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THE INFLUENCE OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR ON  
THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST  
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

by

James I. Mangum III

A thesis submitted to the faculty of

Brigham Young University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Masters of Religious Education

Department of Religious Education

Brigham Young University

April 2007



BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE COMMITTEE APPROVAL

of a thesis submitted by

James I. Mangum III

This thesis has been read by each member of the following graduate committee and by majority vote has been found to be satisfactory.

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BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

As chair of the candidate's graduate committee, I have read the thesis of James I. Mangum III in its final form and have found that (1) its format, citations, and bibliographical style are consistent and acceptable and fulfill university and department style requirements; (2) its illustrative materials including figures, tables, and charts are in place; and (3) the final manuscript is satisfactory to the graduate committee and is ready for submission to the university library.

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## ABSTRACT

# THE INFLUENCE OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR ON THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

James I. Mangum III

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Masters of Arts

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and its membership felt a substantial impact from the effects of World War I. Although other authors have attempted to bring forward the events of these hostilities, they are few in number and the research in this area is small. Additionally, few have focused on the effects of the war on the Church. In order to increase the understanding of this influence, this work examines how the First World War affected the lives of Latter-day Saints both during and after the conflict.

The entire world felt the effects of the world war and the Latter-day Saints were not exempt. Yet during this war, the LDS soldiers had an opportunity to change the way that others viewed the Church. Whether during times of training or on the battlefield, the valiant actions of these men often caused other soldiers to rethink the way they felt about the Saints. One incorrect stereotype that these men helped to remove was that the Latter-

day Saints had no feelings of national loyalty. Soldiers of other faiths could not continue to hold such misconceptions after having spent time working with LDS servicemen.

In addition to attitude-changing influences, Church President Joseph F. Smith was particularly conscious of the effects this conflict would have on the Church. The war would disrupt missionary work as its violence closed certain areas and missionary age young men were called on to bolster the armed forces. President Smith also feared the cost of the war in lives, which deaths increased with the outbreak of the influenza epidemic. In addition to these misgivings, the president of the Church worried about the possibility that Latter-day Saints of opposing countries would have to fight one another. it would have on missionary work, the cost in lives, and the possibility of LDS servicemen having to fight against other Saints. The influence of the war was not only felt by the soldiers. Those who remained at home learned to live thriftily and to give generously to the war effort.

In addition to the general ways in which the war influenced the Church, individual soldiers also had a chance to help the Church. During this war the Church appointed for the first time multiple chaplains: Brigham H. Roberts, Calvin S. Smith, and Herbert B. Maw. These three men had opportunities to work with individual soldiers and influence them for good. Veterans from this war returned home and served in positions of leadership. Some continued military service, while others sought political positions and yet others were called to serve in general leadership positions. So, in both broad and specific ways, World War I changed the lives of Latter-day Saints.

## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my wife, Judy C. Mangum, for all of her support during the long hours it took to write this thesis. I could always count on her for a prodding encouragement to accomplish the goal. I also need to acknowledge my daughter, Piper Huiting Mangum, who did not get to see her father enough during this time. Don't worry girls, we will get that trampoline.

I also need to thank my reading committee. In spite of their busy schedules, these men took the time to read my work and make helpful suggestions. It certainly would not be the document it is today without them.

I am also grateful to the many members of the faculty in the Religion Department who have helped me every step of the way through excellent teaching and worthy example. Specifically I need to mention the efforts of Brothers Clyde Williams and Kelly Ogden, who helped to get this project off the ground. Also, I feel a debt of gratitude to Brother Richard Draper, who helped me to shape some of interests into a plausible research topic.

In particular, I am grateful to Brother Robert Freeman, my thesis chair. He took a chance on an unknown graduate student and taught him how to prepare quality work. Without his work on the *Saints at War* project, this thesis would not have been possible. I especially appreciated his optimism and willingness to take time out to work with me.

Finally, I would like to thank the World War I veterans who fought in those difficult places in order to maintain freedom. Even more so, Latter-day Saint servicemen

helped bring the Church “out of the wilderness of darkness, and shine forth fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners” (D&C 109:73). There are more of your stories to find and I hope we will find them.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

No one would have supposed that the actions of European superpowers of the early twentieth century would have such a great influence on a small, but growing, church in the heart of the western part of the United States of America. Yet that is exactly what happened in the second decade of that century with the outbreak of World War I. By the time that the hostilities concluded in late 1918, virtually all of the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints would have been affected—if not personally involved—in this devastating conflict. The impact of this war on the Church did not end with the November 1918 armistice, but continued to influence the Saints for at least the next half-century.

Already in the sixty years since the restoration of Christ's church by the Prophet Joseph Smith, the composition of the church had changed significantly. The product of a successful missionary program, the Church of Jesus Christ Latter-day Saints had become an international organization. In addition to this growth, the Saints had also acted as pioneers in the United States, Mexico and Canada. From the six initial members meeting in a farmhouse in Fayette, New York, the Church had grown so that over four-hundred thousand members were scattered all over the globe.<sup>1</sup> It was this diverse body of Saints that the leaders of the Church were responsible to lead during this time of international

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<sup>1</sup> See Mortimer, Wm. James, pub., *Deseret News 1997-98 Church Almanac: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret News, 1996), 530. The actual number of members at the end of 1914 was 454,718.

conflict. The decisions these men made would no longer influence only a small number but would have far-reaching impact.

Yet the leadership of the Church had some difficult decisions to make in the years to come. Instructions given to the Saints all over the world would have to reflect the decisions made by their respective governments; such as, whether they chose to stay out of or enter into the war. In some countries, Latter-day Saint men were encouraged to join the war from its outset, while in others they were encouraged to maintain a pacifist stance.<sup>1</sup> Yet participation was not the only issue of the war. Church leaders would have to constantly tackle one issue after another and their decisions greatly influenced the Church. With the constant upheavals in the world at that time, the Lord was testing his leaders—both current and future—and preparing his Church for the days to come.

### **The Influence of the Great War**

The nationalistic feelings caused by the war influenced the Church in many ways. For example, through encouraging participation in the war in some nations, the Church had an opportunity to prove its loyalty to country. Unfortunately, in the decades prior to the war the Church's reputation, with a few exceptions, was negative.<sup>2</sup> Much of this came out of the issue of plural marriage and its subsequent influence on the elected officials in Utah. Although members of the Church in Utah felt very patriotic and had proved their loyalty time and time again, such as in the Spanish American War, the need to strengthen

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<sup>1</sup> Leaders of the Church encouraged the Saints to show loyalty to their country. In Canada that meant joining the military, while in the United States that meant maintaining a neutral stance (see Campbell, Eugene E. and Richard D. Poll. *Hugh B. Brown: His Life and Thought* [Salt Lake City, UT: Bookcraft, Inc., 1975], 53; and Smith, Joseph F., in Conference Report, Oct 1914, 8.).

<sup>2</sup> Church Educational System, *Church History and the Fulness of Times (Religion 342–343)*, (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2003), 465-473.

national trust was still felt during this period.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the number of LDS men and women involved in this conflict made it the largest show of allegiance to country in the history of the Church. The primary way to show patriotism was by joining the military and this was encouraged in both the United States and Canada.<sup>2</sup>

In the 1910s, most of the Church's General Authorities were citizens of the United States. With that country's late entry into the war, these men were afforded the opportunity to speak out on the subject of the war. Some favored the destruction of the blatantly evil governments of Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Others maintained that the United States should continue its neutrality. However, each leader feared the possible outcomes of the war. Joseph F. Smith, president of the Church, particularly had a number of concerns; including the movement, disruption, and safety of missionaries; the needless loss of life; and the possibility that the conflict might pit one member against another.<sup>3</sup> The validity of President Smith's concerns could only be substantiated after the end of the war.

The welfare of civilian men and women was not the only concern of Church leaders. In order to care for LDS soldiers, several chaplains were provided to represent the Church during the First World War. These appointments differed from the Spanish

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<sup>1</sup> When the United States declared war on Spain in 1898, the Church made an effort to mobilize men to join the American military. Church officials even sent to the Stake Presidents of the Church a letter, which instructed them to encourage their able-bodied men to enlist (Journal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, April 30, 1989, 3, Church Archives; hereafter cited as JH). With such promotion, over one thousand men volunteered for service which sent many Latter-day Saints to fight in the Philippines (Prestiss, A. ed. *The History of the Utah Volunteers in the Spanish American War and in the Philippine Islands*, [Salt Lake City, UT: Tribune Job Printing Co., 1900], 26, 30).

<sup>2</sup> Austin, Heber C., in Conference Report, April 1917, 82; Firmage, Mary Brown. "Dear Sister Zina... Dear Brother Hugh..." *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon thought*, vol. 21, no. 2, Summer 1988, (Salt Lake City, UT: Dialogue Foundation, 1988), 46; Bennett, Archibald F., *Journal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 30 Jan 1937, 8; and Madsen, Truman G. *Defender of the Faith: The B. H. Roberts Story* (Salt Lake City, UT: Bookcraft, 1980), 304.

<sup>3</sup> Gibbons, Francis M. *Joseph F. Smith: Patriarch and Preacher, Prophet of God* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1984), 297-298.

American War fought just over a decade before, when the Church had only been able to appoint one chaplain. The opportunity to provide multiple chaplains allowed the Church to spread that spiritual support to different parts of the army. These three chaplains came from different backgrounds—one a member of the First Council of the Seventy, the second the son of President Joseph F. Smith, and the third an aspiring airplane pilot. Although the United States was the only government that allowed for LDS chaplains, the three chosen had a great influence on the men with whom they worked.<sup>1</sup>

In subsequent decades many World War I veterans would take on leadership positions in the Church. From the ranks of the military came general authorities, military leaders and elected officials. The World War I roster included names like Hugh B. Brown, J. Reuben Clark, Briant H. Wells, Richard W. Young, and Herbert B. Maw. These men after serving honorably in the war would return home and act as an influence to move the Church forward.

The Great War did more than just train leaders; its influence had a more immediate effect on the lives of every man and woman in the Church. This crisis forced the membership of the Church to change some of the ways that they thought and acted. Certain habits, right and wrong, needed to be changed in order to sustain a nation at war. Food storage and liberal donations of money to the war effort changed the way members looked at their material goods. Every organization of the Church sacrificed to help win the war.

In many ways the influence of the First World War on the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has not yet been understood. This thesis looks into the experiences of

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<sup>1</sup> One squad in the Albertan Provincial Militia was predominantly made up of LDS men who enlisted at the encouragement of their priesthood leaders. Although this unit did not have a chaplain, Lieutenant Hugh B. Brown often acted as a spiritual leader to these men (Campbell and Poll, 53 and 67).

men and women who lived during this time and felt their lives change because of the unavoidable costs of the war. In the years after the war, these changed people led the Church and so their war experiences continued to influence Church affairs. This paper shows that an understanding of the role of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the First World War is essential to understanding the Church's history.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In comparison to World War II, relatively little has been written about the Church during the First World War. A review of the present literature about this period shows that while each writer has uncovered intriguing facts and they have each done so with the focus required of academic work.<sup>1</sup> Although those who have taken up this subject have done excellent work, there still remain a number of areas which have not yet been explored and analyzed. Below are listed a number of authors and the areas on which they focused.

Only a few years after the end of World War I, the United States government allotted funds to be used by each state in order to produce a history of the war. Fulfilling that commission, Noble Warrum, a Utah historian, penned *Utah in the World War*.<sup>2</sup> He began with a summary of the bigger picture of the war, including its causes and its consequences. Next Warrum systematically went through the major projects of the state of Utah during the conflict, including reports from organizations such as the State Fuel Commission and the Red Cross. He focused on the recording of names and statistics. He included the rosters of the Utah National Guard, a list of medals awarded to soldiers who

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<sup>1</sup> While researching this topic, the author availed himself to several libraries and archives. In addition to the regular stacks at Brigham Young University and the University of Utah, the special collections and archives of both schools were consulted. In addition, research was performed at the Utah Historical Society archives in Salt Lake City. The public libraries of both Orem and Pleasant Grove cities were also utilized.

<sup>2</sup> Warrum, Noble. *Utah in the World War: The Men behind the Guns and the Men and Woman behind the Men behind the Guns*, (Salt Lake City, UT: Arrow press, 1924). Noble Warrum also published a four volume history of the state called *Utah since Statehood* (Salt Lake City, UT: S. J. Clark, 1919).

were citizens of Utah, and also the names of all who gave their lives during the war. Despite his proximity to the times, Warrum unfortunately did not give much analysis to the facts that he spelled out. While he did a thorough job of compiling this information, he did not add much commentary to his presentation. Furthermore, since his book focused on the state government and the Utah National Guard, it does not dwell much on the actions of the most influential organization in the state at that time, which was the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Also, he neglected the military units that were not based in Utah but included many Utahns.

In his doctoral dissertation at Brigham Young University, “The Roles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Relation to the United States Military, 1900–1975,” Joseph F. Boone looked at every conflict during the first three-quarters of the twentieth century.<sup>1</sup> His work chronicled the history of the Church as it responded to the wars fought by the United States and included a section on chaplains and the organizations that the Church used to interact with its servicemen. Since it fell within Boone’s timeframe, he also included a section on the history of the Church in World War I. Yet according to his stated purpose, his concentration was on the war as it affected the Church in the United States. Due to this focus, he did not look at the relationship of the Church and the war on an international scope, such as Canada and Europe. Additionally, his research into the Great War relied heavily on the church periodicals of the time, which he diligently wove into his writings. Yet it misses the touch of personal experiences from individuals who had taken part in the war.

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<sup>1</sup> Boone, Joseph F., “The Roles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Relation to the United States Military, 1900-1975,” 2 vols. (Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, 1975).

While working on a masters degree at Brigham Young University, Richard Maher collected oral histories from the available LDS chaplains in the mid-1970s. These first hand accounts preserve the experiences of these men during the war years and are invaluable. In his later book, *For God and Country*, he re-wrote these histories in narrative form and then added stories about chaplains from LDS periodicals where appropriate.<sup>1</sup> Maher's work was not a scholarly comprehensive study into chaplain life, but a collection of stories from the experiences of these men. In the first section, he included the stories of two LDS chaplains from World War I: Chaplains Brigham H. Roberts and Herbert W. Maw. Elder Roberts is only represented by one account, which was taken second hand from another soldier. Chaplain Maw's stories however come directly from recordings made by Maher for his oral history project. Noticeably missing from Maher's work is information on Chaplain Calvin S. Smith, son of President Joseph F. Smith. The experiences of Chaplain Smith would have made an excellent addition to Maher's collection. Furthermore, Maher does not quote the chaplains directly but instead paraphrased their accounts, perhaps for better flow in the narrative. *For God and Country* is an excellent resource for the stories of LDS chaplains, but would have been strengthened by more quotations of the actual speech and understanding found in the originals of these chaplains' stories.

The sixth volume of B. H. Roberts' *A Comprehensive History of the Church* contains two chapters about the First World War.<sup>2</sup> Elder Roberts served as an assistant historian for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and also as one of the seven

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<sup>1</sup> Maher, Richard. *For God and Country*. (Bountiful, UT: Horizon Publishers, 1976).

<sup>2</sup> Roberts, Brigham H. *A Comprehensive History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1930).

presidents of the Seventy.<sup>1</sup> In the first chapter, Elder Roberts recounted the contribution of the state of Utah to the war including Roberts' own unit, the 145<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery. He also wrote of prophecy and the causes of the war, but since his book was not to be an essay on war, he kept these items short. The second chapter then looked briefly at the role of Church leaders and members in the war. Towards the end of the chapter, Roberts mentioned a few concerns that related to the Church at the time. He clarified how German members of the Church should be treated no matter whether they lived in Germany or in the United States. As a participant in the war and an able historian, Elder Roberts possessed a unique perspective on the war's place in LDS history. That personal understanding of events, however, did not allow for him to look at the bigger picture in this area. Other than a brief mention of German Saints, his chapters focused primarily on the United States and Utah.

In the fall of 1990, the *Utah Historical Quarterly* devoted an entire issue to the topic of World War I in Utah.<sup>2</sup> That periodical presented five papers which covered a variety of subjects. The first article related the story of the Utah National Guard, which later became the 145<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery and supplied men as replacements to the American forces in France. The next article told of the many contributions and sacrifices made by the women in Utah throughout the war. The last three articles dealt with the lives of immigrants and minorities in Utah during this time. The first of this latter group looked at the reaction of these immigrants to the war and the part they played in it, including those who joined the military. However it mainly focused on the members of other faiths rather than the Latter-day Saints. The second immigrant article looked at the German Saints in

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<sup>1</sup> Jenson, Andrew, *LDS Biographical Encyclopedia*, vol. 1 (Salt Lake City, UT: Western Epics, 1971), 205.

<sup>2</sup> *Utah Historical Quarterly*, vol. 58, no. 4, (Fall 1990).

Utah and their newspaper, *The Beobachter*. The final composition looked at the prison-of-war camp in Utah and the treatment of prisoners there. While these articles concentrated on the international perspective of the war, they did not, except in the paper on German Utahns, spend much time on the influence of the Church.

The perspective of German Latter-day Saints can also be found in “Mormons and Germany, 1914–1933,” a thesis written by Jeffrey L. Anderson, a graduate student of German history.<sup>1</sup> The introduction to this master’s thesis begins prior to the war and relates the history of the Church in Germany. The second chapter then dives into the situation of missionaries and members during the First World War, explaining their trials and their successes. Anderson is also able to use German-language primary documents in the form of personal letters of many of the LDS soldiers who fought in the German army. He ties together nicely the relationship between the members in that land and the Church in which they put their faith. Additionally, Anderson reports the reaction that German Church members had to being led by the native Germans after the missionaries were evacuated. As pointed out in the title of this thesis, Anderson deals solely with the German Saints and their experiences in the war.

As writers have looked back on the history of World War I as it relates to Utah and the Church, they have found important events and stories that are integral parts of the history of the Church. Yet many have missed the personal experiences of Church members as they recount their feelings and experiences of the war. Additionally, entire groups of LDS men have not received much attention for their part in the war. For example, the country of Canada and its LDS soldiers are nearly unaccounted for in World

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<sup>1</sup> Anderson, Jeffery L., “Mormons and Germany, 1914-1933: A History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Germany and Its Relationship with the German Governments from World War I to the Rise of Hitler,” (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1991).

