the family's move, "or the Smiths may have lived in a remote quarter in or near the town and later moved onto Murdock's property [the rental property the Smith's leased]" (EMD 5:383).

48. Wright and Wright, "The New England Common School," 238.

family destitute.[49] After hearing about cheap land and better farming conditions in western New York, no doubt combined with rumors of the economic potential of the region, Joseph Sr. decided to relocate the family to Palmyra, New York, a town that would become a stop along the Erie Canal. In late 1816, Joseph Sr. went to Palmyra by himself to make arrangements, while the family packed their belongings and followed after him, apparently in January of 1817.[50]

Thus, in terms of formal schooling opportunities, the timing of the Smith family's departure provides a window for their stay in the Upper Connecticut River Valley. From the time the family arrived in West Lebanon, New Hampshire, in 1811 or 1812 to their final departure from the area in the winter of 1816–1817, Joseph Jr. would have been eligible to attend school for either five or six terms (winter 1811–1812, summer 1812, then skipping the 1813 school year, followed by winter 1813–1814, summer 1814, winter 1814–1815 and summer 1815). Depending again on arrival and departure dates, the amount of eligible formal education for this period would be between two to three school years.

Palmyra, New York: 1817 to 1820/1821

The Smith family's move to Palmyra, a journey of about three hundred miles, would have taken approximately one month.[51] The move would occur in the middle of the 1816–1817 winter term, effectively disrupting the start of the school year, though one account suggests the children attended the latter part of that term after initially getting settled in western New York State. Jacob E. Terry of East Palmyra was one of Joseph's classmates. Vogel observes that if Jacob's sister, Elizabeth, is correct

49. See Bushman, *Rough Stone*, 27; Hill, *Joseph Smith*, 37; Brodie, *No Man Knows*, 8–9; Vogel, *The Making of a Prophet*, 19–24.

50. Vogel observes that Martha Coray, Lucy's amanuensis for her history, wrote in her notebooks, "1816 [1817] moved to . . . Palmyra in Jan[uary]" (EMD 5:384).

51. Bushman, *Rough Stone*, 29.

in her memory of the dates and locations where their family lived, as recorded in the *Parshall Terry Family History* (1956), then "this would indicate that Joseph Smith attended school immediately after his arrival at Palmyra sometime during the winter of 1816–1817."[52] Such partial attendance would not be the last time the children's formal education would be interrupted, particularly because of financial exigencies. Upon their arrival, Lucy records how the Smith's held a family council regarding their "destitute circumstances" and how they "came to the conclusion to unite our strength in endeavouring to obtain a piece of land."[53] This being the case, the children old enough to work likely spent their summers earning money to help the family, rather than attending school during the summer terms. Thus, though he had only recently stopped walking with crutches, Joseph probably started working in the summer of 1817. And given the continued financial struggles of the Smith family, Joseph may never have attended another summer term at any common school again.[54]

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52. By 1819, the Terry family had moved from Palmyra. If Elizabeth's memory of the dates is inaccurate, then, according to Vogel, "it is possible for Jacob E. Terry to have attended school with Joseph Smith either in the winter of 1816–1817 or 1817–1818" (EMD 3:261). That Lucy and Joseph Sr. would immediately enroll their children in school upon their arrival is consistent with their actions when they arrived in West Lebanon midway through the winter term, when they promptly enrolled their school age children into classes. See EMD 1:260.

53. EMD 1:276.

54. Christopher Stafford, a neighbor of the Smiths in Manchester, New York, recalled that "Jo was away much of the time summers" (EMD 2:195). Mrs. S. F. Anderick, a neighbor of the Smiths, confirmed Joseph was away "from home much summers. Sometimes he [Joseph] said he had been to Broome County, New York, and Pennsylvania" (EMD 2:210). Vogel notes that Joseph Jr. and his brother Samuel were not listed on the 1820 census, "perhaps because they were hired out in another township" (EMD 5:391). Joseph likely spent his summers performing manual labor on various farms and occasionally acting as a treasure-hunting seer. Prior to hearing about Smith finding the gold plates, for instance, Lee Yost, "a Michigan merchant and former resident of Fayette, New York [a

Insight into the Smith family's financial challenges, particularly in relation to formal education, emerged with the 2008 discovery of Philander Packard's school records.[55] Packard, a school teacher in Palmyra's District No. 1 (the same district in which the Smith family lived), kept a record of tuition payments he received from his students.[56] Instead of entering the child's name, however, Packard listed funds received under the heads of households. "Joseph Smith" appears among them, nestled in a list that includes several of the Smith family's neighbors.[57] And as

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town approximately twenty-four miles southeast of Manchester, New York]," recalled seeing Joseph with a team of treasure hunters searching among Native American ruins on the farm of his wife's grandfather in Fayette (EMD 5:287).

55. Donald L. Enders, "Treasures and a Trash Heap: An Early Reference to the Joseph Smith Famiily in Palmyra," *The Journal of Mormon History* 40, no. 3 (Summer 2014): 201–222.

56. For the boundaries of the nineteen school districts in existence in 1814, see Town of Palmyra, "Town of Palmyra Board Meeting Minutes," Palmyra, N.Y.: Town & Village of Palmyra, 1819, http://www.palmyrany.com/minutes/TB/1814.pdf.

57. The identity of this "Joseph Smith" is not entirely conclusive. While Packard's list includes several of the Smith family's neighbors, suggesting that the "Joseph Smith" entry may very well be Joseph Smith Sr., the criteria establishing the claim can be problematic. Enders argues, "in 1817, the schoolhouse where Philander Packard was teaching . . . was the only one in the village, standing at East Main and Mill streets. That year, the township (as opposed to the village) had at least eight school districts." While it is literally true that Palmyra did have "at least eight school districts," the total number was actually twenty, significantly altering the perception of the educational landscape of the township (see Appendix B). Furthermore, Palmyra Village had the highest population density in the township and would have required more than one common school to cover the five- to fifteen year-old population. Enders's assumption that Packard was "the only teacher in the village" further leads him to the conclusion that Packard's forty-three students were the only ones in attendance in the village, while the remaining "seventy-nine (or 65 percent) of the school-age children received no formal instruction during the fall of 1817" (Enders, "Treasures and a Trash Heap," 215). Contrary to this estimate, Palmyra (town *and* village) taught a total of 987 students out of 1,050 total children between the ages of five and fifteen

Donald L. Enders observes, the payments from the Joseph Smith family were the second lowest in the account book, bested in meagerness only by the widow Hannah Hurlbut and her child.[58] The document provides stark evidence of impoverished family circumstances. Nevertheless, it is essential to recognize that Packard's notes are not *attendance* records but running *accounts of payments*. Interpreting the documents as attendance records for poor families is, in fact, highly problematic. Thus, contextualizing Packard's records within New York's common school system is crucial.

Before the Smith family moved to Palmyra, Gideon Hawley, Superintendent of Common Schools for the State of New York, had been mounting an aggressive campaign to provide a common school education to all the children in the state. Since 1812, when New York instituted a statewide common school system, universal access to education had become a social and political priority; and Hawley recognized that children from poor families often could not afford to pay their share of teachers' wages and therefore could not regularly attend school. Hawley thus participated in shaping new laws for the common schools, explicitly giving local school commissioners the power to waive tuition costs for poor families. Encouraged by Hawley's advocacy, the legislature passed The Act for the Better Establishment of Common Schools on April 15, 1814, which allowed commissioners and local trustees "to exonerate from the payment of the wages of such teachers, or the residue aforesaid [balance of wages not paid by the state], of such wages, all such poor persons within their district, as they shall think proper."[59] Hawley's

in the 1817–1818 school year. Thus, rather than Enders's claim of seventy-nine untaught children in Palmyra village alone, in reality only sixty-three children between five and fifteen years in the town and village *combined* did not attend school during that time (see Appendix B).

58. Enders, "Treasures and a Trash Heap," 212–13.

59. The State of New York, "The Act for the Better Establishment of Common Schools," (Albany, N.Y.: The State of New York, 1814), 11.

strategy proved to be an enormous success. Between the state funding and the waiver of local fees, children from poor families gained access to the same educational opportunities as all other common school students, and overall statewide attendance began to rise significantly in each successive year. In his report to the legislature for the 1819–1820 school year, Hawley reveled in the progress of the common school system:

> There is now therefore, reason to believe that the number of children in the state who do not attend any school, and who are not otherwise in the way of receiving a common education, is very small. The public bounty is sufficient to defray the expense of most schools for about three months in the year; and where that is expended in different parts of the year, so as not to defray the whole expense of the school for any particular part, it is understood that in most districts, poor children have been permitted to attend the district school free of expense, under that provision in the [1814] school act which empowers districts to exonerate such children from the payment of teachers' wages.[60]

As Hawley's presentation indicates, payment for common school education came from both public and private sources: state funding covered a portion of the year ("about three months"), while local taxes and assessments made up the difference for teachers' wages. If the local commissioner and trustees deemed a family too poor to pay an assessment (in full or in part), the children would be entitled to attend school either free of charge or at a reduced rate, in accordance with the family's ability to pay. Thus, Packard's school records reveal the families who could afford to pay, along with the families who apparently could not. But the point needs to be reemphasized that the accounts do not indicate actual attendance at school. Indeed, rather than providing evidence of the Smith children's lack of attendance, Packard's school

60. *Journal of the Assembly of the State of New-York at Their Forty-Fourth Session* (Albany, N.Y.: The State of New York, 1820), 556. (All subsequent *Journal* citations will be abbreviated as JA, followed by the session and page numbers, e.g., JA 44:556.)

record very likely suggests the opposite. Because the "Joseph Smith" family was one of the poorest in the records, they would have been among the most eligible candidates for tuition waivers. And if they did in fact receive full or partial waivers, the Smith children could have been in regular attendance at classes, even though Packard's accounts would show a near absence of payments. The widow Hannah Hurlbut's child, for example, though the least able to pay, with empty column after column of payments received, would nevertheless be entitled to, and may well have been participating in, full and regular attendance over the duration of Packard's accounts. Thus, while Packard's records potentially reveal the indigent circumstances of the Smith family, they nevertheless do not confirm the actual attendance or non-attendance of the Smith children at school.

The unreliability of Packard's records as attendance records is further complicated by the time period they cover. As Enders astutely observes, Packard's notes cover only the period from September 9 through October 7, 1817, while "the columns are blank after Friday, October 10, possibly because it was harvest time, even though the headings continue through Saturday, November 1."[61] The point is significant: planting and harvest times were the two busiest periods in the life of a farming family. And in the first decades of the nineteenth century, when frontier towns rapidly grew in size and started to become well established, school years often lengthened from shorter periods (roughly five months) to longer sessions (seven to eight months). Such changes resulted in schools commencing winter terms during the fall harvest season. For a poor family like the Smiths, who could not afford to hire additional laborers, the oldest children would likely have stayed home to work on the farm, delaying attendance until after the harvest. Thus, Packard's records are silent on the Smith children's status in the post-harvest winter months. Nevertheless,

61. Enders, "Treasures and a Trash Heap," 202.

the records, even if indirectly, offer potential insights into the working and educational lives of the Smith children.

Harvest season did not occur at precisely the same time each year, because of weather conditions and the annual variations for the maturation of crops. Nonetheless, the harvest season in upstate New York for sweet and silage corn, barley, beans, oats, potatoes, and wheat usually finished by the end of October. The exceptions were field corn (dried and hardened, usually for animal feed) and possibly soybeans (an uncommon crop in upstate New York, used for animal feed in this period), which usually occurred by the end of November.[62] In terms of scheduling the actual harvest, farmers relied heavily on weather predictions in the yearly almanacs. In 1817, for example (the fall season in which Packard kept his school records), almanacs covering New York, Pennsylvania, and the surrounding states (mostly New England) consistently urged readers to prepare for winter in late November with the anticipation of snow and storms in early December.[63] Whether or not

62. On crops, Bushman notes, "Most farmers planted corn for family and animals on the first cleared land. Wheat followed in the second year, with the possibility of a small surplus beyond the family needs" (*Rough Stone*, 33).

63. For the first week in December, Smith & Forman's almanac predicts "Hard [rain?], Snow, with bluster weather" (*Smith & Forman's New-York and Jew-Jersey Almanac, For the Year of Our Lord 1817* [New York: Smith & Forman, 1816]). Pennsylvania-based almanacs consistently predict "snow" on November 28. See *The New St. Tammany Almanac, For the Year 1817*, (Philadelphia: George W. Mentz, 1816); Joshua Sharp, *Bailey's Rittenhouse Almanac, For the Year of Our Lord, 1817* (Philadelphia: Lydia R. Bailey, 1816); *Poor Will's Almanac, For the Year 1817*, (Philadelphia: Joseph Rakestraw, 1816). "If no signs of storms and winds should fail in this month," warns a Windsor, Vermont almanac for the start of December, "we shall have enough of it [i.e., if all the predictions for the month come true, the month will be filled with more than enough storms and winds]. High winds with a driving storm" (Truman Abell, *The New England Farmer's Diary and Almanac, From the Year of the Creation, According to Sacred Writ, 5779, and the Christian Era, 1817* [Windsor, Vt.: Jesse Cochran, 1816]). For the start of December, a Hartford, Connecticut almanac that "will serve for any of the adjoining States" waxes poetic: "Now frowning winter rears its

inclement weather actually occurred, farmers would nevertheless have worked to finish harvest before those dates.

Thus, if he were working on the family farm or hiring out to neighbors for the 1817 harvest, Joseph Jr. would likely have delayed attendance at school until the end of October at the soonest, or the end of November at the latest. Planting season for the following year would not begin until late March at the earliest (usually early April), which would result in Joseph attending approximately only four to five months each school year in Palmyra and later in Manchester. This estimate finds indirect support from Lemuel Durfee's account book for 1815–1829. After Durfee purchased the Smith family farm on December 20, 1825, the Smiths continued to work the property, while Samuel Harrison Smith (Joseph's younger brother) worked for Durfee to pay the rent on the farm. Durfee's account reads, "April, the 16 day, the year 1827, S. Harrison Smith, Son of Joseph Smith, began to work for me by the month. Is to work 7 months for the use of the place where said Joseph Smith lives."[64] This "7 months" span, from April to November, coincides with the regular farming season, from planting to harvest. This then suggests that the Smith children who hired out their labor were working the same yearly schedule as their adult contemporaries, causing them to delay their attendance at school each year.[65]

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head array'd in all majestic dread. Now expect foul weather" (A. Allen, *Allen's New-England Almanack, For the Year of Our Lord 1817* [Hartford, Conn.: Peter B. Gleason & Co., 1816]).

64. H. Michael Marquardt, "Historical Setting of Mormonism in Manchester, Ontario County, New York," *The John Whitmer Historical Association Journal*, vol. 35, no. 2 (Winter 2015): 73 (spelling and punctuation modernized).

65. Apart from Durfee's account book, other indirect evidence suggests the schedules the Smith family followed to balance winter schooling with the months devoted to farm labor. For example, when Joseph established the "school of the prophets," Dean C. Jessee informs us that, "The 1835–36 session of the school met between 2 November and 29 March" (Jessee, ed. *Personal Writings of Joseph Smith* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Brigham Young University Press, 2002],

While the precise details of his school attendance in Palmyra are elusive, Joseph Jr. still managed to appear at school. Several of his former classmates mentioned attending with him during the family's years in Palmyra. William H. Cuyler, a lifelong resident of Palmyra, "attended school with Joseph Smith the Mormon, and his brothers—particularly Alvin [1798–1823] and William [1811–1893]."[66] Isaac Butts also "attended school with Prophet Jo" in Palmyra.[67] And Jacob E. Terry of East Palmyra was said to be "a school associate and friend of young Joseph Smith, they being the same age."[68] The Smith family would remain taxpaying residents in the Palmyra school districts from 1817 to late 1820 or early 1821, but they were not planning to stay in town indefinitely.

Between April 1819 and April 1820, some of the members of the Smith family moved "into a small log cabin on the property of Samuel Jennings on Stafford Road near the southern border of Palmyra township."[69] This cabin was adjacent to a parcel of land they hoped to purchase for a family farm in the neighboring town of Manchester. Though they did not yet own the land, the Smiths were apparently confident enough of its purchase to start developing the property. For approximately two to three years, the Smiths maintained residences on both Main Street and Stafford Road in Palmyra; and the cabin appears to have served initially as an outpost, where family members stayed who were developing the Manchester land.[70] The Smiths would eventually take

88n31). This span of time coincides with Samuel Smith's work schedule for Durfee, suggesting it was common practice to dedicate seven months of the year to farm work, while devoting the remaining five months to such activities as school attendance.

66. EMD 3:169–170.

67. EMD 2:202.

68. EMD 3:261–2.

69. EMD 5:389.

70. The Smiths are associated with three different locations at this time: the Main Street home in Palmyra, the Jennings' cabin in south Palmyra (on the northern

formal possession of the Manchester property sometime between July 1820 and February 1821.[71] This period therefore marks the time when the Smith family became official residents of Manchester.[72] Whether or not the children started attending school in Manchester at this time, however, is not known.

As of April 1822, the Smiths were still recorded on the Palmyra road list, suggesting that the family had not yet made a full transition to the Manchester farm.[73] Therefore, the children apparently could have attended school in either Palmyra or Manchester during the 1820–1821 winter term. These dates provide a framework for Joseph's potential attendance at school in Palmyra. If he started school in Manchester during the same period in which the Smiths took possession of the new farm (1820–1821), then Joseph Jr. would have been eligible to attend three winter terms in Palmyra (winter 1817–1818, winter 1818–1819

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border of Manchester), and the adjacent Manchester farm. According to Vogel, the April 1820 Palmyra road list appears to indicate two dwelling locations for the Smith family: "Alvin appears as fifteenth and Joseph Sr., as forty-second on a forty-four-name list, probably indicating that part of the Smith family moved sometime between April 1819 and April 1820 to the south end of Stafford Road." Vogel further adds, "Alvin was apparently on Main Street, perhaps running the family's cake and ale shop, and Joseph Sr. was south on Stafford Road near the Palmyra township line, evidently occupying the Jennings cabin" (EMD 5:389–90). Bushman notes, "The Smiths moved onto their [Manchester] land in stages. Before obtaining title to the land, the Smiths raised a log house adjacent to their prospective purchase on the land of a local merchant, Samuel Jennings, possibly to begin clearing land they intended to buy" (*Rough Stone*, 32).

71. Vogel notes that as of June 22, 1820, "the entire 300 acres of Farmington (now Manchester) Lot 1 is taxed to the heirs of Nicholas Evertson [the owners of the property prior to the Smiths], indicating that the Smiths had not yet contracted for their land" (EMD 5:391).

72. At this time, the Smith farm was technically within the town of Farmington; Manchester had not yet been created. As Vogel notes, the town in 1821 was divided into two townships: the western half continued under the name of Farmington, while the eastern portion became Manchester (EMD 5:391–392).

73. EMD 5:392.

and winter 1819–1820). If, however, he continued to attend school in Palmyra after the Smiths officially purchased the Manchester property (this would assume he traveled back and forth the relatively short distance between Manchester and Palmyra), then Joseph would have been eligible to attend five winter terms in Palmyra (winter 1820–1821 and winter 1821–1822, in addition to the above mentioned).

Manchester, New York: 1820/1821 to 1825

At this stage, Joseph's age becomes a factor for consideration. Less than three months after the beginning of the 1820–1821 winter term, Joseph turned fifteen years old. According to the New York Act for the Support of Common Schools, passed the previous year in 1819, the local commissioners of common schools distributed state funds "according and in proportion to the number of children, between the ages of five and fifteen years, inclusive, living in each such [school] district."[74] The age range, though arbitrary, nevertheless reflects cultural assumptions about the normative age range of common school students in New York. Therefore, because he turned fifteen on December 23, 1820, Joseph could have dropped out of school at that time, without disrupting social conventions or doing anything unusual in comparison to his peers. Yet, in spite of this option, Joseph nonetheless attended at least one term in Manchester, as attested by Joseph's former classmates in the township.[75]

74. The State of New York, *The Act for the Support of Common Schools; Passed April 12, 1819; With Extracts from Acts Passed March 30, 1820, and March 23, 1821; Also, The Act to Amend the Act for the Support of Common Schools, passed April 17, 1822* (Albany, N.Y.: The State of New York, 1822), 9–11.

75. Manchester would not exist until 1821, when it was created out of Farmington (see footnote 72). To avoid confusion and maintain consistency, however, I am referring anachronistically to the Smith's farm in Farmington as being in Manchester; see EMD 5:391–92. Even though members of the Smith family were possibly staying in the Stafford Road cabin in Palmyra as early as 1818 or 1819, Joseph's attendance at a Manchester school in this early period is problematic. The family did not become official residents of Manchester until they formally

contracted for their new farm sometime between July of 1820 and February of 1821; thus, they would not have begun paying taxes or school assessments to Manchester Township until that time (EMD 5:391–392). In order for the Smith children to attend school in Manchester prior to that time, Joseph Sr. and Lucy would have been required to get permission from the trustees of both Palmyra's and Manchester's school districts (see EMD 3:258n4, where Vogel indicates, "according to early maps of Manchester, the Smiths' former residence was included in school district 11"). Permissions for families to transfer children from one school district to another (within a township or across township lines) took place during town meetings. Palmyra's minutes in 1815, for example, indicate how "Enoch Saunders is set off from 1st School District in Palmyra with leave to annex himself to Farmington. Parshall Terry is set off from Palmyra with leave to attach himself to Farmington. Isaac Sweezy is set off from Palmyra with leave to attach himself to Williamson. Martin Harris [Joseph's early supporter] is set off from School District No. 1 and attached to School District No. 8 in Palmyra." None of the town minutes record the Smith family transferring their children from a Palmyra school district to a Farmington/Manchester district, which strongly suggests the Smith children attended school in Palmyra until the family became taxpaying residents of Manchester between July 1820 and February 1821 (when they could transfer schools without needing permission or being recorded in the town minutes). See Town of Palmyra, "Town of Palmyra Board Meeting Minutes," Palmyra, N.Y.: Town & Village of Palmyra, 1815, http://www.palmyrany.com/minutes/TB/1815.pdf. While the Manchester trustees could have allowed the Smith children to attend their school, the Smiths normally would have been required to cover all the costs of their children's attendance. The 1822 revision of the common school act of New York indicates, "But if children, not residing in the district, be permitted, by the trustees, to attend their school, as such permission might have been withheld, *it may, and ought, if granted, to be on condition that no part of the public money shall be applied for their benefit*" (The State of New York, *The Act for the Support of Common Schools*: 35 [emphasis added]). The Smiths were struggling financially at this time, suggesting the children would have continued to attend school in Palmyra, where they would not incur additional expenses. An exception to this rule would be the case in which neighboring townships shared a school district. Nevertheless, Manchester school district 11 was not a jointly-shared school district with Palmyra. The only school district the two towns shared at this time was Palmyra's District 21, formed on February 14, 1820, which contained Palmyra lots 46, 50, 53, and part of 37 in Township 12, 2nd range, joined together with Manchester

Orrin Porter Rockwell, a well-known Mormon convert and longtime confidant of Joseph's, "was a schoolmate and friend of Smith's" in Manchester.[76] Moses C. Smith, another Manchester classmate (not related to Joseph), was said to have "attended [school] with the Prophet and once they had an altercation."[77] And Samantha Payne, also of Manchester, claimed to have "attended school with [Joseph] for some time."[78] Thus, if he started attending school in Manchester during the first term in which he was eligible as a resident, Joseph would have attended at least the winter 1820–1821 term.

A subsequent question then naturally arises: did Joseph stop attending school in Manchester after the 1820–1821 winter term or did he continue to participate longer? Again, historical documentation does not provide a clear answer. Nevertheless, a look at the laws governing school funding, coupled with the state's statistics on school attendance, offers further insight and clarification. To begin, in order to determine how much money the state would allocate to each school district, New

(Farmington) lots 25 and 78 in Township 11, 2nd range. See Town of Palmyra, "Town of Palmyra Board Meeting Minutes," Palmyra, N.Y.: Town & Village of Palmyra, 1819, http://www.palmyrany.com/minutes/TB/1819.pdf. For helpful online maps showing lot numbers, see Dale R. Broadhurst's webpage: http://olivercowdery.com/smithhome/smithmap.htm. In summary, the earliest any of the Smith family children could have attended a Manchester school would be the 1820–1821 winter term.

76. See Elizabeth Kane's interview, EMD 3:406. Caroline Rockwell Smith, Porter Rockwell's sister, also stated, "I attended school with their [the Smith's] children" (EMD 2:199). Benjamin Saunders, about two years younger than Caroline Rockwell Smith, said, "I knew young Joseph just as well as I did my own brothers. Went to the same school with the younger boys" (EMD 2:137). Though Benjamin's and Caroline's statements do not specifically identify Joseph as a classmate, their observations demonstrate Lucy and Joseph Sr.'s commitment to have all their children educated; therefore, the idea that Joseph would be excluded from such influence and withheld from school is untenable.

77. EMD 3:258.

78. EMD 2:172.

York's Act for the Support of Common Schools in 1819 measured the population of *all* the children "between the ages of five and fifteen years" within every county, regardless of actual attendance. Legislators then used this overall population to determine the amount of money each county would receive. It is important to note, however, that this law did not *restrict* school attendance to children between those ages of five and fifteen; the figures merely provided guidance for funding allocations.[79] Thus, students could attend school at *any* age. The 1822 clarification of the 1819 Act states, "In applying the public money, it must always be paid to the teacher on account of his wages. It is not to be distributed among the scholars or their parents; *nor is it to be applied for the exclusive benefit of children between the ages of five and fifteen years*, or of any other particular description of scholars. *All who reside in the district and attend the school, as they may of common right, must necessarily participate equally in the benefit of the public money*."[80] As such, Joseph could have continued attending common schools for the remainder of his teenage years in Manchester, if he so chose. And whether or not he took advantage of this opportunity, many of his peers did.

According to the annual reports of the New York Superintendent of Common Schools, students throughout the state frequently attended classes at ages younger than five and older than fifteen years. And this was certainly true for Manchester. In the 1821 school year (when Joseph

79. The state paid teachers a flat rate based on the census numbers and school records of children between five and fifteen within any given school district. Teachers did not receive additional money if more children attended than the census indicated, nor did they receive less if all the eligible children did not attend.

80. The State of New York, *The Act for the Support of Common Schools*, 35 (emphasis added). The logistics of tracking a moving population of settlers during a period of intense migration made attendance figures at each country schoolhouse difficult to record. Therefore, in lieu of using actual school attendance records exclusively, state officials also based funding allocations on the more reliable census figures.

turned sixteen), Manchester taught a combined total of 1,051 students. Of these students, 972 were five to fifteen years of age, leaving a remainder of seventy-nine students either younger than five or older than fifteen (7.5 percent of all students).[81] And the pattern continued for all the years the Smith family resided in Manchester: in the 1822 school year, seventy-four students younger than five or older than fifteen attended (6 percent of the total 1,236 students taught);[82] in 1823, sixty students younger than five or older than fifteen attended (7.8 percent of the total 770 taught);[83] in 1824, eighty-three students younger than five or older than fifteen attended (9.8 percent of the total 850 taught);[84] and in 1825, the number of students younger than five or older than fifteen jumped to 179 (18.2 percent of the 985 taught, or nearly one in five students).[85]

Joseph's continued presence in school and desire for an education are suggested not only by the presence of other older students in Manchester, but by additional clues. During this same period, for example, Joseph attended a juvenile debating society, likely during the 1821–1822 winter when he turned sixteen, which reveals an ongoing and self-motivated desire to improve himself.[86] Tantalizing clues also

81. The figures are listed under Farmington (Manchester and Farmington had not yet split) (JA 45:632).

82. Though the two towns had technically split by now, Manchester and Farmington filed a joint return for 1822 (JA 45: Appendix A-11).

83. Manchester stopped filing a joint return with Farmington this year, which explains the drop in numbers (JA 47: Appendix A-12).

84. JA 48: Appendix B-13.

85. JA 49: Appendix G-20.

86. H. Michael Marquart indicates that Orsamus Turner, who provides us with this account, moved away from Palmyra in the summer of 1822 (H. Michael Marquardt, *The Rise of Mormonism: 1816–1844* [Longwood, Fla: Xulon Press, 2005], 49). Thus Joseph's attendance with Turner at the debate society likely occurred at the same time as the 1821–1822 school winter term, if not earlier (rural debate clubs met most frequently during the winter months, when farm work was minimal). In addition, specifically after January 1822, at least one

emerge from his personal library. For example, Joseph owned the Reverend Charles A. Goodrich's schoolbook *A History of the United States* (1822), an advanced school reader that Joseph donated to the Nauvoo Library and Literary Institute on January 31, 1844.[87] First published sometime after March 8, 1822, Goodrich's *History* quickly became popular in common schools and was "reprinted forty times in just ten years; eventually his work sold over 150,000 copies during the decade of the 1840s."[88] Nevertheless, rather than encountering this popular text in school, Joseph likely used this schoolbook in one of the several avenues of self-improvement he pursued, such as domestic education or participation with the juvenile debate society.[89]

More directly linked to classroom study, Joseph's copy of Murray's *English Reader* (1799) suggests Joseph's impressive level of common school achievement. Murray's *Reader* was one of the most advanced

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other "debating school" formed in the Palmyra area. See Marquardt, *The Rise of Mormonism*, 50n56. Yet, the records for all these clubs are currently lost or unknown.

87. Kenneth W. Godfrey, "A Note on the Nauvoo Library and Literary Institute," *BYU Studies* 14, no. 3 (1974), 1–2.

88. Barry Joyce, *The First U.S. History Textbooks: Constructing and Disseminating the American Tale in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Lexington Books, 2015), 45. On March 8, 1822, Goodrich submitted his manuscript for copyright to Charles A. Ingersoll, Clerk of the District of Connecticut. See Rev. Charles A. Goodrich, *A History of the United States of America*, 3rd ed. (Hartford: Barber & Robinson, 1823), imprint.

89. Even though we do not have records of the schoolbooks in Manchester classrooms during Joseph's years there (approximately 1822 to 1825), New York common schools rarely used American history textbooks at this time. In 1826, the first year state records identified schoolbooks in common school classrooms, only six towns in the entire state used an American history text, none of them in Ontario, Wayne, or Chenango counties. See JA 50: Appendix A-9, A-40. While a local Manchester teacher may have adopted Goodrich's *History* during Joseph's attendance at school, it is much more likely that Joseph obtained this book on his own.

textbooks that youths encountered in common schools.[90] Only the oldest and most experienced common school students studied from this text, which required a prerequisite sequence of schoolbooks that included primers, spellers, grammars, and other introductory readers. Thus, Murray's *Reader* not only reveals Joseph's abilities, it also signals the extensive history of educational development needed in order to acquire the skills necessary to use this book. Joseph's participation in a juvenile debate club and his ownership of Murray's *Reader* and Goodrich's *History* therefore provide clues which suggest that Joseph continued—even if only intermittently—to attend school in Manchester during his later teenage years.[91] In any event, Smith's formal education in Manchester would have ranged from a minimum of one winter term (1820–1821) to a maximum of five winter terms (1820–1825).

South Bainbridge, New York: 1825 to 1826

The final location in this review of Joseph's formal education is South Bainbridge, New York. In October of 1825, Josiah Stowell hired Joseph Jr. to work as a scryer for a team of treasure hunters. A few months later, Joseph was arrested and stood trial in Bainbridge on March 20, 1826, accused of being a "disorderly person and an Impostor."[92] According to court documents, Joseph admitted to working for Stowell as a treasure-hunting seer, but asserted that the majority of his time was

90. John Henry Evans, *Joseph Smith: An American Prophet* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1989), 33, 436.

91. Thomas Davies Burrall of Geneva, New York, claimed Joseph worked for him as a woodcutter, "through the winter in company with some twenty or thirty others, rough back-woodsmen" (EMD 3:363–64). Even though Burrall's memorial account contains several historical inaccuracies, it is nevertheless possible that Joseph may have worked for him at some point. If so, this would likely have interrupted at least one of the winter terms during the family's Manchester period.

92. EMD 4:248–49.

spent working on Stowell's farm "and going to school."[93] Stowell's son, Josiah Jr., corroborated the court record in an 1843 letter, in which he claimed, "I have been intimately acquainted with him [Joseph Smith Jr.]. He then was about 20 years old or there about. I also went to school with him one winter."[94] Another student, Asa B. Searles, also claimed to have attended school with Smith in Bainbridge.[95]

When he started school with Josiah Jr., Joseph was nineteen years old and would turn twenty in the course of the winter term. From a modern perspective, Joseph's advanced age for such instruction might seem awkward, but no doubt his history of intermittent attendance contributed to his desire to participate. The circumstances surrounding his attendance, however, urge caution against the exclusive assumption that Joseph's attendance derived from a desire to fill any potential gaps in his education. For instance, as an older student in Chenango County, Joseph was certainly not alone. The county was consistently one of the highest in the state for teaching youths both younger and older than the statewide category of students "between the ages of five and fifteen years." When he attended school, Smith was one of 238 students who fell outside the range of five to fifteen years, which amounted to 23.3 percent of the total 1,023 taught. Assuming half of those students were older than fifteen (state statistics unfortunately group the two age groups together), then roughly 12 percent of the students were older than the five to fifteen category. In other words, when Joseph, age nineteen, started the winter term in Chenango County, roughly 12 percent of his classmates were also older than fifteen.[96] Josiah Stowell, Jr., in fact,

93. EMD 4:249.

94. EMD 4:80 (spelling and punctuation modernized).

95. EMD 4:177.

96. JA 50, vol. 1: Appendix A-13 (only 18 of 21 school districts reported this year). In the 1825 school year, Bainbridge taught 225 students younger than five or older than fifteen (25.3 percent of the total number of students taught). See JA 49: Appendix G-8 (only 16 of 20 school districts reported this year). In

who was born April 16, 1809, was himself sixteen years of age when he attended school with Joseph, and would turn seventeen before the end of the school year. Thus, Joseph's attendance may reflect his desire to participate in the same activities as his peers, as much as a personal desire to improve his education.[97]

Regardless of his reasoning, however, Joseph's time in school would not have been idle, and his age suggests an important role he may have played in the classroom. Older students were regularly enlisted as teaching assistants when the class was separated into groups, according to skill levels. For several years prior to this time, several New York schools were also experimenting with a new form of pedagogy known as the Lancasterian system.[98] In this model, older students, under direction of the schoolteacher, participated in the teaching process by guiding

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the 1824 school year, Bainbridge taught 248 (26.3 percent of the total number). See JA 48: Appendix B-4.

97. Winter terms took place when the work on farms were at a minimum, and the choice between working in the cold weather on a farm or finding shelter in the local schoolhouse with his new friends may well have influenced Joseph's motivations. Regarding older students attending common schools, Joseph's attendance was not anomalous. For instance, Oliver Culver, a twenty-five-year-old resident near Rochester, New York, was so determined to attend classes that he helped build his local schoolhouse. See Rick Grunder, *Mormon Parallels: A Bibliographic Source* (LaFayette, N.Y.: Rick Grunder Books, 2014), 42.

98. On March 16, 1817, Gideon Hawley proposed the introduction of the Lancasterian system (aka "Lancastrian") to selected schools in New York: "it is respectfully submitted, whether the time has not arrived when some provision ought to be made for the encouragement, and gradual introduction into our schools, of the Lancastrian system of education. . . . The great principle, which forms the distinctive character of this system . . . is a kind of self teaching, which the scholars are made to undergo, by means of monitors selected from themselves" (JA 41:478). The experiment, however, did not last long. In 1844, Samuel S. Randall observed, "after an ephemeral and sickly existence, these institutions, from which such favorable results were expected, languished, and with few exceptions, disappeared" (*A Digest of the Common School System of the State of New-York* [Albany, N.Y.: The State of New York, 1844], 25).

younger students in their exercises. It is possible that Smith may have been acting as a monitor, though the historical record is unfortunately silent on such details. Yet, such participation well may have influenced Joseph's desires to teach: he would eventually instruct members of the "school of the prophets" in grammar, as well as teach grammar to his family.[99] In any event, the 1825–1826 winter term was likely the last time Smith attended class in a common school.

Tallying the Time

Throughout this essay, I have revisited several of the claims and historical accounts regarding Joseph's formal education in an effort to interrogate popular notions regarding his level of literacy. I believe a close examination of the existing evidence confirms that Joseph Sr. and Lucy faced significant challenges in providing a formal education for their children. Frequent relocation, illness, and financial exigencies would have contributed to a string of interruptions, resulting in gaps and intermittent school attendance over the years. At the same time, however, the historical accounts reflect the family's recognition of the importance of education and a persistent effort to obtain it. And if the available historical references provide relatively accurate representations, then the overall amount of Joseph's formal education requires significant upward revision.

Because the historical record does not precisely identify each and every term Joseph attended school, a countless number of speculative combinations can be formulated either to expand excessively or minimize unnecessarily the number of his years of formal education. On one hand, we might claim Joseph rarely attended school, regardless of the available

99. In his journal entry of November 5, 1835, Joseph records, "in the evening lectured on Grammar" (to the "school of the prophets"). On November 11, 1835, Joseph states, "returned home and spent the evening, around my fireside, teaching my family the science of grammar." See Dean C. Jessee, *Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, 101–02, 109.

evidence. On the other hand, we might claim Joseph attended, in full or in part, every school term that he would have been eligible to attend (excluding, of course, his times of illness and the summer terms when he was likely working), spanning from the 1809–1810 winter term in Royalton, Vermont (the term in which Joseph turned four years of age and became eligible to attend school) to the 1825–1826 term in South Bainbridge, New York (the last known school term Joseph attended, when he turned twenty years of age). In the latter case, the total number of school terms that Joseph was technically eligible to attend during those fifteen years would have included six full winter terms, six full summer terms, and nine partial winter terms—or approximately ten years of school (see Appendix A for a year-by-year breakdown). What Joseph actually experienced in his life, of course, would surely have occurred somewhere in between these two extremes. To that end, this essay will attempt to minimize speculation by outlining a scenario of Joseph's participation in formal schooling that is grounded in direct and indirect historical references.

Junius Wells provides the first reference to Joseph's formal education by claiming that Joseph learned his letters from Deacon Jonathan Kinney in Vermont. This requires a minimum of one school term. If we assume he did not begin school until the 1810 summer term (delaying his start until he was four and a half years old), and if we also assume the Smith family moved to West Lebanon in the fall of 1811, then Joseph could have attended school in Royalton for three full terms (summer 1810, winter 1810–1811, summer 1811). Yet, this is the same period when Lucy claimed the Smith children had been deprived of the benefit of an education. Therefore, we will limit the estimate of Joseph's time to the winter 1810–1811 school term.

Next, assuming Lucy's dates, the Smith family moved to West Lebanon in the fall or winter of 1811, which would allow Joseph to attend the 1812 school year (winter 1811–1812 and summer 1812). As discussed earlier, Lucy stated in her history that all the Smith children who "were

of sufficient age" were sent to a local common school. Joseph, who turned six years of age during the 1811–1812 winter term, would have been included. This brings the total amount of Joseph's formal education to two winter terms and one summer term, or approximately one and a half school years.

In the 1812 to 1813 winter, Joseph fell ill. Though he likely started the winter term, Joseph would have withdrawn early, as the leg surgery and subsequent convalescence would have prevented him from attending school for the remainder of the term. Joseph most likely missed the following summer 1813 term, as well. One year after the surgery, Lucy stated that everyone in the family returned to health. No longer bedridden, though still lame and using crutches, Joseph would have had the opportunity to return to school and pick up where he left off. Thus, between the first half of the 1812–1813 winter term, combined with the latter half of the 1813–1814 winter term, Joseph would add the equivalent of one more winter term. This raises the estimated amount of formal education to approximately two school years.

Even though Joseph remained on crutches until the family moved to Palmyra, Lucy's claim that all the children in the family returned to health further suggests that Joseph's condition allowed him to return to school for the remainder of the Smith family's time in the Upper Connecticut Valley. Furthermore, Joseph's continued physical challenges that would have prevented heavy farm labor, would have allowed him to attend school during the summer terms. Nevertheless, for this estimate, I will *not* include any summer school sessions for this period. Rather, for the sake of argument, this scenario will assume that family exigencies did not permit Joseph to attend during these summers, though he was apparently physically capable to do so. This results in the equivalent of approximately one more year of formal school (winter 1814–1815 and winter 1815–1816). Joseph's total time in formal school would then be the equivalent of just over three years.

Sometime during the winter of 1816 to 1817, the Lucy and the children spent one month relocating to Palmyra, New York, from Norwich, Vermont. Once the family arrived, Lucy and Joseph Sr. appear to have enrolled the children in school for the remainder of the winter term (February and March). Between starting the winter term in Norwich, withdrawing to prepare for and complete the move to New York, and then finishing the term in Palmyra, the Smith children may have attended between two to three months for the winter 1816–1817 term. This estimate will limit the school time to the final two months in Palmyra, bringing Joseph's total school time to approximately three and a half years.

Shortly after their arrival in Palmyra, the Smiths held a family council and determined to pool their efforts in an attempt to get established. Therefore, in this scenario we will assume that Joseph, now eleven years old, began to work the same seasonal schedule as an adult, splitting time between family labors and hiring out to local farms and employers. This also means that from this time forward, Joseph would miss all future summer school sessions. Furthermore, he would start late in every ensuing winter term (thus limiting his time in school to between four and five months per year). We will also assume Joseph worked this same schedule during every subsequent harvest season, both in Palmyra and Manchester. Using the property tax records as a guide, Joseph's partial attendance during the winters would include four months of each winter term in 1817–1818, 1818–1819, and 1819–1820. This brings to the total time to the equivalent of approximately five years of formal schooling.

Several accounts from former classmates indicate Joseph also attended school in Manchester, which requires a minimum of one partial winter term (winter 1820–1821). During this period, Joseph participated in a juvenile debate club, which reveals his interest in self-improvement—an activity that also suggests continued attendance at school. Furthermore, Joseph's possession of advanced school texts, particularly Murray's *English Reader* and Charles Goodrich's *A History of*

the United States of America, alerts us to his level of achievement within the common school system. Therefore, this estimate will propose that Joseph potentially attended school in Manchester during the 1820–1821, 1821–1822, and 1822–1823 winter terms. This intermittent attendance equates to one school year and approximately four months, raising Joseph's total estimated time in formal school to six years and approximately four months. Finally, this scenario will assume that Joseph did not attend school, in either the winter or summer terms, during the 1824 or 1825 school years. Thus, the last time Joseph attended a common school would be the 1825–1826 winter term in South Bainbridge, Chenango County. This final term increases the overall estimated time that Joseph spent in formal education to the equivalent of approximately *seven full school years*—a notable increase to that proposed in previous historical representations, and one that will require the careful evaluation of future historians.

Because of the several gaps in the historical record, this estimate, of course, can either be increased or decreased, according to any given historian's perceptions and intents. In any case, however, the overall combined effect of historical sources points to a higher amount of Joseph's formal education than is traditionally acknowledged. My aim, however, is not to assert a specific figure of time; other supportable estimates certainly exist. Rather, I want to highlight the implications that can emerge when traditions and cultural contexts are brought into discussion with a detailed review of historical evidence: such incongruence, even when resistant to definitive measurements and final authoritative claims, opens windows to neglected historical narratives.

Another Facet of Joseph's Life

Joseph Smith's dynamic transformation from an uneducated farm boy to an exalted prophet of God remains deeply entangled in cultural traditions, religious identification, and the Mormon cosmology of faith. Yet,

an excavation below the often-hagiographical representations reveals a narrative of Smith's life that is equally compelling for its resonance with the individual struggle for respect and self-determination. Regardless what praise or criticism would be heaped upon his memory, Smith rose to prominence through tenacious determination, persistent hard work, and systematic self-improvement. Moreover, Smith's formal study would surely have been complemented by *informal* avenues of education, including instruction at home, reading, attendance at Sunday school, participation in a juvenile debate society, and even his preparations to become a Methodist exhorter.[100] One could argue that Smith, like so many of his ambitious fellow citizens in a striving nation, was above all an autodidact. The story of a young man, struggling against economic disadvantages and intermittent opportunities to attend school, would be inspirational and serve as a prime model for Mormon ethics of industriousness and productivity, were it not overshadowed by the near-exclusive enlistment of Smith's early life as evidence of divine manifestations beyond his humble and "uneducated" capabilities. Neither would Smith be an easy target for critics hoping to portray him as an illiterate farm boy who duped a bunch of so-called gullible, illiterate folk into following him. For below the surface of both idealized and demeaning stories, a persistent pattern of ambitious preparation begins to emerge, revealing the narrative of an individual's yearning to overcome his seemingly insurmountable obstacles to achieve a prominent role in public life and religious leadership. Smith's story truly exemplifies the ideological aspirations and ambitions of early nineteenth-century Americans, though the narrative of his self-motivated ascendance has receded into the background. It is, however, a story that deserves more nuanced respect, greater attention, and continued research.

