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History of Latter-day Saint Education in Nauvoo 1839 – 1845

Department of Educational Leadership

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Masters Project

2010

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Introduction

Why Research Latter-day Saint Education

Understanding the history of education within The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is essential in order to comprehend the full history of the Church, its people and culture. As the records of the Church have continued to be explored, members and non- members alike have been enriched by the lives of the early saints. Historians have made wonderful progress to provide the common reader with access to the records and history of the Church. However, there is still a substantial amount of research to be performed. One major gap in the research can be found during the Nauvoo period. Although various authors have written about different aspects of education in Nauvoo there is yet to be a work that considers all facets of learning. The purpose of this paper is to explore comprehensive education in Nauvoo from public to private and elementary to university. Understanding education in Nauvoo will enhance our comprehension of the doctrine of education embraced by the Latter- day Saints, the remarkable and rapid progress they made, the uniqueness of their efforts, and how the ground work they laid influences current education policies in the Church. It has been said that those who do not learn the lessons of history are doomed to repeat them. Perhaps in learning the lessons from Nauvoo's history of education steps can be taken to improve modern American educational policies and practices.

This work will also closely study education in Nauvoo with the similarities and differences from the surrounding schools of the day. This paper is not a comprehensive telling of the history in Nauvoo. Rather it is intended to be the starting place for further questions and research.

The Doctrine and Purpose of Latter-day Saint Education

The Latter-day Saints valued education. They believed all that was written in the Old Testament about the importance of teaching children. They also believed in the writings of the New Testament and that in order to be prepared to meet God they must be well schooled. The early followers of Joseph Smith felt that the key to maintaining liberty was through knowledge. Joseph Smith and many of the early Saints were raised in Puritan New England and shared the same reverence for knowledge and learning as other early Americans (Salisbury, 1922).

However, for the Latter-day Saints education became something all consuming. It connected them with heaven in a way earlier religious groups had not imagined. For the Mormons, education was not only about drawing closer to God or being prepared to meet Him but in becoming like Him. Perhaps Brigham Young best explained the theology behind Latter-day Saint education:

We need constant instruction, and our great heavenly Teacher requires of us to be diligent pupils in his school, that we may in time reach His glorified presence. If we will not lay to heart the rules of education which our Teacher gives us to study, and continue to advance from one branch of learning to another, we never can be scholars of the first class and become endowed with the science, power, excellency, brightness and glory of the heavenly hosts; and unless we are educated as they are, we cannot associate with them. (p. 89)(Meservy, 1966)

The Latter-day Saints saw learning as a way to become sanctified. This idea revolutionized education for the Mormons and created an insatiable drive to study.

Old and young, male and female spent hours in learning on every subject they considered necessary to their exaltation; they did it because they felt they were commanded to.

The educational ideas and practices of the Church grew directly out of certain revelations received by Joseph Smith that emphasize the eternal nature of knowledge and the vital role learning plays in the spiritual, moral, and intellectual development of mankind (p.441)(Gardner, 1992).

In addition to the Holy Bible the Latter-day Saints believed in other texts of scripture and in a continuing flow of revelation. The Book of Commandments, later called the Doctrine and Covenants was one of the place where these revelations were recorded. Through these revelations came the commandment to learn. The Saints built their society on the conviction that eternal progress depended upon righteous living and growth in religious and secular knowledge. “Indeed, the necessity of learning is probably the most frequently-repeated theme of modern-day revelations”(p. 411)(Gardner, 1992).

The early Latter-day Saints were not interested in riches but in obtaining wisdom (D& C 11:7)(Church, 1981). However, that wisdom was not limited to the subject of religion, indeed, they wanted to study and learn becoming acquainted with all good things (D&C 90:15)(Church, 1981). They believed those good things included a understanding of astronomy, geology, geography, biology, chemistry, history, languages, local and foreign politics, mathematics and much more (D&C 88:79)(Church, 1981). The early revelations taught about the ability of man to be perfected as he progresses from one degree of intelligence to another. Thus, every form of knowledge became useful to man’s attempt to “realize himself in this world and the next. ‘It is the

application of knowledge for the spiritual welfare of man that constitutes the Mormon ideal of education' (p. 411)(Gardner, 1992). Thus, for the members of the Church the division between secular and spiritual knowledge was non-existent.

Not only did the early Latter-day Saints feel commanded to study intellectual subjects, they felt that their God loved cultural enrichment as well: art, music, theater and more (D&C 25:12)(Church, 1981). Finally, the Latter-day Saints felt that education was vital to their happiness and eternal salvation (D&C 131:6)(Church, 1981) and that the more knowledge they gained during mortal life the greater the advantage they would have in the eternities (D&C 130: 19)(Church, 1981).

The Latter-day Saints were not only reminded of the importance of education through their scriptures but in the early newspapers as well. In one paper, *The Evening and Morning Star*, there are numerous references to schooling. It is said that education "brightens the rough diamond" (p. 285)(Cannon, 1993). Further, the members of the Church are "chastised for failing to cultivate their minds. And parents are challenged to bring up their children properly and are counseled that 'it is folly to suppose they can become learned without education'" (p. 286)(Cannon, 1993). In the June of 1832 issue the disciples are told to "loose no time in preparing schools for their children that they may be taught as is pleasing unto the Lord and brought up in the way of holiness"(p. 2; 1:276)(Phelps, 1833; Roberts, 1978). In the same article reference is made to the Israelites in the wilderness following Moses and the commandments they received from the Lord to teach their children with diligence. The question is then posed: "If it was necessary then to teach the children is it not more so now? Seeing as they are the ones who must prepare for the second coming of the Savior and the Sabbath of creation and

eternity” (p. 1: 276)(Roberts, 1978). Understanding all of the emphasis placed on education it is “doubtful if there is an organization in existence that more completely directs the educational development of its people than does the Mormon Church” (p. 2)(Bennion, 1939). The early Saints felt the hunger for learning not only because of their Christian and American heritage but because of the strong encouragement from their religious leaders and internal ideals.

It is interesting to note that the man who was the driving force behind this new view of education had very little formal schooling himself. According to his mother, as a young man Joseph was “much less inclined to perusal of books than any of the rest of [her] children, but far more given to meditation and deep study” (p.83)(Madsen, 1978). However, as an adult Joseph “became an assiduous, hard-reading student” (p. 88) (Madsen, 1978). He would pour over the scriptures and other texts. Despite Joseph Smith’s limited formal education had a deep love of learning and facilitated education among his followers (Cannon, 1993). Perhaps he was influenced in part by many of his close associates who were teachers. His father, maternal grandmother, and wife were all teachers. It has been said that Emma Smith was “a woman of liberal culture and insistent on education” (p. 6)(Hartley, 1979).

Joseph not only recommended that others acquire an education he also set the example often studying late into the night on a variety of subjects. A few of his personal journal entries from 1835 and 1836 show his dedication to his studies:

Monday mornig(sic) 21st. At home Spent this in endeavoring to treasure up know[*l*]edge for the be[n]ifit of my Calling the day passed of very pleasantly for which I thank the Lord for his blessings to my soul his great

mercy over my Family in sparingly our lives O Continue thy Care over me
and mine for Christ sake.

Tuesday 22^d At home ~~this~~ Continued my studys O may God give me
learning even Language and indo[w] me with qualifycations to magnify his name
while I live...

Wednesday 23^d. In the forenoon at home studing the greek Language and
aslo waited upon the brethren who came in and exhibiting to them the papyrus...

Sunday the 21st Feb 1836 Spent the day at home, in reading meditation
and prayer— I reviewed my lessons in Hebrew...(Smith, 2010).

In Joseph's journal entries it will be noted that there are numerous spelling and grammar errors. As already noted Joseph had very little formal education. In official records he often had the assistance of a scribe. It is noteworthy that he loved learning so much that he continued with his efforts and encouraged others to do so as well despite personal difficulty.

In addition to Joseph's personal journal entries his contemporaries also noted his love for and advocacy of education. During the Kirtland period in the Hebrew school the recorded minutes state that "the two outstanding students in that school were Joseph Smith and Orson Pratt, in that order" (p. 88)(Madsen, 1978). Another acquaintance of Joseph's noted that he had an uncanny ability to memorize texts. This man claimed that he could "read over a passage of scripture three times and one year after reading it he could quote it verbatim and open the book to the portion quoted" (p. 33)(Madsen, 1978).

Joseph was at the forefront in the race for learning. More than anyone else he believed, loved, and lived thirsting after knowledge (Cannon, 1993). Indeed, when it

came to the theology behind education, Joseph was an example of a practicing and devoted Latter-day Saint. Through his leadership the belief in a higher purpose for education grew and the theology driving the educational pursuit among the Latter-day Saints became entirely unique from early Jewish, Christian, and Colonial American beliefs.

Brief History of Education in Kirtland

Making the Dream Come True

Although the early members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints had high ideals, transforming them into a reality was another matter entirely. One of the first challenges came in having books from which to teach. In 1831, less than a year after the organization of the Church, William W. Phelps was appointed to do the work of printing, selecting, and writing books for the schools or the church that the “little children might receive instruction” (p. 1:276)(Roberts, 1978). W.W. Phelps, therefore, selected numerous books and compiled a few of his own. Among these manuals were Burdick’s Arithmetic, Kirkham’s Grammar, Noah Webster’s dictionary, and Olney’s Geography (Roberts, 1978).

In 1832 in response to the revelation commanding the Saints to learn of “things both in heaven and in the earth (D&C 88:79)(Church, 1981). Joseph encouraged his followers to create private schools to instruct the children. The Saints were quick to take action. Teachers offered a variety of subjects, for example: Eliza Snow taught reading, writing, and arithmetic; Orson Hyde offered courses in English grammar, rhetoric, and writing; and Brother Davis even opened a “singing school” (p. 2)(Black, 2009).

Another challenge the Saints faced was in where to educate their children, and everyone else for that matter. When they moved to Kirtland there were a large number of people to be accommodated in school as well as church meetings. Homes, shops, and barns were transformed into temporary schools (Black, 2009). Before leaving for Zion's camp on Monday May 5, 1834 the brethren had begun construction on the school house and left Reynolds Cahoon in charge of finishing it. The building was to be a meetinghouse for Sunday services and a common school for the children. For several Sundays the saints met in the unfinished building but had to end their meetings early because of thunderstorms. Lucy Mack Smith, the mother of the prophet Joseph Smith, encouraged the completion of the first meeting and schoolhouse in Kirtland. Lucy, tired of Sunday meeting interruptions and inconveniences to the children, asked Reynolds to finish construction. He replied that he had neither time nor means to do so. Lucy took matters into her own hands and went about gathering money from the saints and then employed local builders to finish the project (Smith, 1996).

The Latter-day Saints quickly discovered that the commandment to educate their children was readily obeyed. Consequently, apart from hosting school in the meeting house they found it necessary to use the Kirtland temple and to open other schools. In addition to the common schools which taught all children Eliza Snow hosted a specialty school for girls (Givens, 2007).

The School of the Prophets

The children were not the only ones that the Saints were commanded to educate. Adults were also to be taught and expand their minds in every subject as well. The most prominent of the formal schools established in Kirtland was the School of the Prophets,

so named after the schools hosted by Old Testament prophets. It began in 1833 and first involved fewer than twenty-five adults with instruction intended to prepare them for religious missions and other assignments (Cranney, 1992).

The School of the Prophets was especially unique among educational institutions of the day. Specific guidelines were established for student conduct within the school. All students were to be clean both physically and morally, polite, and brotherly. Additionally, this school used an open discussion rather than a traditional lecture format. Students were not simply to listen to one speaker in the lecture style of contemporary higher education. “A teacher was to be appointed”, said the revelation, and “let not all be spokesmen at once; but let one speak at a time, and let all listen to his sayings, that when all have spoken that all may be edified of all, and that every man may have an equal privilege” (D&C 88: 122)(Madsen, 1978; Church, 1981). Each pupil was expected to participate and contribute his or her insights on the given subject. Further, before students were to begin their studies a brotherly kinship was to be established. They were expected to put aside any outside disagreements or issues that would hinder their learning. Students were expected to be mentally active and concentrate completely on what was being taught (Madsen, 1978). The school was rigorous and required sacrifice to enable the accelerated rate of learning.

The first session of the School of the Prophets lasted only a few months closing for summer plantings. The school reopened in November of 1834 and was split into two divisions. The first section was called the School of Elders and focused mainly on theological training for missionary work. The seven Lectures on Faith, which were

included in the Book of Commandments the following year, were also first given in this setting (Givens, 2007).

The other division of the school became the Kirtland High School. This organization became one of the first American schools to offer adult classes on the high school level (Arrington, 1977). The first group of students to enroll numbered almost 100. They used several books among which were Burdick's Arithmetic, Kirkham's Grammar and Olney's Geography. In January classes moved to the temple and lasted until March of 1835 when school was dismissed for spring planting. Another winter session began in the late fall of 1835 when "cold winter months precluded farm labor and much missionary service" (p. 74)(Givens, 2007). In February of 1835, William E. McLellin a teacher in the Kirtland High School and gave a reporting on the progress.

The school has been conducted under the immediate care and inspection of Joseph Smith Jr., Fredrick G. Williams, Sidney Rigdon, and Oliver Cowdery, trustees. When the school first commenced we received into it both large and small, but in about three weeks the classes became so large and the house so crowded, that it was thought advisable to dismiss all the small students, and continue those only who wished to study penmanship, arithmetic, English grammar, and geography. Before we dismissed the small pupils there were in all about one hundred and thirty who attended; since that time there have been upon an average about one hundred; the most of whom have received lectures upon English grammar; and for the last four weeks about seventy have been studying geography one-half of the day, and grammar and writing the other part (p. 201)(Roberts, 1978).

McLellin was impressed with the progress of the students and concluded his report, “since the year 1827 I have taught school in 5 states, and visited many schools in which I was not engaged as a teacher; in none can I say, with certainty, I have seen students make more rapid progress than in this” (p. 1:291)(Roberts, 1978).

In addition to the subjects listed by McLellin the curriculum expanded to include history, philosophy, politics, and literature as well as Latin and Hebrew. A scholar by the name of Joshua Seixas was hired to teach the Hebrew course. In January of 1836 the Hebrew school enrolled forty students but that quickly grew to above eighty and was organized into four classes that met six days a week. Many excelled including Orson Pratt who received a certificate from Professor Seixas certifying his qualifications to teach the language (Givens, 2007).

Later in the winter of 1836 to 1837 they met in the attic story of the temple with 140 students divided into three levels. Juveniles were taught by Elias Smith, advanced students by Marcellus F. Cowdery, and Greek and Latin was taught to adults by Professor H.M. Haws (Givens, 2007).

Unlike any other group in the nation at the time this mixed group of settlers on the frontier was indeed making remarkable progress with their educational pursuits. In 1816 a Methodist group had agreed to sponsor education for the local congregation, unfortunately, because of internal strife that goal was never realized (Givens, 2007). Not surprisingly even enemies and critics were impressed with the success of the Saints. One observer noticed:

The Mormons appear to be very eager to acquire education. Men, women, and children lately attend school, and they are now employing Mr. Seixas, the Hebrew

teacher, to instruct them in Hebrew; and about seventy men in middle life, from twenty to forty years of age, are most eagerly engaged in the study. They pursue their studies alone until twelve o'clock at night, and attend to nothing else. Of course many make rapid progress. I noticed some fine looking and intelligent men among them...They are by no means, as a class, men of weak minds (p. 74) (Givens, 2007).

This example of adult education was contagious and was followed by the Latter-day Saints in Missouri, Illinois, and Utah, where parents joined their children in the pursuit of knowledge" (p. 120)(Bennion, 1939).

Equality in Education

Unlike other schools of the time the Kirtland High School was open to women. For the time, the Latter-day Saints were very liberal in their ideas regarding education. Female education was deeply important and obtaining formal education was emphasized. The High School freely admitted girls. Sarah Kimball, who later became an intellectual suffrage crusader and women's leader, attended the School of the Prophets while a teenager (Givens, 2007). Co- education at this time in American history was offensive to social customs. Further, the first "higher education" open to women would not become available until 1837 when Mount Holyoke Female Seminary opened in Massachusetts (Sass, 2009). Truly the Latter-day Saints valued equality in education.

Thus Mormon education in Ohio rolled forward and the Saints learned from the mistakes as well as the successes. For the time they were pioneers in the world of education leading in the areas of secondary and co-education.

A Brief History of Education in Missouri

When the Saints began settling in Missouri education continued. “Thousands can testify,” said Helen Mar Whitney, “that wherever our lot has been cast, almost the first building put up has been the schoolhouse” (p. 60)(Jackson, 2002). This was true of the Missouri period as well, where the first building dedicated was a schoolhouse. Once again at the forefront of the educational pursuits was the prophet Joseph Smith. Under the direction of the Prophet, W. W. Phelps published an article in *The Evening and the Morning Star* urging the Saints to “lose no time in preparing schools for their children” (p. 2)(Black, 2009). In August of 1831 Joseph Smith and the Latter-day Saints who had migrated from Colesville, New York, laid the foundation of a combined school and church building in Kaw Township, Missouri. It was the first school to be erected within the present boundaries of Kansas City. In addition, John Corrill opened a school on the corner of Union and Lexington streets in Independence.

Life on the frontier of the United States was unrefined yet, despite difficulties, a few years later, another large schoolhouse was established by the Saints in Far West, Missouri (Arrington, 1977). According to Helen Mar Whitney the Far West school was “superior to the ones built by gentiles of my native town” (p. 177) (Whitney, 1997). In these schools teachers like Mary Elizabeth Lightner, Erastus Snow, Zenos H. Gurley, and John Murdock taught “spelling, writing, reading, and geography” (p. 2)(Black, 2009).