War I writings. Even closer to home, very little has been mentioned of the American men who served in units besides the 145<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery. While a few of the experiences of Chaplains Roberts and Maw have been related, very little is known about the experiences of Chaplain Calvin S. Smith. The First World War is a large subject involving millions of people world-wide and deserves to have more of the missing pieces filled in. Speaking of the writings that consider the state of Utah at this time, the editors of the *Utah Historical Quarterly* pointed out that “six years after the end of World War I the Utah State Council of Defense sponsored publication of Noble Warrum’s *Utah in the World War*, a compilation that while useful offers little analysis. A few other titles on Utah during the war can be found in library catalogs, but a fresh look at the period is overdue.”<sup>1</sup> This work will look at a few of the topics concerning the war that have not yet received treatment and thus help make the story of the Church and the Great war more complete.

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<sup>1</sup> Evans, Max J., ed., “In This Issue,” *Utah Historical Quarterly*, vol. 58, no. 4, (Fall 1990): 311.

## CHAPTER 3

### A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF WORLD WAR I

Few people expected the outbreak of the First World War and even fewer recognized the horrible direction it would take. This was true despite the fact that for decades European countries had prepared themselves for fighting on that continent. In spite of—or perhaps because of—their preparations, this conflict was like no other fought before. New weapons, inventions and tactics changed the way militaries fought, thus creating a drawn out war of attrition for which no army was prepared. The European hostilities grew to include nations from all over the globe. Particularly it mobilized hundreds of thousands of men from the United States and Canada. Not surprisingly this war would gain the titles “The Great War” and “The War to End All Wars,” because by the time the fighting was over hundreds of thousands of men would be dead and the concept of warfare would have changed.

Oddly enough, the catalyst for this great confrontation occurred in a relatively obscure country in south-eastern Europe. On June 28, 1914, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the throne of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, was in Sarajevo, Serbia. That morning hundreds of people came out to cheer the Archduke and his wife, Countess Sofierl, as they made their way to a speaking engagement at the city hall. However, not everyone who had turned out for the parade supported the empire, which currently threatened Serbia from the north. At one point while traveling to the appointment, an assassin attempted to take the lives of the Austrians by lobbing a bomb into their vehicle.

While no one in the car was injured, the explosion hurt many spectators. The Archduke made certain that these people would be cared for and then continued on to city hall.

After his speech, Ferdinand decided to visit those injured in the blast. As his car made its way to the hospital, the driver of the car made a wrong turn. When he backed the car up to return to the main road, a young Serbian, Gavril Princip, stepped out of the crowd and shot both the Archduke and his wife.<sup>1</sup> Both were fatally wounded and would later die on the trip to the hospital. The authorities apprehended Princip but the young Serbian had initiated a chain of events that would lead to a global war.

The assassination of Archduke Ferdinand exacerbated the tensions already present in Europe at this time. These tensions were in part caused by the contest for dominance among the major powers of early twentieth-century Europe. England had long held dominance over the seas, while France seemed the master of land wars. However, in the decades prior to the war, Germany had grown stronger, at one point even taking land from France. Moreover, the Germans were quickly becoming an industrial giant which only strengthened their position.

While some countries grew in power, others floundered. The Ottoman Empire was in its death throes and had gradually lost power during the past one hundred years. This decline had two effects: first, nations like Austria-Hungary and Russia fought over lands previously held by the Ottomans and second, some previously subjugated countries began to exert greater independence. Serbia fell into the second category and encouraged Slavs in Austria-Hungary to join them. This aggravated the leaders of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, who saw Serbia as an annoying but small problem that needed to be

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<sup>1</sup> Jantzen, Steven, *Hooray for Peace, Hurrah for War*, (New York, NY: Knopf, 1971), 17-18; and Heyman, Neil M. *World War I*, (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1997), 3-4.

eliminated.<sup>1</sup> It was under this strained atmosphere that Archduke Ferdinand visited Serbia.

With the assassination of the Archduke, the Austrian-Hungarian leaders made demands on Serbia that the smaller country found unacceptable; such as, allowing Austria to handle the investigation into the murders and the halting of all anti-Austrian-Hungarian propaganda in the country. When Serbian leaders refused such demands, the Austrian-Hungarian government declared war. Like falling dominoes, this action brought more countries into the hostilities. The Russians, seeing the threats made against their Slavic brothers in Serbia, declared war on Austria-Hungary. The Germans, as allies of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, were next to declare war and created the Central Powers.<sup>2</sup> Germany's entrance into the war was followed quickly by France siding with the Russians and creating the Allied Powers.<sup>3</sup> With both Russia and France against it, Germany was surrounded. Their military leaders felt that their best strategy was to take France out of the war as quickly as possible. In order to accomplish this goal, the German army pushed through the neutral country of Belgium, rather than the protected borders between France and Germany. This assault on a neutral country brought England into the fray on the side of the Allies.<sup>4</sup> These declarations of war set the stage for one of the bloodiest conflicts ever fought in Europe.

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<sup>1</sup> Heyman, 4-6.

<sup>2</sup> As the war progressed, other nations would join the side of the Central Powers; such as, Turkey and Bulgaria (see Warrum, Noble. *Utah in the World War: The Men behind the Guns and the Men and Woman behind the Men behind the Guns*, (Salt Lake City, UT: Arrow press, 1924), 10.

<sup>3</sup> The Allied Powers were later joined by a number of nations; including, Montenegro, Japan, Portugal, Italy, Rumania, Greece, the United States, Siam, China, Brazil, Guatemala, Nicaragua and others (see Warrum, 10).

<sup>4</sup> Austria declared war on Serbia on July 28, 1914. Russia then mobilized troops starting on July 31<sup>st</sup>. Germany gave Russia a 24-hour ultimatum to stop (an impossible request) and then declared war on August 1<sup>st</sup>. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of August, Germany invaded Belgium and then on into France. Despite the

## A Different Type of War

Despite the resources of these warring nations, most people thought the war would be over quickly, maybe even by Christmas. For example, Colonel Sam Hughes, the Canadian Minister of Militia, feared that if the British government delayed entrance into the war, then it would be over before he could get his men to Europe. The Germans also felt that the fighting would be brief. Kaiser Wilhelm II promised his departing troops that they would be home before winter set in.<sup>1</sup> This conjecture was not without merit. For example, some economists claimed that no country could financially survive an extended war. If they attempted to fight such a prolonged war, then their economy would suffer and once that happened, the leaders would then find it necessary to sue for peace.

However, these speculators did not understand that the nature of warfare had changed. Inventors had designed new weapons and other inventions that could find a military application such as airplanes and balloons, internal combustion engines, submarines, chemical weapons, machine guns, flamethrowers, tanks, and artillery that could be quickly reloaded. Another change in the warfare was the position of the generals and other senior officers. They no longer walked the battlefields, but instead commanded from furnished homes well behind the front lines. While this was the only way in which these officers could command and coordinate such monumental numbers of men and supplies, they were seldom in touch with the circumstances that their soldiers consistently

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complaints made by Great Britain against Germany, the Germans continued their belligerent actions so England declared war on Germany on August 4<sup>th</sup> (see Warrum, 10).

<sup>1</sup> Freeman, Bill and Richard Nielsen, *Far from Home: Canadians in the First World War*, (Toronto, ON: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1999), 24-25.

faced.<sup>1</sup> Removed from the daily suffering of the fighting men, these leaders may have extended the war longer than they would have if they too had been in the trenches.

Additionally, tactics used in previous conflicts were no longer practical. Rather than a series of offensive moves, World War I was generally fought defensively and thus became a war of attrition. The Germans were the first to recognize the power of a defensive war in France and set their lines up accordingly. Having met the initial resistance of the French troops, Germany dug in and then turned its attention to the weaker army of Russia. They dug their trenches in positions of strength, commanding higher ground and maintaining good drainage out of their trenches. The Germans also strung barbed wire all over the front lines. These barriers directed the paths from which the enemy could attack the lines, allowing cunning planners to set up machine gun nests. These machine guns, another relatively new invention, would then massacre the raiding troops. Unfortunately, the Allied commanders had come to France to fight an offensive war and thus were unprepared for trench warfare. Allied troops learned a great deal about creating their own trenches from copying the methods used in the construction of the German trenches they captured.<sup>2</sup> The use and construction of trenches continued to change throughout the war in order to keep soldiers safe from lethal artillery barrages.<sup>3</sup> While life in these pits was not comfortable—and often miserable—in a defensive war trenches were indispensable.

The initial invasion pushed towards Paris, but the French were finally able to stop the Germans near the Marne River about fifty miles outside the capital. From that time,

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<sup>1</sup> Farwell, Byron, *Over There: The United States in the Great War, 1917-1918*, (New York, NY: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1999), 16.

<sup>2</sup> Freeman, 41-42.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 67-69.

the battlegrounds were basically set. Both sides dug in and created what became known as the Western Front, which was the series of trenches that made a line in northeastern France from Switzerland to the English Channel.

With most of the battles occurring along the trench lines, movement only happened when an army could break through those lines. Still, no matter how successful the battle was, the opposing forces would eventually stop the progression of the attacking army. This give and take would cause a bulge in the relatively straight battle lines. These bulges were called salients. The opposing force would then put all its efforts into straightening the line again. The most effective way to accomplish this goal was to attack it from both flanks and then cut off the retreat of the most forward enemy forces. Next they could surround the forces that had crossed the line and either kill them or take them prisoner.<sup>1</sup> This process would straighten out the front lines and the costly war would continue.

### **North America and the First World War**

When World War I broke out in Europe, it affected two nations in North America in opposite ways. Canada, as a member of the British Commonwealth, was automatically considered part of the English declaration of war. So in the fall of 1914, Canada made efforts to prepare itself for combat overseas. Woodrow Wilson, the President of the United States, on the other hand, reiterated the neutral stance that his country would take during the conflict. Although they started with opposite goals, both of these countries would play significant roles in Europe before the end of the war.

*Canada enters the war.* Canada's preparation for fighting in the First World War had three distinctive elements, with the first one occurring before war was ever declared.

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<sup>1</sup> Farwell, 17.

Each Canadian province had several militias, supported by public or private funds. City regiments were often like a social club that met quite regularly, while rural units usually only met once a year for the mandatory summer training camps. At these two week camps, the men would train in their military duties and also learn about the military lifestyle. The culmination of the camp would be an inspection by military commanders. The usual training record of these camps was positive, with most groups exhibiting a good use of instruction time.<sup>1</sup> The federal government of Canada nationalized these militias at the beginning of the war.

After training in Canada and England, the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) moved to France where they immediately went into the trenches as part of the British forces. After gaining some experience with seasoned British troops, the Canadians were assigned their own portion of the Ypres Salient. It was there, during what would later be called the Second Battle of Ypres, that the Germans first put into use one of the most dangerous weapons in their arsenal: chlorine gas. On April 22, 1915, German soldiers opened five-thousand cylinders of this gas and let the toxic fumes float on the winds into the trenches of the Allied forces. The Canadians watched as the gaseous clouds struck their left flank choking the Algerians positioned there. From there it crept towards their position. Prior to the battle, military intelligence officers had warned the commanders on the lines that such weapons might be used, but they had not given any instructions on how to combat these toxic clouds. Lack of training on this matter caused the unnecessary death of many men. Fortunately, a medical officer ran up the Canadian trenches encouraging the soldiers to breath through urine-soaked handkerchiefs. Despite the

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<sup>1</sup> Freeman, 5-6.

repulsive nature of such an action, it saved the lives of thousands of Canadians that night.<sup>1</sup>

Later in the war, scientists would develop gas masks to protect the troops, but at this early stage in the war, the Allied soldiers were without such protection. Since there was no way to resist these attacks, the greatest effect of chemical attacks was psychological. However, the actions of the Canadians that night struck a blow against the mental warfare used by the Germans. They proved that a soldier could withstand such an assault and continue fighting.<sup>2</sup>

During the winter of 1916-1917, the Canadians moved and camped against Vimy Ridge, a region that the French had previously been unable to recapture. Led by British and Canadian generals, the CEF began intensive training to take the ridge. For months the soldiers prepared by memorizing maps and practicing the assault on similar terrain; working on the plan until they knew their individual assignments completely. Soldiers in the ancillary corps, such as stretcher bearers and cyclists, were assigned to dig tunnels in the chalky soil beneath the ridge. These tunnels would allow the soldiers get closer to the enemy trenches before they were seen. After a two week bombardment, the men followed a rolling barrage to the enemy trenches. By staying just behind the dropping artillery shells, the Canadians were able to reach enemy machine gun nests before the gunners could man those positions. While the assault on Vimy Ridge cost over a hundred-thousand casualties, with over three thousand killed, it proved two major points: 1) trench

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, 48.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 48.

warfare could be won by excellent intelligence, sound planning, and diligent preparation; and 2) the Canadians were a force with which to be reckoned.<sup>1</sup>

*The United States and WWI.* Although the United States had declared its neutrality at the outset of the war, it still felt the effects of a war-torn world. In 1915, German U-boats (*unterseeboote* or submarines) were increasing the number of submarine attacks in the Atlantic Ocean. Their main goal was to stop all sea traffic to Allied nations, which would hasten the surrender of those nations because of the shortage of food and other supplies. Although the Germans did not wish to interfere with the trade of neutral countries, by 1915 they felt that the British had forced its hand. Previously, German policy required submarines to surface and ascertain the nationality of passenger and cargo ships. All ships from neutral nations were then allowed to pass by unharmed. However the British took advantage of this policy and began to fly the United States flag on their ships. Then when they saw a surfaced German submarine, the British would ram into it and sink it. After that, the Germans changed their policy to one that threatened any ship that approached Allied countries. This policy led to the tragedy of the *Lusitania*.

Prior to the war, the *Lusitania* was a British passenger ship. When the war started, Britain re-classified it as an auxiliary cruiser and armed it. In May of 1915, it was to journey from the United States to Europe carrying 1,257 civilian passengers. Most passengers did not know that it was also transporting war materiel, including rifle ammunition and explosives. The German government, however, was well aware of that fact. Their diplomat to the United States placed an advertisement in New York City newspapers stating their intent to sink that ship if possible. Despite the warning no tickets were cancelled and the *Lusitania* began its voyage on May 1, 1915. On May 7, 1915, a

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<sup>1</sup> Morton, Desmond, *When Your Number's Up*, (Toronto, ON: Random House of Canada, 1993), 167-169.

German submarine, the *U-20*, spotted the *Lusitania* and without warning sank it. Of the 159 American passengers on board, 124 died. Increasing the tragedy, ninety-five of the total deaths were children. Although this attack did not launch the United States into the war, it galvanized many Americans to the side of the Allies.<sup>1</sup>

Although President Wilson was re-elected in 1916 under the statement, “He kept us out of war;” in 1917 he was forced to lead his country into the fray. There were at least five major reasons why the United States joined the Allies in the fight against the Central Powers. First, the invasion of Belgium by the Germans had shown the latter country’s disregard for the rights of neutrality. If the Germans would violate Belgium’s neutrality, then there seemed no reason why they would not do the same to the United States. Second, Germany’s form of autocratic government was seen as a threat to democracy. In consequence, when President Wilson changed his stance and argued for American involvement in Europe, he described the war as one that would keep the world “safe for democracy.” The third reason was that German-born Americans were spying for their native land and some were even sabotaging and destroying American ammunition and arms factories. The fourth reason was that the British reportedly intercepted and decoded a message from Germany to the government of Mexico. This letter encouraged the Mexicans to join the war as an ally of Germany and then attack the United States. In return for their participation, Mexico would be rewarded by the return of the land it had once owned that was currently United States territory. The final reason was the sinking of American ships or other ships carrying Americans, including the *Lusitania*. In negotiating with the United States, Germany had vowed not to sink American ships. However in April of 1917, the Germans changed their mind about this treaty. Although they knew

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<sup>1</sup> Farwell, 23-24.

that such actions might push the Americans into the war, the Central Powers gambled on the unprepared nature of the American military. They figured that they could cripple the English economy before the Americans would be able to field an army in France. The German government sent a telegram to their ambassador in the United States, and then it was forwarded to the president, who received it just a few short hours before the policy would begin. On April 2, 1917, President Wilson addressed Congress and asked for the power to send America to war. On the sixth of April, the United States officially declared war against the Central Powers in Europe.<sup>1</sup>

The Allies were anxious to gain the assistance of the United States. In the latter part of that year, the Allied forces were facing situations that weakened their ability to successfully fight the war. Battle lines in Italy were collapsing. The Bolsheviks were gaining power in Russia and would topple the government there by year's end.<sup>2</sup> The entrance of the Americans could hardly have come at a better time.

While America was officially at war, they were not in a position to help the Allies much. When the Allies sent a delegation to the United States in late April 1917, more than anything else they wanted men. In this area the delegation would be very disappointed. The United States was totally unprepared to fight a war such as was being fought in Europe. In the entire military, there did not exist even one combat division. When it came to officers and enlisted men, the U.S. military did not have the training and experience needed to lead an army successfully into battle. "Among the armies of the world, that of the United States ranked sixteenth, just behind Portugal."<sup>3</sup> A few years

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, 29-36.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 115.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 37.

earlier, the U.S. Army had been unable to beat the Mexican bandit, Pancho Villa. Yet what the Americans lacked in preparation, they made up for in desire and enthusiasm.

The American Expeditionary Force (AEF) sent the men that it had and they arrived in France in June 1917. These soldiers were so inexperienced that if they had been sent to the front lines without additional training it would have been suicidal. Fortunately, the French 47<sup>th</sup> Chasseur Division was assigned to train the raw recruits from the States.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, the Allies had been so anxious to obtain American fighting men, that they implored the U.S. government to just send men and the Allies would be responsible for getting them appropriate equipment. So after a short period of training with foreign equipment, the AEF went to the front lines.