100. EMD 2:127; EMD 3:49–50.

Appendix A: Joseph Smith Jr.—Common School Years

School Term	Joseph's Location	Joseph's Age (born December 23, 1805)	Notes
Winter 1809–1810 (i.e., the start of the 1810 school year)	Royalton, VT	3 (turns 4 on Dec. 23)	Eligible to attend school
Summer 1810	Royalton, VT	4	Eligible to attend school
Winter 1810–1811	Royalton, VT	4 (turns 5)	Eligible; attends a minimum of one school term in Royalton
Summer 1811	Royalton, VT, or West Lebanon, NH	5	Eligible[1]
Winter 1811–1812	Royalton, VT, or West Lebanon, NH	5 (turns 6)	Eligible
Summer 1812	Royalton, VT, or West Lebanon, NH	6	Eligible
Winter 1812–1813	West Lebanon, NH	6 (turns 7)	Typhoid epidemic; leg operation; winter term interrupted
Summer 1813	West Lebanon, NH (Salem, MA?)	7	Bedridden, Convalescing
Winter 1813–1814	West Lebanon, NH	7 (turns 8)	Eligible to return to school

School Term	Joseph's Location	Joseph's Age (born December 23, 1805)	Notes
Summer 1814	West Lebanon, NH	8	Eligible; on crutches, no heavy labor
Winter 1814–1815	West Lebanon, NH, or Norwich, VT	8 (turns 9)	Eligible;[2] on crutches
Summer 1815	Norwich, VT	9	Eligible; on crutches
Winter 1815–1816	Norwich, VT	9 (turns 10)	Eligible; on crutches
Summer 1816	Norwich, VT	10	Eligible; on crutches
Winter 1816–1817	Norwich to Palmyra, NY	10 (turns 11)	The family moves 300 miles; winter term interrupted
Summer 1817	Palmyra, NY	11	Eligible, but likely starts working[3]
Winter 1817–1818	Palmyra, NY	11 (turns 12)	Eligible; attends a minimum of one school term in Palmyra
Summer 1818	Palmyra, NY	12	Likely working
Winter 1818–1819	Palmyra, Main Street, and Palmyra, Stafford Road	12 (turns 13)	Eligible
Summer 1819	Palmyra, Main Street, and Palmyra, Stafford Road	13	Likely working

School Term	Joseph's Location	Joseph's Age (born December 23, 1805)	Notes
Winter 1819–1820	Palmyra, Main Street, and Palmyra, Stafford Road; working Manchester farm (Farmington)	13 (turns 14)	Eligible[4]
Summer 1820	Palmyra, Main Street, and Palmyra, Stafford Road; Palmyra to Manchester (Farmington)	14	Likely working out of town[5]
Winter 1820–1821	Palmyra, Stafford Road; Palmyra to Manchester (Farmington)[6]	14 (turns 15)	Eligible; attends a minimum of one school term in Manchester
Summer 1821	Palmyra, Stafford Road;[7] Manchester (Farmington)	15	Likely working; unlikely at school
Winter 1821–1822	Palmyra, Stafford Road;[8] Manchester formally separates from Farmington	15 (turns 16)	Eligible
Summer 1822	Manchester	16	Likely working
Winter 1822–1823	Manchester	16 (turns 17)	Eligible
Summer 1823	Manchester	17	Likely working
Winter 1823–1824	Manchester	17 (turns 18)	Eligible

School Term	Joseph's Location	Joseph's Age (born December 23, 1805)	Notes
Summer 1824	Manchester	18	Likely working
Winter 1824–1825	Manchester	18 (turns 19)	Eligible
Summer 1825	Manchester	19	Likely working
Winter 1825–1826	South Bainbridge	19 (turns 20)	Attends school

Summary

Minimum Number of School Terms Attended: 4 (one per town: Royalton, Palmyra, Manchester, South Bainbridge)

Total Number of Winter Terms Eligible for Attendance: 15

Total Number of Summer Terms Eligible for Attendance: 6

Equivalency in Eligible Full School Years: Approximately 10.5

Appendix A Notes

1. The precise timing of the Smith's move to West Lebanon is unknown. Either the Smiths moved between school terms in 1811 or 1812 (not affecting the children's schooling), or they moved at a time that would have partially interfered with the winter term. The move was regional, approximately twenty-three miles, which would have minimized the amount of school time lost.

2. The timing of the seven-mile move to Norwich, Vermont, is unknown. If it occurred during a school term, the impact would have been minimal.

3. Joseph may have started working summers to assist the family.

4. Though the family might have started developing the Manchester farm prior to contracting the land, the Smiths were not yet Manchester taxpayers. The children would likely have continued attending school in Palmyra.

5. Vogel observes that "both Joseph Jr. and Samuel Harrison are missing from the 1820 census, perhaps because they were hired out in another township" (EMD 5:391).

6. Vogel notes, "Joseph Sr. and Alvin contract with Zachariah Seymour for 100 acres of the Evertson land in Farmington [later Manchester]…. This occurred after Seymour received power of attorney for the land on 14 July 1820 and before 5 February 1821" (EMD 5:391). In terms of schooling, the same date range applies to the earliest timing for the Smith children's eligibility to attend school in Manchester.

7. Vogel notes that Lucy Smith, daughter to Joseph Sr. and Lucy, "is born in Palmyra (NY), perhaps indicating that the Smiths had not yet moved to Farmington" (EMD 5:392).

8. Vogel observes how in April of 1822, "Joseph Sr. and Alvin appear on the Palmyra road list, indicating that the Smiths had not yet moved to their Farmington (Manchester) property" (EMD 5:392).

9. See Town of Palmyra, "Town of Palmyra Board Meeting Minutes," Palmyra, N.Y.: Town & Village of Palmyra, 1816, http://www.palmyrany.com/minutes/TB/1816.pdf (accessed June 6, 2015).

Appendix B: Common School Statistics for Palmyra, Manchester (Farmington), and Bainbridge, 1817–1826[101]

Palmyra

School Year	1817	1818	1819	1820	1821
Joseph's Age	11	12	13	14	15
Overall Students Taught	NA*	987	908	1,100	1,253
Students 5 to 15 Years	NA	1,050	886	1,025	1,048
Students under 5, over 15	NA	NA	22 (2.5%)	75 (6.8%)	205 (16.4%)
School Districts	NA	18†	20	20	25
Districts Reporting	NA	NA	16	20	20
Average Months School in Session	NA	NA	NA	8	5††

101. For 1817 statistics, see JA 41:480, 484, 490. For 1818, JA 42:443, 447. For 1819, JA 43:474, 479, 480. For 1820, JA 44:559 [published typo reads 259], 562. For 1821, JA 45:626, 632. For 1822, JA 46: Appendix A-5, A-11. For 1823, JA 47: Appendix A-4, A-12, A-20. For 1824, JA 48:B4, B13, B21. For 1825, JA 49: Appendix G-8, G-20, G-30. For 1826, JA 50, vol. 1: Appendix A-13, A-20, A-27.

School Year	1822	1823	1824	1825	1826
Joseph's Age	16	17	18	19	20
Overall Students Taught	1,276	628	690	685	777
Students 5 to 15 Years	1,109	552	582	608	687
Students under 5, over 15	167 (13.1%)	76 (12%)	108 (15.7%)	77 (11.2%)	90 (11.6%)
School Districts	22	9	10	10	11
Districts Reporting	21	9	10	10	11
Average Months School in Session	7	7	8	8	8

Note: from 1817 to 1823, Palmyra statistics are recorded under Ontario County; from 1823 to 1826, Palmyra statistics are recorded under Wayne County.

*Palmyra did not submit a report for the 1817 school year.

‡Shaded areas indicate Joseph's age group and potential location for school attendance.

†This figure likely indicates the number of school districts that reported, rather than the total number of districts (in 1816, Palmyra created a 20th school district).[9]

††This figure is likely a misprint.

Manchester (Farmington)*

School Year	1817	1818	1819	1820	1821
Joseph's Age	11	12	13	14	15
Overall Students Taught	675	984	977	1,215	1,051
Students 5 to 15 Years	790	852	1,028	1,113	972‡
Students under 5, over 15	NA	132 (13.4%)	NA	102 (8.4%)	79 (7.5%)
School Districts	18	14†	18	22	21
Districts Reporting	NA	NA	14	19	14
Average Months School in Session	NA	NA	NA	7	8

School Year	1822	1823	1824	1825	1826
Joseph's Age	16	17	18	19	20
Overall Students Taught	1,236	770	850	985	987
Students 5 to 15 Years	1,162	710	767	806	821
Students under 5, over 15	74 (6%)	60 (7.8%)	83 (9.8%)	179 (18.2%)	166 (16.8%)
School Districts	18	11	12	13	13
Districts Reporting	18	10	12	13	13
Average Months School in Session	8	7	8	8	8

*1817 through 1821 statistics are for Farmington (Manchester not yet created); in 1822, Farmington and Manchester filed a joint report; 1823 through 1826 statistics are for Manchester.

‡Shaded areas indicate Joseph's age group and potential location for school attendance (statewide inconsistencies in a standard for determining who qualified as a fifteen-year-old means Smith could have been counted in either category for 1821).

†This figure likely represents the number of districts reporting, rather than total number of districts.

Bainbridge, Chenango County

School Years	1817	1818	1819	1820	1821
Joseph's Age	11	12	13	14	15
Overall Students Taught	642	567	772	774	721
Students 5 to 15 Years	537	458	607	571	544
Students under 5, over 15	105 (16.4%)	110 (19.4%)	165 (21.4%)	173 (23.3%)	177 (24.6%)
School Districts	17	17	18	21	18
Districts Reporting	12	11	16	13	14
Average Months School in Session	NA	NA	NA	6	8

School Years	1822	1823	1824	1825	1826
Joseph's Age	16	17	18	19	20
Overall Students Taught	866	838	943	891	1,023
Students 5 to 15 Years	699	679	695	666	785
Students under 5, over 15	167 (19.3%)	159 (19%)	248 (26.3%)	225 (25.3%)	238 (23.3%)
School Districts	19	20	19	20	21
Districts Report-ing	17	18	19	16	18
Average Months School in Session	8	7	7	7	6

‡Shaded area indicates Joseph's age group and location for school attendance.

THE HOLY PRIESTHOOD, THE HOLY GHOST, AND THE HOLY COMMUNITY

Benjamin Keogh

In response to the question "How can a spirit be a member of the godhead?" Joseph Fielding Smith wrote, "we should have no time to enter into speculation in relation to the Holy Ghost," suggesting that we "leave a matter which in no way concerns us alone."[1] Perhaps because of this, the Holy Ghost has become one of the "most taboo and hence least studied"[2] subjects in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Nevertheless, here I will explore the Holy Ghost's purview, in its particular relation to priesthood. It may prove most useful to begin

A version of this essay was given at the 2015 Summer Seminar on Mormon Culture. I would like to express thanks to Terryl and Fiona Givens and my fellow seminarians for their input and assistance.

1. Joseph Fielding Smith, "How Can a Spirit be a Member of the Godhead?," in *Answers to Gospel Questions,* vol. 2 (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1958), 145. Read in context, this suggestion to "leave the matter alone" may have more to do with speculation as to the Holy Ghost's origin and destiny.

2. Vern G. Swanson, "The Development of the Concept of a Holy Ghost in Mormon Thought," in *Line Upon Line: Essays on Mormon Doctrine*, edited by Gary James Bergera (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1989), 89–101. Indeed, it appears that the Harold B. Lee Library at Brigham Young University holds only six LDS books on the subject: Oscar W. McConkie, *The Holy Ghost* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1944); Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet, *The Holy Ghost* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1989); Mary Margaret Muller, *The Holy Ghost: The Third Member of the Godhead* (Bountiful, Utah: Horizon Publishers, 2001); John D. Whetten, comp., *Living by the Spirit* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1980); Duane S. Crowther, *Gifts of the Spirit* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965); N. B. Lundwall, comp., *Discourses on the Holy Ghost* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1959).

the conversation with four statements from Joseph Smith that directly relate, unify, or explicitly link "the Holy Priesthood & the Holy Ghost."[3]

First, Wilford Woodruff records Joseph teaching that power in sermonizing comes from God through "the Holy Priesthood & the Holy Ghost."[4] Second, William McIntire reports Joseph saying "there is a prist-Hood (*sic*) with the Holy Ghost & Key."[5] Again, Wilford Woodruff's journal recounts Joseph Smith stating that until Cornelius "received the gift of the Holy Ghost" he could not have performed healing of the sick or casting out of devils, both duties typically associated with the priesthood.[6] Lastly, in a *Times and Seasons* article, Joseph wrote that the gift of the Holy Ghost was "necessary" both "to make and to organize the priesthood."[7]

It appears that these oblique references were never expounded upon and we are left to wonder how the priesthood and Holy Ghost work in unity in powerful sermonizing. What does that mean for the un-ordained? Can they not preach powerful sermons? These questions become all the more pronounced when we consider the context that William Patterson McIntire gives to Smith's comments: "Joseph said we Do not take Notice of things as they Read them—or they might know things as they Read them—he quotes rather 2d Repent & be Baptized &c—& ye Shall Receive the Gift of the Holly Ghost—Now said he (taking up his Cap & presenting to Prd Law) in Giveing you this Gift is not giving myself. However there is a prist-Hood with the Holy Ghost & Key."[8] This suggests that after repentance and baptism one receives a gift from the Holy Ghost;

3. Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, eds., *The Words of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Grandin Book, 1991), 7.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid., 64.

6. Ibid., 108.

7. Joseph Smith, "Gift of the Holy Ghost," *Times and Seasons,* Jun. 15, 1842, 823.

8. Ehat and Cook, *Words,* 64.

this gift appears to be, at least in this instance, "a prist-Hood" (*sic*), which changes the question entirely: what exactly is the priesthood that is with the Holy Ghost?

Furthermore, one may ask, why can one not heal the sick or cast out devils without the Holy Ghost? What does it mean that priesthood can't be made without the Holy Ghost? Indeed, what does it mean to "make" priesthood? What is involved in that making and what does the Holy Ghost have to do with it? One may also ask why this conflation entered Joseph's teaching and where it came from. While this last question may be impossible to answer, locating similar sentiments in other faith traditions, particularly within the religious milieu of Joseph's time, is not.

There is a clear tradition in both Protestantism and Catholicism of priesthood being transmitted through the Holy Ghost, as well as a sense of a mutually co-existing ministerial priesthood and a "common priesthood of all the faithful." The Catholic Catechism explains that all faithful communicants participate "each in its own proper way, in the one priesthood of Christ."[9] Other traditions indicate that at least the intent of common priesthood may be traced back to ancient Israel, perhaps even to Adam, and into the pre-earth life. It may be that by bringing snapshots of these traditions into focus they may enter into dialogue with current debates within Mormonism, helping to enrich the conversation.

A Snapshot of Protestant and Catholic Positions

In 1822 under the pseudonym Vindex, William Gibbons, a Quaker in Philadelphia, wrote a series of letters addressed to Presbyterians. Letter IV lambasted Presbyterian theological seminaries, declaring their graduates "a tribe of theologians, inspired by the demon of discord . . . corrupt,

9. *Catechism of the Catholic Church* [hereafter CCC] (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1994), n. 1547.

mercenary, and ambitious, in the highest degree."[10] He denounced their "scheme" as "the cloven foot of priestcraft" shown most fully in their "views . . . on the subject of ordination."[11] Prominent in his critique was the Presbyterian requirement that "no candidate . . . be licensed, unless . . . he shall have studied divinity, at least two years, under some approved divine or professor of theology; and also . . . the presbytery shall require of him—1. A Latin Exegesis . . . 2. A critical exercise. 3. A lecture. 4. A popular sermon."[12] Gibbons dismissed their calls as "outward and human."[13] He declared that "there is but one source from which ministerial power and authority, ever was, is, or can be derived, and that is the Holy Spirit."[14] For, "it was by and through this holy unction, that all the prophets spake from Moses to Malachi."[15] Interestingly, Presbyterianism itself cites this "holy unction" as "not only the fact but the origin of our priesthood" claiming to be made "priests by the Great High Priest Himself . . . transmitted through the consecration and seal of the Holy Spirit."[16]

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10. William Gibbons, *Truth Advocated in Letters Addressed to the Presbyterians* (Philadelphia: Joseph Rakestraw, 1822), 95.

11. Ibid., 104.

12. Ibid., 103.

13. Ibid., 102.

14. Ibid., 107.

15. Ibid., 85.

16. "Hours with Holy Scripture," *The Reformed Presbyterian Magazine* (Edinburgh: Johnstone, Hunter & Company, 1866), 45. Similarly, the Scottish theologian and Kirkman T. F. Torrance describes "the Risen and Ascended Lord" acting "directly through His Spirit ordaining His servant to the ministry . . . in and through the church." See T. F. Torrance, "Consecration and Ordination," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 11, no. 3 (1958): 225–52. For Stephen V. Sprinkle, the current order of ordination in the Presbyterian Church (USA) is "firm and clear," that is, "The Holy Spirit is seen to be active in the choice of the minister in the presentation, the ordination, and the assent of the congregation. . . . As a minister in the church, the ordinand is being ordained in the power of the

For Anglicans, the pattern was set by Christ. As William Cooke writes, just as Jesus "was first *anointed* with the Holy Ghost, in private, at his conception, and then publicly at Jordan; *in private,* to give him the office ordained for Him, *publicly*, to proclaim His mission from God; so He first anointed His Apostles in private for their Apostolical Office, and then publicly upon the Day of Pentecost to give them their credentials in the sight of men."[17] For all, the pattern was biblical: "God anointed Jesus with the Holy Ghost and with power" (Acts 10:38), Jesus "breathed on" his apostles and said "receive ye the Holy Ghost" (John 20:22), "as my Father sent me, even so send I you" (John 20:21). Ministerial authority is received from God, through the Holy Ghost. The laying on of hands was introduced instead of breathing because, with Cooke now quoting one of the sixteenth century's most important theologians, "neither spirit nor spiritual authority may be thought to proceed from us."[18]

Given the apparent need for Protestants to differentiate their authority as separate and distinct from that of Catholicism, while also legitimizing it as from God, it is easy to conceive of these teachings as an exegetical masterstroke. This view is muddied by Catholicism's use of those same verses in John 20:21–23 as a basis for Apostolic authority and commission, and further through their teachings on ordination.

Spirit as a minister of Jesus Christ," while "Commitments and prayers beseech the Holy Spirit to *do* something that changes the way the ordinand *is*." See Stephen V. Sprinkle, *Ordination: Celebrating the Gift of Ministry* (St. Louis, Mo.: Chalice Press, 2004), 69–75.

17. William Cooke, *The Power of the Priesthood in Absolution, and a Few Remarks on Confession* (Oxford: John Henry and James Parker, 1858), 15.

18. Ibid., 17. See also Benjamin Hanbury, *The Ecclesiastical Polity and Other Works of Richard Hooker,* vol. 2 (London: Holdsworth and Ball, 1830), 377. Torrance described such laying on of hands as "the apostolically appointed sign and instrument used by the Spirit in bestowing the *charisma* for the ministry," maintaining that "It is Christ, not the Apostles, nor the Church, who bestows upon the ordained minister the Spirit and gifts of the Spirit for the exercise of his office." See Torrance, "Consecration and Ordination," 243.

Citing Paul's admonition to Timothy to "neglect not the grace that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with imposition of hands" (1 Timothy 4:14, Douay-Rheims), it is taught, "a priest lays on hands, but does not ordain." Rather, "grace" is "attached to this external sign and conferred by it. . . . This grace is something permanent" that allows one to "teach and command, to discharge his office rightly. This grace then is . . . a gift of the Holy Spirit for the rightful discharge of official duties."[19] Or, as the thought of one influential Catholic theologian has been summarized, "ordination is a bestowal of the Holy Spirit" empowering the ordained to "execute their mission."[20] For Catholics, then, ordination is "a gift of the Holy Spirit that permits the exercise of a 'sacred power' (*sacra potestas*) that can come only from Christ himself through his Church." As such, "the laying on of hands" constitutes "the visible sign of this ordination."[21]

Priesthood Transmission in Mormonism

What might this mean for Mormonism? First, we must ask a fundamental and unaddressed question: How does God actually transmit priesthood? When Mormons lay hands on heads with the intention of conferring priesthood, is power transmitted from those hands to those heads? Does the priesthood authority "make" priesthood within the ordainer? Could he? Can a person give to another person God's power, which is what the priesthood purports to be? Or can that power come only from God? If only from God, how does God transmit it? Does it

19. Hubert Ahaus, "Orders," in *The Catholic Encyclopedia,* vol. 11, edited by Charles George Herbermann, et al. (New York: The Encyclopedia Press, 1913), 279.

20. Isaac Kizhakkeparampil, *The Invocation of the Holy Spirit as Constitutive of the Sacraments according to Cardinal Yves Congar* (Rome: Pontifica Università Gregoriana, 1995), 66.

21. CCC, n. 1538.

actually take the Holy Ghost to "make" priesthood? In talking of receiving the "baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost" through the laying on of hands, Orson Pratt remarked, "I do not know why it was that the Lord established this ordinance. He seems to have, in all ages, bestowed blessings upon the children of men through simple ordinances."[22] Perhaps it is analogous to 1 Corinthians 3:6–7, where Paul plants, Apollos waters, and God gives the increase. So then, to paraphrase, neither is he that lays on hands anything, neither he that has hands laid upon him, but it is God that giveth the increase.

Consider this from the book of Moses:

> And thus he [Adam] was baptized, and the Spirit of God descended upon him, and . . . he was born of the Spirit, and became quickened in the inner man. And he heard a voice out of heaven, saying: Thou art baptized with fire, and with the Holy Ghost. This is the record of the Father, and the Son, from henceforth and forever; And thou art after the order of him who was without beginning of days or end of years, from all eternity to all eternity. Behold, thou art one in me, a son of God; and thus may all become my sons. (Moses 6:65–68)

First Adam is baptized in water, then the Spirit descends, which baptizes him "with fire and the Holy Ghost," and a voice from heaven declares priesthood, echoing language from Hebrews 7 and Doctrine and Covenants 107, "thou art after the order of him who was without beginning of days or end of years."[23] Perhaps this is the way priesthood has always been transmitted: from God to humans through the medium of the Holy Ghost.

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22. Orson Pratt, Nov. 2, 1873, *Journal of Discourses,* 16:287.

23. Hebrews 7:3: "Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither *beginning of days, nor end of life*; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually"; Doctrine and Covenants 107:3: "Before his day it was called the Holy Priesthood, *after the order of the Son of God.*" See also Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 14:28: "It being after the order of the Son of God; which order came, not by man, nor the will of man; neither by father nor mother; neither by *beginning of days nor end of years*; but of God."

Echoes of this idea are found elsewhere in Mormon scripture. In the Doctrine and Covenants we read, "that the rights of the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven" (121:36). Offending those powers results in a withdrawal of the Spirit, "and when it is withdrawn, Amen to the priesthood or the authority of that man" (121:37). That the Spirit's withdrawal results in the priesthood's cessation is suggestive of a reciprocal relationship wherein the presence of the Spirit is necessary to activate the efficacy of that priesthood. Such understanding may illuminate Moroni's meaning in writing that their priests and teachers were ordained "according to the gifts and callings of God . . . by the power of the Holy Ghost" (Moroni 3:4).

A Universal Priesthood of Believers

Returning to the account in Moses, we hear in the declaration of Adam's sonship echoes of the first and seventeenth chapters of John: "thou art one in me," declares God to Adam. In his High Priestly Prayer Jesus prays for those who "believe on me . . . That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I thee, that they may be one in us" (John 17:20–21). There is, then, with the declaration of Adam's sonship, a promise, "thus may all become my sons." According to Matthew Henry, the "scope and design" of the first chapter of John is to help us "receive" Jesus, "and rely upon him, as our Prophet, Priest, King."[24] To those who do, "gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:12). Marvin R. Vincent, after comparing the different uses of "power" in the New Testament, describes the usage here

24. Matthew Henry, "John 1," in *Matthew Henry Commentary on the Whole Bible (Complete)* (1706), available at http://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/john/1.html.

as "not merely *possibility* or *ability,* but legitimate *right* derived from a competent source."[25]

Talk of power and legitimate rights coming to "as many as . . . believe on his name" sounds a wee bit like stereotyped explanations of the Protestant doctrine of the Priesthood of All Believers. One Latter-day Saint scholar has written that Protestants "hold to the concept that all true believers in Christ are automatically authorized to baptize and perform other ordinances and no exceptional authority from God is necessary beyond acceptance of Christ as Savior." He then labels as "ironic" the Lutheran and Anglican "continued . . . practice of ordaining ministers."[26] While it is true that the doctrine is commonly traced back to Luther, Timothy Wengert has shown that the phrase "priesthood of all believers" occurs nowhere in Luther's own writings.[27] He informs us that the "first serious discussion of the category though not the term itself," occurred in 1675, almost 130 years after Luther's death, with Philipp Spener's plea for "the establishment and diligent practice of the spiritual priesthood."[28] For Wengert, Luther's elimination of "the distinction between the laity and clergy" is "far more revolutionary" [29] than the common view of the priesthood of all believers.

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25. Marvin R. Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament,* vol. 2 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1889), 49.

26. John A. Tvedtnes, "Is There a 'Priesthood of All Believers'?," *Fair Mormon* (blog), http://www.fairmormon.org/perspectives/publications/is-there-a-priesthood-of-all-believers.

27. Timothy Wengert, "The Priesthood of All Believers and Other Pious Myths," *Institute of Liturgical Studies Occasional Papers,* paper 2 (Valparaiso University, 2005), 1, available at http://scholar.valpo.edu/ils_papers/2/. He writes: "armed with the latest technology (the critical Weimar Edition of Luther's works in digital form online), I set off to do my work. Immediately, I ran into the red queen. There were no references to this phrase anywhere in Luther's own writings."

28. Ibid., 2.

29. Ibid., 5.

Wengert walks us through one of Luther's most influential treatises, *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation Concerning the Improvement of the Christian Stand.* The German word from which the title gets its English "stand" can also be translated as "estate" or "walk of life" and refers to "groups" that have standing: "in the church itself there were two . . . the worldly (or secular [which included the un-ordained]) and the spiritual (including priests, bishops, and monastics)." Here then, in the title is Luther's first revolution; he "has reduced the Christian *Stand*, or walk of life"[30] from two to one. In God's eyes there is "one baptism, one gospel, one faith," all "are equally Christians." For Luther, "all Christians are part of the spiritual walk of life [*Stand*], and among them there is no difference except because of . . . office."[31] Wengert explains that "to reduce service and office to 'mere' functions, the authority of which is derived from the priesthood of all believers is to miss Luther's point entirely. The fact that he used this word, 'serve,' means that Luther placed at the center of his understanding of offices not '*Herrschaft*' (lordship) but '*Dienerschaft*' (servanthood)." Having an office, therefore, in "the one body of Christ can never be a claim to power"; rather, it is "a powerful claim to weakness, to service."[32] The text declares all members to be "of the one body of Christ and individually servants to each other in our respective offices."[33] For Wengert, Luther's insistence that any and all Christians become spiritual through baptism "eliminated the laity as a separate category of Christian." This collapsing of categories, however, left Luther two problems: "what ordination was and what set the public office of ministry apart from other Christian offices."[34]

30. Ibid., 6–7.

31. Ibid., 9.

32. Ibid., 10.

33. Ibid., 11.

34. Ibid., 13.

He solved these problems by explaining that although we are "all consecrated priests through baptism," this "does not authorize us to exercise the pastoral office."[35] Wengert asserts that "in Luther's mind, being *equally* priests through baptism prevents—*prevents*—the very kind of power-grabbing that passes for congregational autonomy or lay authority in churches today. . . . For what is held in common no one may take for themselves without the community's permission and entrustment." Therefore, "neither the community nor the officeholder possesses the authority of the office indelibly. Instead, the authority of the office rests in the office itself and in the word of God that created the office and for which Christ established the office."[36] There is "a single walk of life but many offices," with the point of each office being "always and only service: whether making shoes, keeping order, or administering God's Word and sacraments." For Luther, then, the spiritual life was the priestly life, and the priestly life, the community life where "each with his office or work ought to . . . support body and soul, just as the members of the body all serve each other."[37]

Perhaps in response to more liberal expansions and interpretations of Luther's thought, *The Catholic Encyclopedia* of 1913 declared, "it is true that every Christian receives sanctifying grace which confers on him a priesthood." Citing 1 Peter 2:9, it tells us "all Christians are a 'kingly priesthood'" and then explains that "now as then the special and sacramental priesthood strengthens and perfects the universal priesthood."[38] The Catechism expands the Encyclopedic entry, explaining that the "very differences which the Lord has willed to put between the members of his body serve its unity and mission,"[39] with the "ministerial priesthood . . .

35. Ibid., 16.

36. Ibid., 16–17.

37. Ibid., 18.

38. Ahaus, "Orders," 279.

39. CCC, n. 873.

at the service of the common priesthood."[40] This common priesthood comprises "the laity . . . who by Baptism are incorporated into Christ"[41] and are thereby "anointed by the Holy Spirit" to "consecrate the world itself to God . . . by the holiness of their lives."[42]

To summarize, for both Luther and Catholics the priestly life of the community begins with baptism, and the accompanying reception of the Holy Spirit. The presence of both an ordained ministerial priesthood and a universal priesthood does not present a false dichotomy, rather they work together in the one priesthood of Christ; the universal sustaining the ministerial, the ministerial perfecting the universal.

What might this have to do with Mormonism? To begin to answer, let us briefly return to Luther and then look at Saint Cyril of Jerusalem. According to Paul Althaus, Luther's conception of baptized priests was the "exact opposite" of the "religious individualism" the traditional Protestant understanding conveys; rather it expresses the "reality of the congregation as a community." In this conception, the "priesthood of Christians flows from the priesthood of Christ . . . through baptism and the anointing with the Holy Spirit"[43] and "the Christian's priestly sacrifice is nothing else than Christ's own sacrifice."[44] The priest's work then includes, (1) mutually bearing burdens, (2) interceding with God and praying for others, (3) proclaiming the word one to another, (4) standing before God, and (5) sacrificing themselves to God.[45] In this way, they emulate Christ by performing, on a smaller scale, his priestly work.

In light of this, consider these words from the Book of Mormon:

40. CCC, n. 1547.

41. CCC, n. 897.

42. CCC, n. 901.

43. Paul Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), 314.

44. Ibid., 315.

45. Ibid., 313–14.

> And it came to pass that he [Alma] said unto them: Behold, here are the waters of Mormon . . . and . . . as ye are desirous to come into the fold of God, and to be called his people, and are willing to [1] bear one another's burdens, that they may be light; Yea, and are willing to [2] mourn with those that mourn . . . and [3] comfort those that stand in need of comfort, and to [4] stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places that ye may be in, even until death, that ye may be redeemed of God. . . . Now I say unto you, if this be the desire of your hearts, what have you against being baptized in the name of the Lord, as a witness before him that ye have entered into a covenant with him, that ye will [5] serve him and keep his commandments, that he may pour out his Spirit more abundantly upon you? (Mosiah 18:8–10)

Thus Alma's people emulate Christ by performing, on a smaller scale, his priestly work. In this way the community exists through sacrifice, which sacrifice, as Althaus describes the theology of Luther, "is an offering with and in Christ in that one sacrifice which took place once but is yet everywhere present, which cannot be repeated but lives on in the reality of the community."[46]

A Theology of Becoming

Participating with Christ in his work is also the main theme of Saint Cyril of Jerusalem's twenty-first Catechetical Lecture, the third of five given to converts after baptism. Quoting Acts 10:38, initiates are told "Christ was not anointed by men . . . but the Father . . . anointed Him with the Holy Ghost."[47] Because of this, Christian converts were, after being baptized, "given an Unction, the anti-type of that wherewith Christ was anointed; and this is the Holy Ghost."[48] This unction involved being anointed with "holy ointment" considered "Christ's gift of grace and

46. Ibid., 315.

47. Saint Cyril of Jerusalem, "Catechetical Lecture 21," 2, available at http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/310121.htm.

48. Ibid., 1.

by the advent of the Holy Ghost, [he or she] is made fit to impart His Divine Nature."[49] After being anointed on the forehead, ears, nostrils, and breast, initiates were told that "as Christ after his Baptism, and the visitation of the Holy Ghost, went forth and vanquished the adversary, so likewise ye, after Holy Baptism and the Mystical Chrism, having put on the whole armour of the Holy Ghost, are to stand against the power of the adversary, and vanquish it."[50] They were now not only "worthy" of being "called Christians" but having "become partakers of Christ" were "properly called Christs" through "receiving . . . the Holy Ghost."[51]

That the reception of the Holy Ghost makes one a type of Christ is also evidenced in the seventh chapter of John. This chapter is set against the backdrop of the feast of tabernacles, the "third of the great Jewish festivals . . . originally last[ing] seven days. . . . In the liturgy it became known as the 'season of our joy,'" while Josephus calls it the "most holy and important feast."[52] According to Raymond Brown, the feast was associated with "the triumphant 'day of the Lord'" wherein "Yahweh pours out a spirit of compassion and supplication on Jerusalem. . . . He opens a fountain for the House of David to cleanse Jerusalem . . . living waters flow out from Jerusalem" healing the Dead Sea. "In this ideal feast of the tabernacles," Brown writes, "everything in Jerusalem is holy."[53] On each of the seven mornings the high priest leads a procession from the pool of Siloam to the temple. Another priest fills and carries a golden pitcher of water for pouring into a silver basin, connected to the base of altar, at the time of the morning sacrifice. Of the accompanying proces-

49. Ibid., 3.

50. Ibid., 4.

51. Ibid., 1.

52. Joseph Jacobs and H. G. Friedmann, "Tabernacle, Feast of," *Jewish Encyclopedia* (1906), available at http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/14185-tabernacles-feast-of.

53. Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John (I–XII)*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 29 (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1966), 326.

sion, some drink from the pool, others chant words from Isaiah, "ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, with joy . . . draw water out of the wells of salvation" (see Isaiah 55:1 and 12:3). According to the Mishnah, "Anyone who has never seen the rejoicing at the place of [water] drawing, has never seen rejoicing in all his days."[54]

It was against this backdrop that Jesus stood and declared himself the Living Water: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink" (John 7:37). To this astounding claim he added another, "He that believeth on me . . . out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water," and John adds, "this he spake of the Spirit, which that they believe on him should receive" (7:38–39). In partaking of the water, one becomes the water. Jesus himself was the fountain, poured out and running over to cleanse Jerusalem. Those that believe on him, then, are Jerusalem, with living waters flowing from them to heal the world's Dead Sea. In very deed those who are "incorporated into Christ"[55] and "anointed by the Holy Spirit" are to "consecrate the world itself to God . . . by the holiness of their lives."[56]

A similar motif—of the partaker becoming the thing partaken of—is also found in the Book of Mormon. Father Lehi has a dream, in which after travelling through a dark and dreary wasteland and praying for mercy he comes to a large field containing a tree "whose fruit was desirable to make one happy." As he partakes of the fruit he finds it "most sweet, above all that [he had] ever before tasted" and that "it filled his soul with exceedingly joy" (1 Nephi 8:7–12). His son Nephi also beheld the tree declaring it "the most desirable above all;" his Spirit guide, unsatisfied with that description adds, "and the most joyous to the soul" (1 Nephi 11:22–23). It is revealed to Nephi that the tree and its fruit represent

54. Mishnah Sukkah 5:1, *Sefaria: A Living Library of Jewish Texts,* available at http://www.sefaria.org/Mishnah_Sukkah.5?lang=en&layout=lines&sidebarLang=all.

55. CCC, n. 897.

56. Ibid., n. 901.

the love of God in the gift of his Son. In the thirty-second chapter of Alma, after discussing the process of cultivating belief in Jesus, Alma describes again the tree and its fruit as "most precious . . . sweet above all that is sweet . . . and pure above all that is pure" and proclaims that feasting thereon will leave you "filled, that ye hunger not, neither shall ye thirst" (Alma 32:42). Alma then teaches redemption through Christ and encourages his hearers to "plant this word in your hearts, and . . . nourish it with your faith" (Alma 33:23), to believe on him. For those that do, Alma said, the word becomes in them "a tree springing up . . . unto everlasting life" (33:23). In partaking of the tree one becomes the tree. After partaking, Lehi's immediate desire was that others should partake also, and he became an instrument of their doing so. We cannot receive life, it would seem, whether from the Living Tree or the Living Water, without becoming a source of that life for others. Indeed, as Saint Cyril instructed his initiates, Christians having "become partakers of Christ" were "properly called Christs."[57]

A Community of Believers

As evidenced by its invocation in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*,[58] Peter's injunction that Christians "are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people" (1 Peter 2:9) is often employed as the basis for a universal priesthood of believers. Constable declares, "every individual Christian is a priest before God,"[59] and Mason states that, "every member of [God's organized empire] is a priest,"[60] while Poole

57. Saint Cyril, "Catechetical Lecture 21," 1.

58. Ahaus, "Orders," 279: "thus under the New, all Christians are 'a kingly priesthood' (1 Peter 2:9)."

59. Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on 1 Peter, 2016 Edition," *Expository Notes,* available at http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/1peter.pdf.

60. A. J. Mason, "1 Peter," *A New Testament Commentary for English Readers,* edited by Charles John Ellicott (London: Cassell and Company, 1987), 403.

describes believers as "all of them priests."[61] For John Elliott, however, this is a misreading. In his exegetical examination of 1 Peter 2:4–10, he concludes that these verses were "intended as an explication . . . primarily of election" describing "the original Petrine conception of the believing community."[62] Or, as stated more bluntly elsewhere, "Election rather than priesthood is its central focus."[63] Quoting Krister Stendahl, Elliott affirms that "Election in Christ not only constitutes a new society; its meaning is to be found in the new society and not in the status of individuals."[64] As such, terms like "royal priesthood" and "holy nation" are applicable in this instance "only to *a people, a community* and not to individuals."[65] In this way, Elliott rejects the conventional reading, declaring the "common assumption"[66] without foundation.

Communities are, nevertheless, made up of individuals; what then of this community's individuals? For Elliott, those who come to Jesus and are born of the Spirit become "living stones as He is the living stone."[67] Just as in partaking of the water, one becomes the water, or in partaking of the tree, one becomes the tree, it would seem that in building upon the stone, one becomes the stone. "You are the body of Christ," says Paul, "and individually members of it" (1 Corinthians 12:27, NRSV). As in the

61. Matthew Poole, *Commentary on the Holy Bible,* available in part at http://biblehub.com/commentaries/1_peter/2-9.htm.

62. John H. Elliott, *The Elect and the Holy: An Exegetical Examination of 1 Peter 2:4–10 and the Phrase 'basileion hierateuma'* (Eugene, Ore.: Wipf and Stock, 2006), 217.

63. John H. Elliott, *1 Peter,* The Anchor Yale Bible, vol. 37B (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 453.

64. Krister Stendahl, "The Called and the Chosen: An Essay on Election," in *The Root of the Vine: Essays in Biblical Theology,* edited by Anton Fridrichsen (New York: Philosophical Library, 1953), 69; quoted in John H. Elliott, *1 Peter,* 222–23.

65. Elliott, *1 Peter,* 223.

66. Ibid., 220.

67. Ibid., 222.

process of constructing a house, the individual identity of each stone is subsumed by the identity of the house, so in the process of constructing God's spiritual house—this new community—the individual identity of its members is subsumed by the identity of the Christ. In this way "The reality of what this community is . . . and what she does . . . is grounded in the reality" of "Him to Whom this community commits herself."[68] Elsewhere this community is described as having "a singular mission," as having "a special purpose in God's saving plan." Their election, constitutive of "being set apart for service," occurs through "the sanctifying power or action of the Holy Spirit,"[69] and fits them to live lives of holiness. As "God's people," they are "to be like Christ,"[70] that is, their service is to be his service. As Jesus "went about doing good" (Acts 10:39), after his anointing with the Holy Ghost, so now must they; as he relieved suffering, so now must they. Assimilation into the spiritual brickwork of God's house, therefore, is not enough: their lives must imitate Christ's.

That the Petrine construction of 1 Peter 2:9 draws explicitly on language from Exodus 19:6 and Isaiah 43:20–21—the two phrases from Exodus sandwiching the passage from Isaiah—is firmly established.[71] The Exodus verse describes Israel as "a kingdom of priests." Interpretation of the phrase, William Propp notes, falls one of two ways: "elitist" or "egalitarian." For the elitists "Israel is to be a holy nation ruled by (even holier) priests," while egalitarians hold to the "extreme sanctity

68. Ibid.

69. Stephen Ayodeji A. Fagbemi, *Who are the Elect in 1 Peter?: A Study in Biblical Exegesis and Its Application to the Anglican Church of Nigeria* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), 74.

70. Earl J. Richard, *Reading 1 Peter, Jude, and 2 Peter: A Literary and Theological Commentary,* Reading the New Testament, vol. 12 (Macon, Ga.: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, 1984), 85.

71. Paul J. Achtemeier, *1 Peter: A Commentary on First Peter,* edited by Eldon Jay Epp (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 164.

of *all* Israel"—this formulation, he asserts, "most favor."[72] In his close reading of this verse and textually related verses, John Davies concludes that the designation refers to "Israel as a whole."[73] For Davies, Israel is "favoured with a 'covenant,'"[74] designed to draw them "to the court of the divine king." As a token of their chosen status Israel is endowed with a "corporate priesthood"[75] via the "priestly ordination rite" of Exodus 24:1–11, in which "all Israelites participate directly."[76] Here, blood is sprinkled on the altar (v. 6), and then on the people (v. 8)—on the altar to represent the people's giving up their lives to God, on the people, to represent God's renewal of that life. In this way, Israel was "[transposed] into the kingdom of God," the covenant becoming "a vital power," which "sanctified [them] into a kingdom of priests"[77] and endowed them with spiritual power.

The covenant also changed the reality of their relationship with God and others. Israel was not only "set apart . . . *from* other peoples" they were set apart "*for* a specific purpose." Looking outward beyond themselves, this "priestly community" was responsible for portraying to others "all that is ideal about humanity."[78] In this way, Israel's calling was to be God's people in his created world, to bring the world to the knowledge of God. In other words, they were to be God in the world. Here the covenant constituted them as "the new humanity, the true

72. William H. C. Propp, *Exodus 1–18,* The Anchor Yale Bible, vol. 2A (New York: Doubleday, 1999), 157–58.

73. John A. Davies, *A Royal Priesthood: Literary and Intertextual Perspectives on an Image of Israel in Exodus 19.6* (London: T&T Clark International, 2004), 238.

74. Ibid., 60.

75. Ibid., 102.

76. Ibid., 137.

77. C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament, Vol. II: The Pentateuch,* translated by James Martin (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1900), 158.

78. Davies, *A Royal Priesthood,* 202.

successors of Adam," while their designation as a "kingdom of priests" echoed Adam's role as the "archetypal priest-king"[79] of God's first garden.

A Created Temple

According to Margaret Barker, Adam's story, bound up with the world's creation and Eden's garden, is "one of the best known and yet least understood parts of the Bible."[80] She asserts the reality of Adam's high priestly role and designates Eden as his temple. While this understanding has a long history, it is possible to go further. Indeed, the author of the Book of Jubilees asserts that Noah "knew the Garden of Eden was the holy of holies" (Jubilees 8:19). In this reading, the earth itself is a temple, rendering the act of creation a process of temple building.[81]

For John Sailhamer, Genesis 1 describes the process by which God made "good" a "formless and empty"[82] earth, thereby fitting it for the habitation of humanity. This fitting involved a period of sanctification. According to Joseph Smith, God sanctified not only the seventh day, but all he had created.[83] Kearney argues for correspondence between the seven speeches of God to Moses concerning the building of the tabernacle (Exodus 25–31), and the seven days of creation (Genesis

79. Ibid., 202–3.

80. Margaret Barker, "Adam the High Priest in the Paradise Temple" (paper presented at the fourth Temple Studies Group Symposium, Temple Church, London, Nov. 6, 2010, available at http://www.templestudiesgroup.com/Papers/Barker_TheParadisaicTemple.pdf).

81. Jeff Morrow, "Creation as Temple-Building and Word as Liturgy in Genesis 1–3," *Journal of OCABS* 2, no. 1 (2009), http://www.ocabs.org/journal/index.php/jocabs/article/viewFile/43/18.

82. John Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1992), 85.

83. See Doctrine and Covenants 77:12: "on the seventh day he finished his work, and sanctified it."

1:1–2:3),[84] while Cassuto asserts that "parallels in phraseology"[85] between the two accounts have long been noted. As this is so, the tabernacle's "construction was depicted as new creation,"[86] and we should expect Moses' sanctifying of *all* parts of the tabernacle, once it had been "fully set up" (Numbers 7:1) to be following the divine creative pattern. Drawing on these parallels, and a close reading of the text, J. Richard Middleton concludes that the first chapter of Genesis is unequivocally describing God building a temple.[87]

Deigning to fill his temple with priests, God created humans, male and female, in "his own image" (Genesis 1:26–27). This word "image" means more than "concrete, physical likeness"[88] with biblical usage "primarily designat[ing] three-dimensional cult statues of various false gods."[89] These statues, set up in cultic temples in the ancient Near East, functioned as images of their gods. Likewise, Adam, made in God's image and placed in his temple, was "created to function as the creator god's statue,"[90] completing his temple. Or, as expressed by Middleton:

> just as no pagan temple in the ancient Near East could be complete without the installation of the cult image of the deity to whom the temple was dedicated, so creation in Genesis 1 is not complete (or "very

84. Peter J. Kearney, "Creation and Liturgy: The P Redaction of Ex 25–40," *ZAW* 89, no. 3 (1977): 375–87.

85. Umberto Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Exodus* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1967), 476.

86. Morrow, "Creation as Temple-Building," 6.

87. J. Richard Middleton, *The Liberating Image: The Imago Dei in Genesis 1* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Brazos Press, 2005).

88. Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis, "Further Reflections on a Divine and Angelic Humanity in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *New Perspectives on Old Texts,* edited by Esther G. Chazon and Betsy Halpern-Amaru (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill Academic Publishers, 2010), 187.

89. Middleton, *The Liberating Image,* 45.

90. Fletcher-Louis, "Further Reflections," 187.

good") until God creates humanity on the sixth day as *imago Dei*, in order to represent and mediate the divine presence on earth.[91]

This representation began, it would seem, from the moment God breathed into Adam "the breath of life" making him a "living being" (Genesis 2:7). Citing the Nicene Creed's designation of the Holy Spirit as the "giver of life,"[92] Gunton compares this verse with passages from the Psalms and Ezekiel[93] before declaring the Spirit not only the dispatcher of the gift of life but creation's "perfecting cause" and "the one who enables things to become what they are created to be."[94] In doing so, he asserts, "God not only breathes into his human creatures the breath of life, but makes them to be like him."[95] In this regard, Adam and Eve's placement in the garden deserves special discussion.

Genesis 2:15 tells us God "put" man in Eden's garden using language reserved elsewhere in the Bible for two purposes: "God's 'rest' or 'safety'" and "the 'dedication' of something before the presence of the Lord."[96] Placement in the garden allowed the humans to rest safely in God's presence, enjoying his communion. While there, Adam had responsibilities for "dressing" and "keeping" the garden. Jeff Morrow informs

91. Middleton, *The Liberating Image,* 87.

92. Colin Gunton, "The Spirit Moved Over the Face of the Waters: The Holy Spirit and the Created Order," *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 4, no. 2 (2002): 191–204.

93. Psalm 104:29b–30: "When you take away their Spirit they die and return to the dust. When you send your spirit they are created, and you renew the face of the earth"; Ezekiel 37:9, 12: "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe into these slain, that they may live. . . . This is what the sovereign Lord says: O my people, I am going to open your graves and bring you back up from them."

94. Gunton, "The Spirit Moved," 203.

95. Ibid.

96. Sailhamer, *Pentateuch as Narrative,* 100; these "dedications" rendered the thing dedicated "holy" or "sanctified," lending support to the idea that it wasn't just the seventh day that was sanctified, but the entirety of creation, including man.

us that the root of these words refers to "priestly duties in tabernacle" and "keeping/guarding and serving God's word."[97] Sailhamer provides a succinct translation: man was "to worship and obey."[98] As such, Adam and Eve were no mere gardeners—they were priests placed in God's created temple, a high priest and priestess, permitted to dwell in that temple's holy of holies, enjoying the very presence of God. If this is so, the command to "multiply, and replenish the earth" (Genesis 1:28) was a command to populate God's temple with priests.

Returning to Mormonism's engagement with priesthood, according to Lorenzo Snow, in the pre-earthly, pre-embodied state "our spirit birth gave us godlike capabilities" through God's transmission to each mortal, of his "capabilities, powers and faculties."[99] Priestliness is, then, an inheritance of each spirit son or daughter from God. If the earth is a temple, then its creation was intended for the development of these primal "godlike capabilities" through priestly service. Physical birth, through the high priests Adam and Eve, was to be the vehicle for entry into this priestly community. However, upon expulsion from the garden, such a commission, it seems, was revoked: "in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:17). Spiritual death, perhaps, was exactly that because it prevented Adam and Eve from being what they were created to be: priestly images of God. As discussed above, spiritual rebirth through the reception of the Holy Ghost brought with it priesthood, and sonship. In other words, the Spirit again enabled them to be what they were created to be, making them again like God, and restoring their priestly commission.

Israel, elected by God and established by covenant, functioned, according to one commentator, "as a kind of corporate Adam, reflect-

97. Morrow, *Creation as Temple-Building,* 13.

98. Sailhamer, *Pentateuch as Narrative,* 101.

99. Lorenzo Snow, Jan. 14, 1872, *Journal of Discourses,* 14:302.

ing God's image."[100] Being divinely mandated to "obey [God's] voice" (Exodus 19:5) and be "an holy nation" (Exodus 19:6), these "true successors of Adam"[101] were, like Adam, required to worship and obey. Worship and obedience were also the terms of the covenant in Mosiah 18, where baptism was a "witness" of the covenant to "serve [God] and keep his commandments" (v. 10): or in other words, to worship and obey. As such, "bear[ing] one another's burdens . . . mourn[ing] with those that mourn . . . comfort[ing] those that stand in need of comfort, and . . . stand[ing] as a witness for God" (v. 8–9) were not themselves covenantal terms; rather, they expressed the priestly service that flowed from properly keeping the covenant.

With the ministry of Jesus came another reconstitution of the community. As Adam was the "first man" (1 Corinthians 15:45), given life and placed as God's image in the midst of his temple, so Jesus was the "second man" (1 Corinthians 15:45) capable of giving life and performing himself the work of a temple. As entry into Adam's community was, initially, to come through physical birth, so entry into Christ's came through spiritual rebirth. "Ye must be born again" (John 3:7), Jesus said to Nicodemus. Albert Barnes describes this process thus: "the heart must be changed by the agency of the Holy Spirit . . . the love of sin must be abandoned . . . man must . . . turn to God . . . renounce all his evil propensities, and give himself to a life of prayer and holiness."[102] For Luther, spiritual rebirth made one a child of Christ, with a portion of his priestliness becoming the "inheritance" of each so born.[103] Significantly, Mosiah describes a people whose hearts had been so changed by "the Spirit of the Lord" that they had "no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continu-

100. G. K. Beale, *We Become What We Worship: A Biblical Theology of Idolatry* (Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2008), 51.

101. Davies, *A Royal Priesthood,* 202.

102. Albert Barnes, *Notes, Explanatory and Practical, on the Gospels,* vol. 2 (New York: Leavitt, Lord, & Co., 1835), 190.

103. Althaus, *Theology of Martin Luther,* 314.

ally" (Mosiah 5:2). In being born again they entered into a covenant "to do [God's] will, and to be obedient to his commandments" (Mosiah 5:5)—in other words, to worship and obey. Through this dual process of covenant-making and spiritual rebirth, they were "spiritually begotten" of Christ, becoming "his sons and daughters" (Mosiah 5:7), and were thereafter known by his name (Mosiah 5:9). For Alma, this process was akin to having his "image . . . engraven upon [their] countenances" (Alma 5:19). It may be, therefore, that the reconstituting of the community in Christ set up once again "the creator god's statue"[104] through covenantal rebirth in anticipation of the temple earth's re-consecration through the communities' Christ-like lives of holiness.

A Restoration of Community

Mormons believe that Christ's original community was fractured by apostasy, resulting in the need for a restoration. Regarding itself as the culmination of God's work with humanity, Mormonism may be seen as the final reconstitution of the community. Just as Jesus was the "second man," in this reading, Mormonism becomes a second Israel. That restoration was not complete, according to Joseph Smith, until women were organized according to "the pattern of the priesthood." They were to become "a kingdom of priests," moving "according to the ancient Priesthood," being "separate . . . and holy."[105] Three days after making this pronouncement, Joseph instructed a select group "in the principles and ordinances of the Priesthood" while "attending to washings, anointings, endowments and the communication of keys."[106] Holiness was to again spread from a temple, to heal dead seas. This endowment, pronounced

104. Fletcher-Louis, "Further Reflections," 185.

105. *Nauvoo Relief Society Minute Book*, Mar. 31, 1842, 22, available at http://josephsmithpapers.org/paperSummary/nauvoo-relief-society-minute-book?p=19.

106. "History of the Church" (manuscript), book C–1, 1328–29, Church Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah.

"absolutely necessary" for returning to God's presence, is preceded by a priestly anointing.[107] Such an anointing, Joseph Smith suggested, was to enable one to "learn how to be a god."[108]

Entry into the community, however, comes much earlier when one is baptized and confirmed, with the accompanying reception of the gift of the Holy Ghost. Baptism represents giving up one's life to God; through bestowing the Holy Ghost, God transforms and renews that life. Here all participate directly, first, by witnessing the baptism, and then by assenting to the converts' entry into the community. For Samuel Brown, in raising their hand in a "show of support. . . . [i]t is as though each member of the congregation is reaching up to participate in the laying of hands on heads," integrating these newest community members "into the root structure of the tree of life."[109] Here may be the second Israel's priestly ordination rite, with each enactment further sanctifying the community and endowing it with spiritual power. As such, it may be that a distinctly Mormon conception of both humanity and community begins with God bestowing a pre-earthly endowment on the human, and God's placement of that human into a temple earth, to serve as his image. When the community is fractured, covenantal spiritual rebirth both reconstitutes the community and reintegrates one thereto. With reintegration comes a renewal of that pre-earthly priestly endowment allowing the Holy Ghost to facilitate the earth's re-consecration through the community's Christ-like lives of holiness.

In *Teachings of the Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1998), 414.

107. John A. Widtsoe, *Discourses of Brigham Young* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1954), 416.

108. Joseph Smith, King Follett Sermon, Clayton Report, retrieved from http://www.boap.org/LDS/Parallel/1844/7Apr44.html.

109. Samuel M. Brown, *First Principles and Ordinances: The Fourth Article of Faith in Light of the Temple* (Provo: Maxwell Institute, 2014), 120.

A further priestly anointing and endowment then prepares them for life with and like God.

When Joseph Smith was asked what differentiated his religion from others, somewhat surprisingly he did not mention angels or plates or legitimate priesthood authority. He stated, rather, "we differed in mode of baptism, and the gift of the Holy Ghost." For Joseph, "All other considerations were contained in the gift of the Holy Ghost."[110] If this is so, then understanding of the role of the Holy Ghost in Mormonism, and its particular relation to priesthood, can and perhaps should be expanded. As such, I hope to have provided a starting point for discussing how priesthood is actually transmitted from God to mortals, for reframing the priestly interactions of those who have received the Holy Ghost through baptism and those who have received ordination, and for examining the interplay between what might be termed a universal priestly commission and a ministerial ordination for the transmission of ordinances. This, I hope, will create an opportunity for dialogue regarding the earth's purpose and that of the priestly people placed therein.

110. Joseph Smith and Elias Higbee, "Letter to Hyrum Smith and High Council," Dec. 5, 1839, in "Letterbook 2," *The Joseph Smith Papers,* 85, available at http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/letterbook-2/90.

Annie Poon
El Sueño
8x10, drypoint etching

A DOCUMENTARY NOTE ON A LETTER TO JOSEPH SMITH. ROMANCE, DEATH, AND POLYGAMY: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF SUSAN HOUGH CONRAD AND LORENZO DOW BARNES

William V. Smith

In the final year of Joseph Smith's life, he engaged in frequent correspondence with political leaders, Church officers, family members, and others. In this paper I will consider a letter written to Joseph Smith from a Mormon missionary and presiding elder named Jedediah Morgan Grant, headquartered in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.[1] Written in August 1843, the letter concerns—among a number of other things—a young female Latter-day Saint then living with her mother and sisters in Philadelphia. The letter is remarkable for several reasons, notably the veiled glimpse it provides into Joseph Smith's practice of polygamy. A complete transcription of the letter is found in the appendix to this article; I will quote it liberally as I flesh out its context. Note that spelling and other

1. Grant (1816–1856) lived to become a counselor in the First Presidency of Brigham Young, taking the place of Willard Richards, who died in 1854. Grant is perhaps best known for his oratorical forge that hammered out a Mormon reform in 1850s Utah. On Grant, see Gene A. Sessions, *Mormon Thunder: A Documentary History of Jedediah Morgan Grant,* 2nd ed. (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2007).

irregularities in quotes from the letter and other sources are found in the originals (unless noted otherwise).

With the Finneys, Beechers, Towles, Campbells, and other luminaries of antebellum American religion stood the anonymous men and women who were followers or advocates of their movements. In the "age of improvement," Americans seemed to be moving from one idea to another, just as they moved from one place to another. The restless minds of the antebellum Atlantic World were a fertile preaching environment for the Latter-day Saints, and a core of dedicated people made up a missionary cohort that converted thousands, forming Mormonism into a history-making wedge of Americana.[2] Two such devoted Mormon souls were Lorenzo Dow Barnes (1812–1842) and Susan Hough Conrad (1818–1888). I will first give a short description of Barnes's and Conrad's lives as context for the Grant letter. Next, I will discuss how their lives were linked together. Finally, informed by those lives, I will discuss the content of the Grant letter and how it and Conrad figured into Joseph Smith's marriage project.[3]

2. On the general picture of antebellum American religion, see Daniel Walker Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815–1848* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), chaps. 5, 8, 12; Jenny Franchot, *Roads to Rome: The Antebellum Protestant Encounter with Catholicism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); Richard T. Hughes and Leonard Allen, *Illusions of Innocence: Protestant Primitivism in America, 1630–1875* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988); Mark A. Noll, *America's God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

3. This article is based on and expands work that will appear in chapter 3 of a forthcoming book, William Victor Smith, *Every Word Seasoned with Grace: A Textual Study of the Funeral Sermons of Joseph Smith.* I would like to thank Robin S. Jensen of the Joseph Smith Papers Project and the staff of the LDS Church History Library for help with the documents considered in this work. I also thank Margaret Averill for her careful editorial advice.

Lorenzo Barnes

Lorenzo Dow Barnes's[4] given names register one of the most famous of American preachers of the previous generation: Lorenzo Dow.[5] Thousands of American children of the period were named after the spellbinding Methodist itinerant preacher. Born in 1812 in Massachusetts, Lorenzo Barnes and his family were part of the westward expansion. Settling in Ohio, the family came into contact with Latter-day Saints in 1833. Barnes heard and accepted the Mormon millennial message and never looked back. While Barnes tried preaching to his family, it was without success: his parents remained non-Mormon Ohio residents until their deaths.

Almost immediately after joining the Latter-day Saints, Barnes took to the missionary trail, returning to the family home in winter snows to teach school until spring. In 1834, Barnes joined the "Camp of Israel," the hopeful group of Saints led by Joseph Smith who wished to protect those Mormons who had been ejected from their Zion in Jackson County, Missouri, the previous year. The plan, proposed by the Mormons and Missouri's attorney general, was for the men of Zion's Camp to escort the displaced Saints back to the Independence area (now an eastern suburb of Kansas City). Missouri governor Daniel Dunklin rejected this plan because he saw the makings of civil war in the move.[6]

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4. Spelled "Barns" in the 1820 US census, as well as in a number of other sources, for example, see *The Elders Journal* (Oct. 1837): 15.

5. See, Lorenzo Dow Barnes, first small journal, page 1, holograph, MS 1436, LDS Church History Library (CHL), Salt Lake City, Utah. See also his second small journal, pages 53, 118. MS 1436, CHL.

6. Dunklin hoped that ongoing negotiations between displaced Mormons and Jackson County residents would resolve the issue without militia action. They did not, but Dunklin's delay left the Camp without its primary purpose. For a brief discussion of the political, religious, and documentary issues of Zion's Camp see Matthew C. Godfrey, Brenden W. Rensink, Alex D. Smith, Max H. Parkin, and Alexander L. Baugh, *Documents, Vol. 4: April 1834–September 1835*,

The expedition was disbanded and Barnes returned to Ohio. In 1835, Barnes, like many other members of Zion's Camp, was given a leadership role in the Church, becoming a member of the first quorum of "Seventy," a group tasked especially with the missionary efforts of the Church.[7] He was a consistent worker who overcame a speech problem to become one of the most highly regarded Mormon leaders in his field of labor. Sent off to proselytize in the eastern states, Barnes moved through Kentucky and Virginia, and he stayed in the region until 1838, when he followed Church leaders who vacated Ohio for Far West, Missouri.[8]

Barnes didn't spend much time in the community-building efforts before he was again sent east to preach. He remained in missionary service until 1841, when he came to the new Church center of Nauvoo.[9]

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vol. 4 in The Joseph Smith Papers series, edited by Ronald K. Esplin, Matthew J. Grow, and Matthew C. Godfrey (Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2016), 48–96.

7. Similarly named groups in the LDS Church now function as general and regional officers. In these early times, however, it was only the "presidents" of the Seventy that were classed with the general hierarchy of Mormonism in a practical sense, despite the entire quorum having nascent high authority according to an April1835 revelation. On the revelation see, for example, William V. Smith, "Early Mormon Priesthood Revelations: Text, Impact, and Evolution," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 48, no. 4 (Winter 2013): 1–84.

8. On Barnes's early mission work and travels, see Davis Bitton, "Kirtland as a Center of Missionary Activity, 1830–1838," *BYU Studies* 11, no. 4 (1971): 501. Barnes was named a member of the short-lived Adam-ondi-Ahman high council in 1838. See also Andrew Jenson, *Latter-Day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia*, vol. 3 (Salt Lake City: Andrew Jenson History Company, 1920), 307–08. Also, Lorenzo D. Barnes reminiscences and diaries, 1834–1839, MS 1436, CHL.

9. Barnes was in the Philadelphia region in late 1839. On Barnes's work there see, for example, *Times and Seasons* 2, no. 1 (Nov. 1, 1840): 106–07. Barnes was often working in the Chester County area. See Conference Minutes, *Times and Seasons* 2, no. 14 (May 15, 1841): 412–13; Conference Minutes, Nauvoo, Aug. 16, 1841, *Times and Seasons 2*, no. 21 (Sept. 1, 1841): 521. Barnes was appointed clerk of the Nauvoo conference. Barnes was on occasion a "traveling agent" for the Nauvoo *Times and Seasons*. Parley P. Pratt, *Autobiography of Parley Parker*

Barnes was chosen for missionary service in 1839 to travel to Britain in the wake of the Mormon apostles who began canvassing England that same year.[10] Barnes was slow in taking ship for England, spending considerable time in the Philadelphia region. Barnes became a pillar of Church leadership in Pennsylvania for several years and wrote "licenses" for other Mormon leaders who were passing through the region.[11] He returned to Nauvoo in the spring of 1841 and was named clerk for a conference on August 16, 1842.[12] On August 21, a meeting of the Mormon apostles voted that "Barnes proceed on his mission to England without delay." Church leaders wrote to remind him of the point of his journey, and Barnes finally boarded ship for England in January 1842.[13]

Pratt (New York: Russell Brothers, 1874), 331. See also an amplified version of other texts generating a pseudepigraphal work, "Journal of Don Carlos Smith," which appears in B. H. Roberts, ed. *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,* 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1902–1912), 4:394–95; Lucy Mack Smith history, 1845, Box 1, fd. 26, MS 2049, CHL. See Dan Vogel, *History of Joseph Smith and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: A Source and Text-Critical Edition,* 8 vols. (Salt Lake City: Smith-Pettit Foundation, 2015), 4:390, note 27. The "Don C. Smith journal" appears in the appendix to Lucy Mack Smith, *Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith the Prophet and His Progenitors for Many Generations* (Liverpool, England, 1853), 283–88.

10. Lorenzo D. Barnes, Letter to Elijah Malin, Jan. 9, 1842, *Journal History of the Church* 1896–2001, vol. 14, CR 100 127, CHL.

11. The idea of a license was a common tradition among itinerant preachers and in particular, Methodists. It functioned in Mormonism in the same way as a kind of letter of recommendation, but also as a badge of authority. See for example, George A. Smith, Letter to Brigham Young, Feb. 9, 1840, CR 1234 1, CHL.

12. See, Journal of Hayward Thomas, page 1, MS 1434, CHL. John G. Turner, *Brigham Young: Pioneer Prophet* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2012), 65–79.

13. Peter L. Crawley, *A Descriptive Bibliography of the Mormon Church,* 3 vols. (Provo: Religious Studies Center, 1997–2012), 1:165. On the apostles' encouragement to Barnes, see Journal of Wilford Woodruff, Oct. 29, 1840, MS 1352, CHL; Scott G. Kenny, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal,* 9 vols. typescript (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1983–1985), 1:543.

Lorenzo Barnes was no Parley Pratt, but he did publish some missionary tracts, one of which, titled *References,* was well respected by his fellow missionaries.[14] On the ship to Liverpool, Barnes composed a poem, "The Bold Pilgrim," about his missionary task, which he published upon his arrival in England.[15]

Barnes died in December 1842 after a short illness in Idle, Yorkshire, England, where he was buried. Two years later, Wilford Woodruff visited the gravesite and made arrangements for a headstone and epitaph.[16] The epitaph read:

> Sleep on, Lorenzo, but ere long from this
>
> The conquered tomb shall yield her captured prey.
>
> Then with thy Quorum shalt thou reign in bliss
>
> As king and priest for all Eternal Day.[17]

When Joseph Smith heard of Barnes's death via letter from the leader of the Church's British mission, Parley P. Pratt, he offered remarks in Nauvoo in praise of Barnes but also regarding the matter of his burial in England.[18] Willard Richards reported Smith saying during his remarks:

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14. See Crawley, *Descriptive Bibliography,* vol. 1, items 115, 116; *Times and Seasons* 3, no. 1 (Nov. 15, 1841): 529.

15. See Barnes's report of arrival to Parley Pratt in Roberts, *History of the Church*, 4:569–70. Crawley, *Descriptive Bibliography*, 1:151. "Pilgrim" appeared as a broadside in 1842; it gave Barnes's faith-history in verse. No publisher was indicated.

16. Woodruff took excerpts from his journal about the incident and put them in a letter to *Times and Seasons* editor John Taylor. Taylor published a version in the May 15, 1845 issue. Wilford Woodruff's Journal, May 1, 1845, MS 1352, CHL; Kenney, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, 2:541.

17. Woodruff journal, Apr. 26, 1845, Kenney, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, 2:540.

18. Editor Thomas Ward noted Barnes's passing in his January 1843 *Latter-Day Saints' Millennial Star* (hereafter *Millennial Star*) editorial and then inserted a long poem about Barnes. Ward noted that Barnes died at 3:15 in the morning (*Millennial Star* 3, no. 9 [Jan. 1843]: 159, 160).

> When I heard of the death of our beloved bro Barns it would not have affected me so much if I had the opportunity of burying him in the land of Zion. I believe, those who have buried their friends here their condition is enviable. Look at Joseph in Egypt how he required his friends to bury him in the tomb of his fathers[19]

Passionate about having durable connections to family and friends, Joseph Smith deployed this Hebrew Bible image as background to his own New Testament vision of triumph:

> would you think it strange that I relate what I have seen in vision in relation [to] this interesting theme. those who have died in Jesus Christ, may expect to enter in to all that fruition of Joy when they come forth, which they have pursued here, so plain was the vision I actually saw men, before they had ascended from the tomb, as though they were getting up slowly, they took each other by the hand & it was my father & my son . my mother my brother & my sister & my daughter[20]

Smith's sermon was an impressive one, and it resonated with those who heard its sentiments. Years later, Mormon elders in Britain took up a collection to finance the exhumation of Barnes's body to send it to Utah. It would be buried near his fellow deceased Latter-day Saints.[21] Barnes died at a time when Joseph Smith's theological ideas and corresponding

19. The source passage probably refers to Jacob, not Joseph. See Joseph Smith Diary, Apr. 16, 1843; Andrew H. Hedges, Alex D. Smith, and Richard Lloyd Anderson, eds., *Journals, Vol. 2: 1841–1843,* vol. 2 in The Joseph Smith Papers series, edited by Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman (Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2008), 359.

20. Ibid.

21. The bodies of Barnes and another Mormon missionary who had died in Britain took the journey to Utah with the first group of emigrants financed by the Church's Perpetual Emigrating Fund (Abraham O. Smoot Company). The group arrived in Salt Lake City, September 3, 1852. Orson Pratt preached a reburial sermon for the two deceased missionaries on September 12, 1852 (Kenney, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, 4:145–48). George D. Watt captured a shorthand audit of a portion of the sermon. See "Historian's Office Reports of Speeches, 1845–1885," CR 100 317, CHL.

institutions were beginning to reach their zenith. Barnes's death seems to have erased him from a portrait that included most prominent Nauvoo Mormons: the kinship expansions of polygamy and "sealing" and their associated practices.[22]

Susan Hough Conrad

Barnes appears to have been unattached until 1841. Sometime during his missionary service in Pennsylvania, he began a romance with Susan Hough Conrad, a young convert whose family was friendly to Mormonism and who may have heard Joseph Smith preach.[23] Smith preached a number of times in Washington and the surrounding area after his 1839–40 interviews with and pleas to Washington power brokers over the losses incurred by Latter-day Saints in Missouri in the 1830s; one of his better-known sermons was recorded in a letter by Matthew L.

22. Woodruff's epitaph suggests his intention of making the Mormon temple blessings available to Barnes, posthumously. There is now a large literature regarding both early LDS temple practice/ritual and doctrines as well as current temple use among Mormons. For an interesting overview from a century ago with historic photographs, see James E. Talmage, *The House of the Lord* (Salt Lake City: The Deseret News, 1912). For a contextual picture of Joseph Smith's sealing theology, see Samuel Brown, "Early Mormon Adoption Theology and the Mechanics of Salvation, *Journal of Mormon History* 37, no. 3 (Summer 2011): 3–52; also Samuel Morris Brown, *In Heaven as it is on Earth: Joseph Smith and the Early Mormon Conquest of Death* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), chaps. 7, 8.

23. Andrew Jackson's designated presidential successor, Martin Van Buren, was in office. Van Buren was above all a political strategist and far less an ideologue than Jackson. Founder of two-party politics in America, Van Buren may have felt sympathy for Mormons in the Missouri violence, but holding Missouri liable for Mormon losses was outside the presidential and congressional Venn diagram. See Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, chap. 10. Indeed, the Age of Jackson saw citizen violence in America reach an apex only superseded by war. On Smith's mission to Washington for redress, see Richard Lyman Bushman, *Rough Stone Rolling: A Cultural Biography of Mormonism's Founder* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005), 391–402.

Davis, well-known journalist and friend and biographer of Aaron Burr.[24] Conrad was not present when Smith preached that sermon, but she may have heard him preach in Pennsylvania in the days following. She related the story of having Smith in her parent's home at this period, and in any case she was impressed by him and became a Latter-day Saint in February or March of 1840.

Both Conrad and Barnes were in Nauvoo in 1841, but their stays may have only briefly intersected there. Conrad stayed in Nauvoo a few months, roughly between April and June. While in Nauvoo, she was befriended by another Latter-day Saint woman from the Philadelphia area, Mary Wickersham Woolley, with whom she exchanged some correspondence, the content of which suggests that Conrad stayed in the Woolley household during her time in Nauvoo.[25]

One of the more important extant documents detailing Conrad's life is her "Autograph Album." Autograph books were a nineteenth-century fad that often occupied the new-fangled parlors of middle class Americans, where guests might be asked to pen a verse while noting their names and the place and date of signing. Orson Pratt, Parley Pratt, and George Q. Cannon were some of the writers in Conrad's album.

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24. Matthew L. Davis letter, Washington, DC to Mrs. Matthew L. Davis, New York City, New York, Feb. 6, 1840, MS 522, CHL.

25. In particular, Susan Conrad, Letter to Mary Wickersham Woolley, Aug. 5, 1844, MS 8081, CHL. The Woolley letter passed through the hands of Mark Hofmann to the LDS church in 1985 but does not appear to be a forgery. However, it has not been subjected to complete forensic analysis. See Richard E. Turley, *Victims: The LDS Church and the Mark Hofmann Case* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 392 (item 436). See also, Jeffery O. Johnson, "The Document Diggers and Their Discoveries: A Panel," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 19, no. 4 (Winter 1986): 55–56. Mary Wickersham grew up in Pennsylvania but her family moved west to Ohio as she reached adulthood. A young man in her circle of West Chester friends came west shortly after, possibly in search of Mary, and Edwin Dilworth Woolley married Mary Wickersham in 1831. See Leonard J. Arrington, *From Quaker to Latter-day Saint: Bishop Edwin D. Woolley* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976), 42, 45–48.

Conrad's movements and encounters can be at least partially accounted for since she took the book with her on several journeys. She seems to have acquired her book in Baltimore in 1837 (the earliest entries date from November 1837). Some of the entries suggest that it was a keepsake in memory of her departure from Baltimore to Philadelphia.[26]

Within a year of the death of Joseph Smith, Conrad had married, and her first child was born in 1845 or 1846. Only a few entries in the autograph book address Susan as Wilkinson, and up through 1844 she is always noted as Miss Susan Conrad or Susan H. Conrad. Her new husband was a close family acquaintance, William B. Wilkinson (1820–1889).[27] Wilkinson's family identified as Anglican/Episcopalian and Wilkinson was christened at Old Trinity Church in Philadelphia. Indeed, Wilkinson's family, as more liberal Protestants perhaps, apparently hosted Joseph Smith during his 1840 visit to the area; Joseph wrote them a short letter on the subject of "Virtue" with reference to their kind service.[28] Wilkinson tolerated Mormonism but apparently did

26. See Susan C. Wilkinson autograph album, circa 1837–1844; 1860–1861, MS 3466, CHL. Several Conrad families lived in Baltimore in 1837 as shown by city directories of the time. The Baltimore Conrads did business as grocers and tavern keeps among other things. The November entries have the flavor of separation. Whether Conrad lived there some time or was only visiting is unknown.

27. Conrad, "Autograph Album," entries 61, 39 are signed "William." Conrad's brother, David, had married William Wilkinson's sister Margaret in 1836. See also William's death notice, "Died," *Salt Lake Herald*, Jun. 29, 1889, 8.

28. The January 20, 1840, letter read, "Virtue is one of the most prominant principles that enables us to have confidence in approaching our Father who is in heaven in order to ask wisdom at his hand therefore if thou wilt cherish this principle in thine heart thou mayest ask with all Confidence before him and it shall be poured out upon thine head and thou shalt not lack any thing that thy soul desires in truth and again the Lord shall bless this house and none of them shall fail because they turned not away the servants of the Lord from their doors even so Amen." See *Ensign* (Sept. 1985): 77–78. The idea of virtue generally meant honest unselfish service, performing moral duties out of love

not join the faith for almost two decades. Finally, in 1861, Wilkinson united with Mormonism in Philadelphia.[29] The Wilkinsons emigrated to Utah with the James S. Brown wagon train the following year, where they established a household in the Salt Lake City Fourteenth Ward.[30]

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for God and his laws, or out of recognition of human fundamental rights, and it was often used in that way in political discourse. Given Joseph Smith's political frustrations in Washington, it was probably a topic that occupied his mind. He used the same idea in his 1838 letter from Liberty Jail excerpted as Doctrine and Covenants section 121.

29. When George Q. Cannon passed through Philadelphia in December 1860, he noted "I also visited Mr. & Sister Wilkinson." A year later, as missionary John D. T. McAllister passed through Philadelphia he wrote in the Autograph Album, "William B. Wilkinson and Wife, My dear Brother and Sister in the N.[ew and] E.[verlasting] Covenant . . ." showing the Wilkinson was now baptized as a Mormon. (George Q. Cannon journal, Dec. 2–6, 1860, CHL. The Cannon journal was recently digitally published by the *Church Historian's Press* as *The Journal of George Q. Cannon,* www.churchhistorianspress.org/george-q-cannon). For McAllister, see the Conrad Autograph Album, entry 66. I use "entry" rather than page number since the book is not paginated and some pages contain more than one autograph/verse. Other pages are illustrations published with the book. I count these as entries though no handwriting appears on them. Blank pages are not counted.

30. Johnson, "Document Diggers," confuses the Conrad and Wilkinson families, probably assuming that Susan and William were married before Conrad's 1840 Mormon baptism, rather than applying Smith's compliments to William's parents. However, Conrad's records show she was unmarried after Joseph Smith's death. For example, see Conrad, "Autograph Album," entry 8. The narrative is slightly complicated by Susan Wilkinson's death notice: "Her home in Philadelphia was always open for the Elders and in her mother's home she helped entertain the Prophets Joseph and Hyrum Smith" (Death Notice, Susan H. Wilkinson, *Deseret News*, Apr. 11, 1888). Apparently both the Conrad and Wilkinson homes were friendly to Latter-day Saints prior to the marriage of William Wilkinson and Susan Conrad. William's sister Margaret had also married into the Conrad family (she married Susan's brother, David Conrad [1807–1857]). Widowed, Margaret also came with the James S. Brown company with her daughter Tacy. On the Brown company, see "Third Independent Company," *Deseret News Weekly* (Oct. 8, 1862): 113.

With the rejuvenation of local Relief Societies, Conrad-Wilkinson became part the presidency of the Relief Society of the Fourteenth Ward. Records say little of this early period, but Conrad-Wilkinson is noted in reminiscent speeches as active in the work of the Relief Society.[31] Susan had never been an idle Latter-day Saint and her mother's home—and later her own in Philadelphia—was a frequent stopping place for visiting Church missionaries and authorities. She became personally acquainted with Joseph and Hyrum Smith.[32]

Romance

Conrad and Barnes seemingly lived out their lives independent of each other. Barnes's life was cut short at age thirty by pneumonia in England, while Conrad lived a full life. However, below these surface facts, there was a love story.

Three years after Barnes's death, Wilford Woodruff was in Britain and visited the family who cared for Barnes during his final hours. There Woodruff discovered that his hosts had preserved Barnes's effects, among which was a trove of love letters between Lorenzo Barnes and Susan Conrad.[33] Typical of both, they exchanged love poems over the time

31. Jill Mulvay Deer, Carol Cornwall Madsen, Kate Holbrock, and Matthew J. Grow, eds., *The First Fifty Years of Relief Society: Key Documents in Latter-day Saint Women's History* (Salt Lake City: The Church Historian's Press, 2016), 615. The *Fifty Years* volume makes the same error as Johnson in terms of the Conrad and Wilkinson marriage date. United States census records show that Conrad had three children, all of whom migrated to Utah with her and her husband in 1862. See "Probate Court," *Salt Lake Herald*, Jul. 17, 1889. Also see the obituary of Conrad's first child, Robert Morris Wilkinson (1845[6?]–1928), *Salt Lake Telegram*, May 21, 1928, 8.

32. Conrad, Letter to Woolley, CHL. Death notice, Susan H. Wilkinson, *Deseret News,* Apr. 11, 1888.

33. Woodruff boxed up the letters and the rest of Barnes's effects and intended to ship them to Nauvoo for the care of the Church historian. (Woodruff journal, Apr. 23, 1845; Kenney, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, 2:538–39). Barnes's papers

of Barnes's work in England. Woodruff referred to Conrad as Barnes's "Lover," a term that did not carry the sexual innuendo of modern usage. She was in effect, Barnes's fiancé. Woodruff wrote,

> My feelings were keen and sensitive. As I stood upon his grave I realized I was standing over the body of one of the Elders of Israel of the horns of Joseph of the Seed of Ephraim, one of the members of zions Camp who had travelled more than 1,000 miles in 1834 for the redemption of his persecuted, afflicted brethren. Offered to lay down his life for their sake. One whose fidelity was stronger than death towards his Lover, his brethren eternal truth, & his God.[34]

Woodruff held Barnes in high regard for a number of reasons, and he found Conrad (then Wilkinson) years later in Salt Lake City to talk about her former fiancé.[35] He recorded in his journal:

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and property, including his correspondence with Conrad, are largely missing from Church archives.

34. Indeed, Woodruff refers to Susan Conrad as Barnes's "intended." (Woodruff Journal, Feb. 20–22, 1845, MS 1352, CHL; Kenney, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, 2:510–16).

35. Barnes's reputation was still strong decades later. George Q. Cannon wrote, "I am perfectly satisfied there are men who will be counted worthy of that glory who never had a wife; there are men probably in this world now, who will receive exaltation, who never had a wife at all, or probably had but one. But what is necessary for such a case? It must be perfection before God, and a proof of willingness on their part, if they had the opportunity. I will instance the case of a man whom you perhaps know by reputation, namely that of Elder Lorenzo D. Barnes. He was a faithful man in the Church, a man of zeal, a man of integrity, a man who did all in his power to magnify his holy Priesthood, and he died when upon a foreign mission before he had one wife. The Lord will judge that man, as he will all others, according to his works and the desires of his heart, because had he lived, and had had the opportunity, I am fully satisfied he would have obeyed that law. I do not doubt that he will receive exaltation in the presence of God." The law Cannon was speaking of was plural marriage (for eternity) (George Q. Cannon sermon, "Difference Between the True Church of Christ and the Churches of the World . . ." Oct. 31, 1880, *Journal of Discourses*, 22:124–25). On Woodruff's subsequent visits

> It is a Cold day. I spent a part of the day in the office. I wrote a Letter to G. Q. Cannon. I visited his wife also Sister Susan Conrad or Wilconson. I conversed with her about Elder Lorenzo D Barnes.[36]

While in England visiting Barnes's grave, Woodruff vowed that the "sealing" priesthood would be used in Barnes's behalf. Perhaps he thought of Conrad as Barnes's eternal spouse, though they were never posthumously sealed (see the conclusion below).[37]

Polygamy

On March 11, 1843, and again on June 2, 1843, one of Joseph Smith's clerks wrote to Susan Conrad at Philadelphia. The second letter (and likely the first one as well) was penned by William Clayton, a close comrade of Joseph Smith, and a part of his "Kitchen Cabinet" as it were.[38] Few people knew more than Clayton about Smith's execution of and beliefs about polygamy in Nauvoo (that does not mean Smith's

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with Conrad-Wilkinson, see Journal of Wilford Woodruff, Nov. 26, 1849, Feb. 9, 1864, MS 1352, CHL; Kenney, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, 3:496, 6:156–57.

36. Ibid. 6:156.

37. D. Michael Quinn discusses Conrad and Barnes in his *Same Sex Dynamics among Nineteenth-Century Americans: A Mormon Example* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1996), 139. Quinn notes that a Lorenzo D. Barnes married an Amanda Wilson in Ohio, 1841. However, this Barnes and Wilson had a child in 1852. Hence this is not the Lorenzo Barnes of this paper. See Mary Leora Smith death certificate, Jun. 22, 1923, Sunfield, Eaton, Michigan, Division of Vital Records, Lansing, Michigan.

38. A term I borrow from the political discourse surrounding Andrew Jackson. Jackson had a group of confidants outside his presidential cabinet officers. The Kitchen Cabinet often had more to do with government and legislative outcomes than the constitutional one. In some respects, the same was true with Joseph Smith. Ultimately Clayton's letter was destroyed (see below). For the notice of writing the June letter see William Clayton's journal, Jun. 2, 1843, as found in George D. Smith, ed., *An Intimate Chronicle: The Journals of William Clayton* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1995), 107.

polygamy was perfectly known by anyone at the time). Clayton does not mention the subject of the June letter in his journal but notes that presiding elder Jedediah Grant wrote to Joseph Smith from Philadelphia in August.[39] While neither the March nor June letters to Susan Conrad are extant, Grant's letter still exists, and it is this letter that forms much of the documentary background of this paper.

Grant's August 17, 1843, letter details his struggles over the contents of the March and June letters, which evidently proposed matrimony between Joseph Smith and Susan Conrad, vouching that funds would be provided for her return to Nauvoo. The religious dynamics in the Conrad family were complicated by several issues: Susan's father had died in 1835, and while Susan, her mother, and sister Ann were active believers in Mormonism, one other sister still living at home was not (probably Mary Conrad).[40]

While Mary tried to intercept Mormon communications to the Conrad home, she apparently did not see the March and June letters from Nauvoo. When Susan and her mother read the letters, their faith was shaken by their contents as Grant noted in his letter. However, another sister, Ann Conrad (1804–1894), prevailed on mother and daughter to ask for a private explanation from Church leaders in Philadelphia. As it happened, several apostles were in the area, including Orson Pratt, Brigham Young, and Heber C. Kimball, and mother and daughter hoped that Pratt could help them understand the meaning of the letters' troublesome ideas. Grant seemed to be reluctant to have Pratt deal with the

39. Grant traveled to Philadelphia in May 1843 after being appointed as the presiding authority in the area during an April 1843 Church conference in Nauvoo. Sessions, *Mormon Thunder*, chap. 4.

40. Genealogical information on the Conrads is available through LDS records accessible online through https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/2:2:SPBP-HGQ. Generally, such records should be second sourced when possible. I have used census records and personal records (diaries, letters, etc.) whenever possible to build that source structure.

Conrad sisters, likely due to Pratt's difficulties over polygamy. He knew of the blowup that had taken place in Nauvoo over Orson's wife, Sarah Pratt, and so Grant took the task on himself. "I was informed that Elder P. was wanted to explain, &c, as it was not on Mathematical subjects, I, thought it might be difficult for him, to interpet it, and as he was coming back to the City next week, I thought it best to make all things shure."

Grant continued, "so I went to work in the name of the Lord, and after using every argument that I could, they delivered" the March and June letters—under the condition that he was to obtain explanations from Joseph Smith and give those explanations to them. Grant burned the letters in the privacy of his room.[41] Grant wanted to avoid any possibility that the letters might be found by visitors, including other churchmen who often shared his room overnight during their travels. Grant noted in his letter that Kimball had previously introduced him to the idea and practice of polygamy and told Joseph Smith of his pleasure to find that Smith's brother Hyrum (an early opponent of polygamy) "had received the Priesthood, &c." (a euphemism for his acceptance of plural marriage). The letter thus gives early documentation of Grant's introduction to plural marriage.[42]

Grant seems to have been unsuccessful in his attempt to get Susan Conrad to respond to the letters. "I preached, bore testimony &c, 'will you answer it Miss S,' 'no I cannot think of doing it' . . . Miss S cried like a child when these things was made known to me." Meanwhile, Clayton reported that Joseph Smith "received a letter from Jedediah M. Grant containing information of Conrad's having recd a letter &c." Emma Smith, "heard J[oseph Smith] read it and appeared for a while

41. J. M. Grant, Letter to Joseph Smith, Aug. 17, 1843, Joseph Smith Collection, Box 3, fd. 5, MS 155, CHL. Some spelling and punctuation modernized.

42. Grant's sister may have been the object of a (refused) proposal by Joseph Smith. See D. Michael Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy: Origins of Power* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1994), 527.

to feel very jealous."[43] Grant's letter likely contributed to Emma Smith's continuing opposition to polygamy after a brief respite in May 1843.[44]

Conclusion

The March 11 and June 2 letters straddled the day that Barnes's death became common knowledge in Nauvoo (see Joseph Smith's funeral address for Barnes delivered on April 16, 1843).[45] Hence the March 11 letter, if it subtly or explicitly offered plural marriage, would have conflicted with Susan's understanding of her relationship with Barnes, one that both seem to have kept from public scrutiny. Barnes never signed Conrad's autograph book, and in his correspondence he only mentioned his affection for the Saints of Pennsylvania generally and "to all who may enquire after me."[46] The June letter (at least) probably arrived well after Conrad had news of Barnes's death in England.

Grant's letter of August 17 is carefully written so that identities are only indicated by initials in some cases, but the evidence suggests that Clayton made a surrogate proposal of marriage to Conrad on behalf of Joseph Smith and that Conrad's dismay and tears amounted to a rejection.[47] Conrad's August 1844 letter to Mary Woolley (who with her

43. William Clayton journal, Aug. 31, 1843. The original diary is not available for inspection, however the text may be found in the D. Michael Quinn papers, Beinecke Library, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut. See also, Vogel, *History of Joseph Smith*, 5:669n486.

44. By September, Emma had apparently softened again. See Bushman, *Rough Stone Rolling*, 498–99.

45. See Wilford Woodruff's journal for a report of the circumstances and the sermon. See also Kenney, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, 2:226, and Smith, *Seasoned with Grace*, chap. 3, forthcoming. See also, "Sermon delivered at Nauvoo temple on Sunday April 16, 1843," Book of Abraham Project, http://boap.org/LDS/Parallel/1843/16Apr43.html.

46. Barnes to Malin, Jan. 9, 1843.

47. It's highly unlikely that Clayton was acting on his own—he makes no mention of Conrad as a prospect for plural marriage (to himself), something he is very candid about with his other plural wives and prospects. Joseph Smith's

husband embraced polygamy in the fall of 1843) mentioned above may have made reference to Clayton's letters on behalf of Smith:

> I feel tempted to write some thing but I dare not[,] if brother Kimball had passed this way I could have trusted one by him such as I would like to write but it is not so dear sister . . . I heard some things that completely twisted me round that if my life depended on my acting different I could not have done it, I guess Joseph would not think I had much Philosophy about me if he had seen me some times I never was nearer crazy in my life you will know what I mean.[48]

Barnes was not sealed (married) posthumously to Conrad but was eventually sealed to three other women—one dead, two living (at the time of sealing). None of them were women Barnes knew in life. Conrad and her husband, William Wilkinson, did not engage in polygamy after his conversion and their migration to Utah, though they lived through much of the federal polygamy "raid" that marked the 1880s. What Susan Conrad thought of polygamy in later years is unknown, but she maintained a vigorous alliance to the faith, one established by her associations as a young woman.[49]

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revelation on polygamy was dictated July 12, 1843. Interestingly, Joseph Smith's proposals and Grant's response letter fall to the before and after sides of the July revelation. For a contextual discussion of the July revelation, see William V. Smith, *Textual Studies in the Doctrine and Covenants: The Plural Marriage Revelation* (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, forthcoming). Clayton's letters to Conrad may have been written in the same way that Clayton wrote to one Sarah Crooks in his own behalf at Joseph Smith's insistence. Clayton wrote to Crooks having secured passage for her to Nauvoo from England through funds from Smith. When Crooks arrived in Nauvoo, Clayton fully explained his intention to marry her as a plural wife. It is interesting that Clayton's full revelation of his intent to Crooks, something she seems to have been prepared for, took place on the evening of the day Clayton wrote the second letter to Conrad (Smith, *Intimate Chronicle*, 107). Crooks refused Clayton.

