

DIALOGUE

A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT



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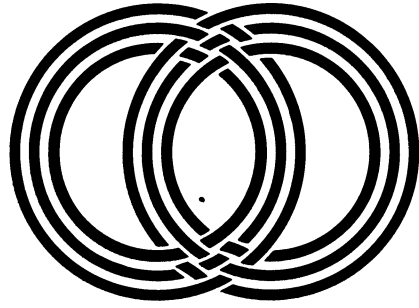
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DIALOGUE

A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT

*is an independent quarterly
established to express Mormon culture
and to examine the relevance of religion
to secular life. It is edited by
Latter-day Saints who wish to bring
their faith into dialogue with the
larger stream of Judeo-Christian thought
and with human experience as a whole
and to foster artistic and scholarly
achievement based on their cultural
heritage. The journal encourages a
variety of viewpoints; although every
effort is made to ensure
accurate scholarship and responsible
judgment, the views expressed are
those of the individual authors and are
not necessarily those of the
Mormon Church or of the editors.*

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DIALOGUE welcomes articles, essays, poetry, fiction, selections for Notes and Comments, letters to the editor, and art. Manuscripts must be sent in triplicate, accompanied by return postage, and should be prepared according to the *Chicago Manual of Style* including double-spacing all block quotations and notes. Use the author-date citation style as described in the thirteenth edition. An IBM-PC compatible floppy diskette may also be submitted with the manuscript, using WordPerfect or other ASCII format software. Send submissions to DIALOGUE Editorial Office, 202 West 300 North, Salt Lake City, Utah 84103. Artists wishing consideration of their artwork should send inquiries to the Art Editor at the same address.

IN THIS ISSUE

Some Latter-day Saints have had their faith bolstered by stories of the Three Nephites, while others view the tales as products of creative imagination. In the lead article of this issue Mormon folklorist William A. Wilson discusses the impact of the Three Nephites on contemporary Mormon culture.

Two articles discuss events in Mormon history that merit close examination. Kahlile Mehr illuminates the infamous 1958 apostasy within the French Mission. These unprecedented events disturbed the Church and rocketed the polygamous Church of the Firstborn into the limelight. This article provides a background to the story and traces its impact on individuals involved. Church members today scarcely know the story of the Saints who emigrated west in 1846 on the ship *Brooklyn*, led by Sam Brannan, who planned to make the California coast a gathering place. Lorin Hansen has produced a detailed analysis of this secondary Mormon migration.

To keep us from becoming too comfortable, Melodie Moench Charles and Lee Copeland examine conventional views of the post- and premortal existence. While Charles questions traditional Mormon views of heaven, especially concerning women, Copeland challenges the popular view that skin color and conditions of mortal existence are based on pre-mortal behavior.

David Buice discusses the strange political alliance in 1882 between Mormons and Southern Democrats in the United States Congress, an alliance which was temporary but potentially beneficial to each group as Congress debated polygamy and slavery. And as an update in the ongoing discussion of Mormon historical writing, Marvin Hill carefully and dispassionately analyzes a number of recent books in terms of the "New Mormon History."

In our Notes and Comments section, we present the view of John Quiring, who has studied Mormonism, discovers in it strengths and weaknesses, and currently chooses to follow his own unique path.

We are also pleased to publish John Bennion's "A House of Order," the 1987 fiction award winner in the DIALOGUE Writing Awards. Rules for the 1989 writing awards appear in this issue.

LETTERS

The Backslider Exposed

It's my guess that after Levi S. Peterson's "In Defense of a Mormon Erotica" appeared in *DIALOGUE* (Winter 1987), you needed more secretaries to handle the mail (for or against) than Ann Landers would need after defending nudity in college classrooms. [In seven months, this is the first letter we have received. — *Ed.*]

Here, finally, my wife and I have a point to agree on. When I informed her that Peterson had previously published a book entitled *The Backslider*, she astutely snapped back, "Makes sense. Obviously, it's an autobiography."

My own feelings about Peterson's self-serving argument for erotica in real life parallel a favorite line of mine from the play *Butterflies Are Free*. To paraphrase an observation from a mother to her blind son: "Diarrhea is a part of life too, but we don't need poetry about it" and we certainly don't need hemorrhoids and pain in every creative chapter to proclaim ourselves well and alive.

Incidentally, I loved every word of "The Third Nephite" (Winter 1986).

Ron Richardson
Orem, Utah

Those Poplars

I second Darlene Phillips's "Of Politics and Poplars" in the Winter 1987 *DIALOGUE*. I've been trying for a long time to say what she said, but could never quite get it —

PIONEER POPLARS

Long lines of poplars
Still stand sentinel
Against the blinding aspect
Of a naked God in a virgin land

A solid century ago
When only limits of vision meted horizons,
When Mormon folk, feet anchored in the
earth,
Rose high as Lombardy poplars.

They die from the top down.
Skeleton fingers protrude
Starkly from lush low foliage,
Pointing to the sky

Above trunks gnarled
As wrists of grandfathers.
Those that have yet to yield
To the surety of decay

Stand in condemnatory staunchness
Among crippled brethren.
Mute witnesses:
Shoulder the sky or die.

There were pioneers
Tall as heaven-stretched poplars,
Stately as pioneer poplars.
Even the seedlings

Huddled at the feet of those dead giants
Are all aspiration,
All up and thrust,
Certainty of God in every arrowy reaching.

I'm relieved that Darlene managed to get it said, and said so well.

Steve Walker
Provo, Utah

Remembering the MTC

Having been one of the hundreds of missionaries that Gary Bergera taught, I was very interested in and touched by his article about his six years at the Missionary Training Center. Countless images and memories flooded into my mind as I read Bergera's experiences.

I remember well my own feelings of doubt and despair, joy and triumph at each

failure and victory in my personal struggle to be the missionary I believed that I should be. I cannot forget the times that I sat in a classroom as if in a trance, listening to a language that I did not understand and wondering if I ever would. More than once I wept in anger and frustration over my inability to learn the language or memorize the discussions.

Although I was one of those missionaries who leaves the MTC without having passed off the discussions, I left with only good feelings about my experience there. As difficult and trying as it was, for better or for worse (and I personally believe it was for the better), the MTC and my mission made me what I am today, and for that, I am grateful.

Craig L. Foster
Provo, Utah

Thomas S. Ferguson Letters

I am writing a biography of Thomas Stuart Ferguson, a Book of Mormon archaeologist and the founder of the New World Archaeological Foundation. I am looking for letters from Tom Ferguson to document his views on the Book of Mormon, the book of Abraham, or Mormonism in general. I would very much appreciate receiving a copy of any Ferguson letter written from 1968–83 that might be in possession of a DIALOGUE reader.

Stan Larson
9109 Elmhurst Drive
West Jordan, UT 84088-8823

Encouraging Words

I've found DIALOGUE most enlightening and a sweet relief from the emptiness so often found in "Church publications." Although the Church has some very positive things to address, I do wish it would encourage freedom of thought as a staple for a healthy testimony.

It seems that the Church is entering the Christian world more by encouraging its members to blind obedience than by teaching the divine capacity of understanding.

I wish your journal continued success in its goal to enlighten and question.

Paul Harris
Calgary, Alberta

Book Review Questioned

Lavina Fielding Anderson's review of John L. Sorenson's *An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon* (Spring 1988) did not provide the scholarly evaluation that your readers deserve. By not inviting an acknowledged Meso-American archaeologist/historian — preferably non-LDS — to respond to Sorenson's work, you have insulted our intelligence and your editorial integrity.

Rick Grunder
Syracuse, New York

Archaeology of the Psyche

DIALOGUE has become my archaeologist. It digs deeply into my psyche, unearths notions that have been embedded there for years, lifts them out, brushes them clean, examines them, and then uses them to confirm or disprove previously held ideas — and even, at times, to postulate new probabilities. DIALOGUE ceaselessly examines the artifacts, and I, excited by this intellectual catharsis, look forward to each successive dig.

Milton E. MacInnis
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia

A Plea for Help

I am a long-time reader and admirer of DIALOGUE and particularly enjoyed the Winter 1987 issue, with Lavina Fielding Anderson's interview with outgoing editors Jack and Linda Newell. This letter is a

plea for help. Though I agreed intellectually with the logic of Jack's statement that "Intellectual independence and institutional loyalty are contradictory terms . . . our ultimate loyalties should be to principles, not to institutions or individuals" (p. 23), I suffered some severe internal conflict in doing so.

I recalled words attributed to the Prophet Joseph Smith, "Above all, be faithful to the Brethren. God will overlook many of our human failings, but never disloyalty to the Priesthood" (loosely paraphrased from *Documentary History of the Church*). And I recalled the trials of the period of polygamy persecution when, with many of the Church leaders "underground," even children were taught to lie to federal marshals to protect General Authorities. As a consequence many felt that a Mormon's word could not be trusted. Even Mormon citizens willing to swear they were not polygamists were disenfranchised in the neighboring state of Idaho.

We live in reasonably settled times, but the prophets have foretold a future of major unrest and uncertainty. And looking to that future, my dissatisfaction with Newell's ideas intensified as I read Eugene England's comments later in the same issue regarding God's use of sometimes contradictory instructions to teach us that:

Trust in our personal experiences with divinity must sometimes outweigh our rational morality. . . . We must learn, sometimes very painfully, to be open to continuous revelation . . . because truth and history are too complex to be reduced to simple, irrevocable commandments—even from past prophets. . . . Obedience to divine commandments . . . must sometimes supersede our understanding of earlier commands if we are to transcend the human condition of even our best intellectual culture and religion (p. 141).

Somehow I feel like the proverbial ass between two equal bales of hay contemplating Newell's advice to follow our own (even if inadequately formed) conscience in questions of moral choice, and England's arguments in favor of celestial guidance.

But even accepting England's indirect criticism that the Newell position does not take into account the complexity of human—not to mention celestial—reality, I cannot go all the way with England, finding it utterly incomprehensible that God would have given the law of plural marriage to the patriarchs and our own Mormon forebears only to confront them in eternity with having to choose a "favorite wife" (after teaching them to avoid such preference in mortality—even if, as Gene asserts, some failed to observe this part of the commandment). Perhaps this is because I find myself sealed to two women, each of whom I love in a different way, but with equal devotion. So perhaps I am reluctant to accept England's conclusions fearing that I will have to choose between my wives in eternity (should any of the three of us get there). England himself strongly defends such transcendental love later in his argument in defense of monogamy (p. 144). If you haven't experienced this love with more than one woman, don't say it ain't possible! Moreover, if we extend into the hereafter his argument that a larger than statistically probable proportion of today's faithful members descend from polygamous unions (p. 142), is this not itself a strong argument for celestial polygamy? Nor can I dismiss as easily as Gene the many authorities quoted (p. 149) who taught that polygamy is the celestial order of matrimony.

Unlike England, I am convinced by observation and experience as a branch and district president, bishop, and member of two stake presidencies that there are considerably more faithful LDS women than stalwart priesthood holders. And I fully expect that fewer of us males find our way to the celestial kingdom than Eugene seems to anticipate. After all, we are considering the highest degree of the celestial kingdom, and it may well be that the problem is not, as Gene imagines, too few women to make up plural households, but a gross insufficiency of males qualified for a "continuation of the seed."

Finally, after telling us that we must be open to new marching orders, England himself raises the question about which authorities we should accept and when and how much to accept them (p. 151). Who is right, England or Newell? Again, help! Anybody.

The chief advantage of having a living prophet is that he can, under inspiration, give us new commandments, which in their own time, are equally or perhaps more valid than our previous understanding. If we disregard new instructions, are we any different from those who reject the initial gospel message or those who refuse to accept the Woodruff Manifesto ending the practice of polygamy. And, as President Benson has usefully reminded us, only the living prophet is authorized to receive such new marching orders for the Church as a whole. If we depend on our own past sense of right and wrong, as Newell suggests, it may help avoid future Mai Lai's and Nuremburg war crimes trials, but, it would seem, it will never secure our celestial exaltation.

The Gods are above moral law as we know it and are constrained only by what is good for the majority in the longest of long runs. They are free to adopt the manners and means, tactics and strategies necessary to put down evil wherever it is found, though they have found by experience that absolute free agency must be preserved in order to assure a crop of inherently "good" souls who are entirely self-directed, uninfluenced by thoughts of reward or punishment, and beyond the influence of flattery or egotism.

Here below, however, God periodically shifts moral guidelines, sometimes radically, as part of his tactical war against Satan: "take plural wives; be immovably faithful to one wife; don't take human life except after raising the banner of freedom four times and parlaying with your enemy before attack"; while in other circumstances he says, "kill Laban in cold blood and without warning because 'it is better for one man to perish than for a nation to dwindle in unbelief.'" (With a similar,

but different scenario he commands Abraham to leave Terah because of the practice of human sacrifice, then later commands him to sacrifice his own son Isaac). And when, as David Buerger reports, (DIALOGUE 16 [Spring 1983]) we can hardly wait for our calling and election to be made sure to give us a mid-course reading on how we are doing because second anointings haven't been practiced in any significant number since the 1920s, what are we to do?

As deputy director of the State Department Office of Intelligence and Research, tasked with drafting the U.S. Position Papers for the International Women's Year in 1976, I experienced some internal conflict over approving U.S. support for radical family planning programs — but reconciled myself by studying all past First Presidency statements regarding family planning and finding that they were directly solely to Church members. Since that time, the words, "what we say to the Church we say to all the world," have been added. But my watch was over by that time.

As an American and proponent of American-style political freedom, I find myself in sympathy with the Newell position. As a political scientist and retired career diplomat, I recognize, however, that the American approach is not the only, nor necessarily the most desirable, approach in many other cultures. Newell theorizes that we are dealing with known quantities: unchanging notions of right and wrong, invariable guidelines to truth.

But, as England adds, the real world is neither so simple nor so constant. Not only God but nations must at times take extraordinary steps to confront unanticipated events. And the current conflict between Congress and the president over who is ultimately in charge of the nation's foreign affairs and whether or not it is lawful and right to fight the fire of unprincipled adversaries with equivalent backfire, is a case in point. This is the line adopted by the moral absolutists of most "main line" Christian churches today. Mormonism, on the other hand, has historically

chosen to trust God's judgment rather than man's, thus putting us in the downright uncomfortable situation of placing ourselves in the hands of even a trusted prophet, who may tell us to go against our deepest and most indwelling concepts of right and wrong.

This can present moral dilemmas of the first order. Remember Oliver Cowdery, who parted company with Joseph Smith over the notion of the Church's voting as a block, Brigham Young, who reported night sweats over accepting the doctrine of plural marriage, and many (including my great-grandfather, Robert Thornley) who couldn't countenance Porter Rockwell as bodyguard (and, some say with pretty good circumstantial evidence, executioner) to Brigham Young. Yet Rockwell died in his bed, while, faced with the aftermath of the Mountain Meadows Massacre, Brigham

threw his own adopted son, John D. Lee, to the federal authorities, accepting his execution while promising "restoration of all blessings" after his death. Ouch! What faith that took.

What position should we take? Loyalty to the Church president (as President Benson has invited), to "all the Brethren" as per Joseph Smith (that has been hard even for some apostles, as we have recently read in *DIALOGUE* concerning Moses Thatcher), or to the "still small voice" of our own conscience — which seems sufficient guide for Jack Newell. I hope some of *DIALOGUE*'s wise heads can bring further enlightenment through your "Letters to the Editor" column. I remain ambivalent and fear for my salvation.

David Brighton Timmins
Laredo, Texas

ANNOUNCING THE 1989 DIALOGUE WRITING AWARDS

DIALOGUE: A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT announces over \$2,000 in awards to encourage new writing in Mormon studies and letters. First-place awards of \$300 for articles, essays, and fiction will be made, with the number and amount of other prizes awarded at the discretion of the judges. A first-place poetry award of \$100 will also be given.

Manuscripts submitted to DIALOGUE after 1 January 1988 and accepted for publication in the 1989 issues will be considered for the awards, provided they have not previously been submitted to DIALOGUE nor previously published, nor are being considered for publication elsewhere. *Manuscripts must be received before 1 March 1989 to be considered for the 1989 awards.*

DIALOGUE welcomes the submission of creative writing and articles and essays dealing with aspects of history, theology, sociology, scriptural study, anthropology, law, literary criticism, and philosophy as they relate to the Mormon experience.

Manuscripts must be typed and double-spaced throughout, including block quotations and notes, and follow the *Chicago Manual of Style's* author-date citation style. A summary style sheet is available upon request from the address below. One original and two photocopies of each manuscript must be submitted with a self-addressed stamped envelope. In general, manuscripts should not exceed forty double-spaced pages, including notes. DIALOGUE reserves the right to edit manuscripts in its usual fashion in preparation for publication.

All manuscripts will be judged on the basis of their contribution to their field, clarity and felicity of expression, and responsible, innovative thought. Judges will be selected by the DIALOGUE Editorial Staff from its board of editors, staff, and other qualified persons. Winners will be announced in the Fall 1989 issue.

THE LOWELL L. BENNION ESSAY PRIZE

A separate \$350 prize to honor Lowell L. Bennion will be awarded to the outstanding essay concerning the expression of Christian values and gospel principles in thought and action. Essays considered for this prize will be judged on their expression of Christian beliefs and values, insights on their application, exploration of the challenges of Christian living, and gracefulness of style.

Essays considered for this award should be submitted following the guidelines listed above.

Send entries to: Dialogue Editorial Office, 202 West 300 North, Salt Lake City, Utah 84103.

For Bonnie

Randal W. Allred

Ever since the homestead days, when you,
The eldest, baked the bread for barefoot boys
Flushed from the corn for lunch, the care we knew
Was testimony of your oaken poise.
And when you left the weathered wood of home
With wide brown eyes, the heavy sandstone walls
Of college seemed like mountains — the sky a dome
So large, a farm girl could not search it all.
But then, with him, you strove with gentle pain
(Your young but work-worn hands would scrub our heads,
And tuck us, kissed and storied, in our beds.)
To bring to pass the circle of life again.
And I see my child strive to learn the song
That you, with care and labor, sang so long.

RANDAL ALLRED is currently living with his wife and three children in Los Angeles, where he is a doctoral student in American literature at UCLA.



Freeways, Parking Lots, and Ice Cream Stands: The Three Nephites in Contemporary Society

William A. Wilson

IN THE 1892–93 ISSUE OF *The Folk-Lorist*, a publication of the old Chicago Folk-Lore Society, the Reverend David Utter, from Salt Lake City, published a short piece entitled “Mormon Superstition.” He recounted Mormon beliefs about Indians, summarized briefly the contents of the Book of Mormon, and then told how, according to this book, three of Christ’s new-world disciples called Nephites had been allowed to remain on earth until the Savior returned again. “Many of the saints now living,” wrote Reverend Utter,

tell that they have, at different times, seen one or more of these three immortal “Nephites.” A daughter of Brigham Young, now a good Unitarian, has told me that her father told, with great and solemn pleasure, of an interview that he had with one of these remaining apostles in Liverpool, when he was there on a mission. The apostle met him at the chapel door, an old man with a long gray beard, made himself known, and spoke many encouraging and helpful words (Utter 1892–93, 76).

So far as I know, this was the first reference in a scholarly publication to what has become one of the best known supernatural-narrative cycles in the United States — the legend of the Three Nephites. And for over three decades it remained the only reference. Then in 1938, in a short article entitled “The Three Nephites in Popular Tradition,” folklorist Wayland Hand once again introduced the Nephite legend to the scholarly community, recounting stories of a mysterious stranger who reportedly had prepared the way for Mormon missionaries in a southern town (Hand 1938, 123–29). Hand did not continue his study of the Nephite tradition, but three other folklorists, Austin and Alta Fife and Hector Lee, had also become interested in the legend and had begun collecting stories in earnest. In 1940 and 1942 Austin Fife pub-

WILLIAM A. WILSON, professor of English and Scandinavian, is chairman of the BYU English Department and director of the BYU Folklore Archives. He has served as editor of Western Folklore and on the executive board of the American Folklore Society; he has published widely on topics ranging from folklore and nationalism in Finland to the folklore of the Mormons.

lished "The Three Nephites in Popular Tradition," a ground-breaking collection of fifty-two texts, and "Popular Legends of the Mormons," which contained a summary of the main features of the stories. In describing the Nephites, Fife gave a capsule summary of the legend that has served to the present day:

In localities of Utah, Idaho, and other states where the Mormon faith is prevalent, one frequently hears accounts of the miraculous appearance and disappearance of kindly, white-bearded old men who bring messages of the greatest spiritual importance, give blessings in exchange for hospitality, lead lost people to safety, and perform various other miraculous deeds. These old men are said by the people to be the "Three Nephites" (1940, 1).

In 1947, building on the work of the Fifes and basing his study on an expanded corpus of 150 legends and their variants, Hector Lee wrote a dissertation on the Three Nephites; in 1949 he published the work as *The Three Nephites: The Substance and Significance of the Legend in Folklore*. In 1956, the Fifes turned their attention to the Nephites once again, devoting a rich chapter to them in their monumental *Saints of Sage and Saddle: Folklore among the Mormons*.

As important as these works were, knowledge of the Three Nephites reached a national audience primarily through the efforts of Richard M. Dorson, dean of American folklorists and head of the prestigious folklore program at Indiana University. Drawing on the works of the Fifes and Lee, Dorson summarized the Nephite legend in his widely read *American Folklore*, published in 1959, and again in *Buying the Wind: Regional Folklore in the United States*, published in 1964.

Mormons, of course, at least those from the Mountainwest, have needed no such works to make them aware of the Three Nephites. They know of them directly, sometimes through their own experiences, which they have interpreted as Nephite encounters, more often by hearing Nephite stories repeated in their homes and churches and by telling them to others. I remember well one such storytelling event from my own life.

On a rainy night in early October 1960, a fellow high school teacher and his wife — Ray and Ann White — were driving me to Salt Lake City. As we dodged through the late-evening traffic, I listened fascinated as Ann told me that on these very roads in recent months an old hitchhiker had hailed rides with Mormon motorists, had warned them to store food for an impending disaster, and had then disappeared miraculously from the back seats of their cars. The hitchhiker was thought to be one of the Three Nephites. I believed the story, partly because of the mood in the car that night, but primarily because I had grown up with stories of Nephite visits and found this account compatible with my past experience.

Two years later, now a graduate student at Indiana University interested primarily in Finnish folklore and literature, I met Richard Dorson, who was delighted to have a real Mormon in his program and who introduced me to the scholarly study of my own tradition. Inspired by his enthusiasm, I turned to Mormon faculty members and graduate students at the university and in 1964

collected from them forty Nephite narratives for Dorson's fieldwork course — seven of them variants of the story I had heard that rainy night in Salt Lake a few years earlier (Wilson 1969, 3–35). Dorson was surprised and pleased to discover that Mormon folklore could be collected outside Utah. And I was hooked — from that day to the present, in one way or another, the Nephites and their stories have been my companions.

As I began collecting Nephite accounts, I expected my work merely to substantiate earlier findings of the Fifes and Lee. I was wrong. Both Austin Fife and Hector Lee had argued twenty years earlier that the number of Nephite accounts was at that time decreasing, and Lee especially believed the legend would not flourish in a more technological and rational age. But my collection showed that the legend was alive and growing, at least among my informants in Bloomington, Indiana. From twenty-one individuals, I easily collected my forty tales in a very short time — and could have collected more had the semester's end not been approaching.

Lee also had argued that while older Nephite stories were still being told, new accounts were not surfacing. According to Lee, the legend developed slowly from 1830–55, grew more rapidly from 1855–75, reached its peak from 1875–1900, waned slightly from 1900–25, and after 1925 dwindled to only a few scattered narratives (1949, 31). The stories he had collected were, Lee argued, cultural survivals from the pioneer past and therefore useful primarily as a means of understanding “pioneer concepts, attitudes, and impulses” (1949, 126).

I certainly did collect some fine pioneer narratives. The following is a good example:

This story is part of the family traditions on my mother's side of the family. It dates back, I believe, to the 1870s when my mother's grandparents lived in the central Utah area, more exactly in the region of Manti. My great-grandfather had a sawmill in the area and often would go up in the mountains to cut trees, and my great-grandmother would be left at home with the many children. Well, one time my great-grandfather was away, and great-grandmother was home watching the kids, and it happened that at the time the Manti Temple was to be dedicated. And my great-grandmother wanted very much to go, but she could find no one to watch the children because everyone in the area was going to the Manti Temple dedication. On the morning of the dedication she [was] still sure that she would not be able to go. She met an old man at the front gate, and he said, “Sister Swenson, I see that you'd like to go to the temple dedication. I'm just passing through; let me watch your kids and they'll be all right as long as you're gone. Don't worry.” My great-grandmother did not know the man, had never seen him before; but somehow she felt that he was a kindly old man and agreed. And she went to the temple dedication. When she came home from the temple dedication, she met the old man just coming out of the front gate, and he said, “Well, Sister Swenson, you have nothing to worry about,” and he walked down the street. And she watched him go, and it seemed that as he just about turned down the path out of sight he met two other old men. And it was felt in the family tradition that these were Three Nephites and one of them had stopped to help my great-grandmother with the children so she could go to the temple dedication.¹

¹ This and all other Nephite stories given here, as well as names of collectors and names and comments of informants, are located in the Brigham Young University Folklore Archive,

But I also collected stories far removed from a rural, pioneer setting. Consider the following account:

I heard this from the person it's said to have happened to, which might give it some more importance. The story was related by the owner of the A & W Root Beer stand on the corner of — I think it's State Street and the entrance to Brigham Young University campus in Provo, Utah. He said he was working in his stand one afternoon in the summer when an old man came walking up and asked if he could have something to eat. The man seemed rather poor, and so the owner gave him an ice cream cone and — perhaps something with it. I don't remember. After finishing this, the old man told the owner — he said something like this, "You'll always have all you need if you're generous with what you have and live righteously." The owner of the root beer stand turned to comment to one of his employees in the store, and when he looked back the old man had disappeared. And he said he immediately went outside to look for him, saying that he couldn't have got off in this short of time — it was just a few seconds — and looked all around in every direction up and down the street and couldn't find him. And in relating this story, then, he said that it wasn't possible for him to have walked out of sight in that short a period of time from the open space around the drive-in. And so he looked upon this as certainly a visit from a being somewhat supernatural, to say the least. And this seemed the highlight of . . . this fellow's talk in which he came [to stake priesthood meeting] and related this story and also, then, pointed out how he had been closing his stand on Sundays for a long time now and that it hadn't seemed to affect his income. . . . So this seemed to be fulfillment of the promise made that if he was generous and living righteously that he wouldn't be in need.

According to Hector Lee, only five of the stories he had collected occurred after 1925 (1949, 31). But of the twenty-seven individual stories I collected in Bloomington (the other thirteen texts were variant accounts of one or more of these), eight of them, like the A & W story, related events that had occurred in the recent past. This was an important discovery. If what was true of these Bloomington Mormons should prove true of Mormons in general, the Nephite stories could serve not just as a window to the pioneer past, but also as a means of understanding contemporary Mormons coming to terms with the circumstances of modern living.

When I came to BYU and developed a course in folklore in 1969, I began to test this hypothesis. As part of their course work, students in my classes must always submit folklore they have collected themselves to the BYU Folklore Archives. While I have never required students to collect Nephite stories, many of them have. As a result, a steady stream of Nephite narratives has come into the archive each year, producing, at last count, a rich store of some 850 texts, ample evidence, I would think, that the legend is still around.

Dating the events these stories recount is no easy task, because new wine often gets put into old bottles. That is, while the structure of a particular story remains the same, the setting is often changed from pioneer to modern times. For example, one very popular pioneer narrative goes as follows:

There was a missionary thousands of miles away from his home. He was starving to death. He didn't have anything to eat, so he knelt down to pray. When he finished, a

Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah 84602. In all instances where names of individuals appear in the stories, I have changed them to pseudonyms.

man came to him with a piece of bread covered with a towel. He ate the bread and kept the towel. Months later, when he returned home, he brought the towel to his wife. When she saw it she asked him where he had found her towel. He then related the story to her. She told him that the same day he was starving to death a man came to her door and asked her for some bread. The only bread she had was a piece that she was baking, and because it was fresh, she covered it with that towel. They thought that the man who asked her for bread was one of the Three Nephites.

A modern version of the story goes like this:

A stranger called at the home of Mrs. John Harris of Roosevelt, Utah, and asked for a meat sandwich. Mrs. Harris's husband was stationed in Korea for the U.S. Army, and a few days later, this stranger presented Mr. Harris in Korea with an identical sandwich to that which his wife had given to the stranger.

It is possible, of course, that these two stories are of independent origin, but it is much more likely that the latter is a modern adaptation of the former. And so it is with many other stories. A horse-drawn wagon tips over and pins a man under a load of wood; a stranger appears from nowhere, rescues the driver, and then disappears. In a modern version of the story the wagon simply becomes a truck.

In spite of the difficulty in dating the stories, careful textual comparisons will show that at least half the Nephite accounts in our collection describe events that occurred after 1925 — and a considerable number of them after 1960. More important, well over half the events described in the stories are believed by their tellers to have occurred in modern times. The stories speak to us, then, both of the past, or at least of our interest in the past, and of the present. They are not, as Lee suggested, simply survivals from an earlier non-rational, nonscientific way of thinking but are very much a part of our contemporary world. And while they are delightful stories whose own existence is their best excuse for being, they also provide us valuable information about ourselves. They do this for the simple reason that, like people everywhere, we tell stories about those things that interest us most or are most important to us. Further, because the stories are oral, depending on the spoken word to keep them alive, when a given event ceases to interest us, stories we tell about that event will disappear. Thus by looking carefully at the Nephite accounts and at the dominant themes contained in them, we should be able to discover those issues of central importance at any one time to the Church and especially to individual Church members.

A few of these issues have grown out of concern over world political situations. For example, in the 1950s, during the tense years of the Cold War and the Korean War, the story I have already mentioned of a Nephite warning of imminent disaster and encouraging individuals to follow Church counsel by storing a supply of food, spread rapidly through the Mormon West and became the best known Nephite account of all time (Wilson 1975, 79–97). The following is a typical example:

A lady got up [in a testimony meeting] and was quite excited and upset about this. She said that this experience had happened to — I don't remember the relation, a

friend of a friend or something. And they had been on their way to the temple and had stopped to pick up a man who was hitchhiking, and they'd talked to him about various things. And suddenly he asked them if they had their two-year supply of food, and they said no. And he said, "Well, you better get it because the end is coming, and it's coming soon." And then the conversation turned to other things. And they turned around, and he was gone, just vanished.

During the years this story was circulating, another narrative also gained wide currency. In this account the normally peace-loving Nephites, sometimes followed by a phantom army, entered the Arab-Israeli conflict on the side of the Israelis:

There was this war between the Arabs and the Jews, and the Jews were outnumbered by hundreds, thousands. They had one cannon, and they had like about ten men, and the Arabs had stuff from Russia, artillery and all sorts of stuff. And the Jews were banging on cans and moving the cannon over here, and they'd shoot it and then they'd move it back and shoot it so the Arabs would think they had lots of men. And they were only fooled for a little while. And then when the Jews had just about run out of all their ammo and they were ready to surrender, then the Arabs, they all threw down their weapons and came walking out waving the white flag and everything, surrendering to these Jews. And the Jews walk out, and there's ten of them. And the Arabs say, "Where's the rest of your men?" And the Jews say, "What do you mean the rest of our men. This is the total company." And the Arab guy who was spokesman for the group said, "Where are those thousands of troops that were just across the hill with the man in white leading them? This man was dressed in white, and he was leading all these thousands of men, and he had a long beard."

In some accounts *three* men in white robes and flowing white beards appear to the Arab generals and warn them to surrender or face annihilation. The story, which originally entered Mormon tradition via the religious press,² has been applied to most major Arab-Israeli conflicts — 1948, 1956, 1967, and 1973. It has not been collected much in recent years; but considering current geo-political tensions, it may reappear, assuring Mormons that the Lord is still in charge of events in the Middle East.

Most Nephite accounts are much less dramatic than these and relate not to national or international events, but to the personal problems of individual Mormons. These stories can be grouped into three broad categories.

The first of these has to do with genealogy and temple work. Since salvation depends on family members attending the temple to seal themselves first to each other and then to their deceased ancestors whose names they have discovered through genealogical research, it is understandable that the Nephite canon is replete with accounts of the old men appearing to Church members and encouraging them to do their duty. In the genealogy stories, the Nephite,

² The story was first published in September 1950 by Arthur U. Michelson in a Los Angeles newspaper called *The Jewish Hope* and was picked up and passed into Mormon tradition by Joseph Fielding Smith in *The Signs of the Times: A Series of Discussions* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1952), pp. 227–33, and by LeGrande Richards in *Israel! Do You Know* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1954), pp. 229–33, and in "The Word of Our God Will Stand," *Improvement Era* 57 (June 1954): 404–6. For a possible source of this story, see Dov Joseph, *The Faithful City: Siege of Jerusalem, 1948* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1960), p. 73.

as in the following narrative, usually appears to a faithful individual who has worked long and hard uncovering ancestral lines but has come upon a seemingly impassable barrier:

[My girlfriend's] grandmother was having considerable difficulty in finding some names on a certain genealogical line. She had done research and, not finding the information, had prayed about the problem. She was in her kitchen one evening, and her husband was in the living room reading the paper. They were alone in the house. Suddenly, they heard the typewriter sounding in the other room. At first, they thought each other was typing, but then they remembered where each other was located in the home. They went in to the room where the typewriter was, with the unfinished pedigree chart still in it. They found that the much sought after names were typed in—in the correct spaces. They firmly believe that it was an act of the Three Nephites.

In other stories a Nephite simply delivers a list of missing names or a newspaper containing crucial information, guides a researcher to a book in the library, or tells one good sister to go to the basement and look in an old trunk located there. In these stories, as in most Nephite accounts, the Nephite delivers his message and then miraculously disappears, thus adding credibility to the message. Such stories persuade struggling genealogists that if they will persist in their work and remain faithful they too may receive the help they need to reach their goals.

In the temple stories, a Nephite, often appearing as a hitchhiker, warns married people who have not been sealed to each other in the temple to have this ordinance performed, or he encourages others who have already been to the temple to visit there as often as possible because “the time is short.” Again he almost always disappears, sometimes leaving no tracks in the snow or along the dusty road where he asks to be let out of the car.

The second major category is missionary work. With over 30,000 young people serving as full-time missionaries in all parts of the world and with the Church's constant emphasis on proselytizing activity, it is again understandable that the Nephites would choose to become involved. On numerous occasions they reportedly have visited a community to prepare it for the message soon to be brought by the missionaries. And from all over the world come accounts of Nephites escorting missionaries through a vicious slum, protecting them from angry crowds, participating with them in street meetings, instructing them in proper proselytizing methods, cheering them when discouraged, and, in time of need, providing them with adequate food, clothing, shelter, and transportation. In recent times, our automobile culture generates many stories. For example:

Two missionaries in the Canadian Mission were driving home from a discussion meeting one day and there was quite a bad storm going. They were clear out in the middle of nowhere when their car broke down, and they were unable to repair it. They decided that they would just freeze to death if they stayed there, so they got out of the car and started walking down the road. After a couple of hours they were pretty badly frozen anyway and could tell they weren't going to be able to go much farther. Just then they heard a car coming behind them. It stopped and the man opened the door, and they got into the back seat. They were so cold they just laid

down on the floor, and didn't even look at the man. Finally they came to a service station, and the man stopped the car at the side of the road to let them out. They got out and stumbled over to the station, but they still hadn't really gotten a look at the man in the car. When they got up to the station, the attendant looked surprised and asked where they had come from. They said from the car that had just stopped out in front. He said, "There hasn't been any car come along here for a couple of hours." They went out to the road and looked, and there weren't even any tire tracks.

To struggling young missionaries such stories provide inspiration and motivation for their difficult work, and to their anxious parents back home they give assurance that the Lord and his servants will protect their daughters and sons while they are away.

The third category of stories really subsumes the others. In these narratives, the Nephites come to solve the personal and sometimes desperate needs of individuals — to save them from physical or spiritual danger. Most of the pioneer stories Mormons still relate will, like the following, fall into this category:

My aunt who lived in Rock Point, Summit County, Utah, was left a widow with a large family. She just wondered how she was ever going to manage, and one day an elderly man came to her home and asked for bread. She said, "Oh, I wonder what I'm going to do! I just have this big family and all." But anyway she gave him a meal and brought him in and fixed him up, and when he left he said, "Sister, you'll be blessed|. You'll never see the bottom of your flour bin." And she looked for him when he went out the door, and she couldn't find him anywhere. And she always felt that this visit was from one of the Nephites. She had looked and looked and not any of the other neighbors had ever seen him. And she said as long as she lived she never did see the bottom of her flour bin.

The majority of the stories relating contemporary events also fall into this category. These stories reveal that contemporary Mormon society is not remarkably different from that of the past. The concerns of our pioneer fathers and mothers are still our concerns today — though worked out in modern contexts. Hector Lee argued that as the need for security from the hazards of pioneer living faded, the Nephite stories diminished (1946, 35, 122). This need has not faded; it has merely changed, generating new stories all the while. For example, in pioneer society, where doctors were scarce and medical techniques primitive, the Nephites came often to aid the Saints in times of illness. They frequently administered to the sick through the laying on of hands, or they employed such popular home remedies as tobacco boiled in lard for the caked breast of a nursing mother, grated nutmeg mixed in oil for a child with croup, and an extract from an indigenous herb for a cholera victim.

The Nephite visiting ailing Mormons today will still lay hands on people's heads and bless them, but also frequently relies on the techniques of modern medicine. Today the Nephite pulls a bishop's son from a lake after a canoeing accident and revives him through artificial respiration; he rescues a Church official from a fiery automobile accident and treats his wound "in a very professional manner"; and in one instance he actually enters the hospital, operates on a woman the doctors had been unable to treat, and removes a "black-covered growth" from her stomach.

Life on the frontier was dangerous, and the Nephites had their hands full rescuing cattlemen and children from blizzards, guiding wagon trains to water holes, saving them from Indian raids, finding lost oxen, bringing food to isolated and starving homesteaders, pulling wagon drivers from under their overturned conveyances, and harvesting crops for ailing farmers. Today it is the Native Americans who need Nephite protection from the whites; sleek automobiles zip us rapidly over paved roads from one water hole to the next; and government welfare agencies succor the poor and needy. Still, modern life is not without its perils, and the Nephites continue to find ample work. Occasionally they stop to fix a widow's furnace, guide a nurse through a storm to the hospital, help a young man pass an officers' candidate test, or rescue a temple worker locked in the temple after it closed. But for the most part, they are kept busy on the highways. For example:

A family consisting of parents and three children were on their way to stake conference. They lived on a desert, and it was a hot, dusty ride of two hundred miles to the tabernacle. On the way home the car broke down on a lonely road, which was even more deserted because it was Sunday. The children were hot and hungry, and the poor father could not find the trouble. Just then, two men in white came walking down the road and offered to help. Telling the man to get in his car and start the motor, they lifted the hood. To the family's surprise the car started, and after kissing his wife and hugging his children for joy, he went out to thank the men. They had disappeared.

In other stories the Nephites repair a broken truck axle, tow a stranded automobile to safety, guide motorists lost in blizzards or in the deserts of Death Valley, keep a long-haul truck driver awake, and pull people from a flaming pileup on the Los Angeles freeway.

As they have done for the past 100 years, the Nephites still come to comfort mourners, clarify gospel teachings, and encourage devotion to duty; but the spiritual advice they now give speaks to the children of a modern age. For example, a Nephite appears to a woman who has lost her husband and daughter in an airplane crash and tells her that her loved ones have been called on a special mission to the spirit world. In Portland, Oregon, a woman takes a break in the department store where she works and forgets to check out at the time clock; a Nephite meets her at the foot of the stairs and reminds her of her negligence. In Los Angeles, one of the old men appears to the head of the police force vice squad and urges him to give up his wild ways. And in San Diego, a Nephite warns a young parking-lot attendant about to be seduced by a woman customer "not to ruin his entire life for a few minutes of pleasure."

In the new stories, then, the scene changes from country to city, but many of the old problems and concerns continue. They are simply changed in form. They are worked out not in pioneer or village cottages with a country road winding pleasantly by, but in urban dwellings, at parking lots and ice cream stands, with the freeway sounding noisily in the background.

What do the Nephite stories tell us about central issues in the Church? Nothing too startling. They show us that the main concerns of the Church are also the main concerns of individual Church members — living lives that

will make them worthy to enter the temple, sealing themselves to their family members, both living and dead, and taking the gospel message to the world. But the stories do more than simply mirror dominant beliefs and principles. They also testify to the validity of Church programs and inspire members to follow them. As anthropologist Radcliffe-Brown has pointed out, folklore expresses and cultivates in the minds of individuals those “sentiments” upon which the continuity and existence of a society depend (1922, 376–405). The Nephite stories thus reflect and reinforce Church programs and, by endowing them with mystical values, place them beyond criticism or questioning.

They also provide the believer with a sense of security in an unsure world. Just as the early Utah settler living in a hostile physical environment felt safe listening to an account of a Nephite rescuing a rancher from a blizzard, so, too, contemporary Mormons faced with urban congestion, riots, and increasing international tensions are comforted when they hear that Nephites might protect them on crowded highways, guard their children in the mission field, and make sure the right side carries the day in the Middle East.

Perhaps most important, the stories give evidence of a personal, loving and caring God, who sends his servants to succor the weary, protect the helpless, and encourage the wayward to mend their ways.

When physically describing the Nephites, the stories are remarkably inconsistent. The old men have white beards, gray beards, black beards, red beards, neat beards, scraggly beards, no beards at all. And they appear in everything from shabby khaki pants to tuxedos. But despite this variation in dress and appearance, one thing remains constant throughout the Nephite canon: the Nephites come in love and compassion. The following statements from a variety of different stories capture in part the feelings of the narrators toward the Nephite visitor: “[He brought] a very serene, peaceful, and quiet feeling”; “he seemed to bring a good feeling”; “a strange feeling came over the woman as she examined the caller — she noticed a sweet spirit radiate from his eyes”; “he vibrated with kindness and love”; “after he left I had such a peaceful feeling fill my soul and heart”; “[his] personality was overwhelming”; “he seemed to bring peace into the room upon entering”; “in the presence of this man he felt a warmth and friendship that was immediate”; “[he] was extremely kind.”

These, kind, compassionate, caring disciples of the Savior come, then, not so much as divine messengers or fearful visitors from the other side, but as brothers and friends, engaged with the people to whom they appear in the same eternal drama and determined to help their brothers and sisters along the way. This gives the Nephites stories a homespun quality and a warmth and immediacy seldom found in other supernatural legend cycles — a warmth and immediacy captured wonderfully in the following story:

Millie and George were a middle-aged couple who had gone a little to the wayside. When first married, they hadn't thought of ever having a cup of coffee or a shot of whiskey. But now, who's to say they were wrong to just calm their nerves by the coffee or whiskey. In their younger years, they never missed a Church meeting or calling. Now, it was harder to get up and wipe the sleep out of their eyes. It was much easier to stay in bed and let Priesthood [meeting] and Sunday school go on

without them. When it came time for Sacrament meeting, Millie was too busy fixing dinner and George, he was too tired from lying around all day. This routine went on for quite a few years. One day as Millie and George were riding down a lonely Arizona road, they saw two men who were hitchhiking. Usually, they would never think of picking up hitchhikers, but something told them to pull over and pick up the two men. The men were dressed nicely and looked as if they hadn't walked even a mile. When asked where they were going, they said that they were going anywhere Millie and George were going. Then they began to talk of things which were very extraordinary and unusual. They told Millie and George that they were living in the last days when the Savior of the world was to come again. They told of the great destruction that would come to the wicked if they did not repent. They told them of the wonderful day when Jesus Christ would again come and never leave his brothers and sisters. They talked on about all that was to come for the world and all its inhabitants. Finally, they told Millie and George that if they didn't repent, they were going to be two sad people. If they kept on as they were, they would be very unhappy and discontented when they didn't obtain the degree of glory they wanted. It was those little things that were bringing them to destruction. Millie and George just sat there wide-eyed and listening to each word spoken by these two strange men. They couldn't bring themselves to turn around and look at the two men because they knew within what they said was true. Millie finally got up enough courage to turn around to ask the men how they knew so much about her and her husband's personal lives. When she turned around, the two men were gone, and they didn't leave even a hint that they had been sitting in that back seat. This experience shook George and Millie greatly. From then on, they gave up their habits and shortcomings. Millie and George, to this day believe those two men who brought them to the truth were two of the Three Nephites.

What does the future hold for the Nephite legend? Will the old stories continue to be told, and will we still hear about new ones? Or in our supposedly more sophisticated age, will the stories eventually disappear?

To answer these questions, we must ask still others: Will Mormons continue to hold fast to the visions of Joseph Smith? Will they continue to believe that God personally leads the Church, rewarding the faithful and punishing sinners? Will Church members continue to seek evidence of God's participation in their daily affairs, and will they continue to tell others about this participation? So long as answers to these questions remain affirmative, the Nephite stories will probably remain. Or if they do disappear, they will be replaced by similar stories that meet similar needs in the lives of those who tell and believe them.

What we must remember is that the Nephite accounts are really only a small part of a much larger body of Mormon supernatural lore that shows no signs of diminishing — a lore generated by belief in a personal God who actively intervenes in people's lives. And this lore speaks to the same central issues as those reflected in the Nephite narratives — genealogy work, temple work, missionary work, personal worthiness, and divine help in solving personal problems. In fact, the Nephite stories are so similar in subject matter to the rest of Mormon lore that stories often slip easily from one genre to another. For example, in one of the most popular non-Nephite stories of recent times, a young mother attending a temple to perform vicarious ordinances for the

dead suddenly felt that something was wrong at home but was promised by a temple official that if she would complete the session everything would be fine.

After the session was over she hurried home, and sure enough, there were fire engines and police cars all around her house. As she was running to her house, a neighbor lady stopped her and explained that her daughter had fallen into a ditch and couldn't be found. As the lady came to the house, there was her daughter soaking wet and crying. Her mother grabbed her and hugged her. After, the little girl gave her mother a note and explained that the lady who'd pulled her out of the ditch had given it to her. There on the note was the name of the [deceased] lady for whom that woman had gone through the temple that day.

Another story collected just last year has an identical beginning to the one just cited, but the ending takes a different direction:

They went home, and they really got concerned when they saw a police car and a fire truck outside their house. They ran up to the house and asked the baby sitter what was wrong, and she said their little girl was missing, and they thought she might have fallen into the irrigation ditch because they found her ball in the ditch. So they went searching for her, and about fifteen minutes later she just showed up at the door, and they asked her where she had been, and she said she fell in the ditch, and a man all dressed in white helped her out. I think he was one of the Three Nephites.

That the Nephite tradition was still strong enough to pull this story into the cycle suggests that the stories will be with us for some time to come.

Some may argue that the stories will continue for still another reason — because they are true. If the Book of Mormon is really the word of God, the following Book of Mormon description of the Three Nephites ought to be sufficient explanation for the continuance of the stories: “And they are as the angels of God, and . . . can show themselves unto whatsoever man it seemeth them good. Therefore, great and marvelous works shall be wrought by them, before the great and coming day [of judgment]” (1 Nephi 28:30–31).