Throughout 1917, the Americans would continue to train their men in the States and then send them when available to Europe. Unfortunately the late start of the United States meant that the greatest numbers of soldiers did not arrive in France until 1918. Even then these men needed additional training before they could reasonably be sent to the front lines. Nevertheless, American soldiers continued to pour into Europe and bolster the tired armies that fought there. By November 1918, there were over two-million Americans in Europe with still more training back at home.<sup>2</sup>

On May 27, 1918, the Germans executed one of the most cleverly planned and prepared battles of the war. Assaulting a position that the Allies felt they had made impregnable, the Germans caught the Allies completely by surprise. They began by launching a brutal artillery attack, which destroyed headquarters, road junctions and artillery positions. Then German storm troopers carrying light machine guns broke

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, 92-95, 100.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 265.

through the French and British defenses. They were followed by two more waves of soldiers—thirty divisions in total. By that night, the Germans had captured over three-hundred square miles. They continued to push on and captured nearly 60,000 prisoners and an incredible amount of supplies and munitions as they moved towards the Marne River.<sup>1</sup>

When the German offensive began to slow, the Allies counterattacked with twenty-seven divisions, including the American 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Divisions. The U.S. marines, although fighting as part of the Army, took their place in the lines; they were assigned to the Belleau Wood. Still unaccustomed to trench warfare, these marines lost over one thousand of their men while capturing their objective, which took fourteen days. The success of this battle boosted the morale of the Allied troops and the citizens back home.<sup>2</sup>

General John J. Pershing, commanding general of the AEF, chose the collapse the St. Mihiel Salient as his next objective. This was an ambitious task, since the Germans had held it for four years and two assaults by the French Army were unsuccessful in recapturing this line. Pershing carefully planned his attack, despite the opposition he received from the generals of the other Allied nations. On September 12, 1918, the bombardment began and in four hours the Americans rained over one-million shells down on both flanks. Using the cover of a heavy fog, the Americans attacked both sides of the salient while the French hit it from the front. Two days later the Allies had cut off the salient and had won an incredible victory in morale. In addition and unknown to the

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, 163-166.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 168-170.

Allies, this success had also dealt a decisive blow to the morale of the German army; many German leaders wondered if the war was already lost.<sup>1</sup>

Shortly after the attack on the St. Mihiel Salient and without any time to rest, the Americans moved to become part of the Meuse-Argonne offensive. The area for which the Americans were responsible contained several military features including “the heights above the east side of the Meuse River, 342 meters high, on the east; the Montfaucon Hills, in the center; and the heavily wooded Argonne Forest on the west.”<sup>2</sup> These natural elements—water, height, and cover—all worked to the advantage of the Germans, who had also spent three years improving the defensibility of that position. Attacking such a fortified location would not be easy but if successful would greatly weaken the position of the Central Powers.

The first day of the assault, September 25, 1918, the infantry followed a rolling barrage of artillery shells. However, the inexperienced condition of the soldiers mixed with the chaos on the battlefield made it difficult to continue the push through the enemy lines for more than four days. Fortunately their initial thrust had started the momentum of the battle and after regrouping, the AEF continued their offensive. On the fourth of October, they made an attack on the enemy forces in the Argonne Forest. There they found the woods filled with camouflaged bunkers, some of which had large underground systems. Successful in that quarter, Pershing reinforced the French to the east of the Meuse River.

It was in this period of intense fighting at the Meuse that the influenza epidemic began to take its toll on American soldiers. These casualties, in addition to the men lost in

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, 210-216.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 218.

combat, weakened the numbers of men capable of fighting. Moreover, since the epidemic had spread to the United States, the government stopped the draft and new soldier training in an effort to halt the spread of this plague. Still, all of these setbacks did not prevent the AEF from moving forward.

The last push of this offensive was against the *Kriemhilde Stellung* and the *Freya Stellung*, which acted as reserve fortifications for the Germans. After a two hour bombardment, which included over 41 tons of chemical weapons, the Americans began their infantry attack. The Germans retreated as the Americans moved forward. However the Germans were not fleeing, but made the Allies fight for all of the land they obtained.<sup>1</sup>

In early October, the Germans opened peace talks with the United States. Throughout the next month, the war would continue while the diplomats worked out the details. “It has been estimated that in the five weeks of dithering about the terms of the Armistice at least a half million men were killed or wounded.”<sup>2</sup> The Armistice began at 11:00 a.m. on November 11, 1918. Poor communication to the men on the front lines caused many soldiers to continue fighting right up until the eleven o’clock hour and, again, needless lives were lost.<sup>3</sup>

Over four years of combat had decimated the French countryside. Millions of men on both sides of the line were either wounded or killed. Military leaders had not anticipated the mixture of lethal technology and the deplorable conditions and their lack of preparation led to an even higher casualty rate. The Great War tested the mettle of many nations and drew distant countries into the fray including Canada and the United States. A tired international community felt that the devastation caused by this war would

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, 218-240.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 258.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 255-258.

make future wars unconscionable. The tactics and weapons of war had changed so considerably by the end of the war, that no military tactician would have anticipated the lethal nature of World War I.

CHAPTER 4  
THE LOYALTY OF THE U.S. AND  
CANADIAN SAINTS TO THEIR NATIONS

At the time of the outbreak of the war in Europe, the loyalty of members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to their respective nations was in question. Addressing this issue, Church President Joseph F. Smith in his opening discourse in the April 1918 General Conference asserted, “I wish to say this, there isn't a feeling in my soul nor in any fibre [sic] of my being that is disloyal to the Government of the United States or to the desire that we have in our souls to maintain the principles of individual and National liberty, justice and freedom that have been established in the Constitution of our country. I believe in the Constitution of the United States. I believe in the principles which that instrument promulgates.”<sup>1</sup> Despite this statement, the antagonistic feelings towards Latter-day Saints still prevailed. The First World War provided members of the Church an opportunity to prove their national loyalty.

Loyalty is a strong word because it requires more than a tacit feeling or even verbal expression. Given that it is rooted in responsibilities and duties, loyalty requires action. Therefore, in order for the Latter-day Saints to prove their loyalty to the countries in which they resided, they had to perform the acts required by their governments. During World War I, LDS men proved themselves loyal to their country by serving in the military. This chapter focuses on the actions of these men in the different aspects of military life: enlistment, training, and service on the battle field. Since the key to loyalty

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<sup>1</sup> Smith, Joseph F., Conference Report, April 1918, 5.

is action, many of their experiences will be shared as evidence of loyalty among Latter-day Saint soldiers during this war.

When those not of the LDS faith attacked the Church, they generally emphasized the ways in which Church practices differed from the lifestyles of other Americans and Canadians. They may have even asked if these different customs would hinder a Latter-day Saint from successfully fulfilling their military duties. The answer to this question could decide a Latter-day Saint's ability to prove his loyalty to nation. Yet it is apparent that LDS soldiers could both perform their military obligations and remain faithful to their religious duties. Since their adherence to divine law did not detract from their functionality as soldiers, they *could* act in a manner loyal to their homeland.

### **The Saints Loyalty in Question**

Before one can understand why the Saints needed to prove their loyalty, they need to understand that the social climate in North America around the turn of the Twentieth Century was not often kind to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Much of this animosity was caused by a lack of understanding of LDS practices and people. Often the only glimpse of LDS culture in the distant Rocky Mountains came from the most common media sources of the day: speeches and newspapers. However those that turned their writing and speaking talents to the topic of Latter-day Saints were often anti-Mormon with the ulterior motive of maligning the Saints. In the years before the outbreak of World War I, the Latter-day Saints already needed to take steps in order to clarify negative stereotypes cast on the Church.

The opinion of many Americans about the Latter-day Saints can be seen in the Utah War. William W. Drummond, who served as a territorial judge, left Utah in disgrace

in 1857 after the locals learned of his adulterous relationship with his mistress. The judge then capitalized on the nation's disapproval of both polygamy and the political influence of Church leaders. His letter spurred President James Buchanan to send 2,500 soldiers to Utah in an attempt to eliminate these practices. The Latter-day Saints, having been run out of three states, chose to stand against the army. Fortunately Thomas L. Kane traveled to Utah and brokered a peace between the two groups. Alfred Cummings replaced Brigham Young as territorial governor, the army was allowed to enter the territory and set up camp forty miles away from Salt Lake City, and President Buchanan pardoned the Latter-day Saints from their rebellious behavior in opposing the U.S. military. Despite the Saint's innocence towards Drummond's accusations and their right to protect themselves against persecution, this event exacerbated the opinion that they were disloyal.<sup>1</sup>

Claims of LDS infidelity toward government power were often made by those who lived close to the Saints and knew that the accusations were unfounded. For example, in 1886 William H. Dickson, the United States district attorney for Utah, claimed in one of his speeches, "We wish to say that the so-called Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is steeped in disloyalty to the Government of the United States." Dickson continued, "We say, more than that, that the purpose of this Church here, on of its particular purposes, is to overthrow the American home and overturn the family altar in this country. We say that the Church, the people who are the adherents of that Church, are steeped in disloyalty." The district attorney also spread the rumor that when news of the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln reached President Brigham Young, the latter "could not and did not repress his exultation over it." Dickson then took up the

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<sup>1</sup> Garr, Arnold, Donald Q. Cannon, and Richard O. Cowan, eds. *Encyclopedia of Latter-day Saint History*, (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book Company, 2000), 1283-1284; and Smith, Joseph Fielding. *Essentials in Church History*, (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book Company, 1967), 405-406.

subject of the Saints' right to vote. He asked, "Why is it, I say, when it is so palpable that the priesthood that rules the people of this Territory are disloyal at heart, the Nation will hesitate to wrest the ballot from them, why hesitate to strike it from their hands?"<sup>1</sup> With statements such as these coming from a supposedly trustworthy government official, citizens of the United States could not help but believe in the disloyalty of the Saints.

Another wave of controversy occurred when the people of Utah voted Elder Reed Smoot into the United States Senate. Elder Smoot was a member of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles and many members of the Congress saw his election as proof that the Church controlled the politics in Utah.<sup>2</sup> After arriving in Washington, D.C., Elder Smoot attempted to take his seat in the Senate but met a great deal of opposition. A short time later, the Senate held the infamous Reed Smoot hearings; a series of questions and testimonies about the worthiness of Elder Smoot to sit as a member of the U.S. Senate. These hearings drew the Church into the limelight, but seldom in a good way. Although Senator Smoot eventually won the right to take his seat, the controversy and the biased reporting of these investigations did much to criticize the reputation of the Church in the early twentieth century.<sup>3</sup>

In later years, Senator Reed Smoot attempted to boost the reputation of the Latter-day Saints among his fellow senators. While standing on the Senate floor, Senator Smoot made the connection between military service and the proof of loyalty.

The loyalty of the Mormon people can be brought home readily by an illustration within our own knowledge. We will pass by an incident of

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<sup>1</sup> "In a Nut Shell: A Strong Indictment Presented by the U. S. Attorney," *The Salt Lake Daily Tribune*, vol. 31 (July 29, 1886), 4. See also the commentary in Roberts, Brigham H. *A Comprehensive History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1930), 6:170-171.

<sup>2</sup> Church Educational System, *Church History and the Fulness of Times (Religion 342-343)*, (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2003), 468.

<sup>3</sup> Boone, Joseph F., "The Roles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Relation to the United States Military, 1900-1975," 2 vols. (Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, 1975), 1:141-142.

the Mormon exiles from Nauvoo furnishing a battalion for the United States Army in the war with Mexico; the action of the Utah pioneers in raising the American flag in the Salt lake Valley when that was Mexican soil; the fidelity of Utah to the Union during the Civil War. Come to the period of the Spanish-American war and the insurrection in the Philippines—all within our personal recollection.

Scarcely two years had passed, after the State of Utah came into the Union, when there appeared on our national horizon the cloud of war with Spain. You all know the causes and the results. When the nation's chief, the late President [William] McKinley, called for volunteers to uphold the honor and dignity of the American flag in the struggle which was at hand, Utah was neither last nor least in the ranks of patriotic response. Side by side, shoulder to shoulder, with every other state in the Union, she furnished her full quota of American soldiers and offered more.<sup>1</sup>

Having evidenced the fidelity of the Saints in previous wars including the relatively recent Spanish-American War, Senator Smoot turned to the allegations that LDS temple ceremonies included pledges that were subversive to the U.S. government. “In the face of an accusation of an ‘oath of hostility,’ what is the reply of those men of the Utah Light Artillery who had received the ‘Mormon’ Church endowment ceremonies? It is given in the roar of battle at Malate, before Manila came into possession of our troops; . . . in the personal privation, the nerve-racking strain of scores of hard-fought engagements, and the unswerving loyalty of those American soldiers, who never shrank from duty or wavered in the face of the enemy.”<sup>2</sup> Senator Smoot argued that the brave actions of the LDS Spanish-American War veterans proved that the Saints stood with the United States and were therefore faithful citizens. This same argument—that outstanding military service equaled loyalty—served as an impetus for Latter-day Saint men to join the military again in World War I.

The charges of LDS disloyalty affected nearly every member of the Church;

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<sup>1</sup> Goddard, Benjamin, *Pertinent Facts on Utah's Loyalty and War Record*, (Salt Lake City, UT: Bureau of Information, 1918), 6-7.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, 7-8.

because when the time came to prove loyalty, it was individual members that furnished the proof. Jenny Van Orman, a Latter-day Saint young woman living in Canada, remembered the sorrow that came to her family on the day that her brother stepped forward to join the military in Alberta.

It was a Sunday and I remember after Sunday school [sic] which we all attended I had been out playing and came into the house and saw my mother and Blanche in the bedroom sitting on the bed and both crying. I went into the kitchen and Levaun was stirring [sic] a cake and wiping her eyes and I said to her “What’s the matter? Why is everyone crying?” and she said, “Herschel is going to war.” Hugh B. Brown was at our home that day and had inducted several L.D.S. boys along with my brother [sic] into the “Fort Garry Horse” battalion. These boys signed up because some people in the community has accused the Mormons of not being patriotic [sic] and cowards because they would not enlist. So these young men enlisted to defend their Church.<sup>1</sup>

When it came to the enlistment of Herschel Van Orman into the Canadian military, it was an issue of loyalty.

Some of the accusations of disloyalty against Canadian Saints may have been caused by an inept military recruiter who had visited Alberta. Sent by the politicians in the national capital of Ottawa, this man came to enlist into the provincial militia. Hugh B. Brown, a future apostle and member of the First Presidency, described this man as “the kind of person who made enemies as soon as one met him. He had a little mustache, wore his hat on one side of his head, dressed like a fop, and in every way was disgusting to the hard-headed, rough-riding cowboy type of young men in the western provinces. This man spent one month in Cardston trying to get someone to join, but not even one man would sign up.”<sup>2</sup> Failing at his purpose and perhaps looking for someone to blame, this man

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<sup>1</sup> Vance, Jennie Van Orman. “History of Jennie Van Orman Vance,” Helma Van Orman Barton Collection, MS 13289, Library-Archives, Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah; hereafter cited as Church Archives.

<sup>2</sup> Brown, Hugh B. *An Abundant Life: The Memoirs of Hugh B. Brown*, Firmage, Edwin B., ed. (Salt Lake

returned to Ottawa and reported that “the Mormons were disloyal and should be expelled from the country.”<sup>1</sup> The challenge towards LDS loyalty had been made and so the men of the community needed to step forward to prove their detractors wrong.

In a letter to the *Deseret Evening News* written during the war, future Church Historian Private Archibald F. Bennett later summarized the reason why so many LDS young men joined the Canadian army: “The ‘C’ Squadron of the 13<sup>th</sup> [23<sup>rd</sup>?] Canadian Mounted Rifles was largely made up of Latter-day Saints who were born in the United States. Their parents had moved to Canada in obedience to their Church leaders. Yet, when the war came to Canada on August 4, 1914, these men volunteered to join the Canadian army. They did not do it for the adventure or the glamour, but to fight off stereotypes that portrayed Latter-day Saints as disloyal.”<sup>2</sup> Private Bennett and his fellow LDS soldiers would later prove their loyalty to their new nation through excellent service in the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF).

Similar prejudices found a place in the United States. Lyman Balls, a member of the Church who served as a coxswain in the U.S. Navy, explained the feelings that Americans had towards members of the LDS Church at the time of the war. Although this experience happened after he had joined the armed forces, it served as an example of prejudices held by many Americans of that day.

I will never forget the time I went aboard the ship [the *Lawrence*], my records had preceded me and those aboard found out I was a Mormon because on our record it stated what religion we belonged to. Forty years ago the Mormons were persecuted and looked down upon, they were not as well known as they are today. I remember as I went up the gang plank

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City, UT: Signature Books, 1988), 49.

<sup>1</sup> Campbell, Eugene E. and Richard D. Poll. *Hugh B. Brown: His Life and Thought* (Salt Lake City, UT: Bookcraft, Inc., 1975), 53.

<sup>2</sup> Journal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, January 20, 1937, 8, Church Archives; hereafter cited as JH.

how the crew was lined up, I suppose to get a look at a Mormon boy, because no sooner had I got aboard they asked such questions [as] where are your horns, how many wives has your father got and how many are you going to have? I was the only Mormon aboard that ship so I was really watched. I was assigned to the deck crew, my chief Boatswain Mate was a full blooded Indian. He was very bitter against the Mormons. He told me awful stories he had heard about the Mormons. Which of course [sic] were not true [but] he believed them and took his spite out on me. He would give me all the dirty hard work he could find, he really ran me ragged. He also threatened to throw me over board some night. I was a big husky boy of 18 and didn't fear anything especially hard work, I was used to it, and I was willing and teachable.<sup>1</sup>

Seaman Balls' experience showed that even if the stories were untrue, it did not matter as long as others believed them to be true. Stereotypes about horns and the continued practice of polygamy led to skepticism among those of other faiths. During their service in the military, Church members endeavored to correct such doubts through their participation in the conflict.

The negative opinion of the Church was so bad in this era that the Church's Bureau of Information deemed it necessary to set forward a record of the past loyalty of Utah, called *Pertinent Facts on Utah's Loyalty and War Record*.<sup>2</sup> The first line of page one read, "To correct misrepresentation we adopt self-representation." Written by the bureau's head, Benjamin Goddard, this pamphlet set out not to explain the causes of the general misunderstanding that people had of the Church, but "to set forth a few pertinent

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<sup>1</sup> Balls, Lyman, "Memoir, ca. 1960," MSS 2350, no. 209, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 21.