48. Emphasis in the original text.

49. Her obituary and autograph book shows that in her youth Conrad met and conversed with many of the leading lights of early Mormonism like Parley Pratt and Joseph and Hyrum Smith.

While it is unclear whether the romance between Conrad and Barnes was known to Joseph Smith, it is clear that Smith wished to enfold Conrad into his sealing network of Nauvoo and that it was not to be a long-distance relationship. Conrad captured the attention of a number of prominent Latter-day Saints both in Nauvoo and in her mother's home in Pennsylvania, but a search of published literature on Nauvoo polygamy suggests that Conrad's case has not been considered before. Conrad consented to give up Smith's surrogate letters and likely understood that Grant would dispose of them. She and her family, while not fully understanding Smith's practice of polygamy, agreed to keep the letters secret. Her actions placed her in an important group of similar women, women like Sarah Kimball who quietly refused Smith's proposals but remained a Latter-day Saint.[50] Unlike Kimball, Conrad never seems to have openly discussed those tearful and confusing hours in her mother's Philadelphia home in 1843. Susan Conrad's sorrow over her encounter with Nauvoo polygamy and her loss of Lorenzo Barnes remained bound in the private spaces of her heart until her death.

Appendix

The following is a transcription of the August 17, 1843 letter from Jedediah M. Grant to Joseph Smith. Symbols employed in the transcript are ^insert^ where Grant made interlinear insertions and ~~delete~~ where he canceled text. I use the vertical slash | to indicate line ends in the original. On occasion I use square [brackets] to complete or explain parts of the text. Use of the original letter is courtesy the Church History Library,

50. Sarah Kimball, "Auto-Biography," *Woman's Exponent* 12, no. 7 (Sept. 1, 1883): 51. Others included Lydia Moon, a sister to two of William Clayton's wives (Lydia finally married Clayton's brother, James, after refusing both Smith and Clayton) and Nancy Rigdon, daughter of Sidney Rigdon. Perhaps as many as twenty women refused Smith. Documentation of such incidents is understandably rare. The document discussed in this paper is important for the reason of its contemporary status.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah.[51] Original spelling and punctuation preserved.

Philadelphia, A^u^gust, 17, ^or (18)th^ 1843,

President. Smith,

Dear Br, in the Lord, | for the first time in the provdece of the Lord, | I take my pen, that I may communicate to you, some| things, that may be of some benifit to you, in time | and in Eternity,, I pray the Lord that these Lines may | reach you, & find you and all yours, in a state of | prosperity, I have ben trying to do rite ever sence| I parted with you, I have got a long finely with ^the^ | Church in this City, so fare we have had peace| ~~in~~ hear in our mitsts & no dificulty whatever, the | Church is increacing,,, 22 New members have joind | cinse, I came hear, you may look for a goodly number | to come to Nauvoo this fall, ,!! Br Horris [Horace] Whitney[52] | staid with me about ,2, weeks,, he then went into | Jersey with one of the Elders, to preach in the | Country, he, left his things with me & said that | he would be back in ,3, weeks. I have hurd that | he has gone to, CT, to see his Grand Father,!!! | Br Wm, & family, are in Monmouth County, NJ, he | is preaching, Sister Caroline's[53] health is no better, but | if any thing it is worse than when she lef home,. | Br Wm, is turning the wourld upside down,, | with his, darling Religion, ... --------- | & Elders, Yong [Young], Kimball, & Page, & GA Smith | left hear this afternoon for, NY, ,, Elders,, | O, Pratt & Woodruff,, left last, Monday for | Chester, Co,. they ^that is Elders Y, K, P. & W,^ staid heare near, two weeks, they | did not settle any dificulty,, for their was, none, to | settle, but they have got the Saints, to feel the impotu^nce^

51. The letter may also be found in *Selected Collections of the Archives of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 2 vols. (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 2002), vol. 1, disc 20, "Letters Received." A digital image may be found at https://dcms.lds.org/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE431511 (images 14–17).

52. Horace K. Whitney, son of Newell K. Whitney.

53. Caroline was Grant's sister, married to William Smith, apostle and Joseph Smith's brother.

| of going to Nauvoo, I think they have performed | a good work in this City,, the Saints all seam to feel | well,, they all, want to see you,, they say when | will, Br, Joseph, come, I tell them that, they | must go whare ^you^ are. & then you will tell them | what to do &c----- |

I will now, tell you sumthing about your old | Friends, in this, ^City^ in so doing, I will try to be a wise | servent and as harmeless, as a, dove,,[54] Sister Bangor, left | the, Church, in April. and has not come back yet, She | is vary friendly, and so is the old gentleman,,, ---- | Br Pawson,, and family, would be glad to see you,, | and in fact all your old friends to numeurous to | mention,,. Sister,. C[onrad], and. her, daugh^t^ers,, they have | ben tried some what of late,, one of the Girls, | is vary much opposed ~~th~~ to, the doctrin of the Saints, | she will not let the old Lady & the others rest becaus | they are Mormons, She wants to rule the family, she | is not willing that any of the Saints should come to | the House,, if theair should come a Letter to the | Office,, she wants to see it., least it should come | from a Mormon, she wa^t^ches vary close,,!! |

A few days befor the Twelve came to this City, I, | was cauled upon to visit a, family that was sumwhat | troubled in mind., !!! Sum person had given them, ^(or her)^ a, | few, words of Council,, the first cost the giver, 50, ct, | and the Last cost the Receiver, 25, ct, | March. the 11th ,, & June the 2et Quincy,,, | again, I was cauled upon to explain certin, | mistryes &c., they were unable to comprehend,, | cirten items, made, known, and yet, unknown, | I confesed that it was a grate Mistery that, I, | could not interpet,, ,, altho ^I^ read vary close, | the one out of the Church had not read, | but the, Three in the Church read, and, cept [kept] | reading,, untill, two of the them, was about | to denie, the faith,,, Miss S[Susan],, & the | Mother [Elizabeth], !!!, Miss A[Ann?],, has ben the meanes of caping [keeping] | them in the Church,, and sending for, me | to explain,, after reading,, I preached, bore testim | ony,,.&c, will you answer it Miss S, no I cannot | think of doing it,, you may write if you will. | so I copied from the March number a few | words thinking to write in a few days,, | but the Twelve coming,, in a day to two, my room, | has ben croded preventing me from writing &c,,.--- | last, Munday,,,

54. Grant is assuring Smith of his desire to be discreet.

Elder . O. P. was requested, to visit,, but | could not as he had to go to Chester, Co, that Morning | I was to go to the same. House,, with him,, so, I, | went a, Lone,, I was informed that Elder P. was wante^d^ | to explain, &c, as it was not on, Mathematical subjects, I, | thought it might ^be difficult^ for him, to interpet it, ~~ad~~ and as he | was coming back to the City next week, I thought | it best to make all things shure,,, so I went to work | in the, name of the Lord,, and after using evry .. | argument that, I could,, they delivered into my | Hands, all that ^I^ wanted, March, & June, | I am now in ^(an)^ up^p^er room, I will at this moment light | my Lamp, and offer, a Sacrefice of evry thing | that I have obtained,,,, as a witness befor the| Lord,, that, I will be true to you in time & in | Eternity,, I have made the ofring the Smoke | and flame has assended,,, I obtained ^(the Lets,,,)^ on this | ^condision^ that if I got an ansor,, they or ^She^ Should | see it,, in this mater whatever you say I will do | but if you write, direct to me, if you pleas, as | this is their request,, , they all feel better | (Miss, S, cried. Like ^a^ Child when these things | was made known to me) they think you canot| explain it,, if ^I^ can I will get them all to ^come^ | to Nauvoo, Miss S, was sick and had Brs, | You^n^g, Kimball, lay hands on her,, they said | that she felt quite chearful,,, this ^Family^ think it | vary strang that their friend should advise one & not | all,, ,,what did he mean by sending money,, attendan^c^e | &c, and about Matrimony,, and the will of the ^Lord.,,^ | Br, K, has,, taught me principle, &c, Br, Y, I found | new [knew] about the matte so I read to them, they said | It should be even as you desired, in the name of the | Lord even so Amen, I told them the care that, I, | ^had^ pursued,, & the one I was going to take, they said it was | rite and the Lord would bless me for so doing | give my love to, Br, Hyrum, I was glad to hear that he had | received the Priesthood, &c, Br Joseph, I have ben tried until, I, have | have allmost desired, to die, I would, have given any thing on Earth to | seen you, & talk^ed^ with you one hour,,, but I now feel well and want | to live long on the, Earth,, my health is vary poor : will you | pray your, Heavenly Father ^to^ Bless me,, with health, and the | holy spirit,, if you think best write & I will do as you | say,, I add no more but remain your freend | & Br, in the,, ^new,^ covenent,, |

Preset,, Joseph Smith, Sener, J. M Grant

THE NOVEL MORMON DOCTRINES OF ULTIMATE REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS AS FIRST REVEALED IN THE VISION: SOME OBSERVATIONS ON HISTORY, SOURCES, AND INTERPRETATION

Clyde D. Ford

The Vision (1832)[1] is one of the most important revelations of the formative period of Mormon theological development, where novel and controversial doctrines of the afterlife first made their appearance.[2]

1. A slightly edited version of The Vision is found as section 76 in The Doctrine and Covenants of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2013), hereafter *SLCDC*.

2. The most controversial new teaching was, as Richard Bushman noted, the "contraction of hell," the doctrine that the unrepentant who die in their sins would ultimately be saved in the kingdom of God. This doctrine was especially difficult for some of Smith's followers with an orthodox Protestant background who came to Mormonism with a belief in hell for the wicked and found a similar doctrine in the Book of Mormon. For example, Brigham Young (1801–1877), a former Methodist, recalled that "it [The Vision] was so directly contrary and opposed to my former education [that] . . . I could not understand it" (*Deseret News–Extra*, Sept. 14, 1852, 24 as quoted in Robert J. Woodford, "The Historical Development of the Doctrine and Covenants" PhD diss., Brigham Young University, 1974, vol. 2, 929); see also Richard Bushman, *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005), 199. For other examples, see Matthew C. Godfrey, Mark Ashurst-McGee, Grant Underwood, Robert J. Wood-

In a recent study I explored how The Vision expanded upon revealed teachings from the Book of Mormon and prior revelations, resolved some inherited theological problems, and set the stage for the unfolding of uniquely Mormon doctrines and practices.[3] There I observed that The Vision appears to be a conflation of several independent sources. Literary evidence for this conclusion includes duplications, interruptions, awkward transitions, deletions, and variances in vocabulary, style, and setting.

To date there has been little attention paid to a source-critical analysis of The Vision as scholars have been primarily interested in exploring the implications of the final canonical text. While such a "synchronic" analysis is undoubtedly of value, a "diachronic" approach aimed at dissecting composite revelations and uncovering the sources and their history can also lead to new insights.[4] As Mormon historian Dean C. Jessee has rightly observed: "textual analysis is as important to an understanding of the past as the gathering and selection of source material."[5]

Below I posit that The Vision was composed from two poems and five previously recorded visions that were received by Joseph Smith and his scribes while revising the New Testament in early 1832. Each of the five visions can be associated with a New Testament passage between John 1 and Revelation 12. The goals of this study are to isolate the literary fragments in The Vision, assign each to its most likely pre-existing

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ford, William G. Hartley, eds., *The Joseph Smith Papers: Documents, Volume 2: July 1831–January 1833* (Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2013), 183.

3. Clyde D. Ford, "The Book of Mormon, the Early Nineteenth-Century Debates over Universalism, and the Development of the Novel Mormon Doctrines of Ultimate Rewards and Punishments," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 47, no. 1 (Spring 2014): 1–23.

4. Both synchronic and diachronic approaches have long been used by biblical literary critics. For recent examples in Old Testament study see Rolf Rendtorff, *The Canonical Hebrew Bible* (Leiden: Deo Publishing, 2005) and David M. Carr, *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), respectively.

5. Dean C. Jessee, "The Reliability of Joseph Smith's History," *Journal of Mormon History* 3 (1976): 23.

source, show how the redactor of The Vision combined and modified the pre-existing sources to produce the final composition, and explore the possible original significances of the five visions.

That some revelations in the 1835 Kirtland edition of the Doctrine and Covenants (*KDC*) were conflations of prior revelations can be shown by comparing *KDC* and the 1833 Book of Commandments (*BC*). This demonstrates that the editors of *KDC* combined revelations *either* in a sequential[6] or a cut and paste[7] format. Other revelations, whose prior sources are no longer extant, have also been suggested to be conflations.[8] Attempted reconstruction of the original sources for revelations without extant sources, such as The Vision, presents considerable challenges.[9] Thus while some displaced fragments in The Vision can be confidently assigned to one of the five visions, others remain of less certain origin. Likewise, distinguishing between original sources and secondary editorial additions can be difficult.

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6. Examples include chapters 17–21 and 31–33 in *BC,* which were combined to form Sections 45 and 52 in *KDC*, respectively.

7. For example, section 13 of *KDC* begins with chapter 44 and then inverts two fragments from chapter 47 in *BC*. Another example is the edited version of Smith's Liberty Jail letters that were added to the 1872 Utah edition of the Doctrine and Covenants. section 121 (*SLCDC*) consists of five fragments cut and pasted from the two letters.

8. Danel W. Bachman has hypothesized that section 132 (*SLCDC*) is "an amalgamation of several separate communications to Joseph Smith, each given at separate times," and I have suggested that sections 89 (the "Word of Wisdom") and 19 are examples of "sequential" editing. See Danel W. Bachman, "New Light on an Old Hypothesis: The Ohio Origins of the Revelation on eternal Marriage," *Journal of Mormon History* 5 (1978): 26 and Clyde D. Ford, "The Origin of the Word of Wisdom," *Journal of Mormon History* 24, no. 2 (Fall 1998): 129–154 and "Debates over Universalism," 22.

9. Good examples are the many complex analyses and unresolved disputes over the sources of the Pentateuch in the twentieth century. For a recent review, see Ernest Nicholson, *The Pentateuch in the Twentieth Century: The Legacy of Julius Wellhausen* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

II. A Literary History of The Vision

Between March 1831 and July 1832 Smith was intermittently occupied with revising the New Testament. Beginning in mid-February 1832 Smith worked on John 1–Revelation 11 with Sidney Rigdon as principal scribe. Sometime thereafter, Revelation 12–22 was completed with Frederick G. Williams as scribe.[10] On several occasions, Smith and his scribes received visions that provided information regarding the scriptural passage under scrutiny, and which they were commanded to record.[11] Sometime following these recordings an individual we will call the "redactor" combined these texts into a single work which is no longer extant and which we will term the "autograph" of The Vision. For convenience, the five visions are numbered below according to the sequence of their scriptural associations in the New Testament, and individual verses in The Vision are numbered according to the 2013 Salt Lake City edition of the Doctrine and Covenants (*SLCDC*), section 76.

In constructing the autograph, the redactor organized The Vision into four parts: Part 1 (vv. 1–10): an introduction consisting of two poems; Part 2 (vv. 11–31): narrative introductory excerpts from visions 1, 2, 4, and 5 arranged in a sequential manner, in the chronological order of reception, and without clear evidence of editorial additions; Part 3 (vv. 31–113), a heterogeneous collection of materials from visions 2–5, consisting largely of lists with each item beginning with "they are they" or "these are they" that summarize the eligibility and/or the rewards or punishments of the human group under consideration; and lastly, Part 4 (vv. 114–19), a conclusion largely written by the redactor. The lists and other materials in Part 3 are organized into four sections that describe the four possible ultimate fates of humans: the eternal abode of the devil (vv. 32–49), the celestial world (vv. 50–70), the terrestrial

10. Scott H. Faulring, Kent P. Jackson, Robert J. Matthews, eds., *Joseph Smith's New Translation of the Bible* (Provo: Brigham Young University, 2004), 58–59.

11. Doctrine and Covenants 76:28, 49, 80, 113.

world (vv. 71–80), and the telestial world (vv. 81–113). All these sections have been significantly reworked by the redactor, who deleted some items, inserted fragments from the visions 2–5 texts, and added editorial comments. Like Part 2, the inserted fragments from other visions seem to follow the chronological order of reception of the originals, as if the redactor skimmed the vision texts in order for the desired passages. The redactor's editorial additions, which are frequent in Part 3, clarified and/or intensified the information in the lists, emphasized some themes distinct from the original vision texts (e.g., the need for the reader to have personal revelation to fill in what the redactor has deleted), and, unlike the terse original lists, showed a preference for long sentences with dependent clauses and the use of adverbs (wherefore, therefore, then, neither). These characteristics aid in identifying the redactor's editorial insertions in Part 3.

During the latter part of 1830 or early 1831, Church historian John Whitmer began keeping a written record entitled A Book of Commandments & Visions of the Lord (*BCVL*). Recent scholars have concluded that "[t]extual evidence indicates that [John] Whitmer and [Oliver] Cowdery copied revelations and other items [in *BCVL*] . . . from even earlier manuscripts *that are no longer extant*."[12] In November 1831, Cowdery and Whitmer left for Missouri, taking *BCVL* with them, where it was a source of the revelations printed in *The Evening and The Morning Star* (Independence, 1832) and *BC*.[13]

A similar work to *BCVL*, which has become known as the Kirtland Revelation Book (*KRB*), was begun in Kirtland in early 1832 by Frederick G. Williams. His first entry was The Vision. A copy of The Vision was carried to Missouri where it was entered into *BCVL* by Whitmer. This was the source for the first published version of The Vision in *The*

12. Robin Scott Jensen, Robert J. Woodford, Steven C. Harper, eds., *The Joseph Smith Papers: Visions and Translations; Manuscript Visions Books* (Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2009), 5; emphasis mine.

13. Ibid., 6.

Evening and The Morning Star in July 1832.[14] And the *KRB* version was a source for publication in *Evening and Morning Star* (Kirtland, 1835) and, shortly thereafter, in *KDC*.[15]

It is presumed in this study that Williams used the autograph as the source for his entry into *KRB*. When Williams had copied the first five verses, he was interrupted by Smith, who inserted vv. 6–7 in his own handwriting; Williams then continued copying. Thus The Vision did not reach its final form until William's *KRB* entry. Smith's insertion is also present in *BCVL*. In a few places *KRB* and *BCVL* differ in wording, with *BCVL* generally having the better readings (see footnote discussions under individual passages below). In some instances, the differences could be explained as either a copying error by Williams or a correction by Whitmer (e.g., vv. 12, 20). The former is considered more likely since Whitmer failed to make some other obviously needed changes (e.g., vv. 25, 96). In addition, Whitmer sometimes preserved an alternative reading that most likely derived from the autograph itself (e.g., v. 100). Taken together these observations suggest that Whitmer also copied from the autograph (or a copy) and added Smith's insertion (vv. 6–7).

III. A Literary Analysis of The Vision

Based on the foregoing, the version of The Vision chosen for analysis is that in *KRB* (with an occasional correction from *BCVL*). In editing *KRB*, I have corrected some spelling errors. The proposed scriptural associations and settings for the five previously recorded visions are as follows: vision 1 (The Prologue of John [John 1:1–18], before creation);

14. *The Evening and The Morning Star* 1, no. 2 (July 1832): 2–3. Robin Scott Jensen, Richard E. Turley Jr., Riley M. Lorimer, eds., *The Joseph Smith Papers: Revelations and Translations, Volume 2: Published Revelations* (Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2011), 225.

15. *Evening and Morning Star* 1, no. 2 (July 1832 [Feb. 1835]): 27–30l. Jensen, Turley, and Lorimer, eds., *Joseph Smith Papers: Revelations and Translations Volume 2*, 225.

vision 2 (John 5:29, the resurrections of the just and unjust); vision 3 (1 Corinthians 15:40–41, the four ultimate rewards and punishments, vision 3a: the celestial world, vision 3b: the terrestrial world, vision 3c: the telestial world, vision 3d: the wicked in the realm of Satan); vision 4 (Revelation 7: the heavenly court, the Lamb, and the righteous in the afterlife; the voice from heaven); and vision 5 (Revelation 12, vision 5a: Lucifer rebels and is thrust out of heaven, vision 5b: Satan overcomes some of the saints of God; the voice of the Lord). Below, the *KRB* version is reproduced with identification of the proposed fragments from the original sources and with the redactor's proposed editorial additions in bold italics. A discussion of the rationales for these identifications follows the analysis.

Poem 1

1. Hear O ye heavens
And give ear O earth
And rejoice ye inhabitants thereof

For the Lord he is God
And beside him there is none else

2. For great is his wisdom
Marvelous are his ways
And the extent of his doings none can find out

3. His purposes fail not
Neither are there any who can stay his hand,

4. From eternity to eternity he is the same
And his years never fail

Poem 2

5. I the Lord am merciful and gracious
Unto them who fear me
And delight to honor

Them who serve me in righteousness and in truth

6.***Great shall be their reward***
And Eternal Shall be their glory

7. And unto them will I reveal all mysteries
Yea all the hidden mysteries of my Kingdom
From days of old and for ages to come
Will I make Known unto them the good pleasure of my will concerning all things to come. Yea

8. Even the wonders of eternity shall they know
And things to come will I shew them
Even the things of many generations

9. Their wisdom shall be great
And their understanding reach to heaven
And before them the wisdom of the wise shall perish
And the understanding of the prudent shall come to naught

10. For by my spirit will I enlighten them
And by my power will I make known unto them the secrets of my will
Yea even those things which eye has not seen nor ear heard
Nor yet entered into the heart of man

Introduction to vision 1, before creation

11. We Joseph & Sidney being in the spirit on the sixteenth of February in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty two
12. and through the power of the spirit our eyes were opened and our understandings were enlarged (enlightened[16]) so as to see and understand the things of God

16. *KRB* has "enlarged" and *BCVL* "enlightened." The latter is clearly preferred as it reproduces Ephesians 1:18, Poem 2 and the Book of Mormon (cf. Alma 32). This is most likely a copying error by Williams. It was corrected in *Evening and Morning Star* and *KDC*.

13. even the things which were from the beginning before the world was which was ordained of the Father through his Only Begotten Son who was in the bosom of the Father even from the beginning

A vision of the divine Son in the beginning (from vision 1, before creation)

14. of whom we bear record and the record which we bear is the fullness of the gospel of Jesus Christ who is the Son whom we saw and with whom we conversed in the heavenly vision

Introduction to vision 2, the resurrections of the just and unjust

15. for as we sat doing the work of translation which the Lord had appointed unto us we came to the twenty ninth verse of in the fifth chapter of John which was given unto us thus
16. speaking of the resurrection of the dead who should hear the voice of the Son of Man
17. and shall come forth they who have done good in the resurrection of the just and they who have done evil in the resurrection of the unjust
18. now this caused us to marvel for it was given us of the spirit

From the introduction to vision 4, the heavenly court, the Lamb, and the righteous in the afterlife; the voice from heaven

19. and while we meditated upon these things the Lord touched the eyes of our understandings and they were opened and the glory of the Lord shone round about

A vision of God, the Lamb, and the sanctified saints in heaven (from vision 4, the heavenly court, the Lamb, and the righteous in the afterlife; the voice from heaven)

20. and we beheld the glory of the Son on the right (hand[17]) of the Father and received of his fullness
21. and saw the holy angels and they who are sanctified before his throne worshiping God and the Lamb for ever and ever
22. and now after the many testimonies which have been given of him this is the testimony last of all which we give of him that he lives
23a. for we saw him, even on the right hand of God

The voice from heaven bears record that Jesus is the creator (from vision 4, the heavenly court and the righteous in the afterlife; the voice from heaven)

23b. And we heard the voice bearing record that he is the only begotten of the Father
24. that by him and through him and of him the worlds are made and were created and the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters unto God

Vision 5a: Lucifer rebels and is thrust down from heaven

25. and this we saw also and bear record that an angel of God who was in authority in the presence of God who rebelled against the Only Begotten Son whom the Father loved who was in the bosom with (of[18]) the Father and was thrust down from the presence of God and the Son
26. and was called Perdition for the heavens wept over him for he was Lucifer even the son of the morning
27. and we beheld and lo he is fallen is fallen even the son of the morning,

17. *BCVL* adds "hand," which is the better reading, reproducing the same phrase in Luke 3:7 (Joseph Smith Translation), see also Acts 7:55. Again, most likely a copying error by Williams.

18. Both *BCVL* and *KRB* have "with," which was secondarily corrected to "of" in each. This appears to be an error in The Vision autograph. Whitmer failed to make this correction suggesting that he was trying to faithfully copy the wording of the autograph.

28. and while we were yet in the spirit the Lord commanded that we should write the vision.

Introduction to vision 5b. Satan overcomes some of the saints of God; the voice of the Lord

28b. *for* we beheld Satan that old serpent even the devil who rebelled against God and sought to take the kingdom of our God and his Christ[19]
29. wherefore he maketh war with the saints of God and encompasseth them round about,

The vision of the fate of those whom Satan overcomes (from vision 5b, Satan overcomes some of the saints of God; the voice of the Lord)

30. and we saw a vision of the eternal sufferings of those with whom he made war and overcame for thus came the voice of the Lord unto us
31. ***thus saith the Lord concerning all those who know my power and have been made partakers thereof and have suffered themselves through the power of the devil to be overcome unto the denying of the truth and the defying of my power***

Redactor's insertion #1 into vision 5b (from vision 2, the resurrection of the unjust)

32. they are they who are the sons of perdition of whom I say it had been better for them to have never been born
33. for they are vessels of wrath doomed to suffer the wrath of God with the devil and his angels throughout all eternity
34. ***concerning whom I have said there is no forgiveness for them in this world nor in the world to come***

19. In *BCVL* this reads "Kingdoms of our God, & of his Christ." Whitmer did not make a similar change in v. 28; this suggests a copying error by Whitmer.

35. ***having denied the Holy Ghost after having received it and having denied the only begotten son of the father crucifying him unto themselves and putting him to an open shame***

Redactor's insertion #2 into vision 5b (from vision 3d, the wicked in the realm of Satan)

36. these are they who shall go away into the lake of fire and brimstone with the devil and his angels
37. and the only ones on whom the second death shall have any power
38. ***yea verily*** the only ones who shall not be redeemed in the due time of the Lord after the sufferings of his wrath

Redactor's insertion #3 into vision 5b (from vision 4: the heavenly court, the Lamb, and the righteous in the afterlife; the voice from heaven)

39. who shall be brought forth by the resurrection of the dead through the triumph and glory of the lamb who was slain who was in the bosom of the father before the worlds were made
40. this is the gospel the glad tidings which the voice out of the heavens bore record unto us
41. that he came into the world even Jesus to be crucified for the world and to bear the sins of the world and to sanctify the world and to cleanse it from all unrighteousness
42. that through him all might be saved whom the father had put into his power
43. ***who glorifyeth the Father and saveth all the works of his hands except those sons of perdition who denieth the son after the father hath revealed him***
44a. ***wherefore, he saves all except them***

The continuation of vision 5b: Satan overcomes some of the saints of God; the voice of the Lord

44b. these shall go away into everlasting punishment which is eternal punishment to reign with the devil and his angels throughout all eternity where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched which is their torment
45. and the end thereof neither the place thereof and their torment no man knoweth
46. ***neither was revealed neither is neither will be revealed unto none save to them to whom are made partakers thereof***
47. ***nevertheless I the Lord shew it by vision unto many but straightway shutteth it up again***
48. ***wherefore the end the width the height the depth and the misery thereof he understandeth not neither any man save them who are ordained unto this condemnation***

Redactor's insertion #4 into vision 5b (from the conclusion of vision 4: the heavenly court and the righteous in the afterlife; the voice from heaven)

49a. and we heard the voice saying write the vision

Conclusion of vision 5b, Satan overcomes some of the saints of God; the voice of the Lord

49b. ***for lo*** this is the end of the vision of the eternal sufferings of the ungodly

Introduction to vision 3a: the celestial world (missing)

Redactor's insertion #1 into vision 3a (from vision 2: the resurrections of the just)

50. ***and again we bear record for we saw and heard and this is the testimony of the gospel of Jesus Christ*** concerning them who come forth in the resurrection of the just
51. they were they who received the testimony of Jesus and believed on his name ***were baptized after the manner of his burial being buried in***

the water in his name and this according to the commandment which he hath given
52. ***that by keeping the commandments they might be washed and cleansed from all their sins and receive the Holy Ghost by the laying on of the hands of him who is ordained and sealed unto this power***
53. ***and who overcome by faith and are sealed by that Holy Spirit of Promise which the Father shedeth forth upon all those who are just and true***
54. they are they who are the church of the first born
55. they are they into whose hands the Father hath given all things
56. they are they who are priests and kings who having of his fullness and of his glory . . .
57. ***and are priests of the most high after the order of Melchizedek which was after the order of Enoch which was after the order of the only begotten son***
58. ***wherefore as it is written they are Gods even the sons of god***
59. ***wherefore all things are theirs whether life or death or things present or things to come, all are theirs and they are Christ's and Christ is God's***
60. and they shall overcome all things
61. ***wherefore let no man glory in man but rather let them glory in god who shall subdue all enemies under his feet***
62. ***these shall dwell in the presence of God and his Christ for ever and ever***

Redactor's insertion #2 into vision 3a (from vision 4: the heavenly court, the Lamb, and the righteous in the afterlife; the voice from heaven)

63. these are they whom he shall bring with him when he shall come in the clouds of heaven to reign on the earth over his people
64. these are they who shall have part in the first resurrection
65. these are they who shall come forth in the resurrection of the just

66. these are they who are come unto mount Zion and unto the city of the Living god, the heavenly place the holiest of all
67. these are they who are come to an innumerable company of Angels to the general assembly and church of Enoch and of the first born
68. these are they whose names are written in heaven where God and Christ is judge of all
69. these are they who are just men made perfect through Jesus the mediator of the new
covenant who wrought out this perfect atonement through the shedding of his own blood.

From vision 3a: The celestial world

70. these are they whose bodies are celestial whose glory is that of the sun even God the highest of all whose glory the sun of the firmament is written of as being typical

Vision 3b: The terrestrial world

71. and again we saw the terrestrial world ***and lo these are they who are the terrestrial*** whose glory differeth from that of the [celestial] ***church of the first born who have received the fullness of the father*** even as that of the moon differeth from the sun of the firmament
72. ***behold*** these are they who died without Law
73. ***and also they who are the spirits of men kept in prison whom the son visited and preached the gospel unto them that they might be judged according to men in the flesh***
74. who received not the testimony of Jesus in the flesh but afterwards received it
75. these are they who are honorable men of the earth who were blinded by the craftiness of men
76. these are they who receive of this glory but not of the fullness
77. these are they who receive of the presence of the son but not of the fullness of the father

78. ***wherefore they are bodies terrestrial and not bodies celestial and differeth in glory as the moon differeth from the sun***
79. ***these are they who are not valiant in the testimony of Jesus wherefore they obtained not the crown over the kingdoms of our god,***
80. and now this is the end of the vision which we saw of the terrestrial that the lord commanded us to write while we were yet in the spirit,

Vision 3c: The telestial world

81. and again we saw the glory of the telestial which glory is that of the lesser even as the glory of the stars differeth from that of the moon in the firmament
82. these are they who receive not the gospel of Christ neither the testimony of Jesus
83. these are they who deny not the holy ghost,
84. these are they who are thrust down to hell
85. these are they who shall not be redeemed from the devil until the last resurrection ***until the Lord even Christ the Lamb shall have finished his work***
86a. these are they who receive not of his fullness in the eternal world but of the Holy Ghost

Redactor's insertion #1 into vision 3c (from vision 3: the 3 worlds are an orderly hierarchy of ministrations

86b. The telestial receives through the ministration of the terrestrial
87. and the terrestrial through the ministration of the celestial
88. ***and also the telestial receive it of the administering of angels who are appointed to minister for them or who are appointed to be ministering spirits for them for they shall be heirs of salvation***

Redactor's insertion #2 into vision 3c (from vision 3: The 3 worlds are ascending levels of glory)

89. and thus we saw in the heavenly vision the glory of the telestial which surpasseth all understanding

90. ***and no man knoweth it except him to whom God hath revealed it***
91. and thus we saw the glory of the terrestrial which excelleth in all things the glory of the telestial ***even in glory and in power and might and in dominion***
92. and thus we saw the glory of the celestial which excelleth in all things ***where God even the Father reigneth upon his throne forever and ever***
93. ***before his throne all things bow in humble reverence and giveth glory forever and ever***
94. ***they who dwell in his presence are the church of the first born and they see and they are seen and know as they are known having received of his fullness and of his grace***
95. ***and he maketh them equal in power and in might and in dominion***

Redactor's insertion # 3 into vision 3c (from vision 3: the 3 worlds compared to heavenly bodies)

96. and the glory of the celestial is one even as the glory of the son[20] (sun) is one,
97. and the glory of the terrestrial is one even as the glory of the moon is one
98. and the glory of the telestial is one even as the glory of the stars is one for as one star differeth from another star in glory even so differeth one from another in glory in the telestial world

Redactor's insertion #4 into vision 3c (from vision 5b: Satan overcomes some of the saints of God)

99. these are they who are of Paul, and of Apollos and of Cephus

Redactor's insertion # 5 into vision 3c (from vision 2: the resurrection of the unjust)

20. This error in spelling is present in *KRB* and *BCVL,* suggesting that it derives from the autograph. Again, it was not corrected by Whitmer.

100. these (they[21]) are they who say they are some of one and some of another some of Christ & some of John and some of Moses and some of Elias and some of Esaisas and some of Isaiah and some of Enoch
101. but received not the gospel neither the testimony of Jesus neither the prophets neither the everlasting covenants
102. last of all these are they who will not be gathered with the saints to be caught
up unto the church of the first born and received into the cloud[22]

Redactor's insertion #6 into vision 3c (from vision 5b: Satan overcomes some of the saints of God; the voice of the Lord)

103. these are they who are liars and sorcerers and adulterers and whoremongers and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie
104. these are they who suffer the wrath of God on the earth
105. these are they who suffer the vengeance of eternal fire
106. these are they who are cast down to hell ***and suffer the wrath of Almighty God until the fullness of times when Christ shall have subdued all enemies under his feet and shall have perfected his work***
107. ***when he shall deliver up the Kingdom and present it unto the Father spotless saying I have overcome and have trodden the winepress alone even the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God***

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21. In v. 100 *KRB* records "these are they" but *BCVL* has "they are they." Since the surrounding verses uniformly use "these are they" it is more likely that Williams made the change either to harmonize or unintentionally. Thus the presence of the phrase in *BCVL* suggests that Whitmer copied from the autograph (or a copy) rather than a copy of Williams's entry since it is difficult to understand why Whitmer would make such a change, either intentionally or as a copying error.

22. Both *KRB* and *BCVL* have "these are they." Yet this verse seems to conclude the fragment and to belong with vv. 100–01, which seemed to use "they are they." It may be that a change was made by the redactor either to minimize an otherwise awkward transition between vv. 102 and 103 or as a copying error.

108. ***then shall he be crowned with the crown of his glory to sit on the throne of his power to reign forever and ever***
109. ***but behold and lo we saw the glory of the telestial world that they were in number as innumerable as the stars in the firmament of heaven or as the sand upon the sea shore***
110. and heard the voice of the Lord saying these all shall bow the knee and every tongue shall confess ***to him who sitteth upon the throne for ever and ever***
111. for they shall be judged according to their works and every man shall receive according to his own works ***and his own dominion in the mansions which are prepared***

The conclusion of vision 3c, the telestial world

112. they shall be servants of the most high but where God and Christ dwells they cannot come worlds without end
113. this is the end of the vision which we saw which we were commanded to write while we were yet in the spirit,

The conclusion of The Vision

114. ***But great and marvelous are the works of the Lord and the mysteries of his kingdom which he shewed unto us which surpasseth all understanding in glory and might and in dominion***
115. ***which he commanded us we should not write while we were yet in the spirit and are not lawful for men to utter***
116. ***neither is man capable to make them known for they are only to be seen and understood by the power of the Holy Ghost which God bestows on those who love him and purifies themselves before him 117. to whom he grants the privilege of seeing and knowing for themselves***
118. ***that through the power and manifestation of the spirit while in the flesh they may be able to bear his presence in the world of glory.***

From the conclusion of vision 4: the heavenly court, the Lamb, and the righteous in the afterlife; the voice from heaven)

119. And to God and the Lamb be glory and honor and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

IV. Some Observations on the Poems and Visions and the Rationales for the Fragment Assignments

The two poems

The two poems are interesting examples of early Mormon poetry, about which little has been written. Both draw on Authorized Version Old and New Testament phraseology and simulate Old Testament verse. However, the two poems are different stylistically. As biblical scholar Adele Berlin has noted,[23] poetry in the Hebrew Bible is "largely the product of two elements: terseness[24] and parallelism."[25] Parallel lines often have word pairs that may be similar or opposite in meaning. Poem 1 more rigidly follows Berlin's elements, especially if the third lines in vv. 1 and 3 (bold

23. Adele Berlin, *The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm B. Eerdmans, 2008), 5.

24. Terseness refers to a limited number (2 to 5) of Hebrew words or "units" in each line.

25. Parallelism refers to two or more lines that express an idea in different ways. Parallel lines may have corresponding "word pairs" that are similar or opposite in meaning, as seen especially in poem 1. Brief reviews of Hebrew Bible verse structure are available in many introductions to the Old Testament, Bible dictionaries, and commentaries on the poetic books. For a more detailed analysis, see Michael P. O'Connor, *Hebrew Verse Structure* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1997) and additional observations on the work in William L. Holladay, "Hebrew Verse Structure Revisited (I): Which Words Count," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 118, no. 1 (1999): 19–32 and "Hebrew Verse Structure Revisited (II): Conjoint Cola, and Further Suggestions," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 118, no. 3 (1999): 401–16.

italics), which interrupt the parallelism, are considered to be secondary additions, perhaps by the redactor.

Poem 1 is written in third person and its theme is God and his attributes. It resembles a Psalmist hymn of praise or divine kingship (e.g., Psalms 135:5–6, 147:5). Poem 2 features the Lord speaking in first person. Its theme is the rewards of human faithfulness. This poem resembles the sayings of many Old Testament prophets that were often introduced with the messenger formula "thus says the Lord." Interestingly, the editors of *KDC* added "For thus saith the Lord" to the beginning of Poem 2. As noted above, Smith added vv. 6–7 (bolded) to poem 2 during copying into *KDC*. This addition also interrupts the symmetry of the poem. It is tempting to suggest that the first line of v. 7 was originally the missing first line of v. 8 and the original poem had four stanzas of four lines each. At any rate, the presence of the poems at the beginning of The Vision immediately informs the reader that The Vision is not one of Smith's typical revelations, which would begin by identifying those addressed and often the person speaking (e.g., the Lord). Rather, The Vision is something else.

Vision 1: Before creation

Vision 1 is the only vision whose date and participants are preserved. The scene is precreation "before the world was" (v. 13). The scriptural passage under revision is not given. Nevertheless, vocabulary such as "the beginning," "only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father," "bear (record or witness)," and "fullness," clearly points to the Prologue of the Gospel of John (John 1:1–18), a passage that Smith revised. Unfortunately, the communication between the Son and Smith and Rigdon, presumably a part of the original, has been deleted by the redactor.

Vision 2: The resurrections of the just and unjust

Vision 2 is the only one that explicitly identifies the scriptural reference under revision. The original text seems to have described changes made

to John 5:29 followed by a description of those eligible for the resurrections of the just and the unjust. A fragment describing those who will come forth in the resurrection of the just is explicitly preserved (vv. 50b–56) but has been displaced to vision 3a. The redactor has expanded v. 51a to include the need for baptism and receiving and being sealed by the Holy Ghost for entrance into the celestial world, v. 56 to further explain "priests and kings," and v. 60 as a guard against arrogance. This unequivocal fragment from the resurrection of the just uses the unusual "they are they" (a phrase that occurs in the Bible only in John 5:39) as opposed to the much more frequent "these are they"[26] which appears in visions 3, 4, and 5. This suggests that "they are they" can be used to identify additional fragments from vision 2.

The fragments identifying those who will come forth in the resurrection of the unjust are more challenging to identify. Two passages (vv. 32–33, 100–02), which begin with "they are they" and describe the wicked, appear to be from this section of vision 2. Verses 100–02 were displaced to their present location in part because of the similar themes of vv. 99 and 100.[27]

In a corrective to John 5:29, Book of Mormon authors had pointed out that the terms "[everlasting] life" and "[everlasting] damnation" more appropriately refer to eternal outcomes than to the resurrection (Helaman 12:26). The New Testament divides humanity into "the just"

26. "These are they" occurs repeatedly in Mark and Revelation and in several instances in the Book of Mormon, sometimes in short lists (Mosiah 15:12, Alma 41:7). However, the longer "these are they" lists in The Vision are unique to Mormon scripture.

27. If v. 102 derives from vision 2, one would expect the event described, the righteous being caught up to the cloud (1 Thessalonians 4:16–17), to also be a part of the description of those eligible for the resurrection of the just. This event, which is associated with the resurrection in 1 Thessalonians, appears nowhere else in The Vision. It may have been deleted by the redactor from the vision of the resurrection of the just. Alternatively, since Smith revised 1 Thessalonians 4:17, the verse could be from a vision other than the five visions.

and "the unjust" (Matthew 4:45) but makes reference only to the "resurrection of the just" (Luke 14:14). The Book of Mormon prophet Alma taught that both the just and the unjust will be resurrected (Alma 12:8). Vision 2 clarified and expanded this knowledge regarding the two resurrections. In vision 2, those eligible for the resurrection of the just will be faithful Mormons. The future reward of "eternal life" in the Book of Mormon became the receipt of "all things" and the "fullness" of God. Conversely, the wicked can expect to come forth in the resurrection of the unjust and reside in misery with the devil.

Vision 3: A novel schema of ultimate rewards and punishments

In the original vision 3, the reader was first introduced to the three "kingdoms of glory" (celestial, terrestrial, and telestial). The date, participants, and circumstances were not included in The Vision. In his revision of 1 Corinthians 15:40–41, Smith inserted the neologism "telestial." The presence of this term in vision 3 as well as other vocabulary from the Authorized Version of 1 Corinthians 15:40–41 (celestial, terrestrial, sun, moon, stars, etc.) establishes the scriptural connection. Vision 3 appears to originally have been a series of four visions of the four possible "worlds" (celestial, terrestrial, telestial, and the realm of the devil) in which humans could ultimately find themselves. Verses 83–84 emphasize that the inhabitants of the telestial world have not denied the Holy Ghost and will not be redeemed until the last resurrection. This implies that there was a fourth group who did deny the Holy Ghost and will not be redeemed. Fragments from this section appear in vv. 36–38.

The redactor deleted the description of the celestial world (only v. 70 can be unequivocally identified, although there may be others[28])

28. For example, v. 85 in vision 3c speaks of the "last resurrection," implying a statement that those of the celestial world will come forth in the "first resurrection." This is possibly preserved in v. 64, which the redactor might have placed next to v. 65 (vision 4) because of similar themes. Likewise, v. 71 suggests that

and substituted fragments from visions 2 and 4. The description of the vision of the terrestrial world remains mostly intact (vv. 73 and 78 are the redactor's editorial expansions and v. 79 is an addition that is out of place), showing the literary structure that was likely followed in the originals of visions 3a, 3c, and 3d. The description of the telestial world has multiple insertions between v. 86b and its conclusion at v. 113. The phrase "of the telestial" was dropped from v. 113 (compare to v. 80) to make this verse appear as a conclusion to all of the visions.

In a prior study[29] I suggested that vision 3 originated from a desire to resolve the "four groups/two outcomes" problem of God's justice inherited from the Book of Mormon. The Book of Mormon describes four human groups that are accountable for sin: (1) faithful Church members (2 Nephi 31:11–20), (2) the untaught who have not heard the Word (Mosiah 3:11), (3) those who hear but refuse to repent (Mosiah 3:12), and (4) the unpardonable who "deny the Holy Ghost" (Alma 39:6). In the Book of Mormon the first two groups are assigned to "eternal life" and the last two to "everlasting damnation." But the groups are not equal in the gravity of their sins, thus creating the problem of divine justice. This difficulty was hardly new, as Christian theologians had speculated on subdivisions of heaven and hell for centuries.[30] Vision 3 resolved the four groups/two outcomes problem by increasing the number of outcomes to four. Thus the Book of Mormon's "eternal life" was divided into the celestial world for the faithful and terrestrial for the untaught. And "everlasting damnation" was divided into a temporary stay in hell

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those of the celestial world belong to the "church of the first born" and "have received the fullness of the father," so vv. 92–95 may have been derived from the original vision 3a, although with some reworking.

29. Ford, "Debates over Universalism," 15–17.

30. See Colleen McDannell and Bernhard Lang, *Heaven: A History* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University, 1988) and Alice K. Turner, *The History of Hell* (New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1993).

for the unrepentant (a kind of Mormon Purgatory) and a permanent one for the unpardonable.

Vision 4: The heavenly court, the Lamb, and the righteous in the afterlife; the voice from heaven

Although the passages assigned to vision 4 also contain some vocabulary from John's prologue, this is clearly a different vision. In vision 4, Smith and Rigdon beheld God's throne, which was surrounded by "angels" and deceased "sanctified" humans who were "worshiping" God and "the Lamb" "forever and ever." These features suggest a vision similar to that in Revelation 7:9–17. Rather than speaking directly with Jesus as in vision 1, communication was through "the voice [from heaven]," which is helpful in identifying other fragments from this vision. One of these fragments (vv. 40–42) seems out of place as its very positive and encouraging verses were placed into the otherwise negative descriptions of the ultimate sufferings of the wicked. After inserting fragments from visions 2 and 3 into vision 5b, perhaps the redactor wanted also to include something from vision 4. However, this caused some difficulty, forcing the redactor to add his clarifying commentary in vv. 43–44a.