While education was flourishing in Kirtland Joseph Smith was still unsatisfied. The need to have every person receive education motivated him to organize another School of the Elders in Jackson County, Missouri. When the school opened in 1833 in an open air grove the men were instructed in theology, public speaking skills, and forensics.

Parley P. Pratt was the main teacher and he reported that to attend the school involved sacrifice. He personally had to travel on foot, “and sometimes with bare feet at that, about six miles” (p. 11)(Arrington, 1977). He did this about once a week. Thus, the educational efforts went forward.

All the while Joseph urged his followers on with his own example and thirst for education. Latter-day Saints who personally knew and observed Joseph Smith attested to his great interest in learning. John Hess, for example, related the following in his journal about the Prophet while he was in Missouri, at the time Joseph was studying Greek and Latin: “When he got tired of studying, he would go and play with the children in their games about the house, to give himself exercise. Then he would go back to his studies” (p. 286)(Cannon, 1993).

Although the educational history of the Missouri period is lacking it is clear that once again equality in education was common. Again this was something quite rare for the time especially on the wild frontier of America. While the saints were in Clay County, Missouri Judge Thorp observed that the LDS women were “generally well educated and as a rule were quite intelligent” (p. 85)(Givens, 2007).

The persistence and fortitude the members of the Church gained during the time in Missouri prepared the Latter-day Saints to create an educational system that would surpass many in the United States and create a social atmosphere that was both liberating and invigorating. In eight short years they had established numerous schools and were leading the nation in progressive education. Although the Saints had made remarkable progress, by the end of the Missouri period there were still improvements to be made. There was a lack of unity in the educational process in both Ohio and Missouri. Many

adult males in the schools of Prophets and Elders struggled with the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic. Yet they were expected to keep pace with the rest of the students while learning the truths of eternity. Additionally, “children, as later revealed by their disinterest in Church matters, struggled to understand the basics of the gospel, yet they could readily recite the times tables” (p. 2)(Black, 2009). These and other systemic problems would find new solutions during the Nauvoo period as education began to flourish and gain the final principles that would carry Latter-day Saint learning into the current century.

The Flourishing of Education for the Latter-day Saints

Nauvoo

the beginnings of Nauvoo.

Joseph was still in Liberty Jail when the Saints in Missouri were being forced from their homes. Church leaders had begun a search to locate a new place of residence for the now homeless masses. They decided to cross state lines and leave Missouri. It was then that Commerce, Illinois caught the attention of church leaders. On May 1, 1839, the Church purchased the one hundred thirty-five acre Hugh White farm for \$5,000. They also purchased Doctor Isaac Galland's farm just west of the White property. By May 10th Joseph had moved his family into the log house on the White farm (Burgess, 1927) others quickly followed and as soon as was feasible they began educating their children. Sometime in May, Sidney Rigdon called Eliza R. Snow to come to Commerce and teach his children; thus, opening the first school in Illinois (Jackson, 2002).

As more and more Saints reached Commerce they immediately began to build a city. Among the plans for the beautiful place was education. “The interest in education that had been manifest in Kirtland and Missouri was expanded in Nauvoo” (p. 245)(CES, 2003). The rapidity with which schools were established attests to that anxiety the Saints felt in giving their children a proper education. To compound this anxiety, the poverty of the early Nauvoo Saints made it difficult for many of them to pay for the private teaches. The average tuition of for one pupil was one dollar per week. For many families who were impoverished because of mob violence the choice to educate the children or put food on the table was, no doubt, a difficult one. “This troubled the leadership, who encouraged schooling as a necessity, yet still felt ‘a great anxiety on the subject, seeing that many children among the disciples [were] deprived of, or [did] not enjoy the blessings of a school’” (p. 65)(Jackson, 2002).

In the growing city “private schools preceded the more extensive public efforts that resulted from the passage of the Nauvoo Charter” (p. 245)(CES, 2003). As time progressed intellectual life was encouraged by public education, a library, museum, university, dramatic society, a school of music, lyceums, a debating society, art exhibits and more (May, 1992). As always, with the Latter-day Saints education was a top priority and intended to be available to all.

Joseph Smith’s vision of education for the saints in Nauvoo.

By 1840 Joseph’s plans for building a great city were well under way. The swamp land was being drained and on April 21, 1840, the name of the post office was officially changed to “Nauvoo” (p. 6)(Burgess, 1927). It was around this time that the Prophet turned his attention to higher education and proposed a program that combined

both secular and spiritual learning. Joseph felt that by establishing a more complete educational opportunity for his followers their minds would be “cultivated” and their manners refined. He believed that the Saints would then have “great and precious enjoyments that [the] ignorant [do] not” (p. 2)(Black, 2009). As he did in Ohio and Missouri Joseph believed and advocated that this opportunity for learning should not be restricted by wealth, gender, or race.

These beliefs again ran contrary to popular opinion of the time. By Illinois state established educational practices schooling one child in six was the desired norm. It was believed that child labor was needed to assist in family survival and that working the land was “too pressing to allow children the luxury of 'idle' hours at school” (p. 2)(Black, 2009). Joseph did not accept this idea and held that all ages had the right to an education. However, he also understood the adverse difficulties faced by his followers. Thus, Joseph began to advocate tax supported free public schools. Once again these beliefs were unpopular. All across the United States citizens protested against having to pay for “the education of another man’s children” (p. 4)(Berglund, 1966). Some citizens, in harkening back to the not-so-distant Revolution, stated that in order to fund education their tax dollars would have to be taken at the point of bayonet (Berglund, 1966).

Another point of contention that continued from Ohio and Missouri was co-education. After the Nauvoo school system was established county records show that half the students enrolled in Nauvoo’s schools were female –

it has been suggested that the Mormons’ liberal views on the equality of the sexes were in part responsible for hostility to the church in Illinois. High schools accepting girls in this decade were still not the rule; in Cleveland, Ohio, for

instance, girls were admitted in 1847, but ‘against the protest of the principal’ (p. 75)(Givens, 2007).

These ideas that Joseph presented were indeed revolutionary. Susa Young Gates who was a daughter of Brigham Young and a noted Church historian, felt that admitting women along with men to the University of Nauvoo was a first in education (Meservy, 1966). Joseph truly had planted deep within his soul the ideals of an educated faith. Popular or not Joseph espoused these liberal ideas regarding learning and used his influence and resources to bring about changes in the current world of education.

The University of the City of Nauvoo

the city charter.

In order to make these ideals become a reality the burgeoning city needed the power to control education as well as the taxation to support it. “Joseph Smith did not create the university on his own, but he was a driving force behind its development and thoroughly believed in it” (p. 287)(Cannon, 1993). However, it was not until September, 1840, when John C. Bennett arrived, that Joseph’s plans for education in the city began to gain momentum.

Bennett was an interesting character with a colorful background. He studied medicine and later taught at a medical school in Ohio (Cannon, 1993). He had helped to found at least six universities or colleges prior to 1838. Additionally, Bennett had petitioned the state legislatures of three different states, Virginia, Indiana, and Ohio, to “incorporate medical schools and universities. Granted, he petitioned legislators, in a few cases, without the knowledge or support of the principals he professed to represent, nevertheless, Bennett was familiar with the legal process of obtaining a state-sanctioned

university” (p. 3)(Black, 2009). It is reported that Bennett traveled through New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania selling diplomas for the Doctor of Medicine degree for ten dollars each. If this is correct those documents would be the first illicit diplomas offered in American history (Smith, 1969). Although he had been called a “‘a false brother, a person of no solid learning, and of very bad morals,’ a ‘getter up of colleges’ and a ‘diploma peddler’” (p. 3)(Black, 2009) Bennett didn’t seem to be phased by these criticisms. He continued to move from state to state and found schools all along the way.

When John C. Bennett arrived in Ohio he joined the Church and then moved with the Saints to Nauvoo. Arriving in September of 1840, he then boarded with the Smith family for the next thirty-nine weeks. Joseph found Bennett’s talents to be very useful in regards to the Nauvoo Charter and felt he was “‘calculated to be a great blessing to [the] community” (p. 3)(Black, 2009). And for a time he was. By October 1840 General Conference Bennett was chosen to be a part of a committee to draft a bill that would create the city of Nauvoo. He was also appointed to be a “‘delegate, to urge the passage of such bill through the legislature” (p. 3)(Black, 2009).

In December, once the draft of the bill was prepared, the committee traveled to Springfield, Illinois for the convening of the State Legislature. While the committee was busy lobbying for the passage of the charter Joseph Smith had a positive outlook on the whole affair “‘We have a bill before the legislature for the incorporation of the city of Nauvoo,” he told the local saints, “‘and for the establishment of a seminary of learning, and other purposes, which I expect will pass in a short time” (p. 287)(Cannon, 1993). Indeed the bill did pass in a short time with little debate and a unanimous vote in both the House and the Senate (Meservy, 1966; Smith, 1969; Black, 2009; Meservy, 1966). Both

Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas were members of the legislature and Lincoln congratulated the Mormons on the granting of the charter (Meservy, 1966).

By December 16th the bill was signed by Governor Thomas Carlin (p. 7)(Burgess, 1927; Cannon, 1993; Whitney, 1997; Black, 2009; Meservy, 1966). Thus, the Saints gained the right to establish their beautiful city and also a university. The bill specifically outlined what rights and powers the Saints would have in regard to education section 24 of the charter follows:

The City Council may establish and organize an institution of learning within the limits of the city, for the teaching of the Arts, Sciences, and Learned Professions, to be called the “ University of the City of Nauvoo,” which institution shall be under the control and management of the Board of Trustees, consisting of a Chancellor, Registrar, and twenty-three Regents, which Board shall thereafter be a body corporate and politic, with perpetual succession by the name of the “Chancellor and Regents of the University of the City of Nauvoo,” and shall have full power to pass, ordain, establish, and execute, all such laws and ordinances as they may consider necessary for the welfare and prosperity of said University, its officers and students: Provided that the said laws and ordinances shall not be repugnant to the Constitution of the United States, or of this State. ... (p. 68)(Meservy, 1966; CES, 2003; Black, 2009; Meservy, 1966)

Through the Charter the Saints gained a remarkable amount of power. They were able to completely control the teaching of their children. They would be able to determine who taught, the curriculum, the hours, the costs, and the quality. The charter also provided for the first completely centralized control of education in America (Smith, 1969)

Helen Mar Whitney, the daughter of Heber C. Kimball and once a student of the Nauvoo school system, later recalled the quality of education in Nauvoo and commented that the charter ought to be remembered by those who think we are a low, ignorant, degraded people, because our enemies say we are, forsooth” (p. 15)(Whitney, 1995; Whitney, 1997). The Saints were pleased with the passage of the charter and when speaking of the university and educational powers now held by the members of the church Joseph stated:

The University of the City of Nauvoo will enable us to teach our children wisdom, to instruct them in all the knowledge and learning, in the arts, science, and learned professions. We hope to make this institution one of the great lights of the world, and by it, to diffuse that kind of knowledge which will be of practical utility, and for the public good, and also for private and individual happiness” (p. 76; 4)(Givens, 2007; Black, 2009).

This institution was intended to enlighten the saints and be useful to them by improving their daily lives.

Joseph’s vision of the University not only included a practical desire but one of equality as well. He desired that the school be the best possible institution of learning available to the people. He called for competent and industrious teachers and professors to be hired and placed in the departments of the University. In addition, he said: “Equal honors and privileges should be extended to all classes of the community. Knowledge is power” – foster education and we are forever free!” (p. 71; 4: 290-291)(Meservy, 1966; Roberts, 1978)

The University of the City of Nauvoo was to become the first university in the state of Illinois (Black, 2009). The charter also gave the Saints the right to establish the first free, or tax supported, public school system. In addition, they were permitted to found possibly the first “unified school system which had all levels of education from the primary grades through the university level unified under one set of trustees” (p. 71) (Meservy, 1966), or in other words they founded the first school district. The University of the City of Nauvoo would be the “third institution of higher education in the United States run by a city or municipal government. Only Charleston College at Charleston, South Carolina, founded in 1790; and The University of Louisville, Louisville, Kentucky, founded in 1837 were older” (p. 66)(Meservy, 1966).

The city leadership encouraged the saints who had not yet done so to move to Nauvoo and to help with the efforts in completing the temple and the University (Smith, 1969). Indeed, the Saints were making remarkable progress! In six short months they had purchased land, drained a swamp, begun to build a city, lobbied for and obtained legal permission to found a city complete with a very advanced educational system. The groundwork was well underway.

public elections and school administrators.

The next step in the formation of both the City and the University was to elect public officials and school administrators. A chancellor, regents, and trustees were all needed before the creation of the university and the school system could move forward. The Nauvoo Charter would take effect in February of 1841 (Whitney, 1997; CES, 2003). On Saturday, February 1st municipal elections were held. John C. Bennett was elected as the first mayor of Nauvoo (Cannon, 1993; Black, 2009; Meservy, 1966) and in his

inaugural address he spoke passionately about education and urged the Saints not to waste any time in moving forward in the creation of the University. Specifically he encouraged a quick election of administrative personnel in order to begin the overall improvement of the intellectual life in the community:

Our University should be a “utilitarian” institution – and competent, industrious teachers and professors should be immediately elected for the several departments. Nothing can be done which is more certainly calculated to perpetuate the free institutions of our common country, for which our progenitors “fought and bled, and died,” than the general diffusion of useful knowledge amongst the people. Education should always be of purely practical character, for such, and such alone, is calculated to perfect the happiness and prosperity of our fellow citizens – ignorance, impudence, and false knowledge, are equally detestable – shame and confusion follow in their train. As you now possess the power, afford the most ample facilities to their Regents to make their plans complete; and thus enable them to set a glorious example to the world at large, The most liberal policy should attend the organization of the University, and equal privileges should be extended to all classes of the community (p. 70)

(Meservy, 1966).

Clearly John Bennett shared Joseph Smith’s ideal that education was meant for all citizens rich and poor alike.

This call for action was met with a very positive reception. On Monday, February 3rd, the first working day after the elections were held, the City Council met for the first time in Joseph Smith’s office. The Council voted to formally establish the “University of

the City of Nauvoo” and the minutes record that the Council determined that the university would be a “self-governing entity that provided educational opportunities for adults and children in Nauvoo” (p. 13)(Black, 2009). The university leaders were challenged to oversee the education of the entire city, including the university studies, seminary, or secondary schools, and common schools. The supervisory responsibilities of the three educational levels were given to the chancellor, registrar, and board of regents. The auxiliary positions of trustees, wardens, directors and examiners were also created. A total of seventy-seven men served in some administrative function for the University of the City of Nauvoo (Black, 2009).

The Administration for both the University and the common schools came from a variety of backgrounds, including medical doctors, lawyers, educators, farmers and more. Not all of those involved in administration or teaching were members of the church. However, the majority were prominent members and high profile citizens of Nauvoo. The following list includes the Chancellor, registrar, and regents of the university.

John C. Bennett, chancellor; William Law, registrar; and Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, Hyrum Smith, William Marks, Samuel H. Smith, Daniel H. Wells, Newel K. Whitney, Charles C. Rich, John T. Barnett, Wilson Law, Don Carlos Smith, John P. Greene, Vinson Knight, Isaac Galland, Elias Higbee, Robert D. Foster, James Adams, Robert B. Thompson, Samuel Bennett, Ebenezer Robinson, John Snider, George Miller, and Lenos M. Knight, Regents of the "University of the City of Nauvoo (p. 289)(Cannon, 1993).

It is notable that Mayor Bennett was also the chancellor of the University. Additionally, many men who later conspired against Joseph Smith were regents. Yet at this time each member of the governing board appears to be in agreement with Joseph's ideas regarding education and willing to sacrifice for the greater good of the community.

This governing body held complete power in the city over education. Additionally, the body operated in a strict hierarchal line and enjoyed an "uncontested power of perpetual succession"(p. 5)(Black, 2009). Although many people were needed to initiate an endeavor of this size, some feel that there were too many administrators and too many levels of leadership (Black, 2009).

Six days later, February 9, 1841 the board met again and instituted the necessary laws and ordinances required to run the university. Said laws conformed with both the US Constitution and the Illinois state laws (Black, 2009). The board did their best to ensure that the University would be an official and legal institution.

By February 15, 1841 James Kelley had been elected as the university president. Kelly had an A.M. from Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland. He was not a member of the Church but was described as a "a ripe scholar . . . [who would] . . . greatly advance the cause of education" (p. 290, 73)(Cannon, 1993; Black, 2009; Meservy, 1966). History has not preserved much more in regards to James Kelly. In addition to his appointment, in that same meeting a building committee and faculty were appointed (Burgess, 1927). In just fifteen days all necessary personnel were in place to run the university. This was truly a remarkable feat for a newly established city on the frontier of America.

Later that month on February 22nd, the City Council turned over all rights regarding educational matters to the chancellor and board of regents. The only power the

council retained in regards to education in the city was the right to appoint future members of the educational board. By the conclusion of that meeting the University was authorized to begin (Black, 2009). So began perhaps the earliest unified school districts in the United States complete with one administration that was authorized to handle all educational issues from the common school through the university level. In less than one year after arriving in the mosquito infested swamp these Saints had established a city to rival Chicago complete with one of the most comprehensive school systems in America (Meservy, 1966).

building.

One of the major challenges faced by the Latter-day Saints was where to host classes for the numerous students. The board of Regents selected Vinson Knight, Daniel H. Wells, and Charles C. Rich as members of a building committee and authorized them to raise money and erect buildings for the University (Cannon, 1993; Black, 2009). Unfortunately, because of other building priorities such as the Temple construction, a lack of financial resources, and a shortage of time an official and centralized campus was never erected (Cannon, 1993; CES, 2003).