<sup>2</sup> The Church's Bureau of Information was organized in order to stem the tide of incorrect information that was circulating about the Church. Utilizing the First Council of the Seventy and the general presidency of the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association, the First Presidency put together a plan to disseminate correct information to tourists who visited Salt Lake City. The Bureau building on temple square was built in 1902.

One of the proponents for this bureau, Richard W. Young wrote a letter in 1902 encouraging its creation. At that time, he was serving as one of the judges of the Superior Court of the Philippines (following the Spanish-American War). As a seventy, he sent his suggestion to the brethren in the presidency of the Seventy (Roberts, *Comprehensive History*, 423-425 and Anderson, Edward H., "The Bureau of Information," *Improvement Era*, vol. 25 (Dec 1921), 131-133).

facts bearing upon Utah's loyalty to the government of the United States."<sup>1</sup> These facts included statements from prominent American leaders who praised the citizens of Utah, statements from Church leaders about patriotism, and statistics about Utah's participation in U.S. military activities. While the pamphlet did not have as powerful effect as the examples of LDS soldiers, it did emphasize the Church's need to show its devotion to country.

Latter-day Saint men went to war in a world that did not trust them. Falsehoods and rumors tainted the opinions of many people although they had never previously met a Latter-day Saint. Each member of the Church desired to show the falseness of these claims. That opportunity came to them when they joined the military and took part in the First World War.

### **A Show of Loyalty from Canadian Latter-day Saints**

Canadian Latter-day Saints could sense the general feeling of distrust aimed towards them at the beginning of the war. A letter from Hugh B. Brown to his sweetheart, Zina Card, reflected the sentiment of the other Canadians and the reaction taken by a number of Canadian Saints. Brown reported, "Well Zina I have enlisted for three years as Lieutenant in the Alberta Regiment. I was loath to accept the position but being advised to do so I trust it will be for the best. We at least hope to keep our friends in the East from saying the Mormons are disloyal."<sup>2</sup> Again the purpose of enlisting in the army was to disprove the charges made against the Saints. In addition to enlisting, Brown and the other men continued to show patriotism during their training and later actions in France.

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<sup>1</sup> Goddard, 1.

<sup>2</sup> Firmage, Mary Brown. "Dear Sister Zina... Dear Brother Hugh..." *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon thought*, vol. 21, no. 2, Summer 1988, (Salt Lake City, UT: Dialogue Foundation, 1988), 47.

*Enlisting in the Military.* As mentioned previously, Ottawa sent a man to recruit LDS men into the militia in Alberta. He had little success and returned to the east with a message that the Saints were disloyal. Fortunately these southern Albertans had a friend in the parliament by the name of William A. Buchanan. As an elected official from Medicine Hat, Alberta, Buchanan was familiar with the Latter-day Saints. Speaking with his colleagues in the House of Commons, he suggested that the army train several Mormons to act as officers. These officers would then take the responsibility of recruiting young Latter-day Saints into the provincial militias. The House of Commons gave permission and Buchanan paid a visit to the president of the Alberta Stake, Edward J. Wood.<sup>1</sup> President Wood then invited Hugh B. Brown to his office and called the latter “on a mission to go to Calgary and train as an officer in the Canadian Army.”<sup>2</sup> Brown was chosen because he shared the same background as the potential recruits and could hopefully succeed where the first recruiter had failed.<sup>3</sup> With their own man doing the recruiting, the Latter-day Saints in Canada now had a chance to prove the initial recruiter’s report false.

On several trips spanning the province of Alberta, newly appointed Lieutenant Brown and others spread a message of patriotism and duty. In early summer 1910, sixty-

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<sup>1</sup> Hugh B. Brown described President Edward J. Wood as follows: “E. J. Wood [was] president of the Alberta stake and one of the finest men I have known—he had a great impact and influence on my life. . . . President Wood was a prophet in a very real sense, but because he was also a polygamist, he did not go beyond the position of president of a stake. Had it not been for that I think he would have been one of the general church leaders.” Susan Easton Black explains that President Wood served in his position from the age of thirty-six until he asked to be released at age seventy five. He had an almost legendary status amongst the Saints in western Canada (see Black, Susan Easton. “Edward Wood: An Ordinary Man Who Became Extraordinary through His Service and Devotion to God while in Canada,” *Regional Studies in Latter-day Saint Church History: Western Canada*, Dennis A. Wright, Robert C. Freeman, Andrew H. Hedges and Matthew O. Richardson, eds. [Provo, UT: Department of Church History and Doctrine, Brigham Young University, 2000], 169).

<sup>2</sup> Campbell and Poll, 53.

<sup>3</sup> Brown and Wood would later suggest four other men to participate in the officer training: William Ainscough, Benjamin May, Andrew Woolf, and Hyrum Taylor. (Brown, *Memoirs*, 50).

seven Latter-day Saints joined the militia. By 1912, so many men had enlisted in the provincial militia squadron that they could not accommodate them all. As of early 1915, there were over two hundred men in this unit.<sup>1</sup> In his memoirs, Brown related at least one reason why such a great number had joined the militia. “Many of them had come because I was at the head. Their parents knew me and had faith in me since I had been a member of a bishopric and was active in the church.”<sup>2</sup> This great trust followed Brown throughout the war and he did what he could to take care of these men.

In addition to the work of Hugh B. Brown, other Church members encouraged LDS men to enlist in the military. Ransom Van Orman, the father of a soldier already in France, took up the banner and campaigned for the continued enlistment of Saints after the initial group of men had left. The men on the front lines in France still remembered Van Orman’s work. Private Archibald F. Bennett mentioned Van Orman’s efforts in a letter: “I shall ever remember with pride and gratitude the stand you took when they asked for volunteers from our town and ever since I heard of your untiring efforts for the conscription cause.” Obviously Brother Van Orman was doing a great deal to help reinforce the Canadian troops in France and they appreciated his efforts.

Through the instrumentation of LDS recruiters, many Canadian Latter-day Saints joined the provincial militia and prepared for war. LDS efforts among the few members in Alberta helped boost the number of men that would eventually see action overseas. When Canada declared war in 1914, there were only 3,000 soldiers in the national army.

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<sup>1</sup> Firmage, Mary Brown, 43.

<sup>2</sup> Brown, *Memoirs*, 58.

The provincial militias supplemented this number with over 75,000 soldiers.<sup>1</sup> The loyal Saints of Alberta helped—albeit in a small way—to make the CEF possible.

*Training for the CEF.* A significant proof of Latter-day Saint loyalty to the Canadian government was the way they went about their training as part of the militia and later the national army. After the recruits joined the local militia, the 23<sup>rd</sup> Alberta Rangers, and Lieutenant Hugh B. Brown gave them their initial military training. He later recalled, “That was one of the most enjoyable parts of my military career, training those young, raw recruits.”<sup>2</sup> Through efficient training and the natural talents of his men, Brown put together a highly skilled unit. In addition to a talent for training, Brown also had an eye for detail. Since the Rangers were a cavalry unit, the lieutenant handpicked all of the horses used by his men. All one hundred and twenty horses were matched for size and each troop rode horses that matched in color.<sup>3</sup> When the entire squadron went on parade, the hard work and matching horses allowed them to impress both military officers and regular citizens.

The 23<sup>rd</sup> Alberta Rangers continued their annual training camps until the war began. After that point, the soldiers were summoned to a camp near Medicine Hat, Alberta. They stayed there training and preparing for over a year waiting for the call to Europe. Life in this camp was far from convenient. Sequestered to camp, they could not return to help on the family farms and often had difficulty attending local Church meetings.<sup>4</sup> Yet despite of these difficulties, the men stayed true to their responsibilities and continued their preparation for war.

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<sup>1</sup> Firmage, Mary Brown, 58.

<sup>2</sup> Campbell and Poll, 52.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 56.

<sup>4</sup> Van Orman, Herschel H., Personal Correspondence, 11 May 1916, Ms d 1380, fd 1, Church Archives.

While waiting for the call to go to France, the LDS servicemen had their loyalty tested. Once the unit joined the national army, they could no longer leave camp and travel home whenever they wanted. However, the long wait time made many think of home and how much of their time they wasted waiting for their orders. In an attempt to maintain morale among the soldiers during training, the officers found activities to keep the men entertained. On one occasion, the people of Medicine Hat held a dance and the local girls came out to socialize with the soldiers, although Private Lee Duncombe, from the LDS settlement of Taber, Alberta, complained that all the girls in attendance were “all ugglyer [sic] than a mud fen I plastered with poggleywog.” In addition to dances, the musically talented soldiers formed a band. Brown borrowed some instruments from the city of Cardston and then arranged for his brother, Lawrence, to act as the band leader. The band learned to play quite well; so well, in fact, that a commanding officer ordered the band and instruments moved to another unit. Since the instruments were borrowed, Brown had a difficult time following his orders. Fortunately, he was able to arrange the return of the musical instruments and Lawrence was replaced as band leader.<sup>1</sup> With these simple diversions, the LDS militia men successfully completed the agonizingly dull training time in southern Alberta.

Even after they sailed to England in June 1916, these Albertans had not finished training. Once in England, they continued to train with and care for their horses, practiced with bayonets and spent hours on guard duty. Still, the move to Europe greatly lifted their spirits. In a letter home from England, Private Herschel Van Orman, whose family initially wept over his enlistment, predicted a quick reassignment to the battlefield. He wrote, “We are on our second week of musketry now it lasts three weeks. And if they

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<sup>1</sup> Brown, *Memoirs*, 52.

keep on sending drafts as fast as they are now, we [are] pretty sure to be sent soon after we pass musketry.”<sup>1</sup> Marksmanship was just one part of the training in England. Soldiers also worked with “hand grenades, rifle grenades, bayonet fighting, Lewis gunnery, anti-gas precautions, entrenching, and construction of barbed wire entrenchments,” all of which prepared the men for combat in the trenches.<sup>2</sup>

While the Mormons had proved their military abilities and loyalties in Canada, they had to do it again once they arrived in England. Since the Saints generally obeyed the Word of Wisdom and did not live the same kind of hard lives as some of the other soldiers, they were occasionally looked upon as soft and unable to overcome the trials forced upon military men. This assumption was proven wrong when the LDS unit was challenged by Northwest Mounted Police to a match of horse back wrestling. Recently promoted Major Brown described this contest as “two teams of ten men each, mounted bareback, faced each other at one hundred yards and then came together at a gallop and grappled.” The Mounties were undefeated amongst the cavalry companies in England but the Latter-day Saint soldiers still took up the challenge.

In preparation for the contest, Major Brown chose several strong men from his unit who had experience with regular wrestling. Although they had no experience with horseback wrestling, each was an excellent rider and “could ride anything that wore hair.” Since the Mounties had bested other units, many of the soldiers from other detachments came to watch the proceedings. According to Brown, “when the struggle was over there was not one Mounted Police on his horse and not one Mormon dismounted. The leader of our group took one policeman under each arm and carried

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<sup>1</sup> Van Orman, Herschel H., Personal Correspondence, no date, MS 1380, folder 1, Church Archives.

<sup>2</sup> Cook, Tim. *No Place to Run: The Canadian Corps and Gas Warfare in the First World War*, (Vancouver, BC: UBC Press, 1999), 90-91.

them through. It was a startling thing.”<sup>1</sup> The publicity of the event brought a new respect to the LDS servicemen, who were now more easily accepted as fellow soldiers.

*Fighting at the Front Lines.* Following a few more months of intense training in England, the soldiers moved to France where they would have the opportunity to show their fidelity to their nation on the battlefield. Starting in September 1916, the men went in small groups to join units that had lost men in previous battles. Unfortunately this left Major Brown with a rapidly diminishing troop back in England; and without a unit, he could not go to France as an officer. He was willing to take reduction in rank in order to go to the front and show his loyalty, but the army denied him this opportunity. Instead they assigned him to return to Canada as a training and transport officer.<sup>2</sup> However, on one of his transporting missions, Brown did find a way to visit the front lines. For a two-week period, Major Brown lived in the field. He explained that he was assigned to a Canadian unit at Bruay, France, and “spent several days in the front line trenches, saw the effect of shell fire, bombs, grenades, etc., and on several occasions narrowly escaped being blown to pieces by exploding shells.”<sup>3</sup> In his journal he detailed his experiences in the trenches: “We spent considerable time in observation posts where we were within 40 yards of the enemy. We lived in dugouts and did most of our work at night. Spent some time among the bones of French soldiers who had not been buried after having been killed between there and the enemy lines almost a year before. Our trenches were facing the Vimy ridge.”<sup>4</sup> According to his timeline, Brown must have left Vimy Ridge just before the great push when the massive Canadian offensive won back that position.

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<sup>1</sup> Campbell and Poll, 65-66.

<sup>2</sup> Brown, *Memoirs*, 58.

<sup>3</sup> Campbell and Poll, 68-69.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, 69.

While Brown waited in England, other soldiers in Brown's company took part in combat in France. Private Archibald F. Bennett had a close call while on patrol one evening:

It was only a night or two ago that some of us were on a night patrol into No Man's Land which right here is about a mile across. We moved down a valley and crept through a wood and saw or met nothing. Then down and across another valley and [saw] another corpse. We passed across one end and were traversing the other side when over the west of the hill we spied an enemy patrol coming. We lay and waited as they came, stealthily up in the open and when they were quite near we challenged and opened fire.

For a few minutes things were happening. Then suddenly we were attacked from the side and rear and bombs commenced bursting around us. We swung out to our left and eluded the trap. Then the firing ceased and we returned.<sup>1</sup>

Bennett helped bring the wounded back to a hospital although he himself was not hurt.

From before the war began in Europe, the Canadian Latter-day Saints had something to prove. When the call went out from LDS recruiters, the young male members of the Church joined the provincial militia in order to prove their loyalty. Then they continued to model their feelings towards the nation of Canada through their diligent training and the pride they showed on the parade grounds. When war erupted on the fields of France, these men jumped at the opportunity to cross the ocean and fight in the name of their country. When their turn finally came, they gladly placed their lives on the line in order to protect the things they believed in, both patriotically and religiously. Through their actions, the LDS soldiers of Canada proved their faithfulness to their homeland.

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<sup>1</sup> Bennett, Archibald F., Personal Correspondence, 4 February 1918, MS 1381, Church Archives.

## **A Show of Loyalty from American Latter-day Saints**

The late start of the American army into the First World War did not affect their enthusiasm once war had been declared. Members of the Church echoed this sentiment. Even before the American declaration of war, a small number of LDS men crossed the border into Canada and joined the army there because they felt so strongly about the Allied cause.<sup>1</sup> Just like their neighbors to the north, the Latter-day Saints in the United States had an opportunity to prove their loyalty by their participation in all aspects of the war cause. In each stage of membership in the U.S. armed forces, the LDS soldiers and seamen proved their loyalty in battle and in other uncomfortable but necessary military life experiences.

*Enlisting in the Military.* One of the big proponents for LDS enlistment in the military was Elder Brigham H. Roberts, one of the seven presidents of the Seventy. He worked with Utah Governor Simon Bamberger's staff in this recruiting process and traveled to LDS settlements all throughout the Rocky Mountains. On these trips he motivated hundreds of Saints to enlist in the military rather than waiting for the draft. Similar to Hugh B. Brown in Canada, Elder Roberts spoke to anxious parents, saying, "You send your sons and I will be a father to them." Members of the Church obviously trusted Roberts deeply, as exhibited at a rally held in the Ogden Tabernacle on March 27, 1917. Elder Roberts stated, "I want to tell the fathers and mothers of Utah that if their sons go to the trenches I will go with them." This statement prompted applause from the

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<sup>1</sup> See "Passing Events," *Improvement Era*, vol. 27, July 1918, 838. The records of men who received medals from foreign countries shows at least four Americans that claimed Utah as their home but fought with the Canadian Expeditionary forces: Harry Joseph Newman of Odgen, Melbourne Walker Sykes of American Fork, Clarence Betts of Benjamin, and Wilford G. Bergstrom of Salt Lake City ("Foreign Decorations to Officers and Enlisted Men Giving Utah as Their State of Residence," Series 6307, Box 2, Folder 5, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, 1-2).

crowd that lasted for three full minutes.<sup>1</sup> This response was indicative of the feelings many Latter-day Saints had about participation in the war.

Two great examples of the spirit of enlistment among the Latter-day Saints were great-grandchildren of the Prophet Brigham Young. S. Grant Young, a veteran of the war in Mexico, applied twice to become a commissioned officer. Since he had a wife and daughter, he could have avoided the war, but as a loyal American he volunteered anyway. Eventually, he went to officer training camp in California and then served faithfully in France.<sup>2</sup>

Another of President Young's descendants and future general authority, S. Dilworth Young was underage at the time America went to war, so he needed his father's permission to join the army. His father, Seymour Jr., was reticent to let his young boy put himself in such a precarious position. After a great deal of discussion, they agreed to seek the advice of Dilworth's grandfather. Seymour B. Young, Sr., one of the seven presidents of the Seventy, reminded Dilworth that their ancestors had participated in previous wars in behalf of the United States. "I'm proud you want to make the world safe for democracy—by all means go." After consulting with Colonel Richard W. Young, another relative, Dilworth joined the Utah National Guard, which was later made a part of the national army.<sup>3</sup>

*The Use of Pre-existing Training.* Some LDS men joined so they could put to use the talents with which the Lord had blessed them. Rae P. Stratford put in for an

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<sup>1</sup> Madsen, Truman G. *Defender of the Faith: The B. H. Roberts Story* (Salt Lake City, UT: Bookcraft, 1980), 302.

<sup>2</sup> Young, S. Grant, *Retrospections of a Sheriff, Soldier, Horseman, and His Spiritual Renaissance*, (1975), 46-47.