In describing the righteous Christians who had withstood severe earthly persecution, Revelation 7:14 states: "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Although there is nothing in the fragment at v. 63–69 to definitively connect it with any of the visions, an expansion of Revelation 7:14 in vision 4 continuing "these are they" introductions would be a reasonable option. These descriptions are different than the "these are they" statements of vision 3, as they do not focus so much on criteria during mortality as they do on outcomes afterward. Verses 63–69 include a reworking of Hebrews 12:22–24, a scripture not revised by Smith. Verse 119, the current ending of The Vision, may have been the original ending of vision 4.

If this analysis is correct, then vision 4 interprets the scene of Revelation 7 as the intermediate state (the time between death and resurrection), since the faithful are residing with God and angels in a future world (v. 63), but their resurrection has not yet occurred (v. 64). The Book of Mormon had already described the intermediate state: "concerning the state of the soul between death and the resurrection . . . the spirits of those who are righteous are received into a state of happiness . . . the spirits of the wicked . . . are cast out into outer darkness . . . until the time of their resurrection" (Alma 40:11–14). Vision 4 identified the righteous spirits as faithful Mormons.

It is likely that Smith and supportive Church members would have interpreted vision 4 in the context of contemporary events. At the time of vision 4 "intense opposition to the Church [had] erupted in Ohio."[31] The Church and its members were under attack in the press and from locals and Church apostates. Like the righteous saints of Revelation 7:13–14 who had faithfully endured "great tribulation," vision 4 informed those Mormons who remained faithful despite the persecutions that they could expect to reside happily after death with God and the righteous in the heavenly New Jerusalem (v. 66), while awaiting the accompanying of Jesus in his triumphal return to earth (v. 64, see Matthew 24:30), their resurrection (vv. 64–65), and ultimate reward.

Vision 5: Satan is cast down and wars against the saints

Vision 5 consists of two visions (5a and 5b) of Satan that were received while revising Revelation 12. Vision 5a (vv. 25–28) describes Lucifer's rebellion and thrusting down, contains some wording from John's prologue, and (according to already existing Mormon scripture) describes an event that occurred before creation (Moses 4:3). While these features might suggest an assignment to vision 1, the lack of a description of Lucifer in John's prologue and the description of the casting out of the

31. Milton V. Backman, Jr., *The Heavens Resound: A History of the Latter-day Saints in Ohio 1830–1838* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1983), 93.

devil in Revelation 12:9 suggest the latter as the scriptural reference, as additionally informed by Isaiah 14:12.

In vision 5b Smith and Williams beheld Satan warring against the saints of God and overcoming some. This vision can confidently be related to Smith's revision of Revelation 12:7–17, not only because of similarities in setting and vocabulary ("Satan," "that old serpent," "the Devil," "make war" [with the righteous]), but because Smith added to Revelation 12:8 a new phrase in scripture: "the kingdom of our God and His Christ."[32] This phrase is a correction or a deletion of "the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ" in Revelation 12:10. Its presence in vision 5b (v. 28) clearly establishes the scriptural connection. That vision 5b is a different vision than vision 5a can be seen from the different names ("Perdition" and "Lucifer" as opposed to "Satan" and "the devil"), the notice that the vision of "Lucifer" is ending at v. 28, and the different settings in time (before and after creation, respectively).

In vision 5b Smith and Williams saw a vision similar to that of John in Revelation 12:17 that reads: "And the dragon (devil) was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God." Vision 5b informs us that in this war, some of the saints of God were overcome by the devil (v. 30). Given the Church's difficulties alluded to above, Smith and his readers may well have associated this vision with apostate Mormons such as Ezra Booth and Symonds Ryder. The additions of the redactor in vv. 31, 34–35, 38, 46–48 intensify the descriptions of future suffering for such individuals. Verses 46–48 offer an editorial correction to v. 45, pointing out that such wicked persons may also receive a vision similar to vision 5b. A few months prior to receiving this vision, Smith had given a message similar to vision 5b to the Ohio Saints: "I the Lord have looked upon you and have seen abominations in the Church which profess[es] my name . . . wo[e] be unto them what are deceivers and hypocrites for thus

32. Faulring, *New Translation*, 577.

saith the Lord, I will bring them to judgment."[33] Vision 5b seems to end with just such a submission and judgment for the wicked (vv. 110–111).

Verses 99, 103–106 are non-specific descriptions of the characteristics and fate of the wicked that do not seem to belong to visions 2 or 3 and are, therefore, proposed to derive from vision 5b. Verses 99 and 100 are duplications that have apparently been placed together. Verses 99 and 105 reproduce 1 Corinthians 1:12 and Jude 1:7, both of which are related to unfaithful Church members. Presumably these individuals were condemned to an eternal stay with the devil in the original vision 5b. In order to include these passages under the punishments of those destined for the telestial world, whose inhabitants would eventually be redeemed from the devil, the redactor had to add vv. 106b–108, explaining that this stay would be temporary.

The conclusion of The Vision

The conclusion seems to be largely a composition of the redactor with the exception of v. 119 (vision 4). Verses 115–118 expand on the redactor's editorial assertions in The Vision (vv. 48, 90) that humans cannot understand the details of future worlds from the written record, but only by personal revelation.

V. Some Implications of this Study for the Dating, the Authors, and the Interpretation of The Vision

Helpful information for dating The Vision autograph includes: (1) contemporary accounts suggesting its existence; (2) evidence presented here that the revision of Revelation 12 had preceded the autograph (see discussion on vision 5b); and (3) publication of The Vision in the July 1832 edition of *The Evening and the Morning Star*. Church missionary Samuel Smith recorded in his journal on March 21, 1832 that he had

33. Revelation received May 9, 1831 and recorded on page 82 of *BCVL* (*SLCDC* 50:4–6).

read a copy of "the vision . . . which Smith and Rigdon had seen."[34] Likewise, a local Universalist publication in its March 21 edition stated that "The Mormonites" had a "new revelation" that taught "that the whole human family will . . . be saved."[35] While a reference to the original vision 3 rather than to The Vision is possible for these two accounts, this is considered unlikely given the redactor's determination to keep portions of this vision from public view (see below). Thus these accounts suggest a date in early March 1832 for composition of The Vision autograph.

The need for the revision of Revelation 12 prior to composition of the autograph is a potential problem for this dating. Since Williams was officially appointed as a scribe to Smith on July 20, 1832 and Smith noted in a letter dated July 31, 1832 that the New Testament revision was "finished," some have concluded that Revelation 12–22 was revised between the two dates.[36] The letter stated that "we have finished the translation of the New testament . . . [and] we are making rapid strides in the old book [Testament]."[37] This obviously does not exclude the possibility that some of the revision of Revelation 12–22 could have continued in March with Williams as scribe. Although Smith was living in Hiram and Williams in Kirtland, Smith traveled to Kirtland during this time.[38]

One important motivation for the redactor to undertake his task was to delete portions of the texts of the five visions that were not considered appropriate for general consumption. Although the visions were recorded, presumably in detail, the redactor insists (vv. 46, 90, 116)

34. Ronald K. Esplin, ed., *The Joseph Smith Papers: Documents Volume 2, July 1831–January 1833* (Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2013), 183.

35. *Evangelical Magazine and Gospel Advocate* 3, no. 2 (Mar. 17, 1832): 67.

36. Faulring, *New Translation*, 59.

37. Letter to William W. Phelps in *JSP: Documents Vol. 2*, 267.

38. In a journal entry dated March 8, 1832, Smith noted that he had been in Kirtland from February 29 to March 4. Some biblical revision, and/or composition of The Vision autograph, and/or initial entry into *KRB* could have taken place at this time. See *JSP Manuscript Revelation Books*, 435.

that other humans will need their own personal revelation if they are to gain a similar knowledge of these transcendental worlds. Although the visionaries were repeatedly commanded to record the visions (vv. 28, 49, 80, 113), the redactor was ordered not to write the details (v. 115). Thus the redactor has left us only a shell of the original texts. These considerations likely explain such major deletions as Smith and Rigdon's conversation with Jesus in vision 1 and the vision of the celestial world.[39]

Lastly, we may say something about the authors. The original poems, descriptions of the visions, and lists seem to have been carefully and skillfully crafted. Conversely, the redactor's editorial conflation was done less skillfully, possibly in haste, and frequently with unsatisfactory results. For example, the transitions connecting fragments from different sources are often awkward (vv. 30–31, 39, 43–44a, 50, etc.), some requiring subsequent revision.[40] These observations might suggest that the composer(s) of the original poems/visions and the redactor were separate persons. It is tempting to conclude that it was the scribes, Rigdon and Williams, who composed the originals, which were then edited by Smith, an activity that continued and concluded with the addition of vv. 6–7. It is difficult to envision any others with the necessary knowledge and spiritual authority who would have been involved.

The realization that The Vision is a conflation of previously existing texts presents new challenges and opportunities for Mormon historians

39. That The Vision has major deletions has also been pointed out by Robert Woodford in "Historical Development," vol. 2, 927–28. Woodford reproduces a retrospective reminiscence (1892) by Philo Dibble, who claimed to be present during "the vision which is recorded in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants." Dibble recalled that "many things were seen and related that are not written." Dibble was likely a witness to the reception of vision 3. See *Juvenile Instructor* 27, no. 10 (May 15, 1892): 303–04.

40. The awkwardness of v. 39 was noted by the editors of *KDC,* who modified it by replacing "who" with "for all the rest." This change seems ill advised as it could convey the erroneous impression that those consigned to spend eternity with the devil may not be resurrected.

and literary critics. Further work on the individual texts delineated in this analysis might shed additional light on the progressive development of Mormon theology in early 1832. These results also suggest the need to explore other revelations searching for signs of redaction and a prior history. And one wonders whether any of the missing parts from the original texts used by the redactor of The Vision might be found elsewhere? Such future work on these and other questions holds the promise of further elucidating one of the most important documents of Mormon literature.

Annie Poon
Lightning and Rain
12x9, monotype

FLAMING

Craig Mangum

One day, I woke up blinded by white light stinging my sleeping eyes. A thin, radiant line created by a break in my window blinds had been making a slow sojourn, day by day, across the floor of my room. Throughout the year it crept toward me, persistent yet hardly perceptible until one day—this day—it hit me in the face. It was as though the planets and stars had conspired to deliver a celestial wake-up call, inevitable and inexorable. And yet, despite the months I had spent in bed, sleeping my days away in a stunned indifference that made things like class assignments, eating, and showering entirely inconsequential, I hadn't seen it coming.

Is this how it was for Joseph? Before I could stop myself, I mentally replayed that moment from the First Vision when Joseph raises his arm to shield his eyes from the light, a composite memory crafted from the movies, pictures, and representations of the scene I had seen over my life. I kicked myself: how immured was I to that story that it was the first thing I should think of at the moment a thin slit of light should wake me up? *Will I ever stop thinking the Mormon thing first? Will these stories and images fade once I leave BYU?*

It was early afternoon. Two adult voices wafted in through the window from the sidewalk in front of my apartment. I'd obtained permission from the university to live there after falsely claiming that my psychiatrist believed my mental health depended on living outside of BYU-approved housing, but the campus worldview still managed to invade my life: my fellow students were cheerily making their way up to campus, brightly discussing their upcoming Book of Mormon exam, their ward activity next week. Their laughter reminded me once again

that my months of depression and frustration were all but invisible to my classmates.

I rolled over in my bed, away from the light, and my glance fell onto the space made by my open closet door across the room. Within, a large Rubbermaid container nestled below my hanging dress shirts. The opaque plastic obscured the contents, but I knew exactly what the Rubbermaid contained. I stared.

And what am I going to do with you? The blinding light. The heat. All this anger.

The answer hit me.

I searched my sheets for my phone and rapidly punched out the text message.

"Caitie? Can we go camping?"

I waited, staring at the screen.

"I need to build a fire," I added.

I waited again.

"Of course!" she replied. "What do you need to burn?"

~

"Craig. Listen to me. I want you to go into the garage, put some tin foil on the ground, and burn these."

My mom hands me a snack-sized plastic baggie. I blink, confused. Why would she ask her ten-year-old son to start a fire in the garage? Not only is the task odd but she is using *the voice.* The *this is important* voice. And not just generally important. *Church* important. Which means *very* important. When she speaks of *very* important *Church* things, her voice diminuendos to a whisper, higher pitched than normal and wobbling with tempered emotionality. She uses this voice when she talks about receiving answers to her morning prayers or thanks my dad after he blesses her when she is sick. I hear other people use their own

version of this voice at church, when they speak of temples and faith, of pioneers and Joseph.

She tugs the Ziploc bag open and pulls out a single small square of white fabric.

"These pieces of fabric come from garments. Do you know what garments are?" she asks.

Like so many raised in Mormon homes, I know what garments are—those white underclothes—while at the same time having no idea what garments *are.* I've seen my mom sort our family's dirty clothing into mountainous color-coded piles on our laundry room's cold cement floor. Sitting in a corner unloading hamper after hamper, she tosses each skirt or slip or sock into its appropriate pile across the room, pausing her efficient system only when she arrives at one of the white pieces, her hands running over the fabric, feeling for that silky coolness that immediately indicates "garments." Instead of flinging them into a pile like the clothes that proceeded them, she gently places each top or bottom in its own basket on the washing machine. Now I tell her I know what garments are, but all I really know is that they're clothes so sacred she won't even let them touch the ground.

~

Childhood in Mormonism is an experience in prolonged observation. Before age twelve, there are no real obligations other than to sit in pews, sing songs, and dutifully go to class. And that's where it ends. Children don't teach or lead and aren't called on in the night to put on a white shirt and tie to bless someone. Kids sit outside the temples while everyone else goes in. While narratives of joining Mormonism condense the journey of conversion into a single moment of baptism, the reality is that induction into Mormon identity occurs slowly. It begins as emanations from orthodox sources. But it occurs even more potently through anecdotes created by experts fluent in that spirit of Mormonism that

resists being distilled into the manuals, like my mother teaching me as she placed a baggie of fabric into my outstretched hand or separated her garments for washing. There are thousands of Mormon myths and mysteries, rules of conduct, and unofficial norms of behavior taught outside Sunday school classrooms. To be told something is sacred is to be given that thing to protect. It's insider knowledge of the rules that dictate our Mormon world. With each telling, one is brought out of the role of observer and transformed into participant: into being Mormon.

~

"I want to burn everything in the Rubbermaid."

It took Caitie about three seconds to reply in all caps: "I'M IN!"

I'd explained the Rubbermaid to Caitie, my sympathetic feminist friend, a few months prior when we were discussing the last time either of us had gone to the temple. Our conversations often orbited around Mormonism, spontaneous self-directed therapy sessions that broke out in the sheer joy of being able to talk with another person who understood what it was like to have believed. When we met two years earlier, I was a teacher at the Provo Missionary Training Center who attended the temple three or four times a week with one singular, nagging question: what should this gay part of my soul become? I had always known I was gay but spent most of my time trying to convince myself I was *only a little bit gay.* Not so gay that I couldn't get married. Not so gay that I couldn't be Mormon. I used language like "same-gender attraction" to prevent myself from forming a gay identity. It wasn't something I was because I always spoke of it as something I struggled with, like some incurable disease.

It wasn't until after my mission when cultural obligations to seriously date and get married forced me to deal with what I had avoided for years. The last time I attended the temple, I suddenly saw the endowment as a gay person instead of experiencing it through the aspirational eyes of

the man I desperately wanted to be. Previously, the temple embodied a well-trod path leading to marriage, fatherhood, a sense of purpose within my community, service, goodness, engagement with the present and with eternity. But on that last day, all that was gone. I didn't feel attacked or marginalized, cast out or hated. Simply unconsidered. Not included in the narrative being presented. A silent, dull slap from a God who had long since gone quiet. There was no bitterness in the delivery, just recognition from both parties that this is the way it is and that this was not for me.

In the months that followed, I started to feel as though I were living among some other person's belongings every time I entered my apartment. There was just so much *Mormon* stuff I had never noticed before. My apartment was littered with institute manuals, seminary manuals, scriptures, gospel commentaries, study guides, artwork, souvenirs from my mission, books, journals, magazines, posters, and pamphlets. I owned a closetful of ties, shoes, dress pants, belts, suit coats—and temple clothing. Including garments.

As my faith and identity oscillated, so did my connection to these objects. They began to feel painfully foreign to me, like relics of some past life I had lived or bitterness-evoking mementos of a horribly failed relationship, their mere presence powerful enough to take me back to the trauma of what I was just coming out of. They highlighted the Mormon backdrop my life had depended on and accentuated my deep sense of lost identity. The objects made me feel like an impostor. It was as though at any moment, some righteous priesthood holder whose room I was surreptitiously occupying would return and cast me out with a disarming smile, arm most likely at the square, muttering "faggot" under his breath as I closed the door behind me.

Unsure of what to do with these remnants of my Mormonism, I began to fill a Rubbermaid container my mom gave me when I moved to Provo for college. Every time I encountered some item that radiated Mormon-ness, I put it in the Rubbermaid in the closet and did my best

to forget about it. With time, the Rubbermaid overflowed as the relics of Mormonism were replaced with new and exciting parts of myself: books about the beauty and history of my gay tribe, campy movies, and old Judy Garland albums. It was Caitie who noticed the reversal of metaphor. As my de facto therapist, she wisely pointed out that I had let the gay part of myself out of the closet and forced the Mormon to take the empty spot in the Rubbermaid as if in cruel retribution for all the years I spent hiding out in there. She called it my spiritual spring-cleaning.

"This is going to be a big fire," she texted me now.

~

The closets we maintain as gay people can be cavernous. Though we blame society for putting us in these dark, lonely caves, it is the closets we create ourselves that are the hardest to leave behind. In our closets, we hide the people we were born to be, the indicators of our difference we don't want others to perceive. We fill our closets with those questions that scare us, those thoughts that, if acknowledged, might prove too difficult to simply ignore. Mormons do this too, metaphorically "shelving" difficult questions until they're ready to be dealt with. We hide away lists of queries unanswered by a God whose voice thunders loudly, commandingly, at certain other times. We hide away stories from our history that don't make sense to us or feel foreign to the church we now find ourselves in. We put away what we cannot know, hoping to receive answers on some distant, nameless day.

But just as questions demand answers, closets eventually require opening.

~

"Garments are sacred."

I nod. My mom makes direct eye contact with me over the top of her glasses, curlers taming her long, fiery hair as they do for hours before church most Sunday mornings.

"And because they're sacred, we don't just throw them away when they get old and worn out. Instead, we cut out these special parts of the garments called 'marks.'"

She runs her finger along a nearly-imperceptible stitch of white thread in the square she holds in her hand. "Once you cut out these special parts, the garments aren't garments any more. They're just regular pieces of fabric that can be used for whatever you want. But we burn the marks to show God our love and reverence for the garment. This is how he wants it to be done."

My mind flashes to my Thursday night Boy Scout meetings at the church. Our troop leader owns a flag store and has taught us appropriate flag protocol with military exactness. He's explained that when an American flag gets old and tattered, it is respectfully burned. Flags don't touch the ground either, just like garments. What is it about garments and flags that make them so powerful? And why is it special when we burn them?

~

The ritual life of Mormonism pivots around rituals of welcoming, coming into, and joining. Through escalating degrees of covenant-making, we are introduced and bound to the magical core of Mormonism through rituals that provide physical, symbolic actions to accompany our increasing devotion. The blessing of a new child is a ritual of welcoming. The preceding generation circles around the new infant in symbolic acceptance. The congregation watches as though to say, "You are ours and we are yours. This faith is your birthright. You will tell your own version of this story. You will walk your own incarnation of this path. And it will be a Mormon path."

I felt the welcome of ritual when I was baptized and confirmed, surrounded by a circle of men, sensing my potential to grow to be their equal. I felt the same welcome on the day of my priesthood ordination, when I received my mission call, in that moment I rounded the corner into the temple's celestial room for the first time, greeted by the warm smiles and hugs of my family. Each step welcomes us to a new degree of observance, an intensified sense of commitment. When performed in the prescribed way and in the appointed time, our rituals of welcoming are real and powerful.

But there are also rituals of leaving, symbolic actions we perform to honor what once was in order to leave behind what has grown old and no longer fits. These are rituals that give us the strength to say goodbye.

~

Caitie and I drove south toward Zion National Park, her recommended campsite. I was fond of the irony. Traveling to Zion? For this?

As we drove, I did most of the talking, setting the scene for the evening's ritual. Like a good friend/therapist, Caitie listened as I told her the history I had learned of BYU's gay witch hunts, entrapping my newfound ancestors in library bathrooms and scribbling down their license plate numbers outside gay clubs in Salt Lake. I told her I admired those men with faith so strong they did nothing but believe when they were told they could have their beautiful gay souls electrocuted out of them. I told Caitie of the marriages I'd seen broken, of the children left hurt and confused. I told her about the friends I'd taken to the emergency room after their suicide attempts, only to have to show up to class at 8:00 a.m. pretending nothing had happened. I described the feeling of molten anger I carried inside me as I walked the flower bed–lined paths to class. I confessed to the speeches I kept prepared and ready to deliver if I were given a chance to tell everyone, anyone, of the collateral damage BYU was causing. Caitie listened to me explain how I wanted to yell

into the face of every student who passed by that his apathy had a name and contributed to the suicide count of my gay brothers and sisters, the ones BYU did nothing to protect or prepare. I tried to articulate that unholy transfiguration that occurs when something you love so deeply becomes something whose presence you cannot stand.

I confessed to Caitie my anger that the gift my Mormon ancestors sacrificed to build was failing so profoundly to live up to its own celestial idealism in regard to its treatment of my LGBT brothers and sisters, my newly-acknowledged family, my tribe. I told her of my pain and guilt, my feeling that I was failing the Mormonism I was born to inherit and practice, as though I were betraying a sacred trust given to me by the universe. I told her how afraid I was because I had lied to my BYU ward bishop to avoid expulsion, to avoid losing my degree, to avoid making those hellish past years worth nothing. I recounted my attempts to numb the pain with anything that would take me away from that place.

Like a wise and true bishop, Caitie listened, allowing me to say what I was not allowed to say to the bishop of my ward. As we drove to Zion, she didn't try to give me answers, but sat with me and acknowledged my questions.

Eventually we pulled off the highway and made our way to the campsite. It was dark by the time we unloaded the car. I took the wood I had bought at a Smith's in Provo, along with matches and lighter fluid and, in a moment of rare application of the Boy Scout skills my youth had given me, made a fire. I let it burn until it was large and hot before removing the Rubbermaid from the trunk.

~

The warrior stories of the Book of Mormon never resonated with me. Brothers of Jared and Captains Moroni, Nephis and Almas the Younger were all lost on my budding gay soul. Stories of battles bored me, and the emphasis on doing one's duty seemed tiresome and juvenile. The

complex stories of the women who staccato our Mormon history were the stories that spoke to me. I reveled in the details of the lives of our Elizas and our Emmas when I learned of their unsung spiritual gifts, their singing in tongues and blessing of one another before giving birth—their priestesshood on full display and their community tolerant and grateful for their undeniably divine gifts. I celebrated the faith of these women who gave just as much as the men without being rewarded with power and prestige. Perhaps it was their sheer invisibility that resonated with me—their purer faith that required no recognition?

I thought of how it must have been for them the night before they had to leave Nauvoo. What did they do after they packed their handcarts with their most precious things? Did they clean their houses for future tenants they did not know? My mom would. Did they fold their garments and hide them deep in their wagons? As they walked past the Nauvoo Temple, did they know how they'd miss it? How long did they walk westward before they felt scared? Alone? Confused as to why God would ever make this story theirs?

Tell me they wavered! Please tell me they grew weak and tired as babies cried and winds whipped. Let me take solace in how insurmountable the task they'd been given must have felt to them. What did they have to burn the night before they started their journey? What precious things fueled the fires that gave them the strength to follow their hearts and minds toward their truth, wherever it may lie?

~

As a ten-year-old boy, I take the tin foil into the backyard and fashion a makeshift bowl to gather the ashes. I create a small cone of matches, methodically and reverently, mocking the teepee-style configurations I was required to learn one summer at Scout camp. I light the stack and place a piece of white fabric on top. Each piece burns with a bright burst of light before curling onto itself around the stitched mark and

melting away. The burning feels important, holy even. Each piece is used to light the next piece until I have burned my way through the entire bag of scraps. I poke the bubbling spot of melted polyester until I deem it sufficiently destroyed. I crumple up the tin foil and toss it into the trash, returning the emptied plastic bag to my mom to show her the deed is done.

She thanks me.

~

In the campground with Caitie, I opened the Rubbermaid.

I assembled the contents on the campsite picnic table. It felt methodical, as though I were cataloguing evidence of a crime. With the items assembled, I began my self-made ritual with no one to instruct me and no elderly volunteer temple worker whispering the steps in my ear. It was instinctual. Unpracticed. It was a ritual born of necessity, not of commandment. I grabbed the pink slip I was given the first time I went to the temple. It had the words "Live Ordinance" written at the top. My mom had told me to hold on to it to be able to remember that day.

I tossed it into the fire.

I took the white temple slippers, coated with soft bumps of rubber for traction on the temple carpets.

I tossed them into the fire.

I grabbed my white tie, the one I wore on my mission during baptisms. I tell Caitie about those people I taught and I wondered how they would look on me in that moment, in front of a fire, burning the reminders of my connection to them. Would they pity me that it had gotten this bad? Would they condemn me? Would they understand? Had any of them loved it enough to be brought to this point?

I tossed the tie, and them, into the fire.

I grabbed the white shirts, the missionary ones with necks worn out from washing them by hand, still stained just slightly red with the dust of Bolivian jungles.

And I tossed them into the fire.

I brushed my hands over the pleats of my white temple robe, the same one my dad had to help me figure out how to put on. I remembered my first time wearing those sacred clothes, how awkward it all felt initially, how familiar it became in the years that followed.

And I tossed it into the fire.

I took the white sash, still rolled up from the last time I used it. I took the white envelope.

And I tossed them into the fire.

I paused at the slick green apron. I told Caitie how I find it comforting that Adam and Eve also had to leave. I thought of the courage of Eve and the wisdom of her disobedience. I thought of my ancestors and how they must have looked in their aprons. I thought of how they would have sewn their aprons themselves, skilled hands getting fussy and particular about the quality of the stitches.

And tossed it into the fire.

I took the letters I'd saved from the woman I'd written on my mission, the letters I thought our someday-children would love to read to know the story of themselves. The letters that began to feel like they were written by some stranger using my name as they toyed with the fantasy of a different, straighter future locked in a relationship whose primary motivation was not love but my own self-loathing, my own desperate need to not be gay.

And threw them into the fire.

I took my missionary tags. I took pamphlets. I took the culmination of a lifetime of Sunday school handouts, of tithing records. I even took a rogue "Personal Management" merit badge book, a stowaway hidden inside my scripture case for a number of years.

And threw them into the fire.

I took *Preach My Gospel,* in English and Spanish. I took *For the Strength of Youth.* I took "To Young Men Only." I took *God Loveth His Children.* I took "The Family: A Proclamation to the World."

And I tossed them all into the fire.

In the end, all that was left were garments. A small mountain of them. I remembered learning in the temple that God gave the garment to Adam and Eve as a shield and protection to them as they stood on the border of Eden, awaiting their inevitable expulsion. How wise of God to give them some protection in that moment of vulnerability. I paused, sensing my inversion of the symbol. Mormonism was the Eden I was leaving, an ideal world of black and white, devoid of the gay gray I found myself inhabiting. Instead of putting on garments to protect me on my journey, I was taking them off, finally willing to face the world on my own, lone and dreary though it may have felt.

~

In elementary school, I heard a classmate call a character on TV a "flaming faggot." He hurled his insult at a particularly flamboyant gay man with his wrist cocked limply in front of him, his other hand on his hip, and a voice filled with that melodious singsong quality. Years later, another misinformed friend told me the reason gay people were called "faggots" was because they were burned at the stake during the Inquisition alongside heretics and witches. The "faggots" and the bundles of sticks used to burn and kill them appeared together with such frequency that they became synonyms.

Gay people flame and burn in a way that can't help but attract the gaze of others, regardless of whether the stares are grounded in envy or disdain. We refuse to fit easily into the categories others depend on to understand the world. Instead, we are drawn to stand on the edges, at the places of transition between male and female, between us and them, between what is acceptable and what is sinful. And there, we flame. We

dazzle. We glitter. We congregate around our drag queens covered in their sequins. We flock to our actors, dancers, designers, musicians, poets, writers, and artists listening to the questions we dare to ask.

We also ignite. We burn down the old and the broken in order to make way for the new. Our very existence poses a perpetual challenge to any human's commitment to "love one another." Gay people are born into one life that must be shed and have the privilege of coming out into a life of our own creation. In doing this openly and boldly, we invite others to have the courage to do the same.

~

"We don't waste the garments once we cut out the marks, Craig. We cut up what's left of the fabric and use it for rags. They make excellent rags for cleaning windows." My mom is standing at the kitchen counter, her orange-handled fabric shears in hand, cutting strips from a large piece of fabric that has two square holes cut out from the chest.

I think of the rag drawer she keeps in her kitchen, in a smaller Rubbermaid of their own stored below the sink. There are rags made from old T-shirts and bath towels. There are rags that curl at the edges just like this piece of fabric does. "They must be garments," I think.

"Well, pieces of garments. Decommissioned garments that no longer have their powers because their marks have been removed." And to think: all this time I had been scrubbing the toilet with my parents' garments? These clothes, once too sacred to touch the ground, were the same rags we used to clean our dog's feet when she came inside after it rained?

~

To leave hurts. To ignite, flame, and burn also hurt with their own peculiar twinges of pain. But in order to arrive at something new, we must leave something behind. In order to come into, we must first come

out of. How could our tribe, with pioneer prairie dust still fresh on our shoes, ever think otherwise?

"Leave" is a flimsy word. It fails to capture all that's really going on. To say we are simply "leaving" betrays the soul stretching that has brought us to this point and discounts the wisdom we've garnered in the process. Perhaps we prefer to say "leaving" because we are more comfortable focusing on the action itself than really delving into the why. It is as though if we actually spoke about it, we may just discover something ugly about ourselves. We may just be forced to acknowledge our tradition's own imperfections, our own obvious humanness.

But there can be a dignity in leaving. There can be an art to it and a potential for beauty.

There can be strength and self-respect. It's simply a language we are yet learning to speak. To leave an Eden, whether by choice or by being cast out, necessitates an endowment of power and protection. To leave can be to arrive at a life that has been growing inside you, albeit silently, preparing to finally, at last, come out.

I have left.

Or have I? It isn't that easy, is it? As I burned my garments the way my mother taught me, was I honoring or desecrating? Sitting in front of a fire burning the relics of my Mormon life, was I heretic? Or disciple? I do not have the answer. But I know I cannot untie my shoes and walk out of my identity just as I cannot replace the blood that carries this tradition through my veins. I cannot un-serve my mission, no matter how many pairs of pants I burn. No storm can squelch the sunbeam from my soul. It feels futile to try to leave when even leaving is built into our shared Mormon story. Departure and exile are themes we can lay sacred claim to as inheritors of a tradition that had the audacity to walk from New York to Kirtland to Missouri to Nauvoo before departing in order to arrive at yet another promised land.

My Mormonism no longer exists intact. It is not a perfect, pristine garment recently bought and torn from its plastic packaging. I have

taken scissors to it, cutting out the portions that itch and chafe. I have cut out baptismal bans and homophobia. I have cut out BYU and the perversion of Mormonism I witnessed harming the many brightly flaming souls who found and find themselves there. I have cut out nervous men who say hurtful things from pulpits who adjust as frequently as their commandments.

And yet, this mangled garment missing its marks that fits only me—that, in spite of myself, I still find myself wrapped in—is not useless. One day I hope to have cut it up and turned it to rags, made it into something useful, something I can clean my house and world with.

~

With tears, I take my garments one by one and toss them into the fire. The fire in front of me billows, melting away the once-sacred remnants of my Mormonism until all that is left is a small smoldering pile of bubbly blackness. I look up at the flaming stars dancing in the sky above Zion. A chilly wind blows through our campsite. I shudder, but smile as I feel the cool air whip up my back, a familiar but new sensation made possible only with garmentless skin.

ECOLOGY OF ABSENCE

Brooke Larson

For starters, the desert is not empty. Things grow in ways you could not dream up. In the Arizona desert, where I was dropped off as a pain-in-the ass teen, there are ocotillo and prickly pear and yucca and all manner of cactus; creosote bushes and mesquite trees with long, knuckly beans; scads of devil's claw; crucifixion thorns and resurrection plants.

The desert is not unbroken expanse. In the desert there are more things vertical than flat: red canyon walls, mesas and buttes, hoodoos and cairns and geo-acrobatic arches. Not least, the trees. Black walnut, velvet ash and ironwood, oak, alder, Mexican elder, jade-skinned palo verde smooth as scars, and crusty alligator juniper. Why am I surprised? In the heart of nowhere there is always the faint pulse of a seed.

~

Wilderness therapy was a happy accident of Stone Age technology. Effective treatment, a side effect. The intent had been to teach college students primitive survival skills, not life skills, but the fact was young adults were coming home from the middle of nowhere more alive than they'd ever been. The survivalists and their desert experiment couldn't stay off the map forever. Already a host of psychologists and sociologists had picked up on their little prehistoric operation. Everything must evolve, the survivalists knew. And so it was that the ANASAZI Foundation, the first wilderness therapy program, organically, collaboratively, came to be. Precarious kids, following guides through the Arizona wilderness, would bushwhack their way forward, all the while cutting new synaptic pathways. They called it ANASAZI after the "Ancient Ones," so named

by the Navajo who once inhabited the land on which the teenaged ones tread. Others would come to call it "Treehab."

~

It was 1962. A group of thirty Brigham Young University students, as part of an academic experiment, were dropped off in the Utah desert with a can of peaches each. They would trek across the blister-red terrain to a pick-up van waiting on the other side, one month away. They would have one guide: a young professor, rangy, enthusiastic, and helpless without his black-framed bottle-glasses. His short hair was crisply parted on one side, but he wore his leather fringe rugged. Larry Olson's obsession with Native American cultures had lured him into great wastelands as a young boy living in Idaho. He minutely emulated their tools and skills. He became a sophisticate at primitivity. The University had him bring it to the classroom. On meeting him for the first time before the trek, one student recalls thinking, "This skinny white man is gonna get us killed."

The student was Ezekiel Sanchez, a first-generation college kid of migrant workers, and recently expelled from the University. Indeed, all the students were ex-students. Kicked-out for chronic failing. Only those with nothing left to lose would agree to be guinea pigs without even the shelter of a lab. The deal: the students would be readmitted to BYU if they spent their summer participating in Larry Olson's rawbrained Stone Age scheme. Ezekiel, back home in Texas hammering once again at the railroad, was fasting when he got the letter of odd invitation. Without the heart to break it to his parents that he would not be returning to school in the fall, Ezekiel had decided to go without food or water until he got a miracle. And so it was. Probation in the wilderness struck him as manna from heaven. He set out for Nowhere, Utah.

Things went south fast in the desert. One guide, and too many lost kids. Olson feared he'd made a fatal mistake. People were starved, injured, sick, falling behind and straying sideways. But then there was Ezekiel.

He knew things. Olson had watched him hang back from the group and quietly gather from the land what he needed. Ezekiel's family had long survived like this. One night, sleepless with anxiety, Olson crawled over to him in the dark. "I need your help," he said, "or we're not going to make it." Ezekiel said he would think about it.

The next day Ezekiel stepped into being a guide, and a month later, the group arrived at their destination. All of the students of the experiment would go on to successfully graduate from the University. Except for one. Ezekiel dropped out of BYU—to accept a position on its faculty. Together he and Larry Olson pioneered a wilderness program and philosophy—the groundwork of what would become a lifelong partnership.

As it became clear that wilderness sojourns were doing something good to people's brains, Olson and Ezekiel found themselves in a forest of eager experts. Experts from psychology, sociology, psychiatry, juvenile justice, family counseling, education, and a slew of other professions—all wanting to analyze and give suggestions on how to enhance the "primitive experience." Through trial and error the survivalists sifted through the mass of ideas and methods. They began to find that the more structured or "contrived" experiences often weakened the impact for participants. It seemed that the more hands-off they were about the hands-on wilderness experience, the more positive the results. "Ultimately, when we founded ANASAZI Foundation," Olson and Ezekiel explained in 1990, "we opted in favor of the original, down-to-earth walking daily—in and with the simple realities of nature." In the Navajo tradition, life is called a "walking." ANASAZI named its approach The Making of a Walking.

~

Desert reminds me of a pubescent body. The puckering place where spare warps to bounty: beauty of earthly awkwardness. Angular, flat planes abruptly interrupted by hard outcrops, jutting ribs of rock and sudden softnesses, lonely globules and lanky pinnacles, every inch slop-

ing, carving, filling, outing, all casting oddish shadows. And then there are the sudden shocks of shrubs. Tufts of trees and scratchy patches. You investigate at twilight. How do all these weird growths fit together? What does this place want to be?

~

When I hike into Girls Band I see the matted beehive of auburn hair. It has risen like nut-gnarled bread since I last saw Rebecca two weeks ago. As I get closer I see twigs sticking out.

When she sees who her TrailWalker is she yells, jumps up to hug me, we nearly topple. She shows me her bug bites and brightly tells me a squirrel stole the billionth comb we've given her.

You would think she and I were pals by this welcome. I'm always amazed and amused by how even a short time shifts things radically around out here. Not half a moon ago this girl was threatening to kill me with a ridiculously small rock. I met Rebecca when I was called in as emergency support when she dropped her pack and booked it for a dirt road. I wish she had booked it. She mostly trudged in five minute intervals and we sat exposed under the July sun, midday, in the dust. Because Rebecca did not have her pack, I did not have mine, as TrailWalkers are not to have more than the YoungWalkers. This meant I was out my long-sleeve shirt and white scarf, making my face and arms a flesh pile for the bugs to swarm. The gnats caught in the zipper of my eyelashes and tickled up my nostrils and in my ears. When I cracked open an eye to look at the New Jersey girl stubbornly slumped on the dirt next to me, I was appalled to see the bugs had no taste for her. She could sit there all day, and she did.

I know the other two girls as well, Jen and Marian. They are older in years and ANASAZI time than Rebecca. This will be their fourth week—three more to go, if the plan doesn't change. The plan often changes. These girls only just met Rebecca, who has been a bit too hostile to join

the group till now. Of course this is not the explanation we give the girls. We simply say that Rebecca has been on a "walkabout." ANASAZI uses a "romantic language," as Ezekiel calls it. He and his wife, who grew up on the Navajo reservation nearby, have crafted a vocabulary in which imagination beats out negative jargon. Rebecca is not a serious case of oppositional defiant disorder; she's just having her own Walking.

Jen and Marian talk to me excitedly about all the things we have to do this week, like the freaky moon dance we made up, and sewing sexy moccasins.

"And we're beating the boys to Final D," Jen crows.

I don't tell them that we won't. We definitely won't. Rebecca's dreadlocked beehive will be a magic hat of tricks for us this week. I have no idea what will come out of it, but it will likely bite.

~

At first blush, the desert appears to be monotone variations on a theme: lack. I don't know that John Cage spent any time in Arizona, but when he took his seat at the piano before an expectant audience, and played—nothing—this was a movement in desert major. The man sat limpid for a small eternity. The audience got restless, whispery, self-conscious, then noisy. Here is where the key shifted in their brains, and they heard themselves: the audience's response *was* the score. The desert is not lack, it is response to lack. It is you hearing yourself.

Desert and speaking are inextricable in Ancient Hebrew, that wilderness tongue, where they share the same root. You can hear the echoes: *midbar/medebar*. They tell of some innate relationship between the barren, empty, silent, and speaking, language, creativity. Nothing so wants to be filled as silence. The quiet of the desert, going way back, is the beginning of speaking and listening.

People go to the wilderness to hear something. Many people say they do. They call it their inner voice, or their god, or the wind, or the void. ANASAZI calls it the One Who Stands Within.

~

Lack itself signals consciousness. How can something be absent apart from our expectations? Absence is a presence of mind. Henri Bergson said that there are no negatives in nature. A negative description is positively our invention. And so it is that loss and absence, inseparable from our awareness, keep us coming to our senses. They activate us. A person recognizes what is lost and sets out to recover it.

Wilderness makes you all kinds of conscious. Everywhere you look is a lack caught in the headlight of your memories: tap water and ice cubes and shampoo and mom's chili chicken casserole and a car and roads to drive it on with no aim but to roll down the windows and turn up the music—oh man—music. The kids sit around the fire and incant lists like magic spells. Napping with your cat; green grapes; down comforters; your sister's laugh when she's hyper; your Dad making pot roast on Sunday afternoon. More than a torturous mantra, it's a fine tuning of awareness. Brooding is one thing, dwelling another. The desert mind dwells between two worlds, perceiving "the nothing that is not there and the nothing that is."

Lack is generative. When the musician doesn't play, the audience crescendos.

~

Blandness is a positive quality, Chinese aesthetics would have it. The bland is a full achievement: not the lack of flavor, but the possibility of all flavors. In the colorless, toneless, soundless, inhere all colors, tones, sounds. It's that temporary moment of loaded indeterminacy: life that

has not yet been sacrificed on the altar of particularity: compost of correspondences breaking down to continuities.

The bland longing is not for what has been, but for what has not come into being. The opposite of nostalgia, the bland longs to lose what is particular. It is in the green as it is in the decayed; never in the golden. The bud, and not the flower, is the point.

Blandness. The dull is your oyster knife.

~

Our first day hiking we come upon campers. We're lucky that this happens rarely—people aren't exactly flocking to the hellfired wilderness for a weekend getaway. When a tent does crop up, TrailWalkers go into hyper-alert mode. With Rebecca in this group, me and James, my partner TrailWalker, go into heart attack mode. Reflexively we jump to put our bodies between the barbecuers and the girls. In case a YoungWalker makes to hitch a ride with a passing camper or cowboy, we wear a badge on a string around our dirty necks to certify that we are not, in fact, homeless bums who kidnap children.

Rebecca starts hollering and clapping commands—sweetly. Thank goodness—it's the dog she wants. The mutt wags its tail and starts towards us. I don't think the campers, veiled as they are by palatial bug nets, have seen us. The dog hesitates. All the girls are slapping their thighs now, cooing and kissing. Come on good boy, almost there . . .

He sniffs the air around us and stops dead in his tracks. You can hear the snort of displeasure as he turns from us and heads back to camp. "Man, even the dogs think we stink," Marian says.

The desert is a vast defamiliarizer: grass, trees, water, plastics, colors, cars, dogs, and most radically, people, shed their invisible everyday skins, pop like hallucinations. When the backdrop is emptiness, every appearance is a burning bush. I remember that as a YoungWalker, a month deep into the solitude of the desert, bumping into a group of campers fairly

blew my mind. You are people! Like I am a person! And we see each other! For the first time in my life I felt what might be called *kinship*. I loved the strangers, because they were humans. I couldn't fathom that not long before I had walked through whole crowds of people—real life people!—without so much as looking at them. Didn't I know what they were? People are too incredibly improbable to overlook. Too impossibly incredible.

The fact of us all being here: way, way too out of this world to not laugh out loud.

~

No place knows more about water than the desert. Its every line and contour, plant and animal, has been sculpted by water, its absence as much as its presence. Lack is its own intimate ecosystem.

I think of desert as the gourmet of water. A glutton will eat without pausing to taste. A gourmet, however, savors not only the meal but the world organized around it—the smells and sounds and placings and pairings, the spaces, lingerings and aftermaths. The desert is a lean muscle toned to taste. A hard tongue that sucks itself dry, plumbing subtleties of wet.

When water itself doesn't do all the talking, you can catch revealing details about it. There are telling trees in the Arizona desert. A cluster of sycamore is a signal of water, present, or soon to return. Cottonwoods are another inside source. They crowd in rings. Once among them, look around. If there's a breeze, I would look up, too: a skyfull of silver leaves a'shimmering and shaking. That rustling sound, a susurrus in full sway, is blood buzzing between the temples, or a conch shell cupped over every pore where every pore is an ear. Trees are vascular graffiti saying Water was here.

~

Lack knows more about desire than pleasure physically can. Where pleasure silences desire, lack interrogates it. Pleasure, like all good stories, has a clear beginning and end. Desire is not a good story. It is a dialogue which undermines itself indefinitely. Desire, like the desert, is a skilled curator of lack. It exploits empty space; it is permutational in the extreme. Desire, as long as it lives, evolves. And it can live long, on nothing. In the wilderness desire lives like a Methuselah. Like a Moses, who saw but did not enter the promised land. Desire shows us bittersweet things.

The kids who come to the desert know many things about pleasure but next to nothing about desire. I am one of them, which keeps me coming back to the desert. I want to be a student of desire. I want lack. But not as an end in itself. As a student also of pleasure, I am interested in the way hunger flavors my fill. How contrast cooks with what it has and doesn't have—to make something fresh.

My greatest desire is to not be used to anything. Here is where lack and desire kiss.