I have no quarrel with this argument. As a folklorist interested in human behavior, I am, to be sure, more concerned with the influence of the stories on the lives of those who believe and tell them than I am with the validity of the stories themselves; and as a literary scholar, intrigued by the struggle for human souls revealed in the Nephite drama, I am more concerned with the artistic tensions developed by the actors in that drama than I am with the historical accuracy of the narratives. But as a Latter-day Saint who believes in the Book of Mormon, I also believe that the Three Nephites may do what the Book of Mormon says they can do. Having read hundreds of Nephite accounts and having compared them with each other, with Mormon folklore in general, and with supernatural legends outside Mormon tradition, I can discount many of the narratives. But I can't discount them all. And I am romantic enough to hope that a story like the following, collected from the young lady who was about to marry the young man in the story, really happened:

Carol's fiancé, Brent, was called to the Mexico-North Mission. Since Carol had not previously been . . . [through the temple ceremonies], she couldn't go through the temple with Brent to see him . . . [receive his ordinances]. So she stayed outside on the temple grounds of the Mesa, Arizona, Temple. To make her wait a little less

tiring and more enjoyable, she took along some embroidery. As she was standing outside the entrance, a short, very old man dressed in white coveralls and carrying a hoe came up to her and said, "You must be very proud of that young man in there," nodding towards the temple. Because she had not seen him standing around when Brent was there, she was very surprised by his remark. He said he was the gardener for the temple grounds and asked if she would like to walk along with him since she had about three hours to wait. She said yes, mostly out of curiosity, she supposed. But as the time went on, he showed her all the flowers on the grounds and explained the lives of some and legends behind others. It seemed his entire life was those flowers. He continued speaking to her, and showed her many things in nature, and she grew to love him in the short time she had known him. He began talking about Brent then. He said she was a lucky girl to have such a man as her future husband. And he went on to explain the importance of marriage. He told her that when Brent came out of the temple, she would see him as she never had before. He then looked at his watch and said, "I suppose your young man will be coming out soon, so we will walk back." As they got back to the waiting room, he thanked her for spending the time with him and asked her to please remember what he had told her that day. Then he left, just as Brent appeared at the desk. Carol looked at him, and she said he had a glow around his entire face. She kissed him and told him to hurry because there was someone she wanted him to meet. They rushed out to catch the gardener, and he wasn't anywhere to be found. Carol looked everywhere they had been and finally she found a very tall man dressed in dirty blue coveralls. She excused herself and asked if he had seen the gardener, and he answered her and said that he was the only temple gardener there had been for the last three years and that he had seen no one there all day.

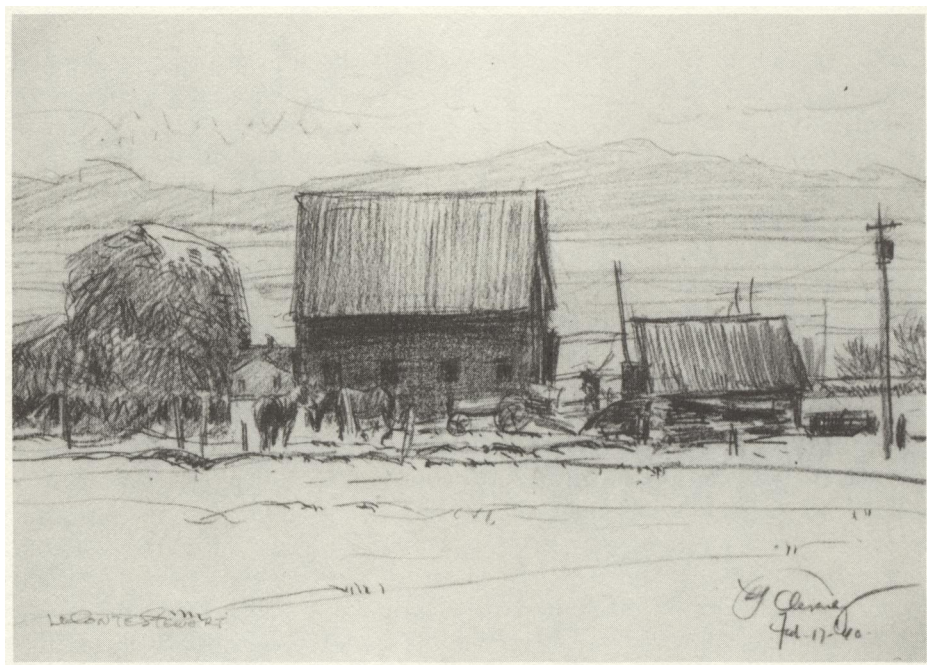
I see no reason to doubt that the young lady who told this story really had spent the afternoon talking with a stranger. Whether this stranger was simply a kindly old man who had helped a young lady pass the time while she waited for her missionary to go through the temple or whether he was one of the Three Nephites sent to help her understand the significance of the occasion, I leave for each individual to decide.

Stories of the Three Nephites, then, like the stories of Millie and George or of Carol and Brent, are still very much a part of contemporary Mormon society. In our unguarded moments, in a testimony meeting, in a Sunday school class, in intimate conversations with small groups of friends, in the family circle — when critical perceptions are tuned low and the spiritual vibrations are strong — in these moments the Nephite stories circulate among us. And they tell us much of ourselves and of our church. They mirror our attitudes, values, and principal concerns; they reinforce Church teachings and persuade us to follow them; they tell us of a personal God concerned with our individual problems; and they provide us with pride in the past, with confidence in the future, and with the means of meeting the crises of modern living with equanimity. So long as the stories continue to meet these ends, they will remain a vital part of Mormon folk tradition, and they will continue to enlarge our understanding of Mormon culture.

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The Trial of the French Mission

Kahlile Mehr

SHORT, SOLID, BULL-NECKED ELDER WILLIAM TUCKER, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, would grip your hand firmly and ask earnestly, "How are you, Brother?" (Harvey, April 1986). Elder Loftin Harvey, Jr., several months senior to Tucker in the mission, at first thought this new acquaintance was simply odd. Later, he, along with many others, would come to respect and admire Tucker, and finally their paths would be drawn together before a Church tribunal in which the course of Harvey's life would forever be altered.

To mission leaders and missionaries alike, Elder Tucker had the qualities of an ideal leader for proselyting. In September 1957 Harold W. Lee, Tucker's first mission president, pointed him out to another newly arrived missionary, Marlene Wessel, and said, "If you want to be a good missionary and baptize, watch Elder Tucker" (Owens 1986). Frank Willardsen, a fellow missionary, remembers his piercing eyes and aura of charisma (June 1986). In person, he was quiet, soft-spoken, gentle, and confident (Norton 1979, 2; Harvey, April 1986). In public, he was dynamic and forceful. He was well-read in Church doctrine and engaged in missionary work with a gusto that caught the attention of the whole mission.

Early in 1958 Tucker became the second counselor in the French Mission presidency, and, in the absence of a first counselor, the only assistant to Mission President Milton Christensen. Tucker traveled in the mission frequently, conducting study classes with missionary elders, preaching over the pulpit to the French members, and performing the diurnal labors of tracting and contacting with individual missionaries. He was widely known and admired.

Yet unseen dissonance belied an orthodox demeanor. Tucker harbored many unresolved questions about the Church. A convert to Mormonism in California at age fifteen, he had immersed himself in a study of its history and

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doctrine. Intrigued by the former practice of polygamy and the many “mysteries” mentioned but not clearly defined in the statements of early Church authorities, he began to develop his own divergent conclusions and to question the teachings of modern Church authorities (Bradlee and Van Atta 1981, 63). His unorthodox notions, however, did not preclude his accepting a mission call.

In France he shared his conclusions with others. Conducting a mission within a mission, he sifted through the elders and sisters looking for his own harvest of receptive minds. Many began to credit his teachings above those of Church authorities, and to the many young missionaries who were attracted to him as a paragon of proselyting, he opened a Pandora’s box of doubt.

The matter culminated in September 1958, when all French missionaries crossed the channel to attend the dedication of the London Temple. Alerted Church authorities interviewed the entire contingent to determine their allegiance. Many repented, but nine were excommunicated after a trial that was without precedent in the history of LDS missionary work.

The nine were not all Tucker’s confederates. In particular, Harvey, never party to the lengthy doctrinal trysts with Tucker or his inner circle, unexpectedly found himself sitting with the defendants on that September day in London. While the formal trial lasted less than a day, Harvey’s inner trial of faith and testimony continued for decades.

The story of Loftin Harvey, Jr., is not, then, the story of the French apostasy. Rather, it is a study of testimony. While faithfully serving his mission, he was inadvertently entrapped in the web of Tucker’s apostasy. His story raises questions of significance to those considering the nature of faith and adherence to that faith.

To understand the whirlpool of events that swept Harvey toward excommunication we must trace in more detail Tucker’s key role in creating the trial of faith in France. In Salt Lake City, while en route to France, Tucker had obtained an interview with Apostle Joseph Fielding Smith, known as a doctrinal authority. Tucker had not been satisfied with the interview (Chard 1965, 114). However, Elder Smith apparently had not found him unworthy to continue on his mission, nor had Tucker declined to continue on his way.

Tucker arrived in the French Mission in October 1956 and was assigned to work in Geneva, Switzerland. Many French missionaries were stationed in Belgium or French-speaking Switzerland, awaiting visas permitting them to enter France itself.

Elder Tucker was initiated into missionary work with a practical joke. Left alone at the missionary quarters, he was visited by Marilyn Lamborn, one of the sister missionaries, posing as a streetwalker. She tried several times to solicit his business. He refused at every point and, when the other missionaries returned, innocently shared his relief with them at his escape from temptation. Everyone hooted at the outrageous prank and this obviously high-principled elder’s discomfiture (Harvey, Sept. 1986). Tucker’s thinking may have been deviant, but he was not unscrupulous.

Tucker remained in Geneva four months. In February 1957, he was transferred to Marseille on the southern coast of France with David Shore

as a companion. In Shore he found a kindred spirit. These two like-minded elders intensively prayed, fasted, studied, and in other ways actively sought spiritual growth. Their devotion and energy was unusual in the French mission in 1957 and attracted attention mission-wide.

Proselyting had never been easy in the French Mission. Full-scale missionary work dated from the end of the First World War, yet in 1957, 130 missionaries baptized only 110 converts and a mere thirty of those baptisms occurred in France proper. Statistically, France occupied the basement compared to other European missions (Norton 1979, 1).

Missionaries, who respond ebulliently to success, are equally disheartened by failure. Morale was low. Discouraged seniors would at times ditch their junior companions and go to movies or other diversions (Norton 1979, 1). In some cases, missionaries diverted their attention from preaching to romancing. Other missionaries simply lay in bed late, neglected their work, and were generally frivolous, light-minded, and unspiritual (Wright 1963, 122). When word spread that missionaries in Marseille were fasting, praying, prophesying, and baptizing, the aspirations of others began to revive (Norton 1979, 2).

The key word in Marseille was “preparation,” and missionaries there pursued preparation to an extreme unseen elsewhere in the mission. While the mission standard was to proselyte forty-five hours a week and to study eight to ten hours, the Marseille elders were studying sixty to seventy hours and proselyting six to eight hours. In their preaching and discussion, they sought to emulate a style, attributed to early Church missionaries, of more decisive and visionary discourse. The approach appeared to be effective. Attendance at Church meetings rose dramatically, and more baptisms were registered in Marseille than elsewhere in the mission (Norton 1979, 2–3). Meanwhile a new mission president, Milton Christensen, had arrived in France in November 1957. Before departing, President Lee recommended Tucker to Christensen as a prospective counselor.

Ironically, while trying to convert others, Tucker continued to sway from his own conversion. Even prior to his mission, he had concluded that the Church had erred in abolishing polygamy (Wright 1963, 121). At some point he developed aberrant views regarding priesthood authority, the guidance of the spirit, the temple garment, and the Word of Wisdom.

Tucker’s Marseille companion, David Shore, proved to be a fellow traveler in many of these beliefs, including the necessity of practicing polygamy (Chard 1965, 114). He and Shore sustained their mutual discord through correspondence. After Tucker was transferred to work in Herstal, Belgium, in October 1957, Tucker’s companion in Herstal, Ron Peterson, remembers that Tucker would rave about “epistles” from Shore, calling them “spiritually colossal” (Peterson, April 1986). Shore left the mission in January 1958, promising to send Tucker any literature he could find that was consonant with their beliefs.

Tucker’s reputation continued to blossom in Herstal. He reinvigorated the branch, attendance rising dramatically as it had done in Marseille (Harvey, June 1986). Others spoke of him as “setting the French mission on fire,” and

his claim that he received revelation to guide his work rapidly became the talk of the mission (Wright 1963, 122). It was at this juncture in February 1958, sixteen months into his mission, that Mission President Milton Christensen called him to serve as his second counselor. The president commented in the mission journal, 6 February 1958, "The Lord truly blessed me in the selection of This Elder, who is very strong in the Gospel and who is loved by all the missionaries. I feel that together we will be able to accomplish a great deal in the French Mission."

Prospects for mission success never seemed better than in 1958. In the spring, French language editions of the Doctrine and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price were published. Word spread throughout the mission that the nighttime of the French Mission was over. New hope and enthusiasm was matched by an upsurge in converts presaging the possibility of more than 200 baptisms within the year, twice the number than in any previous year since the organization of the mission (Chard 1965, 112).

An elder who proselyted door-to-door with Elder Tucker after his appointment as counselor recalls: "His door approach was firm and respectful. Lessons were simple, clear, forceful, and adapted to the special needs of each individual contact" (Norton 1979, 3). This public performance could not help but gain the confidence of his fellow missionaries. In approaching them to gauge their susceptibility to his private beliefs, he worked clandestinely, not intending, it would appear, to cause defection from the Church but to lay the groundwork for what he perceived as needed Church reforms.

Much of Tucker's influence was definitely for the good. He was a firm advocate of the Word of Wisdom. He worked hard and his strong recommendation for spirituality in missionary work inspired many to greater exertion in their own callings (Wright 1963, 122). Juna Abbott, for example, had been an airline stewardess. As a sister missionary, she remained cosmopolitan, sophisticated, and excessively concerned with make-up and appearances. Strongly impressed with the teachings of the Tucker group, she changed dramatically, becoming simple, austere, and studious (Harvey, June 1986, Sept. 1986).

Tucker attracted various confederates, one of whom was J. Bruce Wakeham from Duarte, California, and a member of the same Pasadena Stake as Tucker. He and Wakeham not only seemed cast in the same mold, but Tucker effusively praised his cohort, on one occasion pointing to Wakeham and exclaiming, "Now, there is a prophet of God!" (Peterson, March 1986)

A second adherent was Stephen Silver. Appointed as Tucker's companion after he became a counselor, he absorbed Tucker's teachings on a daily basis. According to one acquaintance, Tucker's teaching profoundly affected Silver's personality. Previously fun-loving, cheerful, and energetic, he became somber, pious, and reticent (Hart 1987).

A third confederate, the ethereal and elusive Daniel Jordan, struck others as extreme in his attitudes and action. He refused to eat white bread or chocolate. He would pray in the open, looking straight up in the air. He kept a pencil and pad by his bedside to record his dreams, which he considered revela-

tions. Rather than proselyte, he generally devoted himself to study. His abnormal behavior and aloofness at times frightened others (Turner 1986).

Tucker gathered these three elders to the Paris mission center in March 1958. During the next several months, all four continuously traveled the mission publicly proclaiming the gospel but privately propounding their own special doctrine. They would team up with individual missionaries during the day and in the evening conduct study and testimony sessions.

Usually, they would test a missionary's receptiveness by stating an apostate principle (Peterson 1986). What came next would depend upon how the elder reacted. If he was confused and quizzical, they might pursue the topic to bring him around. If he denounced their principle and appeared to be knowledgeable, they would drop the subject.

One prospective adherent was Ronald M. Jarvis. Arriving in the French Mission in late 1957, serious-minded and dedicated, he had come on his mission with a testimony of the gospel but, according to a post-mission interview, also determined that he would follow his testimony if it conflicted with the direction of Church authorities (in Wright 1963, 123). He was displeased to find some missionaries shiftless and inattentive to their spiritual development. He was equally disgruntled with what he regarded as a lack of spiritual vitality among the local members. Critical of the mission as a whole, he was thus disposed to be greatly impressed by the energetic work of Tucker and his associates.

Elder Jarvis met Elder Shore, Tucker's Marseille companion, as Shore was leaving the mission field. Jarvis reflected in his journal, "Never have I met a man who more completely won my respect and confidence. My entire soul reached out for instruction and he imparted quite a bit to me concerning the wearing of the Priesthood garments and concerning the spiritual value of the Word of Wisdom" (in Wright 1963, 60–61). Jarvis was in Paris from January until August 1958, constantly exposed to Tucker and his adherents, and by that April he had become totally absorbed in the movement.

While Tucker taught the primacy of seeking the Spirit for guidance in conducting missionary work, he privately went out of bounds, encouraging the elders to discount the current Church leaders' teachings in favor of doctrines culled from sources such as the *Journal of Discourses*, a compilation of sermons by early Church authorities (Silver 1961, 2). He taught that some General Authorities lived polygamously in secret (Peterson, March 1986) and that the Church proper had collectively apostatized from the principles on which it had been founded. He decried the unquestioning acceptance of tradition and urged immediate reformation. Jarvis commented in his journal: "The events of the next few years are going to try this church from the bottom to the top and I fear much persecution from the members of the church who are founded on tradition rather than real testimony" (in Wright 1963, 124–25).

Confronted by Tucker's beliefs, many elders now considered issues they had not encountered, much less resolved, before their missions. Elders with little Church experience were particularly susceptible to Tucker's visionary teachings. Caught up in his enthusiasm and conviction, they were perhaps

unprepared to determine whether or not the spirit Tucker instilled in them was the true spirit of missionary work by which they should guide their own efforts.

Missionaries also did not always realize that in considering Tucker's ideas they were courting apostasy. Marilyn Lamborn, the sister missionary who had first met Tucker in Geneva, later admitted: "I was just thrilled with my new knowledge. I'd write home and say these beautiful doors were being opened to me. I guess my letters must have sounded crazy. I really didn't think I would ever have to give up my beloved church. I didn't know I was headed in that direction" (in Bradlee and Van Atta 1981, 65).

Elder Tucker held great sway over the entire Paris corps of elders as well as many others throughout the mission. One estimate is that a third of the 130 missionaries in the French Mission eventually came to be in sympathy with Tucker (Norton 1979, 1). According to another source about thirty of the missionaries could have been considered firm believers (Cummings, April 1987). Under his influence, missionaries began to study rather than proselyte, and some began to wear only the "old style" temple garments (Wright 1963, 126).

Loftin Harvey, as yet unaffected by the Tucker faction and their teachings, was transferred to Marseille in the winter of 1957–58 just as Tucker was leaving for Herstal. It was in Marseille that Harvey first indirectly encountered Tucker's doctrines. Harvey was the senior companion of J. Bruce Wakeham, Tucker's California double who in spring would be appointed to join Tucker's Paris group as a traveling elder. That winter Harvey and Wakeham worked in Marseille with Elders Bob Johnson and his junior companion, Wayne Cheney. During a testimony meeting of the four elders and sisters Marilyn Lamborn and Wanda Scott, Cheney professed belief in the Adam-God theory, a doctrine no longer taught in the Church. Johnson, his senior companion, objected vehemently. Before the confrontation came to blows, as Harvey suspected it might, he took control of the situation, trading junior companions with Johnson until tempers settled. In the meantime, Johnson, an ardent admirer of Joseph Fielding Smith, wrote to him concerning the incident (Harvey, April 1986).

Word eventually got back to President Christensen that something was amiss in Marseille. In April 1958, he sent Tucker to investigate. Tucker made several visits in April and May, each time assuring the president that the situation was in hand and that the missionaries had been counseled not to study things that they could not understand. The president did not yet realize that the person assigned to resolve the problem was the source of the problem.

Having preceded Tucker into the mission field by four months, Harvey had never been openly approached to share in Tucker's teachings, even by Wakeham in Marseille. Favorable reports and personal acquaintance reversed his initial negative impression of Tucker. In fact, Harvey was deeply moved when, during a testimony meeting, Tucker called him forward to speak on the principle of fasting. Harvey had been fasting secretly and took this request to be more than a coincidence (Harvey, April 1986). Yet Harvey had no doctrinal ties to the Tucker faction.

In May, Harvey was transferred from Marseille to Mulhouse and in August to Nancy. Little did he anticipate that the Adam-God controversy in Marseille was the warning breeze before the tempest.

While attention was focused on Marseille, the affair smoldered more dangerously in Paris, emitting fumes that would soon expose its presence to Church authorities. Elder Shore, having returned to Utah, eventually made good on his promise to Tucker. He perused Salt Lake bookstores and among other items, purchased *Priesthood Expounded*, a doctrinal polemic presenting beliefs held by the Church of the Firstborn. This church, organized by the LeBaron family in Mexico, claimed priesthood authority superior to that found in the LDS Church and also propounded the necessity of practicing polygamy. Tucker was very impressed with the book's arguments (Silver 1961, 5). He and Sister Lamborn typed excerpts from the literature and that July circulated them to other dissident missionaries (Bradlee and Van Atta 1981, 66).

The serious-minded new Paris recruit, Ron Jarvis, requested more information directly from Ervil LeBaron in Mexico. It arrived in late July. In the meantime, Harvey Harper, a missionary from Bakersfield, California, was appointed as his senior companion. The two jointly considered the material. Jarvis recorded in his journal, 2 August 1958, their efforts to receive guidance:

Upon deciding to retire last night we were discussing plural marriage, and upon Brother Harper's suggestion, we read the 132nd Section of *The Doctrine and Covenants* and then asked the Lord for a testimony of that principle. We took turns praying and after being plagued a bit by the presence of evil spirits the light of the Holy Ghost fell upon me and I received a testimony of the truth of that principle. Brother Harper could not seem to feel the same assurance which I felt and on several more attempts to pray we finally retired about 200 AM after praying for two hours (in Wright 1963, 127).

Their prayers continued but to no avail for Elder Harper. Nevertheless, they had both lost the desire to continue their missions. Twice they left their Paris duties to inquire into possibilities for working to earn their passage home. Finally, on 14 August, they divulged their feelings to President Christensen (Wright 1963, 128).

President Christensen, a generous and forgiving individual, tried to talk the problem through with them. He then counseled them to join him in fasting and prayer prior to meeting with him again the next day. When Jarvis prayed that night, he struggled to receive a testimony of which course to pursue. The effort was inconclusive (Wright 1963, 128). On the morrow, Elder Tucker was also present, having just returned to Paris from a visit to an outlying district. Under the direct questioning of the president, Tucker's cover began to unravel, and President Christensen soon realized this was something bigger than he could handle alone. On 19 August, a Tuesday, he telephoned the First Presidency in Salt Lake. The following Saturday, Apostle Hugh B. Brown arrived in Paris.

Apostle Brown was not able to undo in a weekend attitudes and decisions that had been building for months. He could not dissuade the two disaffected companions from departing without permission from the mission. Jarvis, who

had been so impressed by the manner and arguments of Elder Shore, was not impressed that Brown was inspired of God (Wright 1963, 124).

Meanwhile, after his talk with President Christensen but before Apostle Brown's arrival on Saturday, Tucker had gone with his traveling companion, H. Ray Hart, to Lausanne, Switzerland. Hart had dismissed the doctrines Tucker had brought up in casual conversation, thereby unknowingly disqualifying himself as a target of Tucker's proselytizing. Hart, unaware of Tucker's dissonance, was attracted to Tucker personally and thought he had the qualities of a General Authority. His first intimation that something was amiss came Friday evening after dinner at the branch president's home. Tucker began to argue convincingly that David O. McKay was indeed the president of the Church but was not a prophet. Hart was almost convinced and so greatly disquieted that he slept little that night. The next morning a telegram arrived requesting they report immediately to the mission home (Hart 1987).

The two traveled to Paris in silence arriving late Saturday evening. Early Sunday morning Apostle Brown interviewed them individually. Hart at first supported Tucker out of friendship and admiration, but he eventually realized that he had been duped. Tucker came out in open defiance of Apostle Brown and the Church (Hart 1987). Apostle Brown summarily released Tucker as a mission counselor.

According to one source, Tucker's spiritual state powerfully affected even those who had never met him. Mary B. Firmage, Zina B. Hodson, Zola Brown, and Lawrence Brown, all children of Apostle Brown, arrived at the French mission home on Sunday, 24 August. They had been on an excursion in Europe and knew nothing of what was afoot in France. As they sat down to dinner, a young man came in. Suddenly, Mary remembers, she felt a terrible spirit. She and Zina looked at each other, and Zina whispered, "It's Satan!" indicating that she shared Mary's feelings (Firmage 1986).

On Saturday, 30 August, a week after Apostle Brown's arrival, Henry D. Moyle, a counselor in the First Presidency of the Church, addressed a conference of French missionaries in Brussels. He plainly said that missionaries should get up early and spend their time proselytizing. In their studies, they should concentrate on the scriptures and that not to excess (Hart 1987; Snow 1987). The text of a speech he gave two years later to the French missionaries on the same subject provides a clear statement of his position: "If you want to put your time in the mission field to the best advantage, stay with the scriptures. They are complicated enough for the best of us. There is no greater challenge for us than to read the scriptures and then teach the simple principles that are found therein" (Moyle 1960, 1).

The pious Stephen Silver, whose personality had changed so noticeably as Tucker's Paris companion, had been serving in Nice as the district president in the Marseille District since June. While he had rejected the modern Church's authority or truth, he still believed in the original Restoration. He wrote in his journal, "The great truths I was learning were strengthening my testimony of the mission of Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon. I felt the responsibility of bringing these truths to the French people" (Silver 1961, 2). Yet he

soon found that it was not easy to be in the Church and yet not be part of it. Juna Abbott, the former airline stewardess serving in Nice and a member of Elder Silver's district, received notice from her friend, Sister Wessel in Liège, about Elder Moyle's district conference address. Sister Abbott informed Silver, who recorded his dismay, "All we had studied in the wonderful old books and believed in was thrown down and trampled upon and rejected" (Silver 1961, 2).

Silver next learned from Sister Lamborn, then serving in Marseille, that he, Tucker, Wakeham, and Jordan, the four Paris confederates who had served as traveling elders, stood accused of undermining the mission. Yet Silver had not perceived their efforts as a conspiracy, feeling rather that, "we were united only in certain beliefs and in our hope for the future" (1961, 13). The question of whether a conspiracy existed or not would become a key point of misunderstanding between Church authorities and missionary dissidents in the days to follow.

Another key question that all French missionaries would soon confront was enunciated by Silver's companion, Gary Barnett, the Saturday evening in Marseille prior to their departure for London. Abruptly he queried Silver, "Brother, I want to ask you a question. Do you believe David O. McKay is a prophet?" Silver temporized but eventually admitted his disbelief. They then had a long talk and went to bed. Neither could sleep. After about an hour of wakeful silence, Barnett told Silver that he simply could not accept what Silver had told him (Silver 1961, 3).

The next day was a fast Sunday, and all the missionaries in the district gathered for a testimony meeting. Silver noted that missionaries previously in sympathy with his beliefs now turned their backs on him. He labeled their testimonies that day "parrot-like in their repetition" (Silver 1961, 3). That night the missionaries departed en masse for London.

Daniel Jordan, after serving as a traveling elder, had next been assigned to Bordeaux as the Bordeaux District President, replacing Don Norton, who would be leaving the mission field. The other senior companion in Bordeaux was Neil Poulsen who also shared the dissidents' concerns that the elders' preaching was not decisive or visionary and that early Church doctrines had been cast aside without the Lord's approval (Norton 1979, 4). Neil had been David Shore's last junior companion before Shore was released from his mission.

The extremist Jordan was, as usual, humorless and intense. While he spoke of how fortunate they were to be elders in a mission marked to lead out in the great work of the Lord, Jordan's tactics as the new district president were abrupt and disquieting. As Norton packed to leave, Jordan and Norton's former junior companion, David Ririe, went out to work. Ririe returned disconsolate. He explained in tears that Jordan had cut off all their contacts because they would not agree to be baptized in two weeks and that Jordan claimed he did so on the basis of revelation (Norton 1979, 5). The unhappy Ririe was soon transferred and William Turner appointed junior companion to Jordan.

As for J. Bruce Wakeham from Tucker's Pasadena stake, after serving as a traveler, he was appointed the district president of Strasborg, which included the city of Nancy. Loftin Harvey arrived in Nancy from Mulhouse in late August and found the branch in an uproar following one of Wakeham's visits. While Wakeham was there a local leader claimed he saw angels during the confirmation ceremony of a woman who claimed to be a visionary. This claim riled a faction in the branch that did not like the woman. Wakeham, however, had seconded the local leader's statement to the consternation of this faction. Wakeham later confided to Harvey that he had confirmed the statement only to support the leader and not because he could actually confirm the presence of angels (Harvey, Sept. 1986). Harvey was dismayed to learn of this deception.

Wakeham's teachings were an additional source of unrest among the missionaries. He instructed them in unorthodox doctrines such as conscientious objection, the united order, and the "new" form of spirituality (Harvey Journal, 1 Dec. 1960). Harvey did not agree with Wakeham's teachings. However, although he objected to these odd doctrines and argued with one of the elders in Nancy, probably one of the Tucker faction, about the Adam-God theory and conscientious objection, Harvey had not yet made a connection between these incidents and the Adam-God argument in Marseilles between Elders Johnson and Cheney (Harvey, Sept. 1986). He mistakenly viewed them as isolated outcroppings of heresy rather than evidence of a larger groundswell.

By the time the missionaries gathered in Paris to cross the channel for the dedication of the London Temple, many missionaries had an inkling that something was amiss in the French Mission. The atmosphere was tense and expectant. Missionaries learned that the companions Jarvis and Harper had jointly abandoned their missions and that Tucker had been removed from the mission presidency. In the absence of detail, many rumors — some exaggerated and unfounded — circulated through the groups of elders (Silver 1961, 4).

As for Tucker, Wakeham, and Silver, they found each other in the jostling milieu at the train station. Feeling a great sense of separation from the rest, they confided in each other their intent to leave their mission and were elated in their sense of unity (Silver 1961, 4).

On their way to the channel, Silver conversed with Wanda Scott, who had been a companion to Marilyn Lamborn in Marseille. Elder Silver and Sister Scott had shared scintillating but aberrant beliefs only shortly before, and she had been leaning toward the Tucker faction but had apparently been redirected in conversations with Apostle Brown. Once again Silver was dismayed at the widening gulf between himself and former friends and allies. Tucker's teachings had fomented a trial of testimony that needed to be resolved individually, missionary by missionary. Many who had espoused Tucker's doctrine privately would soon think twice when to do so openly would mean accounting to Church authorities. Assurance would turn to confusion, and they would question Tucker's teachings as they had previously questioned those of the Church.

Poor weather made the channel crossing rough and many missionaries ill. For Harvey it was a great adventure, especially since he was looking forward to the temple dedication and did not suffer from seasickness. He went about consoling the ill as best he could.

Upon their arrival in London Monday evening, several of those most suspected of being in collusion with Tucker were summoned to the British Mission Home from the hotel where the missionaries were quartered. These included elders Tucker, Wakeham, and Silver, and sisters Lamborn, Abbott, Wessel, and Fulk. In the case of sisters Wessel and Fulk, the suspicion of collusion was a long way off the mark. Marlene Wessel was the sister who as a new arrival had been instructed to emulate Elder Tucker (Harvey, Sept. 1986). She was deeply involved in missionary work and had discounted Tucker's teachings as something beyond her ken (Owens 1986). Eunice (Nancy) Fulk, ingenuous and unsophisticated (Harvey, Sept. 1986), was also not the type to be interested in deep doctrinal questions. According to Silver, Fulk had known next to nothing of the whole question before London (Silver 1961, 6), although she had become a devotee of Tucker the person, accepting whatever he said unquestioningly.

The interviews at the mission home lasted from 9:00 P.M. until 2:30 A.M. Church authorities included: Jesse Curtis, Swiss-Austrian Mission president and friend of Silver's family; Howard W. Hunter, Pasadena Stake president and a former ecclesiastical leader of both Tucker and Wakeham; Clifton Kerr, British Mission president; and apostle Richard L. Evans. The main intent of the interviewers appears to have been to deal with the missionaries on a personal level. President Curtis tried to convince Silver of the disgrace his disaffection would bring to his family. Silver also recalls President Kerr speaking to him about the evils of polygamy and the ruin caused to families who still tried to live it. These arguments seemed irrelevant to Silver who, at that time, was more interested in discussing doctrinal issues and priesthood authority (Silver 1961, 5-6). None of the interviews appear to have accomplished their purpose.

Early the next morning, Tuesday, 9 September, all French missionaries were interviewed by General Authorities before leaving for the temple dedication services. A select group was called out first, being those most suspected of disharmony with the Church.

Harvey, to his surprise, was included in the first group of interviewees. A week earlier, while still in France, he had confessed to President Christensen that he did not honestly know that David O. McKay was a prophet of God. President Christensen did not know that Harvey's flawed testimony was in no way influenced by Tucker or his doctrines, and Harvey had no way of anticipating the reaction his confession would soon elicit. That Tuesday morning, he entered the interview room and was confronted by apostles Joseph Fielding Smith, Hugh B. Brown, and Henry D. Moyle. They came to the point quickly, Apostle Smith asking simply, "Do you know that David O. McKay is a prophet of God?" Harvey had grown up in the Church. He had accepted most of its teachings casually, with the exception of a strong testimony he had received

concerning the Book of Mormon. So, he reflected to himself, could he honestly answer yes to the question posed? He felt a strong obligation to be honest and simplified a sudden surge of emotions, desires, and questions with the reply, "No sir, I'm sorry I don't." Apostle Smith was unaware of Harvey's special situation and, according to Harvey, exclaimed, "I can't believe it!" "Disgraceful!" "Shocking!" With that, Harvey was summarily dismissed pending a more complete interview after the temple dedication. Harvey exited, feeling a great sense of relief that the interview was over. He felt satisfied that he had been honest even if he had not said what he knew was expected of him as a missionary (Harvey Journal, 1 Dec. 1960, 3, 7; Harvey, April 1986).

Joseph Fielding Smith and Henry D. Moyle interviewed Marlene Wessel, not a Tucker adherent, but a friend to the sisters under his influence. Her demeanor made it difficult for them to determine exactly what her position was. Elder Smith finally decided, "Don't worry about her. She has a cloud over her." Moyle replied, "Still, we can't let her go to the dedication because we have not let the others go" (Owens 1986). Marlene, like Loftin, had failed the interview.

William Turner, junior companion to the extremist Daniel Jordan but a new missionary not suspected of collusion, was interviewed by a single Church authority, Elray L. Christiansen. Turner had not prepared doctrinally for his mission, taking the gospel for granted and accepting a mission call in stride. In similar fashion, he had accepted what his senior Jordan had taught him without much question. He innocently and forthrightly answered all Christiansen's questions. Yes, he had heard that some General Authorities practiced polygamy. Yes, he thought you should not eat meat. Finally, Christiansen informed Turner that he believed in false doctrine and had better change or he would be excommunicated. When Turner protested in a befuddled way, Christiansen looked him straight in the eye and fortunately detected that Turner only needed help. He jotted a short note to President Christensen and sent Turner to find him (Turner 1986).

On the way, Turner passed an open doorway and to his dismay saw his companion, Daniel Jordan, openly arguing with Joseph Fielding Smith. Alarmed, he interrupted to ask his companion if he knew what he was doing. Apostle Smith instructed him to be on his way, then came to the door and closed it (Turner 1986).

Upon receipt of the note, President Christensen directed Turner to a room where he sat alone and waited, fearing he would be excommunicated. He watched missionaries who had passed their interviews go by, cheerful in their anticipation of the temple dedication to be held that day. He remembers feeling engulfed by an abyss from which he might never escape. Although he was granted permission to attend the temple dedication after all, coming to terms with the experience took many years (Turner 1986).

Bruce Cummings, another missionary who had been in sympathy with Tucker's teachings, found that the interview radically changed his perspective. It had been easy to be persuaded by Tucker's personality and logic. However, when listening carefully, eye-to-eye, with a General Authority, paying

close attention to whether the communication was spiritual as well as temporal, he recognized a difference. For Cummings, the interview was decidedly beneficial since he recanted the thoughts of the previous few months (Cummings 1987).

Ten missionaries did not pass the interviews: William Tucker, J. Bruce Wakeham, Stephen Silver, Daniel Jordan, Neil Poulsen, Loftin Harvey, Marilyn Lamborn, Juna Abbott, Nancy Fulk, and Marlene Wessel. None attended the temple dedication though Harvey and Poulsen went to view the temple grounds while the dedication was in progress.

Harvey enjoyed the companionship of Poulsen who was an earnest follower of Tucker. Indeed, Harvey now began to see himself somewhat romantically as an "apostate," though not from any affiliation with Tucker. Rather, he felt valorous for having spoken out that he did not "know" when many whom he suspected were equally unsure had undoubtedly answered "yes" for fear of being ostracized for their differences. He even began to revel in the shock he gave elders when he informed them of his status (Harvey Journal, 1 Dec. 1960).

The next morning, Wednesday, 10 September the ten missionaries were called into a meeting with the assembled authorities present. President Moyle pled with the group to come to their senses. He said that he decried a secret pact among them. This was not technically true; the group was not linked by any overt agreement. Yet their failure to sustain David O. McKay as a prophet united them in overt disaffection with the Church. They were offered clemency if they recanted. Moyle attempted various lines of argument, pointing out that if they had a testimony of one principle of the gospel it was a testimony of the whole. If they believed Joseph Smith was a prophet, he reasoned with them, it followed that David O. McKay was a prophet. He suggested in various ways that they ought to listen to age and experience and desist in being rebellious youth. A member of the dissident group raised a doctrinal question. President Moyle dismissed it, commenting that they, not the Church, were on trial (Silver 1961, 7; Harvey, April 1986; Harvey Journal, 1 Dec. 1960).

Both President Christensen and his wife also spoke to the group, bearing their testimonies and begging them to change. He said they could stay on their missions even if they no longer did any proselyting. While Harvey regarded Christensen's plea as humble and sincere, neither he nor the others were dissuaded (Harvey Journal, 1 Dec. 1960, 9). The meeting was adjourned for a second round of individual interviews.

Harvey met with presidents Moyle and Christensen and a member of the Church's Presiding Bishopric, Thorpe B. Isaacson. The stress of unprecedented circumstances and the mistaken perception that the ten were conspirators largely dispelled patience and understanding. The interview proceeded, in Harvey's opinion, more like an interrogation. He felt he was not able to say more than "yes" or "no" without being cut short. Harvey experienced Bishop Isaacson's arguments as browbeating. On the other hand, he was again touched, but not persuaded, by President Christensen's pleadings for him to repent. After the interview, Harvey arose to leave and before departing em-

braced President Christensen. The strain of the moment suddenly surfaced and both men cried effusively. Harvey left the room and waited alone in the hallway (Harvey Journal, 1 Dec. 1960, 9–10).

Distrust lead to further misunderstandings. The same three authorities next interviewed Neil Poulsen. When he exited the room, he shook Harvey's hand, and they embraced. Bishop Isaacson, peering out of the interview room, misinterpreted their greeting and accosted them, exclaiming, "I caught you in your blood oath! That handshake of the secret pact won't do anything for you!" (Harvey, Journal, 1 Dec. 1960, 10; Harvey, April 1986)

However, these interviews did at last succeed in separating the wrongly accused Sister Wessel from the group suspected of complicity. She left sobbing from the strain of the ordeal as well as exhaustion. She had been up into the early morning hours listening to the arguments of concerned elders trying to convince her to stay on her mission. Her private quest to decide what to do had not yet been successful. Much of her confusion was caused by hearing too many arguments. The authorities seemed to her too upset to testify, and though she wanted to hear testimony, she did not say so. She knew that she did not want to be excommunicated, yet, hurt and confused, her desire to remain on her mission had been deeply shaken (Owens 1986).

Harvey, also feeling rebuffed by the General Authorities, began to see excommunication as a possibility, although he still desired a testimony. He queried President Moyle during a break, asking him if he knew David O. McKay was a prophet. He was expecting a powerful statement of faith that would perhaps overpower and convince him; Moyle simply said, "Yes" (Harvey, April 1986).

Harvey dismissed this simple answer and chose rather to identify with his fellow defendants. He found comfort and companionship with them, though he did not yet share their doctrinal perceptions. Headstrong and swelling with youthful ardor, he began to accept the fact that he would be excommunicated because he did not "know" (Harvey Journal, 1 Dec. 1960, 12).

Meanwhile the other French missionaries were attending a day-long testimony meeting at a local LDS chapel. Hugh B. Brown first addressed the group and then, beginning at 10:00 A.M., each individual missionary stood to testify. During a noon break, Apostle Brown asked four elders to accompany him to the mission home. H. Ray Hart, one of the four and the most recent companion of Elder Tucker, was not aware that they would serve as members of an excommunication court (Hart 1987).

While President Brown and the four elders were in transit, a second general meeting of the still dissident missionaries was being held. Bishop Isaacson spoke first. He lambasted the group for secretly promulgating their beliefs. President Christensen then addressed the group with his most ardent appeal. Stephen Silver witnessed only an excited man shouting at them (Silver 1961, 7) whereas H. Ray Hart, entering the mission home, said he recognized the voice of President Christensen, but it was unusually powerful, as if the Lord were speaking through him (Hart 1987).

With the arrival of Apostle Brown, it was decided to hold the court imme-

diately. The nine remaining dissidents requested a prayer circle. Bishop Isaacson refused, but President Moyle intervened and gave consent. The nine were left alone while the authorities went elsewhere to organize the court (Silver 1961, 7; Harvey Journal, 1 Dec. 1960, 11–12).

The court convened, and Elder Hart was asked to pray. He found it very difficult because an awful spirit oppressed him, a spirit that seemed to him to desist as the trial progressed. President Moyle later explained to him that both the spirit of the Lord and the adversary were present, exerting their opposed influences (Hart 1987).

Presiding at the court, Elder Moyle posed two questions: (1) “Do you sustain David O. McKay as a prophet, seer, and revelator of God?” and (2) “Do you want to be excommunicated?” Each participant responded individually. All nine ultimately answered no to the first question and yes to the second.

Tucker and Silver argued with President Brown but with little result. Harvey did not argue. He remembers commenting that he would like to know the truth and have someone help him but that he felt no one would answer his questions, leaving him little choice but to be excommunicated (Harvey, April 1986, Sept. 1986). Noting his ambivalence, President Moyle invited Harvey to separate from the group and have his case reviewed individually (Hart 1987). Harvey declined. He had finally cast his lot.

The court lasted for several hours. The verdict, pronounced at 4:00 P.M., was: all nine excommunicated. President Christensen wrote later, “It was truly one of the most heart-rending things to ever come into my life, to see our brothers and sisters excommunicated from the Church for apostasy” (“President’s” 1958, n.p.).

After the verdict was rendered, President Brown added that when they returned home he would welcome them to come to him if ever they felt he could be of help. Harvey remembered the promise.

The four elders and the authorities who had been serving on the court then returned to the testimony meeting which was still in session. In what one missionary termed a phenomenally dramatic moment, the excommunication was announced (Snow 1987). Apostle Brown concluded the meeting at 8:00 P.M. with a discourse on the powers of the adversary and the future of the French Mission (“Excommunication,” 1958, n.p.). He described what had happened as the worst missionary apostasy in the history of the Church (Peterson 1986) and further confided that they had discussed the possibility of closing the mission but decided the temple dedication would provide the opportunity to cleanse the mission. He stated that the mission would now flourish (Hart 1987).

The group of nine was inseparable after the excommunication. Harvey, having cast his lot with the others, began to absorb the doctrines that he had once opposed. In bitterness he determined that as the “Church” had judged him of no worth, so he would judge the Church worthless. However, as a whole, the group felt more euphoric than bitter now that the matter was formally concluded. Commenting on the departure of the missionaries return-

ing to France, Silver wrote: "We were so happy and they all looked so sad. They must have thought we were true devils. We of course tried to be understanding but there was such a joy and liberty in our hearts that it was difficult not to have a smile at all times" (Silver 1961, 7).

To their surprise Sister Wessel now joined them. Though she remained a member in good standing, she had opted to accompany them home, hoping to sort out her concerns more successfully there. The group returned to France to gather up their possessions before departing from Paris for the United States. Short of funds, Harvey hitchhiked to Nancy and back. Left by the Church to their own devices to get home, they pooled their money to obtain ship's passage.

Suddenly, Harvey received word that news of his excommunication may have caused a tragedy at his home in Utah. The bishop in his ward, mortified by the excommunication, had announced to the congregation that Harvey would never be rebaptized as long as he was bishop. Perhaps a result of the shocking news from France, the bishop's vindictive public announcement, or perhaps merely an unhappy coincidence, Harvey's father had suffered a heart attack. Desperate to get home, Harvey obtained a loan from his girlfriend in Utah to pay for airfare and returned separately from the others (Harvey, April 1986; June 1986).

Among the missionaries who left London unscathed were some who still had doubts. Frank Willardsen remembers that his companion compensated for lingering doubts by immersing himself in the work (Willardsen 1986). Church authorities fully suspected latent sympathies among the elders. Before the year 1958 ended, Elray L. Christiansen, an assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve, toured the mission and stringently interviewed each missionary (Nelson 1986).

While wrenching, the events in London may well have been usefully cathartic. Many missionaries felt revitalized, learning to balance work and service with prayer, study, and introspection as sources of testimony. In December 1959, a little over a year after the trial, President Moyle visited the mission. Anticipating the new year, he asked the mission leaders what baptismal goal they ought to set for themselves. They consulted and agreed on 400, four times the average baptismal rate of the ten years previous. President Moyle chuckled and said, "I love to see men with more faith than I have." Then more seriously he added, "Brethren, you can have those 400 by the 4th of July" (Nelson 1986). By 4 July 1960, 404 new converts had been baptized, and by the end of 1960 the baptismal total stood at 942. It was an exceptional year in which the mission broke from the statistical mire of its past and was regenerated with an influx of new members.

In the longer term, the experience taught those who knew and had admired Elder Tucker that appearances can deceive. All too often, young unprepared elders and sisters had unwillingly adopted beliefs that were convincingly presented, but contrary to the very work they were engaged in.

Church authorities, also unprepared to deal with these unprecedented events and personalities, failed to prevent apostasy, though their efforts pared

down the size of it. Yet, more sadly, no winnowing process is error-proof and in the case of Loftin Harvey, the interviewers may not have distinguished between overly scrupulous honesty and genuine apostasy.

Consequently, Harvey exited the formal trial in London only to face the greater trial of living with the verdict. It was not easy for Harvey to return home. He suffered from the ostracism attendant to excommunication at that period. His father, who had survived the heart attack, and his mother told him he was being influenced by an evil spirit. With self-justification and some vengeance in mind he obtained an audience with Presiding Bishop Isaacson whom he had last seen in France. Accompanied by his girlfriend, he confronted the bishop with scriptural problems for which Isaacson could provide no answers. Harvey was satisfied to think he had made him look foolish in his girlfriend's eyes. She was a little comforted, wanting to be loyal to Harvey, but remained confused. His vengeful desire now somewhat sated, he telephoned Apostle Brown. Brown welcomed him with open arms and, true to his promise, listened to Harvey for hours (Harvey, April 1986; June 1986).

Harvey then felt a need to investigate the propositions of the LeBaron movement. Mexico had become the designated gathering place of the excommunicated French missionaries. Harvey was the first of the group to arrive, yet he stayed only a couple of days, then left satisfied that he had not found what he wanted.

Feeling uncomfortable at home, Harvey moved to San Francisco. He went to Pentecostal, Catholic, and Jewish services looking for something which would compel his faith. He also wrote to President McKay. The president responded, encouraging Harvey to do the Lord's will but leaving it up to him to discover what that might be in his case. He received no answer to his fasts and prayers and eventually gave up trying to know (Harvey, April 1986, June 1986).

In this frame of mind, he was approached in 1960 by two young men easily recognizable as LDS missionaries. Not knowing his background, they persisted in contacting him until he consented to lessons. After a few lessons, the senior companion, Andrew Laudie, sensing that their contact knew more than he was revealing, stopped the discussion and asked, "Brother Harvey, were you ever a missionary?" Harvey said, "Yes." With tears in his eyes, Elder Laudie rose and hugged his investigator. For Harvey, the embrace was spiritual as well as physical; he felt something he had not felt for years. This was the turning point. He was now headed back (Harvey, April 1986, June 1986).

Rebaptized in October 1961, Harvey requested the priesthood the following summer. Apostle Brown arranged an interview with Joseph Fielding Smith during July 1962. After some conversation, Apostle Smith asked, "Do you know that David O. McKay is a prophet of God?", the same question Harvey had confronted under much different circumstances almost four years earlier. Harvey said, "Yes." Apostle Smith arose without further conversation, circled to the back of his chair, laid his hands on Harvey's head and conferred the priesthood (Harvey, Aug. 1986).