As it was, one can argue that both an upper and lower informal campus were constructed. The city of Nauvoo is built to spread over a vast area that includes both a flood plain and a large bluff. On the flood plain the lower campus was constructed. Many public buildings were used to house classes. These buildings included the Masonic Hall, the Seventies Hall, Concert Hall (Givens, 2007; Meservy, 1966), Church's office building, including the Red Brick Store, and the Nauvoo seminary (Arrington, 1977; Black, 2009). Additional courses were offered in private homes including the residence

of Sidney Rigdon (Cannon, 1993). The upper campus included the unfinished temple (Givens, 2007) as well as the private homes of Orson Pratt, Parley P. Pratt, Orson Spencer, and Gustavus Hills (Cannon, 1993). The majority of public buildings constructed by the Saints also had educational functions and were inspired by the atmosphere of the university (Cannon, 1993). Therefore, although a centralized campus was not completed the university education was not hindered by building restrictions.

faculty.

In Ohio and Missouri as well as in Nauvoo the human resources were as vital if not more important than either the buildings. In Kirtland Joseph had managed to gather a circle of impressively educated and skilled people around him. In addition to his own father, Oliver Cowdery, Sidney Rigdon, William E. McLellin, and Orson Hyde had all taught school prior to the restoration. “Of the first 80 converts eleven were school teachers and fifteen were doctors or lawyers” (p. 74)(Givens, 2007). The numbers of skilled and educated people within the church continued to grow as converts from Europe brought their culture, educations, and trades. Each person fit nicely into a niche and offered the entire city their talents.

In the early days of the Church, Joseph had received several revelations regarding teaching some of these included the ideas that teachers should be “men of God” who keep the commandments (Mosiah23:14)(Church, 2003), that teachers should instruct by the Spirit of God (D&C42:14)(Church, 1981), and that the teachers should work with diligence for the learning and salvation of their students (Jarom 1:11)(Mormon, 2003). As always, for the Latter-day Saints, learning was a sacred affair. Thus the teachers were carefully selected.

At least eighty-one people—forty-eight men and thirty-three women—made part of their living teaching in Nauvoo (see appendix A)(CES, 2003). These men and women were employed on both the University and Common level. As compensation for their services and instruction at the university, professors were offered a percentage of the taxes levied against property owners in Nauvoo. Their salary was modest and not based on the number of students in attendance (Black, 2009). Then, as now, teaching was not a profession to make one rich. “The faculty represented considerable scholarship and indeed was a rather remarkable group to be found in a frontier city” (p. 25; 442)(Bennion, 1939; Gardner, 1992). The following professors were some of the first at the university: Parley P. Pratt, Orson Pratt, Orson Spencer, Sidney Rigdon, Gustavus Hills, and John Pack (Cannon, 1993).

One of the faculty members was Parley P. Pratt. He became a professor of English, mathematics, and sciences (CES, 2003). Elder Pratt was a devoted missionary, member of the Quorum of the 12 apostles, and an editor of the *Millennial Star* (Roberts, 1978).

The most popular member of the faculty of the University of the City of Nauvoo was Orson Pratt. He was born in 1811 and received his early education through common schools and a boarding academy. Orson was converted to the Church by his brother. After his baptism he offered missionary service several times in America and overseas. In 1835 he was appointed as an original member of the Quorum of the twelve apostles. He also published several tracts and pamphlets for the church (Cannon, 1993). In Ohio he was one of the excellent students in the Hebrew School.

Orson Pratt had a love of learning. He especially enjoyed mathematics and astronomy, “fields in which he was essentially self-taught” (p. 291)(Cannon, 1993). Historian Hubert Bancroft referred to Pratt as ““a man of pure mind and a high order of ability who without early education and midst great difficulties had to achieve learning as best he could, and . . . has achieved it”” (p. 5)(Black, 2009). Truly he was an accomplished scholar.

In Kirtland he taught and became known as a published scientist and mathematician (Givens, 2007). He offered courses in English Literature, science, and mathematics (CES, 2003). W.W. Phelps, an experienced newspaperman, songwriter, and poet called Orson the “gauge of philosophy, astronomer and mathematician” (p. 76) (Givens, 2007). He continued to expand his teaching profession in Nauvoo.

Dr. Cannon, of Brigham Young University, said of Orson Pratt: “It is perhaps helpful to view Joseph Smith as the architect and Orson Pratt as the builder of the university. He took the ideas of the Prophet and translated them into reality” (p. 291) (Cannon, 1993). Indeed, the involvement of Pratt in the transforming the University from a dream to a reality is shown by the fact that his name appears more frequently in the historical records pertaining to the university than any other name. He played a very active role in the construction of the frontier university (Cannon, 1993). Additionally, it was under Pratt’s leadership, more so than Bennett’s or Kelly’s that the university flourished and followed a liberal arts curriculum.

Orson Pratt taught numerous subjects including: arithmetic, algebra, trigonometry, geometry, conic sections, surveying, navigation, and differential calculus.

He also offered lectures on astronomy, chemistry, foreign languages, and philosophy (Black, 2009). He was indeed a well-rounded scholar.

Another highly qualified and active builder of the University was Orson Spencer, professor of foreign languages (CES, 2003). As a twelve year old boy Orson Spencer sustained an illness that left him with a semi-crippled leg. This physical handicap further encouraged his thirst for knowledge. In 1817 he went into Lenox Town Academy and did so well that the local sheriff, Henry C. Brown, loaned him money and encouraged him to continue his education (Whittaker, 1984). He then went on to Union College in Schenectady, New York in 1819 (Cannon, 1993). Five years later, at the age of 22, he graduated and then moved to Georgia to begin a career as an educator. During his time in Georgia, Orson converted to the Baptist religion (Whittaker, 1984). After teaching briefly and studying law, he turned his attention to more fully to religion, and, in 1829, graduated from a theological college in Hamilton, New York. He then served as a minister for twelve years before moving to Nauvoo in 1841 (CES, 2003).

Once he arrived in Nauvoo Orson Spencer began to work as a teacher in the public schools. He later became a faculty member of the University. He also worked as chancellor, and finally as mayor of Nauvoo.

Parley Pratt, Orson Pratt, and Orson Spencer were the most prominent members of the University of Nauvoo faculty. However, Gustavus Hills, professor of music was also vital to the development of education in Nauvoo. Little is known about his education or background in music, yet, he was well known for his musical talent. During the Christmas season of 1841 he sponsored a musical lyceum. He also sponsored other singing schools. Even before the University was founded he was referred to as

“Professor Hills” (p. 294)(Cannon, 1993). He offered lectures on the science of music and the sacred art of singing. Two of the texts he used were Parker's Encyclopedia of Music and Lowell Mason's Manual of Instruction (Black, 2009). As director of the choir of the Nauvoo Stake and along with choir members he petitioned the trustees to add a Department of Music to the University. The petition was accepted and Hills was appointed to organize and teach it. “Music had first been taught in Boston only a year before the Mormon city was founded” (p. 247)(Givens, 1990). Thus, the University of the City of Nauvoo became the first American University to provide a regular musical department (Meservy, 1966). Professor Hills is accredited with the beginning of music in Nauvoo (Cannon, 1993).

Sidney Rigdon was also a professor at the University. As a former Campbellite minister Rigdon had a great gift for oration. Therefore, one of his courses was rhetoric. He also taught English literature, language, and Church history (Black, 2009). Just as Orson Pratt, Sidney Rigdon was largely self-educated. Although he is a well known member of the early Church, the role he played in the university is not as well known as that of Orson Pratt or Orson Spencer (Cannon, 1993).

There were many other important members of the faculty as well as numerous teachers in the common schools. Each individual helped to build the love of education in the hearts of their students. They also kept records and helped to organize social events. Because of the work of these individuals education flourished in Nauvoo and most importantly was available to all classes of citizens.

curricula.

The University of the City of Nauvoo offered a variety of courses to citizens. The curricula included chemistry, surveying, navigation, geology, mathematics, literature, philosophy, Church history, religion, music, and the foreign languages: German, French, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew (Arrington, 1977; Cannon, 1993; Givens, 2007; Black, 2009; Meservy, 1966). Students could choose their courses and pay a tuition and fees charge that ranged from \$2.50 to \$5.00 per term (Arrington, 1977).

The University was broken up into several departments which each offered advanced courses. In the Department of Mathematics Professor Orson Pratt offered courses including arithmetic, algebra, trigonometry, geometry, conic sections, measurement (sic), surveying, navigation, analytical, plane and spherical trigonometry, analytical geometry, and differential calculus. Orson Pratt most likely employed the common mathematics books of the day (Nauvoo Educational Notations, 1841).

In the Science Department Professor Pratt also taught astronomy, chemistry, and philosophy (Cannon, 1993). The English Department, headed by Sidney Rigdon, offered courses in English literature, language, rhetoric, and Church history. The Music Department, founded by Professor Hills, offered various courses in music, including science of music, and the art of sacred singing. This wide range of courses enabled citizens of Nauvoo to enrich their minds in a variety of subjects.

It is interesting that history was taught neither in the common schools nor at the University yet that saints were very diligent about keeping their own history – especially after the death of Joseph Smith. In his journal John Benbow records their efforts to write the history. He worked closely with George A. Smith and Willard Richards. Despite severe illness in both the Benbow family and with brother Richards they made the

endeavor in the frost and cold of November to write the history of the Church (Bullock, 1845- 1846).

Once again the Saints raised an institution of learning that was rather astonishing for the time and place. When one considers that fact that many of the early saints lacked extensive formal education, the poverty they'd come from, and the persecution they'd endured it is remarkable that in such a short time they were able to construct a university that was so curricularly rich.

records, books, and degrees.

In addition to keeping historical records the University kept detailed records regarding education. These records included Lists of matriculates and teachers, books used by the common schools and a record of school days (Nauvoo Educational Notations, 1841). In addition, the University granted both regular and some honorary degrees

There are more complete historical records kept on the textbooks for the common schools than for the university. Orson Pratt most likely used the common mathematics books of the time; however, there is not any exact record. We do know about the aforementioned music books used by Professor Hills: Parker's *Encyclopedia of Music* and Lowell Mason's *Manual of Instruction* (Cannon, 1993). As for other texts we can assume Sidney Rigdon used the Book of Mormon and the Bible in his course on Church History.

Students were responsible for purchasing materials to fulfill their scholastic needs. University fees ranged from fifty cents to ten dollars per course for equipment and books. However, few of the students made these required purchases (Black, 2009). This was most likely due to the poverty of the saints.

Matriculated university students who completed their course work did not receive any degree because a curriculum for graduation was never developed (Black, 2009). Although, regular degrees were granted there is no official record of who received them or what they were for. However, the university did grant honorary degrees. This was done in part to lend credibility to the university and also to recognize those who had helped the Saints. For example: Orson Pratt received an honorary degree of Master of Arts to “compensate for his lack of formal education” and to provide stature for the university (p.296)(Cannon, 1993; Meservy, 1966). In addition, at least three honorary degrees were given to men who had helped the Saints. Two of these degrees went to newspaper editors who had printed positive editorials about the Church, John Wentworth of the *Chicago Democrat* and James Gordon Bennett of the *New York Weekly Herald*. James Arlington Bennett, who was a friend of church officials in New York, also received one such degree (Cannon, 1993; Black, 2009; Meservy, 1966).

Thus, 1841 to 1842 saw the beginning of the first academic year in Nauvoo. The University of the City of Nauvoo became the 4th such municipal university to open in the United States and the first to offer co-educational courses to all members of the community rich and poor alike (Sass, 2009). It was an optimistic and ambitious undertaking and was probably superior in many ways to the average educational institutions of the time (Gardner, 1992).

Common Schools

With the University level getting its start the Saints also had great anxiety regarding their children. Therefore, under the supervision of the university administration common schools were established for the free public education for all of Nauvoo’s children.

Although the government established common schools of Nauvoo were not fully operational until late in 1841 the Saints had begun schooling their children as soon as they arrived in the bog called Commerce. Wandle Mace, an early settler in Nauvoo, recorded in his journal the story of the first school and schoolteacher in Nauvoo.

Notwithstanding the difficulties the Saints had been called to pass through, being driven from place to place, the education of their children, although interrupted, was not forgotten. As soon as possible a room was prepared for that purpose, and by request of President Sidney Rigdon, I went to Lima and brought to Nauvoo, Miss Eliza R. Snow to teach school (pp. 22-23)(Smith, 1969).

That was not the only school in operation. A primary school by A. Cutler and J. Durphy opened in October 1839. Additionally, Charlotte Haven, a non-Mormon resident, also referred, “to a schoolhouse in her neighborhood overflowing with children of all sizes” (p. 241)(Givens, 1990).

Records also show that Truman Barlow taught school in May of 1840 and Luman Andros Shurtliff opened a school in October of 1840 (Smith, 1969). David Candland who served as a clerk for Brigham Young also became a schoolteacher (Jensen, 1991). Warren Foote recorded his early experience opening a school just outside of Nauvoo:

Some of the people in the neighborhood wished me to take up a school. I went around to see how many scholars I could get. I only got twelve subscribed. As I wished to be improving myself, I concluded to take up school and try it (p. 240) (Givens, 1990).

Moreover, many Saints included plans for education when building their homes. Joseph Lee Robinson, recognized the need for education in Nauvoo, however, he also knew the

poverty many of the Saints had to deal with. As a result, when he built his brick home he constructed the entire second floor to be a schoolroom and hired a woman named Nancy Goldsmith to teach there. He then recorded in his journal that, “I informed my neighbors that a school would start at my house on Monday morning next. I wanted them to send all their children to the teacher while them that were not able to pay I wanted them to feel just as free as the school was to be free to their children, every one of them” (p. 66) (Jackson, 2002).

The Saints were doing everything in their power to bring education to their children and community. But education was expensive and even with the charity of others some Saints still felt the burden of teaching their children. Thankfully many teachers also accepted payment in goods and produce (Jackson, 2002). But even this did not alleviate the cost of education for some poor families. Because many of Nauvoo’s husbands and fathers served as missionaries for the Church this burden of educating the children fell to the women. Vilate Kimball, wife of apostle Heber C. Kimball, wrote the following to him in the spring of 1840 during his mission to England:

The brethren have fenced and ploughed my land and William has planted it. He has been to school some, and I intend he shall go more. Truman Barlow keeps school in this neighborhood; Helen goes when I can spare her. I teach Heber at home, for I know of no way that I can pay their schooling. It is very annoying to my feelings to be dependent on the church when the Saints are so poor (p. 65) (Jackson, 2002).

It is a credit to the members of this community that they helped each other so much.

Luman Andros Shurtliff, a scholar and convert from Massachusetts, also taught “students who could not pay” (p. 66)(Jackson, 2002). However, these generous teachers still had to support their own families. The difficulty of collecting overdue tuition of many of Luman’s paying students fell to his wife and own children when he was later called away on a mission. He wrote the following in his journal “To collect this would keep one of my children or my wife constantly on the street,” he said, “as they could collect little at a time.” Near this entry he also included a letter from his wife illustrating the desperation she faced in attempting to collect past due tuition to feed her own family:

I thought it strange that you did not write sooner and almost thought you had forgotten us and me in my trouble. I cannot tell you all now. I had all our potatoes to dig and bury (thirty bushels) and debts to collect which keeps me on the run most of my time. I have worn out one pair of shoes. Sometimes I got something or a promise of it and would wait a week or two and go again and again. Brother William paid me 87 cents. He promised me flour about a month ago in a few days and I have not got it yet. Brother Winn paid all but a dollar. Butler paid his school bill. Brother Smith paid all but a peck of meal. . . . Brother Roberts has paid \$1.41, he paid Elcemina’s and Mary’s school bill. Lewis went two weeks. He reads at home. I cannot spare him to go to school as I have to travel so much to get my debts and dare not leave the two youngest alone. I have to keep Lewis home to stay there with them when I am away (p. 67)(Jackson, 2002).

As admirable as it was for this man to teach the children of the poor and the widows for free this brought difficulty to his own family. And even those who he did not teach for

free seem to have had trouble paying for schooling. It is clear that although education was deeply important to the early Saints it often came at a great sacrifice.

The Church leadership recognized and felt this need, often within their own families. Thus, they sought to establish public education as quickly as possible. Once the foundation of university administration was established the leadership of Nauvoo turned their attention to the common schools. As has been noted, the ideals of the Latter-day Saints regarding education were different from those of other Americans. Thus, the ways in which they established common schools were different as well.

Whereas the majority of mid-nineteenth century American childrearing advocates were immediately concerned with raising good citizens to perpetuate the republic, Mormons consistently sought to prepare righteous Saints to build up the kingdom of God. Since their revelations were quite clear about the destiny of children, the Nauvoo Saints felt a righteous anxiety about the education of their future leaders. The power of the school administration is evidence of their need to control that sacred trust (p. 63)(Jackson, 2002).

As a result of this anxiety the school administration held a noteworthy amount of power.

administration.

With the granting of the City Charter in December of 1840 plans for schooling exploded. By early 1841 a system of common schools, or elementary schools servicing first through eighth grade, was established. These schools were directly under the control and supervision of the university leadership (Whittaker, 1984; Cannon, 1993). The University's board of Regents planned to supervise the common schools by monitoring attendance, selecting and developing curriculum, approving textbooks, collecting tuition,

and overseeing human resources by administering exams to potential teachers and issuing competency certificates (Arrington, 1977; Leonard, 2002; Black, 2009).