Several TrailWalkers adapt ANASAZI as a physical lifestyle to follow on and off the Trail. While I admire this, it is not my way. There is no pleasure in the world like a gruesome grease binge after a week of barely salted lentils. Even as I appreciate stepping off the tracks of high-speed wish fulfillment, I'm already looking forward to hopping back on. With one subtlety: I know I'd be fine if someday I came home to nothing instead of something.

Larry Olson wrote a classic field book, Outdoor Survival Skills, that we pack around with us on the Trail. I remember reading the prologue as a 15-year-old and coming up short at one of the traits of a "survivor": a life centered away from comfort and ease. In terms of survival, Olson said, comfort only gets in the way. This odd idea gripped me. What would happen if comfort was no longer a factor in my decisions? What would I do, where would I go? I realized the answer would be: anything and anywhere. If I weren't afraid of discomfort, what would I fear? I couldn't think of one thing. I knew I had in my hands powerful medicine.

~

The desert was the death and rebirth of Mormons. Starting in the east, they made their winding way to the uninhabited wilderness of the west. The tales of persecution, trial and tribulation are religiously recounted, and commemorated every year by Mormons on Pioneer Day. The parades and lawn barbecues, fireworks and pool parties don't do the desert justice. Now in Salt Lake City you can hardly see the desert for the trees. But when the Mormons first rolled up with their dingy wooden carts and undiminished vision of Zion, all the eye could see was a salty blank wasteland.

Who can say what the heart saw? Who knows but the godforsaken has got some fearsome godly glow. As the story's told, the prophet Brigham Young, shortly after the Saints' exile from Illinois, was shown in vision a place where the Latter-day Saints would settle and "make the desert blossom like a rose." Months later when Young was confronted with Utah's vast emptiness, he could already point to the exact spot where the Temple would go. Zion was a precognition and an ever after re-cognition, because Zion is nowhere to be seen. And so it came to pass that the rundown prophet leading the half-dead group could look out over the middle of nowhere and pronounce it, legendarily, "The right place."

"His plainspoken direction," says *Our Heritage*, "helped the Saints imagine the possibilities of their new home." Imagination is a tragic optimist. And desert, the topography of tragic optimism. And the God of Abraham, inextricable from both, wrote the tragic optimist's field guide: "Wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly." How well this god knows us. Man can't resist irrigating absence.

~

Aiding prophetic fulfillment are the plants themselves, who miraculously outlast the desert's scarce supplies. Dormancy is a gift of the spirit. Oh to unmanifest, to lie low in possibilities. Euxerophytes, they're called. True dry plants. In the desert these plants can live true to death for years, decades. Plants in spirit. Just add water, the body will rise.

~

Water is a purely acquired taste. You might say: the acquiring is the taste. There is a story told of a sage who set out to taste the water of all the different springs of the world. He was curious to know the best flavor of all waters. He gave first place to the river of Zhongling, which he found bland at first, but judged gradually to be the best flavor in the world, with which no food can compare. Water is the flavor of sagehood. To taste the richness of the bland is less a matter of receiving a flavor than infusing one: "The sage flavors the flavorless."

Poor, tired sage traveling the world to compare the forgettable. He must have been very thirsty, with fat fingers and a reeling head, by the time he got to the river of Zhongling and acquired a taste. The flavor of water does not exist independent of insight into its worth.

~

Your ankle's swollen? You see black spots? You have stomach cramps and a leg rash and, sure enough, you've cut the tip of your finger off. Whatever your ailment, the prescription is the same: Drink More Water. Funny, infuriating, and bogusly accurate, Drink More Water is good medicine on ego as well as body. There's nothing that tests a prideful leper like being told to wash in the river.

ANASAZI's go-to nurse—a stunning octogenarian who still kills it in high-heels and turquoise jewelry—never stops telling us: Dehydration is the root of all ills. This seems fair, especially from a great-grandmother

who can hike to her patients. Dehydration is not unique to the desert. The majority of us are chronically dehydrated, we just don't know it. It's too easy to drown out our thirst with superficial fixes that run on medicated empty. The desert doesn't drain us so much as bring our dry spots to the surface. The sun will have you feel it. But more than we're getting hammered, we're hungover. The past catches up with you out here.

~

The first time I met Jen I jumped back a little. She is a beautiful girl. But when we met her eyes were so swollen that they deformed the bridge of her nose, her whole face pocked with black scabs and green ooze. Gnat bites. In the desert, you strain at a gnat or swell up to a camel. They are brutal. We had all been hit hard—summer brought a freak swarm—but none like Jen. Her arms were more scab than skin.

This is not a 16-year old cheerleader's vision of summer. But Jen is a blend of sweet and tough that makes her persevere politely. She carries her load, she keeps a controlled smile. She doesn't complain.

But now, in front of me, Jen stops hiking. The group halts and turns to her. Jen is scratching her arms off. Now she is crying. Now sobbing, holding her face. She is moaning, shaking. Saying over and over, I can't do this anymore. Home, I want home.

Everyone knows how she feels, and no one knows what to do. We softly say anything. Our words sound painfully off key. We lower them to a mumble, all but lip-synch, then fall silent. We stand dumbly around Jen as she cries.

Here is one of the hardest parts of the job for me: seeing my agonized younger self, and being powerless to make her believe in me. She will hike through this and past the worst of adolescence. But in this moment, it is the end of the world for Jen. And I can't be her savior.

The best anyone can do is drink more water.

I take off my bandana and empty my canteen onto it. I lift one of Jen's arms and begin rubbing it down with the cool water. Jen sniffles and lifts her other arm like a sleepy child who wants to be undressed for bed. I bathe it down to the wrist, and at the back of her neck, and behind her ears. I don't talk; water is smoother than I am.

James asks Jen if she wants to hike with the bandana. She slowly nods yes. We re-wet it, drape it around her neck. As we set off down the dry creek bed, a ground swell of feeling rocks me. Wonder at water's power to underwhelm.

~

Whatever is not fully externalized, worries you into worrying it. You rub, pick, dig, turn, the indefinite possibilities deepening in your mind. In this way, absence leaves something leftover. Something hidden within for later development. Absence does not leave us.

Chinese aesthetics expresses this quality as a "lingering." Whether it's a tune, a poem, a landscape—holding back initiates overflow.

~

You would think parched land would fling open its doors at the slightest knock of rain. But just the opposite is true. To begin with, most of the desert surface is exposed rock—not particularly absorbent. What surface soil there is expands when wet, essentially sealing off lower layers from needed moisture. The water that does manage to percolate has another problem to deal with: extremely dry soil is difficult to wet. So what's a good rain to do? Much of the water moves across the surface and headlong down slopes. It collects in arroyos. In times of heavy rain, this runoff can create a flood rushing through the arroyo. Rivers! now-you-see-em, now-you-don't. We call these flash floods, and we take them very seriously when hiking in the summer. What sounds like a climatic

magic trick is actually the number one cause of weather-related death. A torrent of water carrying debris and trees and boulders, rushing at you top-speed on your moments-before dry trail, could saw you in half and end the show there.

The desert can move as fast as it can slow, as wet as it can dry. Not a few groups have lost all their gear to a flash flood. And some of us have had to cling to rocks or branches. But no one has ever gone the way of the flood. In its thirty-some years, there has never been a death at ANASAZI. Ezekiel, when he first arrived to the desert in the creation stages, got to his knees and blessed the land for the people who would walk on it. The walking and kneeling has yet to cease.

The desert landscape is protean to the extreme. Dryness creates run-off, and run-off a flood of possibilities. With the kaleidoscopic flux of surfaces, desert plants and animals evolutionarily shift in turn. All that lack makes for dynamic overflow.

How then is desert life sustained? Internal logic. While the soil of the desert may look pale and dead, the rocks and sand are actually nursing life. Desert pavement—the desert's top layer of close-fitting stones, like Inca craftsmanship—protects the underlying soil from wind erosion. Protection also exists between sand grains, where there is a live lace-work of cyanobacteria. These photosynthetic bacteria interlace fingers to hold soil particles in place. The desert is a survivor. But it digs in its heels below the surface.

~

Rebecca is not going to hike today. She informs us of this after the group spends five hours packing up, downing lentils, killing our fire, no-tracing our camp, planning our route, and, at last, setting off down the ravine. We exhale all that stale air. The mood lightens. How fresh it feels to be moving, to create a however small breeze between us. Fifteen minutes in, Rebecca throws her pack and plops down.

"Whatcha doin'?" James goes for casual.

"This is stupid. I'm not hiking."

"Well, what do you want to do?"

"Stay here."

James carefully explains that here we have no water, and no flat ground to make camp.

Rebecca also explains herself clearly: "So."

Marian kicks a rock and Jen tears up. This is the second day Rebecca has refused to hike. They turn to look at me, pitiful. As if I could regulate. But part of ANASAZI's empowerment is equal helplessness. In the desert you can't demand. Only appeal.

An hour later, Rebecca relents enough to backtrack the handful of turf to our starting point. The site is along the dry creek and the dry creek is at the base of a shale and cactus mountain. The girls don't know yet that we are going to go up then down this mountain, and then another one. James and I don't know yet how this will happen. When we take out the maps again, look over what's ahead, we laugh and wipe our foreheads. From here the mountain is an inside joke of indeterminate punch line.

The girls aren't amused. "Ok, who wants to make the fire we put out?"

~

According to the aesthetic of blandness, what a flavor, tone, or landscape lacks in body, it gains in spiritual presence. The art of the bland is less interested in sating the palate than in leading a person to gain a feeling for the Way. Music is divided into two camps: "One that dazzles the senses and one that awakens consciousness." This is the age-old tension. François Jullien, in his book *In Praise of Blandness*, points out that whereas Chinese culture has the myth of silent music, we in the West have the Sirens. Our yearning is for overwhelmed bodily organs.

The desert is not a Siren. It does not dazzle or seduce or bathe itself perennially. The desert is a low, primal growl you discover to be your

own stomach. You come to know your hunger; you learn to feed yourself. Indulgence is nowhere in ear shot.

In the desert, you observe, sounds are chewed with the mouth closed.

~

Blandness is the bread and butter of Mormons. I did not say "tea and jam" because Mormons do not drink tea. "Strong drinks," such as alcohol and coffee, are prohibited. Our church services, like our beverage selection, are prescriptively bland. We don't have paid ministry, so the Church is run by lay members, untrained in the ways of charismatic preaching. Our sermons, which we do not call sermons but "talks," are to be plain and straightforward. We sing a little, rock some organ. Instruments with a "prominent or less worshipful sound," like percussion or brass or an acoustic guitar (for heaven's sake!), are, according to the Church Handbook, inappropriate. Our church buildings are unadorned. You will not find a cross or altar anywhere. Men have cropped hair and hairless faces; women wear capped-sleeves and below-kneecap skirts. These church meetings are three hours long, for toddlers and teenagers alike. Here is where our Olympic training in understimulation begins. The air is rarefied, the clock is inching up the mount. Our butt muscles ache.

We do not pepper our speech with strong language. We do not have sex—or anything like unto it—before marriage. Our Temples seem secretive, and are indeed exclusive, but serve most often as a very clean space for an afternoon nap. We're given to shapeless white robes. Our tastes are textureless. Utah has an official State Dessert, and it is Jell-O.

Worship and entertainment have different goals. It would seem Mormon living is boring by design. For it is by boredom that we divine the Holy Spirit, who was not, after all, in the wind, or an earthquake, or a fire, but a still, small voice.

~

Ezekiel and his wife, Pauline, are Native American, and Mormon. There is nothing exotic about this. Mormons and Indians go way back. Mormonism is often called the American religion, and this is true in more than one sense. The Church was not merely founded in America, but its foundation, The Book of Mormon, proclaims to be a record of ancient Americans: their origin, civilization, laws, prophets, progress, downfall and destruction. According to The Book of Mormon, Native Americans are literal descendants of Abraham. This imbued Mormons with a singular view of Indians in the early 19th-century: they were neither the noble savages of literature nor the sub-human brutes of frontier lore. They were technically God's chosen people. In the 1830s, as the U.S. government passed the Indian Removal Act to push eastern tribes to the western territories, Joseph Smith was proclaiming this land the Native American's God-given birthright.

Joseph Smith wasted no time in meeting with Native Chiefs and telling them so. This did not sit well with the settlers battling Indians for land. It wasn't long before the Mormons, pushed out by the same mobs and Congress, followed their tribal brethren to the empty promises of the uninhabited west. From the beginning, Smith saw the establishing of Zion in the wilderness as inseparable from gathering the "lost tribe" of American Indians.

The Book of Mormon is a strange love letter to America's native. It pleads, it reveals, it evades, it threatens and despairs and dares to hope. It makes impossible promises. The title page of the Book states that it is "written to the Lamanites, who are a remnant of the House of Israel." The Lamanites were the sometimes righteous, mostly iniquitous people from whom Mormons believe Native Americans, particularly the Navajo, are descended. Some Church leaders have used the terms "Lamanite" and "Navajo" interchangeably, which would kind of be like calling an African a Caininite. In recent years, the Church has advocated for using the quaintly more PC term "children of Lehi" in place of Lamanite. To be a child of Lehi in the Church has special status. Once, touring the roof

of the Church Conference Center in Salt Lake City, Ezekiel Sanchez's face popped out at me from sculpted bronze.

~

Though Mormons have spread out over the world, native interest has never let up. BYU offers programs to learn Navajo as a second language. Selections of the Book of Mormon have been translated into Navajo, and, as early as the 1980s, audio translations of talks by Church leaders have been available. In Snowflake Arizona—a Mormon colony co-founded by my ancestor William Flake, and the dot on the map that makes me related to half the Mormons in Arizona—the Mormon Temple offers its holy services in Navajo. Over 50% of Navajo County, Arizona, is Mormon.

The relationship is not always brotherly. Sharing land, even if it is a wilderness, always breeds complications. To this the good book testifies: tribes split a house as they share it. Across Utah and Arizona, Nevada and Idaho, Mormons and Native Americans overcome and overstep boundaries. One southeastern Utah county, uncomfortably encompassing a rundown Navajo reservation and wealthy Mormon community, has been caught in a storm of lawsuits around racism and inequity. The Navajo and Mormons say they pray for each other, in their peyote ceremonies and sacrament meetings, respectively.

Just north of our ANASAZI stomping ground is the small town, and largest community of the Navajo Nation, Tuba City. The name honors Tuuvi, a Hopi chief who converted to Mormonism in 1870. He invited the Mormons to come settle nearby, and the Navajo and Paiute Indians followed to be near the town's natural springs.

The Navajo used a different name for Tuba City, *Tó Naneesdizí.* Tangled waters. Of course. The place where crosscurrents knot together.

~

"In order for a character to be centered and harmonious," wrote Liu Shao in his treatise on personal aptitudes, "it must be plain, bland, and flavorless. This type of character is thus able to coordinate the five aptitudes and adapt smoothly to all situations." Only the watery can move with the changing contours of a situation. Ideals become insipid: not goal-driven, but goal-diffused. This bland character, rather than push a situation in a given direction, exploits it by catching its groove.

At the heart of versatility is a great pumping flatness.

~

It's unnerving to be so far off our hiking goals. This is a relatively easy week, if you're going by the maps, but we're going by humans. Humans have outrageous ridges. When a thing is very steep, it no longer appears on the map as concentric wiggles; it conflates into a single line. It can't be read. Vertical reality is impossible to map out. You just have to set out.

Human relationships are very vertical climbs. Thick lines where anything can await you.

"Powwow time," says James. His tense face makes it clear. He and I go off a bit from the girls, still in our sights, but not in our face, and we're already breathing easier. TrailWalkers must "powwow" daily to counsel about the Band and go over topographical maps, which the kids cannot see. This is the official powwow. But behind the map curtain, is the wowpow. Expletive venting. Which only wants to laugh. Adolescents in the desert say and do the darndest things. If James and I didn't take time to endear ourselves to chaos, chaos would kick our heads in.

James tells me how Rebecca was bragging to the other girls that she knows all about plants because she eats at Subway like every day.

We break down into giggles.

"Hey what are you guys doing over there?" The kids get jealous.

"Checking maps," James and I yell back in unison.

"How far are we?" they whine.

"Closer than we've ever been."

Powwows are essential in remembering that we're not *actually* concerned about failing to make it to our Final Destination. What is Final D, really? Yes, we need to get there so the kids can get food, letters, see their counselors, and most importantly, so James and I can get out of here. But if we didn't get there—what? Somehow everyone makes it home, eventually. Final D is just a key for chaos to play in. A point on the map, but never the point.

ANASAZI considers itself a microcosm of the "wilderness of life." The experience, singular as it feels, is densely fractal. The idea is that the trajectory of one's Walking in the desert mirrors the course of one's life. A movement towards reconciliation, home, and a happiness expansive enough to contain unhappiness. As rooted in the physical as life at ANASAZI is, every action has an almost knee-jerk abstraction. Hiking, making fires, learning plants, building shelters, rationing food, finding water, following tracks, burying poo – these resonate at a near allegorical frequency. Experiences bounce between the inescapably physical and the playfully detached. Goals are real, but not. The stakes are high, but blink, and they're low. Nowhere do I get more caught up in the realness of the moment, or swept away to a more remote distance. I am stressed out and tuned out, totally invested and ultimately indifferent. I am sharply bland.

My parents tell me that they could, in a matter of seconds, make me do or not do anything as a child by beginning to Count To Ten. I never tested them past Seven, and they never had to come up with the meaning of Ten. I think of each day at ANASAZI as a parent counting to Ten. It's useful to act like there's a Ten, and freeing to know there's not. Oh, the genius and grace of arbitrary urgency.

Outside the desert it is far harder to hear the bluff in life's numbers.

~

ANASAZI has tried to distance itself as much as possible from popular boot camp philosophy. People are often perplexed that I can do this job without being a trained counselor. I'm even less equipped than that—anything I did know of psychology, ANASAZI's training disabused me of. Its push is away from theory, models, and fixed techniques. The aim is simply to maintain an ancient primitive lifestyle. There are certified therapists who trek out to the desert once a week to meet with the kids, and they are emphatically not called therapists, which word Ezekiel likes to break down as the-rapist. They are called Shadows, which they essentially are, as they follow the experience of the kids and parents far more than they lead it. Nature is given space to do its thing.

The criteria to work at ANASAZI is almost entirely devoid of credentials. It's a character contract: TrialWalkers during their employment cannot drink alcohol, smoke tobacco, or, awkwardly enough, have sexual relations. We are closer to monks than shrinks. Apart from a few ninja moves ANASAZI gave me in case of revolt (yes, TrailWalkers have been tied to trees before), our skills aspire to be nothing fancy.

My job description is basically to be loving, see the good in others, and be ready to help, which sounds more like a Girl Scout than a professional, and more demanding than a set of skills, especially if you were kicked out of Girl Scouts, as I was. A TrailWalker's skill is not specialized knowledge but acting in the face of not knowing. Responding thoughtfully and intuitively, physically and emotionally. I am woefully under-qualified, like everyone else. Thank god for group intelligence. Wilderness is in the business of utilizing inadequacy: through ours and the land's shortcomings, ANASAZI realizes its mission of having people learn to live on the land with others. We all lack too much to not be together.

ANASAZI takes pride in its emphasis on day-to-day desert living. No contrived consequences, it says, no psychological games. Dirt is dirt is dirt. In the desert, team-building and self-reflective challenges are built-in. Yet, how did the the kids end up in the wilderness in the

first place? Artifice. Lying parents. Mine told me we were taking a road trip to visit my grandma. Ha! A father recently told his son they were taking a ride in a hot-air balloon. ("So, let me get this straight: is there a balloon?" he asked, dizzyingly, a week out in the desert.) Contrivance and scheming are often the only way to get kids to the wilderness, and once there, we live a charmed survival existence: everyone is going to make it. We are not surviving, we are playing survival. And it is this subtle entanglement of artifice and nature that is, I think, so productive. Wilderness therapy is not bare-boned reality, nor cause and effect at its purest. It is somewhere between performance and real-life, a performance for real-life: Wandering in the wilderness for 40 days is, and long has been, role-playing.

~

We improvise and we impersonate. We imitate Indians. Survivalists. Hippies. Sages. We dance and howl under the moon, hold fire ceremonies, build hothouses out of willow, and can't resist chanting in them as the heat drips off our ochre-painted faces. We make moccasins and leather bags, use tools modeled after the ancients and sew with synthetic sinew. We use an invented group-speak, chock-full of romantic and tribal echoes. When I got home from ANASAZI as a teenager, I stopped shaving my legs or wearing a bra or using a bed. It was a performance of sorts. I was imitating what I had seen in my TrailWalkers, and I was acting out what I felt in myself—evolution—mighty and intangibly hairy. Yet the performance was one towards authenticity. Authenticity, that tertiary animal—it takes in others who have taken in others, mashes and mixes, incorporates part, and lets the rest pass through.

Our desert performance brings to mind Rumi's words: "Appear as you are, be as you appear." The sequence is confounding. There is no linear cause and effect, rather, the two clauses modify each other. The

action is where the imperatives meet. *Appear as you are, be as you appear.* You can see the circle of seeming and becoming: as if is part of as is.

Fantasy is not always fooling yourself. It may amount to becoming yourself. As spontaneous and free as being who-you-are is, it is nothing if not proactive and retroactive. Besides, performance is a form of survival. It takes the edge off reality, which is quite sharp in the desert. "Acting like" creates a distance from ourselves that expands our possibilities. For instance, thinking like a stone can soften your steps, as The Seven Paths of the ANASAZI Way suggests:

> I say this in all seriousness.
>
> Don't be offended at the stone that turns beneath
>
> your feet. After all, the stone isn't offended at you
>
> even though you were the one who turned it.

That a stone could take offense at us is laughable, but then, maybe so is our anger when we trip over it. Impersonation opens us to the possibility of the impersonal, which is a particular interpretation and not the lack of one. An impersonal lens shows that you happen to the world as much as it happens to you—so don't take head bumping so personally. We're all playing here.

~

Even the plants are acting as if. They call it growing "adventitious roots." These roots are root impersonators, and true eccentrics in the plant world. The desert is drowning in them. Almost 200 species of cacti have exclusively adventitious roots, which grow not from other roots, but from stem or leaf tissue, making them sprout in unusual but fruitful places. They are versatile role-players, and often inspired by stress. If you're of an adventitious mind, stress lets the play begin. "If 'existence' is responded to as if it were less than totally in earnest," wrote Lionel Trilling, "spirit is the less bound by it. It can then without sadness accept

existence, and without resentment transact such business with it as is necessary." Necessity is necessarily playful.

~

On top of the mountain, Rebecca chucks her pack into a crevice. It's 120 degrees out. *That there, that's not me.* James and I are squatted on stones that could cook our asses sunnyside up. Our sunny sides are getting smoked, and our associations a bit scrambled. Scramble is a funny word, I say it over and over, as we fry on the rock with empty canteens. Can can can you do the can't can't can you... we haven't moved from this spot in a couple hours. *In a little while, I'll be gone, the moment's already passed, yeah it's gone.* We are in a rocky wash with no brush. Rebecca does not care to move towards shade or water. She does not care that without her pack she will have no food, no clothes, and no blanket tonight when it's cold.

James is trying to use reason.

"How will you eat?"

"I'll go into the Boys Band and take all their food."

"How will you find them?"

"I'll howl till they get scared and cry and I hear where they are."

"How will you stay warm?"

"I'll go into the Boys Band and rape them and steal their blankets."

"Your plan is to rape the boys for warmth?"

I bite my finger not to crack a smile. After Rebecca elucidates her plan to kill us all with the knife she's been too lazy to sharpen, we fall back into slumped staring. Jen and Marian are up ahead a ways, sharing some scrappy shade. I keep on with the song in my head. Emergency Radiohead for defibrillating detachment. *I'm not here, I'm not here, this isn't happening.*

The question I always hear is, "Does it work?," or its variant, "Does ANASAZI fix them?"—which sounds to me like a teen neutering, which

meaning maybe isn't so far off: Do the kids permanently stop doing what they shouldn't? What is inconvenient to the parents? Do they stay sober? Do they quit cutting class? Are they nice to their mother? Do they stop hanging around those friends? According to these measurements, I was worse off after ANASAZI than before. Yet I consider myself a success story.

Often I'll tell kids that I was a YoungWalker like them. I'll also tell them that I came back four years later as a SinaguaWalker, that is, as a legal adult. What I never tell them is that, my second time in the program, I ran. And, contrary to the hopeless statistic I tell each group, I escaped ANASAZI. Why would I, who so loves the desert, run from it? Out of respect. The program does not modify behavior; it invites a way of being. That invitation, once internalized, never leaves. What more could the desert say to me? It was on me to choose to use or not use what had been given me. I ran, because I did not want to piss on sacred ground.

The wilderness does not make you change, but it does make you choose. Changes change, but choice is always there. This is why ANASAZI works even when it fails to fix.

Ok, but *how* does it work, parents insist. How does being outdoors heal people on the inside? The YoungWalkers share their doubts. They ask good questions: How is hiking around all day going to help me with my problems? Maddeningly and mysteriously the only answer to that is to keep hiking. I can't say why pushing through brush or trudging dry creek bed, one minute inching under, then leaping long, scaling red ledges, edging along and behind and over and at times, in flushes of hot realization, in complete circles, help a person to think more clearly of themselves, others, and the world. I have to suspect that mystery is part of the efficacy. Daily doses of the incalculable are good for growing humans.

~

Flora and fauna come to resemble each other in the desert. Extreme constraints breed creative redundancies. Solitary bees and desert flowers

have both adapted to live much of the time underground. They speak the same language. As soon as the warm rains hit, the bees and seeds erupt from their earthen dens. Following the beat, they pick up their natural conversation as if no time had passed at all. There had been much time, in fact, much solitude and invisibility. Absence organizes a sticky liquid flying buzzing blooming attuned hearty world around it.

Desert rain does not fall on deaf ears. Believe it: bees and toads and rodents and fleshy seeds listen in holes underground.

~

The Chinese sages believed the bland to be healthy for mind and body. Blandness is the celery of the aesthetic diet—it gives us a workout with its slightness. We find ourselves crunching hard on air, burning off more than we're taking in. Understimulation, say the bland gurus, exercises the senses. Intensity leaves us with nothing to want, but boredom, boredom lingers. Intensively. What to do? You'll just have to occupy your self.

~

O the vapor of blandness! how it opens the spiritual sinuses.

Blandness, the interminable Mormon virtue. There is an oft-told story in Mormon circles that illustrates its high place in spiritual matters. Former President of the Church, Spencer W. Kimball, was once asked, "What do you do if you find yourself caught in a boring sacrament meeting?" The spiritual giant thought for a moment, then said, "I don't know; I've never been in one." Mormons know this to be a mightily ironic response because no one knows better than Mormons how boring they can be. The implication is that President Kimball was not simply hearing what there was to hear but generating something more. He who has ears to hear, let him hear something better than is said. Learning by the Spirit, as Mormons call it, means experiencing what

is not present. It's a promise that no blah-blah is endured in vain, for "he shall mount up in the imagination of his thoughts as upon eagles' wings." When one is tempted to write off longsome tiresome ho-hum tedium, one is to contemplate filling in the blank.

What's in a Mormon Church, Temple, Desert, Get-together? Jazzed absence. Blandness takes the spike out of punch and puts it in your brain.

~

The sun's down, but—high praises—so are we. Off the freaking mountain at last. Those of us who did not chuck our pack in a hole and leave it to rot, drop our stuff under our scraggly canopy of juniper. Jen and Marian waste no time in getting out fire sets and food. They down a handful of almonds and brown sugar lumps before setting to work on the fire. Rebecca eyes Jen's opened sugar bag.

I'm too worn out to care about food. James hasn't moved or spoken since we put down our packs. He sits hunched on the ground like a comatose toad. No sooner do we exhale, Wind comes upon us.

Wind is an exalted TrailWalker, a lone ranger. He or she roams free of any Band in order to help all Bands. Sometimes this is life-saving. Other times, Wind blowing through your camp can be totally deflating. Some Winds police as much as they doctor. Wind pops in, fresh and perky from his lone cowboy camp, energetically wins over our girls, making us look like sticks in the mud. Then tells us what we can do better. At those times, Wind is the grandparent of ANASAZI, rolling in, spoiling our kids, lending unasked advice, then leaving us to deal.

Our Wind is not the ranger you'd expect. He wears trousers and a sweater vest. He is small and impeccably cheery. His boyish look belies his experience, as does his use of obscure, old-fashioned swears, like "gosh-all-Potomac!" or "blistering barnacles!," which is who he is on and off the job, but is also a persona he cultivates. Once, his first week out on the Trail, in freezing January, his pack got swept down the Verde River as

he and the group struggled to cross. Some camper found it eventually and turned it over to the park rangers. From its clothing content, they thought some poor 80-year-old man had washed down the river. Wind was delighted to get his green sweater vest back.

"Howdydoo! Permission to enter camp?" Wind enters our circle and shows the kids his new papoose, gorgeously beaded and fringed. He sings a merry song before asking to powwow with the TrailWalkers. Me and James try to look alive as we follow him off a ways.

Wind tells us what we already know and can't imagine.

"You have to hike back up and get that pack. And Rebecca has to choose to do it with you."

The first part sounds unpleasant, the second unfathomable, and the two, at any rate, are at odds. Leaving the pack there isn't an option, yet we must give Rebecca the option. ANASAZI's emphasis on agency really ties our hands back. James and I laugh but Wind doesn't. He doesn't know Rebecca. No substance on earth could induce that girl to turn around and hike back up that mountain.

I have to eat my words. Wind and Rebecca have a private Sitting for an hour, and when they rejoin the group, Rebecca tells us she is ready to go. James and I are shocked, chastised. Why didn't we have more faith in her "seed of greatness"? Wind has out-zenned us.

Halfway up the mountain Rebecca furtively takes a little baggie out of her pocket. A full Ziplock of glistening blue Tang. No one in our group could have such a stash. Genius. ANASAZI has its Ideals, but thank god even the exalted ones condescend to bribery.

~

As iconic as the American desert has become—all three-armed cactus and cow skull and moon-puckered coyote—the desert is the iconoclast of ecology. The very definition of desert is debated. Dry, hot, salty and barren. A desert may be all or none of these things. The Arctic has

been called a *polar desert,* and the open sea—there are not many places wetter—*oceanic desert.* The root of desert means *forsaken* or *abandoned.* And this seems to be our measure of it: Desert is a place that is lacking. A place apparently empty, full of less obvious life.

Get a bunch of geographers in a room and they'll mostly agree that deserts are defined by their aridity. However, ask how arid a region must be or how best to measure this aridity, and some rocks might fly. It is better, suggest some, to think of arid regions as a continuum of environments, measured in degrees rather than absolutes. The desert likely has no boundary.

It seems we are constantly crossing into other worlds as we hike: a morning of flat cracked earth, noon on a scruffy mountain, midday in a ponderosa forest carpeted with pine needles, and a canyon-deep evening along a rushing stream.

The desert's continuum also runs vertical. Each landscape has another landscape underneath and waiting to pop up. I remember a day a few summers ago, I was in Girls Band, and we were trudging up a bone-dry creek bed. Everything was rock and gray. Almost all at once the air turned incredibly heavy as low clouds smothered the sky. We were rounding a mountain of black-charcoaled trees when the rain dumped. It pooled improbably, and greens seeped out of nowhere. The landscape was becoming fluid like a dream. What I'll never forget: moon-white flowers unfurling like bat wings. They were everywhere, spooking at dark raindrops. They beamed pale against the burned-up trees, the sky's boiling gray. There was something mammal-like about them that repulsed and enthralled. I don't remember them having any purple, but I always think *purplish-shade* when I remember. Perhaps because it sounds vaguely poisonous. To this day I don't know what these flowers are, and honestly, I'm not interested. They remain the plant of my dreams.

~

Brigham Young told his desert people in 1852: "Progress and improve upon and make beautiful everything around you. Cultivate the earth and cultivate your minds . . . make gardens, orchards and vineyards, and render the earth so pleasant that when you look upon your labors you may do so with pleasure, and that the angels may delight to come and visit your beautiful locations." And so the desert became the ground of the Mormon imagination.

A non-Mormon visitor to Salt Lake City commented that Young seemed to fuse spiritual enlightenment and landscape building, preaching "exaltation in heaven" one Sunday, and the next, "how to irrigate and drain land, harvest crops, set out trees, beautify their grounds. . . ." Perceiving the potential of the desert became itself a religious practice.

Mormons were trained, spiritually and practically, to colonize wastelands. The Church sent out hundreds of groups of converts to establish Mormon oases across the wilderness: Eastern Utah, Nevada, Idaho, Arizona. My ancestors, converts came to Salt Lake from Scandinavia, were told to uproot once again and blaze their way to the dry, flat, empty heart of Arizona. They did, and they built, and they spread, leaving only briefly, once plural wives were outlawed in the U.S., for the Mexican side of nowhere, and when those houses got razed by revolutionaries and sunk back into the sun-baked mud, they returned to Arizona as if it were home all along.

Even today, any good Mormon will move in a heartbeat when asked to do so by the Church. Home, by these lights, is not where you live, but where you're led. This is an old story of the wilderness.

~

Desert as a moral and social guide is not a breakthrough of modern psychology, new coat of "wilderness therapy" notwithstanding. Jesus and Muhammad spent significant time in deserts, and Moses, poor Moses, couldn't lead his people any other way.

The story of Abraham begins without preamble: Get lost. *Go forth from your native land, from your birthplace, and from your father's house to the land that I will show you.* Come undone in the desert. Leave everything you were about to be for nothing you could say with any certainty. Become other, which is finally you.

Lekh lekha—literally, Go to yourself.

The Book of Mormon starts with a family commanded to leave iniquitous Jerusalem and enter the barren desert. They must uproot, reorient, begin again. The people carrying this book split from American society to set up their own State in the wilderness.

Intrinsic to desert is testing ground. It is where humans go to either escape from or conceal extreme corruption. The story across time/space: Man leaves behind the comfort and spoils of society and turns toward an indefinite integrity. He takes to the blank of the desert to reimagine what man is about. He writes. The words sink into dust. We who are made of dust take to translating it.

~

When I first started TrailWalking for ANASAZI, I wanted to be put with Boys Bands. They're stronger, I concluded, lazily. They'll be faster hikers, better fire-makers. Gradually I learned my mistake. Ask any TrailWalker who has been there and back with both groups, and they'll tell you the same thing: The girls have the most endurance. This is the truth of my women ancestors crossing the desert with their homes tied up in wagons, children on their hips, the husband ahead or behind. I didn't come to their stories until later. Women to me are the long run surprise.

One of the aims of the Mormon colonizing expeditions of the 1870s was to establish peaceful relationships with the Indians. This meant traveling through Navajo territory – tough, red land. White heat. Black winds. In our family history journals from this expedition I found the story of one of my foremothers giving birth on the rocky backbone

between the Colorado and San Juan Rivers. When the family reached a plateau, a blizzard was raging, and exposed to the wild winds and snows, the woman went into labor. The husband tried to pitch a tent as she pushed. As the baby emerged a hard slapping wind came and blew the tent upward. The woman reached up and held the pole down with one hand, the baby, now, in the other.

The desert is full of holy tents full of holy men and holy smoke of manly meats for the man god behind the curtain. But when I hear the Lord dwelt in a tent, all I see inside is my foremother using her body as a stake as she pushes out human life.

~

Give any slob a compass and a machete and they'll look all business. The desert is maybe the only place where the more rugged you look, the more professional you seem. With my pink tentacles of greasy hair, rainbow button-up shirt complete with duct tape patches, and pants with a wide smile of stitches across the ass—I look unimpeachable.

The truth is, I'm bad with maps. The problem is deeper than that: I am spatially handicapped. I always have been. I exist in a geographical blackout. It does not matter how long I stare, I cannot match a squiggle on the page to a ridge on the land to save my life, which is the point. I am a wilderness guide after all. What complicates matters even more is that I cannot locate the direction of sound. I have only one ear that hears. ANASAZI uses a hooting system—a very distinct yawp—to communicate and navigate within and between Bands. This can prove crucial if, say, the group gets split up for whatever reason and you must find one another in a vast and hairy landscape. You don't want to go up the wrong mountain. Which is exactly what I have done. It's shameful. Is that a hoot? Watch my good ear spin in circles to catch it. Like a dog chasing its nub of tail.

So how have I gotten this far? Moderate wits, fat luck, and, unfortunately for my group, endless trial and error. Fortunately for me, they don't know that. Circles in a barren place are hard to recognize. The desert is discreet.

I have taken our group to the wrong cow tank, and it is dry, and we are out of water, like we have been since yesterday. Everyone is in bad shape. Barely speak. Wolf mouth, shut, keep moisture in, thoughts in small o smoke rings. W a t e r e s c a p e. We've stepped into delusional. We've dropped our packs on the cracked mudbank and are resting our aching backs of wasted wet against them. No one says anything. Rebecca picks up a rock and scratches big letters into the dry skin of her arm: S-E-X. Someone must have another idea.

~

Another ancestress of mine gave birth in a tent in the desert. She was a second wife. Part of an outlawed but covenant union. There is no heavenly hurt quite like a commanded threesome. Following the exodus from Mexico, the fugitive family stopped long enough for her to give birth to a son in a government tent. There, a few days later, she was abandoned by her husband, his other wife and their family, and left with a young daughter, a newborn, and a desert. She, and her children, never saw her husband again. She made the desert and solitude her home, refusing to move, refusing to remarry, calling it her life.

Stories repeat in the desert. Wives turn each other out, houses split, lines continue. Hagar weeps, God sees, wells appear, histories proliferate. And descendants plumb the depths.

It wasn't until my grandma was an adult with her own family that she discovered her mother had been part of a polygamous household. The second wife had never been spoken of. As the secret cracked, bit by bit, correspondences opened between the families. It was found that the two wives, in their old age—husband long dead—had written letters.

"As I look back over the years I think of those days we lived together. We were so closely associated and had trials and many things came up which could have been avoided if only we had been more patient and kind. . . . Eva dear, with all my heart and in deep humility I ask you to forgive me, that we may live in unity, love and happiness in the hereafter." Sarah and Hagar never met again. But in the 1940s and '50s they sent postcards across the desert between them.

In the desert, stories repeat until they change. Echoes bring the rockslide.

~

Blandness has no stake in any one thing.

Revelation and epiphany only cramp the bland's style. Conclusions forgo it. It prefers the logic inherent in change itself. In the landscape of blandness, extremes express not themselves but each other: one state passing into another. States waving their own lack of allegiance.

The bland carries the world on the shrug of its shoulders. It lets itself be led from one extreme to another, with as little intervention as possible.

~

There should be water right—here. A sad empty bed, the color of old oyster meat, stares up at us from where the map showed a solid blue circle. This is not good, this is not good. This is not a mantra James and I say out loud.

"Ok guys, sit tight, I'm just gonna take the radio and go up on that hill to check in, alright?" My voice is a clip higher than usual.

James and I lock eyes for a second. He's as much at a loss as I am. Even if he knew better, it is not the ANASAZI way to take the maps out of somebody's hands, no matter how tenuous their grip. Efficiency is not our meat.

I know this. I know it's about "experience," but I don't sense the great possibilities of failure when failure is sucking our bodies and brains dry. I'm charging too fast up the rocky cliff in my Chacos, radio in one hand, the other pumping and grasping at boulders, shredding my fingertips, the rocks and I mixing our grits. There's no reason to kill myself, but it feels good. I feel guilty and useless. As if these girls weren't struggling enough as it is. I can't even get them to freaking water and the sun will go down and they'll be miserable and angry and probably write blistering letters home and then their parents will be on the defensive and a whole new spat of tit-for-tat will begin and no one's hearts will heal or grades improve and the girls will drop out of high school with vague talk of a GED and deliver pizzas to the door of a life they almost had but lost to dehydration.

I am having my TrailWalker meltdown moment. Radios are for checking in, but we also use them as a device for taking off to fall apart in private. Long check-ins are understood. I am where the hill levels out, lying on my back, sharp stones digging between my ribs, and I am crying like a dehydrated drama queen with low blood sugar. When I turn my face there's a cow staring at me. There are three or four up on this mound, probably looking for the same tank we were.

ANASAZI 101: *You are not the healer.* Agree as you might, there is always some sneaky part of you that tries anyway. This part dooms itself to an illusion: lack as shortcoming. Which is a shortage of imagination: failure as failure.

~

Wilderness doesn't allow for guides, only followers. No person—whatever their age or expertise—is beyond growing pains. Everyone is learning their limits, and tripping past them.

A Mom came out for Family Camp—the two-day reunion on the Trail of child and parents—and pulled a ballistic kid stunt: She ran away.

The desert drove her nuts. She tried to book it for a road, any goddamn road. A TrailWalker recently hopped in the emergency vehicle before the week's end and refused to get out. Two months from now, dear James, according to his own Walking, will have an epic freakout, to be named The Vanishing, and will not return for six months.

Self-discovery is not a transcendent journey. It's a private tantrum in a public place where you are both child and parent. The desert is space to let it all play out. *With as little intervention as possible.* Go on and kick and scream and cuss and throw that stupid pack down a hole and spit on it like you mean it. The desert won't flinch. It only makes picking it back up unavoidable.

~

Sikong Tu, an illustrious poet of blandness, sang of a sweet spot somewhere between sterile and volatile. He wrote a cycle of poems to show what he called the twenty-four poetic modes. These poems have names like Harmony-Blandness, Force-Incipiency, Shimmer-Beauty, and the especially splendid Limpid-Sublime. Blandness plays between these poles. Unfixed, its balance can only be lost and regained, lost and regained, the hyphen a teeter-totter of attraction. Hyphens do interesting work. The meaning of each title exists not in the words but the relationship between them. With a single dash, content gets underwritten by chemistry.

Chemistry, that limpid-sublime stuff of live-wire I-thou encounter constantly threatened with obliteration. Martin Buber, whose *I And Thou* underlies much of ANASAZI philosophy, invented an opaque-lucid language to show, like Sikong Tu's binomials, that our most basic units are relations. ANASAZI, in the hyphenate spirit of I-thou, has created its own language by pairing Buber and Navajo ideas. What Buber calls an I-thou relation, ANASAZI talks about as a Heart-at-peace. What Buber calls return, ANASAZI calls a New Beginning. Like the balance of blandness, a Heart-at-peace is transitory. It will lapse into seeing people

as objects and objects as more than people. I once heard someone ask Ezekiel how it is then that you hold on to a Heart-at-peace. He said, you don't. You keep getting one.

~

It's midday, the day after we should be at Final D, and we break at a creek: sit our bums down in the sweet cool mud, soak our blistered feet, and James and I know our destination is just around the canyon's corner. A mile and a half or so. So doable, so done. We did it. Damn we're good.

We dry off some on the rocks then wriggle back into our packs and boots, ready. Hallelujah. The end is really here, when Rebecca up and chooses a different ending.

"I'm not moving."

Girl down.

No one is sure how to take this. Downright senseless. Not that Rebecca has been a paragon of sense, but this move is so extravagantly backwards that I don't even know how to bribe her. Rebecca wants to be at Final D, where she knows that she a) won't have to hike for a few days, b) gets letters and FOOD and clean underwear, and c) can slap her yells off canyon walls like a little monkey in heat for all the boys camped at Final D to hear. She knows all this is a very short hike away. She knows she doesn't like hiking in the dark, and she knows we need to leave now for that not to happen.

And yet, "I'm not moving." Whether or not she knows what she means by it, she means it. We are not going anywhere.

After the first hour passes, Jen and Marian, patient, coaxing, even babying, move to dramatic, pleading, tearful, and after the second and third hour, threatening, sobbing, yelling, now sulking under the hot sun apart from Rebecca staked out under the one shade tree.

This is what ANASAZI calls a Heart-at-war. James and I move and moderate between the girls. I am calm and patient with Rebecca, but

it's no use because I am these things out of self-interest. The Heart-at-war that smiles is just as useless as the one that kicks and screams. So I shut my mouth and close my eyes. Put myself in her place. Which is to say, I fumble around a 13-year-old girl's brain until a crack opens and some grace slips in, and being Rebecca becomes real. My heart hurts and I can see her. And I see peace has to come from the other two girls.

Who are these girls? I go over to where they are sunk down and sullen on the dirt. We talk about a Heart-at-peace and what it means; I leave to fill my canteens; when I walk back Rebecca has her pack on and Jen and Marian are helping her tighten the straps using bandanas. I blink hard. These are astonishing humans. What on earth did the two girls say? How did Rebecca respond? Doesn't matter. I feel it. The under-stated power I come back to the desert for.

~

When I returned home from ANASAZI as a girl, almost a woman, I remember seeing the desert as the meridian of my life. Me, my world, my relationships, divided into life before and after the wilderness. This would prove to be untrue. I would run from and return to the desert more times and in more ways than fit on two sides of a map. The meridian curved. Because, for starters, the desert is a cycle.