Others separated from the Church because of the Tucker affair eventually returned. Of the nine excommunicants, Loftin Harvey and his friend, Neil Poulsen, were rebaptized. Four others who left France without testimonies, regained them, namely David Shore (Tucker's Marseille companion who sent the apostate literature from Utah), the companions, Ronald Jarvis and Harvey Harper who left their missions early, and Marlene Wessel. David Shore and Ronald Jarvis were both excommunicated after returning from their missions but were later rebaptized. Harvey Harper completed his term of missionary service in the Eastern States Mission. Marlene Wessel returned to France to complete her missionary service, having obtained an assurance that this was the course she should follow.

A decade passed. In 1968 Apostle Marion G. Romney visited the mission. Staying up late to visit with the staff at the mission home, he finally stood up to retire. At the doorway, he turned as if to say something that had just crossed his mind. "Oh, brethren, did I mention about Elder Tucker. He passed away recently" (Roberts 1986). Only a few of the missionaries understood the reference. William Tucker had died of acute appendicitis. Joining the LeBaron movement in Mexico after leaving France, he had eventually abandoned it as well, dying an avowed atheist in 1967 (Bradlee and Van Atta 1981, 80).

Of the seven, four elders and three sisters, who never rejoined the Church, all lived in Mexico for some time and supported the LeBaron movement. Stephen Silver, Dan Jordan, and J. Bruce Wakeham served as apostles in that group along with Tucker. Marilyn Lamborn and Nancy Fulk married Tucker, the latter union ending in divorce. Juna Abbott married Wakeham. Dan Jordan became a close associate of Ervil LeBaron and was indicted for the murder of Joel LeBaron. He left the movement and moved to Colorado. While on a hunting trip in Utah in the fall of 1987 he was killed by an unknown assailant.

Facing the opposition of nonmembers is the common fate of missionaries. Facing opposition from within their ranks was the uncommon fate of the French missionaries of 1958. Uncommon circumstances convulsed to fling individuals into paths centrifugal to that proclaimed by either faith. For Loftin Harvey, the hope to "know" was not fulfilled until long after he was publicly branded an apostate. The trial for unnumbered others also drawn into the circle of Tucker's beliefs was conducted less publicly. The verdicts rendered remain the private legacies of each individual who followed Tucker to the edge of their ken and to whatever lay beyond.

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Voyage of the Brooklyn

Lorin K. Hansen

ON 8 NOVEMBER 1845 SAINTS IN THE EASTERN STATES gathered together in conference at American Hall in New York City and listened to Apostle Orson Pratt deliver an impassioned call to exodus: “Brethren Awake!! Be determined to get out of this evil nation by next spring. We do not want one Saint to be left in the United States by that time. Let every branch in the north, south, east, and west be determined to flee Babylon, either by land or by sea” (*Times and Seasons*, 1 Dec. 1845; HC 7:520–22). Pratt reminded his audience that for sixteen years the Latter-day Saints had been persecuted. In fact, in the previous few months mobs had torched many Mormon homes around Nauvoo, Illinois (Flanders 1965, 306–41). Pressure was mounting to drive the Mormons (some 15,000) from the state. On 16 September, hoping to appease the mobs, Brigham Young had publicly announced the Church’s decision to abandon Nauvoo, and the Saints were now hurriedly preparing for a massive overland trek to the West. As a destination, Brigham Young was considering upper California, at that time Mexican territory (which included present-day California, Nevada, Utah, and Arizona).

Under instructions from Brigham Young, Pratt announced that Samuel Brannan would organize and lead another group — the first company to go by sea, which would sail from New York and go around Cape Horn to California.

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FIG. 1. The *Brooklyn* moored at the Old Slip on the East River. (Artwork by Douglas M. Fryer. Mooring location from *N.Y. Herald, Evening Mirror, N.Y. Post*, 5 Feb. 1846; *N.Y. Tribune*, 6 Feb. 1846.)

Eastern Saints were persuaded that going by sea from New York to California would be less expensive than trekking overland. Thus began preparations for emigration aboard the ship *Brooklyn*. Both the overland trek from Nauvoo and the voyage from New York had one purpose: to build a new Mormon Zion in the West where the Saints would be free from the conflicts of the past. As if to punctuate the unity of the two journeys, they began on the same day, 4 February 1846. The *Brooklyn* Saints understood that eventually the two groups would meet at or near the coast of upper California.¹

What was first envisioned as several voyages in fact became one. But even that one voyage became important in the history of the West. The *Brooklyn* voyagers were the first group of immigrants to enter California by sea after California was claimed by the United States as the spoils of the Mexican-American War. Among the first in California commerce and industry, these immigrants helped build the frontier village of Yerba Buena into a promising San Francisco. They helped discover and, for a time, develop the gold mines. But they also established homes and religious worship and pioneered California agriculture.

Because the main body of Saints stopped their overland migration at the Salt Lake Valley, the *Brooklyn* Saints were isolated from the Church for a time. Even so, they made important contributions to the Church. Their settlements at the Bay of San Francisco were a way station for many years, and the Mormons there generously assisted the missionaries and Saints traveling between the Pacific and Salt Lake City. They also sent many horticultural starts into the Great Basin. Finally, to be at the center of the Church, most of them were willing a second time to leave all behind and journey to "Zion," some called in the midst of the 1857 Utah War. They went, not across the plains, but across the formidable Sierras and the Humboldt Sink, or across the desolate southern route out of San Bernardino.

Surprisingly, this smaller part of the western migration has not been nearly so well narrated and celebrated as the overland trek. The story, when told, has too often been fragmentary and sprinkled with fictions and misconceptions. I have turned to the early sources to retell the story of that epochal voyage. The account here must be abbreviated, but I include especially those details which help correct past misconceptions and ambiguities.

¹ Brigham Young was considering several possible destinations for the Saints, including the Great Basin for a main settlement and the Pacific coast as a secondary colony and way station. Plans were kept from general knowledge, apparently to avoid preemption and interference (Christian 1981; Esplin 1982), and remained tentative until the Saints arrived in the West. Because of this secrecy and communication problems between Brigham Young and Sam Brannan, and perhaps because of Brannan's wishful thinking, Brannan thought or perhaps hoped that he was emigrating where the main body of the Church would settle. Apparently, he had been informed otherwise (Muir 1:30). In any case, Brannan told people that the main body of the Church would emigrate to California (see JH, 8 April 1849, p. 4). This was technically correct since both San Francisco Bay and the Great Basin were in "Upper California." But even more, Brannan gave the definite impression that the main body of the Church was coming to the Pacific coast (see Woodruff 2:617).

THE GATHERING AND PREPARATIONS

In mid-winter of January 1846, East Coast Saints planning to go by sea on the first emigration to California were putting their affairs in order and gathering to New York City. They came from all directions: Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. For each, the story was different, but the parting with family and friends was difficult. Daniel Stark recorded in his diary that when he left Boston his older brother Joseph Stark “cried like a baby” (1955, 25). John Horner married Elizabeth Imlay in his parents’ home in New Jersey on 20 January, and the next morning they left for New York, hoping to join with the Saints and improve their economic opportunities. According to Horner, the voyage was for them “both in time and distance a rather uncommon wedding tour” (1898, 249). A few families split up (such as the Mowrys, the Rollins, the Fowlers, the Birds, and the Haskells), part going overland, part going by sea, hoping soon to meet somewhere in the West. For Sarah Burr, the voyage was a special act of courage and faith. She came from upstate New York with her husband and fifteen-month-old son, knowing that within weeks she would be giving birth to her second child (Carter 1960, 521).

Upon arrival in New York City, the emigrants loaded their heavier luggage aboard the *Brooklyn* and took up lodging with bare essentials at a boarding house reserved by Sam Brannan. Brannan asked them to refer to each other as Mr. and Mrs. rather than Brother and Sister, so as not to attract attention (*New York Messenger*, 15 Dec. 1845). By profession they were school teachers, farmers, carpenters, millers, coopers, blacksmiths, wheelwrights, shoemakers, masons, printers, tailors, dressmakers, weavers, and even midwives and a physician (*Brooklyn Passenger Manifest*). They had the skills, if necessary, to form a self-sustaining colony.

Though they explored some of bustling lower Manhattan while waiting at the boarding house, they spent a good deal of time discussing “the length of the journey, months upon the water, the dreadful possibilities of sickness at sea, of storms, and then in the event of their really reaching that almost unknown shore, the absence of population, the meagerness of supplies, and an almost uncivilized people to meet [the Indians]” (Crocheron 1888, 78). But they also thought about the great adventure and opportunities ahead and the great task of building a new Zion in the West.

Sam Brannan had leased the *Brooklyn* for \$1200 per month plus expenses, and he and Captain Abel W. Richardson² were busily preparing the ship for sailing (*Times and Seasons*, 1 Feb. 1846), hoping to catch the end of the Cape Horn summer. To help pay for the preparations, passengers had prepaid their fare of seventy-five dollars per adult and half that for children (*Times and Seasons*, 15 Jan. 1846).

² Amelia Everett (1958, 229) and Kate Carter (1960, 477) claim Edward Richardson as the ship’s master. The *Brooklyn Shipping Articles*, the *Brooklyn Passenger Manifest*, Bancroft (5:694), and a Honolulu donation list (*The Friend*, 15 July 1846) clearly indicate that the captain was Abel W. Richardson, Edward’s younger brother. See also Sonne (1983, 1987).

The *Brooklyn* was not the most likely vessel for such a voyage. A fully rigged ship of modest size, the *Brooklyn* was only about 125 feet long, about 28 feet across the beams, and weighed only 445 tons (*Brooklyn Ship Registrations*). Some of the passengers doubted that the ship was seaworthy. Promoted in the *New York Messenger* as “a first class ship, in the best of order for sea . . . a very fast sailor” (*Times and Seasons*, 1 Feb. 1846), the *Brooklyn* was perhaps more correctly described as “old and almost worn out . . . one of the old time build . . . made more for work than beauty . . . [with] unmistakable signs of weakness and decay” (Crocheron 1888, 79). One passenger described the ship as just a “staunch tub of a whaler” (Skinner 1915, 2). Well worn from eleven years of hard service, having survived such disasters as sprung masts and a head-on collision, and having traveled the world (Radcliffe 1923, 73–74), the *Brooklyn* was now at a disadvantage when competing with newer, larger, and more efficient ships. So by 1846 the *Brooklyn* was still seaworthy, but well patched, in declining years, and “leased because she could be had cheap” (Crocheron 1888, 79).

Originally used as a merchantman, the *Brooklyn* needed remodeling to carry such a large company of passengers on one of the longest voyages in the world. Working quickly, laborers installed thirty-two small staterooms (with bunks) in two rows on the outsides of 'tween-decks and vents and skylights to give passengers required ventilation and light. Between the staterooms they built a long table with benches for meetings, activities, and meals. Space was tight; taller passengers had to stoop when walking between decks. Workers also improved a galley on deck, equipping it with enough cooking surface for 400 people.

Captain Abel W. Richardson was an experienced ship's master and was part owner of the ship (*Brooklyn Ship Registrations*). By reputation, wrote Brannan, he was “one of the most skillful seamen that has ever sailed from this [New York] port, and bears an excellent moral character” (*Times and Seasons*, 1 Jan. 1846). He came from a family of devout Baptists. John Horner described the crew as men of above-average morals and stated that “Unbecoming language was seldom heard on board” (1906, 796). They were all temperance men. Captain Richardson took as his first mate his nephew Joseph W. Richardson. A second mate, steward, cook, and twelve seamen made up the rest of the crew. The passengers also hired two blacks as their cook and steward. Two non-Mormons, Frank Ward and Edward von Pfister, also signed on as cabin passengers, traveling for business (*Brooklyn Shipping Articles; Brooklyn Passenger Manifest*).

Into the hold of the *Brooklyn* went 800 pounds of paying freight to be delivered to the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii). Some of the eastern Saints (John Van Cott, John Neff, Levi E. Riter, and others) chose to go overland to the West but sent bulky cargo, such as household belongings, on the *Brooklyn*, hoping to receive it later on the West Coast (Carter 1946, 402). Workers packed agricultural and mechanical tools to equip at least 800 men into the hold of the ship.

There were ploughs, hoes, forks, shovels, spades, plough irons, scythes, sickles, nails, glass, Blacksmith's tools, Carpenter's tools, Millwright's tools, three grain mills for

grinding grain, turning lathes, saw mill irons, grinding stones, one printing press and type, paper, stationary, school books, consisting of spelling books, sequels, history, arithmetic, astronomy, grammar, Morse's Atlas and Geography, Hebrew Grammar and Lexicon, slates, etc. etc. Also dry goods, twine, etc., brass, copper, iron, tin and crockery ware (*Times and Seasons*, 15 Feb. 1846).

They even stowed away a cache of muskets and fifty Allen revolvers (pepper-boxes), the latest in handguns (Eagar n.d., 3). To all this they added "large hogsheds of fresh water from Croton Lake" (Stark 1955, 26), provisions for a six- to seven-month voyage, crates of chickens, and forty to fifty pigs. Even two milch cows were stanchioned on board. And at a party the night before they departed, Joshua M. Van Cott (prominent Brooklyn attorney and president of the Hamilton Literary Society), presented the voyagers with 179 volumes of the Harper Family Library.³

During the last days before sailing, Brannan, who already had endless details to take care of, became embroiled in negotiations over possible government interference with the voyage because they intended to settle in Mexican territory. Given the expansionist mood in Washington, a voyage of Americans to Mexican California might have been welcomed. (The sequence of events in Texas could have been repeated: immigration, independence, and then annexation.) Because of their reason for leaving, however, there may have been doubts about their loyalty to the States once in California. And it could have been claimed they should not be allowed to go armed into a foreign state. Conveniently, Amos Kendall and A. G. Benson (representing "secret" interests in Washington) presented them with a warning — and a deal. Not only would the *Brooklyn* Saints be prevented from leaving, but the Nauvoo Saints would not be allowed to travel overland to California. However, if the Saints would agree to turn over half the land they acquired in the West, these "secret" interests would act to ensure their safe departure. Sam Brannan wanted to accept the offer, intending later to disavow it. But Brigham Young considered the offer a swindle and rejected it outright. However, his decision did not get back to Brannan before sailing time. Not knowing the substance of the threats, Brannan spread information that perhaps, after all, they were sailing for Oregon rather than California (CHC 3:33–39; HC 7:587–91).

THE SAILING OF THE *Brooklyn*

On Wednesday, 4 February 1846, after the passing of a snowstorm, the emigrating Saints and about a dozen non-Mormon passengers began assembling at the Old Slip on the East River, where the *Brooklyn* was moored. Seventy men and about sixty women and 100 children boarded the ship with

³ The *New York Messenger* (*Times and Seasons*, 15 Feb. 1846) lists the donor only as "J. M. Van Cott, a noted Brooklyn Attorney." According to the Brooklyn City Directory, 1844–46, the only J. M. Van Cott in Brooklyn at that time was Joshua M. Van Cott. He was an attorney, a graduate of Yale, and was in the process of becoming a prominent civic leader, an authority on maritime law, and a leader in the New York Bar (Hamm 2:200; Van Cott 1:98). Joshua was related to John Van Cott who was sending cargo on the *Brooklyn* but only as a nephew four times removed (Van Cott 1 and 2).

apprehension and excitement.⁴ Friends, relatives, and curious onlookers had packed the wharves, some climbing on ships in the vicinity to get a better view. For a time, as one newspaper noted, “the sun shown down brightly upon them, and gave omen of a pleasant voyage” (*New York Herald*, 5 Feb. 1846). The Saints on the pier joined in some hymns and a song about going to California. Three lusty cheers swelled from the crowd and were echoed by three more from the *Brooklyn*. The exchange was repeated again and again. Then at 2 P.M. on that wintry but promising day the hawsers were released and the *Brooklyn* swung around into the channel. The steamboat *Samson*, a two-decked ferry (Swede 1968), moved to the *Brooklyn*’s side, attached, and pulled her out past the tip of Manhattan, down through the Narrows, through Lower Bay, and off Sandy Hook. Last goodbyes were exchanged, the steamboat disengaged, and sails unfurled. The *Brooklyn*’s topsails and jib caught the breeze and steadily the ship moved out into a frigid, choppy Atlantic, finally disappearing from view (Appleby 1848, 158–62; *Times and Seasons*, 15 Feb. 1846; Kemble 1963, 16–19).

Through this same harbor immigrants arrived almost daily from the Old World seeking religious and political freedom and economic opportunity. Surprisingly, here were some 230 Latter-day Saints — men, women, and children — leaving this very port for the same reasons, embarking on a journey five times the length of the Mayflower voyage, abandoning home, family, friends, and country to begin anew in an unknown part of the world.

The next day, 5 February 1846, the *New York Herald* paid tribute to the courageous, seaward pioneers: “Those hardy, bold pioneers — who (quitting their home, and leaving the pleasant associations which cling around the scenes of their childhood) hew down forests and build up cities, and make the wilderness bud and blossom — deserve our sympathies and most heart felt wishes of success” (punctuation added).

Four days out into the Gulf Stream the *Brooklyn* encountered a frightening gale. The crew quickly prepared the ship for the worst, lashing the helm and furling all sails except a storm jib connected to the main mast. The gale howled through the spars and rigging. Soon “mountain high” waves were breaking over the deck and pounding like thunder against the creaky hull. The ship pitched to the billows and plunged into cavernous troughs. Passengers were shut in the hold, “tossed about like feathers in a sack” (Skinner 1915, 2). At one point the situation grew so precarious that Captain Richardson feared his

⁴ The *Brooklyn* was being loaded far beyond the legal limit of two passengers for every five tons of ship, for the *Brooklyn* a limit of 178 passengers (*Brooklyn Shipping Articles*). Perhaps Captain Richardson and Sam Brannan felt that a child did not count the same as an adult. In any case, by exceeding the limit, the ship owners risked a heavy fine and the confiscation of their ship for payment. No doubt this was the reason New York newspapers were aware of and were reporting only 175 passengers aboard (*New York Herald*, *Evening Mirror*, and *The Sun*, 5 Feb. 1846). As more accurate counts, the *New York Messenger* reported 230 (*Times and Seasons*, 15 Feb. 1846), Horner puts the count at 235 (1906, 795), Eagar claims 236 (n.d., 1), and Kemble reports 238 (1963, 17). Bancroft accepts Kemble’s count and adds the further detail of 70 men, 68 women, and 100 children (5:546), but he uses a faulty list to obtain this breakdown. In the appendix, I have attempted to reconstruct the passenger list and count 234: 70 men, 63 women, and 101 children.

very cabin would be smashed and swept from the deck. He came down to the passengers with a fearful expression, only to find the voyagers in their dimly lit chamber loudly singing hymns to drown out the storm and bolster their own courage. They gathered around him to catch his words. "My friends," he said, "there is a time in every man's life when it is fitting that he should prepare to die. That time has come to us, and unless God interposes, we shall all go to the bottom; I have done all in my power, but this is the worst gale I have ever known since I was a master of a ship." Many shared the captain's fear, but one answered, "Captain Richardson, we were sent to California and we shall get there." Another exclaimed, "Captain, I have no more fear than though we were on solid land." The captain stared in disbelief at such remarks and was heard to say in leaving, "They are either fools and fear nothing, or they know more than I do" (Crocheron 1888, 81).

Day after day the ship tossed and rolled. Without upper canvas, there was little to steady the ship against the roll of the waves. All the passengers were seasick. No fires were allowed, and those few who could eat had to subsist on hardtack (sea biscuits) and water. In the words of one passenger:

Women and children were at night lashed to their berths, for in no other way could they keep in. Furniture rolled back and forth endangering limb and life . . . [the] only light was from two [whale oil] lamps hung outside the hall and these were dim and wavering from the movements of the vessel. Children's voices crying in the darkness, mother's voices soothing or scolding, men's voices rising above the others, all mingled with the distressing groans of the sick for help. . . . And yet even there amid such scenes a few were cheerful and sought to comfort others" (Crocheron 1888, 81).

The ship had laid-to in the storm for four days when Captain Richardson and an unidentified passenger, Baptist and Mormon, found themselves on deck together surveying the fury of the relentless storm, watching the spars whip with the roll of the ship. The passenger related, "Captain Richardson (God bless the man) and myself stood watching those noble sticks that have since done us such good service, with our hearts lifted up to the God of nations to spare them in his mercy. He did so, and the next day the ship flew before the wind like a thing of magic" ("Progress," 1846).

It was refreshing (especially for the children) to come topside, breathe fresh air, and experience new-found sea legs. There was much to clean up after the storm. Unfortunately, the two cows had been killed by the pitching and rolling of the ship. Four-year-old James Skinner stared in amazement as they were "hoisted by block and tackle, swung over the ship's side, then dumped in the sea — food for sharks!" (Skinner 1915, 1)

These small pioneers had little difficulty adapting to the voyage. It would be years before it would be considered wise to send women and children around the Horn. But here were 100 children sharing the hardships and blazing the way. Throughout the voyage they could be found on deck attending school, jumping rope, or playing their many games. Shortly after the storm, another child was added to their number. Sarah Burr gave birth to a son, appropriately named John Atlantic Burr (Carter 1946, 521).

With the storm behind them, Sam Brannan appointed E. Ward Pell and Isaac Robbins as his counselors and began organizing activities and enforcing the twenty-one rules and regulations drawn up before departure. At the beating of reveille at 6:00 A.M. all were to rise, dress, wash hands and face, and "comb their heads." Each activity of the day had its appointed hour: passengers were told when to clean, when to eat, when to count the sick, when to be on deck or in the staterooms, and when to enjoy amusements. They were to retire at 9:00 P.M. One activity followed the next, each announced by the clanging, double-beat staccato of the ship's bells. The whole company was divided into watches and took turns as officers of the day. Captain Richardson held weekly religious services — on deck, weather permitting. At 11:00 A.M. each Sabbath all were to attend, "shaved, and washed clean, so as to appear in a manner becoming the solemn, and holy occasion." Sam Brannan was a frequent speaker. They organized a choir and enjoyed many solos and congregational hymns (Kemble 1963, 20; *Times and Seasons*, 15 Feb. 1846; Stark 1955, 26).

Meals were mostly hardtack and salt junk (cured meat), with a few changes now and again, such as apple duff (a doughy pudding boiled in a canvas bag) served every Thursday (Skinner 1915, 3). The single girls served the meals on tin dishes.

At this point Sam Brannan devised a way to keep control of the Saints and keep them working together even after they reached California. He formed in writing an organization called "Samuel Brannan and Company" which would hold all the assets aboard the *Brooklyn*. Those wishing to become part of the company were required to sign articles of agreement, essentially as follows:

1. They would unite to form one company.
2. They would, as a single body, make every effort to pay the debt of transportation.
3. They would, with one accord, make preparations for members of the Church who were coming overland.
4. They would give the proceeds of their labor for the next three years to a common fund from which all were to have a living.
5. If any refused to obey the laws laid down, they should be expelled.
6. In the event all the Saints departed from the covenants the common property was to rest with the Elders, and if the Elders fell from grace, the common fund was to pass to the First Elder (Bailey 1959, 61–62).

The "First Elder" was, of course, Sam Brannan. Everyone signed the agreement, because if they didn't they would land destitute on the western shores. But they resented what they considered unfairness in the agreement, the absolute authority it gave to Sam Brannan. It was the source of a growing resentment among the Saints toward Brannan.

DOWN THE ATLANTIC TO THE HORN

The storm and the variable winds had driven them well along on their intended route. They continued bearing east, gradually turning to the south.

Within three weeks the ship entered the northeast trade winds and passed near the Cape Verde Islands off the west coast of Africa. It seemed strange to go nearly to Africa on the way around the Horn, but given the winds and the currents of the Atlantic, this was the quickest route to California, a route already well used by China traders, hide and tallow merchants, and Pacific whalers. By entering the northeast trades so far to the east, they could get past Cape San Roque (the eastern extension of Brazil) without beating against the trades to keep from being driven against the northern shore of South America (see map). This route would cause them to go an extra thousand miles but would shave a couple of weeks off their voyage. Still, this voyage from the eastern to the western shores of North America was regarded as the longest point-to-point voyage in the world, in time as well as in distance (Maury 1855; Somerville 1923).

They were now traveling between the tropics. Flying fish abounded, flushed out by the prow, fluttering over the surface of the sea on lacy gauze wings. Porpoises raced along with the ship, sometimes leaping high into the air (Stark 1955, 26). Despite these visual pleasures, many already felt the monotony of the voyage. To overcome boredom, many turned to the Harper Family Library, enjoying books about travel, popular science, and history, as well as biographies, adventure stories, and poetry ("Progress," 1846). Augusta Joyce Crocheron related one passenger's solution to the boredom:

The sharks . . . followed the ship for food thrown overboard. One very daring young man used to take a curious kind of pleasure in lowering himself over the deck down to where he would be barely out of their reach, as an aggravating temptation to them. Evidently he did not share the nervous apprehensions of his wife nor the superstitions entertained by the sailors. After we reached the Sandwich Islands he practiced the same feat at the almost extinct volcano, and narrowly escaped suffocation (1888, 82).

Eventually the *Brooklyn* reached the equator, where the crew, in the traditions of King Neptune, played "tricks and jokes" on the passengers. It was an easy way to lift spirits. Near there the *Brooklyn* was caught in the doldrums. If sailors feared anything on the oceans like the storms it was the doldrums, those dead calms at the confluence of the northeast and southeast trades produced at the thermal equator. The *Brooklyn* sat for two to three days with limp sails in the muggy, oppressive heat, motionless on a sea "like molten glass" (Skinner 1915, 3). They rigged an awning to protect the passengers from the sun, which at noon burned down from straight overhead. James H. Skinner reported that the air seemed "as if it came out of a furnace. . . . It was so hot that the pitch was drawn out of the ship's seams" (1915, 3-4). Finally, the winds stirred into life, picked up the sails, and gently wafted the ship out to the full southeast trades. Soon those trades and the variables carried the *Brooklyn* swiftly down toward the Cape.

Of all the hardships the travelers endured on the voyage, the most difficult to bear were the deaths among the passengers. James H. Skinner recalled as a four-year-old listening to a service aboard ship and watching a shrouded corpse resting on a plank. The plank was raised, he later remembered, just enough to let "the corpse gently slide off, and disappear into the mighty and



lonesome ocean, my mother holding me tight in her arms, as if in fear that I, too, might find a watery grave" (1915, 1). Some preferred to bear their sorrows in private. Phoebe Robbins was on deck one night and saw some sober-faced men gently lower a tiny bundle into the sea. Within days she too would do the same with first one and then another of her own children (Carter 1960, 572). Sarah Burr, who gave birth to her son John three weeks after leaving New York, lost her three-year-old son Charles after another three weeks (Carter 1960, 521). In all, ten passengers and one of the crew died while at sea, and, as reported in the Honolulu *Friend*, another infant died at the Sandwich Islands, left behind with his family because of sickness (15 July 1846). The passengers died of such diseases as diarrhea, scarlet fever, consumption, cankered sore throat, and dropsy of the stomach⁵ (The *Friend*, 1 July 1846; *The Polynesian*, 27 June 1846). These deaths and the recorded dates, latitudes, and longitudes now mark the route of the *Brooklyn*.

The *Brooklyn* voyagers approached the Horn — truly the graveyard of the oceans — with considerable apprehension. It was common knowledge that the supreme test of a bold seaman was going west around the Horn. Violent, changeable winds blew there from every quarter, often accompanied by hail and sleet. Westerly winds outnumbered easterlies three to one. Crews could beat against these winds to exhaustion trying to gain position west. Because of the force and persistence of the westerlies, waves — sometimes in towering crests, sometimes in long, giant swells — could reach a height seldom seen in other parts of the world. But the captain did not fight the westerlies. Instead, he used a tactic recognized and followed by many at that time (Maury 1834); he stood ready to take advantage of the easterlies (when they occurred) to gain position west, but mostly he bore directly south with the westerlies, where gaining longitude west would be easier. After four days, this strategy had taken them as far as 60 degrees south latitude ("Progress," 1846). For days they had barely a glimpse of the sun. Finally they encountered a south wind which carried them sufficiently west of the Cape where they then hauled to the north. John Horner couldn't help but note their extreme good fortune: "It was fine weather when we doubled Cape Horn. The women were making bread, pies, cakes, frying doughnuts, etc., and the children were playing and romping about the deck" (1906, 797).

NORTH UPON THE PACIFIC

Soon the *Brooklyn* was moving north along the Chilean coast, out of view of land. After three months on the sea the passengers were growing weary of their fare. Provisions were becoming scarce and stale.

The drinking water grew thick and ropy with slime, so that it had to be strained between the teeth, and the taste was dreadful. One pint a day was the allowance to

⁵ Contrary to some accounts, there was no scurvy reported. If there had been deaths from scurvy, they would have occurred toward the end of the voyage, not at the beginning.

FIG. 2. Map showing the route of the *Brooklyn*. Black dots along the dashed route show the locations where eleven passengers and one crewman died. (Artwork by Albin Greger)

each person to carry to his stateroom. . . . Still worse grew the condition of the ship. . . . Rats abounded in the vessel; cockroaches and smaller vermin infested the provisions, until eternal vigilance was the price imposed upon every mouthful (Crocheron 1888, 82).

The passengers were growing desperate to reach Valparaiso — the intended port for fresh provisions. Some even voiced doubts that Captain Richardson knew where he was. Those doubts were soon dissipated, however, as the captain took the *Brooklyn* closer to shore and came in view of the highest point of the Andes — Mount Aconcagua, not far from Valparaiso (Horner 1906, 797).⁶ Excitement arose as the Saints anticipated walking the streets of that port city.

Unfortunately, the *Brooklyn* never reached Valparaiso. While trying for that port, another severe gale drove the ship back against the Cape. Again the passengers were hatched below. The storm was not as severe as the one they had endured in the Atlantic (Horner 1906, 798), but still the crew had to fight the elements to ride out the storm and preserve the ship. One sailor was washed overboard but was able to hang on to a floating board until the crew could rescue him. Laura Goodwin, pregnant and traveling with her husband Isaac and seven children, lost her footing with the pitching of the ship and was thrown down a companionway. She went into premature labor and developed complications. She pled with her grief-stricken family that she not be buried in the sea and, after lingering, finally died (Crocheron 1888, 81; “Progress,” 1846).

For three days the ship had scudded before the gale, and because of an easterly was unable to get into port. Now they were even more desperate for supplies. So the captain abandoned Valparaiso as a destination and set the *Brooklyn* to ride the wind for Juan Fernandez (or Mas-a-tierra), some 360 miles off the coast of Chile.

Passengers first caught sight of Juan Fernandez in the early morning rays of 4 May. They could gradually make out the towering peaks jutting out of the ocean and the shifting clouds condensed on those peaks from the Pacific air stream. Excitedly they anticipated their first landing since New York and an opportunity to obtain dearly needed supplies. Juan Fernandez, of course, was well known as the island where Robinson Crusoe was marooned. Supposedly, Alexander Selkirk’s experiences there became the basis for Daniel Defoe’s fictional classic. There had been many settlements on the island by 1846, but because of earthquakes and invasions, only two families — eight isolated Chilinos — now remained. These Chilinos lived in primitive huts and leisurely subsisted on nature. Some of that “nature,” of course, had been imported. The island abounded in untended fruit trees, continually reseeding vegetables, and animals (goats, hares, and pigs) which ran wild from previous settlements (Crocheron 1888, 81–82; Woodward 1969; “Progress,” 1846).

⁶ Horner places these doubts and the sighting of the Andes after Juan Fernandez. However, it is only before Valparaiso that the incident fits. After Juan Fernandez the passengers would no longer doubt that the captain knew where he was and would no longer be near enough to the Andes to see them by a minor deviation of course.

By 1:00 P.M. on 4 May the *Brooklyn* was anchoring in small, half-moon Cumberland Bay on the northeast side of the island, with passengers impatient to refresh themselves on land and to explore this lonely Pacific outpost. From the beach of Cumberland Bay the land sloped back just enough for a small settlement and then gave way to sharp valleys and steep, jagged mountains. Some of the peaks rose to misty summits covered with exotic trees and lush ferns (Skottsberg 1918). Along with the pleasures of going ashore, however, was the sad task of burying their dear sister, Laura Goodwin. Augusta Joyce Crocheron later wrote:

Although the occasion was so sorrowful, the presence of the six little children sobbing in uncontrollable grief and the father in his loneliness trying to comfort them, still, such was our weariness of the voyage that the sight of and tread upon terra firma once more was such a relief from the ship life that we gratefully realized and enjoyed it. The passengers bathed and washed their clothing in the fresh water, gathered fruit and potatoes, caught fish, some eels, great spotted creatures that looked so much like snakes that some members of the company could not eat them when cooked. We rambled about the island, visited the caves, one of which was pointed out to us as the veritable "Robinson Crusoe's cave," and it was my good fortune to take a sound nap there one pleasant afternoon (1888, 82).

Augusta at this time was a child (nearly two years old), napping under the watchful eye of her mother, Caroline Joyce, who was now enjoying a respite in what to her was a voyage of incredible hardship. Years later, at the end of her life, she would relate again the story of the voyage to Augusta and note: "Of all the unpleasant memories, not one half so bitter as that dreary six months' voyage in the emigrant ship" (Crocheron 1884, 101). Others were just grateful to have arrived safely this far. One penned in a letter from the island, "The ship has proved herself to be better than she was represented, and our Captain and first mate have been good and kind to our company" ("Progress," 1846).

The weary voyagers quickly replenished the ship's supplies. They found fresh water only two rods from the beach, poured about 18,000 gallons into casks, and loaded it aboard the ship. They also stowed away bundled firewood from the steep hillsides and salted barrels of fish. Juan Fernandez may have been a second-choice destination, but here they avoided the high cost of supplies and the port duty at Valparaiso. After five days the ship was ready to set sail.

The *Brooklyn* retrieved anchor on 9 May and set a course for the Sandwich Islands. In this part of the voyage the Pacific was true to its name, an expanse of peace. The breezes were gentle and steady, so they used a maximum of sail to make the best time. It was a rare and beautiful moment seeing the ship gliding across the sea with a full complement of sail. Edward Kemble, along to help Sam Brannan pioneer the west coast printing trade, remembered it well:

What a dreamy, delightful period of unbroken sea voyaging . . . were those weeks that followed the short delay at Robinson Crusoe's island! Riding gayly along with all sails set before a six or seven knot breeze, over a sea just sufficiently agitated to give grateful variety to a motion without retarding progress — not a sail touched not a

brace started until the peaks of Hawaii shot up into sight — the remembrance of those cool days and nights in the Pacific “Trades” will be a “joy forever” (1963, 22).

William Glover gave a less poetic summary of the passage to Hawaii: “We were becalmed a few days near the equator. Nothing transpired worthy of note till we landed at Wauhooane [Oahu]” (1954, 16). But for others, those days were indeed noteworthy. Phoebe Robbins, after burying two sons in the Atlantic, gave birth to a daughter — Georgiana Pacific Robbins — just a week before they arrived at Oahu (Carter 1960, 572). Also, Sam Brannan, partly to occupy the men and partly to prepare for the uncertain events at landing, had Robert Smith and Samuel Ladd lead the other men in daily military drills on deck. The captain soon ordered the drills stopped and instead had the crew make military preparations. In the words of Kemble, “Two rusty old guns were fished up out of the hold, pounded free from rust, cleaned, mounted, loaded and put in position; boarding pikes were manufactured and cutlasses sharpened” (1963, 22). Perhaps, as the passengers interpreted, the captain stopped their drills because he feared mutiny. In any case, it seems at least he was reminded that when leaving New York there had been rumors of impending war with Mexico, and he himself needed to prepare for all eventualities. Not until the *Brooklyn* arrived at Honolulu Harbor on 20 June and anchored outside the reef beside an American warship (the forty-four gun *Congress*) did the captain’s worries subside.

But the presence of a U.S. warship did not end Sam Brannan’s concerns. He also remembered the rumors that the Saints might be searched and interfered with if they attempted to sail to Mexican California. Commodore Robert F. Stockton of the U.S. Navy, commander of the *Congress*, boarded the *Brooklyn* and met with Sam Brannan and his counselors, informing them that the United States and Mexico had already engaged in military combat, that our government was contemplating seizing California, that the *Congress* was about to leave for the California coast, and that perhaps the order to capture seaport towns had already been given. The Saints had not anticipated these complications. They had voyaged nearly five months so far, thinking they were leaving the United States. Now there was the possibility that their intended destination would soon become U.S. territory. Even if it did not, it would be held by forces now hostile to Americans.

Commodore Stockton not only informed them of the threatening news, he encouraged them to go and hold Yerba Buena, an Anglo-American colony on the San Francisco Bay, in the name of the United States. According to Edward Kemble,

There were long faces and wrathful words . . . and whispered consultations under the ship’s hatches at the assembling for prayers the evening these unpleasant tidings were made known. Nor was the news made more agreeable by the intimation (frequently thrown out during the remainder of their stay on the Islands) that they would be expected to render assistance in the conquest of the country to which they were going. The arms they held in their hands they were ready enough to use, as originally intended, for their own protection, or for any needful acquisitions under the banner of the Church. But to help establish the authority of the United States again over them

was a very wide departure from the original plans, if not in direct antagonism with their designs (1963, 24).

Some wanted to go on to Oregon, some back home to the East. However, after considering the changed situation carefully, the voyagers decided to move on as planned, hoping for the best but preparing for the worst. Now their safety was of first importance, and it was some comfort knowing that the warship *Congress* was also leaving for California.

The next day, Sunday, 21 June, the *Brooklyn* and the *Congress* were joined at anchor by the U.S. store barque *Erie*. Because of the dangers ahead, Stockton (instead of confiscating the arms aboard the *Brooklyn*) suggested Brannan purchase additional arms, which he did, buying condemned Navy muskets at three and four dollars each. Early the next morning, a pilot arrived and escorted the *Erie* and the *Brooklyn* into port. They left the *Congress* outside the reef to finish preparing for departure to Monterey (Log of *Congress*; Log of *Erie*).⁷

Brannan wanted no complications on this final leg of their voyage. Long before they reached Honolulu he instructed the passengers not to discuss religion with the people on shore, and that if asked what Mormonism was, they were to say it was "to mind one's own business" (Kemble 1963, 22–23). Such a curt response, they soon found, was inappropriate in the warm and welcoming atmosphere of Honolulu. Hundreds came to see them land. So friendly were the residents that Kemble called their short stay "the most delightful episode of their long voyage" (1963, 23). Sam Brannan even abandoned his own advice and accepted an invitation from Rev. Samuel C. Damon to deliver a Sunday sermon at nondenominational Seaman's Bethel near the wharves (*The Polynesian*, 27 June 1846; Damon 1933). This was no doubt the first Mormon sermon preached on the island. On behalf of the *Brooklyn* passengers, Sam Brannan donated \$48.00 for Rev. Damon's ministry (*The Friend*, 1 July 1846).

The crew unloaded 500 barrels of freight and replenished the ship's supplies, including fresh fruits, vegetables, and meats. At least part of the unloaded cargo was an assorted supply of Bibles for Rev. Damon (*The Friend*, 1 July 1846). During the unloading and loading of cargo, the passengers explored the island. Frank Ward appeared before King Kamehameha III to thank him for his generous hospitality (*The Polynesian*, 27 June 1846). Some natives came on board the *Brooklyn* and were captivated by the nine-month old identical twins, Sarah and Hannah Kittleman. They were allowed to take the twins to show Queen Kalama, who then sent back many gifts (Carter 1960, 561). Some of the Saints attended the native church services.

Toward the end of their stay, Rev. Damon published an extensive article in his biweekly newspaper, *The Friend* (1 July), about the history and beliefs

⁷ Their arrival at the reef one day and the wharf two days later no doubt accounts for some sources giving 20 June as the arrival date and some 22 June.

of the Church. He included comments from an interview with Captain Richardson:

Of their [the Saints'] general behavior and character, he speaks in the most favorable manner. They have lived in peace together, and uniformly appeared to be quiet and orderly. They are going with full determination of making a settlement . . . During most of the passage they have maintained orderly and well conducted daily religious exercises, which still continue while lying in port.

Rev. Damon concluded the article with his best wishes:

This numerous company of emigrants are soon to leave for their new home; may it prove more peaceful than the one they have left. So far as their minds may have been led to embrace error, may it be renounced. That we differ on many essential points of doctrine and practice is clearly manifest, yet our best wishes and prayers go with them. May the fostering smiles of a kind and benignant Providence rest upon them. They are to lay the foundations of a society, and institutions, social, civil and religious. O, may they be such that coming generations shall rise up and call them blessed.

More than 600 ships a year frequented the Sandwich Islands at this time. It was a stop on the China trade route and, more important, a base of operations for whalers in the North Pacific. But ships seldom ventured from there to the California coast, and most that did were trading ships, hide droghers. The *Brooklyn* carried the first shipload of families intending to settle in California, and Brannan reported that others would follow and would be met by even larger groups coming overland. The islanders foresaw that a sizeable colony on the California coast would be of great commercial benefit to Honolulu.

FROM THE SANDWICH ISLES TO CALIFORNIA

The *Brooklyn* sailed from Honolulu on 30 June,⁸ leaving behind Orrin Smith and family because of sickness and picking up three additional passengers bound for California (*The Polynesian*, 4 July 1846). The travelers later discovered they had also picked up unwelcome passengers. Two mutineers being held in the fort near the wharves escaped and stowed away on the *Brooklyn* just before it sailed (*The Friend*, 15 June 1846; *The Polynesian*, 11 July 1846; *Log of Portsmouth*, 1 Aug. 1846).⁹

A few days out, the Saints held a modest but spirited Fourth of July celebration: they hoisted flags, fired a volley from their antique firearms, and sang a few patriotic songs (Horner 1906, 798). Then sailing towards the Bay of San Francisco, the men of the company began military drills in earnest, this time with the consent of the captain. By now they even had uniforms (caps

⁸ Kemble gives 2 July as the departure date, while both *The Friend* (15 July 1846) and the log of the *USS Erie* give the date as 30 June.

⁹ Two of the new passengers were probably Henry Harris (Soule 1855, 750) and George Hyde (Downey 1956, 48). The third could have been Howard Oakley, who Glover claims was a passenger (1954, 31) but who does not show up on any other early passenger list. The two stowaways, William Taylor and John Stanley, were returned to Honolulu in irons.

and suits), which the women had made from blue denim (Kemble 1963, 24–25).

At this time, Sam Brannan also excommunicated four Mormon passengers for doctrinal errors and moral misconduct.¹⁰ Many of the Saints felt he had moved with undue harshness. Even Edward Kemble, a non-Mormon bystander, thought Brannan had overplayed the issue. He noted that even though the passengers shared close quarters, there was “rarely an infraction of discipline or decorum among the members of the company, even in the most trying times.” As for moral misconduct, Kemble also noted, “probably no emigrant ship ever crossed the ocean — certainly none ever sailed to California — whose female passengers at the end of a long voyage preserved their reputations as unspotted as those of the *Brooklyn*” (1963, 17). Brannan’s action more deeply estranged him from the other passengers.¹¹

On the morning of Friday, 31 July 1846, the *Brooklyn* sailed boldly into the mist-shrouded headlands of San Francisco Bay. The captain had proved to be a skilled navigator. Throughout the trip, John Horner later pointed out, “He hit every thing he aimed at, and nothing which he did not want to hit” (1906, 796–96). All passengers were on deck, eagerly straining to see through the clearing fog the details of their new home. Suddenly they sighted an old fort, Castillo de San Joaquin, high on the bluff to the right, and all but the crew were relegated below deck as the *Brooklyn* drew within range of the shore-bound guns. What they didn’t know was that the fort was deserted and these guns were antiquated and encrusted beyond use.

Anxiously and quietly the ship slipped past the fort. The passengers returned cautiously to the deck as a great inland sea opened to their view — “the bleak treeless shores . . . the faded verdure of early Autumn . . . the lines of the soldier pelicans winging their measured flight just above the foamy crest of the waves . . . the startled myriads of black fowl . . . the islands . . . the rocky shores of the mainland” (Kemble 1963, 7–8).

This wondrous view was suddenly brought short as they sighted a sail. “Slowly and grimly it loomed into the full proportions of a man-of-war — a Yankee man-of-war at anchor” (Kemble 1963, 8). They had caught sight of the twenty-gun *Portsmouth* captained by Commander John B. Montgomery. Also in Yerba Buena Cove with the *Portsmouth* were two whalers and two or three hide droghers. Montgomery had arrived two months earlier and remained at first, ostensibly, as a passive observer of the Bear-Flag Rebellion and of Captain Fremont’s maneuvers. However, when additional orders arrived, Montgomery and his crew became military invaders, claiming Yerba Buena as U.S. territory.

¹⁰ Those excommunicated were E. W. Pell, Orrin Smith, A. T. Moses, and Lucy Eagar (*Millennial Star*, 15 Oct. 1847).

¹¹ Some fictionalized accounts of the voyage portray a growing contention among the crew and passengers over the subject of polygamy. These portrayals are probably elaborations based on Brannan’s ambiguous statements justifying the excommunications (*Millennial Star*, 15 Oct. 1847). However, in the light of Captain Richardson’s interview at Honolulu and Kemble’s statements about peaceful relations and the absence of polygamy as an issue (1963, 17), such fictional extrapolations must be questioned.

As the *Brooklyn* approached the cove, it in turn was sighted causing sudden commotion on board the *Portsmouth* and on shore. The boatswain's whistle signaled the crew. "Drums beat to quarters, guns were shotted and trained" (Kemble 1963, 8), but then the *Portsmouth* crew sighted the women on board and recognized the *Brooklyn's* peaceful intentions. The Yerba Buena Battery fired a cannon salute, and a return echoed from the *Brooklyn*. Soon a rowboat reached the *Brooklyn*, and uniformed men climbed aboard. One of them loudly proclaimed, "Ladies and gentlemen, I have the honor to inform you that you are in the United States of America" (Crocheron 1888, 83). He couldn't have known what mixed emotions those words would bring. Many of the Saints had hoped that they would land first, and (as Bancroft pointed out) not have to request favors from a government that would not protect them from mobs in Missouri and Illinois (Bancroft 1886, 5:551). On the other hand, they had no desire to become a vanguard colonization in the midst of war. "Three hearty cheers were given in reply from faint and weary lips, but rising from hearts strong, brave, hopeful, and loyal still" (Crocheron 1888, 83).

Sam Brannan and a few of the others were taken to the *Portsmouth* while the Saints, from the deck of the *Brooklyn*, studied this quaint little cove where, supposedly, they would soon be unloading. This was Yerba Buena, named for the good herbs (mint) that grew there. At this time the town had about 200 inhabitants and about fifty adobe and frame buildings (houses, saloons, shops, and sheds), scattered with little apparent order since lots were not fenced and the streets were not developed (Brown 1939; Soule et al. 1855, 173). Augusta Joyce Crocheron recounted the scene:

A long, sandy beach strewn with hides and skeletons of slaughtered cattle, a few scrubby oaks, farther back low sand hills rising behind each other as a background to a few old shanties that leaned away from the wind, an old adobe barracks, a few donkeys plodding dejectedly along beneath towering bundles of wood, a few loungers stretched lazily upon the beach as though nothing could astonish them (1888, 83).

The suspicions and curiosity of the *Brooklyn* passengers were easily matched by those of the *Portsmouth* crew. They had been almost bored by the anti-climactic "capture" of Yerba Buena and the weeks that followed. General José Castro's forces of about 150 men, including a few militia from Yerba Buena — the entire military force of northern California — had retreated south to Santa Clara and on to Santa Barbara, looking for reinforcements from Governor Pio Pico. The officials and other Californians of the village had fled also, fearing the worst. So the assault on Yerba Buena entailed, primarily, rowing ashore, marching to the village square, and running Old Glory up the flagpole in front of the newly constructed customs house. Since then they had laid at anchor for three weeks, with little to do except build a crude battery which overlooked the cove. Yeoman Joseph T. Downey recalled, "Time . . . began to hang heavily on our hands, and many a growl was sent up at our long tarry here . . . when all at once on [Friday]¹² afternoon . . .