<sup>3</sup> Parkinson, Benson Y., *S. Dilworth Young: General Authority, Scouter, Poet*, (American Fork, UT: Covenant Communications, Inc., 1994), 40-41.

assignment for field clerk duty where he could use his ability to speak the German language. Before the war began, Stratford had been part of the European Mission and had learned German. Stratford put in a special application and eventually the army chose him to work as a translator.<sup>1</sup>

J. Reuben Clark, a future member of the First Presidency, also had the opportunity to use his specialized skills in the service of his country.<sup>2</sup> In 1916, Clark was an attorney practicing international law and had many important clients including the government of Cuba. General Enoch Crowder, the Judge-advocate General of the Army sought out Clark and offered him a position in the judge-advocate division of the Officer's Reserve Corps. Crowder explained that Clark would not need to go through basic training but would immediately become an officer. Clark felt it was his duty to take part in the war effort and so joined Crowder's division.<sup>3</sup>

J. Reuben Clark's hasty recruitment came from General Crowder's foresight about America's impending declaration of war. Crowder had doubts about the creation of an all volunteer army, because those with the particular skills needed by the army would generally be the last to volunteer. In order to enlist skilled men, he came up with a general outline for the selective service program, which allowed a draft to take place. The creation of this system was the first assignment given to Major J. Reuben Clark. The young lawyer worked unwearyingly for many months to help create this system, which put into place hundreds of local boards that allowed selection of men based on military

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<sup>1</sup> "Stratford, Rae P.," n.p., Saints at War Files, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT; hereafter cited as SAW.

<sup>2</sup> J. Reuben Clark was later called as a counselor to three different presidents of the Church: Heber J. Grant, George Albert Smith, and David O. McKay (Avant, Gerry, ed., *2006 Church Almanac*, [Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret News, 2005], 58).

<sup>3</sup> Fox, Frank W., *J. Reuben Clark: The Public Years*, (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press and Deseret Book Company, 1980), 251-252.

priorities and complete chance. When Major Clark finished the work in June 1917, he also wrote the cover memorandum:

Heretofore, save in rare cases . . . war has been fought between armies. . . . But this war is a contest between peoples themselves. It is correspondingly determined, bitter, relentless. It is a war of systems; kings against the people. If our enemy wins, kings will dominate the world. That domination continued means the death of democracy. This issue must be fought out now. In this sense, this is truly a war of absolute and complete extermination, not of peoples, but of systems, and so far as the vision can pierce the future, the life of the one system or the other waits on its outcome.<sup>1</sup>

A short time after President Wilson's declaration of war, Crowder's team finished the case for conscription in the United States, which helped to mobilize an American response to the needs of the war in Europe. The adoption of Crowder's and Clark's work also brought even more Latter-day Saints into the war through the draft system.

The effect of the draft on the Latter-day Saint men took many forms. Some men were prepared to accept the draft when it came. Joseph A. Nielsen, of Ox Valley, Utah, refused a deferment of military service that in hindsight would have kept him out of the war until after the Armistice. Instead he stated that he would go when called.<sup>2</sup> Another experience showed that at least one Saint was so involved in providing for the needs of their families, that his draft notice came as a surprise. In the fall of 1917, Leo Jensen was hauling oats on the family farm when a relative arrived with a telegram from Washington, D.C. Despite the unexpected nature of the conscription, Jensen went to Pocatello, Idaho, to fulfill his duty.<sup>3</sup> These young men were representative of their fellow Saints, who—prepared or not—loyally joined the army in order to fight for the land in which they lived.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, 257-258.

<sup>2</sup> "Nielsen, Joseph August," n.p., SAW.

<sup>3</sup> Jensen, Leo, "This is My Life," n.p., SAW, 4.

By the end of the war over 22,000 Saints had served in the United States armed forces.<sup>1</sup> With a total worldwide church membership of just under 500,000<sup>2</sup>, the U.S. government took a large portion of the Church's young men. Whether volunteers or draftees, these men sacrificed their jobs and comfortable homes in order to join the U.S. military.

*Training for the American Expeditionary Force.* In addition to their enthusiasm, these new LDS soldiers needed training. Most of these men had no experience in military matters. Moreover, the military initially was unprepared to train the recruits. LDS veteran George S. Ballif described the status of the U.S. military, "We were ill equipped and ill prepared. . . . When we declared war on them on April 6, 1917, we had no army to speak of. We had no place to train them. We had of course the standing army that you usually have but it was small. We had to build all these places to train them. . . . We had to equip men. It took us [the] most part of the year."<sup>3</sup>

Once the government created training camps, the trainers at these camps faced an incredible task. The LDS men, like their fellow novice soldiers, had the enthusiasm for service but very few applicable skills. Even the new soldiers could see how unprepared most recruits were for army duty. Private Gaylen S. Young, a grandson of Church president Brigham Young, explained that when his commanding officer called the new soldiers to form two lines, chaos ensued. "The largest part of us knew nothing about military formations and acted like a lot of sheep when told to form in two ranks. The

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<sup>1</sup> Freeman, Robert C. "Latter-day Saints in the World Wars," *Out of Obscurity: the 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Sperry Symposium*, (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book Company, 2000), 111.

<sup>2</sup> See Mortimer, 530. The actual number of members at the end of 1917 was 488,038.

<sup>3</sup> Ballif, George S., "Oral History Interview," interviewed by Kaye Alta Haynes on 18 February and 8 March 1974, MSS OH 105, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 10.

Captain was a very hot-headed animal and did not hesitate to tell us what he thought of us. He was from the regular army and evidently expected us to know all about drill without being told even once.”<sup>1</sup> With that introduction to the methods of the military, most soldiers realized that they needed to learn quickly in order to survive.

The instruction that these men would need for their military service took many different forms. The first priority tasks were fighting and battlefield survival skills. The rifle range was an area where many of the LDS men showed expertise. Quite a few had grown up using rifles as a part of daily life in the west and so were quite proficient. When Latter-day Saint serviceman Ivan A. Farnworth first went to the rifle range, he had quite a surprise. “When they took me out on the firing range they gave me an eight inch bullseye. I said to the soldier, ‘Is that all I have got to hit?’ He laughed and said, ‘Yes, that is all you have got to hit.’ I said, ‘I don’t see how anyone could miss that,’ and I didn’t. I made the sharp shooters range.” Farnworth then explained that “all of the kids that were raised that way were sharp shooters.”<sup>2</sup>

Not all of the military duties were as amusing as marksmanship. One dreaded assignment was guard duty because it often interfered with the training or sleep of a soldier. The training had to be made up, but sleep was simply lost. One fear during guard duty was falling asleep. In a letter home to the LDS town of Willard, Utah, Lester Hubbard related an experience he had the night before while performing guard duty. “I went on guard last night and walked my post from one until five and was on again this afternoon from one until five. . . Really I was half asleep most of the time. Sometimes I

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<sup>1</sup> Young, Gaylen Snow, “Diary from April 22, 1918 to May 13, 1919,” MSS SC 1996, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 2.

<sup>2</sup> Farnworth, Ivan A., “Oral History Interview,” interviewed by Stan Burnett on 31 January 1985, MSS OH 3191, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 13.

would go to sleep standing up and would find myself reeling like a drunken man. That is what I call real misery. I was afraid to sit down because you know the penalty for being found asleep on post.”<sup>1</sup> The penalty that Hubbard mentioned for falling asleep during guard duty was death by firing squad, which punishment helped deter laxness while on duty.<sup>2</sup> Although they were protecting camps on U.S. soil, the soldiers were practicing a skill that they would later need when they arrived in the trenches of France.

Army life required a certain set of skills from each soldier, including tent setup and how to care for equipment. Additionally, each soldier had his individual military occupation in which he received special training as preparation for their service in the military. Some soldiers were prepared for a move to Europe by studying French.<sup>3</sup> Others took courses on semaphore (a communication system based on two handheld flags) and Morse Code.<sup>4</sup> The field artillery battalions worked at moving, aiming and firing their weapons.<sup>5</sup> As these initial groups of men learned their duties, the American army gained the experience it needed in preparation for action in Europe.

Before these soldiers could participate in the fighting in France, they needed to cross the Atlantic Ocean. The transport ships were generally not very comfortable; some of them were simply converted cattle or cargo ships. Corporal S. Dilworth Young explained that when he sailed on the *Scotian*, his bunk was in the bowels of that ship. He described it as “a place of darkness and peculiar odors. With all of the ports closed and

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<sup>1</sup> Hubbard, Lester A., Personal Correspondence, 28 April 1918, SAW.

<sup>2</sup> Duffy, Michael, ed. “First World War.com – Featured Articles – Life in the Trenches,” 24 Jan 2004, <<http://www.firstworldwar.com/features/trenchlife.htm>>, 9 Dec 2006.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 9 Sept 1918.

<sup>4</sup> Hausner, 5 and *The New Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster Inc.1989), 658.

<sup>5</sup> Redd, Leland, “Oral History Interview,” interviewed by Gregory Maynard on 23 July 1973, MSS OH 296, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 7.

locked, our only air is through a temporary ventilator, so that it gets pretty sour here before morning.”<sup>1</sup> Private David Call, the cook for the mostly LDS 145<sup>th</sup> Artillery brigade, recounted, “The ships were loaded very heavy with soldiers and with hardly enough room for a place to sleep. Some slept in Hammocks, some on the floor, some on the decks.”<sup>2</sup>

*The Journey Across the Atlantic.* Even crossing the Atlantic Ocean took some bravery, because of the presence of enemy ships in the water. The Germans had developed an effective submarine force during the war. The captains of these vessels were particularly anxious to destroy Allied troop transports, as that enabled the Germans to diminish enemy forces before they could reinforce the front lines. In order to avoid submarine attacks, the Allied navies relied on two tactics: first, they traveled in convoys of multiple ships and second, they used a zig-zag pattern which made it more difficult for the submarines to find the trans-Atlantic paths of their ships. Lieutenant S. Grant Young related a story that emphasized the fear that American soldiers felt about the danger of submarines.

There were no lights allowed except in the ship’s salon where the windows were blackened and the door screened. Our ship carried important cargo and many celebrities; and it was rumored that the Germans hoped to sink her before we reached Liverpool. She was purported to be carrying several million dollars of gold.

After we had been on the water a few days, we were joined by several destroyers that darted from one side of the convoy to the other looking for enemy submarines. The convoy of about ten ships stayed in columns, tacking constantly. We had several life-saving drills and the signals for abandoning ship were published. Five long blasts of the siren was the signal to take to the life boats.”

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<sup>1</sup> Parkinson, 48.

<sup>2</sup> Call, David, “Papers, ca. 1917-1982,” MSS 2350 no. 25, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 2.

Lieutenant Young continued by telling that the men on his ship were often entertained by a famous newsman, Irvin S. Cobb, who was on his way to Europe. One night they were engaged in this activity, “when all of a sudden the siren started: one long blast, two long blasts, three long blasts, four long blasts, then silence. The tension was terrific. After a pause when there was no fifth blast, Cobb broke the tense silence by saying slowly and with feeling, ‘I wish they wouldn’t do that.’ Everyone broke out laughing.”<sup>1</sup>

Despite the light-hearted ending to that frightful experience on board of S. Grant Young’s ship, another submarine warning was called a few days later. This time a boat in their convoy, the *Tuscania*, was torpedoed and sunk. Fortunately the other ships quickly rescued the men traveling on the *Tuscania* and transferred them to the other ships in the convoy.<sup>2</sup>

German submarines did not target transport ships only. Seaman Gordon M. White, of Montpelier, Utah, made several trips across the Atlantic on an oil carrier. On his second trip, he remembered feeling a lulling calm one evening until a periscope was spotted. Before they could react, a torpedo hit the boat near the engine room. Seaman White, who served as an engineer, was in the fire room feeding the engines. He later reported, “It seemed that some unseen providential power guided my footsteps, for when I tried to enter the engine room, ammonia fumes and steam filled my eyes and lungs until I was forced to turn back.” White found his way to the top of the ship by climbing ladders and when those failed, he climbed out of a porthole. Sailors on deck spotted him and pulled him up. They assembled near their lifeboats and after receiving orders to set off, they lowered the boats into the water. In order to avoid the suction created by the sinking

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<sup>1</sup> Young, S. Grant, 48-50.

<sup>2</sup> See *Ibid*, 50-51.

ship, the sailor quickly rowed away. After the danger was over, an English destroyer picked them up. White learned that the other three men on his team in the engine room were the only ones to die in this attack, likely because they had been caught below without an escape route.<sup>1</sup>

*Training in England and the Move to France.* Once the LDS soldiers put the dangers of the sea behind them, they were closer to the battlefield. They had passed through uncomfortable and frightening circumstances, but their enthusiasm still kept them going. Yet before they would reach the front lines, the soldiers of the U.S. army received even more training in both England and France.

Latter-day Saint Private Edward C. Peterson spent the Christmas of 1917 in a camp in England. Other than relating that it was the worst Christmas of his life, he looked at the imminent movement to France as a change for the better.<sup>2</sup> Like Peterson, most LDS soldiers rested in England for a time before going to France. While there, they continued to hone the skills necessary for survival in the trenches. Although separated from the war front, England was not necessarily isolated from the violence at war. The Germans made several bombing raids against London through the use of zeppelins. Ken Burnett, a Latter-day Saint serving in the American Air Corps, witnessed those attacks. The aircraft came at night and seemingly from all directions causing panic among the civilian population.<sup>3</sup> So despite the distance between England and the front lines, the Germans still found ways to attack the English homeland and soldiers could feel the proximity of the war.

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<sup>1</sup> "White, Gordon M.," n.p., SAW, 2-5.

<sup>2</sup> Peterson, Edward C., "Correspondence, 1917-1923," 31 Dec 1917, MSS SC 3071, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

<sup>3</sup> Burnett, Ken, Interview by Robert Freeman, SAW, 1.

When leaving England, LDS soldiers were once again packed into transport ships and carried across the English Channel to the French port of La Havre. Once on the continent, the men received more training. Since these men would soon make their way to the front lines, military trainers spent more time on the correct use of a gas mask. For many, like LDS Private Carl Hausner, this was the first time that they had encountered such equipment.

The next morning we assembled again and were taken to the “gas house” and were given gas masks and a lecture on the principle and working of the said article and a demonstration was given on its use. An English non-com [non-commissioned officer] instructed us. As he had been in the army a long time he told us many incidents from the front, relating to the use and care of gas masks. He said, “By all means take good care of it, for when you get to the front you will find it is the best friend you have.” We practiced putting it on and taking it off, and he laid particular stress on the necessity of being able to put it on in a hurry, six seconds being considered a safe amount of time. I never could do it in less than nine seconds, but then I could hold my breath three times that long, so I felt comparatively safe. Anyway, he advised us to practice whenever we had a chance, saying, “There are only two kinds of soldiers at the front, the quick ones and the dead ones.”

After marching around with them on for an hour or so we went to the “gas house” and were locked in, and the tear gas was turned loose on us for a few minutes. Then the door was opened and we were told to jerk off our mask and run out as fast as we could and only take one little whiff of the gas so we would know what it smelled like when we got to the front.<sup>1</sup>

This vital instruction on the use and importance of gas masks helped the soldiers combat against lethal chemical attacks.<sup>2</sup>

Once in France, trains served as one of the most common forms of transportation in France. These boxcars had a great impact on the men who rode in them because many of them mentioned the cars in their writings. “On the side of the French boxcars it said

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<sup>1</sup> Hausner, 9.

<sup>2</sup> Chemical weapons caused approximately 1,297,000 casualties (91,000 of them fatal) among the belligerents in the First World War (Coleman, Kim, *A History of Chemical Warfare*, [New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005], 34).

forty homme or eight cheveaux. That meant forty people or eight horses.” Brigham Young University student and soldier, Archie Jensen imagined that they actually loaded about eighty men into those cars plus their weapons and gear. Once on board, the men had to fend for themselves. At mealtime they had only the food in their packs, because the train usually did not stop until it had reached its destination. In these crowded conditions, sleeping also proved a challenge. At night the men did their best to lie down, but in order to do so they had to lie on top of each other.<sup>1</sup>

*Fighting in France.* “I have had so many close calls,” stated Gaylen S. Young, “and seen so much of death I hesitate to tell it in letter form lest it appear boastful and you cannot understand the spirit in which I say it.”<sup>2</sup> Although these valiant young men were often humble in sharing their examples of valor on the battlefields of France, their experiences proved their willingness to sacrifice everything for their country.

After a few more months of training, many men were eager to move to the front lines.<sup>3</sup> Gaylen S. Young related his excitement to his brother, Lorenzo; the latter had seen combat at the St. Mihiel Salient. Since Gaylen’s position in the supply delivery line allowed him to stay in the rear, Lorenzo tried to discourage his brother from requesting duty in the trenches. Gaylen’s response echoed the sentiments of many of the soldiers in the First World War who had not spent any time in the front: “I would never feel right until I could go over the top at least once in this war which I considered my duty. . . I told

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<sup>1</sup> Jensen, 19; Gardner, 2; and Hausner, 9.

<sup>2</sup> Young, Gaylen, 28.

<sup>3</sup> Even getting from the rear encampments to the front lines was dangerous. The enemy often targeted trains in order to cause greater casualties, so the military armed the trains when possible. LDS soldier Joseph S. Nielson and his machine gun company were given guard duty when it came their turn to move to the front. Rather than riding in the boxcars with the rest of the men, they secured their machine gun to a flatbed on the train. During their ride to the front, Nielson and his men spent their time watching the skies for enemy airplanes. Had they spotted any aircraft, they alone had the responsibility to safeguard the train. Fortunately, they made it to the front without difficulty (“Nielson, Joseph S.,” [n.p., Saints at War Files, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT] 45-46.).

him it was not because I wanted to but it was my duty and whether I want to or not my duty is to be done.”<sup>1</sup> Gaylen eventually made it to the front lines and after almost being killed, he returned back safely.<sup>2</sup>

Once soldiers left their trenches, they crossed into the desolate area called “No Man’s Land.” Pock marked by artillery shells and generally devoid of any cover, these desolate fields were all that separated one army from another. In order for an infantry company to attack the enemy, they first had to traverse No Man’s Land without being shot. Archie Jensen described the vulnerability of soldiers running across this land as “it was just like shooting pigeons.” In his first trench raid, Jensen’s unit successfully crossed No Man’s Land and secured their objective. However his sergeant realized that they could not hold it against a counter-attack. Their only choice was to run back across No Man’s Land and return to the Allied trenches. Fortunately they did so successfully.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to the bullets from infantry rifles and the shells from the artillery, airplanes and balloons increased the danger to the soldiers. S. Grant Young had a close experience with an enemy plane while climbing a tree in order to ascertain his position. The airplane flew by and came within a few yards of where he was climbing. Although the plane bore allied circles on its wings, it flew close enough that Lieutenant Young could easily see the German iron crosses beneath the circles. He quickly climbed down the tree just in case the plane decided to circle around.<sup>4</sup> In addition to planes, the Germans were adept in the use of balloons. Some of the balloons were armed with heavy weapons. Leo Jensen experienced such weapons first hand. While Jensen was out with

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, 13.