Elegy / Prayer

Conner Bassett

whatever I say I keep alive
keeping you you near
me to the point of me

never near enough here
am either lost or lost am

losing you again speaking
if speaking could find
you if you could be found

~

summoned in visible earshot
sounds of winter like water
tunneling through the body
reduced to an ear, a window
through which the trees, like

bony chandeliers, migrate
quietly away, meaning up
as if listening to the sky
as if listening itself might
be a destination

~

nearer the edge of here
the body becomes
reduced to its ear

how a child hears blood
inside her cupped hand
believing she hears
an ocean, and once
I was a child you
spoke to me once and
since was memory now

say something or vanish

~

falls the snow making
the buildings even taller
like a mind not mine amid
its own racket redundantly
mounting amounting
to snow for hours

I wait the day-faded star
nearly deniable nearly
once spoken no longer
belongs to anyone
say something

~

a shadow falls from what
it fails to copy suddenly
a fact made weightless

all about the world the world
people are dying lovers
at dinner tell each other
plans to make plans

what we cannot contain
we inhabit

~

but the ear also echoes
itself a world next to
nothing to hear
is a subtraction so
and so follows the call

it subsumes called
memory what we lose
to recover later a world
and word to displace
a clarity I cannot trust

carry with me

~

drifting snow locates
dislocates the landscape it

touches becoming the object
of its own description
the imagination craves

a ghost to be heard, to hear it
the unseen bird replays
its rusty gate,its nervous music
not quite music

a faucet drips all morning
television blue

~

where I am not where
I call out what others call

prayer, there is no arrival
it startles me—the wall

the way whatever I touch
overtaken by what I want

touches back

~

thinking through the keyhole
I am nearly but not quite
alone, no such quiet
as long as blood runs
and runs though the body

caught in surrender
in its own unrest—a breath
at the center of the room
still moving

~

I resemble too much
the egg to eat now
an emptiness so simple so
being idle draws out
the residual walls
an afterlife of paper I want

to hear you as I am heard
returns to me the fact of me
what I wanted not
to become become again

ungainly being I am

Nosebleed (A Mormon Pilgrimage)

Tyler Clark

Paese mio che stai sulla collina,
disteso come un vecchio addormentato,
la noia, l'abbandono, e il niente
sono la tua malattia.
Paese mio ti lascio, io vado via.
—Ricchi e Poveri

I. Water into Blood

This is the most I've bled in a while,
blood blooms in the sink like a burnt offering.
It is hot today.
A forlorn train calls
through the open window.

And my blood slides down the dirty sink.

The train is a sea lion that swims in with the tide,
finds a rock
and barks
for whoever will listen to its eloquent nonsense.
The ocean is hundreds of miles away.
This is the closest I will come to hearing it.

I inhabit both the ocean and the high desert,
turning water into blood,
spouting nonsense and forlorn calls.

And my blood dries in the dirty
sink like saltwater in a basin.

II. Water into Wine

Mountains.
An overwhelming sense of mountains was the feeling
when I first moved here; claustrophobic, incarcerating,
decorated with an enormous white Y,
a massive innocent question: Y?

I came to Utah like a curse from God.
I didn't rain frogs or murder firstborns,
but if I keep bleeding at this rate
I believe the Provo River will turn to blood
to the dismay of hipsters tubing or taking pictures
up the canyon for wedding announcements.

Most of them come here to fish,
reel in their prospects with fish hooks and wedding ring lures,
then throw them back.
The biggest fish are in the ocean.
You can wander for forty years in a desert and never
find promise.

III. King of the Mountain

I have been pushed around too much to think this game is fun.

I dream about nudging the mountains down
like a structure made of beach sand,
revealing an ocean on the other side.

This landscape is salty. The air makes me bleed.
The rocks belie a former life of wetness.
Basins of rain, basins of blood,
the salt flats yearn for moisture.

The geology of my genealogy is a vein of blood traveling West
spilling into Monterey Bay.
I did not come back to Utah to be King.

My bloodline sediments in the salty sink.

IV. Bats

This is bat country.
A fruit bat flew out of my fireplace,
circling the living room.
I think the bat was scared, in an unfamiliar place,
circling because what else could it do,
surrounded on all sides by an alien domesticity?
When your life has always been upside-down
in a chimney, I think the best you can do is
circle the room
to make sure the walls aren't closing in.
I opened the door to let the bat outside and heard the big Y shouting,
"Y God? Y?"

Sometimes it's worth not answering
to keep a beautiful question alive.

V. I wish I could go back, John Steinbeck

If John Steinbeck is God, Monterey is heaven,
wild like a seagull singing—
so fleeting in the shimmer—
we don't get to tame heaven and earth;
like the estuaries—water becoming ocean,
or my blood washing down the sink—
we don't get to keep heaven and earth;

not the waves, not the smell of salt and fish.
We can only let it pass through us
like blood pumping, circulating, then spilling.

In Monterey, John Steinbeck is God,
locked in a museum. The churches are empty.
Cannery Row is now a tourist trap and the tin cannery is a strip mall
with boutiques and outlets and a restaurant that sells pancakes.
Monterey is now a fake flower pinned to Pacific Ocean's lapel,
a dapper lie. Golf course Versailles.
The place for the wealthy to retire.
I'm sorry John Steinbeck, but it's too late for poor people.
We live in Utah.

My pilgrimage has ended in Provo.
I came in with a red Nile tide
to spread my fat out on a rock and BARK!
(upon this rock will I build my kingdom)
I am the cherubim circling circling
circling around the tree of life with a flaming sword,
not to protect it, but to keep the walls from closing in.
This is bat country after all,
and when my blood is dribbling out
I begin to think death tastes like salt and copper
and I hear the train again . . .

In Monterey, you can hear the sea lions from across the city,
or while eating pancakes at the tin cannery.
One could do worse than be a sea lion,
barking on a salty rock.

Annie Poon
Job
14.5x90, sumi ink on watercolor paper

BISHOP JOHANSEN RESCUES A LOST SOUL: A TALE OF PLEASANT GROVE

Steven L. Peck

-0-

The grizzly, white-bearded weaver was as silent as the shadow of a ring-tailed civet cat—"reserved," the folks in Pleasant Grove called the Russian. He did capable work making small throw rugs on a yew loom he'd constructed himself shortly after his arrival. He sold them out of his house. If you came by for one of his creations and knocked on his door, his wife would silently lead you into the foyer and in serviceable English politely tell you to wait while she retrieved her husband. The small woman was young and likely twenty years his junior. She was thoughtfully demure, rarely speaking beyond what was necessary, but it seemed a more natural reticence than the wooden stoicism of her husband. She wore a blue kerchief on her head and a long, black wool dress bordered on the bottom with a red and blue flaxen band. Her blouse was muslin with colorful red flowers garnishing its simplicity. Her shoes were thick and blocky. She never looked you in the eye and there was an oppressive sadness about her—a weighty air appeared to gather around her broad face and her large, expressive, slightly Asian eyes. Not the sadness of a woman treated cruelly or badly, but when she looked at her husband something communicated loss. Emptiness.

When you came into the house you could hear the methodic thump and clack of the loom in the back. His wife would disappear there, then

reappear and maybe give a half smile and ask about your health. You'd have heard no exchange of words in the backroom, but soon the sturdy Russian would materialize. He wore simple brown pants, an ample shirt that fit him loosely. His face was weathered, his beard thick, trimmed, and as white as snow. He would look you in the eye and ask if you wanted a rug. If you said yes, he would disappear and bring back seven or eight rugs and set them carefully before you and say simply, Five dollars. A high price, but the rugs were of wool from the Russian's own sheep and of extremely high quality. They were not dyed and carried the hue of whatever sheep they were taken from, varying from black to snow white. When you paid him, he would not say anything but would simply roll up your rug, tie it up with stiff twine, and hand it to you, then, taking his money, put it in a jar on the mantle. Without a word, he would then return to his loom. It was always the same whether you came early in the morning, in the late afternoon, or after sunset.

-1-

They had been there about two years when Bishop Johansen, noticing that their names were not on the church records, came to introduce himself. He asked if he might spend a few minutes with the man. The Russian came out, sat on the davenport, and motioned to a dining room chair, where the bishop sat. His wife hovered around for a few minutes, then retreated to the back of the house out of sight. The Russian sat stiffly, his feet flat on the floor, hands on his knees, his back and head straight. He stared straight ahead, and although the bishop was right in front of him, it seemed to the visitor as if the Slav were looking into space or behind him.

The bishop cleared his throat and said, Well, you have lived in my ward for some time and I feel sorry that I have not come to introduce myself. I am Bishop Peter Johansen, my wife is called Mary.

The man nodded but said nothing, so the bishop continued, How shall I call you?

The man said without elaboration, Moisey Semyonovich Koltsov.

The bishop laughed and said, Perhaps you could write that down for me?

No, the man answered, I cannot write.

Can your wife?

No.

There was a long silence. The bishop nodded and said, May I call you Brother Koltsov (although he said it "Coalstove")?

The man nodded.

And your wife is called?

Tatyana Avenirovna Koltsova.

At this, the bishop just nodded. Are you members of the Church?

The man nodded and said, Yes, we are members of the Russian Orthodox Church.

The bishop said, I see.

He squirmed around a bit and then asked, Well, now that you are deep in Mormon country, would you like to learn more about the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints? You and the Kims down the street are the only non-members in the ward boundary. Should I have the ward missionaries come over?

The Russian nodded, Yes.

-2-

Over the course of the year, the Russians were baptized. The ward missionaries taught them with the bishop and his wife in attendance. Brother and Sister Coalstove, as they came to be known, sat quietly. She appeared animated by the lessons and asked many questions. Could she keep her beloved icons? No, we worship the Lord only. Would Mary still watch over her? As much as she ever had. Could she read her Slavic Bible? Of

course. He, however, sat still and quiet. Never asking for so much as a clarification. When they asked if he believed Joseph Smith was a prophet, he said yes. When they were asked if they wanted to be baptized, he said yes in the same voice he said everything. When she said yes, she wept openly and fell into Sister Johansen's arms, visibly shaking.

That night the bishop asked his wife, Do you find him strange?

She said she did but just assumed it was the way of Russian men.

No doubt you are right, he said softly, no doubt you are right.

Over the next two years, the bishop learned to call the stoic Russian a friend. Of sorts. He came to every activity. Helped in every bit of work he was asked to do. He labored at the storehouse or at the stake peach orchard. He did his home teaching. The bishop hired him to help move cattle off of the summer range come late fall. He was an able horseman and cattle hand and did an excellent job moving dogies down. He never smiled or complained. He went about his work dispassionately, but efficiently. There was never a wasted movement. He'd answer any question put to him, but never ask anything in return. Where did you live in Russia? Saransk. What did you do there? Same as here, I was a weaver of rugs. Why did you come here? To escape Stalin. Out on the trail around the campfire, the bishop asked once for him to sing a song from the Fatherland. In a deep voice, he sang a strange and haunting song. No one understood the words, of course, but it was filled with power and longing—it was the closest the bishop had ever seen him come to expressing some emotion. The only thing he would not do was offer a prayer. If called on to do so at church he would walk to the front, fold his arms, bow his head, and then his mouth would begin to move, but nothing would come out. Eventually, he'd sit back down as if nothing had happened.

Like her husband's friendship with the Russian, Sister Johansen became Sister Coalstove's bosom buddy. They spent much time together—canning, planting their gardens, and planning activities with the Relief Society. But despite their closeness, Sister Johansen had a sense

that Sister Coalstove was holding something of herself back. A secret sorrow she would not share, even though they shared many secrets, including something a little strange about Brother Coalstove that made her blush. It was Christmas Eve night she confided the secret with her husband the bishop.

-3-

The Johansens were sitting in the front room drinking a cup of coffee, their once a year indulgence—despite the new emphasis from Church headquarters in Salt Lake on living the Word of Wisdom, they figured that once a year would do them no harm. Sister Johansen was in a pensive mood and looked a little sad.

My dear, the bishop asked, is anything the matter?

She looked up and sighed, I was just thinking how lovely this old house would be at Christmas time if we had some children about. She took a drink of coffee and smiled at the husband, Don't worry, I'm not going back to my old angry self, it's just sometimes I wish the Lord had seen fit. . . .

She stared back at the fire and was silent. The bishop just nodded. He knew enough not to open old wounds.

The wind was starting to pick up and a lonely howl sounded as a gust made the old house give a low moan.

The Coalstoves are the same, you know, she ventured further.

Her husband grunted and said, That's not our business.

She laughed. Well, maybe we should make it so, or at least you should. She was giving him an I-know-something-you-don't look.

Why is that? he said.

Well, she smiled, leaning closer to him and putting her mug on the side table, It's because he never, well . . . well, he never plays the part of a man in their bed.

Never? asked the bishop, a little surprised.

Never.

Well, come first Sunday after the New Year, he would get to the bottom of this.

-4-

Sister Johansen knew something was wrong the moment her husband stepped out of the bitter cold January night. He had walked home from the chapel, leaving their Mercury as if he had not driven, as he sometimes did in the summer. He plopped on the couch and just stared. She brought him a cup of hot chocolate and a homemade peanut butter cookie. But when she came in a while later both were sitting cold on the table.

What is it? she said.

He looked up, his face one of confusion and terror. There is more in this world than I ever understood. But I believe him. By hell, I believe him. I had to ask every question leading him by the hand. Even so, he told me all. And I believe every word.

Sister Johansen could get nothing from him about what he had learned. He stammered as he tried to explain, It is my priesthood duty as bishop not to break trust with those who counsel with me. . . . And here he paused. But I cannot bear what has been placed on me.

She looked at her husband a long time. I'm going to ask Sister Coalstove.

Not now, he said.

Now, she said.

She did not come home that night. He understood why. She appeared before breakfast and went to work making him pancakes and scrambled eggs and bacon. When he walked in, she abandoned the stove and threw her arms around him. They held each other a long time. So long everything was burnt. It did not matter. She waved a towel around to drive the smoke away, then iron skillets were placed out in the snow

on the back porch to cool. They went to the diner. To eat. To talk. And to make a plan.

-5-

This was the Russian and his wife's story put together in a single telling.

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No two people could ever have been happier. She was the daughter of the mayor and he a master weaver and head of the weaver's guild—a powerful position in that Soviet town devoted largely to textiles and wool. He was older than she, but it did not seem to matter. They both loved to dance, to sing, and to go for long sleigh rides together through the forests near their village. She was religious, and although it was discouraged, she remained faithful, as did her father. But one night her papa was arrested and accused of falsifying his reports to the Party. It was a lie. Moisey spoke on his behalf, but his father-in-law was convicted of treason against the state and sentenced to ten years of hard labor in the gulags of Siberia.

Because he had stood as a witness for his father-in-law, Moisey now fell under suspicion. He knew what was coming, so he and Tatyana fled. He had a distant cousin in Leningrad to whom he thought he could appeal for help in escaping to Finland and from there to Sweden and then on to the United States or Australia. It was a long and complicated journey, for they had no traveling papers, and so they could not simply hop a train, or even stay in a hotel. By relying on the kindness of strangers and networks of sympathizers, they made their way to the fabled city. They found the cousin, who welcomed them with open arms. Then betrayed them to the authorities.

They were arrested and taken to a holding cell where in the morning they would be tried and sent to prison or executed.

All through the night, in that cold underground stone building, Moisey watched his wife pray and listened to her weep. He knew that life for them was over. He was sure he would be executed. She would be imprisoned. He knew the indignities she would endure. She was young. She would be abused often. She would grow old in prison until consumption took her, or dysentery, or some other foul disease. He knew how enemies of the state were treated. She would die toothless. Broken. Mad. Deserted. Forsaken. And alone.

Alone.

He stood up and walked to a corner where a window high up opened on a moonless summer night. He raised his hands in the air and said, Satan. If you exist. If you get my wife and me out and to the United States, I will offer up my soul.

Later that night a guard appeared and said he was with an underground group. He hurried them from the building and onto a fishing boat that sailed them to Stockholm. With help from a group getting people out of Stalin's USSR, they made their way to New York by cargo ship. Upon his arrival in the United States, when Moisey stepped into the street connected to the pier, he disappeared. Or his soul did. There was only this puppet left behind that would say what he would have said. Did what he would have done. But feels nothing. Thinks nothing. The lights were on, but no one was home.

-6-

The bishop took up the matter with the stake president, who consulted with one of the apostles. They all agreed that such soul-selling was impossible. Besides, because he was baptized, he was free of any deals with Satan.

He explained it all to his Russian friend, who sat still, staring ahead as he often did. His wife was beside him weeping hopefully.

Do you understand? the bishop asked.

He nodded but said nothing.

The devil does not have your soul! the bishop nearly shouted at him.

The Russian stared at him then said, Nevertheless, it is now with Satan. May I return to my weaving, Bishop?

Over the course of the next few months, the bishop, despite what his line-leaders had told him, became convinced that the Russian was right. Something was wrong with him. And that his soul disappeared could be as likely as anything to explain it. He talked long to his wife. They began to look for books that would explain the matter, traveling as far as the University of Utah library to search for strange texts of medieval magic that would leave them scared and shaking in the darkness of the night. More and more often, the bishop felt as though their house were under attack from the evil one. The use of the priesthood became common in dismissing the demonic influences.

Spring came, and it was time to move the herd back to the summer range high up Battle Creek Canyon. The Russian was down with the flu and did not assist. One night, the bishop fell into conversation with one of the Lamanite brothers he had hired to help. He was an able hand and a hard worker, but not inclined to talk much. However, one night the conversation turned to the mysteries. The Indian said his grandfather was a shaman who sojourned in the spirit world. As the bishop listened to his tale, he began to wonder if there might be something to this belief. Perhaps the Ute's grandfather could help him recapture the Russian's soul.

-7-

A series of letters and one long and very expensive phone call saw it all arranged. The bishop drove to Towaoc, Colorado on the Ute reservation to rescue his friend's soul. Before leaving, he told his wife his plan. She was aghast. She pled with him not to do it. Could an Indian shaman do something that the Mormon priesthood could not? But his mind was made up. He didn't know what else to try. He had prayed and fasted

much about the problem and nothing had come to him. He was willing to try anything at this point. So in the end, his wife cooked up some fried chicken and potato salad to send with him. She was crying as he climbed into their station wagon and pulled out.

He stopped for the night in Blanding. The shaman had instructed him that he should fast, but he would not have been able to get anything down anyway. He did not understand what was coming, but he was frightened. Things were not as simple as he once thought, and he wondered what unexpected things awaited. That night he was unable to sleep; however, as the dawn leaked into his cheap hotel room, he could not help but smile. If someone had told him seven years ago when he was called as bishop that his duties would require a spirit journey with a Lamanite shaman to rescue a Russian's soul from Satan, he would have laughed them to scorn. And yet here he was. And it was about to happen.

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The shaman lived in a cabin outside of town. It was a beautiful place near Four Corners with grand mesas and the southern end of the Rockies rising in the distance. The sight brought him some comfort. He had always thought of himself as a man of the mountains, and their presence reassured him and strengthened his courage.

The old Indian welcomed him, but offered few words. He took his payment, then offered him a chair. He explained that they would enter the spirit world at night by the light of a fir log and asked for the guide item. The bishop pulled out the white baptismal garment that Tatyana had given him. It was the clothes that the Russian had been christened in as a baby. He handed it to the shaman. The Ute closed his eyes, then ran his hands over the old white ceremonial dress for some time as if he were trying to find something hidden in its threads. At last, he opened his old, red, and jaundiced eyes and said, This will do.

They ate a silent meal together of pork and beans then retired to the backyard. Old blankets were spread around a fire pit in which the shaman kindled a blaze with a bottle of kerosene and a Zippo lighter. It was dark now and the old man sat on one of the blankets and motioned for the bishop to sit next to him. He began a chant, a haunting, otherworldly song, and although he could not understand the Ute's words, the bishop felt their power. When the chant was over, they sat quietly until the Lamanite asked if he were ready.

As ready as I'll ever be, said the bishop.

-8-

The old man took a long pipe made of carved wood with a clay bowl. He took a dried button of peyote and pulled it apart into the pipe and held the lighter up to it, and with short, quick puffs pulled the flame into the bowl. It began to smoke, filling the air with a sweet, pungent, earthy smell. Soon enough, the bowl's contents were glowing heartily. The shaman inhaled the smoke, held it, then released it into the air. He gave the pipe to Bishop Johansen. He tried to follow the shaman's example but coughed violently. It took a few minutes to regain his breath. The shaman handed the bishop a pint of whiskey, and he took a small medicinal swallow. For a moment, it made things worse, but then it helped soothe what the smoke had irritated. He tried again. It took a bit to get to the point where he could hold the smoke in, but with every attempt he made progress. The old Ute was very patient with his fumbling attempts to learn to smoke. Something the bishop had never done.

The moon was starting to rise. It looked like a living thing, as if it were an angel or a powerful spirit. Odd, he thought, that I have never noticed that.

He found himself standing on a vast waste. The mountains had disappeared and the empty plain extended far into the distance no matter which direction he looked. The shaman was standing beside him,

handed him back the Russian's baptismal clothes, and said, We have a long way to go. We will change forms many times, but do not release this, for it is our link to the man's spirit you seek.

Suddenly, the Lamanite was a raven. He squatted, gave a loud cry, and then sprang into the air. Bishop Johansen was also a raven. The clothes of the Russian had shrunk to the size of a soda cracker. He seized them in his beak and noticed that the taste was like no flavor known to him. As he looked through his corvid eyes, he realized that while the color was monochrome, it was not black, gray, and white, but a new color he had never seen before. A color for which he had no word in his vocabulary.

Looking up, he saw the shaman-raven pulling away, so he leaped into the air, following the other bird winging its way across the plain. He found flying natural, as if he had done it all his life. He could not help but feel buoyant and hopeful. Brave and swift. He was a new creature with powers untapped. He gave a caw of triumph through his beak clenched tight on the Russian's clothes. He would succeed!

They journeyed long. After flying for a while as ravens, they next were salmon, then bears, then agile coyotes. With each incarnation, the bishop felt more alive and attuned to the spirit world around him. He remembered scenes from childhood that he had not remembered for years. He felt as though his life had a purpose and meaning from the beginning, perhaps for this very thing. He wept because he had never done anything more worthwhile in his life. He felt he finally understood why his Heavenly Father did the things he did. He cried for joy.

As he ran as a wolf across a Russian forest, he knew they were near. The end of the quest was at hand. He could taste it on the baptismal clothes he held in his mouth.

And suddenly there was Moisey. Or rather there was his spirit, squatting over a child of ten or eleven. Behind him was a demon. The bishop knew it immediately. The demon's color was unearthly and its demeanor, while human, was distorted and cruel. The wicked spirit's fingers were long and the apparition had a wretched appearance of something grave-

like and wasted. It laughed as it pointed to the child, cursing it in such language that the bishop could scarcely listen. He understood the words perfectly, although it was not English or any language he recognized. The bishop turned to the shaman, who stood beside him. Both of them had returned to their human form. He asked, What do we do?

The Ute looked at the scene for a long time. The evil spirit was apparently trying to coerce the Russian into tempting the child to push a little girl down into the muddy street. But the Russian just stood there, looking at the ground. The bishop had seen many men sad and in despair. He had seen sorrow and defeat. He had viewed men wretched in countenance for a wasted life of misdeeds. But until that moment he had never comprehended the anguish of hell reflected so vividly as in the face of the Russian. He remembered the words of Alma in the Book of Mormon: *And now, for three days and for three nights was I racked, even with the pains of a damned soul. And it came to pass that as I was thus racked with torment, while I was harrowed up by the memory of my many sins . . .*

He had read and preached that scripture many times to repentant souls, but its meaning now struck him with the force of a sledgehammer. He found himself weeping, but his teeth were clenched in rage. His companion placed his arm around his shoulder.

The shaman spoke to the bishop in a whisper. I will reveal the chain. This you must break. It will weaken me and I will have to depart. I will seek help. Whatever magic or power you possess, you must use it, else his fate will be yours. Savvy?

The bishop looked at the scene before him and nodded. Aye, I understand.

The Indian stepped forward. The demon and the Russian turned as if suddenly aware they were there. The Indian reached into a small leather bag tied to his belt and from it, he withdrew a purple powder and blew it at the figure. As he did so, the demon screamed in rage and

moved as if to attack the old Ute, but the bishop's guide had become an eagle and flew quickly into the air, into which he vanished.

-9-

Revealed now to view was a long, golden thread that ran from the hand of the demon to a silver collar circling the neck of the Russian's spirit. The bishop raised his hand to the square. The Indian had told him to use what power he had and he knew what that meant. In the name of the Savior Christ, he rebuked the demon. The demon did not move, but stood to eye the bishop. Its eyes narrowed and through its teeth it spat at the bishop, You lack faith, little man. You've bitten off more than you can chew.

The bishop felt his fear rising as the infernal imp began to laugh. Suddenly it cried out, Master, someone is trying to take what is yours! Come. Battle. We have been besieged!

It grew dark, but not from the sun going down. Instead, a mist gathered—a fog that oppressed and dampened all the light within him. He could not speak. And out of the darkness came the very embodiment of emptiness and hate, a spirit of such power and malevolence that he staggered and fell to the ground. Well-named was that monster Lucifer, Son of the Morning, for his power was great. The monster spirit looked at him and said, Bishop Johansen. You, I know well. But bound you will be like this man. . . .

He did not finish his sentence, for into the space came two bright spirits. Angry and full of uncanny power they were. One flew at Satan. Bishop Johansen recognized his wife, Mary. With her was Tatyana, who ran to her husband's spirit and tore the binding from his neck like it was paper. Mary became a lark, then a bear, then a wolverine that moved raging over the devil's form like a wheel of fire. The monster tried to fight her but she was too swift. Too bright. Too full of light. His darkness melted before the onslaught. The bishop's tongue was loosed. His fear

was gone. His wife's power infused him with a mighty faith. As he grew, the evil one shrank. And now as he invoked the priesthood, he drew upon ancient wells of potent force that went as deep as the fundamental particles that made him.

When he was done, the devil was gone and the five of them stood together in joy. The bishop shouted just in case Satan was lurking in the shadows, I reclaim this man, Moisey Semyonovich Koltsov, by the power of the Lamb. He has been baptized and is clean! He is no longer yours! He is God's! Back to Hell with you.

-10-

The bishop woke up. It was late morning. He lay on the blanket by the shaman's fire. His head hurt terribly and he stood up only to vomit. He remembered everything. The shaman came out of his cottage and handed the bishop a cup of coffee. Despite it not being Christmas Eve, he drank.

They were silent for a long time. Finally, he asked, How did my wife get there?

The Indian waited a long time before answering and finally said, I told them what was happening in their dreams.

The bishop thought about it and then said, But how did they find us?

The Indian nodded, Love can do things in the spirit world. It cuts through many mazes.

The bishop was silent a while, then asked, Why did they have power that I did not?

The old Lamanite shrugged and said, You were afraid. They were not.

When the bishop returned home, his wife ran out to meet him and for a long time they held each other. After a space of time, Mary called Tatyana and told her that the bishop had returned. The squeal of car tires announced that the Coalstoves had arrived. The Russian ran from the car and grabbed the bishop and swung him around and around, crying, laughing, and singing violently and loudly in Russian and English.

-11-

It was said in Pleasant Grove that the change in the Russian transformed the city. His love for life was infectious. He and his wife and their five children were a common feature of any good thing that happened in the city. And it was noted by all that their blessed children had two sets of parents, for the bishop and his wife treated them as their own. Never was a there a happier pair of friends in all the history of Pleasant Grove. It was said by many that no two couples feared the devil less, or were more feared by the same, for they were always doing good and in their presence no evil could abide.

The Truth is in the Middle

Stephen Carter and Jett Atwood. *Mormonism for Beginners.* Danbury, Conn.: For Beginners, 2016. 193 pp. Paperback: $15.95. ISBN: 9781939994523.

Reviewed by Cristina Rosetti

Introductory texts often face the challenge of which topics to cover and how much detail to include. In *Mormonism for Beginners,* author Stephen Carter and illustrator Jett Atwood strike the perfect balance between comprehensive survey and accessibility. This is accomplished through both compelling prose and lively illustration. The first page opens with the exclamation, "It's a religion! It's a subculture! It's a Broadway show!" To adequately demonstrate the multifaceted nature of Mormonism, the text aims to offer readers an introduction to both the religion and culture of Mormonism, including a brief history of the tradition, an introduction to LDS scripture, the life of Church members, and challenging topics. As an important contribution, Carter's work demonstrates how history and theology are actively present within the lives of Church members. Rather than introduce the reader to an abstract picture of Mormon belief and practice, the text demonstrates the ways in which Mormonism exists as a lived religion that is both dynamic and evolving.

From the onset of the text, the author makes the important qualification that this book covers one of many traditions that trace their roots to Joseph Smith. Through this single statement, the author makes known the text's wider aim of providing a comprehensive and inclusive representation of Mormonism. Too often, as the author states, introductions to Mormonism act as either propaganda or diatribe. In response, Carter asserts that, "The truth lies somewhere in the middle" (vi). Neither a tool for conversion nor an attempt to debunk the faith, this text succeeds at providing balance and understanding to a complex religious tradition.

While the book does assume some knowledge on the part of the reader, the author seeks to provide enough background to make the history accessible to those unfamiliar with the religion's past. The first part of the text provides this background through a brief sketch of Mormon history. Carter presents an incredible amount of information in a short section that covers the life of Joseph Smith, the translation of the Book of Mormon, Zion's Camp, Kirtland, Missouri, Nauvoo, movement to Utah, and much more. As early as the first part of the text, the author exemplifies an ability to present challenging topics well. A clear example of this is the explanation of the First Vision. Rather than focus on the 1838 version, Carter gives a brief description of all four versions as well as the significance of each. While noting the debate that stems from multiple accounts, the author places importance on the impact the narrative offers. Debate aside, the message held within the First Vision narrative remains the most repeated and transformative story within the Mormon tradition.

Throughout the historical chapters, Carter follows the early Saints from New York, Missouri, Kirtland, Nauvoo, and Salt Lake City. In order to present a detailed picture of each historical moment in the early years of the Church, the author breaks up the chapters by geographical location and the significant events that occurred within each settlement. From the beginning, the text finds strength in its balanced portrayal of Mormonism's history. Chapters are dedicated to topics such as polygamy, the diversity within the Mormon faith, and the Mountain Meadows massacre. At the same time, the author covers westward migration, statehood, and attempts toward assimilation. By following members of the Church through a journey of both success and hardship, the reader is left with the conclusion that Mormonism is both evolving and dynamic.

Following a historical introduction to the faith, the author spends the second part of the text covering the various scriptures used within the Church. As with the first part, the author is once again successful in tackling controversial issues with balance and nuance. A noteworthy

example is Book of Mormon historicity and the translation of the Book of Abraham. In the case of the Book of Mormon, the author notes that the importance of the text is not found in its historical accuracy but its success as a scripture regardless of origin. Turning to the Book of Abraham, the author points to the controversy surrounding the text while also incorporating the views of apologists and Church scholars. By providing multiple perspectives, the author creates space for a wide audience. Unlike many introductory texts that simply present the history and translation of the Book of Mormon, this chapter is significant because it offers the reader an introduction to the narrative and the primary figures held within the Book of Mormon. This section ends with a discussion of open canon and continued revelation through a brief look at general conference and the words of Church leaders.

The third section of the text paints a picture of Mormon life. This includes an introduction to the organization of the Church at the ward, stake, and general level, the Church community, missionary work, temples, and family. Central to this section is the idea that the Church is more than Sunday meetings. Rather, it encompasses the entire life of the believer. Each facet of life, from birth, to adolescence, to adulthood, is marked by the Church community and individual involvement. For this reason, the author spends a significant amount of time addressing the difficulty of faith crises and the ability to rebuild following challenges to one's religious worldview. While not everyone will experience these challenges, faith exists on a spectrum and there are resources available for various stages of life and belief.

Few topics interest outsiders as much as Mormon temples. Carter presents the temple as the space where ordinances are performed and a core component of the Mormon religion is accomplished: the redemption of the deceased. He writes of temples: "They're the place where Mormons perform the herculean task of making up for thousands of years of apostasy by giving every single child of God a chance at receiving his or her temple ordinances by proxy" (131). Beginning with the temple interview,

the author traces the journey to the temple and offers a brief outline of the ordinances and their significance to believers. Without giving too many specifics, the author allows for an inside view of the temple and its centrality. Again, difficult questions are addressed—in this case, the Masonic origins of the ceremony. While the temple is often a point of confusion and interest for outsiders, the temple holds a central place in the religious life of the believer. For this reason, perspective becomes important for fostering understanding. In closing, Carter argues, "For many non-Mormons, temple ceremonies can seem strange, even a little sinister. But from an anthropological perspective, the temple ceremony is utterly normal" (142).

Currently, scholarship on faith crises has come to the forefront. Much of this work seeks to address difficult topics from Mormonism's past and present. As a unique and important contribution to introductory texts, Carter devotes an entire section to the challenging questions that occupy a central place in current scholarship. Specific attention is given to the topics of race and the priesthood, women and the priesthood, LGBT issues, the historicity of the Book of Mormon, and the online essays produced by the Church. Because of the text's recent publication, Mama Dragons, Ordain Women, and other topics not previously covered in introductory texts are addressed. This section sets this text apart as one of the most comprehensive and transparent introductions to Mormonism. At the same time, discussion of the contemporary challenges once again demonstrates the multifaceted nature of Mormonism.

The final section of the text offers an overview of an individual Mormon's life from the conception of the spiritual being by Heavenly Parents to the hope of creating a world for oneself in the eternities. This section uses immense illustration and humor to depict significant theological doctrines, such as the creation of intelligences and the plan of salvation, as well as important events and milestones in the traditional Mormon life. In closing, the author presents the afterlife of a member of the Church as one of continued service in the work of salvation and progression.

Mormonism for Beginners is marked by its humor, transparency, and balance. Throughout its survey of Mormon history, scripture, Mormon life, and challenging topics, the author and illustrator accomplish the monumental task of covering a wide range of material in a way that is both compelling and engaging. Truly, the text accomplishes the arduous task given to introductory books of providing a rich and detailed portrayal of a complex topic. This text would serve as an important addition to both introductory courses on Mormonism and a starting point for anyone interested in learning more about American religious traditions.

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Invisible Men / Invincible Women

Eric Freeze. *Invisible Men: Stories.* San Francisco: Outpost 19, 2016. 150 pp. Paperback: $16.00. ISBN: 9781944853020.

Reviewed by Lisa Rumsey Harris

The gaze of the girl on the cover of Eric Freeze's short story collection arrested me—stopped me. Her eyes, full of hostility, told me that if I opened the book, I would be intruding. Her bright knee-length plaid skirt, reminiscent of schoolgirl uniforms, belied the knowledge behind her glare. If it wasn't for her posture, her arms embracing something, I wouldn't have noticed the titular Invisible Man next to her on the cover.

Her warning wasn't wrong. I felt like an intruder as I began to read. I could only take it in small doses—read, then turn the ideas over and over in my mind, like rubbing a smooth stone between my fingers.

I entered the book through the first story, "Duplex," a fragmented narrative that unfolds in disinterested third-person (focused around a man named Garvey) as well as the up-close "I" of a little girl at the beginning of the narrative. The narratives merge, and the effect of piecing

together details gave me the sense of prickling nervousness. I knew what was coming because it had already come, the end at the beginning, and I was afraid. I didn't want to keep reading, but I had to, like an onlooker at an accident scene: driving by, hands over my eyes, but fingers spread so I could peek at the carnage. I didn't want to see it, but I couldn't look away. That's the way I felt while reading most of the stories.

It was only in the aftermath of reading that I could focus on the artistry, the realistic details, sharp and crisp: "Mom was a realtor who permed her hair and frizzed up the front into a ten-inch-high claw" ("The Chameleon") and "He carried his books in a green Jansport from the nineties that he'd picked up for three bucks, second hand at Deseret Industries ("Tabernacle of Flesh"). These characters, wearers of clothes and stylers of hair, emerge vivid and breathing on the page, wandering around familiar places I've been, like the landscape of the point of the mountain, and places so foreign that I would never venture there voluntarily, like the wilderness of a mountain cave. Immersed in the familiar and fantastic, I was a hesitant traveler, waiting for the darkness to fall on the characters. And it did. Sometimes it hurt, but other times I cheered. Heartbreak can be a five word question ("The Bigamist"), a profanity-littered dismissal ("Our Shared History"), or it can be a landslide ("Sasquatch"), heart failure ("Mr. America"), or a body that caves in on itself ("The Chameleon").

Imbued with resignation and the unflinching ability to look at the ambiguities in life, Freeze guides the reader on a gender journey fraught with pain and haunted by the absent presence of invisible men. Is the invisible man the predator? Or the prey? "Lone Wolf" asks this question, as does "Sasquatch," and the answer to both questions is yes. Freeze warns us that invisibility doesn't offer protection. Indeed, invisibility always predicts pain—pain for the men themselves, and pain for those around them. In "Mr. America," Freeze tells us "men hold their arms, trying to massage out all the hurt" (160), and that emerges as the central idea around which all these stories gather. "They are all under

a tremendous amount of pressure. They try to hide it with prepared statements, with dazzling outfits, with full-Nelsons and banter and worn boots and t-shirts and opinions. But these men can crack. You've seen it happen. It will break your heart" (154).

The women who populate Freeze's stories are often heroic, concerned far more about the survival of their children than for any man struggling along in their wake. They cannot carry the baggage for the men in their landscape, so sometimes the men fall behind—abandoned, alone, invisible, an absent presence that haunts the women's lives (literally, in "The Bigamist"). Women in this world can be so other, so unknowable that they are literally monsters, like the Ice Woman and Sasquatch, or they can be as familiar as the widow you think you know in your ward ("The Bigamist").

By the end of the last story, the women have evolved, from the high-pitched sing-song voice of the little girl in "Duplex" to the invincible Ice Woman who moans and demands while giving birth. In this instance, the invisible man stands to the side, irrelevant, hurt, and full of mistrust in her moment of triumph (177).

And yet the men's invisibility shapes the women's lives, their choices, their pain. The men may feel irrelevant, but their absence impacts the women's lives, causing them to change course and adapt while leaving holes and pockmarks in their souls.

There is enough pain to go around. But the women seem to deal with it a bit better, or maybe it's just that Freeze gives us the inside of the men's emotions, a part that most fiction leaves off the page. Frankly, for me, as a woman with no brothers and a mother of four daughters, I've never pondered the vulnerability of men: the side effects, the risks, and the dangers when confronted with women. Seeing inside was an uncomfortable revelation.

By the end, my hands were no longer over my eyes, and I was appreciative of the nuance in the journey through both Mormon and secular territory. Anyone who ventures into this countryside with Freeze as a

guide should know that they will not emerge with sure answers and easy denouements. Instead, you will walk into dark places that are safe (a Sasquatch's den) and familiar places (BYU campus, I-15) that will haunt you long after you've put down the book. When the penetrating gaze of the cover model is hidden from your view, obscured and pressed against other books on the shelf, you will no longer be an intruder. Instead, you might become the girl, glaring with dismay at the implications of interactions between genders. Or maybe you'll be the invisible man, wondering why camouflage doesn't offer safety. In the moments between your everyday life and to-do list, your mind may catch on a detail, a sentence, a phrase, and you'll reconsider what nuances you may have missed the first time.

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Speaking for Herself

Ashley Mae Hoiland. *One Hundred Birds Taught Me to Fly: The Art of Seeking God.* Provo: Neal A. Maxwell Institute, 2016. 212 pp. Paperback: $11.92. ISBN: 9780842529921.

Reviewed by Glen Nelson

One Hundred Birds Taught Me to Fly: The Art of Seeking God is a collection of short missives—poems, essays, and autobiographical sketches—grouped loosely and thematically into thirteen sections and an epilogue. Ashley Mae Hoiland is the author/illustrator of three self-published children's books, a contributor to a collection of essays, *Fresh Courage Take: New Directions by Mormon Women* (Signature Books, 2015), a blogger (under the name ashmae) for *By Common Consent,* and the creator of a collection of sixty (trading or flash) cards of notable women in history, *We Brave Women* (Kickstarter, 2015).

Ultimately, the publisher does Hoiland a disservice by setting readers' expectations for *One Hundred Birds Taught Me to Fly* at sky-high levels. A florid and overreaching foreword by Kristin L. Matthews compares the text to (merely): Donne, Milton, Bradstreet, Yeats, and Bunyan, and to twentieth-century writers of distinction, particularly women writers. Further, the book's front matter begins with fifteen blurbs of praise by some of the most significant names in Mormon letters today. They employ vocabulary of superlatives and make claims for Hoiland's book as a work of historic importance. But there is little in Hoiland's book to suggest she aspires to such loftiness. It is a modest book—a personal, open, heartfelt, frank, and gentle book—published in the Neal A. Maxwell Institute's Living Faith series. Its daring comes from candid explorations that could be generalized with this question: what is a person in the LDS Church to do right now regarding an internal battle of belief and nonbelief?

Hoiland goes to great lengths to establish an authorial voice that speaks only for herself. The book is almost entirely free of "shoulds" or generalizations of any kind or, for that matter, direct references to Church policy and pronouncements. This is an account of a young mother trying to make sense of shifting internal foundations. "The weight of having to believe every thread of my Mormonism felt too heavy to bear," she writes (105); still, she resists the word "crisis" regarding her faith: "I could no longer give my spiritual questions and wanderings the name of 'crisis.' I could not continue pelting my own sincere heart with stones of shame and guilt because I did not believe perfectly, or understand perfectly, or even sustain a constant desire to do either of those things" (106). She adds, "Not a crisis now—just my story, the surprising story that was one of faith all along" (108).

At its best—in the stories of her sister Sage, who left the Church nearly ten years ago; her brother Dane, who is punched by his missionary companion and who ultimately falls into drug addiction; and her husband, Carl, whose homeless father arranges for the young boy

to sleep in the cab of his truck in an LDS temple parking lot so he can wake up amid the morning shadows of holiness—Hoiland shows a deft and graceful hand when writing about people, including herself, whom she knows intimately. The description of her husband's gradual integration into an accepting church community and his own self-acceptance in college is simply beautiful. She writes exquisitely about being in nature. Particularly when she creates heightened poetic images that underscore grander metaphors, Hoiland's prose shines, such as the poetic description of her husband's childhood toys after the Willamette Valley Flood of 1996, with "plastic arms sticking up out of the mud" (47).

Not all of the poetics land equally well. The title of the volume comes from an essay about the author's missionary experience in Uruguay: "On Easter all the children built kites out of sticks and tissue paper, and we sat on a front lawn watching them all rising into the sky, colored and cobbled out of the simplest things their world could afford them—one hundred birds teaching me to fly" (53). There are times in the book when the imagery is forced or tired, the lessons to be learned a bit obvious, the moralizing too convenient, and all of it wrapped up too neatly. Occasionally, cultural insensitivities and descriptions of the disadvantaged feel almost exploitative; there are scattered taste issues. But for a reader facing any of the struggles outlined in the book, Hoiland offers some templates of calm: "Over the last years I have done the work of unbinding my heart. Unraveling the threads that I thought it needed bound so tightly to stay good. I spent years in fear of where my heart might go if I untethered it. Fear that it would run from holiness and God and sacred things if I simply let it wander and explore. Fear that it might question itself beyond retention or lose its grip on awe" (98).

In one passage, the author writes about a Sunday, while pregnant, when she decided to stay home from worship services. It is a simple and brief story, if personally momentous: "and the memory of those

three hours is my saving grace at times" (130). She has given herself permission to create her own mode of worship, her own parameters. "I have discovered holiness in the exercise of abandoning my own world to enter the sacred lands of my children," she writes (135). She finds in the journals of Emmeline B. Wells a validation for doubt. She notes a diminishment, after her missionary service, of a connection to God. She writes tenderly about gay men she has dated and loved. Her life is as messy as any reader's. Her metaphor of children playing in clutter is apt for the author's spiritual state. She is content (even relieved) to enjoy it this way, and the implication is that a perfectly clean house with kids in it is not the life she wants; ditto religion.

The key metaphor in the book is the recounting of the gospel story found in St. Mark, in which people cut a hole in the roof above the Savior and lower an ailing friend into the assembled throng: "When I think of these people climbing on top of the roof while carrying their friend on his sickbed, about to dig a hole and interrupt a large crowd—not to mention the most important and sought-after man in the city—I wonder if they hesitated. I wonder if they thought they should turn back, that it was just a silly idea. But then, I marvel at their bravery—breaking a hole in that roof and sending their friend right down where he landed at Jesus's feet" (141–42).

To the extent the author wants a seat at the table in today's evolving Mormon dialogue, this is her salvo. For a loving cause, she is asking, can we interrupt the standard proceedings of the faith and be honest with each other? Can real life displace the idealized life in our discourse?

I can imagine many readers craving this exact point of view. She is persuasive and disarming. I also think she is guileless and sincere.

The book could be better. As described in the text, the life of a young mother of two does not yet provide the time to expand on thoughts, to ruminate without coming to simple conclusions, to write more poetry than simply poetically. The Post-it note format of the book suggests a lack of time and energy to make it cohesive and

deeper, narratively. One could say the same about the drawings that illustrate the book. Her skills are color and observation, and the book is sometimes reduced to simple lines, so to speak—at least, that is the slack I want to cut her.

I sympathize. As a young stay-at-home writer dad, I once approached Claudia Bushman for literary advice. How is it possible, I asked her in frustration, enviously, that she managed to raise a large family, pursue her education, conduct original research, publish numerous books, and keep a high-octane household humming? Her reply: "Make those ten minutes count."

By all appearances, that is what Hoiland is doing. She is juggling it all, doing good, trying to figure it all out, and generating poetry and prose and pictures that aim sincerely to help others do the same. Kudos to her. Yes, the book feels fragmented, but I can't help but think she will be proud of it in years to come, and a reader will be happy to have read it now . . . perhaps more than happy.