¹² According to Downey the *Brooklyn* arrived on a Saturday. Most sources, including the log of the *Portsmouth* and Duvall (with Downey on the *Portsmouth*) give 31 July 1846,

without signal or warning, round the point came booming along a full-rigged ship, crowded with men and bearing our flag at her peak" (1956, 43). They soon learned that this was the *Brooklyn* from New York with a load of Mormon immigrants. Downey continued,

The arrival of Mormons in Yerba Buena, a sect we had heard so much, was an event which caused great surprise and no little share of excitement in our colony. Curiosity was raised to the highest pitch, and surmises ran rife among all the inhabitants. The stories of their adventures in Illinois and Missouri had preceded them, and a vague idea seemed to predominate that they were a wild and desperate people, and that trouble would soon arise from their arrival¹³ (1956, 45).

So Brannan and the others were brought to Commander Montgomery's cabin, where they exchanged plans and concerns to Montgomery's satisfaction.

Montgomery described the situation in a letter (2 Aug. 1846) to the new officials in Monterey: "The emigrants who have determined to remain at this place for the present, consisting of 80 men, completely armed, organized and drilled as a military company, have promptly tendered their services to me should any emergency arise which I do not apprehend [anticipate]. I feel very strong however under the circumstances [of these additional forces]." Officials gave the immigrants permission to disembark and to unload all their possessions free of duty. They began unloading at a rocky point near the battery (later called Clark's Point) and began setting up accommodations on shore for their first night in their new land. A few families found vacant homes. Sixteen families stayed in the barracks or customs house, which they separated into apartments using quilt partitions. Others pitched white tents around the village square in military fashion, lit campfires, and set up outdoor cooking facilities.

Commander Montgomery was known as a deeply religious man who studied the scriptures daily (Downey 1958, 9, 79). He invited the Saints to join him for Sunday services aboard the *Portsmouth*. His invitation was no

a Friday, as the *Brooklyn*'s date of entry into San Francisco Bay (Log of *Portsmouth*; Duvall 1962, 47).

¹³ This concern was not just a fabrication of Downey's imagination. The overland trek and the *Brooklyn* voyage were announced publicly months before they started, and news of them had reached the West before they themselves did. See, for example, the letter of A. E. Beach of the *New York Sun* to Thomas O. Larkin (U.S. Consul at Monterey) which accompanied newspaper reports (Larkin 5:129). Larkin also received word from a friend in Boston that an avalanche of Mormons was headed for California (around 10,000 strong) and that the Mormons would "kill you all off and take possession of all your worldly gear" (Larkin 5:118-21). The French consul at Monterey, M. Gasquet, wrote that the Californians "have a terrible fear of them [the Mormons] and are all ready to give themselves up to whomever will deliver them from this plague" (Nasatir 1932, 355). Larkin wrote to Washington about the excitement and fear among the natives over the coming of the Mormons (5:232). Even Governor Pio Pico expressed concern about the invading 10,000 from the society of "Mormonitas" coming to claim California as their promised land (Bancroft 9:16-17). It is easy to understand this fear when we realize that California was then a remote, sparsely populated, and neglected province of Mexico and that General Castro in the ensuing conflict was able to raise a force of only about 150 men in northern California, and Governor Pico even less in southern California. There was no way they could handle an invading force of 10,000. The Mexicans either did not know or did not consider it relevant that the Mormons came as refugees, not conquerors.

doubt sincere, but according to Yeoman Downey, the crew of the man-of-war had other ideas.

Anxiety to see and examine the female portion of this strange sect was apparent on the faces of all. At the appointed hour the quarter deck was cleared, the awnings spread, the chairs from the ward room and cabin placed for the ladies, the capstan bars ranged as seats for the men, and the boats called away to bring the visitors. When on their return with their live cargoes they hauled alongside the gangway, the whole ship's company was collected on the larboard side of the spar deck, and every eye was fixed on the ladder, anxious to get a first peep at that portion of the human family which is generally denominated the better half of man. Over they came, and as they followed one another, curiosity appeared to fade away, and ere the last had seated herself in the chair appropriated for her, a long-drawn sigh of disappointment escaped from that large crowd, and a dilapidated specimen of a Quarter Gunner growled out, in no very sweet tones, "D-mnation! Why, they are just like other women." And so they were; sect, creed, or religion had not changed the human form divine, and they sat as meek and smiling as though they had no religion at all. Services over, they one and all partook of a lunch with the Captain and Lieutenants, inspected the ship all over, and then took their leave, having created a most favorable impression among the hardy Tars of the good ship *Portsmouth* (1956, 46).

Monday morning the unloading of the *Brooklyn* continued, assisted by the crew and boats of the *Portsmouth*. Arriving when they did, instead of three to four weeks earlier, the *Brooklyn* passengers not only had this help but avoided about \$20,000 in import duty (*Millennial Star*, 15 Oct. 1846), assuming of course that they would have been allowed to land. The *Portsmouth* tars marvelled at the cargo, "the most heterogeneous mass of materials ever crowded together; in fact it seemed as if, like the ship of Noah, it contained a representative of every mortal thing the mind of man had ever conceived." Last to be unloaded, causing reflection about what might have been, were "three beautiful pieces of brass cannon, six pounders, mounted in the style of light artillery, with the necessary complement of powder and shot: round, fixed, and grape" (Downey 1956, 47).

Brannan was about \$1,000 short on the money he owed Captain Richardson. To settle the account, a group of the men went to Sausalito and prepared a load of redwood for the captain to receive at Bodega Bay on his return trip (Glover 1954, 18).

Accounts settled, the *Brooklyn* and crew left 17 August to return home by way of Bodega Bay, Oahu, and Wampoa (Huangpu) and Canton China (Log of *Portsmouth*; *New York Evening Post*, 13, 28 April 1847). Yerba Buena (soon to be renamed San Francisco) was now essentially a Mormon town (Bancroft 1886, 5:551). The Saints had only primitive accommodations and about two months' provisions. However, they immediately began building homes, setting up industry, and laying plans for an agricultural settlement. But that is another story.

The voyage of the *Brooklyn* was an event of historical significance and provides an engaging tale of human experience. It occurred because of the conflicts between early Mormons and their neighbors in the East. Yet, interestingly,

the voyage itself (except for the Brannan/Kendall intrigue) was marked by an unusual flow of kindness and good will from others. It involved only a few people but was a part of ambitious Mormon plans in the West. For San Francisco, though it imposed only a brief Mormon interlude between a Spanish/Mexican past and a boom-town, gold-rush future, it was the beginning of a larger Mormon involvement in the development of California.

As with life in general, the story is not without touches of incongruity. History and biography have often been made to celebrate great leaders, but Sam Brannan was hardly the ideal player for such a role. He was a great organizer and became a community leader, but as the voyage began to show and as time would confirm, he failed as a spiritual leader (Campbell 1959). One biographer called him an "opportunist and an erratic genius" (Glover 1954, viii). Another referred to him as "a man of more ability and zeal than high principle" (Bancroft 1886, 5:545). Religious history has also been used to celebrate faith, devotion, and moral triumph. Here also, some of the *Brooklyn* Saints displayed their human weaknesses; a few eventually abandoned the cause they originally embraced. But, of course, life is too complicated for simple judgments. Despite the incongruities, there is special meaning for the *Brooklyn* voyage beyond just our fascination for things as they were. Here were a few ordinary people who — through faith, courage, and sacrifice — more than they had dreamed, placed their impressive contributions in the history of their church and the history of the West.

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APPENDIX: *Brooklyn* PASSENGER LIST

In the following notes, C represents Kate B. Carter's compilation (1960), F represents the passenger list in *The Friend* (1 July 1846), and H represents the passenger list from the Honolulu manifest (*Brooklyn* Passenger Manifest). The lists in F and H were prepared after the deaths and births at sea and therefore must be so adjusted to give the correct count at departure from New York. In the compilation of F and H, there was a tendency to miscount children. A genealogical approach such as in C tends to correct such errors, as well as supply names and ages. There are several other lists, but I consider them less reliable. The approximate ages at departure are in brackets. Asterisks indicate an entry that is in question.

I count a total of 234 passengers at New York (including Ward, von Pfister, cook and steward): 70 men, 63 women, and 101 children. This is obtained by counting passengers as adults when they are 18 years or older, and by assigning the following family totals: Buckland (2), Nathan Burr (2), Charles Burr (3), Fowler (5), Meader (3), Narimore (2), Read (5), Isaac Robbins (5), and Robert Smith (5). I do not count Charles Robbins as a passenger. This count can be considered the same as the 230 reported in the *Times and Seasons* since that count reported the Brannan group only, not Ward, von Pfister, cook, or steward.

Addison, Isaac [36]
Addison, Eliza [33]
Addison, (dau)

Aldrich, Silas [43] (died on voyage)
Aldrich, Prudence Clark [43]
Aldrich, Nancy Laura [17]
Aldrich, Jasper

Atherton, William [32]
Atherton, Emily [27]

Austin, Julius Augustus Caesar [36]
Austin, Octavia Ann Lane [32]
Austin, Louise Maria [7]
Austin, Edwin Nelson [5]
Austin, Newton Francis [2]

- Brannan, Samuel [27]
 Brannan, Anna Elizabeth Corwin [24]
 Brannan, Samuel L. [2 mo.]
- Buckland, Hannah Daggett [43]
 Buckland, Alondas de Lafayette [20]
 * Buckland, James Daggett [18]
 (added by C, not in H or F)
- Bullen, Newel [37]
 Bullen, Clarissa Judkins Atkinson [35]
 Bullen, Francis Andrew [8]
 Bullen, Hershel [6]
 Bullen, Cincinnatus [3]
- Burr, Nathan [58]
 Burr, Cloe Clark [50]
 * Burr, Amasa [34] (in C, but not in F or H)
- Burr, Charles Clark [29]
 (son of Nathan and Cloe)
 Burr, Sarah Sloat [24]
 Burr, Charles W. [1] (died on voyage)
 Burr, John Atlantic (born on voyage)
- Cade, Jonathan [64]
 Cade, Susannah [58]
- Clark, Sophia P. [22]
- Coombs (Combs), Abraham [41] (H lists 2
 children, F and C list 3 children)
 Coombs (Combs), Olive Curtis [26]
 Coombs, Katherine [12]
 Coombs, Marion Charles [5]
 Coombs, Helen [3]
- Corwin, Francis M. [42]
 (Samuel Brannon's mother-in-law)
- Eagar, Lucy Buell [42]
 (C and F give 5 children, H gives 4)
 Eagar, John [23]
 Eagar, Mary [18] (listed separately in F)
 Eagar, Thomas [16]
 Eagar, Arabella [13]
 Eagar, William [10]
- Ensign, Elias (died on voyage)
 Ensign, Jerusha [56]
 Ensign, Eliza (died on voyage)
 Ensign, John Warren [18]
- Evans, William [34]
 Evans, Hannah Benner [34]
 Evans, Amanda [12]
 Evans, Jonathan Benner [8]
 Evans, Parley Pratt [6]
 Evans, William H. [4]
- Fisher, Joseph R. [24] (brother of Mary Ann)
- Fisher, Mary Ann [23] (sister of Joseph R.)
- Fowler, Jerusha H. [27] (C claims 3 chil-
 dren, F claims 4, H claims 3, census
 confirms the following. Husband, John
 S., went overland.)
 Fowler, Thomas [8]
 Fowler, George [6]
 Fowler, John [4]
 Fowler, (child) (died on voyage)
- Glover, William [33]
 Glover, Jane Cowan [29]
 (H claims 2 children, F and C claim 3)
 Glover, Jane [8]
 Glover, Katherine [4]
 Glover, Joseph Smith [1]
- Goodwin, Isaac R. [35]
 (H and F list 6 children; there were 7)
 Goodwin, Laura Hotchkiss [33]
 (died on voyage)
 Goodwin, Emerette [13]
 Goodwin, Isaac H. [11]
 Goodwin, Lewis H. [9]
 Goodwin, Edwin Abia [6]
 Goodwin, Nancy Ellen [4]
 Goodwin, Lucinda Ludelia [3]
 Goodwin, Albert Story [1]
- Griffith, Jonathan [32]
 Griffith, Sarah [32]
 Griffith, Jackson
 Griffith, Marshal
- Hamilton, Mary [56]
 (mother of Mary Sparks)
- Haskell, Ashbel Green [48]
 (family went overland)
- Hayes, Jacob [52]
- Hicks, Joseph [36]
- Horner, John Miers [25]
 Horner, Elizabeth Imlay [20] (not LDS)
- Hyatt, Elisha [30]
 Hyatt, Matilda [35]
 Hyatt, John [16]
- Ira (Irea), Cyrus [22]
- Jones, Isabella [38]
- Joyce, John [24]
 Joyce, Caroline Augusta Perkins [21]
 Joyce, Augusta [1]
- Kemble, Edward C. [19] (not LDS)

Kittleman, John [50]
 Kittleman, Sarah [38]
 Kittleman, Thomas [27]
 Kittleman, George (not in H, but in F & C)

Kittleman, William [39]
 (son of John and Sarah)
 Kittleman, Eliza Hindman [34]
 Kittleman, Elizabeth [14]
 Kittleman, Mary Ann
 Kittleman, George
 Kittleman, James
 Kittleman, Sarah [4 mo.] (twin)
 Kittleman, Hannah [4 mo.] (twin)

Knowles, Richard [58]
 Knowles, Sarah Rostirn [54]

Ladd (alias Johnson), Samuel [27]

Lane, Emaline Amanda [21]
 (youngest sister of Octavia Austin)

Leigh, Isaac [27]
 Leigh, Achsah [24]

Light, James [36]
 Light, Mary J. [26]
 Light, James M.

Lovett, Angeline M. [19]

McCue, Patrick [55]
 McCue, Esther [45]
 McCue, James B. [15]
 McCue, Solomon B. [6]
 McCue, Amos W. [3]
 McCue, William K. [1]

Marshall, Earl [47]
 Marshall, Leticia Dorsey [47]
 Stivers, Simeon [20] (adopted)

Meador, Moses A. [42]
 Meador, Sarah D. Blod [40]
 Meador, Angeline [13]
 (C claim 3 other children, but not shown
 in F or H or in California Census.)

Moses, Ambrose Todd [51]
 Moses, Lydia Ensign [46]
 Moses, Norman S. [15]
 Moses, Phoebe Maria [14]
 Moses, Ann Frances [12]
 Moses, Clarissa Cordelia [7]

Mowry (Morey), Barton [47]
 Mowry (Morey), Ruth [47]
 Mowry, Origin [21]
 Mowry, Rhenaldo [18]

Murray, Mary [36]

Narimore, Mercy M. [45?]
 Narimore, Edwin

Nichols, Joseph [31]
 Nichols, Jerusha [27]
 Nichols, Enos [2]
 Nichols, Joseph [2 mo.] (died on voyage)

Nutting, Lucy Jane [20]

Pell, Elijah Ward [40]
 Pell, Seba [45]
 Pell, Geraldine
 Pell, Hettie

Petch (Petz), Robert [50]
 Petch (Petz), Mary [42]
 Petch, Salina [11]
 Petch, Richard [6]

Phillips, John [33]

Poole, Mary Crammer [57]
 Poole, Elizabeth Francis [24]
 Poole, Peter John [23]

Read (Reed), Christiana Gregory [45]
 Read (Reed), Hannah T. [24]
 (was Mrs. Alexander Jamison)
 Jamison, John Read [4]
 Read (Reed), John H. [17]
 Read (Reed), Christiana Rachel [15]
 (listed by C, but not F or H)

* Robbins, Charles [31] (brother to Isaac
 and John) (in C, but not listed in F or
 H)

Robbins, Isaac [41]
 (F and H lists 2 children, C lists 3)
 Robbins, Ann Shinn Burtis [35]
 Robbins, Joseph Reeves [12]
 Robbins, Wesley [5]
 Robbins, Margaret [2]

Robbins, John Rogers [36]
 (F claim 2 children, H lists 1)
 Robbins, Phoebe Ann Wright [34]
 Robbins, Charles Burtis [11] (child of first
 marriage, to Mary Shinn Harper
 Burtis)
 Robbins, George Edward [6]
 (died on voyage)
 Robbins, John Franklin [1]
 (died on voyage)
 Robbins, Georgiana Pacific
 (born on voyage)

Rollins (Rowland), Henry [55]
 (father of Jane Tomkins)
 Rollins (Rowland), Isaac [17] (C refers to
 this son as Isaac, H as Thomas)

Savage, Susan Eliza [20]

Scott, James [34]

Sirrine, George Warren [27]
(brother of John)

Sirrine, John [34]
(went for health, not LDS)

Sirrine, Nancy Smith [26] (not LDS)
Sirrine, George [1]

Skinner, Horace Austin [28]
Skinner, Laura Ann Farnsworth [26]
Skinner, James Horace [4]

Smith, Orrin [40]
Smith, Amy Ann Dodd Hopkins [35]
(Smith), H. M. [14]
Hopkins, Ellen M. [10]
Smith, Amelia A. [9]
Hopkins, Emily M. [7]
Smith, Francis [3]
Smith, Orrin Hopkins [6 mo.]
(died in Hawaii)

Smith, Robert [33]
Smith, Catherine Clark [28]
Smith, Daniel [2]
Smith, Hyrum Joseph [1]

Snow, Zelnora S. [22]

Sparks, Quartus S. [25]
Sparks, Mary Hamilton [24]
Sparks, Quartus Jr. [8 mo.]

Stark, Daniel [25]
Stark, Ann [24]
Stark, John Daniel [4 mo.]

Bird, Elizabeth Wallace [1 mo.]
(father went overland)

Still, George [65]
Still, Mary [41]
Still, Sarah
Still, Laura
Still, Julia

Stout, William [30]
Stout, Mary Ann [18?]
Stout, (Malone?)

Stringfellow, Jesse A. [22]

Tomkins, Thomas [29]
Tomkins, Jane Rollins [26]
Tomkins, Amanda [4]
Tomkins, Jane Elizabeth [3]

Warner, Caroline E. [34]
(husband went overland)
Warner, Myron
Warner, Sarah [6]
Warner, Henry J. [2]

Winner, George K. [39]
Winner, Mary Ann [37]
Winner, Elizabeth [17] (twin)
Winner, Mary Ann [17] (twin)
Winner, Louise [15]
Winner, Emmajean D. [7]
Winner, Moroni [3]
Winner, Israel [1]
Winner, Sarah [4 mo.] (died on voyage)

Additional passengers (not LDS):

Ward, Frank
von Pfister, Edward
Black cook
Black steward

The Need for a New Mormon Heaven

Melodie Moench Charles

IN MARK TWAIN'S *Letters from the Earth*, Satan, who has been banished to earth, writes letters home to Michael and Gabriel. Mortals, he writes, have imagined a heaven that contains "each and every imaginable thing that is repulsive to a man, and not a single thing he likes! . . . He has left entirely out of it the supremest of all his delights, the one ecstasy that stands first and foremost in the heart of every individual of his race — and of ours — sexual intercourse!" In heaven, "prayer takes its place. . . . His heaven . . . has not a single thing in it that he *actually* values. It consists — utterly and entirely — of diversions which he cares next to nothing about here in the earth, yet he is quite sure he will like in heaven." These diversions include "church that lasts forever, and a Sabbath that has no end," continuous harp playing, and singing. There is no variety in activities and no intellectual stimulation (1938, 15–20).

I used to love this description because my Mormon heaven seemed far superior to this standard Christian heaven that Twain's Satan describes. Sexual intercourse *does* have a place in Mormon heaven, though not as an end in itself. Heavenly residents are busy with activities. Those righteous individuals who become gods in Mormon heaven will certainly be using their intellects as they create worlds and keep them running, and they will undoubtedly be learning continuously. Mormonism never suggested there would be continual music, nor continual church or Sabbath days in heaven.

Lately though, Satan's comments about mortals' relationship to their heaven have hit close to home. While the appealing aspects of Mormon heaven that I have mentioned have allowed me to feel smug, there are other aspects of Mormon heaven that I, like Twain's mortals, "care next to nothing about, here in the earth" (1938, 16). Still other aspects of Mormon heaven offend

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and annoy me in their earthly counterparts, and I can't imagine that I will like them any better in heaven. Much in this heaven violates my idea of fairness and of how God operates. Much does not seem logical, does not ring true to me, and leaves me feeling apprehensive rather than motivated to earn a promised reward that seems a little like a punishment.

I acknowledge that some of what I present as Mormon heaven is probably not the heaven many living Mormons anticipate, and some Mormons may not even have been exposed to some of these ideas about heaven. Yet many of the most influential nineteenth-century Church leaders, including three prophets, taught these ideas, and they have not been superseded by new teachings. Some Church members continue to promote these or similar ideas; they are still found in our temple ceremony and in our scriptures.

Lowell Bennion has taught that God is reasonable, fair, impartial, and benevolent, and when he acts differently in scriptures or in our theology, we can assume that those portrayals are not accurate. Bennion has also taught that for a church to be a good church it must provide people with a sense of their intrinsic worth and equality (Bennion 1956, 7; 1959, 38; 1981, 34, 35, 39). When I apply the Lowell Bennion test to the current concept of heaven, I find it wanting.

Parts of this Mormon heaven seem profoundly wrong because they give women and single men a diminished sense of self-worth here on earth. It is hard not to conclude from the patriarchal nature of this view of heaven that those who can be patriarchs are eternally superior to those who cannot be. Furthermore, this theology of heaven reduces many people to "things" — things that someone else will receive as a reward, things that someone else can use to help him achieve glory, and things that someone else can dominate. I believe that heavenly patriarchy, and the hierarchy and unequal rewards for comparable righteousness that it spawns, are the cultural gospel, authored by Mormon males, not the revealed gospel authored by God. The doctrine is colored by these males' cultural milieu and their desires for power and glory.

Various writers, such as Goethe, Voltaire, and Montesquieu, have turned Genesis 1:26–27 inside out to claim that man has created God in his own image. Jerome Lawrence and Robert Lee said it best in the play, *Inherit the Wind*: "God created man in His own image — and Man, being a gentleman, returned the compliment" (1963, 70). Taking "man" to mean "males" rather than "humankind," religious feminists have refocused this idea and said that males have created a male God and have projected the patriarchal systems of the cultures in which they lived into heaven. According to Rosemary Radford Ruether, "Most images of God in religions are modeled after the ruling class of society" (1975, 74). After the ruling patriarchy creates a God and a heaven like itself, it then "sacrilizes the existing social order as an expression of the will of God" — that is, it gives itself a stamp of divine approval (1986, 5).

I am going to describe some patriarchal, hierarchical aspects of this Mormon heaven, its marital framework, and then Mother in Heaven, the shadowy deity of Mormon heaven. Within each topic I will focus on the individual features that are unappealing, unreasonable, and destructive to the egos of

mortal Mormon women and single men. Be warned that my analysis is very personal and full of my own opinions.

This heaven is a highly structured, organized society. Heber C. Kimball preached that priesthood ranking will be just as it is here, “and you will find all the officers down to the deacon” (JD 4:82). This heavenly “patriarchal priesthood” denotes a system of eternal organization and government of families. I presume that it is labeled “patriarchal” because it is male-centered. Descriptions of the heavenly structure focus on a man’s kingdom and a man’s male progeny. A woman’s kingdom and female progeny are almost non-issues.

People in the celestial kingdom are grouped into both family units and dispensational units, and every conceivable unit in heaven is ruled over by an exalted patriarch. God rules over everyone, Christ rules below him, and Adam below him. Patriarchs who were notable during their earthly lives, such as Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and Jacob, though subject to God and Christ, preside as patriarchs *over* the people in their dispensations. As one of these Joseph Smith will preside as patriarch over the people of the current dispensation (Andrus 1970, 1973; Esplin 1978; Widtsoe 1939; Ehat and Cook 1980, 297–99).

This is not an obsolete nineteenth-century doctrine. I first learned of this heavenly hierarchy in a Relief Society class in 1977. When the teacher said that Joseph Smith would be our king in eternity, I was horrified — certain that she was promoting her own misunderstanding. I was also amazed that no one else seemed alarmed. Apparently this was either old news to others in the class, or else it did not disturb them. After class when I expressed my doubts about her information, the teacher said she got it from religion classes at BYU.

Showing that theology can change, the Church has rejected one layer of heavenly hierarchy accepted in the nineteenth century. For a time faithful Mormon males were sealed to important males in the Church’s hierarchy rather than to their own fathers. For example, in heaven Brigham Young would be a patriarch *under* God, Christ, and Joseph Smith but *over* those men and their families who were sealed to him. Some men who were sealed to Brigham Young, John D. Lee for example, also had men sealed to them. The strains this put on relationships between these mortal men caused the hierarchy to rethink this practice. During Wilford Woodruff’s administration the Church abandoned these adoptive sealings and members were sealed only to their own parents (Brooks 1973, 73–74, 122–24; Irving 1974; Esplin 1978).

In heaven each righteous man would be patriarch over his righteous descendants. A person born in the 1980s would be subject to God, Christ, Joseph Smith, and the thousands of righteous males who are his or her ancestors. All of a man’s righteous descendants will make up the kingdom over which that man will rule. Brigham Young explained, “Now if I be made the king and lawgiver to my family, and if I have many sons, I shall become the father of many fathers, for they will have sons, and their sons will have sons, and so on, from generation to generation. . . . In this way we can become King of kings, and Lord of lords, or Father of fathers, or Prince of princes, and this is the only course, for another man is not going to raise up a kingdom for you”

(JD 3:265–66). When Brigham Young warned that those people who depend upon other people to lead them “never can hold sceptres of glory, majesty, and power in the celestial kingdom” (JD 1:312), his language makes it clear that administrative efficiency was not the reason for this hierarchical system. This system was organized so that males could rule, gain honor, and have power over others.

Religious groups who feel persecuted have a tendency to expect that after the end of human history they will finally receive the power and status to which they are entitled by right of their superior righteousness, knowledge, and commitment (Hansen 1977). Nineteenth-century Mormon theology shows a preoccupation with attaining power and status in the millennium and in heaven. The developers of our theology took at face value the scriptural references to being rewarded in heaven with crowns, thrones, and kingdoms. Some early Kirtland elders asked rhetorically, “If the Saints are not to reign, for what purpose are they crowned?” (HC 2:5–22) Inheriting thrones and crowns had to mean inheriting kingships and kingdoms.

I believe that *wanting* kingdoms, they misread a promise of kingdoms into the scriptures. The New Testament’s answer to the elders’ question “If the Saints are not to reign, for what purpose are they crowned?” is found in 1 Corinthians 9:24–25. Saints receive a symbolic crown: just as the winners of races are crowned with a garland of laurel leaves for their achievement, the Saints receive a crown of recognition for having endured righteously to the end (*Interpreter’s*, 1:746). The scriptures that mention crowns talk of crowns of glory, crowns of immortality, crowns of righteousness, crowns of honor, but never crowns of kingship. The thrones mentioned are almost always God’s throne.

I think that Joseph Smith’s desires rather than God’s inspiration prompted the only unambiguous scriptural promises of kingdoms. Doctrine and Covenants 121:29 promises “All thrones and dominions, principalities and powers shall be . . . set forth upon all who have endured valiantly for the gospel of Jesus Christ.” Section 132 promises those who marry “by the new and everlasting covenant” that they shall “inherit thrones, kingdoms, principalities, and powers, dominions, all heights and depths . . . then shall they be above all because all things are subject unto them. Then shall they be gods, because they have all power, and the angels are subject unto them” (v. 19–20). Because the scriptures and those who interpreted them have given me no other reason for the existence of heavenly kingdoms, I believe that this theology has patriarchs ruling in heaven because patriarchs-to-be thought that, deprived of due recognition and power on earth, they deserved a truly grand reward in heaven. No one suggests that anyone in the celestial kingdom is in need of being ruled—instead, it is the earthly patriarchs who feel the need of the glory, honor, and power of ruling.

I find this heavenly structure neither reasonable nor appealing. First, any kind of ruling hierarchy among celestial beings seems inconsistent with a God who loves us equally and who rewards us according to our faith and works, not according to our gender, marital status, rank in the Church’s hierarchy, or

our progeny. Second, Brigham Young implied that people who need to be ruled won't be given the highest eternal reward. This elaborate layering of managers seems entirely unnecessary among people who are worthy of celestial life. In addition, these rulers are chosen more for their gender, the time of their birth, and the size of reward they deserve than for their management or leadership skills.

Third, I can't imagine that people worthy of the highest degree of the celestial kingdom would aspire to or even be interested in having status and power over other people. I can't imagine any good reason for heavenly kings beyond God and Christ. If kings exist, I think their role must be to serve their subjects as Jesus did when he washed the feet of his disciples and as King Benjamin did throughout his life by laboring with his own hands.

Fourth, a hierarchy appeals only to those who believe they will be among the rulers rather than among the ruled. Because Mormon hierarchy is patriarchy, all women will automatically be among the ruled, eternally subject to an endless string of grandfathers. From a man's point of view, there is nothing fair about being subject to one's father for all eternity, nor about ruling over one's son only because one man preceded and sired the other. Furthermore, there is nothing fair about being subject to exponentially more grandfathers by virtue of being born in 1980 A.D. rather than in 980 B.C.

By promoting rule in the afterlife by patriarchs, this view implies that even in this life patriarchs are worth more than other people. Giving some righteous people kingdoms and power over other righteous people reduces those other people to things — things making up the kingdom awarded to the patriarch for his righteousness, and things the patriarch can dominate. I don't believe that God would reward some righteous people by diminishing others.

In order to attain the highest rank and reward in this Mormon heaven a person must be married in the temple. The unmarried and people married in any way other than a sealing ceremony are doomed to the fate outlined in Doctrine and Covenants 132:16–17: "To minister for those who are worthy of a far more, and an exceeding, and an eternal weight of glory. For these angels did not abide my law; therefore, they cannot be enlarged, but remain separately and singly, without exaltation, in their saved condition, to all eternity; and from henceforth are not gods, but are angels of God forever and ever." These verses explain that single people have not obeyed the command to get married, and therefore, by definition, are not righteous. Mormon leaders teach an exception to the harsh penalty presented in this scripture: people who had no fair chance to be married correctly get a chance to marry after mortal life.

In mortality Mormonism offers single adults an awkward and isolated social status that evokes either suspicion or pity in other Mormons. It condemns them to a life of sexual frustration and encourages feelings of unrighteousness, guilt, and inadequacy. For single men it offers significantly fewer chances to serve in high management positions in the Church. This heaven offers single people an eternity even worse than the second-class existence they enjoyed in Mormon society on earth. I find it unreasonable to think that God

would have structured the rules for salvation to do this to people who are single during mortality. I also think that the difference in eternal rewards for single people and married people is so great that a just God couldn't have authored them.

Why does Mormon theology do this to single people? Because of the idea that the highest glory in heaven includes becoming a god and reigning over the kingdoms which we create by procreating. Two levels of heavenly kingdoms exist in our theology. The first, as I have said, is a kingdom made up of former mortals, primarily one's descendants. To rule over one of these one must have descendants in mortality. But the lack of earthly progeny to rule over is not what keeps single people from receiving the highest heavenly reward.

Rather it is the inability to produce heavenly progeny. This second kind of kingdom is made up of the children conceived in heaven who will inhabit earths created by their parent gods. Creating includes not only making a world, but peopling it through procreating, through sexual union with one's spouse. Parley P. Pratt rhapsodized that "the result of our endless union would be an offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven, or the sands of the sea shore." From Joseph Smith he "learned the true dignity and destiny of a son of God, clothed with an eternal priesthood, as the patriarch and sovereign of his countless offspring. It was from him that I learned that the highest dignity of womanhood was, to stand as queen and priestess to her husband, and to reign for ever and ever as the queen mother of her numerous and still increasing offspring" (1938, 297-98).

I am not arguing against the idea that happy marital unions should continue in heaven. I find the doctrine of eternal marriage one of the most appealing of our theology, and I hope that my marriage will continue there. But rather than viewing eternal marriage as a precondition for the eternal reward of kingdoms in heaven, I see a good marriage being its own reward in heaven just as on earth. Similarly, rather than viewing eternal singleness as a condition deserving eternal punishment, I see it as a condition with limitations (that some might see as punishments) inherent in it. Rather than being punished because, lacking a spouse, one cannot produce progeny in heaven, the inability to procreate here or in heaven is perhaps its own punishment. Surely there is more to being kings, queens, gods, and goddesses than procreating, and those who remain single in heaven need not have external limitations placed on them when singleness necessarily includes limitations.

While I've got no interest in ruling over, nor being god to anyone, there is something intriguing and enticing about creating worlds and keeping them running; but for me, the issue is apparently moot. Instead of creating mountains, trees, or marine life, I can earn the right to fill the role of "birth-machine for spirit children" (England 1986, 28) because the other creating is done by the power of the priesthood, a power that women will have in a very limited way, if at all. Brigham Young taught that "the Priesthood . . . is the law by which the worlds are, were, and will continue forever and ever. It is that system which brings worlds into existence and peoples them, gives them their revolutions, their days, weeks, months" (Widtsoe 1939, 30).

Orson Pratt elaborated that priesthood was the power for “the regulation of the materials in all their varied operations. It is that power that formed the minerals, the vegetables, and the animals in all their infinite varieties which exist upon our globe. It is that authority that reveals laws for the government of intelligent beings.” This priesthood is so essential that God, knowing his son would be worthy of having and using the priesthood, “thousands of years beforehand” allowed him to “have the power to create worlds and govern them, the same as if he had already received the consecration” (1853, 145, 147).

Our theology currently gives women no hope that their participation in priesthood will ever be great enough to allow them to create anything but children. Some women might be excited by the possibility of providing the womb through which a never-ending stream of children would be born, but I am not. I don’t look forward to producing progeny while my husband is creating reptiles and planets and inspiring mortals to fashion reasonable governments and legal systems. Gene England rightly called this limited, unequal role for women in eternity “absurd” “humiliating” and “degrading” (1986, 23).

Our temple ceremony has some further limiting, unequal, and degrading implications for women’s heavenly existence. Each woman is promised that she might eventually be a queen and priestess *to her husband*, while her husband is promised that he might eventually be a king and a priest *to God*. All women, married or unmarried, are required to covenant to *obey the law of their husbands as their husbands obey the law of God*, while all men are required to covenant to *obey the law of God*. Thus males are linked directly to God, and women to God only through their husbands — even women who have no husbands. This link takes on a twist when people being married are symbolically brought into heaven by a male playing the role of God. A man is brought into heaven by an anonymous male temple worker playing that role. But a woman is brought into heaven by her husband playing the role of God to her. So not only does the temple ceremony suggest that women reach God through their husbands, but that husbands, on some level, act as god to their wives.

Though both men and women need spouses to achieve the highest eternal glory, a husband helps his wife attain salvation in a way that a wife does not do for her husband. Daniel Wells taught that if treated well, women would stick to their husbands “because it is for their salvation in the kingdom of our God. It is for this they are here, and they will cleave to you for it; and it is your office, right and privilege to extend that blessing to them. . . . Wives . . . seek their salvation through [their husbands]” (JD 4:255–57). According to Lorenzo Snow, the head of a family must have the spirit of the Lord, “and he should possess that light and that intelligence, which, if carried out in the daily life and conduct of those individuals, will prove the salvation of that family, for he holds their salvation in his hands” (JD 4:243).

As recently as 1978 a priesthood manual for young men taught that “a fine Latter-day Saint girl is counting on you to provide the way to exaltation for her and the spirits in heaven that will come to your home to grow in the

gospel" (Inglesby 1985, 29). *The Melchizedek Priesthood Personal Study Guide* from 1984 included the following: "Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote: '[Husbands] must . . . love their wives, sacrifice for their well-being and salvation, and guide them in holiness until they are cleansed, sanctified, and perfected, until they are prepared for exaltation in that glorious heaven where the family unit continues. Husbands thus become in effect the saviors of their wives' (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary* 2:519)" (pp. 47–48).

An essential part of this theology of marriage in heaven is polygamy. While it is unlikely that the Church will again promote polygamy in mortality, it is still a vital part of Mormon heaven. As Doctrine and Covenants 131 and 132 explain, polygamy in heaven enables celestial beings to procreate kingdoms over which a righteous man would preside as god. I say "man," because while the woman is a participant, the focus is completely on the male and his kingdom. A man obtains the highest kingdom in heaven only by entering into this kind of marriage. If he does not, "that is the end of his kingdom; he cannot have an increase" (131:2–4). His wives "were given unto him" (132:37, 39, 52, 61, 62) "for he shall be made ruler over many" (v. 44). They "belong unto him" and "are given unto him to multiply and replenish the earth . . . and for their [presumably the women's] exaltation in the eternal worlds, that they may bear the souls of men" (v. 63).

Eugene England has argued against heavenly polygamy, suggesting that it be dropped from our theology of heaven. His chief objection was that it made fidelity impossible. With multiple partners no two spouses could experience complete trust and sharing of themselves with each other. I agree with this objection, but I will elevate his secondary objection into my primary one. Heavenly polygamy "is simply a way of saying that one good man is in some sense the equivalent of more women than one, however good. And whether what is implied is that one man can emotionally and sexually satisfy more than one woman or is capable of balancing more than one woman spiritually or intellectually or managerially or whatever . . . the implications seem to me to discredit women, to in some essential way reduce them to less than full equivalence with men" (1986, 27–28).

I can see how nineteenth-century American men, trying to conceive of a heaven, could construct one in which one man *was* the equivalent of a number of women. Nineteenth-century American culture was sexist and patriarchal, and most people, women as well as men, believed that men were superior to women in many ways. Brigham Young reinforced this notion for Mormons by stressing that he led his wives not by force but "by a superior intelligence." If the servants of God allow a woman to be their leader, he noted, "they have sunk beneath the standard their organization has fitted them for. . . . Let our wives be the weaker vessels, and the men be men and show the women by their superior ability that God gives husbands wisdom and ability to lead their wives into his presence" (JD 9:307). On another occasion he preached that women are weak. "It is the decree of the Almighty upon [women] to lean upon men as their superior" (JD 12:194).

I can see no reason to let such a theology stand without protest. It can't be any healthier for Mormon men to believe that they are inherently and eternally superior to all women than it is for Mormon women to believe that they are inherently and eternally inferior to righteous Mormon men. Yet as long as heavenly polygamy remains in our theology, these self-evaluations will naturally arise. As long as Doctrine and Covenants 132 remains in our scriptural canon, heavenly polygamy is a part of Mormon theology.

Heavenly polygamy, more than anything else in our theology, reduces people to things. Emily Dow Partridge, a plural wife to Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, complained, "even our own people seemed to think that the Lord had given men plural wives for stepping stones for them and their first wives to mount to glory on" (Hill 1977, 353). The greater the number of wives and children a man has in heaven, the greater his power, kingdom, and eternal glory. In the worst materialistic sense rather than in the best metaphorical sense, wives and children were a man's riches. Benjamin F. Johnson remembered that "the Prophet taught us that Dominion & power in the great Future would be Commensurate with the no[.] of 'Wives, Children & Friends' that we inherit here" (Van Wagoner 1986, 45). Joseph Smith counseled his Sunday audience to "use a little Craftiness & seal all [the people to yourself that] you can" so that you can claim them in heaven (Ehat and Cook 1980, 331).

Wives (and children) became objects to be given to righteous men as rewards, or taken from sinful men as punishment. Joseph Smith taught Lucy Walker that "many would awake in the morning of the resurrection sadly disappointed; for they, by transgression would have neither wives or children, for they surely would be taken from them, and given to those who should prove themselves worthy" (Hill 1977, 356). Brigham Young recast this idea in terms of Jesus' parable of the talents. The man who would not take plural wives may get to the celestial kingdom, "but when he gets there he will not find himself in possession of any wife at all. He has had a talent that he has given up. He will come forward and say, 'Here is that which thou gavest me, I have not wasted it, and here is the one talent,' and he will not enjoy it, but it will be taken and given to those who have improved the talents they received, and he will find himself without any wife, and he will remain single forever" (JD 16:66).

Men too become objects in a system of heavenly polygamy. Mormon marriage sealings revived and revised the Old Testament practice of Levirate marriage. When a man marries a widow who was married for eternity to her first husband, any children who result from this second marriage are credited on the eternal tally sheet to the first husband. Regardless of the role this second husband played in the lives of this wife and children in mortality, in eternity, he is the source of the seed that helped produce children for the first husband (Foster 1981, 164).

Polygamous wives sometimes viewed their husbands as vehicles through which they could attain exaltation. The best example of this was the practice

of “marrying up,” catalogued in 1986 by Richard Van Wagoner. In a general conference in 1861 Brigham Young, talking on divorce, said that “a woman could leave a man — if the woman preferred — another man higher in authority & he is willing to take her. & her husband gives her up.” Zina Diantha Huntington Jacobs Young was sealed to Joseph Smith while being married for time only to Henry Jacobs and eventually left Jacobs to be a plural wife of Brigham Young, for “President Young told Zina D. if she would marry him she would be in a higher glory” (p. 43). Brigham Young announced to Henry Jacobs that Zina and her children were his (Brigham’s) property. Here, and in his proposal to Martha Brotherton, in which he promised that “if you will accept me, I will take you straight to the Celestial Kingdom” (p. 18), Brigham was trading on his status, selling himself to a woman by offering that she could ride his coattails to exaltation. Van Wagoner observed, “A Mormon male of hierarchical rank, with feet firmly planted in the priesthood, seemed a sure ticket to heaven” (p. 46).

Rather than seeing any compelling reason to think that we must populate heavenly kingdoms into existence so that these kingdoms can be our eternal reward, I see a compelling reason not to believe that God authored this system. It again reduces people to things. Women are the means by which men populate their kingdoms. They are also symbols of their husbands’ obedience to the commandment to marry, or to marry polygamously; under polygamy, the more wives a man has, the more righteous he is. Women are also taken from men as punishment or given to them as rewards. Men are tickets to celestial glory. Each spirit child is one more being for its parents to be sovereign Lords over.

The theology’s promise of an exalted future of creating worlds and procreating kingdoms supposedly follows a pattern set by God himself. Yet it is hard to match the language used by nineteenth-century Mormon men talking about their own heavenly future, with the Mormon concept of God. The emphasis on becoming a ruler over a family of subjects and wielding scepters of power is inconsistent with our description of God’s character.

While we certainly accept and occasionally use such titles as “King of Kings” to describe God, he is most commonly “Heavenly Father,” an intimate deity. We are supposed to be able to go to him with our deepest thoughts and questions, our most personal concerns. He in turn takes time for each of us and is passionately concerned about our well-being. Mormonism teaches me that I am a child of God. While I may well be a subject in God’s kingdom, I am not instructed to perceive myself as another person to be dominated to add to his personal power. His glory is not greater because he procreated me. I can’t conceive of him basking in his own marvelousness, or taking pride in the vastness of his dominion.

In this view of heaven exalted couples follow the pattern set by God and his eternal female companion. My Star B Primary manual produced in 1985 has a lesson on “Our Heavenly Family” (pp. 12–15). It tells me to teach the six-year-olds that in heaven, “they were a part of a heavenly family. Heavenly Father was their father, and they had a mother in heaven.” She must finally be officially accepted in Church theology.

Granting that it is rare to find Mother in Heaven in lesson manuals at all, the lesson's portrayal of her is typical of the way official Mormonism deals with her. She appears fewer than ten times, always as "mother in heaven" (all small case), in contrast to forty plus appearances of "Heavenly Father" (capitalized), and twenty plus appearances of Jesus. How is she described? As one of the heavenly parents who loved my children. She is like Heavenly Father, who is great and good and wise and knows everything and is perfect. My children loved her in heaven and wanted to be like their heavenly parents. In summary, she exists, has some good characteristics, and she loves.

How is Heavenly Father described? Jesus was *his* son. *Heavenly Father* called a meeting; *he* had a plan. If my children choose to do right they can live with *him* forever, being "just as happy and great and wise and good as *Heavenly Father* is." *He* planned what my children should do on earth, *he* knew it would not be easy, *he* gave them families, prophets, and Jesus. My class wanted to become like *Heavenly Father* and *Jesus*, and they wanted to choose the right like *Heavenly Father* and *Jesus* wanted. They can return to live with *Heavenly Father* and *Jesus*. In summary, Heavenly Father's companion when he is loving his children is Heavenly Mother. His companion when he is performing any other action is Jesus. Wouldn't the writers of the manual have been safe in saying that Jesus was the son of a heavenly mother as well as a heavenly father, that she also knew earth life would not be easy, and that she as well as Heavenly Father wanted us all to choose the right?

Although she is great and good and wise and omniscient and perfect, it is not for any of these qualities that she is valued. Her value is in her fertility. She exists to procreate, not to create, to inspire, to guide, to plan, to intervene, to empower, to comfort. As Erastus Snow explained in 1886, logic dictated that she must exist: "Now, it is not said in so many words in the Scriptures, that we have a Mother in heaven as well as a Father. It is left for us to infer this from what we see and know of all living things in the earth including man. The male and female principle is united and both necessary to the accomplishment of the object of their being, and if this be not the case with our Father in heaven after whose image we are created, then it is an anomaly in nature" (JD 26:214). Heavenly Mother is necessary because procreation can't be achieved by males alone. During the era of polygamy some suggested that she is only one of many mothers in heaven. They reasoned that procreation of spirit children could be accomplished more efficiently if Heavenly Father could impregnate many heavenly mothers, just as exalted mortals' procreation of spirit children could be accomplished more efficiently if exalted mortal males could impregnate many wives.

Yet, peculiarly, even this narrow sphere of creation is denied her in all official Mormon accounts of creation. The primary account, Genesis 1, uses the singular "God" throughout except in verse 26, where without explanation God says, "let *us* make a man in *our* image." Mormon variations of this scripture add other gods to explain this change from singular to plural, but the other gods are never explicitly female and are sometimes explicitly male. In Moses, "I, God" creates, apparently alone, until suddenly, "I, God, said unto

mine Only Begotten, which was with me from the beginning: "Let us make man in our image." Bizarrely, these two males, God says, "created man in mine own image, in the image of mine Only Begotten created I him; male and female created I them" (Moses 2:26–27).

In Abraham 4, the grammatically plural "Elohim" becomes the numerically plural "the Gods" thus eliminating the singular/plural shift. This might, but does not necessarily, include women. The temple ceremony presents Elohim, Jehovah, and Michael sharing creation duties. Elohim and Jehovah transform Michael into Adam. So not only is Mother in Heaven not a participant in creating the light, the darkness, plants and animals, she gets no credit for the one kind of creating allowed her.

Heavenly Mother is not an equal partner with Heavenly Father in any sense. She is second to her husband in everything, to her son in many things, and even to the Holy Ghost. Since she has no sphere of operations, she has no power. Everything that deity does is credited to God, to Christ, or to the Holy Ghost. Our First Article of Faith specifies that "We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost." There is no official, creedal statement which claims that we believe at all in Mother in Heaven.

Authority, both temporal and eternal, is linked to priesthood, a power that our Mother in Heaven apparently is without or possesses only in a limited way, because she is female. Her husband possesses all of it there is to possess. On this score, she is second to her son, for even before Christ was either a mortal or resurrected and exalted, he had all the priesthood power he might need to create everything. As a mortal he had authority to speak for God, while she appears not to have enough authority to speak for even herself. She is certainly second in veneration to her husband, for until recently, she existed only in the hymn, "O My Father," and was otherwise ignored. Prayers and worship are all directed to the Father alone except in rare gatherings of the unorthodox and of feminists. We must conclude that she is second in worth to her husband.

I will guess that this is another case of projecting current social reality into heaven. I can see why nineteenth-century Mormon men would envision a Mother in Heaven as a bearer and nurturer of children, for these were the primary roles American society allowed women. There was little precedent for a powerful, creative woman with independent spheres of action — and any women who were this way were generally derided as being "unwomanly" rather than praised for their talents. I can see why today's General Authorities who define womanhood as stay-at-home mothering would also envision her this way. But I can't see any reason now to let such a degrading concept of the female deity continue to exist without protest.

Mother in Heaven is a nothing at best, and at worst is a housewife. Given the status that women have had throughout the history of Mormonism and given the patriarchy that still rules in our Mormon and larger society, Mother in heaven can be nothing other than the faceless, nameless, unavailable-for-theological-purposes blank that she currently is. Our theology has allowed

her no authority nor power; she gets no acknowledgment for her distinctive contributions, whatever they are. She has no self apart from her husband.