The board of Regents began by dividing Nauvoo into four municipal wards. These wards were represented by one alderman and two councilors. The board of Regents was also responsible for appointing wardens and other district leadership. Members of the community would fill leadership positions by appointment rather than election as was common in most other communities at that time (Leonard, 2002). This was another way in which the University administration held tight control over education in Nauvoo. Jonathan Hale records in his journal that one of his public duties in Nauvoo, as well as jury duty, was as director for School District No. 1 (Hale, 1830 - 1844). The administrative positions were screened and filled with personnel from a variety of backgrounds and professions. The board appointed twelve wardens, three from each of the four political divisions in town, to administer common school instruction (Black, 2009). The wardens chose teachers from among those certified, monitored their work, and arranged for schoolrooms, often a rented room in a home, public hall, or commercial building (Leonard, 2002). Each teacher was to be supervised by a team of three trustees. These supervisors would note accuracy of schedules of pupil attendance as well as the curriculum taught. The cumulative attendance would be used in computing teacher salary. The board of Regents also appointed four school directors and four music directors (Smith, 1969).

In the second board meeting held on March 1, 1841 the Regents appointed the first of many school wardens and authorized them to commence “open enrollment” for the common schools. The wardens were to encourage all children to attend school. This

directive was in line with the message from the First Presidency of the Church that “Catholics, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Latter-day Saints, Quakers, Episcopalians, Universalists, Unitarians, Mohammedans, and all other religious sects and denominations whatever, shall have free toleration, and equal privileges, in this city” (p. 8)(Black, 2009).

Thus, the school wardens went to work and the common schools began to flourish. Eventually twenty-seven teachers became part of the county supported taxed school system. Still others functioned without tax support. As a non-Mormon in Nauvoo observed, “There are many Common Schools in Nauvoo, where the *germs* of greatness are planted, which, if nourished, could reap an abundant harvest of the good things of intellect” (p. 196)(Leonard, 2002).

In addition to being well organized the University’s board of Regents kept records of attendance, reports of scholars with teacher’s and trustees’ certifications, superintendent reports (Commissioner, 1842-1845), and lists of teachers of common schools (Nauvoo Educational Notations, 1841). Further, individual teachers kept records of their students and teaching experiences. James Monroe Madison was a school teacher in Nauvoo in 1845. He taught the children of Emma Smith, Brigham Young, John Taylor and others. He recorded school attendance rolls, as well as his personal studies and efforts in teacher improvement (Monroe, 1841).

Although the saints did a remarkable job in such a short time period and with limited resources, the system was not infallible. As Doctor Black notes: “The top-heavy administration” was effective at getting the educational system started, however, over the long run the various leadership layers would have proved inflexible (p. 4)(Black, 2009). Ideas generated in the classroom or in the lower levels of this “vertical structure” would

not have been able to reach the top in order to be implemented as successful new policies. Yet despite this difficulty the formation of the common schools went forward at a remarkable pace. Soon more and more of Nauvoo's youth were being educated.

funding.

Using taxes to support the schools was allowed under the federal ordinance of 1785. This Ordinance provided for rectangular surveys in the Northwest Territory, of which Illinois was a part, to be divided into townships. Each township was to be a six-mile square area divided into thirty-six sections, of one square mile each. The sixteenth section was to be sold and the money used for the public school in the town. Although this ordinance had been in place for years few communities took advantage of it at all, or if they did sell the land the money was often squandered misplaced (Smith, 1969).

In order to rectify this problem in 1818 Congress passed Nathaniel Pope's enabling act. This act provided that the cost of one township in each state be used for instruction and learning. In addition, three percent of the net proceeds of public land sales was to be used by the legislature for the "encouragement of learning, of which one-sixth part shall be exclusively bestowed on a college or university" (p. 37)(Smith, 1969). Sadly, although the Illinois State constitution was written after this act was passed, no provision was made for education within state borders (Smith, 1969).

In the Illinois 1824-25 General Assembly Joseph Duncan proposed a bill enabling the establishment of Free Schools within the state. This act required every township with a population of fifteen families or more to financially support a free school for at least three months of each year. The town would support the school by taxation and all white

citizens between the ages of five and twenty-one were to be admitted for free. Duncan's Free Schools Act passed January 15, 1825. However, shortly before the Saints arrived in Commerce in the 1828- 29 assembly the sections enabling taxation for support of schools were repealed. The citizens of Illinois felt they should not have to pay for the education of another man's children. Further, the majority of the frontier pioneers felt that subscription schools were of a higher quality (Smith, 1969). It was not until 1855 when the Free School Law passed that taxation was firmly required to support education (Smith, 1969). By that time the Saints had left and the Nauvoo charter complete with the authority enabling the city council to tax the citizenry for educational purposes had been repealed.

Although there is no record of any public lands being sold within Nauvoo to support education we do know that taxes were used to help with things like public building construction (Smith, 1969). These facilities were often multi-purposed and education was frequently one of the main reasons for assembly.

facilities.

Once the Administrative and financial structure were in place the wardens began the work of opening schools. The first school house prepared for the public was held in a stone structure known as the Arsenal (Smith, 1969). Before the organization of the University of Nauvoo and the Common School System most teachers taught wherever they could find a room to rent. Most teachers taught in private homes. The Red Brick store was also used until Willard Richards and W.W. Phelps complained to Joseph of the noise interrupting their work writing the History of the Church. Apparently the schoolboys liked to run and jump down the narrow stairwell that passed their office once

classes were dismissed (Smith, 1969). Upon the organization of the Common School System the need to find a place to hold school was removed from teacher responsibility. Wardens oversaw the procuring of a location and making sure that the school houses were also furnished and prepared. Classes were also held in the Church's office building, the Nauvoo seminary, the Seventies Hall, and the Masonic temple (Arrington, 1977; Givens, 1990).

One of Nauvoo's old residents recalled what one school house looked like. His note of sarcasm reminds us that the saints were living in frontier community and in their rush to offer education to their children perhaps sacrificed building quality:

The [school] house was built of rough logs, which were put up in such a bungling style that one would suppose that some person had done the carpenter work himself. Where the logs crossed each other at the corners they were from six inches to two feet too long. The crevices between the logs had been chinked with clay, which was still remaining, except such portions as had been knocked out by the boys. The cover was roofed over with clap-boards, but had no ceiling. The floor was made of puncheons which had been smoothed but very little, and the desks and seats were made of the same material, supported by wooden legs polished with an axe and put in with an auger. The door swung on large wood hinges secured by pins. There were two windows in the house each one being two panes in depth; room had been made for them by cutting out a log on each side. The architectural bounty of the building was finally completed by the fireplace. This was a huge pile built of timber and rocks, and would

accommodate a back log six feet in length, with a large quantity of finer wood
(p. 86)(Godfrey, 1984).

With the large amount of children to be educated such buildings were essential.

Although they worked for a time the upper stories of homes and stores often did not accommodate the numerous students.

teachers and teacher certification.

Once the structure for the school system was in place the next step was to certify and hire teachers. Becoming a certified teacher in Nauvoo was no small matter. In the three years “from 1842 -1845 only thirty-five teachers passed the competency exam and received a teaching certificate” (p. 8)(Black, 2009). The following certificate shows that applicant Lovinia Whipple was competent to teach certain subjects:

Certification

State of Illinois

County of Hancock:

We certify that having examined Lovinia Whipple, the teacher above named, we find her duly qualified to teach a common school in the following branches to wit, reading, writing, geography, English grammar, and arithmetic.

Given under our hands and seals this day the first of March, 1844.

Norton Jacobs

William W. Lane (p. 8-9)(Black, 2009)

Although certification was required to teach public school in Nauvoo the process of becoming certified was not yet uniform for all teachers. The following certificate from Charles Wesley Wandell is more detailed regarding his proficiency in certain subjects.

The certificate also shows that meetings were held by inspectors of common school teachers:

State of Illinois

County of Hancock

We certify that at a meeting of the employers of Charles Wesley Wandell the above named Teacher, held at the school-house in Warsaw street, near Parley street, Nauvoo, township six north range nine west, in the county of Hancock State of Illinois, pursuant to notice on the eighth day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and forty four, we were duly appointed trustees of said school, that we have performed the duties of such trustees by visiting said school, and superintending. We the undersigned inspectors of Teachers of common schools in the city of Nauvoo Hancock County, in the state of Illinois do certify that at a meeting held for that purpose at the house of Sidney Rigdon, we have examined Charles W. Wandell and find him of sufficient learning and ability and in other respects well qualified to teach a school in the several branches of reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, and grammar, —

Given under our hands at Nauvoo the 3 day of February 1844

Sidney Rigdon

Joseph M. Cole (p. 9-10)(Black, 2009)

Regardless of the lack of uniformity, a teacher who was certified by the board was essentially guaranteed work in Nauvoo. This was the case because although schools were common and supported by taxes they were also often partially subscription based.

Compulsory education laws had not yet been passed and although the city was divided into municipal wards students were not assigned to specific schools. If parents or students did not favor the teacher they were free to seek education elsewhere. However, parents who choose to have their children educated by a certified teacher knew that teacher had received “approval from two local trustees, three wardens, two examiners, two inspectors, and twenty-three members of the board of regents” (p. 9)(Black, 2009). In order to receive such certification teachers must pass an oral examination in the subject area they desired to teach (Smith, 1969). Thus, the board of Regents was careful to control who was allowed to teach public school in Nauvoo.

Another concern for parents who were interested in preserving their distinct religious way of life was the religious background of the teacher. All of Nauvoo’s teachers were members of the church except one: Charlott Haven, who taught school for the non-Mormons (Godfrey, 1984; Jackson, 2002). Again one can see how concerned these saints were with the education of their children. They believed very deeply that learning was a heavenly affair.

Eighty one people are identified who earned at least part of their living teaching school. Only twenty seven of these taught under the Common School fund for the city. Forty-eight of the eighty-one teachers were male and thirty-three were female. Less than a tenth of these teachers had attended a university and even fewer had earned college degrees. However, the majority of these teachers had at least a common school education. The average age of Nauvoo’s teachers was 27. The youngest teacher was sixteen and the oldest was forty-one (Godfrey, 1984). If one takes into account the teachers, trustees, wardens, school presidents, and administrators of the University it is

easy to see that over 300 members of Nauvoo's adult citizenry were involved in education (Smith, 1969). Truly education was important to the Mormons.

teacher compensation.

The pay even for the public school teachers was meager and many of them taught only a few months of the year. Therefore, many of the teachers in Nauvoo also took on other work to supplement their income (Leonard, 2002). Teacher salary was calculated based on daily attendance and number of students enrolled. Attendance records, otherwise known as "written schedules" were kept by individual teachers and reviewed by one of the wardens for the school. The teachers were required to make note of the township and range of the school location, the names of students enrolled, daily attendance, end of the term cumulative attendance, and salary due for instruction rendered (Black, 2009). Those schedules were then examined by the wardens and trustees to assure that teachers were not overpaid. This review committee then presented a written verification of the documents accuracy to the board of regents proposing an amount of payment. This also meant that wardens and trustees were to suggest a pay reduction when teachers had poor attendance. It appears as though the average salary for the Common School teachers was \$1.50 per student (Black, 2009).

Thus if students failed to come the entire term a teacher's pay could decrease dramatically. For example in 1843, "W. S. Hathaway, after thirty-five days of instruction, had seventeen students drop out of his school" (p. 242-243; 11)(Givens, 1990; Black, 2009). Twelve new students eventually enrolled in his school, however, during the following weeks an additional seven left. "Only three children remained under

his tutelage for the 117-day term. Their names were Hathaway, of course” (p. 11)(Black, 2009). Records do not indicate if he decided to continue in the teaching profession.

It is interesting that such meticulous care was taken in regard to teacher pay when they were already making so little as it was. Perhaps it speaks again to the rigid control the school board maintained, or to the fact that they were dealing with a fledgling system and wanted to be exact with the tax payers’ funds. It may also attest to the fact that the poverty of the people was extreme and the temptation to falsify records was real.

Whatever the reason, one of the duties that consumed much of the time for wardens and trustees was review of school schedules.

With the tax supported schools the cost per child ranged from \$1.50 to \$3.00 per term. That price became much more manageable for poor families than the \$1.00 a week per student for the private schools. In addition, families were allowed to pay in produce which also helped to ease the burden of education costs (Smith, 1969; CES, 2003).

teaching begins.

With the Common school structure in place, the teachers hired, and the buildings readied sessions at the common school level began. During the first busy days of instruction schools were crowded with students of every age. Four common school buildings in each ward, private homes, vacant offices, and even barns were filled to capacity with youth. James Monroe recorded in his diary, “I have now about a dozen in each school. Several other individuals wish to get their children in my school, but I could not take them” (p. 11)(Black, 2009). The Saints were eager to have their children educated. Monroe also recorded his experience after the first day of classes.

This being the first day everything, of course, was to be arranged as far as commencement. I think, however, I was enabled to give them some instruction. But I think I never felt my inability and incapacity of instructing children as they should be instructed so much as I did today. Perhaps the reason was, partly, because I took more than ordinary interest in their advancement and also that I was reading a work for the benefit of teachers and saw so many requisites to constitute a good teacher that I almost despaired of ever being able to come up to the standard... (p. 86)(Godfrey, 1984)

Despite the hullabaloo of the first day James Monroe and other teachers were most concerned with the quality of education they offered to their students.

Often the teachers in Nauvoo went above and beyond their duties to ensure their students were well taught. Eliza Snow cared deeply about her young scholars and felt a sacred obligation to teach them. In 1843 at the end of the year's instruction she addressed her students and expressed her feelings and the "deep interest [she felt] in [their] present and future welfare." She stressed the importance of education and encouraged them to continue in their studies noting that their future personal glory among the called and chosen depended upon it. She also said, "You live in a very important age, an age teeming with events," she remarked, "and if your lives are spared, you will each have a part to act in the grand scenery which precedes and is to prepare the way for the second coming of the Messiah" (p. 68)(Jackson, 2002). Eliza advised her students to "cultivate the minds, virtues, feelings and affections that make signature Saints." Finally she expressed her conviction that education was more than an earthly matter and concluded:

How awkward you would feel to be introduced into the society of beings filled with intelligence and surrounded with glory, if entirely unprepared for such society? Life itself might seem too short for such a preparation. Then diligently seek wisdom and knowledge. Study attentively the revelations which God has given heretofore, and receive & treasure up whatever shall proceed from his mouth from time to time (p. 68)(Jackson, 2002).

Truly Ms. Snow understood the purpose of education in Latter-day Saint theology. She also understood her role as a teacher.

Eliza was not the only teacher who felt a deep interest in her students. J.A. Banister taught forty-two students for a total of twenty-nine school days with an average absence of only once per student (Givens, 1990). He must have done something right to maintain high attendance. In addition, Martha Cory and her husband Howard were very popular teachers. Together they taught as many as one hundred and fifty students (Holzapfel, 1992). Further, James Monroe consistently awoke at five in the morning each day, and studied scientific and educational works at the breakfast table. He practiced his voice by “hallowing and singing” in the woods. He also studied the habits and mannerisms of his students in order to better teach them. Mr. Monroe also personally wrote letters to his students when he noticed a lack of enthusiasm for learning or carelessness in their work. “Joseph Taylor and Frederick Smith both received letters from Monroe, encouraging them to exert themselves in their schoolwork” (p. 69) (Jackson, 2002). Indeed the teachers in Nauvoo held a solemn responsibility and felt the weight of their duty.

school furnishings and supplies.

However, in Nauvoo schools there were challenges to receiving a quality education. Lack of teacher and student supplies, overcrowding, frequent interruptions, and long class sessions all hindered learning. In James Monroe's school and others like it the furnishings were simple. The persecutions in Missouri and the material losses in Ohio had impoverished the Saints and the majority of available funds went to the building of new homes, the temple, starting businesses, and the sustaining of families. When attending a Common School in Nauvoo students sat on crudely made backless wooden benches and used writing tables. There would sometimes be a teacher's desk, usually a coarsely made table. School houses also almost always had a fireplace or wood stove. This often caused a conflict over who got to sit near the heat. The majority of school sessions were held during the winter months when students were free from planting and harvesting duties. The Nauvoo winters could be frigid, sometimes to the point of the ink freezing in the inkhorns (Givens, 1990).

Although the blackboard had been available in the US since 1809 many schools did not have one. Those that did were frequently under used as noted in a report from Connecticut in 1939 (Givens, 1990). Teachers seldom had visual aids and things like maps, globes, charts, or models were both rare and expensive (Givens, 1990; Black, 2009). Students were expected to pay attention to the teacher and what was being spoken.

As for school supplies, students often used slates to write on which could be purchased for pennies in most general stores. Writing paper was also available; however, it was expensive and therefore used sparingly. Most students would have used unruled foolscap which was the least expensive. Students would purchase loose foolscap and sew

a binding at home to make a copybook. A piece of sharpened led was used to line the paper (Givens, 1990). In the 1840's pencils were most commonly sold for fifty cents a dozen. However, there is little evidence that Nauvoo citizens used many pencils. The most common writing utensils appear to have been quill pens (Givens, 1990). Feathers were sharpened or repaired with "penknives." The majority of quill pens were made from goose quills, which were preferred. However, turkey and even buzzard quills were also used. In the January 9, 1845 issue of the Nauvoo Neighbor an ad was run by the editors seeking a "few hundred wild or tame geese quills." It is possible that the newspaper staff used them for business or resold them. Textbooks were also available at the newspaper office, thus, it is likely that quills and even school paper were sold there as well (p. 248)(Givens, 1990).

Since the most common writing utensil was the quill pen students and teachers would also need to purchase or manufacture ink. In 1816 the first American patent for ink was issued in Boston, however, because of travel and cost it is unlikely that commercially manufactured ink was sold in Nauvoo. Ink was something that was easily made either by local merchants, and sold in the general stores, or by parents wishing to save money. Ink was often made from

nut-galls, copperas, and gum arabic, all available at the apothecary shop. To make ink with even less cost, maple bark or sumac, poke berries or oak berries, and vinegar made a most acceptable ink. A sawed-off cow horn or a lead and pewter inkstand could serve as the container (p. 249)(Givens, 1990).