<sup>2</sup> See *ibid*, 19-20.

<sup>3</sup> Jensen, 20.

<sup>4</sup> Young, S. Grant, 58.

some other soldiers looking for grass to use in their bedding, an enemy balloon suddenly appeared and began shooting large-caliber shrapnel shells. Jensen just made it to the door of his dugout when one shell hit close by and killed two of his friends.<sup>1</sup> The heights to which these vehicles could ascend gave them the vantage point necessary to spy out enemy camps and also made them somewhat more difficult to hit. Towards the end of the war aircraft became more plentiful and helped to once again change the nature of combat in World War I.

*Wounded Saints.* The Latter-day Saint men on the front lines were willing to do whatever it took in order to defend their homelands. Many were wounded while attempting to fulfill this purpose, but they continued to fight on as long as they were able. The experiences of three men help to illustrate the bravery of those who chose to fight on in spite of their own wounds.

Sergeant Howard M. Angell of Bingham Canyon, Utah, took his position as a non-commissioned officer very seriously. The citation to his French Croix de Guerre with gilt star read, "Although wounded during an advance of his regiment, he refused to be bandaged and continued to command his platoon until the morning of the following day. Had to be formally ordered to the rear." Sergeant Angell showed valor even after being injured.<sup>2</sup>

Frank Aldridge, a Latter-day Saint from North Carolina, worked as a field medic during the war and exhibited courage in spite of heavy fire. Even when he lost both of the men in his team, he continued to retrieve the wounded from the field.

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<sup>1</sup> Jensen, 5.

<sup>2</sup> "Foreign Decorations to Officers and Enlisted Men Giving Utah as Their State of Residence," Series 6307, Bx 2, Fd 5, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1.

On May 21<sup>st</sup>, [1918,] the day I was wounded, the Germans had launched an extra heavy barrage [sic]. It was on the Somme, near Cantigny, France. The big shells were exploding behind the lines and the machine guns kept up a steady firing. We all had on our gas masks as the Germans had sent over gas. The Medical Corp were kept busy giving first aid to the wounded and getting them back to the dressing stations. The other two men in my group had been severely wounded and the Sergeant had been hit in the arm, but was still carrying on. It was beginning to get daylight and we were getting ready to move back, when we heard a shrapnel [sic] coming over. We all dropped to the ground, but I was hit. The Sergeant asked if I could make it back to the dressing station and I told him I thot [sic] I could. I became sick and started to vomit, so I had to remove my gas mask and I got gassed. I reached the dressing station where they loaded me on a stretcher and took me back to another dressing station. I was moved to several different dressing stations, as the hospitals and dressing stations were filled with wounded. There were over 600 wounded in my division alone.<sup>1</sup>

Private Thomas C. Neibaur was the first recorded Latter-day Saint to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor. The following story related the actions that earned him that recognition.

On the afternoon of 16 October 1918, when the Cotede-Chatillion had just been gained after bitter fighting and the summit of that strong bulwark in the Kriemhilde Stellung was being organized, Private Neibaur was sent out on patrol with his automatic rifle squad to enfilade enemy machine gun nests. As he gained the ridge, and although practically cut off and surrounded, the remainder of his detachment being killed or wounded, this gallant soldier kept his automatic rifle in operation to such effect that by his own efforts and by fire from the skirmish line of his company, at least 100 yards in his rear, the attack was checked. The enemy wave being halted and lying prone, four of the enemy attacked Private Neibaur at close quarters. These he killed. He then moved alone among the enemy lying on the ground about him, in the midst of the fire from his own lines, and by coolness and gallantry captured eleven prisoners at the point of his pistol and although painfully wounded brought them back to our lines. The counterattack in full force was arrested to a large extent by the single efforts of this soldier, whose heroic exploits took place against the skyline in full view of his entire battalion.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Aldridge, 15.

<sup>2</sup> "Neibaur, Thomas C." n.p., SAW, 650-651.

If an uninjured man had accomplished the feats performed by Private Neibaur it would have been incredible. However, for a wounded to man to capture a number of prisoners and escort them back to the trenches was miraculous.

These three stories exemplify the courage and tenacity of the Latter-day Saints who took part in the First World War. While not every heroic deed received a medal, the records of LDS veterans of the Great War showed that they fought with great loyalty to their country. In addition to those whose survived the war, many LDS soldiers sacrificed their lives while serving in the trenches in order to prove their loyalty to the nation they called home.

*Experiences from the Battlefield.* The writings of World War I veterans provided added insight into life in the trenches. This type of combat was by no means an exact science, often causing greater misery and death than was necessary. When an attack came to those manning the trenches, the soldiers were pushed to the edge of their ability. With shells exploding and bullets flying, these men had to constantly be on guard because one small lapse in attention could cost their lives. The constant stress left the men exhausted even before the enemy troops came near.<sup>1</sup> Another difficulty for life in the trenches was the lack of communication. While the telephone found use in this war, it could only link two locations together. Even if a telephone line went down a particular trench, the men standing beside it did not have access to the information being shared on it. Leo Jensen reported one of the ingenious methods used by commanders to keep the troops informed: “Bright stars from a gun shot up in the sky called for machine gun fire, a bright red rocket called for artillery fire or help if we needed it. If there was gas fired then we had six seconds to get our gas mask on. When a gas alarm was given, which was with a horn

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<sup>1</sup> Aldridge, 15.

sounding up and down the trenches, a few green rockets were shot up in the heavens.”<sup>1</sup>

The lack of communication and the sheer tenseness of life in the front lines constantly wore on the nerves of these men and so their stints in the trenches generally only lasted a few weeks. They were then replaced and allowed a short rest period to recuperate away from the frontlines.

Amid the great dangers of the trenches, the LDS soldiers and their colleagues showed incredible courage. They accomplished things that were necessary to win the war. Yet, as George Ballif explained, fighting on the front was not completely physical:

It wasn't how good you could shoot, it wasn't how good a soldier you were as far as our traditional thinking about soldiers, but it was how far you could walk, how long you could go without sleep and food under all kinds of conditions that determined whether or not you survived. It was all so different than warfare had ever been. . . You didn't see the enemy. It was a question of surviving the tremendous artillery fire that would come at you, bombs from the air, if you were about to withstand that and get out of the way. It was terribly frightening at first for us. Sometimes you would get so frightened you would want to turn and run, but nobody could run. Everybody was going forward. That is of course what you ought to do. I didn't have any heroics in my experience, but we saw a lot of men die, and there was a great patriotic feeling of what we were doing. If we could stop the Kaiser who wanted to enslave us all, that is what we were there for.<sup>2</sup>

Although Ballif downplayed his contribution into the war effort and claimed that he never did anything heroic, his actions showed otherwise. Any man brave enough to climb out of a pit and run across an empty field in the face of enemy fire was a hero.

Even soldiers and sailors who never experienced combat in the trenches bravery and patriotism. Many Latter-day Saints had occupations in the military that required them to work behind the scenes. Their jobs were not necessarily less dangerous and were indispensable in maintaining the safety of those on the front lines. S. Grant Young

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<sup>1</sup> Jensen, 5.

<sup>2</sup> Ballif, 13.

worked as an advance observer for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Field Artillery. In order to obtain clear and useful intelligence about the position of enemy artillery units, Young often had to position himself in areas that were open to enemy fire. When the other two officers in his observation post were wounded, he continued at his post around the clock so that he could relay vital information back to the artillerymen.<sup>1</sup>

Farther back were the men that ensured that communication happened between commanding officers and the soldiers in the field. Private First Class Carl Hausner worked in the Signal Corps and was responsible for maintaining telephone lines that led from the rear to the trenches. Hausner related an experience that happened one night after he had gone to sleep. At eleven o'clock another member of the Signal Corps woke him up because one of the lines was out of commission. He and a fellow soldier named McCormick packed up their gear and started towards the line. In order to reach it, the two of them needed to cross a narrow path between a 10-foot deep cellar and "a big deep shell hole." Hausner had successfully crossed the path when he heard a loud thud followed by the ringing of a bell. He turned back quickly and found that McCormick, who was carrying a telephone, had fallen into the cellar head first and complained that his back might be broken. With the help of some other men in his unit, Hausner carried McCormick back to their dugout.

Once Hausner and the others made it back to their post, German shells began to fall on their location. A corporal approached and told them that because of the increased danger they did not need to go back out.<sup>2</sup> Hausner later explained the luck they had in

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<sup>1</sup> Young, S. Grant, 57-58.

<sup>2</sup> Although Hausner had started his military service at Camp Lewis, where many Latter-day Saints trained for the service, he was later assigned to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. While at that camp, Hausner trained as a member of the signal corps (Hausner, 5). Since he was removed from the larger number of LDS

McCormick's accident. "In the morning we left at day break to patrol our stretch and found it in fine shape. It was in our neighbor's stretch that the wires were cut, so if we had not had that accident with Mac [McCormick], we would have gone out for nothing, and one or both of us would likely have been killed, as the Germans were shooting at the wires." Yet despite the ever-present dangers, Hausner and McCormick had gone out the night before to fulfill their duty.<sup>1</sup>

Lyman Balls never came close to the Western Front during his service in World War I. As a Navy Coxswain on the USS *Lawrence*, he spent a good deal of his time guarding the Panama Canal. His valor—although thousands of miles away from the enemy lines—was evidenced in the following experience:

One day as we were just outside the break waters at the entrance of the canal a terrible storm came up, it got so bad that we could hardly navigate, so the captain gave the order to tie up to a large buoy and drop anchors. The call was made for a volunteer to jump from the ship onto the buoy and secure a line to it; this looked like certain suicide; but I raised my hand, that I would do it. Just then the old Indian [the ship's Boatswain who had been quite antagonistic towards Balls] yelled out, 'How about it Balls'. I soon had a heaving line around my waist and they brought the ship along side the buoy. I jumped and was successful in securing the line to the buoy saving the ship. They threw me a line which I tied securely around my waist. I went hand over hand the best I could and then they drew me aboard safely.<sup>2</sup>

Bravery in the face of possible death allowed Balls to save an entire ship full of men.

The actions of Latter-day Saint soldiers in World War I consistently furnished evidenced of the loyalty of their people. No matter where their duties called them, these men performed their responsibilities. Quite frequently these men also performed above the levels expected of them and gained the trust and friendship of those around them.

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servicemen, it seems likely that he seldom served with other Latter-day Saints. When relating this story, Hausner does not explain whether McCormick and Cox are members of the Church or not.

<sup>1</sup> Hausner, 16.

<sup>2</sup> Balls, 21.

Their loyalty showed in the number of men enlisted, the way in which they trained and their deeds on the field of battle. Stated simply, the Latter-day Saints proved their loyalty by actions, not merely words.

### **Loyalty to Covenants**

In many ways the Latter-day Saint soldiers were no different than their comrades. However in some ways, these men followed a lifestyle that was unlike most of the others. Many of their distinct practices came from the covenants they had made with God; that they would live by a different set of standards than was popular in the world. This could be seen in their practice of the Word of Wisdom, moral cleanliness, payment of tithing, prayer, fasting and the use of the priesthood.

*The Word of Wisdom.* The Latter-day Saints follow a code of health, called the Word of Wisdom, which prohibits the use of tobacco, alcohol, coffee and tea (D&C 89:5-9). The temptations to break this commandment were everywhere as evidenced by the experiences that LDS men had with several items prohibited in that law. The soldiers learned that the French did not drink water, but instead drank wine. The French, in order to fill the drinking needs of their families, often filled their basements with barrels of wine.<sup>1</sup> In addition to alcohol, tea and coffee were great temptations because water sources near the frontline were often polluted.<sup>2</sup> Tobacco was also quite common. During the time that S. Grant Young spent in a forward observation dugout, he mentioned that they always had an overstocked supply of cigarettes.<sup>3</sup> Not only were the soldiers fighting in a

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<sup>1</sup> McDonald, Howard Stevenson, "Letters, 1914-1944," 15 Nov 1918, MSS SC 1316, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

<sup>2</sup> JH, Jan 20, 1937, 9.

<sup>3</sup> Young, S. Grant, 55.

land with a different culture, but the horrors and stresses of war, which often led to vice, constantly surrounded them.

Some core features of military culture held many practices that used items prohibited by the Word of Wisdom. A short time after Hugh B. Brown and a few other LDS men enlisted in the Canadian militia, they went to an officer training camp. The captain of this camp was intrigued by the Latter-day Saints and so invited Brown and the others to his office in order for them to become acquainted. At first the commanding officer offered each a cigar, which they all turned down. Undaunted he offered them some beer and met with another rejection. While the captain was simply trying to help the Latter-day Saint men feel comfortable around him, their beliefs made it necessary for them to reject his hospitality. Fortunately rather insulting the captain, their integrity impressed him.<sup>1</sup>

Besides the lack of understanding by those on a superior level, the Word of Wisdom often set Latter-day Saint soldiers up for harassment by other enlisted men. While preparing to go to the front lines in France, Archibald Bennett and his LDS colleagues from Canada sat with other battle-hardened soldiers for the first time. Having learned the strange eating and drinking habits of the Latter-day Saint men, these veterans began to tease the neophyte soldiers about the difficult conditions on the front. Particularly, Bennett recorded the torment that followed when the other soldiers learned they would not drink tea. “The seasoned soldiers explained that some days they would march and the only thing for dinner was tea.” The men chided, “You’ll be glad of a little boiled tea, won’t you?” Despite the intense harassment about their belief in the Word of

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<sup>1</sup> Campbell and Poll, 53-54.

Wisdom, Bennett and his comrades trusted in the promises made by the Lord and kept the Word of Wisdom.<sup>1</sup>

Notwithstanding the intense temptation to lower their standards in this area, many of the soldiers held inner convictions that would not allow them to acquiesce on this matter. Statements made by Jens L. Stevensen in a letter home could summarize the feelings of many Latter-Day Saint soldiers. “Now that I am in the army for good, I am here to do my best and to show the world that the Latter-day Saints are the light on the hill, not under a bushel. Every ‘Mormon’ boy (at least that is the way I feel) is a wonder to all the men. I do not know what it is to use tea, coffee, tobacco or liquor, or to have a smoke. I do not know what they taste like. When we get hard tack to eat, I am almost tempted to take some tea to soak it in, for not always is water to be had. Then I think ‘He that breaketh the least commandment,’ etc. So I brace up and so far have not yielded.”<sup>2</sup> This statement expressed the contradiction of several facts of life among Latter-day Saint soldiers. These men lived in circumstances where breaking the Word of Wisdom was a great temptation. In addition, they were also occasionally put in situations when compromising this belief would have made life easier. However they were confident that the Lord had promised them that if they would refrain from such enticements, their lives would be blessed. Overarching the difficult choice of maintaining this covenant was the fact that others were constantly watching the actions of the Latter-day Saints—they truly were a “light on the hill.” While not every Latter-day Saint kept the Word of Wisdom, a

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<sup>1</sup> JH, Jan 20, 1937, 9. Some soldiers learned how to use their compliance with the Word of Wisdom to their advantage. In a letter home, Herschel Van Orman “said they used to trade their ration of rum and tobacco and tea and coffee for bacon and jam” (Vance, Jennie Van Orman. “History of Jennie Van Orman Vance,” Helma Van Orman Barton Collection, MS 13289, Church Archives).

<sup>2</sup> “Stevenson, Jens Leslie,” n.p., SAW, 3.

many recognized the strength that came from keeping this commandment of the Lord because they chose His ways over the ways of the world.

*Morality and the Law of Chastity.* Another consequence of the war was the loosening of morals. As the soldiers interacted with young women outside their camps, they often saw how the standards of chastity among these ladies had fallen. A major indicator of the laxness of morals was that access to such sin had increased. Speaking of conditions in England, Gaylen S. Young bemoaned that in Liverpool “you don’t have to go in dark places or remote places to see how rotten conditions are in morals among the girls of this city.”<sup>1</sup> The increase in attentions that women received from men on the military bases may have contributed to lowered standards of chastity in these areas.<sup>2</sup> Whatever the cause, morals weakened and sexual temptations flourished during the war years.

This greater access to sin and the weakened state of highly-stressed soldiers occasionally led to the fall of a soldier that should have held higher standards. Corporal Dilworth Young spoke of a friend trying to get him to go to a place called “Hill 13.” Both soldiers knew it was a place of prostitution but his friend argued that he just wanted to go and see. Young said, “I refused. He went, but would not look me in the eye the next day.” He related another experience that happened one night while waiting for a truck. While standing in the dark, he noticed another member of his battery standing alone down the street. A French prostitute approached the man and “spoke to him in the universal language.” The soldier looked around and saw no one else, so he went with her. Later, Dilworth Young related that when his unit returned to Salt Lake City, he saw the man

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<sup>1</sup> Young, Gaylen, 7.

<sup>2</sup> Heyman, Neil M. *World War I*, (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1997), 92.

reunite with his wife and baby. He wondered what the soldier thought of his infidelity at that moment. Dilworth also mentioned that he regretted not stepping out into the light and stopping the man at the time.<sup>1</sup> In both cases, Young made it sound like the men had made unwise choices even though they should have known better.

Fortunately, most men of the LDS faith had strong moorings that encouraged their fidelity to covenants. Many had been taught the importance of maintaining chastity. When times of temptation came they could reflect on their personal commitment to stay chaste. Furthermore, a number of them had the added strength of temple marriage covenants to fortify them against these sins. The thoughts of a spouse, with whom they could share the rest of eternity, strengthened resolve to remain true to commandments they had been taught.<sup>2</sup> Through safeguarding their standards on morality, many LDS men were able to avoid the disease that followed many who broke the law of chastity.<sup>3</sup> Since they did not put themselves in harm's way by such irresponsible acts, chaste LDS soldiers showed that living their beliefs helped them be better soldiers.