Unless we can begin to see mortal Mormon women as significant in their own right, we will never see our Mother in Heaven as significant in her own right. She will only have significance because of the male she married or sired. As long as she is only the eternal housewife, producer of babies, and nurturer of children, mortal Mormon women will be expected to find those limiting roles satisfying.

I am not asking that we project a 1980s-vintage female executive into heaven and call this Mother in Heaven. But I wish there were more caution from those who project onto Mother in Heaven the traditional earthly model of housewife and nurturer of children. I would prefer that we project no model of womanhood into heaven to define her. Instead, since revelation often comes when questions are asked, I am encouraging Church authorities to ask for revelation about her. Then we might learn what she really is.

I can't change the reality of what heaven is. My wishing, hoping, and needing won't make it what I want it to be. But neither does Brigham Young's or Joseph Smith's. I believe that they and other Mormon males projected their own needs and desires into heaven, and that their heaven probably does not resemble actual heaven any more than my ideal heaven does. I reject much of their vision of heaven because it is destructive. It is based upon the notion that males are the truly significant beings: *their* kingdoms, *their* posterity, *their* creative priesthood power, *their* rank, and *male* deities are its focus, while females, including female deities, are an afterthought — ignored, restricted, and demeaned. This erodes the self-worth of women whose self-esteem is already low and encourages pride in men who already have a disproportionate sense of their own importance.

Rewards are given in this heaven because of gender, marital status, and hierarchical position as well as righteousness. Without minimizing Brigham Young's sacrifices and faithfulness, for example, should we really believe that he deserves a grander eternal reward than do the families who bravely attempted to settle the uninhabitable areas in Southern Utah that he sent them to? Should his reward surpass the rewards of the women who supported their children and their husbands as well, while those husbands were away on missions? Would a just God give him a better reward than he gives the hidden-away second and third wives of men who rarely visited or contributed to their families' economic well-being? Should his reward be greater because of all his wives and children than Spencer W. Kimball's is because he only had one wife and a handful of children?

These men's vision of heaven reduces many good people to insignificance. In 1967 Tom Stoppard rewrote *Hamlet* focusing on two minor characters, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. However, even as the major characters in their own play, they merely pass the time as they wait for their encounters with *Hamlet*. Although the focus is on them, they exist only to help action progress in *Hamlet*'s story; they are foils to enhance his distinctiveness; they define themselves according to their place in his life. In focusing on males, and par-

ticularly on males with hierarchical status, the Mormon vision of heaven reduces all others to minor characters in these males' heavenly lives. Its creators fashioned fine rewards for themselves but did not consider that their rewards wiped out the identities and personal significance of other people. Almost everyone becomes a minor character in someone else's story, and many people, especially women, children, and unmarried men, never do get to be the major character in their own story.

All Mormons become minor characters in Joseph Smith's story in heaven, as we become the subjects in the kingdom over which he rules. All children become minor characters in their parents', particularly their fathers' stories, as their numbers are added up to expand the vastness of their parents' kingdoms. All polygamous wives, who "belong" to their husbands, who "are given" to them like presents and can be taken from them and given to other husbands, also contribute by their numbers to the vastness of their husbands' kingdoms. Husbands become major characters in their own stories as they amass kingdoms, but wives are only the facilitators who help bring the subjects of those kingdoms into existence. Each of us deserves to be the major character in our own story in heaven, but does our current theology of heaven allow each of us that right?

To make Mormon heaven into something that rings true, that could reasonably have been structured by a God who loves us equally and fairly and who wants the best for each of us, I would simply make it less specific. Rewards would be based on faith and works, and each righteous person's reward would provide her or him with happiness. All people could continue to enjoy the company of those who were important to them on earth and could form emotional bonds with whomever else they chose. There would be meaningful, stimulating, creative activity there. Each person would be valued for her or himself, not for family ties, function, or earthly hierarchical position.

I have said all this not to complain, but rather to encourage Church members and leaders to rethink our theology of heaven. The nineteenth-century Mormon men who fleshed out the theological skeleton provided by scriptures and revelation fleshed it out according to their own cultural prejudices. They structured it to compensate themselves for the deprivations they felt they suffered on earth. But their prejudices and their needs should no longer be misread as representing heavenly reality: they are time-bound, not eternal. It is time to reject those aspects of Mormon heaven that are uninspired, unreasonable, unfair, damaging, and serve no virtuous end.

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From Calcutta to Kaysville: Is Righteousness Color-coded?

Lee Copeland

RECENTLY THE BISHOP OF A NEARBY WARD addressed the young people of our stake on the subject of making correct choices. In the course of his remarks he assured these young men and women that they were special spirits, reserved to come to earth in the last days to stand as witnesses for the Lord and to spread his gospel throughout the world. He explained that this was a reward for their righteous actions in the premortal existence.

He contrasted their situation with those who were less righteous and therefore less blessed in their earthly circumstances and referred to those living in the streets of Calcutta, relating their impoverished status to their less-than-valiant premortal behavior.

Having just adopted an infant girl from Calcutta, I was amazed to find that without meeting her the speaker could immediately assign her to the lower caste of the less valiant. When I spoke with this gentleman later, he said he was very sorry if I had been offended, but these ideas were not just his own; they were official Church doctrine.

This incident has prompted me to seek answers to these questions: What are the popularly held beliefs regarding the relationship between our premortal existence and the circumstances of our mortal life? Are these beliefs consistent with the scriptures and the statements of Joseph Smith, or do they merely reflect American cultural biases? Are they consistent with the most recent statements of Church authorities?

POPULAR BELIEFS

In its simplest form, the doctrine states that certain spirits, righteous in the premortal existence, have been reserved to come forth in this time and place. Ezra Taft Benson stated: “The finest group of young people that this world

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has ever known anything about has been born under the covenant into the homes of Latter-day Saint parents. I have a feeling that in many cases at least these choice spirits have been held back to come forth in this day and age when the gospel is upon the earth in its fullness, and that they have great responsibilities in establishing the kingdom" (CR, April 1951, 48).

For many Church members this statement lacks completeness. If there are "choice spirits," then there must be "less-than-choice spirits." If there are "these homes" and "this time" for the choice spirits, then there must be "those homes" and "those times" for the remainder. According to Orson Pratt the spirits "held back to come forth" were more noble and intelligent. The Lord had not kept them waiting thousands of years "to send them among the Hottentots, the African negroes, the idolatrous Hindoos, or any other of the fallen nations. . . . They are not kept in reserve in order to come forth to receive such a degraded parentage" (JD 1:63).

Joseph Fielding Smith described these choice spirits as the faithful and obedient in the premortal existence. "There is a reason why one man is born black and with other disadvantages, while another is born white with great advantages. . . . Those who were faithful in all things there received greater blessings here, and those who were not faithful received less" (1926, 154).

To the characteristics of nobleness, intelligence, faithfulness, and obedience Orson Pratt added another dimension: "If all the two-thirds who kept their first estate were equally valient in the war . . . why should some of them be called the chosen in their spiritual state to hold responsible stations and offices in this world, while others were not?" (1853, 55)

Many Church authorities felt that varying degrees of premortal intelligence, faithfulness, and obedience were understandable and expected. But failure to be valiant in defending the Lord could not be excused; punishment was necessary, and that punishment was a degraded mortal existence. As Mark E. Petersen commented, "Can we account in any other way for the birth of some of the children of God in darkest Africa, or in flood-ridden China, or among the starving hordes of India, while some of the rest of us are born here in the United States? . . . Because of performance in our pre-existence some of us are born as Chinese, some as Japanese, some as Indians, some as Negroes, some as Americans, some as Latter-day Saints" (1954, 12). This theme was echoed with a markedly racist tone by Melvin J. Ballard:

Of the thousands of children born today, a certain proportion of them went to the Hottentots of the south seas, thousands went to the Chinese mothers, thousands to Negro mothers, thousands to beautiful white Latter-day Saint mothers.

Let us not imagine that in this dispensation we shall do the work for the dead Chinese or Hindus. Not at all. I expect it will take one thousand years to complete in our temples the ordinances looking to the salvation of the House of Israel. It will take all Latter-day Saints and all that we can do to take care of our own branch — of our own house (1932, 19–20).

Though Joseph Fielding Smith popularized the "less-than-valiant" explanation, his early writing had a tentative tone. "It is a reasonable thing to believe that the spirits of the premortal state were of varying degrees of intelligence

and faithfulness. . . . However, to dwell upon this topic and point out certain nations as having been cursed because of their acts in the pre-existence, enters too much on the realm of speculation" (1924, 565).

A few years later George F. Richards also noted a lack of authority for this view. "I cannot conceive our Father consigning his children to a condition such as that of the negro race, if they had been valiant in the spirit world. . . . [However,] we have no definite knowledge concerning this" (CR, April 1939, 59).

As this theme was repeated in articles and sermons, however, the concern that "we have no definite knowledge" seemed to be forgotten. By 1958, when Bruce R. McConkie restated Joseph Fielding Smith's views in *Mormon Doctrine* (p. 269) for many the belief had become doctrine.

Alvin R. Dyer (1961) explained that the three divisions of premortal spirits (valiant, not valiant, and those who rejected the priesthood) came to earth through the three sons of Noah (Shem, Japheth, and Ham) into their lineages (chosen, adopted into the chosen, and cursed) to create the races (white, dark, and colored) who will be resurrected to their foreordained glory (celestial, terrestrial, and telestial). This connected race, nation, time, and place to premortal valiancy. It followed that if a nation or race was less valiant, then each individual member was less valiant.

Statements about interracial marriage perhaps most accurately indicate pervading racial attitudes. Brigham Young's feelings were recorded by Wilford Woodruff: "If any man mingles his seed with the seed of Cain the only way he could get rid of it or have salvation would be to come forward and have his head cut off and spill his blood upon the ground. It would also take the life of his children" (Woodruff 4:97, spelling modernized).

Arguing against the intermarriage of white and black, B. H. Roberts quoted from *The Color Line, a Brief in Behalf of the Unborn*, in the 1907 *Seventy's Course in Theology*: "That the negro is markedly inferior to the Caucasian is proved both craniologically and by six thousand years of planet-wide experimentation; and that the commingling of inferior with superior must lower the higher is just as certain as that the half-sum of two and six is only four" (p. 166). It was easy for Roberts to accept the supremacy of the white race and the inferiority of other races. Almost forty years earlier the *Juvenile Instructor* had taught:

In it [the Caucasian race] are included the people of nearly all the nations who have ruled or now rule the world; those who are the foremost in the arts, sciences, and civilization. All the other families of men are, as a rule, unequal to them in strength, size, beauty, learning and intelligence.

[Last] in order stands the Negro race, the lowest in intelligence and the most barbarous of all the children of men. The race whose intellect is the least developed, whose advancement has been the slowest, and who appear to be the least capable of improvement of all people (Cannon 1868, 141).

In response to popular beliefs the Utah legislature passed a law prohibiting "marriages between persons who are Negro and White and between Mon-

golians, members of the Malay race or Mulattos, Quadroon, or Octoroon, and a White person" — a law which was not repealed until July 1965 (Section 30-1-2, Utah Code Annotated, 1953). Two years later the United States Supreme Court overturned all such laws, leaving South Africa as the only modern nation still prohibiting interracial marriages (*Loving et ux v. Virginia*, 388 U.S. 1 [1967]).

Statements by Church authorities against interracial marriage have continued through the 1970s. In 1946 J. Reuben Clark said, "Do not ever let that wicked virus get into your systems that brotherhood either permits or entitles you to mix races which are inconsistent. Biologically, it is wrong; spiritually, it is wrong" (p. 492). When asked why the Church discouraged interracial marriage, Hugh B. Brown responded, "I'm a farmer by nature. . . . I know the wisdom of selecting the future parents of future generations of animals. The Church takes the position that we ought to be as careful, at least, when we select our mates as we are when we select the future parents of our animals" (Campbell and Poll 1975, 286). The First Presidency even discouraged "all social relationships and associations between the races" because of the concern that they might lead to such marriages (First Presidency to Harris 1954).

Spencer W. Kimball's statement in 1965 was the first to remove the stigma from interracial marriages. "Now, the brethren feel that it is not the wisest thing to cross racial lines in dating and marrying. [However,] there is *no* condemnation" (p. 15). His views did not change even after the 1978 revelation on the priesthood. In June 1978 he admonished students "to marry within their own race. There is nothing wrong with any other course, but it is generally better if two people can have the same background and similar experiences before they're married" ("Whirlwind," 1978, 8). These two statements constitute the current official Church policy on this subject.

SCRIPTURAL AND CULTURAL ORIGINS

The scriptures only briefly refer to our premortal existence and make no mention of the valiancy of spirits there:

Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee (Jer. 1:5).

He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4).

I was in the beginning with the Father and am the Firstborn; . . . Ye were also in the beginning with the Father (D&C 93:21-23).

Now the Lord had shown unto me, Abraham, the intelligences that were organized before the world was; and among all these there were many of the noble and great ones (Abr. 3:22).

Even before they were born, they, with many others, received their first lessons in the world of spirits and were prepared to come forth (D&C 138:56).

While the scriptures give no details about our premortal existence, they are very clear about the universality of the gospel. During his mortal ministry the Lord directed his message "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt.

10:6). Immediately after his resurrection he commanded his apostles, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).

Almost immediately Paul began carrying Christianity out of its narrow cultural and geographic confines into "all the world," a task which the Church continues to do today. Paul knew "that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness is accepted with him" (Acts 10:34–35).

The Book of Mormon presents the same view of the gospel in 2 Nephi 26:33: "He [Christ] inviteth them all to come unto him and partake of his goodness; and he denieth none that come unto him, black and white, bond and free, male and female; and he remembereth the heathen; and all are alike unto God." Joseph Smith reaffirmed that the Lord would judge all men fairly and equitably, "not according to the narrow, contracted notions of men, but 'according to the deeds done in the body whether they be good or evil;' or whether these deeds were done in England, America, Spain, Turkey, India: he will judge them, 'not according to what they have not, but according to what they have'" ("Baptism," 1842, 759). Joseph Smith viewed interracial marriage with blacks differently than with other races. In an 1831 revelation Joseph stated that, in time, the Saints should intermarry with the Lamanites and Nephites (Foster 1981, 134–35), while in 1844, as mayor of Nauvoo, he fined "two negroes for attempting to marry white women" (HC 6:210).

How much do these ideas reflect American cultural biases? The United States has always been celebrated as a nation where immigrants from all nations and races would be considered on their personal merits, not their color or culture. Unfortunately this description more closely resembles the creative concept of a public relations firm than an accurate reflection of our history.

Racism in the United States was recorded as early as 1655. Peter Stuyvesant, recruiting a military force to defend New Amsterdam, rejected a number of Jewish settlers attempting to join the guard because of "the disgust and unwillingness" of the citizen soldiers to serve with them, or to "be on guard with them in the same guard house" (Ecclesiastical Records, 1:340).

Statements directed against blacks have set the standard for racist rhetoric. In 1866 Benjamin Humphries, governor of Mississippi, declared, "The Negro is free, whether we like it or not. . . . To be free, however, does not make him a citizen, or entitle him to social or political equality with the white man" (1866, 183).

Thirty years later American history leaflets were still proclaiming "that the African Negro is destined by Providence to occupy this condition of servile dependence. . . . It is marked on the face, stamped on the skin, and evinced by the intellectual inferiority and natural improvidence of this race. . . . They are utterly unqualified not only for rational freedom but for self-government of any kind" (Hart and Channing 1893, 5).

Asians have not fared much better. Concern regarding the increasing Chinese immigration during the second half of the nineteenth century prompted Edwin Meade, a lawyer and legislator, to describe the Chinese as "a mere animal machine, performing the duties in his accepted sphere, punctually and

patiently, but utterly incapable of any improvement.” He further declared their brain capacity to be so far below that of the Caucasian as to render them “unfit for free government” (*Chinese*, 1878, 297).

United States Senator Albert J. Beveridge in supporting the war against Spain for the Philippines asserted that Filipinos are a “barbarous race . . . not capable of self-government. How could they be? They are not of a self-governing race. They are Orientals” (*Congressional Record*, 1900, 708).

After the attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States government feared a Japanese invasion of the West Coast aided by Japanese-Americans. These citizens were prohibited from entering certain areas, and the government relocated many of them to detention camps. In 1944 the Supreme Court reaffirmed its previous approval of this policy, stating that the war “situation demanded that all citizens of Japanese ancestry be segregated” (*Korematsu v. United States*, 323 U.S. 223 [1944]).

All of these statements are founded on the concept of white supremacy. In 1858, Stephen A. Douglas stated that “in my opinion this government of ours is founded on the white basis. It was made by the white man, for the benefit of the white man, to be administered by white men, in such a manner as they should determine” (Jones 1895, 70).

In 1920 Lothrop Stoddard, a popular commentator on social and political matters, wrote, “Two things are necessary for the continued existence of a race: it must remain itself, and it must breed its best. Within the white world, migrations of lower human types . . . must be rigorously curtailed. Such migrations upset standards, sterilize better stocks, increase low types, and compromise national futures” (p. 301).

These few selected quotations accurately reflect the American culture during the emergence of the Church’s doctrine regarding the premortal existence. The statements of Church authorities regarding non-white races seem to echo these cultural biases rather than reflect any insight found in the scriptures.

How did these culturally and personally held beliefs become accepted Church doctrine? Armand Mauss has provided substantial insight into this process. First, beliefs are imported from the prevailing culture. Specific doctrinal themes are integrated with these beliefs into a popular folklore. Second, these ideas receive authoritative endorsement by some Church leaders. At this stage they are often expressed in tentative terms or as personal statements. Over time the ideas are repeated, the previous reservations are forgotten, and the beliefs are elevated to an official status. At that point they exist independently of those who first expressed the idea. Even though they are not canon (scriptural or revelatory doctrines), they are accepted by Church members with the same force (Mauss 1981, 33).

The doctrine of valiancy in the premortal existence was developed exactly according to this sequence. Commonly held cultural beliefs regarding race were combined with uniquely Mormon themes. The Book of Mormon, the “keystone of our religion” and “the most correct of any book” available to the Saints, continually equates white skin with righteousness and dark skin with

sin and degradation (see 2 Ne. 5:21; Jacob 3:8; Alma 3:6; 3 Ne. 2:15). In this way the shared culture and the revealed religion reinforced each other.

In addition, the Saints found support for these beliefs in the experiences of their missionaries. Newell Bringhurst describes a number of these, of which the following is typical:

Latter-day Saint missionaries, however, had limited success in converting the Asian Indian. As a result, the Saints viewed these reluctant east Asians in an increasingly unfavorable light. Frustrated missionaries described the unreceptive Indians as mental “slaves bound with superstitions strong cords” who deserved to remain “a nation of servants.” The Saints, in looking for a concrete reason for the limited appeal of Mormonism in India, seized upon what they perceived as the Indian’s “inferior” ethnic racial composition (1975, 190).

In marked contrast the missionaries’ message was well received by the white Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian nations.

These experiences reinforced the ideas drawn from Mormon culture and from the Book of Mormon — dark-skinned people are ignorant, superstitious, unrighteous, and generally inferior, while white-skinned people are intelligent, industrious, and desirous of accepting the Lord’s message. From this cultural, scriptural, and personal basis, these ideas went on to become first authoritative and then official.

Existentialist philosopher Karl Jaspers wrote that humans have an irrepressible urge to know the knowable. He neglected to add that we also have that same urge to know the unknowable and few guidelines to distinguish between the two. Culture is based on our ability to understand the relationships between events that, at first glance, appear to be chance occurrences. Explanations of these relationships become the foundation of scientific and religious thought. Explanations where there are no relationships become the foundation of prejudice.

Church authorities may feel about the spiritual world the way scientists feel about the natural world — for every unanswered question there is an explanation to be found. Things happen the way they do for a reason. If the reason is not obvious, it is only because we have not discovered it. In spiritual matters this discovery should be the result of revelation, but sometimes the reasons discovered are only cultural biases masquerading as revealed truth.

CURRENT ATTITUDES OF CHURCH LEADERS

There is, however, an undercurrent of enlightenment in the Church. Not all authorities have expressed racist views; notable exceptions are James Talmage, Spencer W. Kimball, and Howard W. Hunter. While believing that there was a relationship between our premortal existence and our mortal life, Talmage clearly understood that the blessings of the earth are not to be confused with the blessings of God. “Our condition, position, situation upon the earth,” he wrote, “must be the result of causes operating before we came into possession of our mortal bodies. Now let it not be assumed that the man who counts himself most blessed in the things of the earth was, therefore, most deserving, for

the things of earth may not be, after all, the greatest blessings of God" (1908, 992).

As early as 1949 Spencer W. Kimball was reminding the Saints, "Who are we that we are so preferred in the kingdom of heaven? What have we done that we are entitled to so many blessings? What did you individually do that made you superior to your other darker brothers and sisters? Was it something you did? Well, maybe it was because you were fortunate enough to be born in Latter-day Saint homes. . . . And yet, are we any better than those who have been deprived? And who are we to differentiate?" (E. Kimball 1982, 236–37) It is important to note that he says "fortunate" while others were saying "deserving." He continues his plea for tolerance: "Take this message back to your people in the stakes, that they leave off their racial prejudice. Racial prejudice is of the devil. Racial prejudice is of ignorance. There is no place for it in the gospel of Jesus Christ" (p. 237). But, like Talmage's message, his ideas were overwhelmed by the popular view of white superiority.

More recently Howard W. Hunter has spoken clearly and forcefully in defense of equality:

The gospel of Jesus Christ transcends nationality and color, crosses cultural lines, and blends distinctiveness into a common brotherhood. . . . *All* men are invited to come unto him and *all* are alike unto him. Race makes no difference; color makes no difference; nationality makes no difference. . . . As members of the Lord's church, we need to lift our vision beyond personal prejudices. We need to discover the supreme truth that indeed our Father is no respecter of persons (1979, 72, 74).

While no Church authorities are speaking in favor of interracial marriage, the most recently available divorce statistics argue against the claim that these marriages are significantly more prone to disruption. In the United States in 1982, those states reporting race recorded 346 divorces per 1,000 same-race marriages and 351 divorces per 1,000 mixed-race marriages (Vital Statistics, 1982). In the previous year the corresponding statistics were 364 and 365. No comprehensive study has been done regarding the causes of divorce among interracial couples. The few brief studies available indicate that the majority of interracial couples report their racial differences as a positive force in their marriage, while none claimed these differences as a factor in divorce (Porterfield 1978, 104–5).

The decade of the eighties has seen subtle yet significant changes in the attitudes of Church authorities toward nonwhite races. First, public statements of Church authorities regarding our premortal existence have taken on a new tone. Boyd K. Packer in his October 1983 general conference address asked, "Why the inequities in life? Some so rich. Some so wretchedly poor. Some so beautifully formed, and others with pitiful handicaps. Some are gifted and others retarded" (1983, 20). But he did not answer with the old maxims. Instead, he left these questions unanswered. In Bruce R. McConkie's final book, his certainty of previous years is absent. He wrote, "When and where and under what circumstances are the 'noble and great ones' sent to earth?"

. . . There are no simple answers. Our finite limitations and our lack of knowledge of the innate capacities of all men do not let us envision the complexities of the Lord's system for sending his children to mortality" (1985, 35).

Second, and more important, the racial stereotypes of the last century are beginning to disappear. In his October 1987 general conference address, Alexander Morrison spoke in glowing terms about black Africans, "a people prepared by the Spirit of God." He described them as "anxious to learn and quick to understand, attentive and responsive, spiritually sensitive, thirsty for the living water and hungry for the bread of life, . . . and eager to obey the commandments of Christ" (1987, 25).

The teachings of Church authorities regarding nonwhite races are changing. Whether our understanding of the gospel is pushing aside the old cultural biases or whether current, more enlightened cultural views are allowing us to more fully comprehend the gospel's universality is unimportant. What is important is that the doctrine is changing and it is changing in a major way. On 9 December 1987 an official Church news release described the belief in the superiority of one race or color over another as "abhorrent and tragic" ("Statement," 1988, 74).

Unfortunately, Church authorities rarely emphasize such statements. They either simply stop teaching the old beliefs, or they start teaching the new beliefs without acknowledging that there ever was a different view. This approach places a difficult burden on Church members. The "truth" learned from parents and Primary may not be today's truth. The "truth" which is then taught to our children may not be today's truth.

Speaking of third-world nations and the ever-expanding programs and publications of the Church, Boyd K. Packer said: "Now, we are moving into those countries, but we can't move *there* with all the baggage we produce and carry *here*! We can't move with a 1947 Utah Church! Could it be that we are not prepared to take the *gospel* because we are not prepared to take (and they are not prepared to receive) all of the things we have wrapped up with it as extra baggage" (1987, 10).

Part of the Church's extra baggage which has now officially been jettisoned is the belief in the inferiority of nonwhite races. Church members must now follow by jettisoning their own outmoded "1947 Utah Church" cultural biases. Leaders like Howard W. Hunter and Alexander Morrison have made a significant contribution to this process. As we leave these prejudices behind we can more easily accept the differences in our Father's children and more freely delight in their diversity.

Each day as I see my daughter, I am reminded of the miracle that preserved her life and brought her to us. I sense the love and joy of her unique spirit and see the beauty of her black eyes and brown skin. There are those who do not know of the miracle, who do not choose to feel her love, and who see only the difference, not the beauty, of her skin. While I cannot protect her from cruel remarks made by children on the playground, I will never tolerate those same remarks made by adults from the pulpit.

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A Stench in the Nostrils of Honest Men: Southern Democrats and the Edmunds Act of 1882

David Buice

SENATOR GEORGE F. EDMUNDS OF VERMONT stood before his colleagues 12 December 1881 to introduce Senate Bill Number 353, the latest in a series of measures aimed at the Mormon practice of polygamy. The Edmunds' bill was reported out of the Committee on the Judiciary with amendments on 24 January 1882. Congress eventually approved the measure, and President Chester A. Arthur signed it into law. Its passage was preceded by a spirited debate in both houses of Congress, and among the foremost critics of the measure were a handful of southern Democrats (CR 68, 577; Poll 1939, 114–16).

In one sense, southern opposition to Edmunds' proposal was not surprising, given the region's long-standing defense of States' rights. But in another sense this stand was indeed unusual as the relationship between the South and the Mormons, dating back to the earliest days of the Church, had always been troubled at best.

The first contact between Mormons and the southern states came shortly after a general conference of the Church held at Amherst, Ohio, on 25 January 1832. At this meeting four elders were instructed to preach in the "south countries," meaning the area south of the Ohio River. In May 1832 they established the first branch of the Church in the South in Cabell County, Virginia (now West Virginia). The Church continued to search for southern converts throughout the ante-bellum period, and while the traveling elders encountered little actual violence, they were often threatened and treated with hostility. Opposition stemmed largely from resentment over the conversions, limited though they were, made at the expense of the established denominations, questions over the authenticity of Joseph Smith's revelations and the Book of Mormon, and deep-seated suspicions that the itinerant missionaries

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were surreptitiously preaching abolitionism throughout the region. Southerners only rarely raised questions about polygamy, possibly because abolitionism seemed the greater threat.¹

In Congress, meanwhile, the polygamy question came up several times before the outbreak of the Civil War. Legislative attempts to deal with polygamy date back to the early months of 1856 when Congressman Justin S. Morrill of Vermont introduced an anti-polygamy bill in the House of Representatives. The measure was eventually referred to committee but was never debated. A similar measure introduced in 1858 died in the House Judiciary Committee (Poll 1939, 97–101).

Undaunted, Morrill continued his fight for a monogamous America and in 1860 introduced a measure which, like the first two, provided for the imposition of a fine and a prison term for anyone found guilty of polygamy. This measure, unlike Morrill's earlier proposals, was debated, after being reported from the House Judiciary Committee in March with southern congressmen playing a prominent part in the discussion. While southerners were by no means united in opposing the Morrill Bill — it was reported from committee with a recommendation for passage by Thomas A. R. Nelson of Tennessee — several congressmen from the region challenged the measure. Lawrence O'Brien Brance of North Carolina, L. Q. C. Lamar of Mississippi, and Miles Taylor of Louisiana all expressed serious reservations. They feared a precedent which national legislation on a local affair might set: if Congress began regulating marital relationships, the ownership of property in the form of slaves might also soon fall within its purview. Despite their protests, the measure passed the House but languished and died in the Senate in the rush of activities between the election of Abraham Lincoln in the fall of 1860 and his inauguration in March 1861. It was not until June 1862 that Congress, with most of the South no longer represented, finally passed the Morrill Bill. Lincoln signed it 1 July (Poll 1939, 102–15).

About the same time that Justin Morrill's 1861 measure died in the Senate, the spreading hostilities of the Civil War ended Mormon missionary activities in the South. In 1867 the Church again assigned missionaries to the region and after several years of sporadic activities organized in 1875 the Southern States Mission, which encompassed Tennessee, Arkansas, Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, and Virginia. Its jurisdiction was later expanded to include North and South Carolina, Kentucky, Maryland, Texas, Florida, Louisiana and, for several years, Ohio (Berrett 1960, 219–21, 252, 257–58; Ellsworth 1951, 120, 319; Hatch 1968, 25; Southern, 8, 25 April 1867).

The first elders assigned to the South found a dispirited people surrounded by the desolation of the war. But the numbness of southern whites soon wore off, and they turned their wrath not only on Republican interlopers but on the

¹ The records of Latter-day Saint activities in the antebellum South are fragmentary at best, but the following sources in the Church archives provide additional information and insights: *Diary of Abraham Smoot*, vol. I and II; *Diary of James H. Flanagan*; *Autobiography and Diary of Henry G. Boyle*, vol. I; *Reminiscences of Drusilla Dorris Hendricks*; *Diary of Amasa Lyman*.

Mormon intruders as well. Indeed, the elders who traveled the backroads of the post-bellum South encountered what Gene A. Sessions (1976) has called "a curious mixture of fellowship and fear." The diaries and journals kept by the elders who labored in the region record countless acts of kindness and generosity by the ordinary southerners they met. But at the same time, the specter of violence was always present. On 21 July 1879 Elder Joseph Standing was shot and killed by an anti-Mormon mob at Varnell's Station, Georgia, and on a bright Sunday morning in August 1884 a blazing shootout near Cane Creek, Tennessee, left four Mormons and an anti-Mormon Methodist minister dead.

By the end of the nineteenth century five Mormon missionaries had been killed in the South. While murder was rare, threats and lesser acts of violence were almost daily occurrences. To cite only one instance, Elders Arthur Dall and G. B. Moore were driven out of Ruston, Louisiana, in February 1898 by local residents hurling a barrage of rotten eggs. In contrast, despite the general unpopularity of the Mormon church in late nineteenth-century America, there were no murders and very few acts of violence committed against Mormon elders in other regions of the country (Sessions 1976, 212–16; Wingfield 1953, 19–35; Arrington 1976, 9; Southern, 1875–1900, 410).

There were many reasons for the fierce southern response to Mormonism. These included the southern belief that the Mormons were only another in a series of destructive outside forces at work within their borders; the still limited success of Mormon missionary activities (which often created cleavages within families, extended families, or churches); and the intrusion of the Mormons into a frontier-type society where force and violence were a way of life and an acceptable solution to many problems (Sessions 1976, 212–25).

And there was polygamy, which magnified southern suspicions and fears. In the postwar period as missionaries gradually spread throughout the South, lurid rumors followed. It was whispered that the elders baptized their women converts in the nude and that the flower of southern womanhood was being lured away to lives of slavery in the harems of Mormon patriarchs in Utah. While at times southerners responded to these rumors rationally — for example, by issuing grand jury indictments against elders accused of preaching polygamy — this was not always the case. Some southerners, believing the worst of the rumors and determined to preserve the sanctity of their homes and communities, reached for their whips and guns in dealing with the lecherous intruders. And there were tragic results, such as the bloodletting at Cane Creek, Tennessee (Sessions 1976, 222–24; Southern, 26 Oct. 1869).

Outside the South the reaction to polygamy was equally vitriolic, although far less violent. As one observer has noted, during the second half of the nineteenth century most Americans of social conscience confronted with the issue of polygamy had an immediate and negative response (C. Cannon 1974, 61). Victorian Americans believed that Christian civilization was fragile, held together by a morality based on man's ability to control desire, especially the wild and destructive sexual impulses. Many feared that any relaxation of sexual standards would lead to a complete breakdown of civilized order. And

if polygamy liberated man's base sexual drive from the normal restraints of civilization, he would be consumed by unrestrained sensuality (C. Cannon 1974, 64–65).

The horror with which most Americans of that day viewed polygamy led to a flood of anti-Mormon literature, much of it erotic and sado-masochistic in tone. Most national magazines carried numerous articles on the Mormons, and polygamy was the most common theme. Of the fifty novels written about the Mormons in the nineteenth century (and many went through several editions), most were concerned at least in part with polygamy (C. Cannon 1974, 63; Sessions 1976, 223).

In Congress the response was a spate of anti-Mormon legislation aimed not only at destroying polygamy but at cracking the Saints' political control of Utah and insuring that Utah entered the Union as a Republican state (Poll 1958, 112). Before the 1880s the one statutory achievement of this effort was the 1874 passage of the Poland Act during the presidency of Ulysses S. Grant. The new law, a Republican-sponsored measure which received only scattered Democratic votes, limited the jurisdiction of the Mormon-controlled probate courts in Utah to the handling of estates and civil cases involving less than \$300. The measure also revised the method for impaneling juries in Utah to facilitate convictions under the Morrill Act of 1862 and provided for appeal to the United States Supreme Court, on writ of error, of convictions for polygamy (Poll 1958, 113–16; 1939, 156–57).

The results were significant. Brigham Young's secretary, George Reynolds, was convicted of polygamy in a well-known test case of the Morrill Act. The United States Supreme Court upheld the conviction in 1879. But when it became apparent that Latter-day Saints would continue to defy the laws and bear the consequences rather than abandon polygamy, President Rutherford B. Hayes made additional proposals in his last annual message to Congress in December 1880. Among other things, Hayes called for the establishment of a provisional government in Utah made up entirely of presidential appointees confirmed by the Senate. But if the present form of government were to be continued, he recommended that the right to vote, hold office, and sit on juries in Utah be confined to those who neither practiced nor upheld polygamy (Poll 1958, 117; Arrington and Bitton 1979, 180).

Hayes was not able to secure the passage of new legislation before leaving office in March 1881, but a vortex of events soon led Vermont's Senator George F. Edmunds to introduce additional legislation. The most bizarre of these events was the shooting of President James A. Garfield in July 1881. In the weeks that followed, Americans anxiously read their local newspapers for the daily bulletins issued by the president's physicians and followed Garfield's death watch with dismay.

Speculation accompanied the concern, and rumors that Mormons rejoiced over the assault on the president made their way into print. Those circulating the rumors apparently assumed that because Garfield called for more anti-polygamy legislation in his inaugural address Mormons were glad when he was struck down. And one Protestant clergyman, the Reverend T. DeWitt

Talmage, went so far as to imply broadly that the assassin, Charles J. Guiteau, was a Mormon. In a sermon delivered in Brooklyn, New York, shortly after the president's death, Talmage declared that Guiteau had about him the "Mormon ugliness," as well as the "spirit of Mormon licentiousness." If Garfield's death should arouse more hatred toward Mormonism, Talmage declared, he would not have died in vain (CHC 6:26–8).

However, even before Garfield was shot, the Reynolds decision had sparked the campaign against the Latter-day Saints and polygamy. George Q. Cannon, Utah's delegate in Congress, noted that after the Supreme Court decided the Reynolds case, petitions poured into Congress asking for additional legislation to make the Morrill Act of 1862 more effective. And Cannon himself felt the consequences of the case (M. Cannon 1960, 65–6, 72).

Since his election as Utah's congressional delegate in 1872, Cannon had been the target of intense opposition from members of Utah's anti-Mormon Liberal Party. He had overwhelmingly defeated his Liberal opponents in the elections of 1872 and 1874, and when these victories were unsuccessfully challenged in Congress, the Liberals offered no candidate to oppose him in the elections of 1876 and 1878. The Reynolds decision, however, generated new hope. In the election of 1880 Cannon again faced a Liberal Party opponent, Allen G. Campbell, a mine owner from Beaver County. But again Cannon, the candidate of the pro-Mormon People's Party, was the victor, receiving 18,568 votes to Campbell's 1,357. The Liberals, however, appealed to the territorial governor, Eli H. Murray, claiming Cannon's election was invalid because he had not properly completed his naturalization as a United States citizen and was, therefore, an unnaturalized alien ineligible to hold public office. When Murray upheld this claim, Cannon served notice that he and his supporters would appeal to Congress for final adjudication.

The resolution of the Cannon-Campbell contest was still pending when the Edmunds Bill was introduced. Presumably Edmunds believed that passage of a measure prohibiting polygamists from holding public office would increase the likelihood that Cannon's appeal would be denied, which in fact occurred when the House voted on 19 April 1882 against seating either claimant. Further, the 1880 Republican victories in the presidential and congressional races greatly increased the chances for passage of Edmunds' proposed legislation (M. Cannon 1960, 50–77; CHC 6:2–11).

After its introduction in December 1881, the Edmunds Bill was submitted to the Senate Committee on the Judiciary. As reported from that body the measure provided that the maximum penalty for any person found guilty of practicing polygamy was a fine of not more than \$500 and imprisonment for not more than five years. Any male convicted of cohabiting with more than one woman was to be fined not more than \$300 and imprisoned for not more than six months. To insure enforcement of these penalties, the measure also provided that in cases involving bigamy, polygamy, or cohabitation in the Territory of Utah, prospective jurors could be challenged if they themselves were currently practicing or had practiced bigamy, polygamy, or unlawful cohabitation.

What turned out to be the most controversial provisions of the measure were found in the last two parts, sections 8 and 9, provisions intended to restructure the territorial government. Under section 8 no polygamist, bigamist, or cohabitant, and no woman cohabiting with such persons, could vote or hold public office in any territory of the United States. Section 9 declared all registration and election offices in Utah vacant and assigned the supervision of elections for the time being to a five-member commission appointed by the president. The commission was to name all election officers in the territory, examine all election returns, and issue certificates of election to those found to be duly elected to the territorial legislature. The new legislature would then provide by law for the filling of vacated offices. This final section of the measure also stipulated that none were to be barred from voting because of their opinions on bigamy or polygamy (Poll 1958, 117–18; 1939, 188–89; CR, 1155).

The debate began immediately. Southerners manned the front ranks of the opposition, and their motivation was quite simple: they were not so much interested in defending polygamy—most made it quite clear that they abhorred the practice—as they were in preventing the passage of what seemed to be a Reconstruction measure, especially one that might well convert a Democratic territory into a Republican state. In short, they opposed what they saw as a replay of radical Reconstruction and a violation of the principles of States' rights.

The first attack against the measure was launched by Joseph E. Brown, the former Confederate governor of Georgia. His almost fanatical adherence to the doctrine of state sovereignty had led to frequent clashes even with President Jefferson Davis and the Confederate Congress. Brown was a strange mixture of idealist and opportunist; his dedication to States' rights had not prevented him from joining the Republican Party during the early years of Reconstruction and then switching back to the Democrats in 1871. Following his election to the Senate in 1880, he had supported various causes without regard to their popularity in the South. Swimming upstream against public opinion, he supported federal aid to education, at the same time telling New Englanders that they spent too much time “attending to other people's business” and ought to let the southern states tend to such matters as voting rights for their citizens. He had also denounced recent efforts to limit Chinese immigration, and now he came to the assistance of the Mormons.

In an effort to increase the Democratic presence on the election commission, Brown first proposed that not more than three of the five members be from the same party. But his reservations went beyond mere numbers; he objected more to the commission's influence on Utah's future. While the sponsor of the bill might claim that the commission was not to be the government of the territory, Brown insisted it would be a returning board, similar to those of the Reconstruction era.² He had always found that in the South

² During Radical Reconstruction laws had been enacted in the southern states giving certain state officials the authority to supervise all elections. These bodies, popularly known as returning boards, helped perpetuate Republican rule in the South by certifying election returns and ruling in favor of Republican contenders in disputed elections. Brown and other southerners

the returning board was in fact the government of the state. The board always decided the outcome of elections, and he had no doubt that this would also be the case in Utah where the Republicans desired to control the territory (CR, 1155–56; Brooks 1929, 141–43; Parks 1977, 535–36, 542, 548).

Florida's Wilkinson Call, former adjutant general in the Confederate Army, quickly endorsed Brown's remarks. Focusing also on the proposed five-member commission, Call argued that if the proposition were enacted, five persons would have absolute power to decide who was eligible to vote and to hold office in Utah. If Edmunds were to report a bill giving five persons absolute authority to interpret the election laws of the territory and of the United States, to declare which votes were valid and which were not, and to declare who was eligible to hold office, Call asserted, "we shall have the proposition in its naked and proper form" (CR, 1156). When Edmunds rebutted that the territorial legislature, the moment it was organized, would have the authority to rejudge and revise the actions of the commission, Call insisted that this was a subterfuge and that the legislature itself would be a mere creature of the commission, "a packed legislature and not a fair expression of the public will of the people" (CR, 1156). Stating that he had no objection to stamping out polygamy and would "join hands in that very gladly," Call declared it would be much better to allow the federal courts to decide who was qualified to vote and hold office in Utah. He concluded: "I am willing to see the disqualification of polygamy made a condition of electoral capacity, but I do not think that the power of the courts should be taken away and the whole of this *reconstruction* vested in a board of five persons appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate" (CR, 1156; Biographical, 650, italics added).

The greatest opposition to the Edmunds Bill on this first day of debate came from Missouri's George G. Vest. Even though some the darkest moments of early Mormon history occurred in Missouri, Vest, a former member of the Confederate Congress, could not tolerate the denial of the constitutional principles he considered guaranteed. He, too, concentrated on sections 8 and 9 of the bill and based his opposition on judicial precedent. He insisted that he knew of no decision in the jurisprudence of the United States in which it had been ruled that the right to vote or hold office, after being conferred, could be taken away without conviction for a crime. Vest cited first an obscure New York case, *Barker v. the People*, in which that state supreme court had ruled that classes of men, or even a single person not convicted of a crime, could not be barred from voting or holding office. He then brought up the Dred Scott decision, calling Chief Justice Taney's arguments in that case "letters of gold" (CR, 1158). Vest cited those parts of the decision in which Taney decreed that the citizen and the Constitution walked side by side into the territories of the West, thus making it impossible for the federal government to assume in those territories discretionary or despotic powers denied it by the Constitution. Although he, too, detested polygamy and believed it to be "utterly subversive of all pure society and good morals," he could not permit

who opposed the Edmunds Bill did not want an agency of this type established in Utah, and if it was they wanted to make certain that Democrats would have some voice in its decisions.

himself to vote for a proposal he believed subverted the "highest and dearest rights of every American citizen" (CR, 1158; Nettles 1936, 260; Holsinger 1970, 24, 35).

The debate consumed most of the day. By early evening Senator Edmunds proposed that further debate be suspended until the following day, with the stipulation that the Senate would vote on the bill no later than five o'clock the next afternoon. His reason for making this proposal, he said, was the Senate's extremely crowded docket; some 200 bills were still pending. Alabama's John T. Morgan strongly opposed this proposal, claiming that he had learned that an agreement had been reached in the Judiciary Committee to press the bill to a vote without adjournment. Edmunds insisted that this accusation was without foundation, and after exchanging several more verbal jabs, they agreed to bring the bill to a vote no later than 5:30 on the following afternoon (CR, 1162).

When debate resumed the next day, 16 February, southern opposition was conspicuous. In presenting their arguments, though they could not bring themselves to support polygamy or to praise Mormonism, they did at least defend the right of the Latter-day Saints to freedom of conscience.

Morgan of Alabama was the first to take the floor. The one-time Confederate brigadier pointed out that over 200,000 people living within the United States had grown up under a system of polygamy—the Indians. Wisely no laws had been enacted to forbid the practice among these people, and he saw no reason why the same forbearance could not be extended to the Mormons:

There is no occasion just at this moment of time for being unduly excited about this business. . . . It is one of the highest duties of every government in moments of excitement to stem the current of the tide of fury, of rage, or of wrath, and to appeal to the Constitution; to place the people against whom an assault is made or against whom an accusation is brought upon the ground on which we place all other people in dealing with them (CR, 1196).

The framers of the measure, he charged, were acting in "a spirit of madness." The measure which they proposed was not only an *ex post facto* law, punishing a man for bigamy or polygamy entered into before the enactment of the statute in question, but also a bill of attainder, for by giving the five-member commission the authority to declare who was eligible to vote and to hold office in the territory, the measure would enable that body to punish citizens without the benefit of a trial. This would violate not only constitutional guarantees but the rights which "belonged to American civilization and law long before the Constitution was adopted" (CR, 1197). And the people of the Utah territory did not deserve this treatment, he argued, for a man practicing bigamy or polygamy might still have a large proprietary interest in the country:

It is scarcely to be supposed that a man by a course of conduct of this character has disqualified himself in any essential way from casting an intelligent vote, or that he has lost his interest in the community to the extent that he is not expected to feel any responsibility in connection with his vote. . . . There can be but one interpretation

given to this statute as it stands reported by the committee, and that is that the deprivation of the right of suffrage is intended only as a punishment (CR, 1198).

Not wanting to be thought either lenient or too sympathetic toward the Mormons, however, Morgan emphasized that no one in the Senate had more "profound abhorrence" of the Mormon hierarchy in Utah than he, nor was anyone more convinced than he of the necessity of taking all proper and legitimate steps to deal with polygamy, "this bane of all civil society" which threatened to overwhelm the West with "the pall of destruction and despair." But he was unwilling to persecute Mormons at the expense of the Constitution (CR, 1199).

Missouri's George G. Vest similarly charged that if this measure was not a bill of attainder, then one had never been proposed in all history. And the bill posed a threat to all, he insisted, for the feelings that then existed against the Mormons might exist tomorrow against any church or against any class in the land. If enacted the result would be a "star-chamber of five men, responsible to nobody, governed alone by their own prejudices" (CR, 1201). Vest eventually proposed an amendment he believed would make the bill more palatable. The Vest amendment to section 8 stipulated that no bigamist or polygamist would be barred from voting or holding office unless duly convicted "in a court of competent jurisdiction" (CR, 1217).³

Following Vest's remarks, Senator Brown of Georgia warned of the spirit of religious intolerance abroad in the land and discussed the British experience in India as a precedent. When the British entered India, he pointed out, they found that polygamy had existed there from antiquity. Yet they did not do what American public opinion now wished Congress to do. While the British did not condone additional polygamous marriages, they did not try to dissolve existing unions. Turning from the generalities of the British experience to the specifics of the current proposal, he cited from *Webster's Unabridged Dictionary* a definition of a polygamist as being "a person who practices polygamy or maintains its lawfulness." He believed, he said, that there was scarcely a man, woman, or child in Utah who did not believe in the lawfulness of polygamy. And according to Webster's definition they were polygamists even though they did not engage in the practice. Thus, by means better known in the South than in the North, the Edmunds Bill would disfranchise virtually the entire population of Utah:

Whenever it is necessary to make a Republican State out of a Democratic State, or a Republican State out of a Democratic Territory, the most convenient machinery for the purpose is a returning board. . . . By fraud, perjury, forgery, and villainy, the returning board system cheated the people of these United States out of a legal election for President. . . . It stinks in the nostrils of honest men (CR, 1203).⁴

³ Because Brown's amendment stipulating that no more than three of the five commissioners could be from the same party was already on the floor, the Vest amendment was read merely for information purposes at this point in the debate.

⁴ Southerners did not stand entirely alone in their opposition to the Edmunds Bill. Although they belonged to opposing parties, both Ohio senators, George H. Pendleton and John Sherman, criticized the measure. Democrat Pendleton claimed that the outcry over polygamy

The defense rested almost entirely in the hands of Edmunds himself, who threw out jabs and snipes during the southerners' presentations. When, for example, Brown produced his copy of Webster's dictionary, Edmunds responded with a copy of *Burrill's Law Dictionary* and suggested that the discussion should move "from the land of literature to the region of law" (CR, 1203). Burrill's dictionary defined a polygamist as one who had two or more wives at one time, rather than one who simply believed in polygamy. Edmunds and the Judiciary Committee assumed this definition was well understood. When the southern opponents had finished, he concluded briefly:

We come back to the question of whether the Congress is willing to deal with the fact of a polygamous government in territory over which I assume the United States has supreme control as to its political character. That is all there is to it. If we have that control which I assume, then the question is whether, saying all of us that we are against the practice of polygamy . . . we shall put the offices of that community into the hands of those who are not polygamists (CR, 1213).