The students of Nauvoo prepared for their studies as best they could. Education was not something that was easily acquired or cheaply supplied.

the learning experience.

There were many students to be educated and not the resources to provide high quality schooling for them all. In the Nauvoo school system there were over 1800 students (CES, 2003; Black, 2009). The average student load per teacher was forty-six (Godfrey, 1984). Some teachers taught many more students than that, for example, the attendance records of Pamela Michael, show that she carried ninety-three students on her class rolls (Givens, 1990). Overcrowding was indeed a problem in Nauvoo.

An additional difficulty was caused by frequent interruptions in instruction. Seasonal work repeatedly disrupted learning and the rain and muddy streets also caused delays or cancelations (Smith, 1969). Along with the recurrent classroom disturbances from weather and overcrowding teachers also had the challenge of offering individual age based instruction. Because student ages ranged from five or six years old to the marriageable age of sixteen or older. Further, the length of school sessions caused some students to be antsy. Most schools were in session for six hours a day with few breaks. These long hours coupled with the environment and the age differences often caused discipline problems.

Teachers attempted to resolve these problems using various methods. Joseph Smith III recalled being whipped by one of his teachers, Howard Corey. Years later when reminiscing with Mr. Corey he noted the following conversation:

In our opening conversation I had mentioned the name of Jack Allred and asked if he remembered him and the time when he, as Teacher Corey, had whipped Jack with the sturdy switch I had cut and whipped me with the slender one Jack had procured. At first he looked a little mystified, but laughed with me as I related the

incidents. I told him I had always been curious to know why he punished us that way. "Well," he answered, "I felt that a boy who when sent out to get a switch to be punished with was honest enough to cut one of a proper size, was not at heart a bad boy, that his misdemeanor was doubtless due to a bad influence, and that his companion needed the heavier thrashing." (p. 85)(Godfrey, 1984)

Whipping was not the only disciplinary tactic used by the Saints. In the 1840's corporal punishment in schools was being debated and was on the way out in many districts. In addition, compulsory education laws had not yet been passed. Thus, students attended classes because either they or their parents recognized the value of education. This fact made most discipline problems fairly easy to control with the threat of expulsion (Givens, 1990).

In his diary James Monroe records some of his experiences in regard to discipline. This A.M. my scholars seemed to have forgotten their interest in their studies and the necessity of industry and I was almost ready to despair, but a little wholesome severity in keeping them after school, I regained all I had lost and I think lost none of their love. I see the necessity more and more of studying the characters and dispositions of my scholars as to suit my conduct and their course accordingly. I had considerable trouble with Caroline and I do not know what will be the end of it. She says she won't and shan't get her lessons and I tell her she shall not come to school until she does. I think she has learned it but has not recited it yet (p. 250)(Givens, 1990).

If Monroe is an example of most teachers in Nauvoo, then the educators of this city were a remarkable group indeed. Another discipline tactic was separating instruction.

Sometimes the youngest children were barred from winter schools; later, classes were divided and female teachers were in charge of the younger pupils while the men taught and controlled the older and more rowdy students (Givens, 1990).

The classroom experience for older students often included segregated seating (boys and girls would sit on opposite sides of the classroom), reciting long lists, such as “names of states or capitals or lists of tables, including apothecary weights, avoirdupois weights, troy weights, long measures, square measures, land measures and Federal and English money” (p. 11)(Black, 2009). Students would also imitate “copy.” A teacher would “set copy” by writing some sentiment in his or her best hand and then pupils were expected to write the same in their copybooks (Givens, 1990). In addition, young scholars were required to perform on public oral exams in front of the class. Such rigorous learning often caused frustration. Therefore, teachers also attempted to keep student interest by awarding successful students with illustrated paper certificates. These certificates were sold in bulk to teachers and were highly valued by students who owned few worldly possessions (Black, 2009).

curricula.

Nauvoo schools offered a wide variety of curricula. Most schools offered the basics of reading, writing, arithmetic, oration, and philosophy. The board also decided that all young students should learn languages—Greek, Latin, Spanish, and French (Black, 2009). There are two subjects that are noticeably missing from the curriculum in Nauvoo: religion and history. The State of Illinois mandated by law “that no literary institution or school shall have a religion department (Givens, 1990). Although the

Common Schools were based in the Nauvoo wards there is no existing record showing that the gospel was specifically taught at the elementary level (Black, 2009).

A possible additional reason for not teaching religion in the common schools is that the Nauvoo Saints believed that fundamental learning should be acquired *before* serious gospel study. In 1842 the editors of the Times and Seasons wrote an article explaining that

in order to teach children the plan of salvation, ‘it is necessary that children should be taught in the rudiments of common learning out of the best books; and then, as they grow up they can be qualified to search the scriptures, and acquire the knowledge of the Lord, become heirs of the kingdom, and, guided by the Holy Spirit, which is a never failing promise to the saints, they will walk in all the commandments of the Lord blameless, in thanksgiving forever.’ As education was a prerequisite of heaven, “common learning” was a prerequisite to serious study of the gospel (p. 60)(Jackson, 2002).

The fact that there were no religion classes does not mean that religion was ignored all together. “Little ‘scholars’ opened and closed daily school sessions with hymns and prayers and read the Book of Mormon alongside Ray’s *Little Arithmetic*, and Mormon teachers directed their study” (p. 64)(Jackson, 2002). It is interesting to note in a community where religion was at the heart of everything the citizens did that the teaching of religion to the children was left out of the school system.

The board members also decided to omit history from the prescribed study list. They believed that history “immortalized the worst men and failed to recognize praiseworthy men” (p. 10)(Black, 2009). This is not unusual for the American schools of

the time. The inclusion of history as a subject in most common schools across the nation was being debated in the 1830's especially by the authors of children's books. The common feeling of opponents were similar to those of the Nauvoo citizens that history presented only "a disgusting detail of follies and crimes; and insolence of power, and the degradation and misery of our kind" (p. 247)(Givens, 1990). Massachusetts was one exception, and included history as a separate course beginning in 1832 (Givens, 1990). It is interesting that the Latter-day Saint leaders were so opposed to the inclusion of history in the curriculum yet made painstaking efforts to record and teach their own history.

Perhaps another reason behind their reluctance lay in the inaccuracy of available texts of the day. Even in the geography texts which should have been most accurate were significantly flawed. "At this time geography texts carried pictures representing bear, buffalo, and elk riding down the Ohio River to market on an ark; buffalo were described as 'very domestic and harmless'" (p. 247)(Givens, 1990). There were other glaring mistakes as well that could have easily led to the lack of confidence felt by the Mormons. It is also possible that the history books were even more inaccurate which lead to the exclusion of the subject from the curriculum.

Not all teachers were certified in every subject, therefore, those with special talents would advertise what they could offer. J. A. Banister advertised his abilities to offer the fundamentals and "stated his readiness to teach orthography, geography, arithmetic, grammar, composition, oratory, and philosophy" (p. 246)(Givens, 1990). James Monroe also offered higher mathematics, languages such as Greek, Latin, Spanish, and French, philosophy, and chemistry (Givens, 1990). The majority of teachers were self educated in a variety of subjects but it is possible that the lack of formal education

among the teachers in general inspired the board of Regents to exercise such strict control over the curriculum (Black, 2009).

books.

The texts to be used in Nauvoo Common Schools were just as tightly controlled as was the rest of the curriculum. Heber C. Kimball of the Quorum of the Twelve declared that they would print school books “for the education of [their] children, *which will not be according to the gentile order*” (p. 64)(Jackson, 2002). However, the writing, printing, and distributing of books took time. Therefore, because of notable flaws in many books the Board of Regents adopted the following texts for use in the Common Schools during their meeting on December 18, 1841:

Town's Spelling Book

Town's Introduction to Analysis

Town's Analysis

M. Vickar's or McVickar's Political Economy for Schools

Help to Young Writers

Girl's Reading Book by Mrs. Sigourney

Boy's Reading book by Mrs. Sigourney

Bennett's Arithmetic

Bennett's Book Keeping

Kirkham's English Grammar

Olney's Geography (p. 10)(Meservy, 1966; Black, 2009)

Professor Hills was also responsible for adopting music textbooks for the common schools (Givens, 1990). Despite Heber Kimball's remarks it is evident from the books adopted that education in Nauvoo was not limited to Mormon doctrine.

In fact the list of approved readers was dominated by stern Calvinistic theology. The morals taught in these readers were pure frontier Presbyterianism. Many children's books were of a religious nature, preaching hellfire and damnation for disobedient children (Givens, 1990). However, by the mid 1830's children's book publishers had begun printing books for the amusement of children and not just for moral education; although, many authors were apologetic for encouraging light-mindedness through recreational reading and play (Givens, 1990). Joseph Smith, on the other hand, believed in recreation and was noted to read often to his children from a special children's magazine he had in his home (Lyon, 1978).

Later, in 1842, the *Times and Seasons* printed a standard list of textbooks to be used in the common schools. This list included The *Eclectic Readers* which were most likely the popular McGuffey *Readers*. The *Times and Seasons* also carried an ad for Robinson's Nauvoo Stationery Store. The merchants advertised the *Eclectic Primer*, *Spelling Book* and first through fourth readers. The price for these books ran from six cents to seventy-five cents (Givens, 1990). Considering that the average daily wage ranged from 67cents to one dollar this cost for education was not cheap.

Yet in spite of this cost most Mormon families had books in their homes which the children could also read in school. Jesse N. Smith recalled

in 1843, for a short time, I attended a school kept by a Miss Mitchell in Hyrum Smith's brick office. Passing the home of the Prophet one day he called me to

him and asked what book I read in at my school. I replied the “Book of Mormon” He seemed pleased, and taking me into his house gave me a copy of the Book of Mormon to read in at school, a gift greatly prized by me (p. 85) (Godfrey, 1984).

Thus, Joseph Smith encouraged education. He firmly believed that men should seek wisdom out of the “best books”(D&C 88: 118; 109:7, 14) (Church, 1981). Joseph did all he could to assist others in that pursuit at the common school level and beyond.

private and secondary schools.

One of the major problems of Nauvoo’s common schools came because of the strictness imposed by the administration. Many of the teachers resented the board’s position in regard to curriculum, with the omission of history, and the tight control on the textbook list. As a result on September 2, 1843 teachers met at the Nauvoo Seminary to discuss the curriculum rigidity. This group of teachers believed that science, grammar, literature, music, foreign languages, orthography, composition, oratory, chemistry, geography and history belonged in the common school curriculum. In addition to desired curriculum changes the teachers also discussed possible effects of hiring more female teachers. Female teachers received a salary that was one-half to two-thirds the salary of their male colleagues. The board of Regents recommended that more female teachers be hired in order to meet the “challenge of educating every child in Nauvoo” (p. 10)(Black, 2009). Many of the teachers present believed this proposal was more about money and less about children. However, after some debate the new curriculum was adopted and additional female teachers were hired (Black, 2009).

Yet this board meeting failed to assuage all of the teacher concerns in Nauvoo and many private schools continued to open in Nauvoo (Black, 2009). Teachers in the private sector “prided themselves on being out of the administrative realm” (p. 14)(Black, 2009). Although they did not receive a certificate of verification for their ability from the Board many of these teachers had successful schools. Fifty-three of these teachers completely disregarded the examination and certification process yet claimed to have superior qualifications (Black, 2009). The private schools received no public funds thus, unlike their common school counterparts, who had pre-determined salaries, subscription school teachers earned between 17 and 25 cents for each subject taught. “The cost of instructing ‘one student taking just the basic five subjects—reading, writing, geography, grammar, and arithmetic—was approximately a dollar each week, or twenty cents per day’” (p. 14) (Black, 2009). Further, private educators were not required to teach the same curricula or use the same texts as teachers in the common schools. As a result there was lack of uniformity in the quality, material, and intensity of education for elementary aged students in Nauvoo.

Some teachers continued to teach in the Common Schools and offered private services as well. For the teachers in the private sector to be successful they must have a good reputation. Eliza R. Snow, a well known teacher since the Kirtland period, for example, opened a subscription school in the Masonic Lodge in 1842. Her tutelage lasted for a three-month term. “Hancock County records indicate that the county paid her for a three-week period that same year” (p. 240)(Givens, 1990). In addition, James Monroe advertised his teaching ability and “claimed that he had the ‘concurrence of the Twelve’ in opening a school at Brigham Young's home in 1845” (p. 196)(Leonard, 2002). At the

same time Monroe held a school for the children of widowed Emma Smith and a few other families in Mansion House, where he boarded. Monroe was a good friend of Emma, however, it is possible that the tension between the Young family and the Smiths made it “necessary for Monroe to start a second school for the children of Brigham Young and others of his quorum’ (Leonard, 2002). Interestingly, the Smiths and the Youngs both prominent families in the Nauvoo community choose to have their children educated in private schools.

Private school teachers were also responsible for obtaining their own school houses as well as students. Thus they could truly advertise being free to determine the length of sessions as well as the content and the quality. The Coles, for example, ran the following ad to enlist students:

Mr. Joseph N. and Miss Adelia Cole, would respectfully inform the citizens of Nauvoo, that they have opened a school in the large and convenient room, in the second story of President Joseph Smith's store, on the corner of Water and Granger streets, on Tuesday the 11th inst., [July] for the instruction of male and female . . .

TERMS OF TUITION

Reading, writing and spelling \$2.00

English Grammar & Geography 2.50

Chemistry and Natural Philosophy 3.00

Astronomy 4.00

A quarter will consist of twelve weeks or 65 days and no allowance will be made for absentees unless prevented from attendance by sickness or by special agreement. (p.241; 7)(Givens, 1990; Black, 2009)

Indeed there was a wide variety of education for children and parents to choose between in Nauvoo. Although Common Schools attempted to solve the problem of offering education to all children within the city it was not yet a perfect system.

In addition to elementary instruction secondary school or a seminary was also provided. The Seminary Level focused on grades nine through twelve and was also under the supervision of the University of Nauvoo. Joseph N. Cole and his sister, Adelia, were “appointed Directors of Seminary Instruction by the board of regents” (p. 7)(Black, 2009). The Coles were responsible for the seminary building and all classes taught within it. The Coles were also expected to follow a prescribed curriculum as mandated by the Board of Regents. This curriculum was similar to that of the secondary schools in New England. Thus, Greek, Latin, English grammar, writing, mathematics, bookkeeping, geography, and religion were subjects offered in the Seminary. Unfortunately, other records containing attendance of students and faculty members have not been preserved. There is no way of knowing exactly how many young people received secondary instruction in Nauvoo (Black, 2009). However, in a letter to the editor of the Nauvoo Neighbor the writer states that 135 students are part of the Seminary (Godfrey, 1984).

In addition, that same letter run by The Nauvoo Neighbor talks about the success of the seminary. The writer was a Nauvoo citizen who simply signed his name Othello. This resident visited the Seminary and described his experience:

On Friday last through the politeness of Mr. Joseph M. and Miss Adelia Cole, I received an invitation to attend a public examination of their seminary. Quite a number of our citizens were in attendance, and appeared to be well pleased with the order of their exercises during the afternoon. Various questions were propounded on Astronomy, Geography, Arithmetic and Grammar, which were answered with readiness by the pupils, which proved that the instructors had used every exertion to cultivate the minds of those who had been placed under their care, and give them a knowledge of the different sciences.... The ventral table was then loaded with compositions written by the pupils on the subject "Does the merchant enjoy a greater degree of happiness than the farmer." ... After exercises were concluded, Sidney Rigdon, esq., was called upon, who addressed the school in a very appropriate and able manner (p. 86)(Godfrey, 1984).

Education appears to have been a very central and public part of life in Nauvoo. It is interesting that so many community members turned out to support this public examine.

Despite the many obstacles to good education in Nauvoo the Latter-day Saints made remarkable progress in their educational pursuits. Having to deal with the material losses from the

Ohio and Missouri persecutions, the all-consuming energy and expense of building new homes, businesses, farms, and the temple, the inability of parents to expend money on the "luxury" of an education, poor pay for teachers and lack of qualified instructors, poor quality or lack of school buildings and furnishings, and lack of good quality books (p. 251)(Givens, 1990)

makes the progress these early Saints achieved an awe inspiring accomplishment. What is most inspiring is not that they managed to provide education for their children in the midst of overwhelming difficulties; but that under these circumstances the quality of education they offered was comparable to, if not superior to, that given in the best schools across the nation (Givens, 1990).

Public Education

When the leaders of the Church received the charter for the City of Nauvoo they were pleased with the included authority to “establish and organize an institution of learning within the limits of the city, for the teaching of the arts, sciences, and learned professions, to be called the “University of the City of Nauvoo”” (p. 441)(Gardner, 1992). Not only did they have the permission to open a University but to “supervise all education from common schools up to the highest branches of a most liberal collegiate course” (p. 11)(Arrington, 1977). As time progressed intellectual life was encouraged by public education, a library, museum, university, dramatic society, a school of music, lyceums, a debating society, art exhibits and more (May, 1992). In addition, learning was not something in which only the young engaged. The common and seminary schools provided for the children yet the leadership of the University of the City of Nauvoo was also responsible for the education of every citizen within the city limits. This was a great task indeed. As always, with the Latter-day Saints, education was a top priority and intended to be available to all.

As Joseph continued to influence the creation of the beautiful city his sights turned from the education of children and youth to the public sphere. He taught that because the “Glory of God is intelligence” in all its forms, Zion must not only provide

facilities for learning but also serve as a social laboratory” (p. 474)(Roberts, 1978). Thus, after the formal education was taken care of the “social laboratory” and public education must be established. Joseph planned to create a community where

the farmer and his family will enjoy the advantages of schools, public lectures and other meetings. His home will no longer be isolated, and his family denied the benefits of society, which has been, and always will be, the great education of the human race; but they will enjoy the same privileges of society, and can surround their homes with the same intellectual life, the same social refinement as will be found in the home of the merchant or banker or professional man (p. 1:312) (Roberts, 1978).