Toward the end of *One Hundred Birds Taught Me to Fly,* Hoiland tells the story of running a half marathon. She is concerned that she will not be able to make it to the finish line and, seeing a stranger in the distance, she decides to run alongside her. Wordlessly, each encourages, calms, paces, and pushes the other. "We crossed the finish line together, and then upon stopping we turned and hugged tightly, sweat dripping down our necks and backs. She said, 'I could not have done this without you'" (152). I have to wonder whether years from now, there will be a reader who approaches Hoiland and repeats the same sentiment regarding Mormon belief: *I could not have done this without you.*

A Candid and Dazzling Conversation

Patrick Madden. *Sublime Physick: Essays.* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2016. 244 pp. Hardcover: $24.95. ISBN: 9780803239845.

Reviewed by Joe Plicka

Patrick Madden's second book of collected essays, following 2010's *Quotidiana* (which won an award from the Association for Mormon Letters and was a finalist for the PEN Center USA Literary Award), bears the mark of a writer hitting his stride. All the usual adjectives apply: the essays are at times witty, profound, charming, moving, playful (even cheeky), and wise. As anyone who has hung around a creative writing classroom knows by now, personal essays are grounded in a carefully curated friendship between reader and writer, a dialogue, an intimacy—a formulation probably most plainly expressed (recently) by Phillip Lopate in the introduction to his seminal anthology *The Art of the Personal Essay.* It is this quality of friendship, of candid and dazzling conversation, that engages and entices me as a reader throughout *Sublime Physick*'s dozen entries. When Madden laments the inescapable arithmetic of time in "Miser's Farthings"—"the vast part of life is absorbed into the unremembered whole" (80)—I nod and sigh in unison. When he ruminates on the limits and value of his aspirations, his efforts, his art—"But maybe this is literature: to say what has already been said, or will be said long after, in words (even translated words) that sing" (58)—in "In Media Vita," I thank him for giving me the words to understand something I have so often felt. It is the strange and almost embarrassing alchemy of fine literature: we commune and enter into prized confidence with people who are often distant strangers and may even, in some cases, be dead. (Note: Patrick Madden is very much alive and teaching in the English Department at Brigham Young University in Provo. He is also,

full disclosure, someone I know personally, though I know him much better through his books than in "real life.")

On his stroll through memory and mind, Madden has invited along many other amiable and compelling friends: indeed, a great pleasure of this book is Madden's rich compilation of relevant passages from other (mostly) writers, (mostly) essayists, spanning the centuries and providing dense fodder for his own essaying. As many a blurb writer has pointed out, Madden is indeed a scholar of the form and combines the expert's frighteningly vast knowledge of the field with the warm love and exuberance of a fan. He is the proprietor of the website quotidiana.org which is, among other things, an "online compendium of 420 public-domain essays." Both Madden and the above-mentioned Lopate (along with countless other essayists) have pledged their allegiance to sixteenth-century Frenchman and godfather of the contemplative personal essay, Michel de Montaigne (you can read fifty of his essays right now on quotidiana.org), who famously wrote, "I have never seen a greater monster or miracle in the world than myself." Madden continues in this vein, harnessing the energy of both the miraculous and the monstrous actions, reactions, and ideas that form the contours of our mostly banal and ordinary lives. (Admittedly, I think Madden is stronger on miracles than on monsters, but this is not a failing as much as perhaps a function of being a middle-aged American Mormon father, something I can certainly identify with.)

Montaigne makes many appearances in these essays, as exemplar and standard-bearer, and I think there is a decent case to be made that Madden is, for all intents and purposes, the Mormon Montaigne (he will probably hate and deny that moniker and I don't blame him; forget I ever said it). The point being, however, that while Madden is not usually concerned with highlighting his Mormon-ness, he is exactly the kind of writer that Mormons need right now—someone whose interests, questions, and concerns, not to mention audience, transcend sectarian cultures and doctrines, but who still represents a recognizably

spiritual point of view, maintains hope in Christian ideas and ideals, and cultivates an openness and humility with regard to things like family, forgiveness, tragedy, friendship, creativity, and redemption. Madden is a seeker, a collector of fragments, and a generous companion in print, as his form practically dictates; those wanting a preacher may need to head elsewhere.

All this may sound very serious indeed, but it is vital to note that *Sublime Physick* is a fun and funny book. It is full of photographs and illustrations that add texture and depth to the prose as well as give readers that extra little connection to their capacious host. Madden is an encyclopedia of popular music and he has an uncanny ability to make offhand quotes and references by Eddie Money and John Lennon, as well as obscure rappers and one-hit wonders, a seamless part of his tapestry. He delights in tinkering with computer programs, in visiting psychics, in riding elevators. He analyzes court cases, advertisements, phone conversations. He isn't afraid of the pun or the parenthetical. He's also not afraid of the long essay, and I will notify you now about the penultimate essay in the book, "Independent Redundancy," that runs a staggering ninety pages (hard to place in a literary journal or magazine, as one can imagine). It is also one of my favorite essays in the book, a brisk and highly entertaining exploration of how we perceive originality and influence in art and culture, and how creation is more often than not recombination and repetition.

I look forward to sharing these essays with my own writing students and showing them what is possible in the shrewd and flexible essay form.

An Honorable Testament to a Legacy

Gregory A. Prince. *Leonard Arrington and the Writing of Mormon History.* Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2016. 540 pp. Hardcover: $39.95. ISBN: 9781607814795.

Reviewed by Dallas Robbins

Upon completing *David O. McKay and the Rise of Modern Mormonism* in 2005, Greg Prince was uncertain of what his next project would be. After speaking in the Logan Tabernacle, he was approached by Susan Arrington Madsen, a daughter of the iconic Mormon historian. Susan invited Greg to breakfast the next day to discuss whether he would be interested in writing her father's biography. Eleven years later, readers now can enjoy the fruits and labor born out of that morning conversation.

What makes writing a biography of Leonard Arrington so irresistible is that his personal and research papers were made available to the public in the fall of 2001 at the Utah State University Merrill-Cazier Library. His papers by any standard are enormous, an embarrassment of riches for the researcher, 319 linear feet of material, described once by Leonard to his friend Carol Lynn Pearson as "a diary of perhaps fifty large notebooks, the most sensitive part of which is that kept from 1972 to 1982 when I was in the Church Office Building. I record many conversations, perhaps even some with you! They also include, besides books and pamphlets, magazines, and other published material, a large number of typescripts of things I have copied, or things others have copied and given me Xeroxes or carbons of" (460). Also there are the letters Leonard wrote to his wife during his school and military years and weekly letters he would send his children throughout his life. In addition, Greg Price conducted numerous interviews to write the story of "arguably the most important figure in twentieth-century Mormon historiography" (ix).

That sentiment that Leonard Arrington is the "most important figure" in Mormon historiography is one that I have thought of on occa-

sion when the debate or discussion arises, but the longer that Leonard is no longer with us, I think it may be taken for granted that he indeed is so. The fact that Greg Prince never again refers to this laudatory label for the rest of book is a testament to the obvious strength of the story that he tells, because as the life of Leonard unfolds over the course of more than five hundred pages it becomes so blatantly self-evident that to bring it up once again is an insult to the reader. And in the spirit that Leonard Arrington possessed, insulting the reader would be embarrassing in the least and a sin at the most.

But starting with such a high note of praise from the beginning, a reader may fear that this work may border on hagiography, which, considering the subject's own pursuit of honest, fair, and professional history, would be an unfortunate irony. Thankfully, Prince does not do this but exemplifies the "warts and all" style that addresses both Leonard's own strengths and weaknesses. Prince paints a portrait of an optimistic personality that may at times have been oblivious about how to navigate corporate or bureaucratic relationships and of Arrington's own personal struggles with faith and reason, most problematically with Book of Mormon historicity. Prince even goes at length discussing Leonard's use of ghostwriters and the mixed quality of his historical output over the years, including a very strong chapter on the weaknesses of his later masterpiece, *Brigham Young: American Moses.* One is reminded that, in spite of Arrington's amazing influence, research, and generosity, he was not perfect any more than the historical figures he loved to write about.

The story of Leonard Arrington and his years as Church Historian has been told often by colleagues and history buffs and for long enough that it has become a morality tale that prepares the budding young Mormon historian of the challenges she or he will face while writing fair and honest history. Leonard's vision was simple:

> Is there any area of the history of the Church and its leaders which deservers being cloaked in half-truth or consigned to chilly silence?

> Our office has the conviction that any aspect of the history of the Church can be discussed frankly and analyzed in depth at least among mature scholars. . . . As long as the narration and analysis is kept within perspective it ultimately will be a contribution toward spiritual uplift and understanding. Inevitably, interpretations on some points will differ among those committed to the same standards of research, religion, rationality, and revelation, but the differences should be occasions for reflection and reassessment rather than retrenchment or fear. (177–78)

Unfortunately, this vision wasn't shared by all. The story of Leonard's calling to Church Historian in 1972 and the eventual (if not inevitable) "release" in 1982 is a tragic story that has taken on mythic proportions. But in reading Prince's work, one is reminded that it wasn't all just good guys versus bad guys; it was always more complex, the tensions rooted in the motives of real people on both sides of the aisle making modest strides in writing history they believed would be in the best interest of the Church and the Saints. In this struggle we see certain apostles, primarily Mark E. Petersen, Ezra Taft Benson, and Boyd K. Packer, as the antagonists to Leonard's plans of what Mormon history should be. But we also see other General Authorities who, if not vocal, were more sympathetic and aligned with Leonard's strengths, such as Harold B. Lee, Spencer W. Kimball, even Bruce R. McConkie (who supported Leonard's desire that Church History staff publications should not be subject to the correlation committee). I suspect that the full breadth of this struggle among differing factions and personalities is difficult to capture on the page, though in the chapter "What Went Wrong" Prince has probably done the best analysis so far, exploring many ideological, social, corporate, and generational factors that turned "Camelot" into a fated story with only one possible outcome.

Even though Prince's book is more than just about the "Camelot" years, they roughly make up almost half of the book. They are incisive, capturing the promise and hope of those early years, along with the

grinding frustration of cancelled projects, conflicting plans, mixed messages, and eventual exile to the BYU campus under different auspices. Even though I have read this story before in Leonard's autobiography, revisiting it again with Prince's broad research on display, I truly felt the immense injustice that was brought down on such a truly beautiful and genuine man. Leonard was always an optimistic person, approaching situations and people with the best intentions and a generous spirit. To see him endure the bureaucratic and authorial gauntlet he did for so many years is profoundly tragic. That the Church now is more forthright with its history is ironic in that the fruits now available—the Joseph Smith Papers Project, the Gospel Topics Essays, etc.— can all be traced back to the soil Leonard planted and tended to over forty years ago. He was a man ahead of his time who saw the future more clearly than the myopic authorities who complicated or squashed his projects so many years ago.

Though many readers may gravitate toward those chapters that recount Leonard's years as Church Historian, as a reader and admirer of Leonard from afar, I was more gripped and delighted by the personal stories that Prince has put together. To begin, we have several chapters that delve into Leonard's family, early life, college years, and his service during World War II in Italy, along with his courtship and marriage to Grace. An entire chapter dives into the development of his work that put him on the map of Mormon history: *Great Basin Kingdom: An Economic History of the Latter-day Saints, 1830–1900*. As a dedicated scholar of economics, Arrington developed into a historian, despite never having taught a single history course in his career at Utah State University. Much is given to his early relationships with books, scholars, colleagues, and friends that contributed to his development as a historian who was both "faithful" to his church while at the same time upholding the highest standards of professional and academic history. There are even personal stories that reveal the character behind

the historian. For example, Leonard's first wife, Grace, was not LDS, though it didn't seem to bother him in the least. In fact, while living in Logan he would rotate his church attendance, one week attending his LDS ward and the next with a Protestant congregation, in order to make Grace comfortable in the land of the Saints. She later converted to the LDS Church in spite of Leonard's not seeming to worry about or convince her that she should do so.

Some other character-revealing moments for Leonard include when, as Church Historian, a member of his staff, Maureen Ursenbach, got married and soon after was expecting her first child. Church employment policy was firm that any new expecting mother would have their employment terminated. Leonard and Maureen both fought this policy, which made its way through the Church's legal counsel and eventually forced the Church to eliminate the policy for good and later provided women with several weeks of maternity leave after which they were welcome to resume employment.

The last chapters in the book cover the last decades of Leonard's life as a man who always stood above the fray of conflicts. Many moments in Church history are covered, recounting Leonard's involvement and/or commentary about the things that weighed on his mind, such as the Sonia Johnson excommunication, the 1978 priesthood "revelation," the Mark Hoffman bombings and forgeries, the September Six, plus other events too numerous to list here. And we get many personal struggles that he faced in his later years, such as the death of his first wife, his fear of retaliation for publishing his autobiography, his declining health, and even some personal angst he felt toward certain Church practices that he detailed in a list in his journal. In addition to all of this, there are numerous personal moments from his life that surprised me, delighted me, or usually both and are well worth the price of admission.

Leonard Arrington's legacy is known and appreciated by many. But there are still many who are not aware of his contribution to Mormonism. Fortunately, Greg Prince does a wonderful job in making that story

interesting, relevant, funny, gripping, tragic, and consequential for us today. It is a story that even those who are familiar with it may lose sight of, and a biography like this reminds us to think on it more often. But more than Leonard's influence in Mormon history, it was the personal moments shared in this biography that have given me a much deeper appreciation for the man and person that he was. Leonard was truly a great historian but also a great man, and the world of Mormonism is immeasurably blessed to have had his influence and contribution. Prince's biography is an honorable testament to that legacy.

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"The Dean of Mormon History": One Viewpoint

Gregory A. Prince. *Leonard Arrington and the Writing of Mormon History.* Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2016. 540 pp. Hardcover: $39.95. ISBN: 978-1607814795.

Reviewed by Dennis L. Lythgoe

Greg Prince published *David O. McKay and the Rise of Modern Mormonism* in 2005 to mostly critical acclaim. His study of Mormon historian Leonard J. Arrington is patterned after that work in its style, its largely undigested interpretations, and even its large format size. It did not matter that he never personally knew McKay since the latter was a famed Mormon prophet, but it makes a significant difference in his Arrington book that he never really knew his genial subject. He only met him casually at unspecified Mormon history meetings.

Although Arrington was extremely familiar to Mormon historians and Mormon history buffs, he was not universally known to Mormons in the same way as President McKay. That point is of major significance

for Arrington followers who knew him to be a historian of the first rank, a genuine intellectual, and an affable, generous human being.

Prince correctly makes much of the fact that the "Dean of Mormon History" was also an avid mentor to numerous aspiring Mormon scholars. In fact, I was mentored by him. Yet Prince cavalierly demotes Arrington by his description of his numerous writings on Mormon history as "mediocre" and even "abysmal" to read. Astonishingly, this includes his hallmark book, *Great Basin Kingdom: An Economic History of the Latter-day Saints, 1830–1900,* originally published in 1958 by Harvard University Press, and *Brigham Young: American Moses,* published by Alfred A. Knopf in 1985.

Both books received high marks from scholars of western American history and were ardently enjoyed by rank-and-file Mormon readers. The first book permanently changed the public view of Mormonism as a field of study worthy of pursuing; it may have led to newly-organized departments of religion and endowed Mormon chairs in several universities. The second book was the first objective and scholarly analysis of Brigham Young, the colonizer and pioneer, written in the twentieth century. It has not yet been equaled in the twenty-first century. Previous studies of Young were either viciously anti-Mormon or embarrassingly apologetic. Each Arrington book has been widely used in academic courses in Mormon and western history and by scholars who followed him with their own appraisals.

That Prince refers to Arrington's published work as "mostly ghost-written" is stunning, disingenuous, and actually insulting. Toward the end of his book, Prince tries to justify such a description by arguing that while Arrington was LDS Church Historian, he utilized large chunks of material written by his scholarly staff that went unattributed, even though Church authorities insisted that his name be the only one included on his books. Prince also glosses over Arrington's formidable obstacles in writing during those years because of his copious duties as an administrator.

Prince calls Arrington "naïve" in his dealings with LDS General Authorities, as if to imply that they took advantage of him by going through a back door to overrule his Historical Department decisions. Actually, he often stood up to General Authorities. Prince is dismissive of Arrington's talks to Mormon groups, alleging that his actor son, James, would coach him how to make a gentle but clever point, i.e. "Just remove your glasses, lean over the podium and say, 'I've been through the archives. I've seen it all! There's nothing to worry about.'" I don't doubt the quotation, but I don't think Arrington needed coaching. Prince may not have heard the talks. They were filled with rich anecdotes that made his oral style lively and entertaining.

As a good friend for many years, I witnessed his charismatic speaking ability and candid approach that also spilled over to the LDS study group to which he and I both belonged. He always conveyed his opinions of Mormon history and his differences with Church leaders with conviction and his signature humor.

Although Prince often uses Arrington's candid diaries and frank letters, he does not always use them effectively. He conducted a variety of interviews with people Arrington only knew casually, but he allows their sometimes confusing views to dilute the primary sources. Some of the extraneous opinions expressed in the interviews appear to be apocryphal rather than stories "from the horse's mouth."

I look forward to the promised publication of Arrington's actual diaries to speak for themselves.

The Prince book fails to do justice to the brilliant man I knew.

Old Words, New Work: Reclamation and Remembrance

John Russell. *The Mormoness; Or, The Trials of Mary Maverick: A Narrative of Real Events.* Edited and annotated by Michael Austin and Ardis E. Parshall. The Mormon Image in Literature. Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2016 [1853]. 114 pp. Paperback: $12.95. ISBN: 9781589585072.

Alfreda Eva Bell. *Boadicea; The Mormon Wife: Life-Scenes in Utah.* Edited and annotated by Michael Austin and Ardis E. Parshall. The Mormon Image in Literature. Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2016 [1855]. 151 pp. Paperback: $15.95. ISBN: 9781589585669.

Nephi Anderson. *Dorian: A Peculiar Edition with Annotated Text & Scholarship.* Edited by Eric W. Jepson. Annotated by Mason Allred, Jacob Bender, Scott Hales, Blair Dee Hodges, Eric W. Jepson, Sarah C. Reed, and A. Arwen Taylor. El Cerrito, Calif.: Peculiar Pages, 2015 [1921]. 316 pp. Paperback: $21.99. ISBN: 9780991189236.

Reviewed by Jenny Webb

The continual rising interest in all things Mormon, whether they be historical, cultural, social, doctrinal, or even theological, has led to a number of interesting publication projects. The texts gathered in this review represent a particular focus within this broader interest: the recovery and re-examination of the various historical forms of the "Mormon novel." The books on their own are not necessarily remarkable. They hold some significance as examples of a particular genre or a particular thematic interest, but their real value today lies in their ability to provide insight into the various ways in which the emergent Mormon religion was culturally received and aesthetically appropriated.

On the surface, the two series represented here appear fairly similar. Each takes a text that, for a variety of reasons, has languished in recent publication history and essentially been unavailable or difficult to locate in a decent edition. The original text is carefully and faithfully reproduced in a modern typesetting, and the editors provide a series of explanatory annotations along with various critical components such as a historical introduction to the text, appendices with additional contemporary texts provided for comparison, and in some cases, critical essays on the author or work itself. And yet there are distinct differences between the focus of Kofford's The Mormon Image in Literature series and that of Peculiar Pages: the scope of a "Mormon work." Compare the series descriptions:

> The Mormon Image in Literature reprints important literary works by and about Mormons—from the sensational anti-polygamy books and dime novels of the Civil War era to the first attempts of Mormon writers to craft a regional literature in their Great Basin kingdom. Each volume contains a critical introduction, helpful annotations, and multiple appendices that enlighten and enliven the text. These volumes have been designed for both Mormon and non-Mormon readers who want to understand the cultural importance of Mormonism during the first Latter-day Saint century.
>
> Peculiar Pages presents new editions of vital Mormon texts alongside overdue critical analysis. These carefully edited volumes bring deserving artistic works back to public attention.

Questions of genre (literary texts? how does one define a "Mormon text"?), authorship (Mormon authors? or authors writing about Mormons?), and audience (both ostensibly hedge their bets toward an expanded audience—essentially anyone interested—but their mutual emphasis on creating some sort of critical text indicates an underlying academic orientation) provide a sense as to the underlying complexities involved in reprinting and updating past texts for modern consumption. The editors involved in each series are well aware of these challenges, and are to be commended for their efforts here. While the Church Historian's Press has

certainly undertaken the most visible republishing effort of Mormon documents in recent years, both Kofford and Peculiar Pages demonstrate the breadth and depth of the available field. These texts may not possess the same doctrinal heft as the documents in the Joseph Smith Papers, but their ability to demonstrate a particular cultural reception of and response to popular Mormonism is significant in many ways, not the least of which is a demonstration of the reception of these theologies from both within and without the boundaries of Mormonism itself.

In *The Mormoness* and *Boadicea,* editors Michael Austin and Ardis E. Parshall have taken great pains to provide an informed, thorough, and yet accessible introduction to each volume. Both novels are written by non-Mormons, and both relate the story of a Mormon heroine battling a distinctively Mormon trial—persecution and polygamy, respectively. Austin and Parshall's helpful contextualization allows the reader to understand the important differences between the two projects: while it is tempting to lump these novels together along with other early novels anxious to capitalize on the cultural otherness of the Mormons, the approach and methodology of the original authors as outlined by Austin and Parshall lie at opposite ends of the literary spectrum.

John Russell, author of *The Mormoness,* was a thoughtful, educated man whose approach to the topic ultimately sought to illustrate the underlying Christian impulses of forgiveness and mercy as integral to the Mormon experience. When his heroine serves the man who murdered her family, she is both fully Mormon and fully Christian (xv), and in this conceptualization of his heroine Russell displays a sensitivity and nuance regarding Mormonism that would not surface again in popular literature for many years.

On the other hand, Austin and Parshall explain how Alfreda Eva Bell (a pseudonym for, they argue, Arthur R. Orton) wrote *Boadicea* quickly with an eye to potential financial profits rather than as a factual depiction of polygamy in the lives of the early Utah Mormons. The novel seeks thrills—it most closely aligns with early efforts at sensational

crime drama—and its twists and turns demonstrate the text's "curious place in the history of both publishing and Mormonism. . . . Its author has figured out how to make a lot of money by presenting sensational crimes as true stories to an unsophisticated audience" (xvii).

The distance here between Russell and Bell demonstrates both the challenge of this series—disparate approaches bound together by the happenstance of historical proximity abound!—and the value in its approach. By placing these early works on Mormonism together, Austin and Parshall illustrate in their conception of this ongoing series the wide variety with which Mormonism itself was received within the early American cultural context. For some, the strange religion provided an opportunity to reflect upon the tenets of religious faith, examining and ultimately expanding the borders of Christianity itself. For others, the very otherness of the Mormon experience proved a plentiful site for profitable entertainment. These responses, which I will broadly characterize as the religious and the economic, are at root fundamentally American. They display the quintessentially American modes of response to what was, at that point, an essentially American religion, and the interplay between product and context is fascinating at our present historical remove.

This same interplay is at work in Nephi Anderson's coming-of-age novel *Dorian,* although in a decidedly more limited context. The editor of the present edition, Eric W. Jepson, describes Anderson as "the grandfather of Mormon literature," calling *Dorian* "his best work" (iv). As a Mormon author, Anderson is clearly coming to his text from a distinctly different place than that of Russell and Bell (note the nearly seventy-year span between the earlier works and this later work as well). And as an author, Anderson is clearly writing for his contemporary Mormon audience: his vocabulary, his emphasis on doctrinal speculation/philosophizing at the expense of the plot, and his ultimate laser-like focus on conventions of redemption—each points toward a Mormon audience sympathetic to the protagonist's difficulties. Young Dorian struggles to

learn and think, ultimately wanting to produce some kind of systematic synthesis of scientific and religious thought. Along the way, he negotiates the pitfalls of love, loss, and forgiveness, emerging as heroic due to his ability to accept his love, a "fallen woman."

In some ways, the historical remove seems even farther in *Dorian* than in *The Mormoness* or *Boadicea,* simply because, as a Mormon reading a novel by a Mormon about a Mormon, I approached the text with muffled expectations of identification and recognition. And there were certainly lines that provoked thought. For example, the mentor Uncle Zed characterizes the Doctrine and Covenants as "the most wonderful love story ever written" (38). While the continuing text makes it clear that Uncle Zed provides this assessment due to the revelation on eternal marriage, as a singular assertion, the line proves potent: What *would* it mean to read the Doctrine and Covenants as a love story? But there were also plenty of moments where the cultural recognition was painful. For example, when Dorian's female friend Carlia asks him about a sermon Uncle Zed gave earlier, she says "Try to tell me, Dorian. I need to know. I'm such a dunce" (81). Frankly, my reaction to this seemingly stereotypical depiction of gender was a literally-out-loud "Ugh!"—admittedly a specific modern reaction due to my own beliefs, but it is telling: I'm the kind of generalist Mormon reader (trained in literature, but not history) curious enough to pick up the book, but also a bit unsettled at this literary heritage.

From this reaction, it's no surprise that the argument Jepson constructs through his editorship of this edition faces several difficulties. First, Jepson makes the case that Anderson was himself an important author worth considering in his own right due to his efforts at cultivating a Mormon literature. And second, the case is also made that *Dorian* itself represents the high point of this effort due to its attempts at what I would term a literary Mormon theology. Jepson addresses these issues both in his own introduction, but also in his construction of the volume as a critical text: there are full notes on each chapter, a series of six critical essays by contemporary readers and scholars (which do a good job of taking up topics raised by Anderson and placing them within the

modern critical discourses of canon, gender, economics, science, etc.), and two further essays by Anderson himself, "A Plea for Fiction" and "Purpose in Fiction." The appendix provides deleted material curated by Scott Hales as well as contemporary notices of *Dorian*'s arrival in Mormon publications. And it is difficult to imagine work on the historical emergence of a Mormon literary tradition that would not take up Anderson in some way. For this work, then, this edition of *Dorian* provides ample orientation to Anderson, his aesthetic, his thematic approach, and, of course, *Dorian* itself.

It was impossible to read these three works without noting the various methodological and editorial choices. And there were distinct advantages and disadvantages that became apparent with each approach. Austin and Parshall displayed a certain facility working within the historical approach that was not as readily visible in Jepson's volume. At the same time, Jepson's efforts to provide not only historical contextualization, but also a framework for further literary interpretation gives the reader ready access for reflection upon the themes and motifs developed by Anderson throughout the novel. The actual text of each novel has been reproduced faithfully, though I have a slight preference for Austin and Parshall's method of providing corrected spelling or punctuation in square brackets when the original contains an error. There were several instances in *Dorian* where it was unclear if the typo originated with Anderson or Jepson—for the record, they were all Anderson and were simply being reproduced as promised.

Luckily, I'm not being asked to pick a favorite, and the conceptual differences between the two series display the strength, breadth, and available intellectual space in this emerging field. For all their differences, the volumes here produced something in me that I had not anticipated: genuine excitement.

There is something going on in these texts, regardless of author, plot, or compositional intent. Together, they begin to paint a picture of the landscape of literary Mormonism with its interior reflections, exterior observations, and general evidence of multiplicity. There is no

one historical Mormon experience, literary or otherwise, and these texts readily demonstrate this fact. But there is a certain Mormon textuality that emerges from these pages: experimental, provocative, heartfelt, and profoundly human. It is this essential humanity that lies at the root of Mormonism both as a lived religion, but also as a cultural experience within the larger narrative of American history. The fact that we are at a vantage point from which we can reflect on Mormonism's broader cultural impact in a specific national context demonstrates the ways in which our current assumptions surrounding Mormonism itself are challenged by notions of national identity. Contemporary Mormonism exceeds national and cultural boundaries in ways that ultimately place these texts firmly within the historical past. They connect with a historical Mormonism precisely because, upon reflection, we realize how far we've come. The process of reflection initiated in each of these series is part of a central Mormon theological gesture: the turning of the hearts.

We turn toward those who came before us as we read their words with an eye to their historical moment and cultural context. We turn toward those who are coming after us as we recognize the changing attitudes in reception, circulation, and interpretation. We enact memory through a re-membering—a reconceptualization of the body of Christ as constituted by a multitude of members: fingers and toes, arms and legs, down to every hair on the head. These projects of textual reclamation resonate with Mormonism's foundational impulse to restore, and I cannot wait to see where they take us next.

THE INTIMACY OF FATHERHOOD

Patrick Hemming

I—along with many men of my generation—was brought up believing that men and women are equally equipped to be parents. Many men like me feel a deep desire to be hands-on fathers who claim responsibility for many of the tasks that previous generations assigned principally to mothers; to not perform these duties for us is unacceptable. Despite these personal convictions, I have continually found it a challenge to achieve a fair and equal share of parenting duties; however, it is a goal that I remain committed to attaining. I am not alone in my desire or in the obstacles I face. I feel that a tremendous potential opportunity awaits today's fathers through seeking and achieving intimacy with our children.

The intimacy I describe here is more than showing our children love and affection. It is about being there: up to our elbows in the messy rituals of childhood. Many of the intimate tasks of parenting can be unpleasant: cleaning up urine, feces, or vomit; soothing a screaming child; arbitrating sibling arguments; or sitting up well into the night with a sleepless child. The intimacy that we may find there as parents intertwines with our life's most meaningful moments. Writer Michael Chabon describes intimacy as a father this way:

> The daily work you put into rearing your children is a kind of intimacy, tedious and invisible as mothering itself. There is another kind of intimacy in the conversations you may have with your children, in your

> quarrels, your negotiations and running jokes. But above all, there is intimacy in your contact with their bodies.[1]

I see one of the great struggles of Latter-day Saint men of this generation as achieving balance between domestic and ecclesiastical roles. At church, men are issued leadership and administrative callings, and these callings often compete with time to parent. This is especially true for young fathers, when most of us (and, in many cases, our spouses) are attempting to build a career. The Church, an organization that has devoted its public image to being centered on the family, reminds each of us that being a parent is "the only calling from which you will never be released." And we are taught from our youth to "magnify our callings." The Church's ideals for fatherhood are generally very good, but I find them generally to be lacking acknowledgement of the need for intimacy as fathers mainly because of the ways in which Church service competes with our families for our time and attention.

Talks about fatherhood at church tend to have a different focus than what I have described here. In Church settings, I often hear fatherhood described in the same terms that are used to describe leadership in a priesthood organization. In October 2014 general conference, Elder L. Tom Perry spoke on this theme and made a list of responsibilities that constitute a father's calling: administering blessings and ordinances, leading family worship, providing one-on-one visits with children, teaching children diligence and goal setting, and setting an example of faithful gospel service. Elder Perry also somewhat awkwardly suggests "being involved in helping plan vacation trips and outings."[2] These activities are all important; however, I get the overall impression of fathers being visiting Church authorities in their own homes. These men's spouses

1. Michael Chabon, *Manhood for Amateurs* (New York: HarperCollins, 2009), 18.

2. L. Tom Perry, "Finding Lasting Peace and Building Eternal Families," October 2014, https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2014/10/finding-lasting-peace-and-building-eternal-families?lang=eng.

will need to make most of the day-to-day family action happen, which means that they will also be relieved to let their husbands help a bit with the vacation planning. This father-as-visiting-authority model prevents fathers from developing intimate relationships with their children. But it can also hurt mothers. Surrounded by the immediacy and intimacy of motherhood, mothers may feel disconnected from the overall mission of parenting. President Linda K. Burton in the April 2015 general conference spoke of her husband coming home to her and their small children:

> He always greeted each of us with a hug and kiss and turned many difficult and sometimes disastrous days into delightful daddy times. I wish I had been a little less preoccupied with the endless list of to-dos still to be done and had more wisely focused, like he did, on things that mattered most. I would have stopped more often and enjoyed sacred family time and would have thanked him more often for blessing our lives![3]

Please do not misunderstand me; I want "delightful daddy times" too, but I also feel a moral responsibility to be a part of "difficult and sometimes disastrous days" in my children's lives. I want to be there to nurture my kids not only because it's fair to my wife, who would like to have more "delightful mommy times," but also because that's where I am likely to find intimacy with my children.

Though I often fall short in recognizing the opportunities for the intimacy that I aspire to, I can see clearly times and situations with my three young children where I have been privileged to have powerful one-on-one experiences simply by virtue of being present and attentive to their needs. I want to share a few of these experiences.

Since my oldest daughter began kindergarten in 2014, I have been the parent who gets her ready for school and to the schoolroom door or school bus. She has inherited my congenital aversion to hurrying, accompanied by a zest for established routine and puttering with books

3. Linda K. Burton, "We'll Ascend Together," April 2015, https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2015/04/well-ascend-together?lang=eng.

or toys. In these moments, I am reliving the struggles my parents had with me. In her first two years of elementary school, we have already logged many hours of begging, cajoling, and threatening, often capped with a rushed arrival at our destination—frequently late. When she was in kindergarten, we walked to school, crossing the hills of Patterson Park overlooking the cityscape of downtown Baltimore, we trekked together through rain, sun, and snow. As we walked, our frequent standoffs would slowly melt away to companionship. At our parting each morning, she always needed to look me in the eye, wave, and say "Bye, Dad." Now in second grade, she still does. I have arranged my schedule to do this daily task with all of its accompanying unpleasantness partially because it makes good sense for our family; but mainly I do it because it means that in these moments—before the cares of the world have separated us—she and I have this shared experience to bring us together.

My middle son is a willful four-year old with an active imagination for anything that is reminiscent of action heroes. In my current job, I have one weekday each week where I am home to be the primary caregiver. A centerpiece of our weekly ritual is that he and I do our family's weekly grocery shopping trip. As many parents know, navigating little kids through grocery stores is made especially complex by product placement: sneaky ad executives, food companies, and grocery store managers strategically put images of Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and Star Wars on products from graham crackers to Tupperware and place the products at four-year-old eye level. True to human nature, my son wants all of these. In learning to grocery shop with him, I have had to deftly navigate finding the right motivators to get him through the shopping trip while not giving in to his demands to buy the many items that stoke his desire. As he and I negotiate weekly, we have built a meaningful interaction in a situation that may otherwise seem like drudgery. Instead, each of us looks forward expectantly to our trip to the grocery store. Again, after years of rarely buying groceries for our family, this arrangement seems fairer to my wife. More importantly, my

son and I have gained confidence in one another to accomplish the task and have grown in a sense of companionship.

My youngest son is now nearly two. During the first year of his life, I had more time than I did with his siblings to be with him and have now logged many evenings helping him get to sleep. The steps required to get him to sleep have varied over time, but during certain phases it has meant spending thirty to sixty minutes rocking quietly in the dark with him until his body relaxes and his breathing slows. This last winter on just such a night, as his body relaxed into sleep, I sat there rocking him in my arms. Slowly I became aware of the pattern of my breathing with our torsos pressed together and his head on my right shoulder. Perhaps it was the sensation of our shared respiration that awakened me to the profound spirituality of this interaction. I felt a connection to the Father of my spirit as I soothed my own child. This intimate moment was qualitatively different from how Mormon theology often describes godhood—where men and women create worlds to become parents to innumerable spirits. In this moment with my son, I simultaneously saw myself nurturing a child and being nurtured by an Eternal Father in a way that resonates deeply with the way I would hope to feel in a future eternal setting. Again, from a perspective of equal parenting, I was doing the right thing to share bedtime responsibilities. In this case, however, I gained much more than simply achieving parity. In a moment of holding his body close to mine, I gained a profoundly spiritual connection.

I chose these three examples from my own family occurring at different times during a typical day. When our lives are busy with too many competing demands, we don't have these opportunities with our children. Certainly, Church responsibilities are not incompatible with being present for our kids at these moments. Frankly, for most fathers, work responsibilities are more likely to crowd out opportunities for the intimacy of fatherhood than Church ones. However, in my life I can think of many Church meetings and tasks that have competed with my time for fatherhood. When I have spoken with local leaders about my

concerns, they have always been sympathetic and encouraging. Elder L. Tom Perry stated in April 2015, "It has never been more of a challenge to find a practical balance between employment, families, and personal needs than it is in our day. As a church, we want to assist in all that we can to create and support strong marriages and families."[4]

I do not have a simple answer for the complex balancing act of competing needs that the Church and its families face, but I do have some ideas of ways for us as a church to rise to the challenge and help today's working LDS fathers:

1. Valorize the nurturing capabilities of men: "The Family: A Proclamation to the World" states that women are primarily responsible for the nurture of children; importantly, it also states that men and women are *obligated* to help one another in these responsibilities. Church authorities' talks, lesson plans, and manuals can make more explicit mention of men participating in the nitty-gritty of parenting kids and maintaining a household. At our ward's Father's Day sacrament meeting, multiple speakers talked of stay-at-home dads, dealing with kids' bodily fluids, and comforting sad or tired kids. These kinds of stories need to be explicit in our teachings; they help guide my way as a father. Intimacy with our children, I believe, creates a pattern for how we live in the world and how we serve our fellow human beings.

2. Reinforce the message that men's primary calling is at home: In our last ward, I served as a counselor in the bishopric. When a member of the stake presidency extended the calling to me, I immediately worried that the new calling would scuttle my attempts to equalize parenting and domestic work in our home. When I attended stake leadership meetings, leaders regularly told us to streamline tasks to relieve overburdened bishops. Although they verbally praised a lean administrative approach, these same meetings generally served to only expand the list of local leaders' tasks. My bishop and stake leaders were understanding and responsive when I expressed concerns that the calling would crowd

4. L. Tom Perry, "Why Marriage and Family Matter—Everywhere in the World," April 2015, https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2015/04/why-marriage-and-family-matter-everywhere-in-the-world?lang=eng.

out my family responsibilities, but at the same time I wondered whether these leaders were able to protect *their* own time for fatherhood.

3. Minimize the frequency and duration of meetings: Our ward's leadership meetings changed when our bishop's family had a new baby. At this point all three members of the bishopric had young children in the home and our bishopric meetings grew shorter and shorter. At one point, we were meeting for only thirty to sixty minutes no more than three or so times per month. During this time, our ward began planning activities to occur at times when whole families could attend, taking into account children's bed times. This contrasted with stake meetings that, in my experience, always occur at 7:00 p.m., are seldom shorter than two hours, and often appear to be designed with the speakers and material to fill the allotted time rather than focusing the time toward a specific purpose.

4. Remind those tasked with extending callings to carefully consider the added strain that men's callings can place on their spouses and family: In the wards where I have lived, many of the time-consuming callings have gone to men with children under five. Many mothers with young children experience profound isolation and even depression, a problem that is only compounded by absent spouses. In my experience, these factors have been underappreciated in considering various men's suitability for time-intensive callings in the ward.

I have one final personal experience regarding the challenge of fostering intimacy as a father and how the Church can better model fatherhood. Many of my thoughts on this subject developed after I co-taught a parenting course in our inner city ward. At the time, we had a wise Relief Society president who felt that many of the families needed practical assistance in parenting, so instead of using the Church's Marriage and Family Relations manual, we used the LDS Family Services' Strengthening the Family curriculum. While the Marriage and Family Relations course emphasizes typical gospel topics, drawing intensively from general conference talks of the last half-century, the Strengthening the Family curriculum covers topics such as "communicating with love," "nurturing children," and "teaching responsible behavior." The course brings together scripture, quotes from

General Authorities, and information about child development and psychology. Regarding nurturing, it states: "Nurturing involves responding to a child's needs in a kind and loving way. It includes nourishing (physical, emotionally, and spiritually), loving, teaching, protecting, helping, supporting, and encouraging."[5]

As our class worked its way through the Strengthening the Family curriculum, it became abundantly clear to each of the moms and dads that it was not just the "needier" families of our ward that needed practical help in parenting; we all did. During the months where I taught and learned together with my class, I experienced powerful spiritual growth and learning. I felt that learning about parenting gave me new appreciation for gospel concepts, and that as I engaged in gospel teaching, my capacity as a parent grew. Comparing our course with the Marriage and Family Relations curriculum, it occurred to me where the Marriage and Family Relations course lacked depth: the Marriage and Family Relations manual explains principles of family life, drawing heavily from talks by General Authorities of the Church. Our male General Authorities experienced their family life through the lens of demanding ecclesiastical responsibilities while building busy professional careers. In the decades that these leaders were young fathers, gender roles generally divided men and women's spheres, with women in charge of most domestic tasks. How much of the intimate details of their families' lives occurred while they were present? What details and wisdom is lacking when talks on parenting are conceived by men who relied on their spouses to do much of the parenting? In the Strengthening the Family curriculum, I found it refreshing to have a curriculum put together by men and women from LDS Family Services whose daily work is to support parents in the practical aspects of their families' lives. Perhaps, if we had more time at church to talk as men and women about what goes on in our homes, it would fundamentally change our realities.

5. *Strengthening the Family: Instructor's Guide* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2006), 33

I yearn for more talks from male church leaders about the one-on-one, frustrating, messy, intermittently glorious process of fatherhood. I believe that we can be doing more in the programs of our Church than father-son campouts, daddy-daughter dances, and occasionally bringing our kids along as we do our home teaching. Let's think more carefully about the necessity of each meeting or activity that competes with fathers' time to parent. Let's be less apt to assume that when we add another item to fathers' Church duties, everything will be fine because their spouse can easily accommodate a few more hours of single parenting in their lives.

Despite the tensions that I have outlined, I have benefited in many ways as a father because of the Church's influence. Many of the convictions I am expressing have come about *because* of my Mormon upbringing. Though I have never felt comfortable with the historical Mormon ideal of fathers presiding as benevolent patriarchs, the Church has taught me much about giving love and service to others. I myself have been nurtured by various male leaders, in the form of youth advisors, mission presidents, and bishops.

I hope to see this intimate face of fatherhood increasingly presented as the ideal of Latter-day Saint men. We are not visiting authorities presiding in our homes while most of the tedious day-to-day intimacy of family life goes on without us. Instead, we are entrusted with raising up God's children. The work is demanding, exhausting, tedious, and sacred. May we be an intimate part of it, engaging with this labor in a way that reveals to us the intertwining of our most mundane and spiritual acts.

Annie Poon
Los Negros
10x8, drypoint etching, monoprint

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EUGENE ENGLAND PERSONAL ESSAY CONTEST, 2016

Each year, Dialogue hosts a Eugene England memorial essay contest to honor essays that represent Gene's vision of an expansive, inclusive, and bold Mormonism. This year's winners are:

1. Lon Young, "That's Where the Light Enters"

2. Stephen Carter, "Three Sealings"

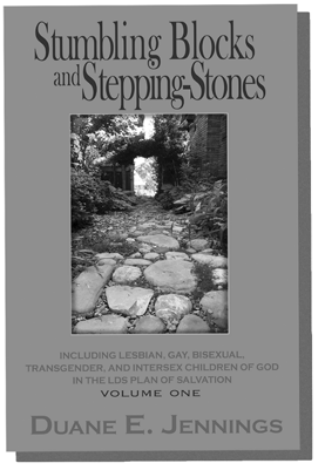
DIALOGUE FICTION AWARDS, 2016

Each year, Dialogue honors the best fiction published during the year. This year, judges decided to honor three stories that further the vision of Mormon literature:

1. William Morris, "The Darkest Abyss in America"

2. Theric Jepson, "The Laurel's First-Night Fantasies"

3. Steve Peck, "Bishop Johnson Rescues a Lost Soul"

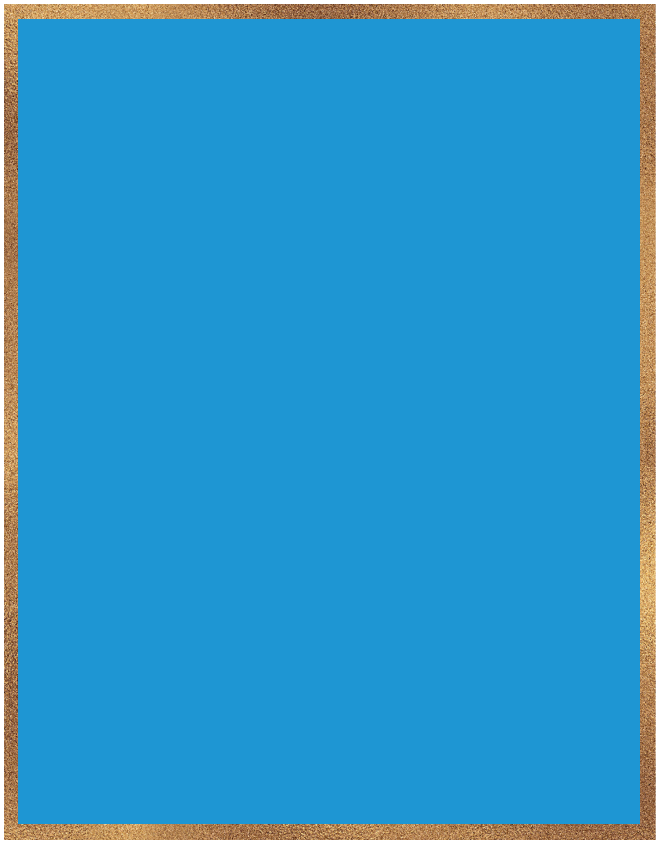


Stumbling Blocks and Stepping-Stones:

Including Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex Children of God in the LDS Plan of Salvation

Duane E. Jennings

JENNINGS provides extensive scientific documentation undercutting the "homosexuality isn't natural" argument, while arguing persuasively that the gospel can and does include LGBTI members in full fellowship. The combination of compassion, serious scholarship, and firmly founded discipleship models how the dialogue can and should be conducted.

DUANE E. JENNINGS, a sixth-generation Mormon, Utah native, and University of Utah graduate, served his mission in South Africa, and has held leadership positions in Affirmation.

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