Most members of the Senate were prepared to strike at polygamy through the means at hand. When voting on the Edmunds Bill began late on the afternoon of 16 February, all southern efforts to amend the bill were defeated but one. Brown's amendment to section 9 stipulating that not more than three of the five members of the presidentially appointed commission were to be from the same party passed by a vote of twenty-six to twenty-three, with twenty-seven members not voting. Of the twenty-six votes for the Brown amendment, seventeen came from states of the former Confederacy and two of the border states, Missouri and Kentucky. Only one senator from a southern state, Republican William Pitt Kellogg of Louisiana, joined the opposition.

After additional discussion, a vote was taken on the Vest amendment to require conviction in a court of law before a bigamist or polygamist could be barred from voting or holding office in Utah. This proposal was voted down, eleven to thirty-three, with thirty-two not voting. Of the eleven yeas, eight came from the southern and border states. However, an equal number of southerners voted against the Vest amendment. Of the eight who voted against it, five had voted for the Brown amendment, two had not voted, and Kellogg had voted against. If these two votes indicated anything it would seem to be that the more polygamy was the issue, as opposed to Democratic Party interests, the more divided southerners tended to be on the Mormon question (CR, 1214, 1217).

With the amendments disposed of, the bill was read for a third time and passed by a voice vote. Outbursts of applause from the Senate galleries accompanied the voting. The chair expressed amazement at this breach of Senate decorum but took no action as the spectators rapidly cleared the chamber bearing news of the bill's passage (CR, 1217).

was a facade concealing an attempt by supporters of the measure to Republicanize the Territory of Utah, while his Republican colleague Sherman made the conflicting claim that the measure would disfranchise only a small percentage of Utah's population and would not prevent the Mormons from continuing to control the territory. Nevertheless, southerners led the opposition to the Edmunds Bill.

The Edmunds Bill first appeared before the House of Representatives on 8 March 1882 and immediately became ensnared in a parliamentary technicality. The proponents of the measure opposed adding any amendments to the bill that would force it to be returned to the Senate for further consideration. The plan was to invoke the previous question in an effort to cut off debate and force an immediate vote. But when opponents of the Edmunds Bill objected strenuously to this maneuver, a compromise was worked out allowing one hour for debate and amendments followed by an additional hour for general debate (CR 1732; 1845–46; 1851–53).

Two southerners, John H. Reagan and Roger Q. Mills, both Texans and former Confederates, played a notable part in the discussions which followed on 14 March. Reagan, who had served the Confederacy as Postmaster General and as Acting Secretary of the Treasury, launched into a lecture on constitutional principles similar to what had been heard earlier in the Senate. He charged that the current bill, if passed, would be both a bill of attainder and an *ex post facto* law. To avoid this problem, he offered amendments, similar to those proposed in the Senate earlier, stipulating that no one could be denied the right to vote or hold office until convicted in a court of law of the crimes listed in the measure. His colleague Mills went even further and proposed an amendment to strike completely sections 8 and 9 of the bill. Mills insisted that there were three groups in league against the Mormons — the religionists who were “trying to propagate the doctrines of Christ with the instrumentalities of Mahomet,” those who were “incensed against the people of Utah because they were Democrats,” and those who opposed polygamy because the Mormons had property which they wanted for themselves. The latter group Mills called “the patriots who question Naboth’s loyalty because of Naboth’s vineyard” (CR, 1861). And he also called the proposed five-member board an “imperial commission . . . empowered to carry at its girdle the keys of death and hell” (CR, 1862). In an obvious reference to the experiences of the South during Reconstruction he added:

This venal instrument of oppression is not wholly unknown to fame. It has left a record as indelible as infamous on the pages of our recent history. For a few dark and melancholy years it wielded an unchallenged scepter in the Southern States. It filled the legislative halls with its own creatures, and the complacent slaves without murmur registered the decrees of their masters (CR, 1862).

Because the bill so grossly violated the principle of local self-government he could not, he concluded, under any circumstances support it (CR, 1860–62; *Biographical*, 1336, 1502–3).

The House Republicans who defended the bill were somewhat more forthright than their Senate colleagues. Where Senate Republicans had decried the absence of republican government in Utah and occasionally denounced the Mormon hierarchy, proponents in the House made it quite clear that they wanted to strike a blow against Mormonism. George W. Cassidy of Nevada, in a bitter attack, said there were but two classes of Mormons in Utah — knaves and dupes. Church members were largely foreign-born, he charged,

and Brigham Young was a “crafty old revelator” (CR, 1863). While this bill, in his opinion, did not do all that really should be done, it had one redeeming feature: “It goes to the point of making the polygamist element disreputable in Utah” (CR, 1863). To the accompaniment of applause from his Republican colleagues, Dudley C. Haskell of Kansas declared that the purpose of the bill was “to legislate out of office every one of that infamous Mormon priesthood” (CR, 1873). And Richard W. Townsend of Illinois charged that both the Latter-day Saints and Charles J. Guiteau — again Mormons were equated with murderers implying that to be one was to be the other — acted “in obedience to an inspiration” (CR, 1868).

These impassioned declarations preceded voting on Mills’s motion to strike sections 8 and 9 from the bill. By a voice vote the motion to eliminate section 8 was defeated, but John F. House of Tennessee moved to reconsider. A vote was then taken on the motion to delete section 9, and it failed with 88 yeas and 140 nays, 64 not voting. Of the 102 representatives from former Confederate states and the border states of Missouri, Kentucky, and Maryland, only nine voted to retain this section providing for the five-member election commission while fifty-nine southern and border-state politicians voted to delete it. It seems fair to presume that southern memories of the Republican-controlled returning boards during the Reconstruction years caused southerners to vote overwhelmingly to eliminate this provision from the bill. On the other hand, section 8, which prevented any bigamist or polygamist from voting or holding public office, held no such associations, and consequently southerners were not as united in opposition. When the yeas and nays were called for, 44 voted to eliminate this section of the bill, 193 voted to retain it, and 55 did not vote. In this instance, southern and border-state representatives were evenly divided with thirty-seven in favor and an equal number opposed. And on the final vote for passage of the Edmunds Bill, southerners were once again evenly divided. The vote was 199 for passage, 42 against, with 51 not voting. In this case 36 southern and border-state congressmen voted for passage, 36 against (CR, 1864, 1976–77).

Given the divided southern vote on the various sections of the Edmunds Act, it would be difficult to say that there was a southern position on the measure. The most that can be said is that the traumatic Reconstruction era still cast a long shadow for southerners in Congress, especially those who had actively served the Confederacy. And their determination to prevent a recurrence of this experience — which could lead to Republican control of Utah — led them to defend the most unpopular white minority of their day. Yet while some of these same southerners would use many of the same arguments to attack the later Edmunds-Tucker Act, none of them ever defended Mormon causes outside the halls of Congress. For all their opposition to the proscriptive anti-Mormon measures of the 1880s, their stance was something of a theoretical abstraction, a rear-guard action fought in defense of the diminished but not yet dead principles of States’ rights and really nothing more than that.

Even the defense of States’ rights, however, could not bring some southerners to oppose the Edmunds Act. Their views were probably best summarized

by Congressman Otho R. Singleton of Mississippi. He conceded during the debate on the Edmunds Bill that the measure was far from perfect, especially if it was used to bar from office a man such as George Q. Cannon who had served his constituents for many years. Yet, whatever his reservations, he intended to support the measure even if all efforts to amend it failed.

But so strong are my convictions against the doctrine of polygamy that I prefer to stand to these convictions and my duty to the people I represent rather than vote against a bill which, though objectionable in some of its provisions, does not in my opinion conflict with any provision of the Constitution of the United States (CR, 1871).

For all the furor in Congress surrounding the Edmunds Act, its passage changed little. The measure lived up to neither the expectations of its proponents nor the dire predictions of its opponents. President Arthur signed it into law 22 March 1882, and the five-member Utah Commission, three Republicans and two Democrats, reached the territory in August. The commission went to work with dispatch and within a year more than 12,000 Saints had been disfranchised. The House of Representatives voted, after the passage of the Edmunds Act, to seat neither Cannon nor Campbell. The People's Party continued to dominate territorial affairs, and its new candidate, John T. Caine, was elected to fill the congressional delegate's seat. The Mormons continued to practice polygamy, and since so little changed the cry soon arose in Congress for even more severe legislation (Poll 1958, 119–20; M. Cannon 1960, 77; CHC 6:51; Allen and Leonard 1976, 395).

Conversely, as the Edmunds Act failed to alter conditions in Utah, the arguments defending the Mormons by southern opponents of the act in Congress did nothing to help the Latter-day Saints in the southern states. Indeed, two years after the arrival of the presidential commission in Utah, the Cane Creek massacre, mentioned earlier, occurred in Tennessee, forcing a temporary suspension of the Church's missionary activities in the region.

There was both irony and tragedy here. While southerners in Congress had defended a religious minority in the name of preserving constitutional rights, the rights of that same minority were often blatantly violated in the South, and for the rest of the century and on into the next that singularly southern mixture of fellowship and fear continually confronted the Mormon elders assigned to the Southern States Mission.

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The “New Mormon History” Reassessed in Light of Recent Books on Joseph Smith and Mormon Origins

Marvin Hill

IN 1959, WHILE A GRADUATE STUDENT at the University of Chicago, I wrote a review of the historiography of Mormonism for *Church History* which incorporated the major books and articles from 1832 to 1959 in only eight pages. Now I am hard pressed to review as concisely the major books on just one topic. Despite a flood of studies on Mormonism since 1959, I do not believe that there actually exists an entirely “new Mormon history” in terms of the issues argued or the points of view expressed, and certainly not in the negative sense that some would describe it. In 1959 I found a group defending the Church on the right, writing faith-promoting history which affirmed the truth of Mormon historical claims. In the center was a group of professionals, some Mormon, some not, who focused on questions other than “Is Mormonism true?” And on the left was a group who insisted that Mormonism was historically untrue, a religious corruption, and a fraud. These general categories still tend to hold up, as we shall see, except that more Mormon scholars now fit into the center.

Moses Rischin, who apparently originated the term “new Mormon history,” correctly noted in 1969 that the last decade had seen scholars of every religious persuasion writing about Mormonism, providing a degree of intensive study “unparalleled for any religious group except the Puritans.” Rischin said that the new history constituted a “Mormon declaration of cultural independence,” evidenced by the appearance of *DIALOGUE* and the organization of the Mormon History Association. Rischin said these Mormons agree that Mormonism is fair game for examination and that “Mormon history and culture can be studied in human or naturalistic terms—indeed must be so studied.” But Rischin added significantly that Mormon historians believed this could be done “without thus rejecting the divinity of the Church’s origin and work” (p. 49). While Rischin’s appellation has stuck, much of his insightful characterization of the faithful aspects of the history has been forgotten.

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Robert Flanders (1974) picked up on the "new history" label and said that he believed that the new historians were existential in their beliefs, but he did not define what he meant by the term. Thomas G. Alexander wrote in 1983 of the "new history," arguing that the writing of Mormon history has gone through several phases. Initially, Mormons and anti-Mormons writing the "old Mormon history" battled without careful research, anxious only to find evidence to prove their case. A second phase saw "venerative scholars" writing to inform Latter-day Saints of some aspects of Church history but carefully choosing their topics. Progressive historians followed who were preoccupied with economic history and overlooked religious motives. Alexander contrasted these with the new historians who confront conflict within the Church readily and admit problem areas but deal with religious motivation.

While there are some good insights in these studies, I would question the appropriateness of the term "new history." Certainly the quantity of scholarly studies has greatly increased, and often the quality as well. Yet I still find, as I did in 1959, a difference between writers on the right, those in the center or "middle ground,"¹ and a small number on the left who reflect old antipathies, although I concede that differences are more subtle today.

On the right is a conservative type of writing which remains largely addressed to Mormon audiences, but is more sophisticated than in the past, faith promoting in purpose, and defends against any negative views expressed by non-Mormons. It is frequently nonprofessional in the sense that defenders often write outside their field of expertise. It tends to proclaim empirical proofs for Mormon claims, and generally ignores contrary scholarly opinion. Those who write in this way are usually motivated by powerful spiritual experiences which they consider to be final evidence of the truth of their claims. Their purpose is often moralistic and didactic, using the historical past to reinforce Mormon religious beliefs and values.

An example of such writing appears in Noel Reynolds' *Book of Mormon Authorship*, which is a collection of essays by scholars from BYU. Reynolds says in his introduction that the significant questions of today revolve around the existence of the supernatural, a belief in which modern society has mostly lost faith (1982, 1). He contends that the Book of Mormon provides solid evidence of the supernatural and of the divinity of Christ (pp. 1, 2, 5). He insists that "it would be a very simple matter for scientists to demonstrate" that the book is a fraud. There are, Reynolds holds, any "number of straightforward scientific tests which could help determine whether this book is . . . of ancient origin or whether it was written by nineteenth century Americans" (p. 3). I wonder after 150 years of arguments whether it is that easy to finally establish the historicity of the Book of Mormon, or to disprove it. Much depends upon the assumptions one brings to the effort in the first place.

¹ I used the term "middle ground" to describe a position between those who said Mormonism is untrue and those who insisted on conclusive proof that it is true. In my article "Secular or Sectarian History? A Critique of *No Man Knows My History*" (1974, 96) I criticized Brodie for focusing on the question of Mormonism's truth or untruth, arguing to offset Brodie's thesis that Mormonism was a religious fraud.

In the center is a large group of professionals, mostly RLDS or LDS with a small number of non-Mormons, who write far more sympathetically toward the Church than most professionals did in times past. Of the Mormons who write in this vein, it is evident that despite their high degree of professionalism they are strongly committed to the Church, often have had spiritual experiences of their own, and yet do not base their work upon these. They find other reasons for faith and avoid "empirical proofs." In many ways Leonard Arrington best represents this group and is the very heart of the effort to write scholarly history that still treats Mormon religious claims with respect. Arrington stated his philosophical premises in his first major work, *Great Basin Kingdom* (1958). He said that he believed that any religion must be judged on its "capacity to attack ageless human problems" effectively and that the best evidence of Joseph Smith's claims "is the essential social usefulness of the church." A very important point for understanding Arrington's position is his belief that "the discussion of naturalistic causes of revelations does not preclude . . . [their] claim to be revealed or inspired of God," and that "in practice it is difficult, if not impossible to distinguish what is objectively 'revealed' from what is subjectively 'contributed' by those receiving the revelation" (pp. viii, ix). Arrington seems to be saying that as a historian he cannot prove or disprove Joseph's claims to divine inspiration but that he personally finds strong reasons for belief. This may have been what Robert Flanders meant when he called the new history "existential." However contradictory the evidence may be, a faithful member makes a commitment and tries his best to be true to his beliefs. I suspect that many Latter-day Saints, historians or otherwise, who have reflected upon the historical issues and have thought through the evidence have come to some sort of position like this, although this is a very personal thing and not talked of much in Church circles. Those who criticize the new historical writing from the far right may well misunderstand the affirmative character of the middle ground historian's commitment.

On the left are those almost exclusively outside the Church who more so than in times past are motivated by explicit and contrasting religious commitments. They tend to follow many of the arguments of Fawn Brodie, a disillusioned but scholarly ex-Mormon, and react very negatively and dogmatically to contrary studies. Rev. Wesley Walters, an ardent opponent of Mormonism,² fits this description, concentrating exclusively on the truth or untruth of Mormon religious claims. But to illustrate my point here, I would note the career of Jerald Tanner, who has written no narrative history but depends heavily on historical sources to write polemical works.

A former Mormon who is convinced that Mormonism is not true, Tanner wrote his earliest version of *Mormonism — Shadow or Reality?* entitled "Mormonism" (n.d.) before 1961, using as his biblical text I Thessalonians 5:21: "Prove all things." He offered historical examples of what he considered inconsistencies in Mormon doctrine and practice. He acknowledged candidly

² See my criticism of Walters, "The First Vision Controversy: A Critique and Reconciliation," *DIALOGUE* 15 (Summer 1982): 42–45.

that he lost his faith at about age eighteen when he read David Whitmer's *Address to All Believers in Christ* (1887) and found he could not disprove Whitmer's charges that Joseph Smith altered his revelations. Admitting shortcomings in his own personal life, Tanner felt great guilt but no forgiveness within the Mormon church. He learned that he needed a personal and forgiving Savior, found his needs met in another church, and reformed his life (n.d., preface, p. 236). It would appear that Tanner was obsessed with proving Mormonism, but when he could not he tried to disprove it. He assumes that proof or disproof is possible. In some ways his work is an exact counterpart to the far right, defensive Mormon studies, although recently he was one of the first to question the authenticity of the Hofmann manuscripts after employing them for many years to contend against Mormonism (Tanner 1986, 1).

In evaluating books published during the last two and one-half decades, I will consider one major category — Joseph Smith and Church origins. Then I wish to return to my original question: Is there a new Mormon history?

Milton Backman, a member of the religion department at BYU, trained in American history at the University of Pennsylvania, represents the conservative right. He wrote *Joseph Smith's First Vision* in 1971, largely as a corrective to Rev. Wesley Walters' article which said that there were no revivals in Palmyra in 1820, and therefore Joseph's story of the first vision was untrue. Backman affirmed that "sacred history clearly testifies that God periodically directed his children through prophets." He included also what he termed "several distinct evidences of the divine calling of Joseph Smith" (pp. xi, xiii). Backman insisted that when Joseph Smith described local revivals he was speaking of those in the "religion of country" around Palmyra and not in Palmyra itself, as Walters maintained. Backman presented evidence that there were many revivals within a fifty mile radius of the Smith residence (pp. 84–87).

Hugh Nibley's *Abraham in Egypt* (1981) is another conservative work which defends the historicity of the book of Abraham. Nibley addressed the problem created by the discovery by University of Utah Professor Aziz Atiya of Egyptian papyri which once belonged to Joseph Smith and which one eminent Egyptologist from the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago contends were the source for the book of Abraham (see Wilson 1968). Another Oriental Institute scholar argued that the fragments were Book of the Dead materials and had nothing to do with Abraham (Baer 1968). Nibley responded by citing the first description of the book of Abraham in the *Times and Seasons*, which said that the book was a "translation of some ancient Records from catacombs of Egypt, purporting to be the writings of Abraham" (5 March 1842, 704). Nibley took this to mean that Joseph did not say for certain that they actually were Abraham's writings and argues that "we already know Joseph Smith had power to translate ancient records with or without possession of the original text." Thus, Nibley contends, "it is the Book of Abraham that is on trial, not Joseph Smith as an Egyptologist" (1981, 3–4).

Nibley uses several purportedly ancient sources dealing with Abraham which have appeared since Joseph Smith's time to find parallels with the book

of Abraham text, and thus to argue for its historicity. Yet he admits that these sources date at least hundreds of years after Abraham. One of these, the Apocalypse of Abraham, he indicates dates from the time of Christ (1981, 9). Furthermore, as he says, no one is certain when Abraham lived. Estimates differ as much as two thousand years (p. 8). Despite this, he contends that to determine the authenticity of the book of Abraham we have only to compare sources from the *same time and place* and weigh the points of conflict and agreement (p. 8). Just how this can be done when the dates of his new sources are very late and the time of Abraham indeterminate he does not say. Also, he never compares these elements in the book of Abraham and his new sources which do *not* match, thus failing to meet his own essential criteria for proof. It might be better simply to accept the book of Abraham on faith rather than trying to prove its historicity by faulty logic and questionable evidence.

In the volume by Noel Reynolds mentioned earlier, Truman Madsen, who holds the Richard L. Evans Chair of Christian Understanding at BYU, fills a gap in a biography of B. H. Roberts which he wrote in 1980. Madsen argues that Roberts was playing the devil's advocate in presenting the General Authorities of the Church with a study which raised several questions as to the Book of Mormon's authenticity, including the point that there are actually thousands of dialects among the Indians in America which could not have evolved from a single Hebraic language in as short a time as the Book of Mormon allows.³ Madsen maintains that Roberts came to see that Book of Mormon peoples represented one migration among many who came to America.⁴ Madsen says that there has been an avalanche of evidence that the Hebrews had influence on pre-Columbian America but cites none of it. His contentions also run contrary to what qualified Meso-American scholars maintain, even at BYU.⁵

In another essay John Welch, a member of the BYU law faculty, seeks to establish the Book of Mormon's authenticity by citing examples of the Hebraic poetic form chiasmus. Noel Reynolds, a specialist in law and philosophy, makes a similar type of argument in another piece, saying that this pattern was not recognized in Hebrew literature until the middle of the nineteenth century. In light of these literary forms he concludes, "it seems impossible

³ See Reynolds (1982, 23). Madsen skims over this problem which Roberts thought enormous. For a better understanding see Roberts's original manuscript (B. Madsen 1985, 72-82).

⁴ See Reynolds (1982, 23). If this is so Roberts was no doubt aware that it ran counter to the thinking of most Latter-day Saints and perhaps Joseph Smith, who wrote to the editor of *The Saxton* in Rochester that the "Book of Mormon is a record of the forefathers of our western Tribes of Indians," suggesting that he considered all of the western tribes had the Lamanites as progenitors (see Jessee 1984, 273).

⁵ See Reynolds (1982, 23). Madsen says, "Roberts felt he had established beyond doubt that there is enough independent evidence for . . . Jewish or Hebraic influence on native American races to make the Book of Mormon credible. The evidence was accumulating rapidly in the last decade of Elder Roberts' life (it has been an avalanche since)." For a top archeologist's contrasting perspective see Coe (1973). Ray Matheny, a Mormon archeologist who has done diggings at important central American sites, also does not agree with Madsen's unsupported contentions (1984).

that any modern man could have written the Book of Mormon" (1982, 73). But neither Welch nor Reynolds consider whether this literary structure appears in any of Joseph Smith's other writings⁶ nor how much he was influenced by King James' literary style.

A volume which is more difficult to categorize but which seems to belong in the conservative mold, is Richard Bushman's *Beginnings of Mormonism* (1984), which I would say exemplifies Mormon conservative writing at its best and constitutes one of the few conservative works which tries to bring Church opinion of Joseph Smith up to date with new sources and new historical insights. Bushman indicates that he believes Joseph Smith's account of his revelations (p. 3), yet also acknowledges some connections between Joseph's writings and the beliefs and culture of his immediate society. Perhaps Bushman's conservative inclinations are most clearly illustrated in his contention that Joseph "is best understood as a person who outgrew his culture." Clarifying this Bushman said, "The viewpoint of this book is that parts of Mormonism did resemble aspects of the environment; other parts were alien and peculiar" (p. 7). Bushman is leaving room here for uniqueness based upon divine revelation, a worthy purpose from the Mormon perspective.

Sometimes Bushman overstates his case, as when he argues that Mormon theology "shows few signs of having wrestled free of Calvinism," and that by Joseph's time "the family could scarcely connect with mainstream Protestantism" (pp. 5, 6). This is hard to accept when the revolt against Calvinism was almost universal in the United States in the 1830s (Sweet 1952) and the Smith family was reared in a Congregationalist environment where Calvinist proclivities were strong. Also, Asael Smith and Joseph, Sr., had been Universalists, a denomination that broke free from Calvinism. Lucy Mack Smith and most of her children joined the Presbyterians in 1824, and their church was strongly Calvinist.⁷ Bushman contends that Lucy was never converted to this church, but Alexander Neibaur indicates in his journal (24 May 1841) that when Joseph attended the revivals he wanted to "feel and shout like the rest" of the family who joined, showing a strong emotional commitment by some members of the Smith family. Bushman's conservatism is also manifest in his failure to treat Book of Mormon themes, except to argue that Book of Mormon theocratic tendencies hardly match Republican values in 1820 America (pp. 132-33). Nonetheless, where Bushman deals with environment he does so superbly and adds significantly to our knowledge.

Also on the conservative side, yet very important, is Truman Madsen's edited volume of essays by nationally known biblical and religious scholars entitled *Reflections on Mormonism: Judean Christian Parallels* (1978). These various specialists treat Mormonism and the Book of Mormon as worthy of their scholarly attention, a situation that has not always been the case but which may well be a by-product of the recent more professional style of Mor-

⁶ Blake Ostler comments on chiasmus in the Doctrine and Covenants and the book of Abraham and denies that it was an exclusively ancient literary form (1987, 101).

⁷ Bushman himself is aware of these points but brushes them aside (pp. 4-7). On the Calvinist inclinations among the Presbyterians see Marty (1984, 124).

mon history writing. Thus Krister Stendahl, dean of the Harvard Divinity School, is one of the first ranking New Testament scholars to look at 3 Nephi in the Book of Mormon. He compares 3 Nephi with the Sermon on the Mount and argues that Joseph Smith targumized the text, that is, read his own theological viewpoints based on the King James version back into the Book of Mormon translation. He says that 3 Nephi quotes Jesus, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled with the Holy Spirit." But he indicates that the word in the Greek original is "chortazo" (not "pleroo") and that chortazo can only mean "to fill the stomach." Stendahl says that 3 Nephi ignores Jesus as social critic and follows John where Jesus is Christ and center of salvation, not Matthew where Jesus is the teacher of righteousness (1978, 151). David Noel Freedman (1978), who edits the *Biblical Archeologist*, describes the discovery of the Ebla Tablets, some 1500 tablets dating from 2500 B.C., which include references to Sodom and Gomorrah, and names like Abram, David, Esau, and Israel. These lend support to the biblical story and suggest that Abraham may have come from Syria rather than Ur of the Chaldees in the south.

Gaining access in the Church archives to richly varied sources on the prophet's life, Andrew Ehat and Lyndon Cook edited *The Words of Joseph Smith* and stated in their introduction that in the restoration "no one stood taller than Joseph Smith, the Lord's prophet" (1980, xv). Using diaries kept by his closest associates, Ehat and Cook have provided scholars with the original reports of all of Joseph's sermons and addresses. Some insight into the potency of the prophet's public speaking (and why gentiles feared him) comes in Levi Richards' recording of an address to the Nauvoo Legion in May 1843. Joseph declared:

Speaking of power in relation to our country & the innocent, — he said that those who held power when applied to by those who were suffering, received in answer "We cant do any thing for you," *damn such power*, — if I have power & am called on by the innocent Sufferer I swear I will use by the great God I will use that power for them — & not Say I cant do any thing for you — I can do something — & I will! (p. 199)

After Missourians endangered his life in June 1843, Joseph declared:

If our enemies are determined to oppress us & deprive us of our rights & privileges as they have done & if the Authorities that be on the earth will not assist us in our rights not give us that protection which the Laws & Constitution of the United States & of thi[s] State guarantees unto us: then we will claim them from higher power from heaven & from God Almighty & the Constitution & I *SWEAR* I will not deal so mildly with them again for the time has Come when forbearance is no longer a virtue, And if you are again taken unlawfully you are at liberty to give loose to Blood and Thunder But act with Almighty Power" (p. 217).

Using the unpublished diaries of Willard Richards, William Clayton, Wilford Woodruff, and many others, Ehat and Cook have given scholars and Saints an indispensable collection of sources about Joseph Smith.

The substantial works by Madsen, Bushman, Ehat, and Cook suggest that the distinctions between right and center blur at times, a trend which I see as

desirable as more and more conservative Mormon scholars write or edit substantial works.

In looking at the historical works in the center, one of the earliest significant studies comes from Richard Howard, RLDS Church Historian, who wrote *Restoration Scriptures* in 1969, a study of the textual development of Joseph Smith's revealed scriptures. Howard said that his volume was designed for the "serious student seeking to grasp the relationships between church history, revelation and scripture" and that many of the "documents published in this volume were revised extensively to accommodate . . . the enlarged historical understanding of Joseph Smith Jr." (p. 8). Affirming that the RLDS tradition denied what Howard called the "plenary inspiration" thesis — that by supernatural means prophets can fully communicate God's truth without error — he stressed that the RLDS church held that inspiration is "conceptual" and that the Holy Spirit works through the natural facilities of the recipients. He quoted an RLDS authority saying, "What is seen is always to some degree distorted" (p. 13). That being so, Howard felt free to show evolutionary changes in his texts without challenging the faith of his readers.

Howard traced changes in the Doctrine and Covenants and the Inspired Version texts, but his most provocative analysis was a comparison of the various texts of the Book of Mormon from 1829 through 1840, showing how Joseph Smith revised passages rather freely as his insights and understandings changed over time. In comparing the early MS "D" text, dictated by Joseph Smith to several scribes in 1829, MS "E", an amended transcript used by the printer, and the 1830 printed edition, Howard found stylistic changes, as well as paragraph and punctuation changes introduced by the printer. Howard concluded that the texts do not support the David Whitmer, Martin Harris, and William Smith contention that Joseph received a word-by-word translation by inspiration which required none of his own conceptualization. If this theory were valid, he said, "there would have been no need to improve the text" (p. 40). Howard said Joseph continued to make improvements between 1830 and 1840, some with doctrinal import. There were over two thousand alterations in the MS "E" text and a thousand more in the published version of 1837.

Noting how changes were made concerning the nature and person of Christ, Howard said it can "be demonstrated that theological considerations were operative" (p. 47). He alluded here to initial passages which referred to Christ as the Eternal Father and everlasting God, which were changed in 1837 to read, "son of the Eternal Father" and "Son of the everlasting God," seeming to accommodate Joseph's repudiation in the middle 1830's of the orthodox trinitarian Godhead.

The 1977 Donna Hill, a librarian at Hunter College and a Church member, published the first major biography of the Mormon prophet since Fawn Brodie's. Acknowledging herself "a descendant of Mormon pioneers who crossed the plains in faith and hardship," Hill said her "sympathies lie with the Saints." But she quoted Joseph Fielding Smith that "No historian has the right to make his prejudices paramount to the facts he should record." Making

extensive use of original letters and diaries in the LDS church archives, Hill sought to present for the first time by any biographer, "the dramatic and human elements of his story, to show the warmth, spirituality and joyousness, for which his people loved him, his foibles, his implacable will and something of his complexity" (pp. ix, x).

Taking issue with Brodie, Hill traced the deep religious disposition of the prophet's parents. Hill also used Joseph's 1832 account of his first vision, unknown to Brodie, to argue that the 1820 experience was deeply personal and that his understanding of its theological implications may have grown over time. She said that all the varying accounts of the vision agree that he had a moving religious experience in his adolescence after being disturbed by sectarian agitation. Hill differed sharply with Brodie on this, who had contended that the vision was a half-remembered dream, or else fabricated.

Hill questioned the significance of the 1826 trial for "glass looking," which Brodie saw as powerful evidence that Joseph Smith was a money digger. Hill pointed out the differing accounts of what happened at the trial, who testified and what was said, and whether or not Joseph was found guilty. Yet she acknowledged that Joseph was most likely a money digger, as were many of his friends, since other evidence supports this. But she suggested that magic and religion were linked in the minds of many of them, such as Oliver Cowdery, whose father had belonged to the primitive Christians' money digging sect, which mixed magic and Christian millennialism.

Hill recognized conflicting testimonies attributed to the witnesses of the Book of Mormon and suggested several possible interpretations of their experience as witnesses, but concluded that "however others might judge . . . it was real to the three witnesses. The closest scrutiny of their testimonies can leave no doubt that their faith in the Book of Mormon was based upon what they believed to be a manifestation from God" (1977, 94). This contrasted sharply with Brodie's argument that Joseph Smith had the power to make men see visions. Reviewing some of the arguments as to the historical authenticity of the Book of Mormon, Hill affirmed that new converts were unconcerned with the issue, that they cared more that America, due to its sectarian antagonisms and materialism, was doomed unless the nation speedily repented. This too contrasted with Brodie, who developed an extensive argument that Joseph had written the book.⁸

Another work of great value from the center is Dean Jessee's *Personal Writings of Joseph Smith* (1984), edited from unpublished holographs, dictated manuscripts, and rare printed materials. Jessee asserts that too much of our assessment of Joseph heretofore has come from writings that were not his and that we cannot know him on this basis. "Although," says Jessee, "final answers to the question of Joseph Smith's religious claims do not lie within the framework of the historical record," yet we can only know his true personality when we can read what he wrote or dictated (pp. xiii-xix). These sources show us a strong spiritual side of Joseph Smith from his handwritten diary, his millen-

⁸ Compare Donna Hill (1977, 15-31, 38, 41-52, 65-69, 93-94, 104-5) with Brodie (1945, 1-49).

nialism, his inclination to forgive those who wandered in their loyalties but with honorable intentions, his hopes to frighten the Missourians with a military task force to redeem the Saints' holdings in Jackson County, Missouri, and the moral dilemma that plural marriage provided when so many in his own family, in the church, and in the community opposed it.⁹ We get more than a glimpse here of the human struggles Joseph experienced and can identify with him on those grounds.

On the left is the work of Dan Vogel, a disaffected Mormon, who in his recent *Indian Origins and the Book of Mormon* (1987) traces what he considers the actual historical background of the Book of Mormon. Convinced that Joseph Smith wrote the volume, he attributes some of its ideas to Joseph Smith's money digging experiences and much of the rest to his desire to answer questions about the Indians that had been hotly debated in America since the sixteenth century. These issues included whether the Indians were Hebrews or refugees from Babel or the northern kingdom in 700 B.C.; whether they were initially white; by what route and means they came to the new world; and the level of their civilization, including the state of their metallurgy. He argues, much as Fawn Brodie had, that these questions were widely discussed. He contends that Ethan Smith argued that the Indians were the lost tribes to offset the Puritan notion that they were savages unworthy of missionary effort. He says that the relationship between Joseph Smith's environment and the Book of Mormon is the central issue for students of early Mormonism to consider in coming years. Vogel has done some research well but tends to depend heavily on Wesley Walters at key points. He describes Joseph Smith's 1929 trial, for example, as though we have one impeachable source to tell us what happened. He tends at times to be dogmatic, a characteristic of many of the far left opponents of Mormonism.

If there is anything really new or remarkable about the historiography of Mormonism since 1960 in the area that I have treated here, it comes in the number of solid works which have come from the right and center. Much of the impetus for scholarship has come from more readily accessible Church Archives, under Church management, and also from financial support by BYU, suggesting that more than a few Mormons have wanted a more mature written history. What has been accomplished is a monument to a people seeking truth about their past and facing that past with courage and with faith.

Of late some critics have charged that the "new history" undermines faith (Bohn 1983), but personal conversations with administrators and faculty members at both BYU and at the University of Utah (where I would expect such a movement to begin) have convinced me that this is not so. Those who thus criticize often have done no historical research, read few significant historical works, and written none. They are outsiders who argue ad horrendum that the very church is endangered if their viewpoint does not prevail. Some have said that the authors of the "new history" are positivists, doctrinaire in their certainty of the truth of their history (Bohn 1983; Kramer 1983). But

⁹ See Jessee 1984, 16–18, 20–21, 27–28, 238, 323–24, 472, 538–39.

as I have shown here, dogmatism seems to come from the right or the left. Historians in the center have made their existential position clear — Mormonism can be neither proved nor *disproved* by historical means. The irony is that those in the center affirmed their existential faith long before certain critics seized upon historical relativism and nihilism to criticize them. It would seem that somehow critics have not been listening, that they are caught up in their own inner perplexities and turmoils.

Yet from one perspective the historical relativists may have gone too far. If those who doubt the possibility of an objective history had thought their position through, they would have perceived that if it is not possible to say anything truthful about the past, the missionary message of the restoration would be included. A position so cynical would destroy all Mormon claims to historical truth. At the end of his article Bohn disclaims this degree of cynicism, but in light of his argument that historians can never escape their own culture and personal biases, no other conclusion is possible. If it is possible to know something about the past, then historians are justified in trying to recover it in an objective way. If it is not, then Mormons should not present historical arguments to the world in favor of Joseph Smith and contend that they are true.

Bohn, however, affirms that only the faithful Mormon historians have stated their premises forthrightly. Obviously he has not read very widely in the recent history. In my own case I stated emphatically in an early criticism of Brodie: "Nothing which I suggest below is intended to render any final resolution to the question which I think she tries to answer — is Joseph Smith a prophet of God? . . . I do not believe that question can be finally answered by historians who deal with human artifacts left from a hundred and forty years ago" (Hill 1972, 72). Some of the critics on the right tend to distort or oversimplify the positions they are attacking, which makes seeming refutation much easier.

The issue between Mormons writing their history today and those who criticize them is not between those who believe and those who do not, but between those who think that old words and old interpretations are sacrosanct and that any changes may somehow destroy the faith, and those who contend that making concessions where evidence requires merely shifts the way we perceive some things and not the substance of the things themselves. A recent poll of *DIALOGUE* readers shows strong faith among those subjected to differing points of view when those viewpoints are expressed in a general context supportive of the Church. A very high percentage of readers attend church every Sunday. Even among those who question the historicity of the Book of Mormon (27 percent of total subscribers) nearly half believe in its divine origin. Thus 77 percent would at least agree that "its theology and moral teachings are authentically of divine origin" (Mauss, Tarjan, and Esplin 1987, 47).

Many scholars who write Mormon history believe that some recognition of contradictory evidence is necessary if the Church is to maintain its credibility against the allegations of historical distortion made by its enemies. Thus, writing scholarly history can be Church-supportive and true to the highest Church values of openness and honesty.

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A House of Order

John Bennion

THREE WEEKS HAD PASSED since Howard and Sylvia Rockwood last made love. Earlier, before the days of silence, they could have begun casually, prompted by any minor conversational motion, finally drawing close enough for physical discourse, but now it would take singular effort. That morning, riding the fence to make sure his cattle couldn't climb through and be lost in the higher reaches of the mountain, Howard looked down on the fields of Rockwood. Perched on the slope, he felt that if he wasn't careful the cultivated green which was his life would slide away into the desert and dissipate in the dry heat.

Soon afterward he discovered a transparent snakeskin rolled against the base of a cedar post, like a tendril of mist keeping out of the sun. He dismounted and curled it in his fingers — the second rattlesnake skin he had found in his life. It could become a gift to help them talk, a prompt or a gimmick. Cradling the brittle shell, he rode toward town, which was caught midway between the western Utah desert and the watered communities of the Wasatch front. His great-great-grandfather, James Darren Rockwood, had settled the area under a call from Brigham Young.

At home he placed the intricately ribbed snakeskin on the kitchen table. "Sylvia, come see what I brought you." He blew, and the transparent skin rustled against the salt and pepper shakers. "Sylvia?" He dropped his saddlebag with what was left of lunch on the wood stove, dusty in the summertime, and looked at the pans hanging on the wall. Suddenly, he felt close to another, familiar universe and he was returning from school to the same kitchen, wrapped in the same sunlight, calling for his mother. The only difference was that now the radio played "Hey, Jude" instead of "Love Me Tender."

He looked at the empty electric stove; Sylvia hadn't started dinner. "Surprise. I've brought a friend." The kitchen window was the old kind, installed

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by James Darren or replaced by his son with glass that distorted the trees on the other side, compressing and stretching the branches, but he could see that Sylvia wasn't in the orchard. "OK, where are you reading today?"

The bathroom door opened, and she walked down the hall toward him, a book dangling from her hand. Wearing one of his shirts — too big for her, hanging straight from her shoulders, flat across her chest — she looked like a little girl. She bent over the skin, pulling her black hair sideways out of her eyes.

"A snake," she said. She knelt on the floor with her chin on the edge of the table. "Did you see him with his fresh skin?"

Howard shook his head. "I'm lucky I didn't. Dad told me that they'll strike at anything if you disturb them while they're shedding." The cover of her book showed a heavy-breasted woman lying in the arms of a cowboy. "I almost smashed it bringing it to show you."

She caught him looking. "The real West. I've been expanding my mind."

"Romance," he said. "The opiate of the Mrs." She made a face. Reading all day, especially when she read trash, made her dull-headed and disagreeable. The cowboy had wide, muscled shoulders.

"I found it in the garage; I think it was one of your father's." She gave him a slight smile and walked into the living room. His father had indulged in romance, had tried to live fictions. "I'm almost finished," Sylvia called. Sticking her head back through the doorway, she nodded toward the snakeskin. "Thanks."

She was gone. Since the morning after the last time they had made love, she had acted this way — cold and distant. Or she made wisecracks, like the one about his father's stash of westerns. Howard had offended her either during the lovemaking or earlier in a way that the lovemaking emphasized, but he wished she would talk about it. Riding the fence, he had tried to decide what bothered her: (a) he had moved too quickly that night, leaving her unsatisfied or in some other way trammelled; (b) she was bored since she quit her job; (c) she had a secret lover, an option he didn't take seriously but inserted to make sure he covered everything; and (d) the most obvious choice, she had finally decided that living in his parents' old house, on his father's old farm, wouldn't work, and she was using her body to imply what she knew would hurt him if said directly.

Two years earlier his father had left his mother. When he later died in an auto accident in California, Sylvia and Howard had interrupted school at the University of Utah, a sacrifice for both of them, and Howard began gathering into his own hands the reins his father had dropped. Howard's mother moved to Salt Lake to be near his sister, and he and Sylvia established themselves in the old house. They had committed to a two-year experiment, which was now half completed. Sylvia had grown up in Charlottesville where her father taught at the University of Virginia, and she had surprised Howard by agreeing easily to the long sabbatical from school and the city. As he plowed, planted, and harvested his land, turned his cattle out to feed on the mountain, he had been less and less able to think of their stay as temporary.

He looked past the skin toward the empty stove and counter. "Hey, what

do you say if I cook tonight?" he called. She had quit her job at the insurance agency two months before and since then had been winding down, perhaps getting herself to where she could challenge their waiting even another year.

"Fine," she said.

He pulled two steaks from the freezer and laid them in a frying pan, then sliced several potatoes and an onion in with the meat. After pouring a cup of water across the food, he settled a lid over the top. He washed then walked back into the high-ceilinged living room, drying his hands. "Anything wrong?" he said, knowing the answer already. Confronting her directly had never worked.

She looked up. "No. Why do you ask?" She turned again to her reading.

"All last night you sat there staring out the window as if I were invisible."

"I'm sorry." She looked up at him. "You look tired."

"And today —" She was reading again. "You're not listening to me."

She looked up, wide-eyed, holding her face blank. He stood and left the room. In the bathroom, he sat on the toilet lid, his feet up on the legged porcelain bathtub while he unlaced his boots. He stood and slowly shook them out into the toilet. "I *am* tired," he said, out loud, looking into the mouth of his boot. It was hard work making the farm produce like it had when his father was thirty, getting it to look as it did in memory. He was also tired of her devices. "What is talking to your shoes a sign of?" he called down the hall.

"Did you say something?"

He pushed open the swinging door into the living room.

"Acute schizophrenia," he said.

"Are you talking to yourselves again?" She wasn't looking up from her book. But she was listening. She was staring at the page listening.

"A cute schizophrenic." He smiled across the room. "Can you read and think at the same time?" He wanted to confront her with what she was doing to him. But that would bring anger.

"Of course not." She wouldn't admit her readiness to talk.

Without moving, he let the door swing shut, standing with his nose against one of its panels. "Who do you think you're fooling, Howard Rockwood?" he whispered. In the bedroom he changed out of his work clothes, gradually failing, despite his efforts at humor, to control his anger. He knew the joking meant nothing, but he was too tired for deeper talking. They would both wait in tension until the mechanism of her mind shifted, like an uncertain clock; nothing he did could move her faster. "You know, Howard, I've been thinking," she would finally say. Then they would pour it all out for two or three hours, slowly becoming correct again. He thought of the pleasure, toward the end of their talk, when, after the pain of digging up and cataloging feelings, they'd talk in rhythm. After the communication shifted from words and eyes to hands and bodies, the oneness would melt them into passion. They made better love after those talks than any other time. "Yes, sir," he said. "We could use some loving." He looked across at the picture of James Darren which hung on the wall opposite the bed. His Victorian ancestor wore a long, dark-brown beard and a black suit. The painter had made the eyes look

straight out, so that wherever a person moved, they followed. "Sorry," Howard said. "The royal prerogative. I wasn't including you."

He weighed again the patience and effort before they would feel close, wanting to get Sylvia in bed. "Nothing wrong with that," he said, looking at the picture. "Do I see the hint of a smile behind those beady polygamist eyes? Are you trying to say that after living with three wives at once, you think my problem is insignificant?" He put on his slippers. "Having one wife is what makes it significant."

His mother, as far as he knew, had never treated his father to arbitrary silence and coldness. Sylvia looked like the younger pictures of his mother, the same dark hair, the same slight body. But he couldn't picture his mother reading forever or getting into moods that lasted for days; she was too busy. If she had a disagreement with his father, she worked it away. He could only remember her active: sewing, gardening, holding a baby, or visiting her friends in town. He waved his finger at James Darren. "The first law of marriage, which every husband must break at once, is don't compare your wife with your mother." But her activity hadn't kept his father from leaving.

Howard knew Sylvia was bored in Rockwood. "I started thinking the work was important," she said after quitting her job selling insurance. "Besides, my brain has started twitching." She hadn't explained herself.

He looked out the window at his mother's garden plot. In the spring he had tried to get Sylvia to grow some vegetables — replotting the spot, showing her how to dig the earth open, to insert the corn and bean and carrot seeds, and to fold the soil back across. He started her, then watched her leave with the rows only half done. "What's the good of it?" she said. Afterward, he realized that he had been trying to get the house and yard to look as they had in his memory. He shared his insight, and they didn't talk about the garden again.

But he knew one result of his mother's hard work. When his father was excommunicated for adultery, leaving town with Sister Sorenson, their neighbor across the road, his mother had survived. "He's just like Samuel Rockwood," people whispered about his father. His great-grandfather, the son of the polygamist James Darren, at the age of sixty took another wife, an extremely young woman, three decades after the Prophet Wilford Woodruff said it wasn't celestial marriage anymore. After his parents' separation, his mother's hard work quilting and selling her quilts had kept her sane. If he and Sylvia had children, it might soften the force of her introspection. Better for him too, to have a son or a daughter. The doctor said that there was no apparent reason they couldn't have children. (e) Frustration at not conceiving.

He walked through the kitchen to check the food, upset that she read instead of cooking, that she wouldn't talk, and angry because he let himself be bothered. Tangled and bound, he sat on the sofa across from her, staring at the floor. She glanced over her book at him several times, finally standing. Soon he heard her taking plates out of the cupboard and silverware out of the drawer.

When he followed, putting his hands on her waist from behind, she turned

away and set two glasses on the table. "Will Edgar want some?" She indicated the snakeskin.

He smiled. "Spirit mice maybe."

"I hear them nights."

"Mice or spirits?"

"Both."

He looked at her. "It's getting to you, isn't it?" he said softly. "Living in this old house." Even though they had changed all the yellowed lace curtains and put carpet down on the floors, he could imagine how she might feel: she didn't have the immediate memory of his family and the acquired memory of his ancestors moving through the musty rooms, enlivening them.

She paused. "I'm handling it. We agreed." They *had* agreed, and that was her problem. He kept the farm constantly before her: she knew it was integral to what he was becoming.

"Too many ghosts," he said, his voice wavering. His grandfather and his great-grandfather had both died in the bedroom, twenty-five years apart. They had brought his father's body back from California and buried it next to the others in the cemetery. He wanted to be laid there himself.

"We're not alone," she said in the same voice, grinning.

Tonight, he knew. Tonight. He could feel her readiness. If he could just keep his patience and humor. They had sacrificed too many days to tension, too many nights to her lying still on her side of the bed.

"I don't know what I'm doing here, but that's something I'll work out myself." She wouldn't yet commit herself to any specific concern. "I'm happy to see you excited about the farm."

He touched her hand. Closer and closer. They were quiet, eating the steaks. Then the sadness settled back into her, her eyes dropping away to look at the plate. He could see it happening but couldn't put out his hand to prevent it.

"Yes, the farm and house are OK," she said.

He waited. "You didn't finish."

She said nothing.

"Sylvia?"

"Do the ghosts bother *you*?" she said.

"What ghosts?" He stopped eating.

"I mean, I wouldn't want to live in the house I grew up in." She looked at him. "Too many memories. But that's your business. It doesn't have much to do with what's bothering me."

"What *is* bothering you?"