This was a unique outlook on the purpose for life within the community. Once again learning and refinement of the soul were the purpose behind all public education.

adult education.

Since the purpose of the University of Nauvoo was to “refine the mind, enlarge the intellect, and promote learning, literature and science” (p. 13)(Hurd, 2004). The university offered classes in math, music, history, English Literature and languages. In addition to their teaching duties during the day many of the University faculty members and other teachers began to offer evening classes for the adults in the community who could not enroll in university courses yet wished to broaden their education. James Monroe, for example, offered classes in singing, theology, reading, writing, spelling, grammar, geography, chemistry, philosophy, and astronomy (Godfrey, 1984; Black, 2009). Further, the Nauvoo Neighbor carried notices of “private instruction in Hebrew,

German, penmanship” (p. 13)(Hurd, 2004). The Nauvoo leadership planned to offer education to everyone who desired it.

the Nauvoo Lyceum.

Another form of public education offered to citizens of Nauvoo came through the Nauvoo Lyceum. Lyceums were popular in many parts of the United States. At this time it was a form of adult education that was provided by frequent lectures and on varying subjects and current issues. The name Lyceum comes from the Greek Lykeion, which referred to the gymnasium near Athens where Aristotle taught (Smith, 2007). The Nauvoo Lyceum was created in 1841 and Gustavus Hills was appointed president (Givens, 1990; Smith, 2007). In advertising the Lyceum the Nauvoo Neighbor stated that the Lyceum was to be “open to men and women of mature judgment” and would feature lectures from which they could obtain educational credit (p. 13)(Hurd, 2004).

The Lyceum lectures met in various homes around the city to discuss different questions (Givens, 1990; Smith, 2007). Orson Pratt’s school offered the use of the facility a few times. Eventually it became difficult to “distinguish the Lyceum and other public lectures from extensions of the school system; in fact, the Lyceums were often called lecture schools” (p. 171)(Givens, 1990). Indeed those who sponsored or offered the lectures were often faculty members. For example, George Watt offered free lectures on writing (Godfrey, 1984).

The lecture topics were often religious. Joseph Smith frequently participated in the Lyceum and offered lectures on such subjects as: "no beginning, no end axiom", the doctrine of God once having been a mortal, the Book of Abraham, and the Grand Council in Heaven (Smith, 2007) to name a few. Although lectures were often free occasionally

they were used as fund raisers, for example: July 4, 1843 a celebration was held to raise funds for George J. Adams to use on his pending trip to Russia. Then the next day “over 1,300 people assembled to hear Orson Hyde report his mission to Palestine” (p. 88) (Godfrey, 1984).

Although religion was often discussed other subjects were also frequently addressed as well. These included such topics as phrenology and geology (CES, 2003). “These events were well attended and enthusiastically supported. Sometimes the Saints gave lectures and sometimes guest speakers were brought in from outside. “It was difficult for towns on the American frontier to attract well-known speakers, so a professional lecturer on almost any subject could fill a hall” (p. 171)(Givens, 1990). For example, in March of 1844 “Dr. Reynolds, of Iowa City, lectured on astronomy in the assembly room” (p. 171; 299)(Givens, 1990; Cannon, 1993). Apparently this event as well as others were enjoyable because the Saints were willing to pay for the lectures and then take examinations about the subject matter (Givens, 1990).

Advertisements informing community members of upcoming lectures were run in the Nauvoo Neighbor. The issue from March 13, 1844 advertised:

The young ladies and gentlemen, who have attended Mr. Martin's lectures, will pass a public examination on Saturday in the school room over the store of Messrs. Butler & Lewis, at 3 o'clock P.M. Mr. Martin makes the following offer to the citizens of Nauvoo, that he will give a second course of lectures in the month of April, to a class of one hundred and twenty, for one hundred and twenty dollars, the room procured, warmed if necessary, and lighted at the expense of the class (p. 171)(Givens, 1990).

Indeed, the Saints hungered for learning as shown by the sacrifices they were willing to make to obtain it.

These lectures were not limited to the intellectual pursuits of adults. Heber C. Kimball suggested that the young people meet to hear lectures on practical advice on the wise use of time. In response crowds of youth met in homes and private halls. These meetings resulted in the organization of the Young Gentlemen and Ladies Relief Society of Nauvoo. This charitable auxiliary was to assist the women's Relief Society. Kimball was one of the first speakers and advised against excessive parties, dances, and entertainment. The Prophet Joseph also addressed the youth and counseled them to spend more of their time serving the poor instead. Thus, the Young Gentlemen and Ladies Relief Society turned their attention to the poor and their first project was constructing a house for a disabled immigrant from England (Givens, 1990).

Another aspect of the Nauvoo Lyceum was public debate. Professor Hills frequently sponsored debates (Godfrey, 1974) and encouraged becoming skilled in public speaking. Wandle Mace, one of the evening students, remembered

At the commencement of the school the new members could only use a few minutes of their time, being unused to public speaking and because they must confine themselves to their subject. Before the winter was gone, however, they could occupy all their half hour and keep the subject in hand (p 171)(Givens, 1990).

As the students gained skill in rhetoric other intriguing subjects were debated. On February 21, 1844 the Nauvoo Neighbor ran an announcement for the subject of the following meeting. The question was: "Are the claims and qualifications of Martin Van

Buren for the Presidency as good as those of Henry Clay?" The announcement then cited the names of the ten participants, five for the affirmative and five for the negative (Givens, 1990). It must have been an interesting debate. Other topics included: "Ought capital punishment to be abolished?", "Is there sufficient evidence in the works of nature to prove the existence of a God?", and "Should females be educated to the same extent as males?" (p. 171)(Givens, 1990) Although we do not have the results of these debates one thing is clear: church leaders and city planners would have responded positively to the final question.

These public lectures were open to women as well as men. As in Kirtland and Missouri the equality of education continued to be important to the Latter-day Saints. Again co-education was offered. Public lectures were held in the Lyceum on the importance of educating women and the Nauvoo the county records show that half the students enrolled in Nauvoo's schools were female (Givens, 2007). Some have suggested that "the Mormons' liberal views on the equality of the sexes were in part responsible for hostility to the church in Illinois" (p. 234)(Givens, 1990). During this time period High schools permitting female attendance were rare. As already noted, in Cleveland, Ohio "girls were admitted in 1847, but 'against the protest of the principal'" (p. 75)(Givens, 2007). As before the Latter-day Saints didn't seem to pay attention to what the outside community was doing, they valued education. Thus, the intellectual growth of the Latter-day Saints flourished during the Nauvoo period as they taught and learned together.

music.

In addition to the formal institutes of learning such as the common schools the city chartered permitted the saints to establish literary and dramatic associations. They

were also allowed to create choral and band organizations (Roberts, 1978). With the common schools and the University in session a choir of singers from the Nauvoo Stake presented the Board of Regents of the University of Nauvoo a petition for the appointment of a “professor and wardens in the Department of Music in the University of Nauvoo” (p. 82)(Meservy, 1966). The petitioners proposed that the professor and wardens constitute a “board for the regulation of music in the city” (p. 82)(Meservy, 1966). The petition was quickly adopted and the Board appointed the following people to the leadership positions: Gustavus Hills as professor of Music and B.S. Wilber, Stephen H Goddard, Titus Billings, and John Pack as wardens (Meservy, 1966).

On December 21, 1841 Gustavus Hills and the wardens met to organize the Nauvoo Musical Lyceum. At this same meeting a resolution was passed adopting textbooks for the teaching and examination of music teachers in the city. The manual would be used for teaching the elements of the science of music and guiding the instruction in the “art of sacred singing” in the Nauvoo common schools. In addition, the leadership appointed Porter’s Encyclopedia of Music for those who wished to “pursue the science of music beyond the elementary principles” (p. 82)(Meservy, 1966). Four days later on the 25th of December the music board met again and issued two resolutions:

Resolve 1: That for our own improvement in the art of music, and with a view to extend and elevate musical science, we hereby form ourselves into a Lyceum of Music to be styled “The Teachers’ Lyceum of Music in the City of Nauvoo.

Resolve 2: That the professor shall be ex-officio president, and the wardens ex-officio directors of said Lyceum (p. 82)(Meservy, 1966).

Thus began the first association of music teachers in the United States. The second association would not be established for another thirty-five years (Meservy, 1966). This small group was now in place and prepared to enhance education in Nauvoo through music.

Within a short time, Nauvoo residents were able to attend concerts. In the initial phases some of the performances were offered by amateur groups like the Young Peoples Improvement League and the Relief Society. However by 1843 traveling professional musicians were presenting concerts. For example, the *Nauvoo Neighbor* advertised that “Mr. William H. Keith, will favor the citizens of Nauvoo with a concert this evening [Thursday] of instrumental and vocal music, at the brick store of Joseph Smith, commencing at 6½ o'clock. Admission 25 cents” (p. 178)(Givens, 1990). On another occasion a twenty-three piece vocal and instrumental group performed for Nauvoo's citizenry (Godfrey, 1984). Nauvoo was beginning to thrive as the cultural learning of the community grew.

Through Professor Hills' encouragement music became very popular and in 1842 the Relief Society organized a choir. Several settlements on the outskirts of Nauvoo also founded choirs and these groups flourished throughout the Saint's stay in Nauvoo. These choirs became known for their varied repertoire of religious, popular and even comedic songs, at both religious services and civic events (May, 1992).

Further, the arts benefited greatly by the growing number of talented emigrants from the British Isles (Jensen, 1991). The first band was a twenty-piece ensemble led by William Pitt. They became known as the Nauvoo Brass Band. This musical group composed of English converts to the Church who had emigrated together to Nauvoo

quickly enlivened the city with their talent. The Brass Band instantly became a favorite of Nauvoo citizens with their white trousers and proficiency on trumpets, French horns, piccolos, clarinets, coronets, bugles, trombone, and the bass drum (Givens, 1990). Helen Whitney, who was a young lady during the Nauvoo period, mentioned that the Nauvoo Brass Band was one of her “most pleasant memories of Nauvoo” (p. 177)(Givens, 1990).

Pitt’s band was not the only performing group in the city. The Nauvoo Quadrille Band was also popular. These players offered their music in “benefit dances for widowed families, sick church members, and departing missionaries” (p. 177)(Givens, 1990). They also played for riverboat cruises on the Maid of Iowa and other boats along the Mississippi (Givens, 1990). Another less well known band that performed in Nauvoo was the E. P. Duzette band. The bands and often other musicians were known to provide the music for the ever popular Nauvoo dances. Balls were held for every occasion imaginable. This popular diversion became a frequent enough pass time even dancing schools were offered. This form of public entertainment became an “enduring feature of LDS social life” (p. 3)(May, 1992).

There were also several poets and song writers among Nauvoo’s citizens who learned to expand their talents while living in the city. Perhaps two of the most well known are W.W. Phelps and Eliza R. Snow. However, other popular songs were also composed by city residents. For example, John Taylor wrote “The Seer” and another resident, Joel H. Johnson, composed more than 735 songs (Godfrey, 1984). Not only were Nauvoo citizens learning of reading and arithmetic but many of them studied and improved their musical talents through participation in the groups sponsored by the Musical Lyceum.

As with the common schools, and the University the saints began their learning of music before there was an official building to house it. Joseph Smith's Red Brick Store was the first location to house cultural events however the upper story of the store, despite its size, soon became inadequate for the growing performances. In April of 1844 the Masonic Hall was dedicated for the use of the city. The first floor sported a theater with seats for 150 audience members, a stage, and dressing rooms was used for dramatic productions, musical presentations and public meetings. The second floor was used for public, church, and political meetings and the third floor was a Masonic lodge that was often used for dances and parties (Hurd, 2004).

However, because of the Saints affinity for music soon the Masonic Hall, or Cultural Hall, as it was sometimes called, was too small as well (Givens, 1990). Perhaps it was the wonderful success of the "Grand Concert" that convinced Nauvoo's leaders of the need for a building to house the city's music. On October 23, 1844, the *Neighbor* announced a "music and concert hall in process of construction [which] will house the Nauvoo Choir, numbering over 100 members, and band" (p. 177)(Givens, 1990). So important was music to the city's cultural life that in 1845 the Saints completed the Music Hall. The building measured thirty feet by fifty feet had eleven-foot arched ceilings, sounding jars for better acoustics, a raised platform at one end, and would seat between seven and eight hundred people (Givens, 1990; May, 1992).

The dedication of the Hall ran three consecutive evenings. Both the Nauvoo Choir and the Brass Band played and admission was free. The *Neighbor* ran an article detailing the event and asking for donations to help finish the building. Despite being unfinished the Hall was used and all three nights of the dedication were overflowing. On

the third evening Heber Kimball addressed the audience and commented that one thousand people were in attendance. The chief of Nauvoo Police mentioned in his journal that the concert commenced at six p.m. and ended at eleven o'clock and that "all were entertained" (p. 177)(Givens, 1990). Despite the lengthy performance the community relished the new Music Hall and returned again and again for future performances.

After the dedication the Hall received regular use for both vocal and instrumental performances. These performances included everything from the full bands, to violin trios, and vocal soloists (Godfrey, 1984; Jensen, 1991). On April 16, 1845 the Nauvoo Neighbor ran a review of the most recent concerts the editor seems to have thought highly of the performances:

The concerts at the Music Hall, last week, were excellent. The compositions and music most of which was the natural production of the city ... was(sic) first rate, and does credit to the genius and talent of the saints. To enjoy life, in a civil, virtuous manner, being thankful to God for the privilege, and honoring him as the giver of all good, is certainly the highest earthly happiness controlled by man.

But to the concert, it was made up of the sacred, sentimental, and comic, and done up to the very sense of the heart (p. 20)(Hurd, 2004).

These early Americans were a gifted group and had a deep love for the refinement that came to the soul through music.

The Music Lyceum proved beneficial to the city in many ways. For one it helped to unify the community by bringing understanding and appreciation for different cultures. It also offered citizens from various backgrounds the opportunity to work together to

achieve a greater harmony. A times and Seasons article printed January 15, 1842 praised the Music Lyceum for unifying and bringing to order “a people emigrated from different countries, with different prejudices and habits” (p. 15)(Hurd, 2004). The Nauvoo Lyceum and teachers association were offering instruction and enlightenment not only to their students but through them to the entire community. Indeed this aspect of education was a grand success.

theater.

In addition to a belief that music would educate, refine, and enrich the citizens of Nauvoo the city leadership also believed that the theater could provide a medium of learning unattainable in other ways. “Theater was esteemed to be a morally instructive art form” (p. 16)(Hurd, 2004). Thus, the creation of a theater was also included in the powers granted under the City Charter. “Nauvoo was unique as a covenant community in its embracing of theater” (p. 16)(Hurd, 2004). Indeed the plays presented in Nauvoo were selected because of their ability to reinforce Christian values, educate the public, and provide light entertainment. The Dramatic association helped to unify and civilize a very diverse group of people as well as fill educational, moral and social needs (Hurd, 2004).

On July 15, 1842 the first theater performance was held in upstairs of the Red Brick Store. Later on, Lyman Powell, a professional actor, requested permission from Joseph Smith, the current mayor, to perform in the city. Smith’s reply dated April 1, 1843 offers some insight to Joseph’s feelings regarding the theatrical arts:

I have no objections to your visiting Nauvoo. The citizens of this place are a free people and {illegible} the theatricals or anything else not repugnant to good order

and decency can act as they think proper. I do not wish to restrain nor interfere with their liberties. It will be seen by an ordinance of the city Council passed July 5th 1842 that full permission is granted to any public shows, theatricals, or other public amusements of a “moral character” but immoral or indecent exhibitions are strictly prohibited as well as drunkenness (p. 20)(Hurd, 2004).

With permission granted the play went on and Nauvoo received its first troop of professional actors.

Later, in April the play Pizarro was performed for the “benefit of the financially encumbered prophet” due to unjust court trials and fees (Carmack, 1994). In May of 1844 Joseph Smith met with Thomas Lyne, a professional tragedian who had played in New York and Philadelphia, and most recently, lent his talents to the latest play. Shortly after this meeting the city officially formed the Nauvoo Dramatic Association. Lyne became the manger and director of the Nauvoo Theater and, along with his brother-in-law, spearheaded the Association. The Dramatic Association performed not only in Nauvoo but in other parts of the Mississippi as well, traveling as far as Burlington, Iowa to play (Hurd, 2004). Incidentally, Lyne became a close friend of the Prophet Joseph to the point that he was in the group accompanying the Smith brothers to Carthage. Despite being sent home from the company along with others, Lyne refused to leave Joseph’s side (Hurd, 2004).

Performances were offered in school houses, the Nauvoo court room, and in the Red Brick store. “The leaders of Nauvoo demonstrated their commitment to theater and faith in its ability to educate its people by allocating the town’s civic and church facilities in support of the art” (p. 24) (Hurd, 2004). However, the growing city needed a theater

house and in 1844 the Masonic Hall was completed. Charlott Haven, a young lady visiting her Mormon brother, spent the winter in Nauvoo and was pleased with the cultural refinement of the balls and especially the theater where she saw Erastus Snow play a leading role (Godfrey, 1984).

The Nauvoo Theater offered at least nine different plays including: Pizarro, or The Death of Rolla, John Jones of the War Office, Therese or the Orphan of Geneva, Douglas, The Idiot Witness, William Tell, Damon and Pythias, The Iron Chest, and Virginius (Godfrey, 1984; Hurd, 2004). Theater goers were required to have stamina for the long performances. Usually the plays were five-acts and were followed by a comedy or farce. They were also often interspersed with vocal and instrumental music and its encores. The Brass Band usually offered the musical intermissions in the Nauvoo theater (Hurd, 2004).