*The Law of Tithing.* Another principle of righteous living is willingness to sacrifice. The lives of Latter-day Saint men exemplified this principle in small and great ways. One way in which these men sacrificed was in the payment of tithing. The salary of an enlisted man was small, with a great portion of it going to pay for life insurance. Furthermore, what little they had left could generally only be spent in markets stricken with wartime inflation. Paying ten percent tithing certainly entailed a great sacrifice on their part but many of the soldiers did it in order to remain obedient to the law of tithing.

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<sup>1</sup> Parkinson, 51.

<sup>2</sup> McDonald, 26 Sept 1918.

<sup>3</sup> Heyman, 93.

Although regular payment of tithing was difficult, a few mentioned that they sent money home and asked their parents to give it to the bishop.<sup>1</sup>

*Obtaining the Power of God.* Worthiness was a vital trait in these men because they so often relied on the power of God to protect their lives. Since these men constantly risked their lives in order to fulfill the objectives assigned to them, they wanted to put their lives into the hands of a higher power. In order to obtain this assistance, the soldiers used the practices of prayer, fasting and priesthood blessings. When Private Gaylen S. Young finally had his opportunity to “go over the top” (climbing out of the trenches and making an attack on the enemy) in early October, 1918, prayer played a major part in getting him back to safety. Young and his patrol were assigned to take a particular hill but as they approached it, the enemy increased their assault using rifles, artillery and gas. The Germans had him pinned down so that moving forward or retreating were both difficult.

“I became frightened, the only real case of fright I ever had in the front. I didn’t know what to do. I had lost sight of the other boys, so which should I do, go forward in spite of ‘hell’ or go back into it. Bullets kept a constant hum and crack as they passed. Now I began to think what my dear mother would have me do. My religious training and my parents [sic] teachings I thought of much. Being in a predicament when I was sure that only one power could save me, I prayed to God to give me protection and make it possible so I could go through this ‘hell’ safely. I told him in my prayers that if he would, I would do what I could to work for humanity in the future. That if my work was to be along religious lines, that I would be influenced in that direction, and if other lines that my life would be influenced in that direction. Just about this time a bullet passed through the upper part of my left arm coat sleeve. I realized how close I came to being hit. I was made to feel better right away for I saw two of our group running back over the hill from which we came and go to the other side of the little ditch below and knowing I should be following them I crawled for a ways and then jumped up and ran to the same place.”

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<sup>1</sup> Van Orman, 22 June 1916; and McDonald, 13 Oct 1918.

Young was finally able to reunite with his patrol and his captain gave him orders to pull back and dig in. Prayer played an integral part in the lives of many soldiers. Canadian Archibald Bennett recalled that he and eight of his Latter-day Saint friends would gather together at night for what they termed “family prayers.”<sup>1</sup>

In addition to prayer, the soldiers derived power and comfort from fasting. Since there was a great deal of injury and sickness surrounding the soldiers, often involving those close to them, a few Saints saw fasting as a method to help relieve some of the suffering.<sup>2</sup> On March 22, 1918, LDS Private June Sharp mentioned that a member of their unit, Dr. Heard Lambert, an optometrist, was “sick badly.” That evening Sharp fasted for the doctor. The next day he visited Lambert in the hospital and learned that he had pneumonia. Dr. Lambert died on the 25<sup>th</sup> and was sent to Bordeaux for burial. While fasting did not always miraculously save their fellow soldiers, the faith exercised by fasting showed the trust that these men had in God.

Many Latter-day Saint men also relied on the power of God as manifested by the use of the priesthood. Hugh B. Brown felt that the ability to give or receive a priesthood blessing was a privilege greater than anything else that his rank afforded him. He related an experience when a serviceman recuperating in a hospital in London asked for his assistance. Brown thought that perhaps the young man hoped to ask a favor based on his status as a major. It turned out that the request had to do with Brown’s spiritual standing and not his military rank. The injured man was a Latter-day Saint and asked for a

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<sup>1</sup> Bennett, JH 30 Jan 1937, 8.

<sup>2</sup> Sharp, June Bennion, “World War I Diary and Battle Account, 1918—1919,” MS 19547, Church Archives, 2.

blessing. The moral of the story was explained by Brown, who said, “I went into that hospital a proud British officer. I came out a humble Mormon elder.”<sup>1</sup>

*The Gift of the Holy Ghost.* Another blessing bestowed upon faithful members of the Church is that of the Gift of the Holy Ghost. They had been promised that if they kept their covenants then they would receive the promptings of the Holy Ghost to help direct their lives. One night, these promptings saved the lives of Amos Hatch and his lifelong friend, T. N. Bunker, both Latter-day Saints. While fighting in the Argonne sector at night, these two friends bedded down in a rock quarry in order to avoid the explosion of artillery shells. They had just found a place in an old stone quarry that they felt was safe from artillery fire.

At this particular time, T. N. said, ‘I don’t feel good about this!  
I said, “My golly, we’re pretty decently comfortable here. Let’s not  
move from here.”  
He said, “I don’t feel good about this. If you don’t leave, I’m going  
to.”  
I thought, “Well, T.N. has a lot of intuition or something.  
Something has told him to move, maybe I’d better follow him.” I did so.

From there Hatch and Bunker moved through water about two-feet deep and found another shelf on the other side of the quarry. As soon as they had reached their new location, a shell fell on the area they had moved from. Their shelter was completely destroyed.<sup>2</sup> Following a prompting, even though it was inconvenient and uncomfortable, saved both soldiers from an instant death from an artillery shell.

Priesthood holders also found strength in prayer and fasting. When they used their priesthood appropriately they blessed the lives of others. Even in less formal settings, they followed the promptings of the Holy Spirit and their lives were saved. Many perhaps

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<sup>1</sup> Campbell and Poll, 67.

<sup>2</sup> Hatch, Oleen N., “The Amos Chester Hatch and Sarah Edna Stohl Family History, 1985,” M270 A525, Church Archives, 81.

felt as Archibald Bennett when he wrote, “The principles impressed upon us [in priesthood quorum] and at our homes have lived and I know they grow stronger with each added testimony that the Lord is with us and our Priesthood is something more than a thing of naught.”<sup>1</sup>

The covenants that Latter-day Saint soldiers had made with God did not stop them from accomplishing their military duties. As they followed the Word of Wisdom, addictive substances did not control their actions. They found strength in their promises to loved ones to maintain standards of chastity. The soldiers also did not succumb to selfishness as they paid their tithing. Additional power came from their closeness to God through prayer, fasting and use of the priesthood. While these practices set them apart from most other soldiers, covenants did not hinder LDS men from fulfilling their duties as soldiers.

### **The Armistice**

On the eleventh of November, 1918, at eleven o’clock in the morning, World War I was over. Yet even up to that hour Latter-day Saint soldiers had remained loyal in fighting the war that their nation had called them to fight. Even that very day, many expected to go over the top and perhaps lose their lives in service to that country. The risk of death did not lessen their willingness to fight on and do whatever thing was asked of them.

After that eleven o’clock hour, the atmosphere of the entire battlefield changed. Shells continued to drop in the minutes just prior to the time of Armistice, but the moment that the hour struck the guns went silent. “That was the greatest feeling I’ve ever had in my life,” reported Archie Jensen. “There was not a sound. So I remember we were

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<sup>1</sup> Bennett, Archibald F., Personal Correspondence, 4 February 1918, MS 1381, Church Archives, 7-8.

lying. We had made a little hole with bayonets to give us a little protection. I got up on the top and started looking around. I looked across no-man's land and I could see the Germans getting up there. Finally we got up and started walked [sic] toward each other. I got close enough to talk to one of the guys, and I said, 'Are you glad that the war is over?' It seemed like he could talk English. He said, 'Yes.'"<sup>1</sup> Men on both sides were grateful to learn that the war was over. Ivan Farnworth learned an important fact that day as he stood guard over a number of German prisoners. "They [the Germans] threw their mess kits in the air and they threw their hats in the air. Then they began to dance. They were tickled because the war was over. They didn't want to kill us any more than we wanted to kill them. It was nice. . . I never felt bad about having that experience."<sup>2</sup>

The aversion to killing other men was obvious on both sides of the battlefield. The Latter-day Saints who were spared from fighting expressed tremendous gratitude at never having to take the life of another. In truth, this was a war largely fought by men who would rather not have to kill anyone else.<sup>3</sup>

With the bloodshed over, a feeling of celebration spread throughout France. At night the artillery pieces went off again, but this time just to fire blue and red star shells as a form of celebration. Music filled the air as military bands dusted off their instruments and played festive songs to cheer on the men and women who had suffered so long. The streets of towns throughout the countryside were filled as people who had hid inside their homes for too long finally ventured out to celebrate. Now they could walk the streets and noisily express their happiness at the end of the war.<sup>4</sup> That night the citizens of many

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<sup>1</sup> Jensen, 21-22.

<sup>2</sup> Farnworth, 5.

<sup>3</sup> See Ibid, 13; Jensen, 4; and Nielsen, 10.

<sup>4</sup> Ballif, 9.

countries around the world walked the streets of France and reveled in the fact that, as one jubilant Frenchman announced as he ran up and down the town, “La guerre est fini!” “The war is over!”<sup>1</sup>

### **Summary**

Loyalty is more than a feeling; it is an action. In every aspect of military expectations, the actions of Latter-day Saint soldiers showed their feelings of patriotism. In both Canada and the United States, when Church leaders sent out the call for the enlistment of men, those requests were answered by thousands of men who flocked to their recruiters in order to join the military. Sacrificing their comfort, they put their lives in the hands of army, navy and marine leaders. While preparing for war, they volunteered the talents they already possessed and then worked diligently to learn other skills they had not mastered. Although the training took months and often left the men aching to be anywhere besides camp, most did not falter but continued to do the things that were asked of them. When the time came to finally take part on the battlefield, Latter-day Saint men did not shirk their duty. They spent their time in the trenches, experiencing some of the worst things that war inflicted on men. Others helped to maintain the ability of the army to prosecute the war from behind the lines, but were no less diligent in performing their duties. In all the areas that any American or Canadian soldier was tested, the Latter-day Saint soldiers passed.

In many ways LDS soldiers had different standards than many of the other soldiers along side whom they fought. These standards directed their eating habits, the way they spent their free time, the way they spent their money, and their reliance upon God. Yet these differences never caused them to be unable to fulfill their responsibilities

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<sup>1</sup> Redd, 8.

as soldiers. Conversely, it often made them better soldiers because they were not influenced by the addictions and diseases that plagued other soldiers. Additionally, they felt they had access to God and His gifts, which enabled them to accomplish things they could not have accomplished by themselves. Indeed, their distinctive beliefs allowed them to act as superior soldiers and therefore demonstrate their loyalty to their nations.

Through years of daily trials, LDS men gave all they had and did so willingly. Many lost their lives on the battlefields and in the hospitals; but not in vain, because they fought for a cause in which they believed. Others suffered life-changing injuries, but had done so while trusting in their God. All had been affected by the war, but when the Latter-day Saint men remembered who they were fighting for, they kept on fighting. Most Latter-day Saints remained in Europe until several months after the Armistice, but when they did return no one could rightly claim that members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints were disloyal to their nations.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE CONCERNS OF A PROPHET

The outbreak of a world-shaking war caused the already immense responsibilities of the President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to multiply. During the time of the First World War, President Joseph F. Smith held the responsibility for the spiritual welfare of men and women throughout the world.<sup>1</sup> As he pondered the effects of war on the world, he must have seen how the events of this war would affect members of all faiths. While he was certainly interested in other aspects of this war, this chapter examines three concerns: first, the movement, disruption and safety of missionaries; second, the needless loss of life both on and off the battlefield; and third, the fact that this war could possibly cause one member of the Church to have to raise his weapon against another member of the Church.<sup>2</sup>

These concerns were not distant to President Smith since this war affected his own children. On the missionary side, the president may have wondered how the war would turn out for his son, Hyrum Mack Smith, who served as the president of the Church's European Mission during the first few years of the war.<sup>3</sup> Military activity would

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<sup>1</sup> President Joseph F. Smith, Sr., was born to Hyrum and Mary Fielding Smith while they lived in Far West, Missouri. He came into the world on November 13, 1838; a time of bitter persecution for the Church. He was named after the Prophet Joseph Smith. He was seventy-six when the war began. (see Ludlow, Daniel H., *Church History: Selections from the Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, [Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book Company, 1992], 525).

<sup>2</sup> Gibbons, Francis M. *Joseph F. Smith: Patriarch and Preacher, Prophet of God* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1984), 297-298.

<sup>3</sup> "A full-time mission is an ecclesiastical unit of the church in a designated geographical area. A mission president and his wife are called to preside over the mission and supervise from 120 to 250 full-time missionaries" (Cleverly, Dean B. "Missions," *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, Daniel H. Ludlow, ed., 4 vols.

have an even greater influence on his family since President Smith had several sons who were of military age.<sup>1</sup> They would sacrifice their lives for the sake of their country or perhaps take the life of a fellow Saint during a battle. With these ideas so close to his own heart, they could not help but echo in his concern for the Latter-day Saints in general. Nonetheless, President Smith had to watch as missionary work was disrupted, many lives were lost and brothers in the gospel were forced to fight against each other.

### **Missionary Work and the War**

The responsibility for members of the Church on a continent plunged into the chaos of war fell upon the shoulders of the prophet's son, Hyrum Mack Smith, a member of the Church's Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. He presided over the European Mission from 1913 to 1916, performing much of his service in nations bent on the destruction of their neighbors.<sup>2</sup> Initially, President Smith had five hundred missionaries to help carry the load; but when the hostilities increased in intensity, it fell to the president to coordinate the withdrawal of all the Lord's servants from Europe.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to the full-time missionaries working in Europe, President Smith also acted as the leader of the Church members that resided in that area. Anyone who thought about the lands in the jurisdiction of his ecclesiastical assignment could see the enormity of his task. Four of the major belligerents of the war—Germany, Austria-Hungary, France and England—fell under his responsibility as well several neutral nations,

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[New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1992], 916). The European Mission presided over by Hyrum M. Smith contained several smaller missions, including the British Mission and the Swiss-German Mission. As an apostle and a mission president, Hyrum M. Smith's titles included Elder and President.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, 302. B. H. Roberts recorded that six of President Smith's sons served during this war (Brigham H. Roberts, *Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols., [Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret News Press, 1930], 476).

<sup>2</sup> See Gibbons, 302.

<sup>3</sup> See Journal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, August 15, 1914, 9, Church Archives; hereafter cited as JH.

including Switzerland, the Netherlands, and the Scandinavian countries. When the instructions came to remove the missionaries from these lands, the mission president first made certain that “the wisest and most faithful” of the German priesthood holders stepped into positions of leadership.<sup>1</sup>

President Hyrum M. Smith was serious in the accomplishment of his duty. Well versed in the scriptures, this apostle understood the significance of removing missionaries from any area of the world. In a letter to the First Presidency, he related his feelings on the subject. “I have received word that this has been done. The calling of our missionaries from these countries is fraught with such grave consequences, both to the Saints who will be left almost without shepherds and to the nations themselves according to the revelations of God, that I can hardly reconcile myself to it. Only on the ground that the time has come that the prophets have foretold and that it is the Lord’s will that His servants be called out of the nations in order that they might escape the judgments of the last days can I harbor the thought.” If it were not for the welfare of his missionaries, President Smith would have found it too difficult to leave a nation without servants of the Lord to share the gospel. His letter showed that this decision bore heavily in his mind. “I dare not, alone, assume the responsibility of determining such a portentous question. Therefore I have moved slowly, yet I trust wisely.”<sup>2</sup> Also regarding this matter, he wrote, “These are very serious times and I pray the Lord to give me wisdom and sound judgment in dealing with the grave questions that now come to me for consideration I need your prayers and instructions.”<sup>3</sup> The European Mission was fortunate to have a leader who did not solely depend on his own judgment or even on the judgment of fellow

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<sup>1</sup> JH, Sept 10, 1914, 3.

<sup>2</sup> JH, Sept 10, 1914, 3.

<sup>3</sup> JH, Aug 22, 1914, 4.

church leaders, but also relied on the inspiration of God while making decisions of such importance.

*Movement of missionaries.* When the October General Conference of 1914 convened shortly after the beginning of the war many anxious parents awaited news about their missionary sons and daughters in Europe. Appropriately, President Joseph F. Smith's first item of business concerned the safety of missionaries across the Atlantic. He reassured Church members that, from what he understood, all the missionaries were safe and had moved to areas away from the war zone.<sup>1</sup> In fact, some missionaries fled the country even before receiving formal instructions from mission leaders.<sup>2</sup> With the official instructions to gather the missionaries out of mainland Europe arriving August 30, 1914, the missionaries had safely evacuated the war-torn continent by the beginning of October that year.

Prior to the notice of evacuation, the Swiss-German Mission held a priesthood meeting. The subject matter of this meeting may have spurred the missionaries to quickly follow counsel when asked to leave Europe. The meeting's topic was obedience and the Spirit whispered to all present the value of such a practice. When Mission President Hyrum W. Valentine, president of the Swiss-German Mission, awoke on the next morning, he received a telegram from President Joseph F. Smith. President Smith's instructions were to evacuate the missionaries to Liverpool, England, by the end of September. President Valentine wondered to himself just how such a proposition could ever be achieved. He "thought a moment and I said: 'Oh, yesterday when we enjoyed the Spirit of the Lord in such abundance, and the spirit of obedience was so impressed upon

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<sup>1</sup> Smith, Joseph F., in Conference Report, October 1914, 2-3

<sup>2</sup> JH, Aug 7, 1914, 2.

our souls, little did we think that before the sun should rise we would be called upon to exercise that obedience;’ and I said: ‘We will do it.’”<sup>1</sup> When the missionaries were asked to leave the people that they had learned to love, their commitment to obedience ensured their safety and the peace of mind of loved ones at home because they quickly moved to places of safety.

In the first days of the war (late July and early August), missionaries did not find it too challenging to leave warring countries. President Le Grand Richards of the Netherlands Mission wrote that two elders from Germany had “succeeded in crossing the border into Holland without difficulty other than that incident to poor train service.”<sup>2</sup> With only minor struggles, many missionaries made their way to neutral lands, such as the Netherlands, Switzerland and then to England.