"You asked that already."

"Right."

They waited.

"Howard, what's bothering me?"

"How should I know?" But Howard thought that they both knew. He watched her eyes, waiting, afraid of acknowledging a difference of mind which would be irreconcilable. The truce of not saying was strong between them.

"I don't know either," she said finally.

"So what am I supposed to do? Just put my life on hold until *you* decide how to talk about it?" He wasn't being fair, and she said nothing. "You never get out since you quit your job, except to go to church. I've tried to introduce you to people, help you fit in. Is that it — you don't have friends?"

"They are your mother's friends or daughters of your mother's friends. I've tried to reach out to them, and they smile and act friendly, but they never talk to me like they talk to each other." She looked at him. "Don't you see what I mean? Really, what do I have in common with them? What kind of life can I have among them?"

"Now we're getting somewhere."

"Not really. Even that is outside." She was retreating again. "It could be managed."

"Have I pushed you to be like my mother?"

"Don't be foolish. In the first place, I wouldn't let you. I thought you understood that. In the second place, I love your mother. You're way off. It's different in Rockwood, no question about that. I'm just not sure that what's bothering me would be any better anywhere else."

"Well, what is it then?"

"I can't put it into words yet. It's all mixed up."

"Sylvia."

She looked at him. "We've been married three years."

He waited, surprised, still sure that being in Rockwood was the core around which any aggravation had built. "So?"

"Sometimes I feel like my body's going blind, like it no longer has a way of touching anything outside itself."

He grinned, then saw it hurt her and stopped quickly. That's what joking can do, he thought — backfire without warning. She changed her expression, eyes wide and spooky. "Sometimes," she rasped, "I feel like one blink and I'll be gone." She rolled her eyes. "Sometimes there's mold growing all over my skin."

"Be serious now," he said softly. "You started to say it."

"I can't say anything yet."

"Just try."

"I did. You saw how well it worked."

"I'm sorry. I'll listen now."

"No. Not now. It's too complicated. It's you and me and the farm and your father and your mother and the town. But it's mostly something I feel from you."

"When then?"

"Don't push me, Howard." She turned away. "Just leave me alone for a while, if it's not too much to ask."

He stood. "Well, when you figure it out you can tell me." He took his plate into the living room, his patience gone. When she played this game, he felt less loyal. In his anger he thought of his high school girlfriend, Belinda Jackson, now Belinda Sharp, who worked at the feed store. She had worn a

shirt open at the collar today. Filling out his order, she leaned forward and he could see where her breasts flattened against each other. She had a full, nearly muscular body. With Belinda watching, he had refused the help of the dock worker and his hand truck and had lifted a seventy-five pound bag of barley under each arm. Driving home, the force of his desire frightened him. He realized that he had taken to finding reasons to go to the feed store, lingering and talking with Belinda. Though he knew that looking and even talking were not fatal, for years he hadn't allowed himself to let his eyes linger on a woman, waiting for her to look up and discover him flirting. That is until the last month. When he leaned across the counter and talked, he remembered kissing Belinda, remembered fumbling as they held each other and touched, awkwardness and fear keeping them from going too far. Now, after having made love with Sylvia, knowing the motions of sensuality, he wondered how he could have been so ignorant, so backward. Imagining possibilities now felt much more dangerous.

His father must have watched Sister Sorenson in a similarly intense manner at first. A speculating eye, one which dragged the body with it as it wandered, was the beginning of the path to infidelity. He had seen the pain his father caused his mother, and he didn't want even to approach that failing. But he was curious. How had it happened? What had the two of them thought and done beforehand? "Exactly how are the seeds of adultery planted?" he asked in the voice of a preacher.

"I'm not sure I heard what you said, Howard," said Sylvia from the kitchen.

"I said, you could drive me to drink, you know."

"Not me." She said nothing else.

Finished with his food, he brought the plate back, sliding it into the sink. He put his hands on her shoulders, but she shrugged them away. "No. It has something to do with the way I feel when you touch me, especially the way I feel when you touch me making love."

"Is it the way I touch or the way you feel when I touch?"

"Don't be so analytical."

"What don't you like?"

"I don't know."

"Are you being too sensitive about something I've done?"

She looked at him. "My skin often feels dead when you touch it. Something basic is wrong between us."

"I'm sorry."

"Please don't. It doesn't help to be sorry. Something has just changed."

"Your idea of me?"

"Why do I get the feeling I'm not getting through to you?"

"I'll listen now."

"You're just missing me. You're here looking, but you're not really seeing me. Like touching. Yes, it's like the touching. You touch me, but it's mechanical. As if it's not really me you want, but I'm handy."

He felt his neck warming. "(f)," he thought. "All of the above and

more.” For some time now he had used Belinda when Sylvia and he made love, borrowing the more voluptuous curve of Belinda’s breasts and hips. He had always known that Sylvia and he were sensitive to subtle changes of attitude, but he was surprised to think she had sensed his thoughts.

“I’ve got something to tell you,” he said. He had the idea that, even if his mental sleight of hand only indirectly bothered her, confession would keep them talking.

She looked at him, puzzled.

“I mean I admit it, I sometimes look at other women.”

“You what?”

“I sometimes think about the way other women look, when we — you know —” He saw she was laughing.

“Oh. A bonus,” she said. “I had no idea we weren’t alone. I was thinking more about simple communication. Just getting on the same wavelength or something. Though I doubt it would do me much good if I got on your wavelength in this case.”

He smiled, uncomfortable. They were going too quickly, and he wanted to slow down, be sure of what was said.

“What’s wrong?”

“I don’t think it’s funny,” he said, trying to keep his voice level.

“Oh,” she said. “You don’t.” She stopped smiling. “You really don’t like centering on you, do you? As long as you thought it was just me, we could talk, and you could pat me on the head after it’s over and we’d climb into bed and forget it.”

“I’ve never said that it’s you.”

“No, I guess you haven’t. It’s not me and it’s not you.” She frowned. “It’s sex. Sex is like a magnet or a radio receiver, drawing all our ambiguity and confusion into a single act. Confusion is its territory. But you probably don’t want to talk about that.”

“Who says I don’t?”

She was quiet.

“Well?” he said.

“I need to finish my book.”

“Don’t you dare. You can’t start then stop with me like that. How could you think of it?”

“Watch me,” she said. “We talk and nothing else changes and you think it’s all right. I want to think and think until I figure it out; then we’ll talk.” She left the room.

He strode out the back door, slamming it. Soon he would lean across the counter at the feed store, which was empty in his daydream, and put his hand into Belinda’s shirt. She’d lead him back and they would lie on grain sacks in the heavy darkness. They had come so close to sex when they were younger, but he knew he still didn’t have the courage to do anything in reality.

He walked through the orchard and the barnyard into the fields, the dark alfalfa rustling with the night breeze around him, just blossoming. He would start cutting Monday. At the ditch he turned left. Walking helped, moving

through the alfalfa, which his work had made luxuriant. His field, his farm. He had walked here the night after he had caught his father with Sister Sorenson, soothing himself with the canal and trees he had known since knowing anything. He moved down the path into the next property, Brother Johnson's, where the willows weren't cut and where thick brush grew along the ditch. Remembering that night and what followed stopped him: he determined never to hurt Sylvia, never to destroy his integrity as his father had his.

"Something about the way you touch me," Sylvia had said. Touching and loving in bed was good, approved by God, such sex being foreign in nature to his father's act, but still when Sylvia and he sweated against each other, panting and clutching, he thought of his father moaning over Sister Sorenson and over his mother, rutting as James Darren and Samuel and his grandfather rutted, and Howard was ashamed. Sometimes he filled his head with Belinda so he didn't have time to think, which also made him ashamed. Now, walking along the canal, he was ashamed to be ashamed of his natural, physical self. "Good Lord, Howard," he said to himself. "You are in one hell of a bind." But knowing he was irrational had never helped him, when in the winding down of his emotions after sex, he had to make himself hold Sylvia, make himself even stay in bed with her. "You are a century behind your time, you slug-minded Victorian prude."

When he came to the next boundary fence, he turned and walked back. A mist, a thickness, had come into his head, keeping him from understanding how to talk to Sylvia. She wasn't in the kitchen, and he saw that she hadn't moved the book from where she dropped it. When he walked into the bedroom, she was sitting naked on the edge of the bed, watching herself in the mirror. Her small breasts sloped forward to the nipples. Her hands lay flat on her narrow thighs. She didn't turn her head.

"I didn't mean that the way I feel is your fault," she said. "It's easier to analyze someone else's problems. I mean my analyzing you." He couldn't understand what she was doing. "Good lord, we've got to get rid of this painting." She took it off the wall and stuck it in the closet, shutting the door. "The grim old goat." She turned toward him. "Look at me," she said. He did and felt his body reacting. Resenting his own action, he reached to shut off the light, keeping his eyes on her body, white in the moonlight. He stretched his chest with a deep breath. In the darkness he could watch and make Sylvia's body blur, he could close his eyes, and her breasts grew heavier, her hips curved wider, her eyes became sensuous. Though he felt silly, it gave him pleasure thinking of himself holding Sylvia as the cowboy on the book cover did, with Sylvia submissive as the woman was. As he stepped out of his pants and took off his shirt, moving toward her. She turned the light on.

"What are you doing?" he asked.

She touched his cheek and looked into his eyes, too close. "Where are you?" She still hadn't covered herself.

He thought about Belinda. Frankness might help. "I told you. I look at other women. Sometimes I think of them too."

"Who are they?"

"They? I don't mean to suggest that there are dozens."

"You don't have to tell me."

But he did if they were to continue. Part of his attraction for Belinda was the memory of early love, the seventeen-year-old which seemed to glow out of her fuller body. He was stimulated by imagining again how smooth her skin had been then, how her lips had felt moving against his, how it felt to press against her. In his memory their tentative and incomplete approaches toward full sex possessed a dark intensity which he wanted again.

"What do they look like?" said Sylvia.

He opened his mouth and shut it.

Sylvia laughed. "You look like a fish," she said. He glared at her, grabbing his pants and going into the kitchen. "Don't be mad," she called after him. He waited. "You look so silly when you get mad," she called, deliberately provoking him. He replaced his pants. She followed into the kitchen, moving slowly to touch him on the arm, holding her hand there. "Don't be angry," she said. "It makes you too serious. You start feeling like a black hole and I feel like everything, including me, is going to be pulled into you."

"What are you doing tonight? Playing games? Teasing? What do you want me to do?"

"Nothing, I want you to do nothing."

"I think of Belinda Sharp for one, the clerk at the feed store."

Still naked, she sat at the table near her uneaten dinner. "Oh," she said, stopped for a moment. He sat in the chair opposite, feeling quieter after his outburst. She pointed to the tubular skin. "I think it's quite Freudian that you brought this home." She stroked her chin and made her voice deeper. "Now, Mr. Rockwood, just what were you intending?"

He didn't smile. "Don't be so damn weird," he said. She grabbed his hand and led him, unwilling, into the living room, making him lie on the couch. She left the room, returning with a pad and pencil, wearing the black-framed glasses she had bought to look more like an insurance agent. He glanced toward the front window: they had no close neighbors now, but the curtains were translucent. Someone coming for a visit would get a start. She sat naked on the edge of the coffee table, frowned and crossed her legs. "When we're making love, what do you think about?" He looked away. "No," she said. "Rule number one is you have to speak truly." She touched his hand. "What are you thinking right now?"

"How silly you look."

She slid the glasses down to the edge of her nose and wrote something in her book.

"What are you thinking?" he said.

She turned the pad toward him. "Talking frightens me," it said.

"Why?"

"It's being on the edge."

"Do I scare you?"

She grinned. "Oh, don't hurt me, Mister Punch," she said in falsetto.

"Can't you say anything straight?"

"I guess not." She frowned. "I mean it's frightening being on the edge. But that's better than not talking."

"I know. Talking frightens me because we've been through it before and I'm worried that it won't change anything."

"What I hate is when we make love and you're not there anymore." She was changing again, jerking toward what was at the core of her mind. "And I hate it when we hedge our talking."

"I'm sorry," he said.

"I guess it's just part of being married for a few years."

"I don't like that either," he said. "It's too fatalistic. And if it's something which will happen to us because it happens to everyone and which no one can control."

"So you think about a specific woman?" Sylvia put her elbow on her knee, supporting her chin with her hand. Howard felt his face turn red. "I think that your thinking about her is more important to you than it is to me. I wish you wouldn't invite her in though."

"Presto chango."

Sylvia put her pencil to the notebook again, and watched him. "So you're into large breasts?"

He jerked his face up. "So you're into jealousy?" Sylvia had identified his interest, which was upsetting, but she also made his imagining grosser than he felt it. "I don't think it's unusual to be attracted to breasts." But he knew he was attracted to Belinda, to his memories of their good times together.

Sylvia covered her face with the notebook. Her shoulders shook. For a moment he thought she might be weeping. But then she spoke, and it was only a mock whimper. "Are you saying that I don't measure up? She giggled again, unstable.

He looked at Sylvia's legs, at the curve of her waist and felt the motion through his groin, still glad, despite what Sylvia had said, for the tension of a private image, the secret intensification of his emotions. He looked at her eyes over the pad. Suddenly tired of confusion, he longed for a passion strong enough to overwhelm his ambiguity. "I can't help it," he said. "I need you."

"Not so fast!" She looked at an imaginary watch. "Your time's not up." She made her voice serious. "Mr. Rockwood, are those breasts the source of your heaviness?" She looked at him and spoke more softly. "The heaviness that's going to swallow us."

He sat up on the couch. Everything had changed again, and he felt the pain of frustration, a sharp tightening. "Heaviness? What are you after tonight?" He frowned, realizing that she was describing guilt. But he didn't think he could explain to her why he felt guilt, or why that made his loving thick and clumsy, hurried. "When we're making love what do you think about?" He needed to turn it back toward her. Tired of what she had called hedging, he wanted space to gather himself toward an unreserved unburdening.

"How smooth your skin is," she said.

"Is that all?"

"How good it feels to hold you that close."

"Is that all?"

She held the back of her hand to her forehead. "Sometimes — oh, how can I hold my head up — I think about Mick Jagger."

"OK, so I'm an idiot." He couldn't unburden to a chameleon. "Now you've proved that, what next? I think you could be serious for three sentences in a row."

"And sometimes your body clenches and you aren't there anymore. If thinking of another woman causes that, I hate it." She wasn't smiling now. "Sometimes the touching changes."

"I won't think of them anymore."

"It can't be that easy. I wish you could see that it's more fundamental than morality. Howard, we've made love for three years now. Is it more exciting to think about someone new?"

"I guess so. Easier maybe. I mean —"

"I don't remember feeling this way in Salt Lake," she said.

He looked at her quickly. "We were newlyweds then." He thought about the way he felt when they made love. "You said that the touching changes. Well when I touch you my whole body changes. I want it to be the same." Immediately he knew he had said too much.

"The same." She was laughing again. "You want your body to feel the same when you don't touch me as when you do?"

He didn't move.

"That might make things difficult," she finally said.

"Stop it," he said.

He waited, ready to leave or turn it into a joke too if she didn't see, but then her face went sad. "I'm sorry," she said.

"I'm going to finish what I was saying."

She nodded.

"I can't look at you," he said.

She said nothing.

"Do you remember our wedding?" He paused. "I didn't see you in your long dress until you came out of the bride's room in the temple. We held hands walking to the sealing room. The mirrors on each side showed us kneeling at the altar for eternity forward and backward in purity. It may be trite, but —"

They were quiet. "But it was important to you," Sylvia said.

"Wasn't it to you?"

"Oh, yes."

"I've never been able to feel that way in bed. When I let myself go it seems a violation."

"Howard, what we do in bed isn't —"

"Don't lecture me. I know it's right. I'm not a total idiot. I can say to myself, the way you feel is a hundred years old. You are acting so stupidly, titillating yourself with dirty thoughts because you can't stand to have your own wife's body straight, without any hedging to protect you. But do you think that knowing what I'm doing changes anything? Part of it is Sunday school. No one means harm, but all they drill is self-restraint, holding back

continually. The opposite, no restraint at all, doesn't help either. I should know that better than anyone from my father, but all that women-are-pure stuff, don't degrade their purity—it makes me shut down when we make love." He stopped. "That's only part of it." He thought about his father, how it had been when he had discovered what his father had done. His mother's face was a grim mask when his father was excommunicated. He hated Sister Sorenson.

"What are you thinking about now?"

"My mother," he said quickly.

"Your mother?"

"She didn't deserve it."

Sylvia said nothing. He watched her eyes flick to his face then away as she thought.

"I mean she loved him. How could he do it? I can't comprehend what was in his head."

Sylvia watched him.

"Not knowing scares me. Not being able to understand how anyone could do what he did. And when we make love, instead of you and me clear, forever forward and backward, it's as if he's sitting next to the bed, as if his spirit has seeped out from the floorboards, so he can watch and laugh." He stopped, trying to confront his own captivity. "It would be better if we had a child, if we could make something with our love."

She was quiet.

"No, that's not it. Did I make you sad?"

"Yes."

"I'm sor —"

She put her hand across his lips. "It wouldn't change everything if we had children." She looked at him. "Do you think what your father did is unforgivable?"

"Of course not." Someone might forgive and understand.

"I only met your father once," she said.

"I remember. That was after he was excommunicated."

"He was a sad, old man."

He looked at her quickly. "You should have seen him when he was young. He was hard and sharp and strong then."

"Like you?" She smiled.

"What?"

"You are that now. Do you want to be even more like him?"

"You should have seen him."

"When he was younger?"

"Yes."

"I'd like to see *you* when you were younger." He smiled. "I'd like to see you free and simple."

"Don't get insulting," he said.

"I'd like to see your little boy body. See your little boy head."

"You perverse woman!"

"We're getting away from the women with the pendulous breasts," she said.

"Oh, yes. I'd forgotten."

"Don't lie to me. Why do you want to live here?"

"What do you mean?" He was wary.

"What do you get out of it? All it does is remind you of your mother and your father."

"You don't know how good it feels to make this place look right again. I mean when we moved here that field was covered with weeds and brush and crap." He pointed toward the back of the house. "Now, after I've plowed the fields, it's filled with alfalfa. I'm fixing the fences, making the barn good again."

"Why?"

"I want it to be like it was before."

"Why?"

"This could go on forever." He thought. "This town is named after my family."

"I know."

"I want people to see the farm like it was when my grandfather ran it, and like it was when my father was young, before he left."

"Oh." She turned her face sharply away.

"Whats' wrong?" He could see she was angry.

"I thought we came here because you wanted to farm."

"I do want to farm."

"Right." She slid to the edge of her chair.

Had she softened her voice and attitude, finally talking to him, only to persuade him to leave? Everything was falling away again. "I don't understand why you're so angry," he said.

"I came here with you, away from any chance I have of living the way I want to live, to this farm because I thought it was of itself important to you, not because you were trying to prove something." He felt dragged back through the last hour of struggle, as if the pain of opening had been worth nothing.

"It's more than just proving something."

"Is it? Whose idea will you change? You once told me that everyone in town thought your father was like Samuel Rockwood, that they all looked down on your father. Who told you that?" He was silent. "Who did you hear say it?"

"I could see it in their faces."

"You just thought you saw it. Was what your father did so important that they are going to spend all that time worrying about it? For years after it happened? And if the bad Christians among them do remember, do you really think that anything can ever change their minds?"

"I could." She had known all this already, was only now putting it in this desperate light.

"Good lord, you take yourself seriously. If that's what you want to spend your life doing, fine, but do you think any rational woman would want to stay with a husband whose highest desire is to live someone else's life?"

"Shut up," he said. "You're twisting it now, making it more than it is. I don't know what you're trying to do, but whatever it is, it isn't working."

"I'm trying to help you see what's happening to me."

"You're pushing me into something. I can't change magically at your demand." He remembered that earlier he could have taken her in his arms, loving her. He hated her for trying to make everything straight first, for having to talk first.

"Mr. Rockwood," she said. "Tell me more about your father. Tell me about your desire to live his life over for him."

"Go to hell." He stood. "Be damned in hell. I won't take any more of this warped game. Why can't you just say what's wrong like any normal person? God, I hate it." He finished dressing and walked through the living room and out the front door, slamming it behind him. He saw through the curtains that she didn't move. She thought he'd walk around for a while then come back like an obedient animal. He knew he was angry, but he had tired of the talking and talking without coming to any conclusion. If her plan had been to force him to a choice, then her plan was backfiring. "Ahhhhh," he shouted in the front yard.

Climbing into his pickup, he sat behind the wheel growing tighter and tighter with anger, his body clenching as he thought of the ways she tried to entangle him in her twisted emotions. He felt like smashing his hands through the windshield, cutting himself, anything to release him from the confusion which she and his own history had conspired to weave for him.

Starting the engine suddenly, he jerked the vehicle out of the driveway and headed too fast toward town. His first thought was of Belinda as he determined to make a violent break with Sylvia. He turned down the road to the feed store. It would be closed, but, because she had complained about it two or three times when they had talked, he knew Belinda worked late every Saturday totaling the books. Feeling a rush of adrenaline, he wanted to see what could happen if he actually approached her. From the top of the road, he saw a single light. No one was at home in the house opposite the feed store. No other building was on the street, and Belinda's car was the only vehicle. Though he couldn't see her yet, he thought Belinda was inside working. Lightheaded, astonished at what he was doing, he parked his truck to the side of the building, hiding it behind a low tree.

He climbed out, hesitating with his hand on the door. Having read about cowboys approaching their women and having thought that kind of masculinity silly, he knew enough not to swagger. However, he felt the same aggressive power inside. Conscious that he was shattering boundaries, he climbed the stairs, striding across the cement dock which went all the way around the building. If they had sex, it would be a clean, continuous expression of his vigor. He paused at the side window, standing back in the darkness, shielded by the nearly closed venetian blinds, and watched her work. She hurried, moving her fingers rapidly over a calculator. He watched her waist and hips as she moved across the room and lifted the top bag of a stack of yard fertilizer to check the tags. He admired her motions, a strong, sure woman, and he

realized that she would never be passive as she was in his imagination. She returned to her desk without seeing him. He waited, trying to figure what to say. As he watched her work, a quieter feeling, another way of proceeding, came to him.

If he was careful, if he talked tonight, touched her hands after the talking, moving slow the way he did with Sylvia, he might actually have her. The same physical motions that worked with Sylvia could work with her. He would have to be kind and tender, the same way Sylvia needed him, another way of touching than the wild and aggressive bouts of passion which had filled his daydreams. They could approach person to person, two people who cared, equally strong. He remembered seeing his father's hand on Sister Sorenson's cheek. Despite his years of hating his father, he knew that his sin might have been one not merely of lust but also of humanity.

He walked to the front. Belinda looked up startled as he tried the door, which was locked. She smiled, moving around the counter toward him, opening for him. "Howard Rockwood, what are you doing here?"

He went inside and his imagination failed him: he didn't know how to talk to her out of either vigor or humanity. "I need a bottle of penicillin," he found himself saying. "I remembered you said — ah — that, sometimes, someone is here late."

She walked to the fridge and got out a box. "You're lucky I was here," she said. "Did you use the other one already?" He had forgotten that he had bought a bottle that morning. He took the offered penicillin, brushing her fingers.

"Yes. I mean, no." He hesitated. "I mean I'm lucky that you're here. I wanted to talk to you."

"About what, Howard?" She looked around him out the door. "I didn't hear you drive up. Is Sylvia waiting in the truck?"

Howard cleared his throat. "I parked around to the side," he said. "I came alone."

"What are you saying?" She walked toward the counter where he stood, her eyes on him. "Are you all right, Howard?" She stood directly opposite him on the other side of the counter. "You don't look good."

"Sure. I'm fine." He took a deep breath. He knew they needed to talk but he didn't know what about. "You have a lot of work, don't you?"

"I'm almost finished for the night." She watched him, apparently curious.

He held up the package. "Do you remember when you helped me give my show calf a shot?"

She shook her head, then smiled. "Yes, I do. You held the rope while I jammed the needle into his butt. He jerked you onto your face in the manure."

"You helped me take my shirt off."

"Then I sprayed you with the hose."

"You came almost every night to help me."

"I came to make out with you behind the shed. God, if we didn't have fun."

"Yes," he said, watching her eyes, trying to communicate his feeling.

"Why are you here?" she said. Her face was closed, but he sensed a smile behind her eyes. He felt his neck flushing.

"Ah . . .," he said. She folded her arms across her chest. "Sylvia and I are having a fight, and —"

"You're having a fight?"

"Things haven't been going well for a long time. It's not working with her."

"And you came to your old friend for advice." The smile behind her eyes was more obvious.

He tried to smile back. "I needed to get away from the house."

She turned toward the papers. "It's a lonesome world, isn't it?" Her voice was flat. She moved away from him, her head up, moving proudly to a chair. Then she leaned back, hands behind her head. She watched him without evidence of emotion. "I'm full of advice." Her face was veiled firmly now, nearly hard, and he doubted his imagined modes of proceeding, doubted that he had ever seen warmth in her face. "You shouldn't have come down here."

He searched her face again for the inviting smile he thought he had seen that morning, unable to find the seventeen-year-old behind the weary eyes and thicker face, wondering what he had seen and felt, finally deciding that he had been tricked by the intensity of his memory. She clearly didn't care for him in the way he had imagined for the past month, and he believed he had mistaken the seriousness of his own emotion. Even if he made his motions and voice persuasive, nothing would work. He remembered the awkward hesitation and bumbling of his adolescence, the confusion which he had tricked himself into repeating.

She now retreated even further behind her mask. "I need to finish these and get home," she said. "My husband's expecting me."

"I'll take this anyway," he said.

As he left, she turned back to her work. His face and neck burned with foolishness. He couldn't order his splintering impressions, couldn't bear to think of the haphazard selfhood created by what he did and thought. He felt his essence dissipating, reforming itself outside his control. Driving up onto the flat, he looked down on the fields and houses of Rockwood, over which the souls of his ancestors brooded. Five generations of them had spent their lives fumbling and groping for a bright and vigorous intensity, a marriage of spirit and physicality, which he had no doubt would continue to entice and elude. The lights of his house showed where Sylvia waited, perhaps still watching out the window. After waiting uselessly for some gift of clarity, he started the truck and drove home.

She was dressed when he came in. "Well if it isn't Boomerang Bob." Her voice was strained. "Where did you go?" she said, softer. Her lips were firm, her eyes wide and frightened. "I feel like such an ass for laughing at you."

He said nothing; his head was spinning.

"Where did you go?"

"I went nowhere."

"I don't believe you."

"I went down to the feed store." Her head turned sharply away. "And nothing happened."

"Why don't I feel convinced?"

"Belinda was there, working late." He stopped talking. He had seen Sylvia's face totally open, ready to be hurt by what he would say. Despite her clever talk, she had never prepared herself for the possibility of his actually being unfaithful. Talking, he had felt pleasure in a kind of power over her, and more than that — a heightening of emotion, telling her about how he nearly made it with someone else. He shook his head, his mouth turning down bitterly at his reaction. "It's hard for me to talk about it." Then he looked up, seeing from her face one reading of what he had told her so far, and he knew he had to tell her everything, no matter how it made him feel.

"I didn't intend to go there."

"But?"

"But I ended up there. She was working late and —"

"Sounds like what I've been reading today."

"— and then we talked until it was clear that there was nothing but old memories between us. You didn't know this, but we dated in high school. After we made each other depressed and embarrassed, I left."

He could see she thought there was something else. "I could see how my father could have gone ahead, where I couldn't. I just made a fool of myself."

She watched him, uncertain, then he saw her decide to believe him, without understanding. "Did you do this to scare me?"

"Do you think I'd —" He looked at her. "I don't know why I left. I'm not trying to hide something or be someone I'm not. I scared myself." They were silent. "What now?" he said.

"I don't know."

"I had the feeling of what I want — something unusual, intense like a vision. I can't say it. Something better and stronger than what we have. Not just a sexual experience, something beyond that. Sometimes I feel that if I could drop my head away, clear out everything that I've been and start over it would be all right."

She smiled. "My romantic Howard, stuck in the here-and-now." She looked up with tears in her eyes. "Isn't that the hell of it?" He moved closer, and she held his head, his cheek against her breast. Soon he felt quiet.

"That feels good," he said.

"Remember when I first saw you?"

"Yes." He recreated the lawn, the trees around the university, the crisp, brick buildings. He remembered her legs, hair, and face, the way she had acted as she spoke to him. "I sometimes think it was worth it." She bent and kissed him, moving her lips harder against his. He shut his eyes, thinking of her then, the way she had appeared to him years earlier.

"Uh-uh," she said. "No way." He opened his eyes. "Look at me," she said. He saw the way she smiled, a flat line, her eyes that had gone through time with him, clear as they had ever been. Her hands were around his shoulders, soft across his back under his shirt.

"Howard," she said suddenly.

"What?"

"You were going away again."

He moved away and sat on the chair.

"Come back." He did. "I like it when you're tender with me. I like it when you're fast, too. I just don't like it when you make me invisible. When you shut your eyes, and I feel you going away from me." She said it quietly, more as an invitation than a reprimand.

"What now?" He faced her. "You've told me you don't like the way I make love. What else can I look forward to?"

"Howard."

"Maybe I can concentrate on unbuttoning your shirt," he said, doing so. "Maybe I can live in the here-and-now by focusing on taking my pants off."

"You silly fool," she said, looking at him full as he felt the thrill downward through his body. She put her arms around his neck and kissed him. He let her pull him after her onto the floor. She kissed him harder. He touched his lips to her hair, brushing his fingers across her skin when he felt himself slipping away. Moving, he watched her eyes, the speckles of gray across her irises, made his lips touch the texture of her hair, attended to her legs wrapped around his legs, her hands holding tight to the back of his neck, her lips on his neck, made himself feel the warmth and moisture inside her body, sense his own body straining toward comprehension of the gifts which she lavished on him and which he waited and waited to return to her.

Afterward, he wanted to sleep, to cave into himself, alone. She pulled him to his feet. "Come on," she said. "I'm hungry."

"Now I like that. I cook you dinner, you don't eat it, but now you're hungry."

"I'll make some cinnamon toast and lemonade."

He took his robe from the bathroom. "Do you care if I slip into something more comfortable?" he said.

"Whatever you want. But you have to admit, being naked kept you humble for a minute."

"Are you making a comment about my body?"

"Oh, no, Mr. Rockwood," she said, making her voice deeper. "It looks just fine." She put her hand on his chest, then cut the bread.

While it was toasting, they sat at the table. "What do you think about when you're making love?" she said.

"How smooth your skin is." They smiled.

"Howard, I need to go to school." He looked up surprised. "The woman's place is in the home," she said.

"That isn't it."

"Then it's a question of primacy of need." She watched his face carefully. "I don't want to thrust us back into the argument. I'm just trying to let you see me."

"You could drive in to Salt Lake."

"It's eighty miles." He saw she had considered it.

"That's a long way to drive everyday."

"Yes. It's too far."

She had come at length back to what she wanted. He thought about his dream for the farm: making it so that people would pass and say, "Those Rockwoods are fine people. Look at that." It was a stupid dream compared to what she offered. "I can stretch only so much in one night," he said anyway.

"Talk about it tomorrow."

"Sure," he said. "Tomorrow."

She looked at him. "Let's leave it, Howard. Let's sell it and go to Bolivia or Australia with the money."

"You're serious," he said. She laughed. "You're really serious."

"Forget it," she said. Tears stood in her eyes. "I'll be with you, Howard," she said. Then she looked away at the snakeskin. "What is your real reason for bringing this home?"

"I've only seen one before."

She laughed again, silvery clear. After running down the hall to the bedroom, she came back with small bottles of oil paints, opening them in front of the snake. She began painting the ribs; dabs of red, violet, and blue building into rings. He watched, smiling and rubbing both hands down across his face. She sat naked in the old kitchen with the cups hanging widemouthed behind their glass doors, her breasts moving back and forth as she painted green and yellow circles around the snakeskin. Something was falling away from him again, more dead air about him moving backward, dropping away, and he held himself, frightened at what was being lost. He looked around him at the familiar kitchen where his family had cooked, prayed, and eaten for four generations. Frowning, he pulled the robe closer around his body.

Burial Service

Jim Walker

The place they put him seemed extravagant —
Sprawling flowers, hovering crowd, artificial grass
To cover up plain dirt.
The coffin shone, wood lustrous as the new organ
At the church. He must be proud, I thought.
The words of the sermon flowed mellifluous
But the prayer seemed short and the west wind
Blew the women's fine-combed hair askew
And chilled despite late autumn sun.
After the Amens people melted into their cars
Except Grandma and her six grown sons.
Eyes reddened, she refused to go.
"It's not right," she said. "We can't just leave him."
Then the brothers threw back the artificial grass
And one by one dug deep into the mound of earth
To fling their loads atop the shining wood.
Sweat brimmed their foreheads,
Crept into the creases of their dark suits,
But they labored as if to save a life
Until the hole lay filled.
Still she would have stayed, but they whispered
In her ear, took her by the arm, and all but carried her,
Looking backward desperately, to the waiting limousine.
I visit over spans of years
And find the place quiet, lonely, small.
Now that she has joined him, I wonder at memory's miracle,
The moment, frozen in my mind, the look in her eyes,
The sons' quiet fury as they tore into their resenting task
That day so distant in the files of time.

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The Oldest Son Leaves for Nagoya

Jim Walker

Surprisingly tall, he looks down toward
His six-inch shorter father
And shifts his feet, anxious
For the moment of departure, awkward in uncertainty
Caught between manhood and his mother's arms
Clinging to him more as minutes slip past
Like gnats on a summer evening.

Firstborn, he seems built of putty from
The infant mold we have in picture after picture,
Grinning toothless grins, staggering first steps,
Drooling at his mother's breast.

He sketched away hours like an engineer
Designing vast projects, attracted admirers
Who forgave him his white skin. His smooth,
Long stroke smacked line drives to left and center
And his extended fingers stretched for rebounds
High above the rim.

Now from nowhere a young woman, pretty, lithe
And five-foot-ten glides to his side, reminding
Me of my own place in an endless line
Stretching past tragedies of moment
Converging towards infinity.

So we watch him after hugs and tears
And his wan wave as he ducks into the tunnel
Leading away through the night outside
Into the dark mystery of the future.

On the long drive home we speak reassuringly
Between deep chasms of silence.

Mormon Christianity: A Critical Appreciation by a Christian Pluralist

John Quiring

I RECENTLY HAD AN UNEXPECTED OPPORTUNITY to analyze the ideas and experience the worship of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Following four months of intense dialogue with a Mormon intellectual and former missionary, I had seven sessions with missionary elders, attended a variety of services in several wards, and read the Mormon scriptures as well as several hundred pages of theology. I think this exposure should warrant a fair-minded decision about whether or not to join the Church. The following remarks sketch my background, expectations, experience, and deliberations.

Having reinforced the Fundamentalist, Mennonite, and Presbyterian influences in my background with studies in history of religions, my graduate work in the philosophy of religion has focused on various atheistic movements and writers that view all religion as worthless — secular humanism, the Marxisms, and Nietzsche — as well as the “widespread practical atheism” (Smart 1969, 499)¹ and irreligion influenced by the individualism and consumerism of our industrial civilization. For some time I have felt that the differences between the world’s traditional religions are minor when contrasted with the enormous difference between any one of them and the post-Enlightenment atheisms. From this perspective, the differences between the various branches or versions of any one of the religions seem to me unspeakably minuscule. Access to saving experience and wisdom seems available and to some extent demonstrated in most, if not all, religions and denominations, despite apparent differences in belief. But through mutual investigation, dialogue, criticism, and appropriation, I suggest we can encourage ever more radical transforma-

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¹See also Harrington 1985, 202–3; Bell 1978, 21; and Velasquez 1982, 243. Philip Devine (1986, 280–82) considers market “economism” to be a religion worshipping the lesser god of buying and selling. Susan Wolf (1982) argues for an easing of many scriptural prescriptions for the saintly life out of sympathy with many of the features of what I would label “all-American higher hedonism.”

tion toward a lifestyle centered in the religious ultimate, uniquely experienced and conceptualized in our various traditions.

I also presume that for many of us, local religions and denominations mold our spiritual sensibilities long before we are in a position to investigate the global alternatives, decide for ourselves, or be proselytized. Nevertheless, I have long struggled with my religious identity, being torn between two positions. First is the commitment to the Pauline ecumenical vision of one God who is over, through, and in all, with one faith, one baptism, and one body (Eph. 4:4–6). In light of this view, much of the factionalism of denominations and cults, of conservatives and liberals, is merely spiritual dissipation. Second is the need to serve this vision in a concrete movement, despite my dissatisfaction with all the options. Because of my unfinalized religious identity and my pluralist legitimation of religions and denominations, I, perhaps naively, did not shy away from the exclusivist LDS movement.

I began my investigation of Mormonism assuming that the Church has, by its very survival, proved itself more than a sect or cult and is justifiably considered a maturing denomination of Christianity. It represents a unique, legitimate attempt to instantiate part of the inexhaustible potential glimpsed in the biblical world views and lifestyles. I presumed that some youthful enthusiasm remained and contributed to the Church's strength, though I saw evidence of the inevitable transformation from cult naïveté to sophisticated, global denomination or perhaps new religion. I thought Mormonism seemed successful in creating a strong moral culture of the kind prescribed by philosophers² countering the dominant, Western, capitalist culture of hedonism and enabling unusual compliance with the domestic moral moderation advocated by the Bible. This moral culture, in turn, enabled deeper attempts to release the type of generosity prescribed in the egalitarian and liberationist strands of biblical communitarianism.³ I was attracted by W. D. Davies's suggestion that Mormonism "is the American expression of many of the same forces that led in Europe to Marxism" (in Madsen 1978, 91), and by Fawn Brodie's claim that "the spirit of true Marxian communism — 'from each according to his ability, to each according to his need' — was implicit in the whole system" (1971, 106).

Though I was not inclined to take the Book of Mormon as a lost-but-found fifth gospel, I was prepared to treat it with respect as an attempt to reintroduce

² Alasdair MacIntyre concludes *After Virtue* (1981, 245) by saying, "What matters at this stage is the construction of local forms of community within which civility and the intellectual and moral life can be sustained through the new dark ages which are already upon us." Stanley Hauerwas says, "Our only escape from destructive histories consists in having the virtues trained by a truthful story, and that can come solely through participation in a society that claims our lives in a more fundamental fashion than any profession or state has the right to do" (1981, 127).

³ "I do not mean that others should be eased and you burdened, but that as a matter of equality your abundance at the present time should supply their want, so that their abundance may supply your want, that there may be equality" (2 Cor. 8:13–14, RSV); "Cease to do evil and learn to do right, pursue justice and champion the oppressed" (Isa. 1:17, NEB); "No, this is the fast I desire: to unlock the fetters of wickedness, and untie the cords of the yoke to let the oppressed go free; to break off every yoke" (Isa. 58:6, JPSA).

the biblical moral ethos in an exotic, narrative context. I was excited to discover that it is possible to affirm a selective, critical, demythologized version of Mormon Christianity without being excommunicated (see Ostler 1984; McMurrin 1959, 1965). But it seems that the official self-understanding of Mormonism dominates among Mormons, namely, that virtually all Christian history has been apostate and that the unique true church was restored by special revelation to an ancient American people, émigrés from the Middle East, whose buried scripture was made known to Joseph Smith. This large and seemingly fantastic claim makes a temperate evaluation difficult. It forces an intellectually unhealthy all-or-nothing decision that polarizes Mormons and non-Mormons. It is this polarization that I address and wish to see dissolved.

As in all religious movements, I find strengths and weaknesses in Mormonism. On the one hand, Mormonism seems to be an effective moral culture in a civilization that some philosophers presume has lost moral culture. To a large extent morality is cultivated in organized lay study of Mormon scriptures, whose negative and positive moral principles, rules, policies, and observations are similar to, and as powerful as, those in the Bible. One example is the prophetic accusation, uniquely worded in the Book of Mormon, against those who, by loving money, fine apparel, and fine sanctuaries, actually rob the poor (Morm. 8:36–39; 2 Ne. 28:13). Another timely example could be set by those who, like the first Christians and the first Anabaptists, would “rather sacrifice their lives than even to take the life of their enemy; and . . . [would bury] their weapons of war deep in the earth, because of their love towards their brethren” (Alma 26:32). I find such teachings in the Mormon scriptures extremely valuable.

On the other hand, there seem to be conflicting scriptural remarks about the concept of God in Mormonism. Whereas Abraham 3:2, 9, and 13 suggest that God is enthroned near a star called Kolob, and Mosiah 2:17 localizes service of God in service of one’s fellow beings, presumably on earth, Doctrine and Covenants 93:33 and 35 indicate that the eternal elements are the tabernacle of God, and Doctrine and Covenants 88:41 says God is above, in, through, and round about all things while all things are round about God, suggesting a diffused, cosmic omnipresence.

More worrisome, perhaps, are allegations of controlled history, indoctrination, authoritarianism, subordination of women, favoritism toward right-wing politics, anti-intellectualism, a notion of God as growing from a man, fabricated visions, threatened or symbolic violence to punish covenant-breaking, and perfectionism-based depression (see Ostler 1984; Roberts 1985; Bluhm et al. 1986; and Brodie 1971, 24, 409). These allegations are troubling not because they are unanswerable, but because it is unsettling, given these issues, to experience the enthusiastic certainty of missionaries who teach as if theirs is the only coherent thought system and lifestyle on earth. While Gordon B. Hinckley, for example, insists that “we don’t need critics standing on the sidelines” (“The Mormons,” 1987), I would think that religions and denominations especially need critics, since it is perilously easy to claim divine sanction for all-too-human naiveté, error, and sometimes perversity. I fear that, given

the elusiveness of the religious ultimate and the plurality of religions and ideologies, we are tempted to be dogmatic, authoritarian, and zealous precisely where the foundations are shakiest. Thus the unquestioning confidence I have noted among Mormons seems as unwarranted as it is anywhere else in the world of religion.

My provisional view of the LDS Church is that it seems to be a strong church, a remarkably staunch attempt to replicate in our age many biblical practices and beliefs. I find many understandable attempts to be faithful to the biblical gospel: the Church's stress on transformation from self-centeredness to selflessness, following the example of Jesus; salvation from sin; faith in Jesus; repentance; baptism by immersion, "after the manner of [Jesus'] burial" (D&C 76:51); obedience to commandments to love God and neighbor; and emphasis on obeying spiritual "laws," such as obedience, sacrifice, consecration, chastity, health, tithing, and the fast. However, in all this I sense a tendency toward grace-slighting, works-first legalism (Moro. 10:32; Hel. 12:24; 2 Ne. 25:23).

In my view Mormonism could be even stronger if it took steps that most would initially regard as subversive, namely, deflating what seem to me to be pious overestimations. Mormonism is strong because of its focus on adherence to biblical themes reiterated in its supplementary scriptures. Part of the task I suggest is differentiating between the moral and theological content of the Mormon scriptures, on the one hand, and the status of the founder, on the other hand. That is, many of the main ideas of the Mormon scriptures seem useful independently of their alleged origins. Thus, if Joseph Smith were viewed as a charismatic founder of a denomination, but the actual origins of the Mormon scriptures turned out to be other than officially claimed, the Church could soften its all-or-nothing approach that insulates Mormons from believers of other denominations and religions.

Now that the Church is globally established, it would remain strong even if it came to devalue the Book of Mormon to the status of edifying, amateur fiction, rather than continuing to claim it to be "Another Testament of Jesus Christ," as it is now subtitled. I suggest this because, for me, the book's narrative material seems flat, monotonous, imitative of the King James version of the Bible, and lacking in vitality in contrast to the Bible itself and other scriptures of Penguin Classics stature.⁴ Similarly, the Doctrine and Covenants seems to reword and particularize biblical phrases, from, for example, "He came unto his own" (John 1:11, KJV) to "I came unto my own" (D&C 6:21, 45:8), and from "thou shalt love thy neighbor" (Lev. 19:18) to "thou shalt love thy wife" (D&C 42:22). In my view, these are not sufficiently fresh to be taken as new revelations but are derivative.⁵

⁴ For example, the Bhagavad Gita, the Upanishads, the Dhammapada, Buddhist Scriptures (Edward Conze, ed.), the Analects of Confucius, the Tao Te Ching, the Psalms, the Four Gospels, a reprint of the New English Bible New Testament, and the Koran.

⁵ Some are quick to charge Smith with plagiarism. Brodie speaks of "a mosaic of extracts" from the Bible that "had the ring of divinity" (1971, 57). I would consider also the combination of Smith's pre-scholastic mentality and mystical personality, where perhaps the

Such a scriptural devaluation would allow the Mormon church to be seen as a *de facto*, sometimes successful attempt at restoration of aspects of the primitive church, such as Anabaptists and others have tried, rather than the uniquely authorized *de jure* restoration it now claims to be, thereby eliminating the somewhat myopic view that all traditional attempts to follow Christ are invalid (e.g., “Presbyterianism is not true” [JS-H 1:20]). It might, however, be useful to question whether replication of the first churches is desirable, deferring, rather, to a goal of “indigenization” — faithfulness to the spirit of God in Jesus, uniquely expressible in each relative cultural setting. This would enable cooperative interaction with other churches and eventually other religions, so that they could be enriched by the Mormon example, while Mormons could appropriate the occasional insights of mainline biblical scholarship, ethics, and theology that are gradually being humbled into coherence with the sciences, ecology, logic, critical world history, women’s experience, and the experience of primal, Third World, and underclass peoples.

In my view, the real strength of the Mormon church is not some unique mandate from God withheld or unavailable for eighteen centuries, but its unique faithfulness to the ancient Hebrew experience and wisdom. As Gordon B. Hinckley remarked, “in essence, Mormonism claims to be a modern revelation of old principles divinely pronounced with new emphasis and completeness in our day” (1982, 9). Mormonism, I think, simply takes those biblical principles more seriously than most. That, I submit, is its real strength, not the Book of Mormon or Doctrine and Covenants. The latter are texts of contestable quality, novelty, origin, historicity, and theology, useful for renewing interest in and reinforcing commitment to biblical vision and virtue.⁶

While aspects of Mormonism’s scriptures and doctrines interest me, I find Mormon worship dreary and lackluster in contrast with, for example, some Presbyterian churches. I am left with a sunken feeling without a sermon and pastoral prayer. Sacrament meeting “talks” may well contain true material, but they lack clout for me because they are delivered by laypersons. For me the dangers of theological professionalism in leadership are outweighed by the dangers of uncritical handling of texts and doctrine. However, this is certainly

boundaries between self and others (and their creations) become blurred. Even if Smith were not entirely innocent, one also needs to consider what millions of believers have made of the spiritual and moral substance of the texts *they* took to be revelatory in combination with the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament.

⁶ Here I suggest an alternative to Brodie’s view that “the moving power of Mormonism was a fable” and that the energizing forces in the lives of Mormons are the myths of an imaginative genius (1971, ix). I am suggesting an analysis of the deepest foundations of Mormonism — God in Christ and biblical spirituality — which can be appropriated from within and appreciated from without and are not dependent on the historical authenticity of Smith’s visions, revelations, and scriptures. I tend to agree with McMurrin that “the best things in Mormonism would survive an honest and open search for the truth and that even the skeletons in the closet should not be hidden from the people” (Ostler 1984, 22), that “the best kind of theology is one which is open to criticism and growth and improvement” (Ostler 1984, 35), and with Brodie’s less polite view that “the religious legacy of Joseph Smith can be shorn of its abracadabra of magic and still have sufficient strength to stand by itself” (1971, 425).

debatable. There seems to be a strong tendency toward conformity of expression and dogmatic assertion, with little fresh, independent observation.

Testimonies often seem to be little more than rubber-stamping the official line. I fear there may be a tendency to create virtue by cloistering away from temptations to maintain innocence (a recurring strategy in religious history), rather than by teaching *why* things are viewed as right and wrong. Fear of unknown but threatened consequences is fostered rather than knowing and wise moderation. There seems, further, to be little awareness of the world of scholarship that challenges every one of these ideas and all interpretations. In my world there is no immunity from the morass of pluralism, interpretation, and controversy. Joseph Smith's transcendence of the "tumult of opinions" (JS-H 1:10) seems to me to have been a bit too facile. Moreover, within Mormonism itself we find factionalism and multiple interpretations of doctrine — official statements versus a nonauthoritative, speculative, oral tradition, and changes in "official" opinions over time. None of this is meant to imply any final illegitimacy of Mormonism, nor to minimize its great strengths — puritan moderation, welfare, and organization.