Adults were not the only ones who participated in Dramatic Association. Helen Mar Whitney, the daughter of Heber Kimball, was fifteen when she acted in one of Nauvoo's plays. Other youth of the city also participated in drama. The Coles held performances of music and drama with their students (Hurd, 2004).

The support from city and church officials encouraged the development of drama in Nauvoo. As a natural result of this focus on culture the city became more unified, more refined and more educated. The Nauvoo Dramatic Association and Theater also provided moral and intellectual enlightenment thus helping to further the cause of heavenly education in Nauvoo.

visual arts.

Although Nauvoo had neither a Visual Arts department at the University nor an Artists Association art was still an important aspect of learning in Nauvoo. The emigration of so many talented Saints enhanced the artistic culture of Nauvoo. “Portrait Painter William W. Major and artist Sutcliffe Maudsley were both welcome additions to the city” (p. 77)(Jensen, 1991). In addition to displaying their talents many of Nauvoo’s artists offered to teach as well. A letter by Sally Murdock describes the flourishing of portrait painting in Nauvoo

John is very much engaged in learning to paint portraits; his teacher is a Mr. Vansickle who occupies one of my rooms; he takes a portrait from life and John copies it[.] he has taken several in this way among which are John Smith (Uncle to Joseph) his wife and son, Joseph Young who was to Hamilton you know and he is now engaged in taking mine from life and it looks quite natural although he has had but one sitting[.] John is now preparing to take Eunice's likeness[.] You see we are getting to be fashionable as the 'twelve' and almost every one that can afford it are having their portraits taken[.] If John continues to improve as he has done so far in his profession, he can always make a comfortable living and if he should arise to eminence he would probably grow wealthy (Holzapfel, 1995).

The visual arts continued to flourish in Nauvoo and added to the cultural education of the community.

public library.

Learning was so important to the Latter-day Saints that reading was a common pastime. In order to offer all citizens the opportunity of improving their minds through good literature the Saints created a public library for the use of the citizens of Nauvoo.

The institution was not supported by taxes, rather it was supplied by subscription and members were asked to donate books. Some of the local donors included Ebenezer Robinson, Sidney Rigdon, and Heber C. Kimball (Institute, 1844). In addition, Joseph Smith contributed a “substantial number of important books on such subjects as philosophy, religion and archaeology to the Nauvoo Library and Literary Institute” (p. 299)(Cannon, 1993). Once again Joseph Smith led by example. His involvement in the Institute was just one of many ways in which he encouraged education. Because of generous donations, the Nauvoo Library grew to hold over four hundred volumes and provided an exceptional source of materials for study and learning (Godfrey, 1974).

The Nauvoo Library and Literary institute also sponsored lectures. One such lecture was offered by a Dr. Smith who spoke on a “New French System of Medical Practice” (p. 92)(Godfrey, 1974; Godfrey, 1984). Although the lectures were intended for Institute members many of them, including the one offered by Dr. Smith were free to the public.

Another imposing collection of books in Nauvoo was held in the Seventies Library. This library had holdings that also embraced artistic and scientific studies from around the world. As the members of the seventy traveled in missionary labors they were to gather all “the curious things both natural and artificial with all the knowledge, invention, and wonderful specimens of genius that have been growing in the world for almost six thousand years” (p. 87)(Godfrey, 1984). This library was also intended to help educate those preparing for travel due to church service.

In addition to the public libraries many of the Saints had private libraries in their homes. Joseph Smith had over fifty volumes in his personal collection. Other private

libraries included those of James Ivins, Sidney Rigdon, John Grey, and George Gee. Among these collections were a wide range of books from geography and grammar to languages and theology; there were also several books of poetry (Godfrey, 1984). When one compares Nauvoo's literary holdings to those "found among people of similar backgrounds, educational attainments, and possessing similar financial resources, the private libraries in Nauvoo are not altogether unimpressive" (p. 87-88)(Godfrey, 1984).

Reading was important to many of the Saints and although the libraries provided various genres of books for circulation the residents of Nauvoo preferred more intellectual volumes. From the minutes of the Nauvoo Library and Literary Institute we know that library patrons avoided novels and chose instead books on history and philosophy. John Locke's *Essay concerning Human Understanding*, biographies of Napoleon, as well as English, French, and American histories appeared to have been most popular and were circulated frequently (Godfrey, 1975; Givens, 2007). When compared to books read by other Americans of the time perhaps the Mormons are not all that unique in their love of reading. However, the fact that the new city made such efforts to support individual and public reading attests to the fact that the Saints valued learning and were not the ignorant, uneducated, or simpleminded people they are often portrayed to be.

the newspaper.

Other mediums of reading that were supported by the citizens of Nauvoo include local and national newspapers. Some of the Saints frequently read papers like the *New York Herald* and the *Chicago Democrat* (Godfrey, 1984). *The Times and Seasons* and the *Nauvoo Neighbor* were the two local papers and were the chief sources of news in the

city. The Saints had previous experience with publishing newspapers in Missouri and Ohio. During the siege of Far West in Missouri, Church leaders buried the printing press it was recovered and cleaned in 1839 and brought to Nauvoo for the printing of the *Times and Seasons*. The first copy was printed in November of 1839. As the “official publication of the Church, the *Times and Seasons* was carefully controlled and supervised by the prophet Joseph Smith” (p. 246)(CES, 2003).

Citizens of Nauvoo could expect to see a variety of items published in the *Times and Seasons*, including doctrinal statements, church policies, excerpts from Joseph’s official history, portions of the Pearl of Great Price, General Conference addresses, official letters from the Council of the Twelve Apostles, minutes of important Church meetings, reprints from other newspapers, and the King Follett Discourse. In addition, there were several articles discussing the Book of Mormon as well as archaeological evidence and discussion of South American geographical locations (CES, 2003). Along with the *Times and Seasons* Nauvoo had a weekly nonreligious newspaper that issued articles about agriculture, business, science, art, and community events. This was first printed in April 1842 and became known as *Nauvoo Neighbor*. William Smith, brother of the Prophet, and later John Taylor both served as editor for the paper (CES, 2003). The citizens of Nauvoo thus had the opportunity to be well informed and thoroughly educated through the many public resources of the city.

museums and public exhibits.

As the Nauvoo’s public education efforts expanded the need was recognized for the housing of ancient records. Thus, the residents of Nauvoo founded a museum as well. In it the Latter-day Saints kept ancient manuscripts, paintings and hieroglyphics (Givens,

2007) as well as contributions from the travels of missionaries and other saints. Addison Pratt made the first contribution of a whale's tooth, coral, and the jawbone of a porpoise (CES, 2003).

In addition Nauvoo had at least one zoological exhibition. Admission cost fifty cents for adults and twenty-five cents for children (Godfrey, 1984). Another form of public cultural education came from the local Indian tribes who, on occasion, were invited to perform some of their ancient dances (Godfrey, 1984). The final public works devoted to education were the city parks. There were at least two within Nauvoo city limits one called The Kimball Gardens and the other Park Place (Godfrey, 1984). These were places of quiet where citizens could go to reflect and meditate. They were also places of beauty and horticultural learning.

The city planners did all they could to promote learning and educational excellence within Nauvoo. From the University to the public libraries and the zoo to the common schools, learning and intellectual improvement were at the heart of the leaders motivations. Their success in achieving those ends was noted not only by the residents but by visitors as well. A statesman, Thomas L. Kane, visited Nauvoo and later, in a lecture to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, he commented that "the unmistakable marks of industry, enterprise, and educated wealth everywhere made the scene one of singular and most striking beauty" (p. 251)(McGavin, 1946). Another visitor, a United States Army officer was surprised by the educational achievements of the city and observed that because of the "'learned footing' upon which the Saints were establishing their religion, 'ecclesiastical history presents no parallel to this people'" (p. 251)(Givens, 1990). Truly Nauvoo was a unique place in America. It was a city where heavenly

learning and eternal progression was at the center of every pursuit and activity. The importance of learning was made even clearer by the public educational system put in place.

Brief Comparison of Public Education in Illinois and the Rest of the United States

Education in the Early American Colonies

In looking at the Latter-day Saint experience with education in Nauvoo one must also consider the wider context of the state and the nation.

In some of the American colonies education had a different purpose than in Europe. In England and elsewhere only the wealthy were educated. However, among the Puritans, in a society that depended entirely upon one another for survival, each child was important. In early Plymouth town most education was done at home and with the purpose of teaching children to read the Bible. Among the other New England colonies of the Puritans the purpose of every aspect of life was to prepare the “city on a hill” for the second coming of Christ (Winthrop, 1869). Later in American history Noah Webster stated that,

the central goal of education was to train youth in the precepts of Christianity. No truth is more evident to my mind than that the Christian religion must be the basis of any government intended to secure the rights and privileges of a free people (Shenandoah, 2002).

For early Americans, the purpose of education was to maintain a morally upright people and thereby secure the freedom of the nation. By educating their children they were creating future “nation builders” (p. 64)(Jackson, 2002).

The first official school in New England was the Boston Latin School that was founded in 1635 with the intention to educate the upper class future leaders (Shenandoah, 2002). Harvard was founded a year later and was the first higher education institution in the New World. The college offered courses in theology in addition to literature, arts and science (Marshall, 2000). Six years later in 1642 Massachusetts passed the Bay School Law requiring parents to ensure that their children knew the “principles of religion and the laws of the commonwealth” (Sass, 2009). After another five years the Massachusetts Law of 1647 passed requiring every town of at least 50 families to hire a schoolmaster who would teach the town’s children to read and write. Further, all towns of 100 families or more must provide a Latin grammar school master to prepare students for studies at Harvard College (Sass, 2009). Thus, in the New England colonies education was viewed as something necessary for all children and especially important to uphold the religious piety of the time.

As time progressed so did the number of subjects taught. In 1690 when the first New England Primer was printed in Boston it was the most widely used school book in the area. The Primer focused mainly on teaching the alphabet and religious piety. Almost a century later, because of his dissatisfaction with English textbooks of the day, Noah Webster printed his famous spelling and grammar books along with an elementary reader. These became widely used throughout American schools (Sass, 2009). Additional subjects received a greater emphasis as well. As time went on, the eighteenth century school system put a much stronger emphasis on science with Benjamin Franklin founding the Society of Friends and identifying the positive properties of electricity. By the late 1760’s the Fine Arts movement gained momentum with the emergence of theater,

music, and painting (Marshall, 2000). Thus, with the quantity and quality of education on the rise among all classes in the eastern colonies the stage was set for another beginning in American history.

By the mid 1700's America had seen an explosion of growth and reform in education. By 1743 Benjamin Franklin had formed the American Philosophical Society, which brought ideas from the European Enlightenment as well as the writings of John Locke to America. These ideas as well as others lead to a secularization of colonial schools and opened the door for courses in history, geography, navigation, surveying, science, arithmetic, and modern and classical languages (Sass, 2009). Additionally, because of these new ideas sparked by the Enlightenment many in the wealthy class decided that education created financially and morally superior citizens. Therefore, many towns set up free schools or public common schools for the poor (Marshall, 2000).

Originally, the teachers in the colonies were from the ministry, however, with the educational laws and colleges emerging, teaching became a profession distinct from the local religion. In 1770, Christopher Dock published the first book about teaching in the American Colonies (Sass, 2009). By the time the American Revolution began the literacy level was near 100%. John Adams said to find someone who could not read was as rare as a comet (Shenandoah, 2002). As time progressed the emphasis on equality in education would only increase with the founding of colleges for young ladies with the first opening in 1787, and schools for those with special needs opening as early as 1817 (Sass, 2009). By 1839 the first state funded school specifically for teacher education opened in Lexington, Massachusetts (Sass, 2009). Education continued to spread through the States with Massachusetts leading the way in private and public endeavors. The

Americans were making remarkable progress and rapidly becoming more and more educated.

Education in Illinois

According to an ordinance passed in 1785 every sixteenth section in every township of the Northwest Territory would be used for funding public education “There shall be reserved the lot No. 16 of every township, for the maintenance of public schools within the said township” (p. 19)(Abbott, 1917). Two years later in 1787 an ordinance contained the declaration that “religion, morality and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall be forever encouraged” (p. 20)(Abbott, 1917). Therefore, when each town in the State of Illinois was mapped out the sixteenth square mile lot was to be reserved. However noble these ordinances may sound practically speaking these generous funds for education were provided in part because politicians believed that citizens would more readily move to and purchase public land in the territories if schooling were provided for. At this time public schooling was a dream that hadn’t yet come true even in Massachusetts, the nation’s leader in education.

In 1818 when Illinois applied for statehood the territorial legislature drafted the State constitution without any mention of education despite the 1787 laws. Indeed there were no laws whatsoever in Illinois regarding education. That same year Congress passed the “enabling act” to further encourage public education. However, many states continued to ignore this issue. Those townships that did sell the mandated public land often mismanaged the money or wastefully disposed of it (Abbott, 1917). One way or the other schooling did not improve. Some felt that taxation rather than land grants was

the only way to support public schooling. That method, however, was adamantly resisted by the great majority of new settlers in frontier towns.

The idea that a successful democracy was built upon educated citizens was accepted by most American citizens, however, that such education should be universal and free was not so easily swallowed especially in the frontier states. By 1818, when Illinois obtained statehood, there was not yet a state in the nation that had put these beliefs into practice, although Massachusetts was close.

In 1825 when John Quincy Adams took office the “common school did not exist as an American institution” (p. 18)(Abbott, 1917). Adams was a proponent of universal education however, spent more of his presidency on other issues. According to John McMaster:

In some states [the common school] was slowly struggling into existence; in others it was quite unknown. Here, the maintenance was voluntary. There, free education was limited to children of paupers or of parents too poor to educate their sons and daughters at their own expense. Elsewhere, state aid was coupled with local taxation. Scarcely anywhere did the common school system really flourish. Parents were indifferent. Teachers as a class were ill fitted for the work before them, and many a plan which seemed most promising as displayed in the laws accomplished little for the children of the state (McMaster, 1898 -1921) .

Most Americans were more concerned with sustaining life than with the future of the democracy. In addition, some states were so large geographically that they truly appeared a wilderness to the settlers. Illinois, for example was more than fifty-six thousand square miles (Abbott, 1917). To even begin to settle, organize a government,

and begin passing laws to govern the diverse citizenry of a territory so large was a huge task. In addition, many of the citizens of Illinois were divided over political issues such as slavery. Further, many of the new settlers in Illinois were emigrants from Pennsylvania, Louisiana, and Kentucky all states in which the “principle of universal education through public schools had not yet been established” (p. 19)(Abbott, 1917). Education therefore became secondary in importance.

Despite the fact that the public sentiment was strongly against it by 1825 the Illinois legislature passed an act providing for a school system supported by taxes. The preamble stated that:

To enjoy our rights and liberties we must understand them; their security and protection ought to be the first object of a free people; and it is a well-established fact that no nation has ever continued long in the enjoyment of civil and political freedom, which was not virtuous and enlightened; and believing that the advancement of literature always has been and ever will be the means of developing more fully the rights of man, that the mind of every citizen in a republic, is the common property of society, and constitutes the basis of its strength and happiness; it is therefore considered the peculiar duty of a free government, like ours, to encourage and extend the improvement and cultivation of the intellectual energies of the whole.

After that bold declaration the first section of the statute provided that:

There shall be established a common school or schools in each of the counties of this state, which shall be open and free to every class of white citizens, between the ages of five and twenty-one years of age (p. 22)(Abbott, 1917).

Thus Illinois provided for free public schooling for white children. However, according to Governor Thomas Ford, the very idea of a tax was “so hateful” that the act was “the subject of much clamorous opposition” (p. 22)(Abbott, 1917). “The people,” he said, “preferred to pay all that was necessary for the tuition of their children or to keep them in ignorance rather than submit to the mere name of a tax by which their wealthier neighbors bore the brunt of the expense of their education” (p. 22)(Abbott, 1917). Indeed citizens were so opposed to the law that it was promptly repealed by the next legislature. And an additional amendment was passed stating that: “No person shall hereafter be taxed for the support of any free school in this state, unless by his or her own free will and consent, first had and obtained, in writing” (p. 24)(Abbott, 1917). Twenty-five years would pass before any representatives of the people would make another provision for tax-funded education (Abbott, 1917; Berglund, 1966).

In 1831 an article published in the *Annals of Education* stated that “only about one-fourth of the children between four and sixteen years of age attended school during any portion of the year. The schools that existed were kept open only a few weeks in the year and were miserably equipped and taught” (p. 26)(Abbott, 1917). As a result of the people’s negligence in providing schools the majority of children in Illinois had no opportunity for fundamental education.

With the people so unwilling to tax themselves for the support of education the state legislators took a different route and in 1831 without waiting for congressional sanction passed an act legalizing the immediate sale of the sixteenth section of land in each township (Abbott, 1917). So land that would have been increasingly valuable in coming years and was intended to be held as a trust fund for the education of the state’s

children was wastefully sold.

There is no doubt that the legislators had good intentions, albeit short sighted, as shown by statements from Joseph Duncan, who had proposed the act of 1825,

Every consideration connected with the virtue, elevation and happiness of man and the character and prosperity of our state, and of our common country, calls upon you to establish some permanent system of common schools, by which an education may be placed within the power, nay, if possible, secured to every child in the state (p.355)(Abbott, 1917).

Every child in the state was an ambitious goal considering that of the more than twenty thousand children in Illinois more than half were “destitute of means for an education” (p. 26)(Abbott, 1917).