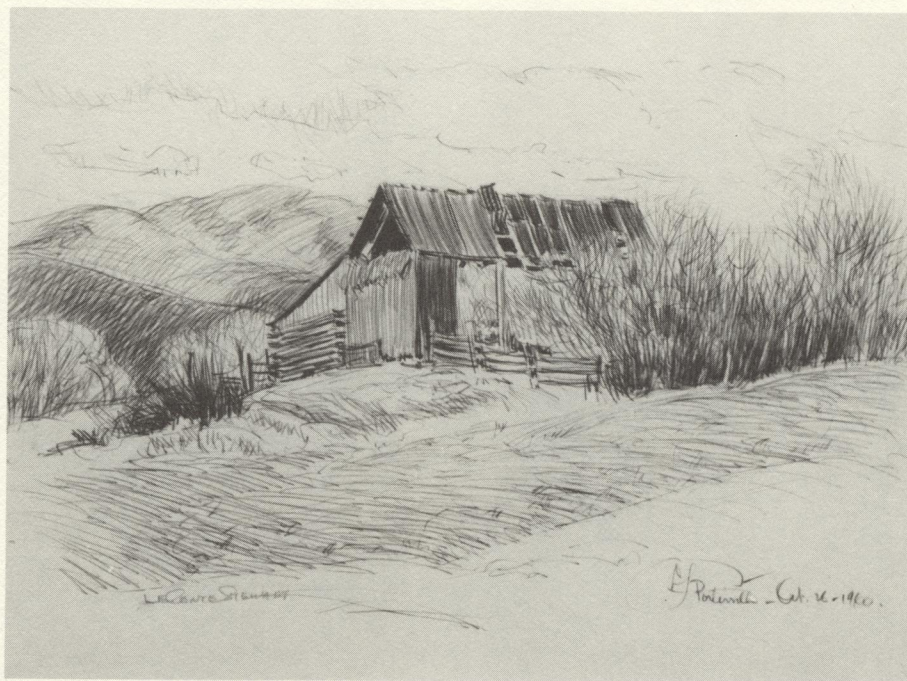
At present I am planning not to join the Church, but rather to investigate further the traditions responsible for my actual spiritual formation. But I have wanted to defend my vision of Mormon potential in order to try to help transform internecine struggle into solidarity against our common foes — irreligion and decadence.

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REVIEWS

Universalizing Mormonism: The Mexican Laboratory

Mormons in Mexico: The Dynamics of Faith and Culture by F. LaMond Tullis (Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 1987), 250 pp., \$22.50.

Reviewed by Davis Bitton, professor of history at the University of Utah and co-author (with Leonard J. Arrington) of *The Mormon Experience: A History of the Latter-day Saints* (1979).

THE APPEARANCE OF *Mormons in Mexico: The Dynamics of Faith and Culture* is cause for celebration. For one thing, another volume in the beleaguered sesquicentennial series sees the light of day, accompanied by a refreshingly frank explanation by its author, F. LaMond Tullis, of some of the frustrations of being a scholar working in Mormon history. As he explains in the preface, one publisher rejected the work because it mentioned sensitive problems of the Church in Mexico. Finally, after his work was accepted by his current publisher, Tullis had to revise his manuscript in order to communicate with a general, not only a Latter-day Saint, audience.

More important, *Mormons in Mexico* provides a model of how studies of the Church in other countries can be carried out most fruitfully, providing not superficial cheerleading but genuine understanding. Since we will doubtless be seeing a long string of publications — Mormons in Korea, in the Philippines, in France, in Finland, and so on — it is important to have something like Tullis's work, which is neither a pageant nor "yearbook," to show the way.

The first six chapters tell the story of early exploring and colonizing, the ups and downs of missionary proselytizing, the exodus of many Anglo-American Mormons

during the Revolution of 1912, the subsequent development of relative isolation, and the shattering challenge of the Third Convention in the 1930s.

Essentially a nationalist movement, the Third Convention was a pathetic experience stretching from the mid-1930s to the mid-1940s. Some Mexican members, feeling neglected and patronized, petitioned among other things for a mission president of Mexican nationality. A schism resulted but was eventually healed largely through the efforts of mission president Arwell L. Pierce, an unsung hero. A better goal, argued Pierce, was a stake with a Mexican president. At the time of President George Albert Smith's visit to Mexico in 1946 some 1200 Conventionists returned to the Church. Unity was restored. Eventually, in one way or another, all of the basic goals of the Third Convention — Mexicans in leadership positions, young Mexicans on missions, increased educational opportunities, and more chapels — would be achieved.

Especially valuable in Tullis's book are two chapters on current conditions. The generation since World War II has seen incredible growth as Church membership in Mexico climbed from several thousand to over 300,000 in more than eighty stakes. Young Mexicans by the hundreds, even thousands, have served as missionaries. Though the Church by law may not sponsor schools directly, they have enhanced educational opportunities by indirectly sponsoring schools through an educational society that meets legal requirements. Rapid growth occurring simultaneously elsewhere in Latin America has raised the percentage of Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking Church members from 1.5 to 20. By the end of the century, Tullis estimates,

"the mother tongue of one out of every four Mormons may be Spanish or Portuguese" (p. xiii).

Tullis neither exaggerates nor glosses over problems and challenges. Local leadership is still a problem. Accepting Mormonism often leads to tensions with inherited cultural standards. Although much has been achieved, education, which creates expectations, is both a blessing and a source of frustration. Also, occasionally Anglos, insensitive to Mexican pride, talk as if the Church is somehow linked to American imperialism and conservative political ideology. And, like other areas with many baptisms, approximately one-half of Mexican converts do not remain active.

Recognizing that there are different perspectives, Tullis deftly presents each of these problems from the point of view of those experiencing them and in his final paragraph leaves open questions as to whether they will be resolved in the future. While his tone is optimistic, it is clear leaders must proceed carefully, showing sensitivity to Mexican identity.

Tullis's bibliography is extensive, benefiting particularly from oral history inter-

views conducted by Tullis himself or by others, such as Gordon Irving of the Church Historical Department. But I was disappointed that Eduardo Balderas was not listed in the index: Balderas, whose lifetime work was translating scores of Church works and hymns into Spanish, deserves mention, even if he performed his labors in Salt Lake City.

Familiar with the literature on modernization, social change, and conflict, Tullis has written a book that simply could not be produced by a less informed amateur, however diligent and well intentioned. A case study of the challenges and rewards "in the meeting of diverse cultures with a common religion" (p. 209), *Mormons in Mexico* is recommended reading for General Authorities and Regional Representatives concerned with similar problems elsewhere in the world, for those who want to inform themselves of some of the exciting developments away from the traditional Mormon centers, and for anyone open to a thoughtful analysis of the interrelations of religious, national, and class loyalties and aspirations.

Sorting Out Mormon Theology

Mormon Neo-Orthodoxy: A Crisis Theology by O. Kendall White, Jr. (Salt Lake City, Utah: Signature Books, 1987), 196 pp., \$11.95.

Reviewed by Kent E. Robson, professor of philosophy, Utah State University, Logan, Utah.

IS MORMON THEOLOGY a radically novel theology or is it akin to Catholic-Protestant, orthodox theology? White's new book on Mormon theology asks this question. White lays out two distinct ways of looking at Mormon theology. First, he describes what I call traditional Mormon theology, which emphasizes the themes that Joseph Smith articulated toward the end of his life and

that Brigham Young, Parley P. Pratt, Orson Pratt, Orson F. Whitney, and B. H. Roberts promulgated in Utah. Second, it can develop into what White calls neo-orthodox theology similar to Catholic-Protestant, orthodox theology. To do this it must reject the latter ideas of Joseph Smith expressed most conspicuously in his famous King Follett Address.

According to the Joseph Smith tradition, God is an organizer, not a creator *ex nihilo* (out of nothing). God is powerful, has great knowledge, and is the very embodiment of goodness; but God cannot prevent all evils and human travails. People are eternally necessary beings with inherent freedom that is a part of their eternal intelligences and not "given" them by God.

Souls are created by God, but intelligences can be neither created nor destroyed.

In the orthodox, Christian tradition, God is the omnipotent, omniscient creator of everything *ex nihilo*. White characterizes this tradition as defending (1) the sovereignty of God, (2) the depravity of man, and (3) salvation only by grace. In this latter tradition, because an omnipotent God created everything, God, not human weakness, causes evil.

In this very important new book White presents the orthodox view within Mormon theology and labels it "neo-orthodoxy." Many of White's collected statements will surprise many Latter-day Saint readers. Few realized that Pearson, Riddle, Yarn, Andrus, McKinlay, Bankhead, and other Mormon writers represent a theological tradition so close to Catholic-Protestant theology and so absolutistic in its concept of God. Readers will be surprised at this tradition's emphasis on unavoidable sin, on grace as opposed to works, and on the total dependence of humankind on God.

In order to develop these ideas, White borrows the "neo-orthodoxy" label from Protestantism and attempts to compare this Mormon tradition with Protestant neo-orthodoxy. The comparison is not completely felicitous. What counts as Protestant neo-orthodoxy differs substantially from what might be called Mormon neo-orthodoxy. For one thing, the Protestant tradition has none of the Bible literalism and fundamentalism found in the Mormon tradition. But the label "neo-orthodoxy" works as well as any other label to characterize the difference in theology between Christian orthodoxy and Joseph Smith's distinctively Mormon view. It is Christian orthodoxy that White labels as "neo-orthodox" when it occurs in the Mormon tradition.

White's book also discusses the sociology of religion. While White claims that a crisis occurred in Mormon theology giving rise to this new tradition, his argument leaves me unconvinced. Examining the cultural and sociological components of theological development through the soci-

ology of religion inadequately explains the views of Pearson, Yarn, Riddle, Andrus, Turner, and others. Still, White accurately identifies their views and legitimately asks what brought them about. Rather than view them as products of a sociological crisis, White should examine individual personal development and one person's influence on another.

In calling Mormon Neo-orthodoxy a crisis theology, White asserts that it is "the cultural crisis, which is my concern here." He then adds, "in his 1967 essay, 'The Crisis in American Religious Consciousness,' O'Dea compellingly argued that this century, including the 1950s and 1960s which constitute the formative period for development for Mormon neo-orthodoxy" (p. 15) constitutes the formative crisis period.

But in defining the crisis, White discusses the traditions of intellectualism and anti-communism among Latter-day Saints and ascribes both to the same crisis. This makes the attempt to pinpoint a crisis more difficult. The dates of a so-called crisis can vary from 1933 to the present. The characteristics of the crisis are vague and not precisely defined. The questions remain of when an identifiable crisis occurred, what caused it, when it was over, and what its results were.

White brings his discussion up to the present in the fascinating penultimate chapter entitled "Recent Developments." In this chapter he discusses the work of Paul Toscano on human depravity, of Janice Allred on original sin, and of Donald P. Olsen and Frederic Voros who have developed views on grace and other similar views that are sympathetic to the neo-orthodox concept of Mormon theology. The fundamental question confronting these writers and the neo-orthodox theologians is the role of human freedom. Do we have any freedom, and if we do, is it only *given* to us by God and exercised according to God's will, or is it independent of God and an intrinsic part of our makeup? Unfortunately, these views of sin, depravity, original sin, and grace are only consistent with

an absence of freedom and with an absolutistic nature of God. The serious problems concerning freedom are the same as those of the Catholic-Protestant theologians who originally advanced these ideas.

Questions concerning how we are to understand evil and human suffering are also raised. Are they to be blamed on humans or ascribed to God? If the latter, there is no way to escape the conclusion that we are not responsible, that an absolutistic God has predestined our lives.

In short, *Mormon Neo-Orthodoxy: A Crisis Theology* is an excellent and important new study of trends and tendencies in Mormon theology. The current challenge

that Mormons are not Christians makes this issue especially germane to Latter-day Saints. In order to establish that we are Christians, we tend to accommodate our theological views to those of orthodox Christianity. Thus, we abandon the ingenious insights of the Prophet Joseph Smith and fail to realize that orthodox Christian theology was largely borrowed from Greek philosophy and from the New Testament. White's book enables us to see in stark contrast what the different theological tendencies are and how we should understand them. In doing so, it is an excellent and rare addition to our understanding of Mormon theology.

Clayton's Struggle

Trials of Discipleship: The Story of William Clayton, A Mormon by James B. Allen (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 383 pp., \$12.95.

Reviewed by Jay M. Haymond, a historian working for the Utah State Historical Society.

JAMES B. ALLEN has done us all a great favor by writing this interesting biography of William Clayton, a disciple of Joseph Smith. There are many biographies of Mormon leaders, but few about Mormon followers. This study is long overdue.

Allen defines discipleship not as "perfection but rather a struggle for perfection, and in this struggle a person often must wrestle with himself even more than with others" (p. 2). William Clayton struggled as a disciple because he was a strict believer in perfection in an imperfect world. Possibly an alcoholic, Clayton seems to have continually punished himself for his failures.

Called to be the branch president in Manchester before he emigrated, Clayton seemed to enjoy being a leader. But his continuous frustration as a follower suggests that he was unable to reconcile the difference between his own and his leaders'

perceptions of his abilities. He yearned for recognition and positions of greater responsibility. But even when Joseph Smith elevated him to the circles of power, Clayton's jobs were as a clerk and messenger. Brigham Young also gave Clayton opportunities to "lead," but Clayton carried such rigid expectations about the relationship between follower and leader that few were able to live up to his high standards. Clayton was especially offended by those who enjoyed the privileges of rank over the lot of ordinary folk, though he himself was always well connected. He knew people all over the territory and once used his connections to successfully prevent his runaway wife from selling the sewing machine he had given her, even though she was in Payson and he was in Salt Lake City.

Clayton could be stubbornly independent from those in authority. When astrology was introduced to Mormon leaders, Brigham Young professed to believe but warned others of its dangers. But Clayton persisted in dabbling with the belief as if he were in the grip of some overpowering habit. Possibly he equated astrological forecasts with the power of prophecy.

Clayton's most disappointing experience with leadership was his mission to

England, his homeland, where he was given leadership responsibilities in Manchester. The calling was a step forward for Clayton. Then he became ill and one evening drank a glass of gin to give him strength to return to his lodging. The alcohol was too much for the weakened missionary. Ashamed of his lack of decorum, Clayton's leaders quickly disciplined his unacceptable behavior by taking away his leadership duties. Clayton was forgiven after explaining the circumstances but was nevertheless sent home without fulfilling his mission.

In demand as a secretary and accountant in Salt Lake City, Clayton helped organize the Zions Cooperative Mercantile Institution. He zealously threw himself into the effort. But he was again frus-

trated by the contradictions of human frailties, especially those of his leaders, compared to the human potential in which he so firmly believed. These distractions from his own accounting and auditing business resulted in financial failure and further disappointment.

Allen admits a great admiration for Clayton, even while revealing his weaknesses as well as his strengths. I too learned to admire Clayton as an individual and as a participant in the formative years of Utah settlement. Allen's unique portrayal and interpretation of William Clayton, a disciple, and the records he left contribute as well to our understanding of the Mormon community under Brigham Young.

Before Constantine, After Joseph Smith

Ante Pacem: Archeological Evidence of Church Life Before Constantine by Graydon F. Snyder (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1985), 169 pp., \$19.95.

Reviewed by James Emerson Whitehurst, professor of religion, Illinois Wesleyan University, Bloomington, Illinois.

FEW RECENT BOOKS substantiate the major claims of Restoration faith as well as Graydon Snyder's *Ante Pacem*. A professor at Bethany Theological Seminary, Snyder convincingly shows that the early church had structures and cultic forms remarkably similar to those of Latter-day Saints. This, of course, is not his purpose; he is not an apologist for Mormonism and never once mentions the Latter-day Saint faith. Rather, his aim is to describe the early church through archeological evidence dated before the era of peace initiated by Constantine in A.D. 313 (hence the title *Ante Pacem*).

Snyder sifts through the vast accumulation of archeological evidence now available from that period—data that has not been lost or eradicated, as many scholars

have assumed. He defines archeology in a broad sense as nonliterary remains; consequently, his study includes not just excavations and ground plans of buildings, but sculpture, frescoes, sarcophagi inscriptions, funeral tablets, papyri, and graffiti. He summarizes in English a vast fund of resource materials hitherto available only in French and German monographs. Focusing on the approximate date A.D. 180—which he believes is when a distinctively Christian culture began to emerge—Snyder's book helps fill the time gap between the New Testament writings and formation of "orthodoxy" during the age of Constantine. Geographically, Snyder concentrates on Roman Christianity, where remains are far more massive and accessible than anything from the Greek-speaking world before the late fourth century (pp. 168–69). The following conclusions might interest Latter-day Saints.

1. *The Absence of Cross and Crucifix*

Snyder confirms contemporary findings that the cross is not found in the symbolism of the early church; instead, early Christians preferred to see Jesus as a strong, vic-

torious Christ who gave substance to their hope for surcease from Roman tyranny and who overcame illness, suffering, and death (pp. 15, 27–29, 165). Snyder emphasizes that “there are no early Christian symbols that elevate paradigms of Christ’s suffering . . . or even motifs of death and resurrection” (p. 14). Only after the state recognized Christianity could the cross be used for redemptive purposes (p. 29). Latter-day Saint author Robert Wells correctly argues that the Church should not be faulted for its failure to use the cross as a symbol. Speaking for Latter-day Saints in general, he says, “We remember Him as resurrected and glorified, having overcome death. We see Him as a strong, masculine, healthy savior of mankind, not an emaciated and suffering one” (*We Are Christians Because . . .*, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985, p. 24).

In early art Christ was not the redeemer from guilt through his suffering on the cross, but rather a young heroic deliverer who rescued his followers from desperate circumstances of death and dehumanization (pp. 165–66). Only after Constantine was the image of Christ “changed from the youthful [beardless] wonderworker to the royal or majestic Lord. At that time, Jesus shifted more to a bearded, elderly, dominant figure.” Snyder further suggests “that the price for orthodoxy was the ultimate loss of this attractive young Jesus” (p. 165).

2. *The Communion of the Saints*

And yet early Christianity was not as centered on youthful vitality as the above portrayal might indicate. Snyder notes that before the time of Constantine, Christianity was as much a “cemetery” religion as it was a “house-church” religion that met in the home, hall, or marketplace. “In the cemetery they celebrated their kinship with the Christian special dead [saints of a later period] and with each other” (p. 83). This gathering was highly social and included an agape meal (which Snyder differentiates from the Lord’s Supper, as illustrated below). Here, “prayers were

addressed to the dead on behalf of the living” (p. 83). Rather than encouraging necrophilia, the church’s cemetery rites emphasized the triumph of life over death. This recognition of special kinship with the dead can be likened to the ethos Latter-day Saints have established through temple ordinances and sealings.

3. *New Light on an Old Issue: Are Mormons Christians?*

In the struggle between the two major forms of early Christianity — the “urban” and “cemetery” factions — the urban authorities won, and the preeminence of saints (usually worshipped in catacombs at the edge of the town) gave way to the authority of bishops in the city churches (pp. 165–66). According to Snyder, controlling the cult of the dead paved the way for orthodoxy, which was more a political compromise than a doctrinal development (pp. 123, 165). This discussion helps illuminate how orthodoxy and heresy should be perceived today and clarifies the relative position of Mormonism to traditional Christianity. Here, Snyder supports Walter Bauer’s thesis in *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971) — that Christianity was not initially a uniform orthodoxy from which heretical movements deviated. Says Snyder, “Heresy was that variety of Christianity that was repressed rather than the factor that eroded pristine orthodoxy” (p. 8). In other words, through pluralistic competition, orthodoxy became the heresy that won — coercively, I might add.

4. *“Families Are Forever”*

The most widespread portrayal in early Christian art is the *orante* symbol — usually a female figure in a Roman toga with arms extended upward in praise. Snyder challenges the usual interpretation of this figure as the soul of the departed praying to God. Rather, he believes that it represents filial piety, corresponding to its use in the surrounding pagan environment. For the Christian it also expressed the security and joy found through adop-

tion into a new family, the church. The deceased were thus part of a family that extended blood relationships (p. 20). This seems to parallel both Latter-day Saint genealogical concerns and the concept of incorporation into the "blood" of Israel by adoption.

5. *Christianity as a Lay Religion*

Snyder finds little evidence of clergy or even hierarchy in the early church: "There was leadership, but clergy were not divided from laity" (p. 166). Mass had not yet become a spectator phenomenon; religious act and religious actor were one. Social class structures were unimportant in the Christian "small-group caring and hospitality . . . [that offered] deliverance from the personal and social entrapments of "life" (p. 169). Later, however, the post-Constantinian church compromised and altered this earlier pristine vision.

6. *Adult Baptism*

The initiatory rite for the early church was baptism, undoubtedly limited to adults (pp. 166–67). Since the baptistries Snyder analyzes have pictorial representations of Jonah being cast into the sea, swallowed by the fish, and spewed out up on dry ground, we can presume that baptism was by immersion, with its attendant overtones of death and rebirth (pp. 32, 40). There is also evidence that the remains of two pools could well have been baptistries suitable for immersion (pp. 102, 117).

Most of Snyder's findings corroborate the Latter-day Saint view of the early church. However, a few of the archeological findings challenge Restorationist views — specifically, the sacrament of communion. Snyder traces two different kinds of suppers: the cemetery agape that was more a social meal eaten in the presence of the departed souls, and a second meal of remembrance of Christ's sacrifice held in the urban centers. In the cemetery religion, the dead were believed to be vitally present, especially on death anniversaries, and were invited to partake spiritually of the meal (p. 18). If we compare the "cemetery" religion and the cult of the dead with Mormon temple rituals, many of which center around the deceased, and insist that a restored church recapitulate essential features of the early church, we might expect the Mormon temple ceremony to include some kind of agape supper. But before Latter-day Saints take this suggestion seriously, they should note that the cemetery meal reverencing the special dead developed into a cult of the saints and a mass celebrated atop their bones.

Latter-day Saints claim that the Reformation did not go far enough and that what was needed was a Restoration — a return to the practices of the early church before the "apostasy." On the whole, this book supports that claim and supplies specific evidence of several practices that are remarkably similar in both Latter-day Saint and pre-Constantinian Christianity.

A Writer Reborn

Leaving Home: Personal Essays by Mary Lythgoe Bradford (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1987), 162 pp., \$7.95.

Reviewed by Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, essayist and historian, University of New Hampshire.

AT THE AGE OF SEVEN Mary Bradford imagined herself presenting a story to a New York publisher, the manuscript "rolled

into a scroll and tied with a yellow ribbon" (p. 16). Now in midlife she wonders what ever became of that little girl. "She nags at me — she seems to be asking me what has happened to all those stories and poems I was going to write" (p. 20). This is a bittersweet collection, at the same time a celebration of family life and a confession of failed dreams.

Although Bradford never directly answers her own question, there is an an-

swer found between the lines of her essays. It is an answer familiar to women's literature. Her poems and stories became Christmas cookies and Family Home Evenings and fireside talks and, yes, six and a half years of *DIALOGUE*. Others flourished under her care while her own dreams waited. The dates of the essays in *Leaving Home* tell the story. Five of the twenty-two were written between 1968 and 1972, seventeen between 1981 and 1987, and none in the decade between. While it is hardly surprising that a girl who produced a summer-time newspaper in her mother's kitchen with "a pan of viscous yellow jelly" that she called the Hectic Hectograph should end up publishing a journal from the basement of her suburban Washington, D.C., home, there is also something distressingly Mormon about such a story. That is why the appearance of this volume is so heartening. Mary Bradford, the Writer, is back.

Leaving Home is a gallery of Mormon family life. There are comic snapshots (Mary baking the Twelve Days of Christmas or delivering a mustard plaster to the office gigolo), a wedding portrait (she and her husband Chick as an unresolved lithograph), and even a collection of travel slides (with her daughter Lorraine to England and the Philippines and with her son Stephen to Spain). Woven in and out of the various sections are reflections and even advice on parenting, with just enough of Bradford's pungent wit to offset the potential preachiness. Her essay on sex education, for instance, begins, "In fifth grade I read *Gone With the Wind*, deducing from it that if my father were to lie down by me at night, as he was wont to do during my frequent bouts with the croup, I would become a mother" (p. 41).

The richest, mostly fully realized essays explore the author's relationship with her own childhood. In "Yesterday the Wardhouse" and "An Art Deco Childhood" she introduces her readers to the curious corner of Salt Lake City and of Mormondom where her dreams developed. In a wardhouse that was once mistaken for a dairy

she recited scriptures and Dorothy Parker poems, learned to embroider a dishtowel, sang the *Elijah*, wore a drop-shoulder dress in a roadshow, and stood up in testimony meeting to thank God for saving her mother's life. It was in that ward, too, that she met "a certain Mr. Romstoft, who, according to his thrilling sacrament meeting accounts, had survived a hair-raising escape from Russia" (p. 14). For a time he nurtured Mary's hopes of writing for *The Improvement Era*, and he "even talked of laminating my little testimonies for possible missionary cards!" (p. 15) Unfortunately, it was soon whispered in the ward that "the Man Who Knew Tolstoy was living in sin with his housekeeper, a fact that threw doubt on his tales of intrigue about the Russian Revolution" (p. 15).

Bradford writes of a never-celebrated and almost-forgotten Mormonism. The provincialism and the absurdities of mid-twentieth-century Utah are there, lovingly limned, as well as the warmth and the nurturing of children's hopes. Reading about the wardhouse, or the family orchard, or the '28 Chevy that became the protagonist of a backyard adventure series, I began to hope that Bradford's literary "leaving home" would not be permanent. The material she has begun to mine here is as rich in local color and universal significance as Garrison Keillor's Minnesota childhood, the subject of a fatter and more expensive book with the same title as hers (*Leaving Home: A Collection of Lake Wobegon Stories*, New York: Viking, 1987).

In two of her most recent essays, "The Veil" and "Gentle Dad," she reworks these childhood materials to a poetic depth that, in my view, make them the best of the collection. "Gentle Dad" takes its title and central image from an early poem she had never shown to her father. It, like the essay, concerns Leo Lythgoe's relationship with his orchard.

Dad sang in the morning
As he called us from sleep
But he sometimes wore overalls
White with the spray of death

Dad in his reading voice
 Hesitated over our stories at night
 And by day his shears
 Crippled the Paradise trees (p. 86).

The paradoxes of the poem are elaborated in the essay, which brings together most of the themes of the collection, the Art Deco childhood, family love and guilt, the human need for self-expression. Significantly, it ends with a dutiful child's version of the creative child's question: "What has happened to all those stories and poems I was going to write?" Here the focus shifts from the child to the parent: "Why hadn't I spent more time documenting his life? Dad was such a good storyteller. Why hadn't I been less selfish, more at-

tuned to his needs, to the rhythm of his life" (p. 95). The self-deprecation so apparent here is at the center of the essay and accounts for much of its emotional power, yet what is especially moving about this passage is the author's seeming unconsciousness of what she has achieved. Ironically, the essay works because it is about *her* pain, not his. Preserving her own story she has found a way to honor him.

Reading such an essay one wants to prescribe for Mary Bradford a large dose of Selfishness, preserving her from all Good Works for at least the next ten years. To paraphrase the finale of another of her essays, "Yes, they also serve who only sit and write!" (p. 113)

BRIEF NOTICES

To Destroy You Is No Loss: The Odyssey of a Cambodian Family by Joan D. Criddle and Teeda Butt Mam (Boston: The Atlantic Monthly Press, 1987), 289 pp., \$17.95.

"TO KEEP YOU IS NO BENEFIT; to destroy you is no loss" is the Khmer Rouge slogan giving this book its title. The words take on stark, horrible reality as the story of young Teeda Butt, a Cambodian holocaust victim, unfolds. Teeda is representative of millions of other Cambodians who were regarded as expendable and were ruthlessly thrust from their Phnom-Penh homes between 1975 and 1979. Forced into slave labor in one of the rural Khmer Rouge communes, Teeda speaks as a survivor, as proof that human dignity can endure in the face of incredible brutality.

Joan Dewey Criddle, a Utah native, has framed Teeda's story as first-person narrative, using facts supplied to her by the Butt family, whose emigration to America the Criddles sponsored. Giving them more than passage, the Criddles offered friendship, space in their California home, leads for employment and education, and per-

haps most important, a way to make their wrenching tale heard.

The Butt family's father and husband was executed for his upper-middle class status soon after the family's evacuation from Phnom-Penh; they lost their home, possessions, friends, schools and places of worship, their health, and happiness. Yet they did not lose faith, determination, or their cohesiveness as a family.

The book, an honest witness of man's inhumanity to man, calls upon readers to go beyond statistics and smug complacency, making intimate the terrible consequences of tyranny. Though the book's happy ending in America is a bit pat, the overall impact is powerful.

Properly, the message in this book is no more for Latter-day Saints than for any who are genuinely concerned with the misery and unhappiness of other human beings. There is nothing in the book that suggests the Criddles' openness is related to their church affiliation or background; however, accounts such as this should remind Latter-day Saint readers of personal opportunities that transcend institutional religion.

Woman to Woman: Selected Talks from the BYU Women's Conferences (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1986), 212 pp., index, \$9.95.

ALTHOUGH NO EDITOR IS LISTED and the preface is unsigned, these speeches were all apparently drawn from four compilations of addresses edited by Maren M. Mouritsen, dean of student life at Brigham Young University. Fourteen addresses are included here, dating back to 1975. However, no dates are included on the addresses with the exception of a fifteenth speech, presented by Belle S. Spafford in New York City in 1974. Consequently, it is impossible to tell whether they are arranged in chronological order, according to some perception of speaker's importance, or according to how the essays best read in sequence.

Contributors are:

Camilla Eyring Kimball, "Keys for a Woman's Progression"

Norma B. Ashton, "For Such a Time as This, the Time Is Now"

Barbara B. Smith, "Blueprints for Living"

Ida Smith, "A Woman's Role and Destiny"

Ardeth Greene Kapp, "Drifting, Dreaming, Directing"

Elaine A. Cannon, "Daughters of God"

Grethe Ballif Peterson, "Priesthood and Sisterhood: An Equal Partnership"

Beverly Campbell, "Dare to Make a Difference"

Karen Lynn Davidson, "The Savior: An Example for Everyone"

Patricia T. Holland, "Within Whispering Distance of Heaven"

Sally H. Barlow and Tamara M. Quick, "Responsible Assertiveness: How to Get Along without Getting Up or Getting Out"

Maren M. Mouritsen, "Scholars of the Scriptures"

Libby R. Hirsh, M.D., "Being Well Balanced: A Key to Mental Health"

Marilyn Arnold, "Reading and Loving Literature"

Belle S. Spafford, "The American Woman's Movement" (appendix)

Most of these essays have the virtue of originally being oral presentations and hence are personal, personable, and lively. Some examples:

Ida Smith: "The Prophet removed some of the excuses afforded woman in her passive, dependent role and made her responsible for herself. In a very real way, he started the modern-day women's movement. Many of the early Mormon sisters caught his vision for women, got in the game, and ran with the ball. . . . Somewhere in the last eighty or so years, Mormon women have not only dropped the ball, but they have left the game" (p. 45).

Grethe Ballif Peterson: "Women receive additional blessings of the priesthood through ordinances and governance, but priesthood receives additional blessings through sisterhood, which provides a special sensitivity to things of the mind and spirit" (p. 83).

Karen Lynn Davidson: "I am sorry to report that at BYU we have thousands of women students who are dabblers as far as their school work is concerned — also a few men who fall into that category, but more women than men by far. Tithing funds are supporting them in this dabbling, and I feel that the day will come when they will be held responsible for the waste" (p. 108).

Marilyn Arnold: "We tend to think of things as being useful only if they have some kind of economic value. For me, the most valuable things in this world . . . cannot be assigned material value. They are things that speak to the heart and the mind and the spirit and that do something for us in ways we cannot measure. Literature is one of those things" (p. 182).

Brothers by Dean Hughes (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1986), 105 pp., \$7.95.

THIS STORY OF TWO BROTHERS by one of Mormondom's most popular and prolific writers for young people focuses on a parallel problem of identity. Dokey (short for Okey-Dokey) is trying, at the mature age of nine, to shed this nickname. Rob, nineteen, is dealing with negative feelings about an impending mission call. High-school-aged Jill is a sensitive mediator while Karen is experimenting with growing up at BYU.

Here's a sample of Hughes's dialogue:

"Gee, Karen," he said, "life must be tough for you since you missed out on homecoming queen. I'll bet you don't get asked out more than five times a week now."

"Listen, I'm not dating as much as I did the last two years. I'm into some tough classes now, and I need all the book-time I can get."

"Yeah, I hear those advanced Holiness classes are rough."

"Oh, ho, ho. Listen to the freshman talk. The Weber State man—the only guy I know who's majoring in racquetball."

"Oh, cheap shot. Cheap shot. I have a bowling class, I want you to know. I'm well rounded" (p. 21).

Into this lively mix comes a weekend when the parents are gone and Rob's bishop calls for the appointment. Rob takes his .22 and Dokey instead and goes rabbit hunting. It's a foggy day, they're soon lost, and it's night. Both of them learn some new lessons about prayer and about the kind of determination that is faith.

The Second Century: Latter-day Saints in Great Britain, Volume I 1937–1987 by Derek A. Cuthbert ([Cambridge, England]: Cambridge University Press, 1987), ix, 223 pp., £6.95.

CUTHBERT, A CONVERT to the LDS faith and member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, compiled this volume from his personal experiences in the Church. He discusses his conversion in 1951, as well as the missionary program and growth of the Church, the Church building program, the dedication of the London Temple, and other experiences in England. He also includes appendices which list statistics concerning Church growth, baptisms, number of buildings, organization of the British stakes, British stake presidents, mission presidents called from the British Isles, presidents of the London Temple, and area and regional officers.

In the Process: The Life of Alfred Osmond by Irene Osmond Spears (Provo, Utah: privately published, [1987]), 230 typescript pp.

ALFRED OSMOND, A HARVARD GRADUATE and head of the English Department of Brigham Young University, 1905–33, is the subject of this affectionate reminiscence by a daughter.

She recalls how he walked around the house in the morning, reciting passages from Shakespeare for "recitals that he gave all over Utah and Southern Idaho" (p. 58). As a result of this "excellent initiation," two of his seven children also became members of the English faculty at BYU—the author, and Nan Osmond Grass.

This biography contains appendices providing more information on Osmond's siblings and on his children, plus a substantial photograph section.

A vivid and lively chapter describes Osmond as a teacher. (Irene, as a result of special pleading, was allowed to audit his Shakespeare class when she was still in high school.) Osmond had discovered Shakespeare at age eleven, had read all the plays by age thirteen, and "gloried in Shakespeare" all his life. Irene relates:

"My sister Nan was sitting in a class of his when he began impersonating

Desdemona pleading on her knees to Othello to spare her life. So absorbed Father became that he fell to his knees and gave the entire scene unaware that the bell had rung and that the students had left the classroom one by one as he continued. When he finished and found that he and Nan were the only occupants of the room, he was dumbfounded" (p. 145).

For information about copies, contact the author at 3224 N. Mojave Lane, Provo, UT 84604.

A Singular Life: Perspectives on Being Single by Sixteen Latter-day Saint Women, edited by Carol L. Clark and Blythe Darlyn Thatcher (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1987), 182 pp., index.

THESE PERSONAL ESSAYS, all of them with emphasis on *personal*, relate the experiences of sixteen single LDS women and the interaction between those experiences and their values and beliefs. These personal experiences include Church-related service in Africa, creating apricot chutney, and emergency service as a last-minute organist when the hymns, written in Spanish, provide no clue to their English originals. The tones of the essays include wry irony, serious theological examinations, humor, scholarship, and inspiration.

Only one author mentions children; apparently the others have never married. Most also seem to be in their thirties and forties. Although selective and limited, this editorial decision allows more in-depth exploration of options available to college-educated, American single women than an attempt to represent all the varieties of the single state might.

For the most part, the essays are lively, engaging, and well written. Sample from Carol Clark's essay: "Last summer I complained to a non-Latter-day Saint friend that I was exhausted, having no fun, living like an automaton. Nonsympathetically, she countered, 'What do you think this is? A dress rehearsal? This is your life, Carol. Fix it'" (p. 36).

Authors include Jeanie McAllister, Rebecca Coombs, Cheryl Ballard, Ann Laemmlen, Elizabeth A. Shaw, Margo J. Butler, Marion Jane Cahoon, Mary Kay Stout, Ida Smith, Christine Timothy, Shelley Swain, Mary Ellen Edmunds, Kathryn Luke, and Joan Okelberry Clissold, in addition to an essay by each of the editors.

I Walk by Faith by Ardeth Greene Kapp (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1987), 189 pp., \$9.95.

READING THIS BOOK in one sitting is a little like eating a whole bag of taffy without rationing it—the individual pieces are good enough, but too many of them at once are a surfeit. Ardeth Greene Kapp divides her collection into sections on faith, divine nature, individual worth, knowledge, choice and accountability, good works, and integrity, but the divisions tend to blend into one sweet uniformity.

Sister Kapp, who has served since 1984 as general president of the Young Women in the Church, has written her collection with girls in mind. Her sermonettes will lift and inspire many a young woman and perhaps even her brother, though he would probably prefer a bag of taffy. Yet the book, no doubt, would do us all more good than the candy. Ardeth Kapp has a knack for seeing epiphanies in the small things of life. It's just that if every life experience is an epiphany, then epiphanies themselves become little more than a bag of taffy.

Walk on the Edge of Panic, by Karl Goodman (Bountiful, Utah: Horizon Publishers and Distributors, Inc., 1985), 184 pp., \$9.95.

FOR LOVERS OF INTRIGUE we have the story of Whitney Evans, a widowed Mormon journalist living in Utah, who accepts an assignment in Guatemala and soon becomes involved in a turbulent political struggle. There he meets non-Mormon Gerie Taylor, who has been secretly hired by Whitney's

boss to involve him in a complex smuggling scheme.

Whitney and Gerie go deep into the Guatemalan jungle where they meet Juan Berrera, a professional killer who has left his village to live in isolation, hoping to change his life. When Gerie is kidnapped by the political group to which Juan used to belong, Juan and Whitney put their lives in jeopardy to rescue her.

As they struggle for their lives, Whitney, Gerie, and Juan learn to love each other and to depend on each other and God to help them survive.

Marketing Precedes the Miracle: More Cartoons by Calvin Grondahl (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1987), unpaginated, \$4.95.

THIS BUMPER CROP of ninety-six spritely cartoons, the fourth to delight unstuffy Mormon audiences, has a wider range than most. It includes BYU jokes, missionary jokes, Joseph Smith jokes, frazzled family life jokes, and even outer-space jokes.

Tops in the last category is a theologically oriented elder slugging it out verbally with an alien being while his companion tugs at him and shouts, "Let's go, Elder." "He has a body of flesh and bones!" insists the elder. "He has a body of slime and scales," reiterates the adamant alien. Another gem from the same section is a futuristic Tabernacle where the speaker, bolstered by a two-headed being labeled "First and Second Counselors," addresses an audience of aliens: "A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away, our church only had six members."

Or how about these vignettes to tickle the funnybone?

In a temple president's office, a large female shoves a briefcase full of money at the president and demands, "Here! Seal me to Elvis Presley!"

Joseph Smith, sleeves rolled up, sloshes in the dishwater muttering, "Translate the

plates. Wash the plates . . . Where's Oliver? He was supposed to dry."

A well-fed and gaudily adorned Nephite addresses a skeptical audience: "I have labored with mine own hands not to be a burden unto you . . . laboring on the board of directors of Zarahemla Fuel Supply."

A glazed-eyed boy, obviously concentrating hard, recites: "We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, ruler, dictators, military juntas, anybody with a gun. . . ."

At the "Liberal Mormon Conference," a speaker is introduced: "At the age of six our next speaker wrote his first essay, 'Spiritual Equinox of the Paranomal Dimension,' but it was rejected by the *Children's Friend* as being too controversial."

LDS Sniggles: Words You Haven't Heard in Church—Yet by Brad Wilcox and Clark Smith (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1986), 63 pp., \$4.95.

A CLEVER ADDITION to our sometimes stuffy ecclesiastical vocabulary, these sniglets with a Mormon flavor, illustrated by Brent Watts, zero in on appealingly familiar aspects of LDS culture. It will remind some readers of Orson Scott Card's spritely *Saintspeak* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1981).

In alphabetical order for easy reference, we find such illuminating terms as:

HYMNASIUM: Turning the hymnbook holders into baskets for tossing rolled-up bits of paper into.

PASTAOVER: The untouched Italian salad at the ward dinner.

PATRIART: The father who can make a winning pinewood derby car look as though it were made by a nine-year-old.

SHUG: The awkwardness of two old mission friends meeting—one ready to shake hands, the other prepared to hug, and both quickly reversing.

Pronunciations are provided for the serious student.

Navel

Anita Tanner

I drive by a red farmhouse
in the setting sun. Orange morning
darts through rippled glass.
High-glossed linoleum
wears into mottled color. Oranges
studded with cloves perfume buffet drawers.

I imagine Gram's baptism
in the irrigation ditch
way out back,
follow the road that turns
like a cord until the white church
appears.

There old men utter oracles
about the Holy Ghost,
about the body and blood
of sacrament
and how Gawwd rules
in our lives.

I remember the navel oranges
at Christmas time,
how I turned each one before eating
to the depression like a navel
on the underside and imagined
the undeveloped fruit.

ANITA TANNER has a perpetual interest in poetry and literature, resides in Cortez, Colorado, with her husband and six children, and serves in her Stake Women Organization.

The road threads from the church
to the blue school
that seemed an orphanage.
Oddly, here I learned to pray
against the taunts and whims of peers.
against the measuring, falling short,

against devils
and souls in hell
that could be prayed out,
souls severed from wholeness,
left waiting
for a chance connection.

Just as the sun sets, I pass by
the road, a spindle I revolve on.
I roll the window,
reach outside the car,
lay my palm
against the sun's ghost.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

LeConte Stewart was born 15 April 1891 in Glenwood, Utah. After schooling at Ricks Academy in Rexburg, Idaho, he studied art in Salt Lake City in 1912, and with the Art Students League in Woodstock, New York, and New York City in 1913–14. While on a mission in Hawaii in 1917–19, he was assigned to paint murals and decorative detail for the temple in Laie. He married Zipporah Layton while in Hawaii, and taught school and proselyted as well. In 1920–22, he painted murals in the Cardston Alberta temple, and returned to settle in Kaysville, Utah, in 1923. He was head of the Ogden High School art department from 1923–38, and from 1938–56 was chairman of the University of Utah Art Department.

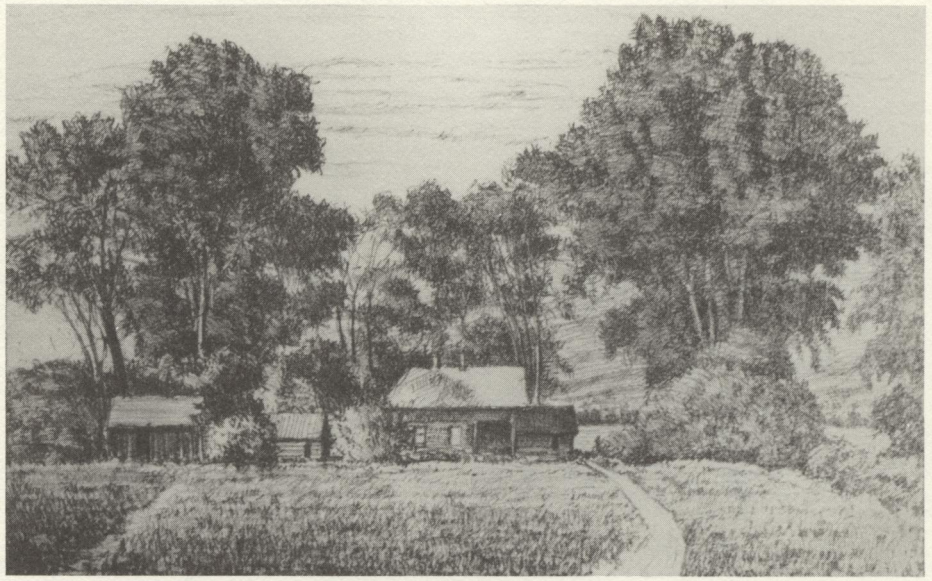
Stewart taught in elementary schools, high schools, and at the University of Utah, and after retiring in 1956 continued to teach, both with the University and privately in Davis County. His on-site landscape painting classes continued through the mid-1980s, and he worked actively in painting and drawing the landscapes of rural northern Utah to the age of ninety-five. Stewart's failing health has recently forced him to retire from painting, and at present he resides in a health care center in Clearfield, Utah.

In an essay accompanying a 1985 retrospective exhibit at the Museum of Church History and Art in Salt Lake City (published in *LeConte Stewart: The Spirit of Landscape*, Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1985), Robert O. Davis wrote of Stewart's work:

Nature and landscape, God and religion, art and creative activity are all part of the same truth for Stewart. As an artist, he has attempted to portray both the surface appearance of things as well as the inner character of the subject. He does not mechanically copy nature as it would be seen through the lens of a camera. He simplifies and selects detail that brings out the essence of things through a kind of visual poetry. A secret of Stewart's method is to render on canvas not what the eye actually sees — all the small details — but to record the way the mind understands and feels the subject (p. 32).

Stewart's drawings, prints, paintings, and commercial illustrations have almost exclusively centered on Utah landscapes — the images of "Mormon country." Working in desert and mountain scenes, urban landscapes, or in the farm scenes that dominated his work after the 1940s, Stewart has recorded a cultural heritage:

The harmony between nature and the farmer supporting himself from the earth has the deep respect of LeConte Stewart. He supports the rich cultural and aesthetic legacy left by the Mormon pioneers and those who followed. The picturesque farms and honest homes, the fine civic buildings, and the beautiful Mormon chapels and tabernacles from the nineteenth century all exhibit a unique regional style and high level of craftsmanship. He sees in these structures the finest physical expression of the Latter-day Saint people (p. 22).



Stewart's feeling for the religious aspects of his art has influenced his style and approach to various media. Murals for temples and chapels, illustrations for church books and magazines, and rural and urban landscape painting are all related in a lifelong work that reflects a deep personal commitment to esthetics and religion. Stewart comments:

The story of Joseph Smith's first vision is so convincing that no one can deny it. He was only a boy, and yet the creative spirit worked upon him. . . . In painting nature and through study I feel that I can extract the spiritual qualities the Creator put there.

When I look at a tree and its growth, I immediately become aware of how the Lord created it and made it live. I am amazed how trees lose their leaves every winter and bloom forth every spring. The creative power to do that is marvelous—it is beyond my comprehension, and I tell you I respect it and those who created what we have here. Those are only a few of the great achievements. The Lord is so far beyond us in his understanding and use of creative ability that I bow down in humility because I am nothing. But somehow I have this bug to paint it. When I want to express it, it is that religious feeling that inspires me to paint it (as quoted by Davis, p. 34).

ART CREDITS

Cover art for this issue is provided courtesy of the LeConte Stewart Estate. Inside artwork by LeConte Stewart is courtesy of the Utah Museum of Fine Arts Permanent Collection. The art editor gratefully acknowledges the help of Birge Stewart and of Chuck Loving, Utah Museum of Fine Arts registrar.

Cover: "Fall Woods," 30"×22", oil on canvas panel, c1950

Pencil drawings:

- p. 12: "Road, Southwest Kaysville," 12½"×9¾", 1931
- p. 26: "Barns at Cleverly," 11¼"×8¾", 1940
- p. 88: "House on Flint Street," 12"×9", 1932
- p. 99: "Old House, Birch Creek," 11"×8½", 1940
- p. 114: "House at Birch Creek," 12"×9", 1937
- p. 128: "Healy Hotel," 12½"×9½", 1937
- p. 157: "House and Trees," 11"×9½", 1934
- p. 158: "Barn, Porterville," 12⅞"×9⅞", 1960
- p. 175: "White House," lithograph, 13"×8½", undated