Abraham Lincoln was also a member of the legislature and had previously made his thoughts regarding schooling public in the *Sangamon Journal*

I view [education] as the most important subject that we as a people can be engaged in. That every man may receive at least a moderate education, and thereby be enabled to read the histories of his own and other countries, by which he may duly appreciate the value of our free institutions, appears to be an object of vital importance on this account alone, to say nothing of the advantages and satisfaction to be derived from being able to read the Scriptures and other works, both of a religious and moral nature, for ourselves. For my part, I desire to see the time when education, and, by its means, morality, sobriety, enterprise and industry, shall become much more general than at present, and I should be gratified to have it in my power to contribute something to the advancement of

any measure which might have a tendency to accelerate the happy period (p. 28)
(Abbott, 1917) .

Unfortunately in their well meaning attempt to bring education to the children of the state the eager legislature moved more quickly than the means could provide and valuable funds were lost.

During this same period Horace Mann, known today as the father of public education, was serving in Massachusetts' legislature and advocating public education as the "great equalizer of men" (Wagoner, 2008). Along with the rest of Americans, Mann envisioned the common schools as places designed to "prepare students to 'carry out the duties and privileges of life in a republic' and to 'weld a democracy' out of the disparate human stuff of the frontier" (p. 61)(Jackson, 2002). These idealist reformers saw the common school as a way to culturally unify and transmit the society. The main concerns of legislators were, logically, political and not religious as was the case of the Latter-day Saints. Mann supported a "state-supported, publicly controlled" system that would be a "unifying force, assimilating immigrants, foreign language groups, and other diverse elements of American society into one nation" (p. 61)(Jackson, 2002). Although this was a noble goal the forward momentum was slow in coming. The biggest obstacle to the common school movement came from the citizens themselves who did not feel it right that they should be taxed to educate another man's children (Berglund, 1966).

Such were the sentiments of the Illinois citizens when the Mormons arrived in 1839. It is no wonder that with the passage of the Nauvoo Charter Abraham Lincoln and other legislators congratulated Jon C. Bennett. The educational clause alone which allowed the city to tax her citizens for educational purposes was clearly something these

leaders desired for the greater community. This group managed not only to establish a city, but an entire unified public school system, a university, and public adult education. These programs were implemented before the State of Illinois could even get legislation off the capitol steps—an enviable feat which contributed to later contention. Yet the efforts of the Latter-day Saints must have also given these men hope for the future of schooling in Illinois.

Although the Mormons used the term common schools and public education, their purpose, definition, and desire for the common schools and public education were quite different than those of other Americans. Horace Mann, for example, held the philosophy of creating a melting pot of human capital to be used in furthering the goals of the republic. In his early years Mann believed and taught “the spiritual end-goal of education, whereby a child develops into a “spiritual similitude to its Author.” However, later in his final thesis Mann held to goals very different than those of the Mormons. He was wary of anything that could bring division. He felt that “exclusive sectarian education crippled the power of the Union’, as did ‘potential threats to social unity’ like the ‘widening gap between rich and poor, the schismatic tendencies in religion, the growing heterogeneity of the population, and political and sectional divisiveness” (p. 61) (Jackson, 2002). Whereas Joseph Smith valued unity his reasons were different and it certainly was not the end goal. The Latter-day Saints prized education more for its ability to make one like God. In addition, one who was educated fully would be compassionate and good to his or her fellowmen. The purpose behind education for the Latter-day Saints was not sameness but divinity.

By February 1, 1841 the Nauvoo Charter was effective and just fifteen days later all University School Administrators had been elected. By the 22nd the City Council turned over all administrative power to the board of Regents. March 1st the infrastructure was in place and open enrollment commenced for the 1800 elementary and secondary age students. It should be noted that this was the beginning of public education in the city. The Saints had commenced educating their own children as well as those of the poor and widowed families shortly after they arrived in Commerce. As for the rest of the state in May of 1841, it was “estimated that more than one half of the children of the state did not attend school at all and that most of the schools were not in session more than thirty days in the year” (p. 31)(Abbott, 1917).

The citizens of Nauvoo differed from their neighbors in more than just religious ideals and practices. Not only were most of the Saints from New England, or the Free states, but they were in favor of both public and co-education. These educational differences alone were enough to make some Illinois citizens violent. Along with these political leanings the Mormons had a formidable militia, larger than any in the state, and their city government leaders had complete control of that armed force. For Illinois residents the strong central government supported in Nauvoo made them nervous. According to Hallowas citizens of frontier Illinois leaned much more to the political democracy and were so opposed to Nauvoo because it echoed of old world authority – a theocracy. They feared government control and reveled in their frontier freedom (Hallwas, 1990). Consequently, as time progressed and Nauvoo grew to rival Chicago the violent opposition to the Mormons increased as well.

The Martyrdom and Changes in Nauvoo Education

The educational, business, and other public endeavors came virtually to a standstill with the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith on June 27, 1844. After a week the city slowly came to life again. In her diary Zina Diantha Huntington Jacobs, a young teacher, records that after the martyrdom she commenced schooling again on July 8th but then closed her school permanently July 31st (Madsen, 1994). However, most schools, at least the public ones, continued to function. And from 1844 to 1845 the Saints enjoyed a year of relative peace wherein schools and businesses continued to function as normal (Smith, 1969).

In December 1844 the Nauvoo Charter was repealed despite all attempts to prevent it, which were soundly rejected. The power to run a city government was removed from the Latter-day Saints. The city leadership instead functioned as a volunteer town council. The police force was also reduced to a volunteer basis. On September 30, 1845 Stephen Douglas and other representatives of Governor Ford visited the city with concerns that the saints were too involved in county politics and issued an ultimatum they must leave or fight (Smith, 1969). The ultimatum begged the question fight with what weapons? The Nauvoo Legion had been disbanded and all arms confiscated by Ford a year earlier. The local citizens who attempted to be law abiding and continue their lives in relative peace had been consistently disrupted by unrestrained mob violence.

Realizing they would be forced to vacate Nauvoo, the Mormons spent their remaining months in Illinois preparing for the westward trek (Meservy, 1966). Despite preparations to move west there was still a great concern for the education of Nauvoo's citizens. At the Church General Conference held in October of 1845 Heber Kimball and

W.W. Phelps voiced the concern that school books continue to be printed for the education of the children (Smith, 1969). Most schools continued to function during the remainder of 1845. However, all official records for the city's public school system end in the winter of that year (Smith, 1969). By the time the Saints left Nauvoo in 1846 "seventeen different institutions of and programs of learning, including the first adult education course in America," had been established (Smith, 1969). Indeed the Latter-day Saints valued education and believed that it should be offered to every age and class of people (Smith, 1969).

The Impact of the University of Nauvoo on the Latter-day Saints

Although the dream of the University of the City of Nauvoo never came to complete fruition the seeds of a love for learning were planted in the hearts of the people and they carried those ideals with them to the west and beyond. For the westward-bound Saints, the University, the common schools, and the public education of Nauvoo had a long-lasting effect. The structure, ideals, and methodologies of these institutions became an inspiration for future educational aspirations (Black, 2009). The pattern established in Nauvoo proved invaluable to Brigham Young and others as they established the first institutions of higher learning wherever they went.

Despite the difficulties brought on by the murder of Joseph Smith and the persecution, followed by the exodus to the Great Basin, education was not forgotten. When the vanguard company of Saints left Nauvoo in February of 1846 there were few children in the company. However, by the fall of 1846 the majority of the Mormons had vacated the city and spread in companies across the plains. At this time Brigham Young sent order that schools be established for the children. Young further instructed the

migrating Saints to bring with them at least a copy of every valuable treatise on education. They were to take

every book, map, chart, or diagram that may contain interesting, useful, and attractive matter, to gain the attention of children, and cause them to love to learn to read; and, also every historical, mathematical, philosophical, geographical, geological, astronomical, scientific, practical, and all other variety of useful and interesting writings, maps, etc.(p. 442)(Gardner, 1992).

Brigham wanted the saints to compile the most valuable works and find information they could on every subject that they might teach the rising generation (Gardner, 1992).

Additionally, the group that sailed on the Brooklyn to California to bring the printing press, took with them a “ large quantity of school books, among which are named spelling books, histories, books on arithmetic, astronomy, grammar, geography, Hebrew grammars, slates, etc.” Education in the Great Salt Lake was patterned after previous experience in Nauvoo and Kirtland (Arrington, 1977).

In addition to curricular materials the Latter-day Saints took the human resources they had gained. The organizational, administrative, and instructional skills they gleaned from Nauvoo set the precedent for higher education in the future (CES, 2003). When Brigham Young began the establishment of education in Utah he appointed a Board of Regents then specifically called for teacher training:

I feel that sufficient attention is not paid to the selection and examination of teachers, or the manner of conducting Schools. Although the Board of Regents, have doubtless by their influence aided much, and are still extending their influence and exertions in a general way to advance the cause of education, yet at

this moment, there is not a Parent School for the instruction of Teachers—a Mathematical or High School where the higher branches are taught (p. 16)(Black, 2009).

The Regents followed Brigham Young's council and continued to improve education in the settlements of Utah.

Other universities established by the church in Utah followed the standard of the University of the City of Nauvoo. For example the first institution, the University of Deseret founded in 1850 later became the University of Utah. Orson Spencer used his skills from Nauvoo and served as chancellor in Utah (Cannon, 1993). Later, when Brigham Young University was founded in 1875, the same pattern of excellence in education was followed. Numerous other academies were also formed and education was offered to every class and age.

The saints also continued with LDS journalism. It began in 1832 with the publication of the *Evening and the Morning Star* and continues today with *Deseret News*, which remains a Church-owned Salt Lake City daily newspaper (May, 1992). The importance of the arts has also continued with the many theaters and musical groups which were founded when the saints reached Utah and continue to exist today. Brigham Young told the Board of Regents in Nauvoo that “Education is the power to think clearly, the power to act well in the world's work, and the power to appreciate life” (p. 442)(Gardner, 1992). He also believed that “A good school teacher is one of the most essential members of society” (p. 442)(Gardner, 1992).

Education in Illinois Following the Exodus of the Saints

With the majority of the Latter-day Saints following Brigham Young, the city of Nauvoo declined. As the vast population joined the exodus, businesses were vacated, homes abandoned and the University of the City of Nauvoo closed. New settlers eventually moved into the city and the shops and homes the Saints had built were again occupied. The new citizens of Nauvoo knew little or nothing of the city government that had once existed. They had no understanding of the educational aspirations of the Mormons or the common school system they had established. The new residents also sought schooling for their children. However, according to the Hancock Eagle there was a notable shortage of teachers in the area.

SCHOOLS: We are requested to call the attention of Teachers to the fact that a good school is much wanted in this place; and should a competent person think proper to establish on at this place, he would probably be extensively patronized (p. 15)(Black, 2009).

In fact there was a veritable academic void in the city and surrounding area. Indeed there is little evidence that any educational efforts of the Saints had a lasting impact on the town or the state that, when compared with the achievements of the Mormons, was in its infancy when it came to public education (Black, 2009).

In 1848 Church Agents from Utah returned to Nauvoo to conduct business and encourage remaining Saints to migrate. John Scott, one of the agents, climbed to the roof of the temple for a view of the city. That evening he noted what he saw: "It's truly a scene of destruction. All parts of the temple, city and surrounding country is one scene of desolation; horror and dread seemed to be depicted in the countenance of every person that lives in Nauvoo. Not even the Saints that live there are altogether clear of the same

doleful looks” (p. 28)(Leonard, 1990). On a later visit Andrew Jenson remarked that the city was full of weeds and disrepair. He came to the conclusion that “a curse had indeed rested upon the place ever since the Saints were driven from there” (p. 28)(Leonard, 1990). As Nauvoo itself remained virtually uncivilized and certainly without a formal education system, the state of Illinois did continue, albeit slowly, in its quest for public education.

In 1844 Governor Ford addressed the General Assembly and emphasized common school education as “of the utmost importance to the well-being of the people; the due provision for which is essential to the perpetuity of enlightened republicanism, and absolutely necessary to a proper and just administration of our democratic institutions” (p. 33)(Abbott, 1917). By 1845 the legislature passed a law that encouraged the principle of free schooling by allowing local taxation by a two-thirds vote for any school district in the state.

By 1846, when the Saints were fleeing Illinois, a common school convention was held in Chicago, which became known as the “city of free schools.” At this time there were 10 teachers in the city with a population that neared 30,000. During this assembly Chicago was praised for the passage of a previous law allowing the city to tax herself for educational purposes. In addition, her school system, which was looked upon with great respect, was pointed to as an example for the rest of Illinois. The superintendent noted that:

The inhabitants – deeply impressed with the importance of the common school education—have raised, by voluntary taxation, under the provision of the law, the large sum of five thousand, two hundred and four dollars, which will

continue and increase as an annual tax; and what has been the result? Their schools are in a most flourishing condition. They have erected large and elegant school-houses, procured competent and accomplished teachers, and have two thousand and ninety-five children in daily attendance at these nurseries of learning (p. 35)(Abbott, 1917).

Indeed the city was making progress. Common Schools were becoming more accepted as the economy improved and many new emigrants from the eastern states, who were accustomed to public education, moved to the frontier.

By 1849 the annual School Inspectors report detailed progress since 1840: there has been a change unparalleled in the school history of any western city. Then a few miserably clad children, unwashed and uncombed, were huddled into small, uncleanly and unventilated apartments, seated upon uncomfortable benches. Now, the school reports of the township show the names of nearly 2,000 pupils, two-thirds of whom are in daily attendance in spacious, ventilated, well-regulated schoolrooms. The scholars are neat in person and orderly in behavior (p. 435)(Abbott, 1917).

The same statements could easily have been made about the education system of Nauvoo eight years earlier. Regardless, public education was improving in Illinois as well as the rest of the United States.

By 1855 Chicago sported 9 public schools and 42 teachers with about 6,826 pupils (Abbott, 1917). Finally in 1856 a law for free public education was passed which included a principle providing for taxation to support common schools. According to a resolution in this law “the property of the state should be taxed to educate the children of

the state” (p. 36)(Abbott, 1917). As remarkable as this achievement was, the problem of finding and training competent teachers still existed. Many subscription teachers gladly offered “a made to order education that could be given to any child so long as the tuition was paid” (p. 104)(Belting, 1918). Additionally there was still no system of regulating teacher credentials. Fifteen years earlier the Latter-day Saints had established a system for monitoring teacher aptitude.

The progress of the public schooling movement in Illinois continued and more and more children were offered free public education regardless of their class. Unfortunately, the state of Illinois as well as the Nation lost the opportunity to learn from the Latter-day Saints. The citizens of Nauvoo offered high quality public education to all citizens regardless of social class, gender, or race. Had the example been followed perhaps the history of education in the United States would have been more peaceful and better for America’s children.

The Need for Further Research

Although a great deal is known about the educational system in the early history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints there is much of the story that lies untold. Current research fails to provide records from the perspective of students who composed the largest number of people involved in education in Nauvoo. There were at least 1400 common school students (Black, 2009). However, the records in existence that describe the experience of these people are few. Helen Whitney the daughter of Heber Kimball writes briefly in her memoirs about attending school taught by Marinda Hyde (Whitney, 1997). There are a small number of other journal entries and records that offer the perspective of the students. Were children required or allowed to attend

school? What about students with special needs? How were classrooms separated? Were students divided by ability? Additionally, what were the students' perceptions of their schooling experience? More information is needed regarding school policies on students of different races and genders as well. Future research in this area would provide additional and rich insights to the understanding of education among the early Saints.

A more detailed look at teacher's experiences would also be fascinating. James Monroe seems to have kept the most complete journal. A deeper look at his writings could offer added appreciation for the work of teachers in Nauvoo.

Further information is also needed regarding personnel and funding. How were employees of the schools and University recruited, hired, and trained? And how did their salary compare to those of other workers in Nauvoo or other teachers around the nation? We do know that in Chicago by 1855 a male teacher made \$1,200 a year and a female made \$ 400 (Abbott, 1917). Whereas some teachers in Nauvoo made much less around \$70 per term depending on their student load (Black, 2009). What did daily work hours and holidays look like for teachers? And finally what qualifications were deemed as necessary in the making of good educators? As for funding: How were the taxes gathered? Was there an audit to determine if the use of funds was proper? Were supplies ever purchased for teachers of the city or did all teachers procure their own teaching aids? These among other questions remain at least partially unanswered and future research would aid in the further expansion of this subject.

Conclusion

From what we do know it is safe to say that the ideas Joseph Smith offered regarding education were revolutionary! From the financing through taxation to the fact that this system of public education would reach every age, gender, and class of people, in short would be available to anyone wishing an education is amazing. During an era of private and subscription schools afforded only by the wealthy, free schools intended for the paupers, or communities without schools at all “Joseph Smith became an educational reformer well in advance of his times” (p. 3)(Hartley, 1979). The fact that he was able to create the political and administrative groundwork and open the system for enrollment in less than a year is miraculous. Likewise, his hunger for learning was contagious. “Joseph Smith had essentially no formal schooling, yet the effect of the gospel of Jesus Christ on him was to make him want to learn more so that he could be more useful to God and to God's children” (p. 14)(Eyring, 2002).

Thus, through his remarkable leadership the Latter-day Saints became a people who were very different from other Americans, indeed from any other group of people in the world. The Mormons valued education for its ability to draw one closer to God, and to prepare the learner for heavenly things. They also prized education for its ability to help citizens maintain their liberty as did the early Americans. Yet as we continue to learn of the purpose of education for the Mormons we will understand why it consumed them and became a part of everything they did. As we learn more about the motivation, hard work, dedication, and accomplishments of the early Latter-day Saints in regard to education we will, like Josiah Quincy, gain a better understanding of Nauvoo and what it took to create such a society (Woodworth, 2000).

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