Yet as time passed, the difficulty of land travel increased. Elder Lowry Allen served near a major German military outpost in the city of Saarbucken.<sup>3</sup> By the third of August, he and his companion realized that if they were going to leave the country then they must do so quickly. Furthermore, since there was no American consul in Saarbucken, the elders also realized that if they got into any trouble—and with the hyper-suspicious soldiers this would not be too difficult—then they would be on their own and in great danger. “The next morning” Elder Allen reported, “we hastily packed our belongings and after a great deal of tipping succeeded in getting them conveyed to the depot. Here we found all in confusion, owing to the incoming troops and the large

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<sup>1</sup> Valentine, Hyrum W., in Conference Report, April 1917, 146.

<sup>2</sup> JH, Aug 7, 1914, 2.

<sup>3</sup> Male missionaries of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints take on the title of “Elder” during their missionary service. In addition to being an office in the Melchizedek Priesthood of the Church, it is also “used as a general title for all bearers of of that priesthood, regardless of the specific priesthood office they hold” (Vetterli, R. Richard. “Elder, Melchizedek Priesthood,” *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, Daniel H. Ludlow, ed., 4 vols. [New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1992] 447). Such being the case, LDS apostles are also referred to by the title “Elder.” Female missionaries take on the title of “Sister.”

number of people who were trying to get away on the same train as we were.” Elder Allen and his companion managed to get aboard and then learned a lesson about wartime travel. Allen reported that “in [this] crowded condition class distinctions were ignored and people rode in any accommodation they could get.”<sup>1</sup> Although they did not ride in comfort, these missionaries were able to make the first part of their difficult journey to safety.

The money needed to evacuate an entire mission was more than President Hyrum W. Valentine had on hand. The mission did have some resources, but the funds were not liquid and so Valentine had to find someone willing to lend it to him. He went to a bank and explained his dilemma to the cashier, who sent him to the bank directors. While visiting with these men, Valentine bore his testimony of the work in which he was engaged and then explained his instructions from his church leaders. Since the declaration of war caused inflation in Germany, Valentine wondered if the bank would allow him access to the money. Fortunately the directors gave him the twenty-five thousand francs he requested and President Valentine was able to finance the exodus.<sup>2</sup> After arranging for the missionaries to leave Germany, he stayed behind to coordinate the remaining branches until Church leaders finally called him home.

In the nations on both sides of the trenches, military leaders took control of train travel in order to facilitate the movement of soldiers. Although the trains moved frequently and quickly to the front lines, the return trip was generally less direct and not well scheduled. Elder Louis L. Driggs, a recently released missionary who was touring Switzerland, experienced the hassles of train travel during that hectic time. He explained

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<sup>1</sup> JH, Oct 22, 1914, 4.

<sup>2</sup> Valentine, 146.

that “on the first day of [his] trip to Paris [he] rode on seven different trains, sometimes in the coaches and sometimes in box cars.” There were few other passengers and no one asked to see his ticket. Driggs’ greatest worry problem was that the trains lacked food service cars. He described the dilemma and its solution: “I could buy nothing to eat, but many peasant women came to the stations with gifts of food for the soldiers that were hurrying to the front in troop trains and I managed to beg meals from these women, who appeared willing enough to give me food.” The only other trouble Elder Driggs encountered was at the railroad stations, “where officers and civilians demanded my passport. I do not speak French, but I could make them understand that I was trying to get out of the country to America and that I was a tourist, and they let me alone.”<sup>1</sup> While the travel was often slow and unsystematic, each of the missionaries, like Elder Driggs, worked their way out of the war zone.

Even the short trip across the English Channel was often fraught with danger. The Germans had placed mines under the surface of the water in an attempt to limit access to England by sea. This hazard caused the transport ships to travel at a slow pace. Occasionally, mine-destroying ships escorted the passenger ships across the English Channel. Elder Harold Tribe, who had served in Germany, sailed on a ship that had such an escort. He later related that the destruction of the mines made the trip a little more exciting for the passengers. Fortunately he and his family made the trip to England in safety.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> JH, Aug 31, 1914, 7.

<sup>2</sup> JH, Oct 3, 1914, 5. Evacuation from Germany became even more important to Elder Tribe, who had his wife and child with him. Unfortunately, the record does not explain why his family accompanied him on his mission.

Once in England, the missionaries reported at the European Mission office in Liverpool. President Hyrum M. Smith then coordinated their transfer to a new area. Some missionaries remained in Europe to work in neutral countries away from the battlefields of France. President Smith sent others back to the United States—either assigned to another mission there or as released missionaries—but the trip home still held some danger. The *Baltic*, which carried many of the missionaries home, had a military escort, the British cruiser named the *Essex*. Elder John H. Reeve, of the England Mission, expressed how the presence of the *Essex* helped relieve the anxiety of the trans-Atlantic voyagers.

Apprehensive of meeting German cruisers we found the presence of the *Essex* a great comfort. When in midocean we heard rumors of the presence of German cruisers and the *Baltic* went 150 miles out of course of general travel over the ocean.

We were about a day out from New York when the *Essex* left us. A feeling of apprehensiveness developed. It increased when we again observed gray smoke rising and increasing in the eastern horizon until the tops of the warship could be observed through a telescope. We feared that it was a German cruiser, but finally the captain informed us that it was the *Essex*.<sup>1</sup>

When these missionaries arrived in New York, they sent letters home informing their loved ones of their safe arrival. After a problematic journey, the LDS missionaries who had served on the European mainland found their way to their next assignment.

*Disrupting missionary work.* The war in Europe did not disrupt missionary work as much as it re-routed it. In the time between the declaration of war and the removal of full-time missionaries on the European mainland, missionary work proved quite difficult. After the withdrawal of missionaries from mainland Europe, local membership filled in the gaps wherever necessary. This gave the membership in war-torn lands the opportunity

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<sup>1</sup> JH, Aug 28, 1914, 4.

to serve in positions previously filled by missionaries. The disruption of missionary work in Europe had both negative and positive results.

The negative side to disruption. In August of 1914, the office of the First Presidency announced that “no more missionaries for the Church will be sent abroad until the war clouds are cleared away.” They further announced that any missionaries whose calls sent them to Europe would receive a change in those plans. Even those who planned to sail in September learned that the Church had cancelled their reservations and assigned them to other areas.<sup>1</sup> This change affected the life of future Church president Spencer W. Kimball. Initially, he received a mission call to serve in the Swiss-German Mission. . However when the war started, Church leaders changed his assignment to the Central States Mission. Although disappointed by the change, Kimball boarded a train and reported to his mission president in Independence, Missouri.<sup>2</sup> Kimball was just one example of a missionary reassigned during the war.

As for the missionaries who remained in Europe, their ability to perform their duties became more and more limited after the war began. For example, President Hyrum M. Smith instructed that wherever possible missionaries should gather in small groups.<sup>3</sup> This shrunk the size of the areas in which missionaries could work and thus limited the number of people they could contact. Another hindrance occurred as citizens in those countries involved in the war became more suspicious of the actions of foreigners. For example, army detectives watched the work of Elder Mortimer Watson and his companion quite closely. One day while the missionaries were out teaching the gospel,

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<sup>1</sup> JH, Aug 8, 1914, 4.

<sup>2</sup> Kimball, Edward L. and Andrew E. Kimball, Jr., *Spencer W. Kimball: Twelfth President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, (Salt Lake City, UT: Bookcraft, Inc., 1977), 72-73.

<sup>3</sup> JH, Sept 10, 1914, 3.

German detectives approached their landlady and inquired into the business of her American tenants. The landlady replied that they were students. The detectives then countered that the missionaries had delivered tracts to local houses. At this point the landlady admitted her lie and explained that these young men were missionaries; the tracts only contained religious messages. She was then instructed to advise the missionaries to cease handing out the tracts.<sup>1</sup> Both the diminished size of areas and government interference interrupted the ability of the missionaries to work as they had done before the war.

When the missionaries finally withdrew from the continent in late September, they left behind unfinished work. French Mission President Benjamin Howells reported, “The war came just when the greatest prosperity of the French mission was commencing. We had many friends and were hoping for a number of baptisms this fall. But everything was left in such a shape that the missionaries can resume work easily at the close of the war.”<sup>2</sup> President Howells hoped that the war would quickly find resolution and that his missionaries could quickly return to work with those souls interested in the restored gospel.

Even missionaries who continued to work in countries outside of the war zone often met resistance to their message because of their age. As many European men left their families to serve in the military, any men that remained behind faced the scorn of military supporters. While serving in England, Elder Rae P. Stratford had the following encounter:

A young man, who appears to be physically fit for service and has not donned the colors of England and in uniform, is the recipient of dark

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<sup>1</sup> JH, Nov 3, 1914, 3.

<sup>2</sup> JH, Oct 3, 1914, 3.

and ugly looks from the soldiers and women folks, as well as a target at which slurring words and “slams” are continually aimed. I can assure you that I get all of this from both sides, for people do not know that I am not an Englishman. Without fail, every time I get on to a train nowadays, remarks begin to be passed about how well most of the sons of the empire have responded to their country’s call, but still there are others who as yet have not done their duty, etc. A little incident is brought to my mind which happened on the train a few days ago.

I entered an apartment in the train [which was partly occupied by a] sailor (in uniform) and a fairly well . . . dressed lady. The two were in conversation and the sailor was relating his experience of being shipwrecked of late on the destroyer Hogue off Helgoland. The lady changed the subject after I had taken my seat, and made remarks to the sailor to this effect: “Don’t you think that all of our best men have already volunteered?[,]” and “only the scum of the nation is left” and similar remarks of this kind directing remarks to me because I was not in uniform.<sup>1</sup>

Had these English citizens realized Stratford’s nationality, they likely would have responded differently. However, prejudice against anyone not in uniform limited the amount of work that a missionary could accomplish while serving in England.

A majority of the church’s missionaries came from the United States, which caused another difficulty in the later years of the war. After the U.S. declaration of war, the number of missionaries decreased as young men went into the military instead of serving missions.<sup>2</sup> However, missionaries already serving when the United States began the draft could obtain an exemption because of their status as ministers. This did not always happen, however. Elder Jens L. Stevenson began his service as a missionary in early February 1917 as part of the Eastern States Mission. Although he had come from Canada, Elder Stevenson was drafted into the U.S. Army while serving in Pennsylvania.

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<sup>1</sup> “Stratford, Rae P,” *Pocatello Tribune*, no date but likely February 1915, n.p., Saints at War Files, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT; hereafter cited as SAW.

<sup>2</sup> In 1913, the Church set apart 858 missionaries but the number dropped to 684 the next year. The United States took part in the war from 1917 to 1918, with the number of missionaries set apart dropping to 543 and 245 respectively. The number of missionaries set apart in 1919 jumped to 1,211; a number previously unseen in the history of the Church (Avant, Gerry, ed., *2006 Church Almanac*, [Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret News, 2005], 655).

He went to the local draft board in Pittsburg for help. Once there, Elder Stevenson explained that he was an ordained minister of religion and therefore exempt from the draft. Unfortunately the anti-Mormon sentiment in that area caused the board to refuse him that status and so Elder Stevenson was drafted on October 4, 1917.<sup>1</sup>

While missionary work continued throughout the war, circumstances often made it difficult to work at the same level of efficiency. In 1918, the President Joseph F. Smith decided that since the draft had affected the number of missionaries, the Church would not extend a mission call to anyone within the age limits of the draft.<sup>2</sup> While others could still serve as missionaries, the number of young men in the military definitely affected missionary work.

The positive side to disruption. A significant benefit of removing the missionaries occurred unexpectedly. In preparation for the evacuation of full-time missionaries, local members were called to positions of leadership, which had previously been filled by missionaries. These calls made many of the European Saints nervous. In some areas, the “best experienced men”<sup>3</sup> had never before had a chance to lead the Church because of the presence of missionaries. Some native members even accused the missionaries of abandoning their flocks. In order to overcome these feelings of resentment, Church leaders taught the European members that it was not the missionaries, but Christ who was the shepherd. The Savior then gave men authority to do His work. Therefore since the

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<sup>1</sup> “Stevenson, Jens Leslie,” n.p., SAW, 1.

<sup>2</sup> Smith, Joseph F., in Conference Report, October 1918, 3.

<sup>3</sup> Smith, Joseph F., in Conference Report, October 1914, 3.

newly set apart leadership held identical authority to that of the missionaries, they were every bit as capable to lead the Church.<sup>1</sup>

Years later, former-President Hyrum W. Valentine summarized the effect that local leadership had on members of the Swiss-German Mission. In 1914, he had accompanied President Hyrum M. Smith as they went from town to town re-organizing the branches and setting apart new leadership. In Basel, Switzerland, they called a Brother Spoerri to act as a branch president. From a non-spiritual perspective, this man did not have many of the qualities one would expect in a church leader. Yet when Elder Valentine returned to Basel to visit members there, he found a substantially different reaction. Initially the members had approached their church meetings with a little skepticism because of Brother Spoerri's inexperience. However they found their experience to be much different. A Sister Closios, a faithful member of that branch, described their situation: "The Lord blessed and magnified that man, Brother Spoerri, in our eyes, and we had such a rich outpouring of the Spirit of the Lord that we all knew of a surety that the word of the Lord had been given to us, and that we were not going backwards but forwards." Elder Valentine testified that the same kind of experience was common throughout Europe.<sup>2</sup> These new leaders were so successful at their new positions that not one of the Swiss or German branches needed to be closed when American mission leaders returned after the war. In addition, hundreds of people converted and joined the Church in these areas during the war.<sup>3</sup> Rather than relying on

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<sup>1</sup> Anderson, Jeffery L. "Mormons and Germany, 1914–1933: A History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Germany and Its Relationship with the German Governments from World War I to the Rise of Hitler" (Masters thesis, Brigham Young University, 1991), 50.

<sup>2</sup> Valentine, Hyrum W., in Conference Report, April 1917, 146-147.

<sup>3</sup> Anderson, 50-51. Elder Hyrum W. Valentine reported that in the first couple months of 1916 over three hundred people sought baptism (Valentine, Hyrum W., in Conference Report, April 1917, 147). In 1916, Elder George F. Richards became the mission president of the European Mission. When he returned in

the work of foreign missionaries, these local members continued the missionary work in their areas with great success.

Lay members of the Church also felt the spirit of missionary work as they served in the military. Army squads generally afforded LDS servicemen the opportunity to share their beliefs and many took the chance to share their knowledge of the gospel with their military friends.<sup>1</sup> Corporal Jens L. Stevenson, who had not been able to avoid the draft despite his position as a full-time missionary, continued his missionary service after he was drafted into the U.S. army. He still considered himself a full-time missionary so he taught the gospel to the men in his unit. As a full-time missionary, Stevenson had written a weekly progress report to his mission president in the Eastern States Mission and continued to do so even after his induction into military service. He continued his proselytizing so diligently that the men with whom he worked began to see Elder Stevenson as kind of a personal chaplain for their unit. Both the officers and enlisted men would turn to him when they needed a spiritual boost.<sup>2</sup> Membership in military units opened doors to missionary work that would not have been open prior to the war.

Most of the missionaries evacuated from Europe had not yet completed their missionary service, so they received assignments to labor in new areas. Once far enough away from the war, these elders and sisters could once again spread the gospel. Additionally, a few mission presidents requested that a number of these unassigned

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1919, he reported on the conditions of the Saints in England: "The L.D.S. mission . . . is thriving most successfully in spite of the fact that there are few missionaries from the intermountain region in Europe. Their place in England has to a great degree been taken by British Church members who have been doing splendid work" (JH, July 25, 1919, 3).

<sup>1</sup> "Some of our soldier boys stationed at London rendered valuable missionary assistance. . . Some of the boys had the spirit of missionary work having previously had that kind of experience. We supplied them with literature for distribution and very much good and some conversions were accomplished in that way" (Richards, George F., in Conference Report, Oct 1919, 62).

<sup>2</sup> Stevenson, 1, 3.

missionaries be sent to their missions. For example, the president of the South African Mission, Nicholas Smith, wrote a letter to the First Presidency and explained the progress of the missionary work in his area. While they were seeing a great deal of success, they only had a few missionaries and the smallness of numbers hampered their progress. He asked Church leaders if they would transfer some of the missionaries from Europe into his mission.<sup>1</sup> The missionaries who left Europe then helped out those missions that lacked missionaries and therefore finished their missionary responsibilities.

As the war touched lives of individuals throughout the world, it often softened their hearts and made them more receptive to the missionary message. President Joseph F. Smith reported that in England “the field is opening before [the missionaries] with somewhat better prospects than heretofore. A great many people are beginning to feel the necessity of praying for deliverance and safety, and as the spirit of prayer rests upon their minds, they begin to feel after their spiritual as well as their temporal welfare.”<sup>2</sup> Thoughts of life and death loomed in the minds of many people and so they turned to those who brought a message of peace and knowledge of God’s plan.<sup>3</sup> This sentiment was echoed throughout the world. In the Scandinavian mission, President Joseph N. Busath reported that Church members “are beginning to be more united in their different communities and live lives worthy of Saints of God.” Even on the other side of the world, the events of the war softened the hearts of men and women. In Australia, President John C. Rushton

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<sup>1</sup> JH, Sept 12, 1914, 4.

<sup>2</sup> Smith, Joseph F., in Conference Report, Oct 1914, 3.

<sup>3</sup> President Charles W. Penrose felt that while war was a horrible thing, it also prepared some to here Christ’s message. “[War] is a horrible thing, but this is a great object lesson, and will be . . . a spirit of repentance. Our elders were able to go, after [the Civil War] into the southern states and preach the gospel freely, which they could not do very well before. Some of them, quite a number of them, lost their lives because there was such enmity in the hearts of the people toward our doctrines; but the people were softened in their hearts by the troubles and sorrows, that came upon them through that terrible civil strife” (JH, Aug 30, 1914, 2).

reported that the war “made the majority of the people look more seriously into the purposes of our existence upon the earth.”<sup>1</sup> As people watched their loved ones go away to war or simply read the horrible news coming from the front, they could not help but look inside themselves. This introspection bred a humility that in turn allowed for increased reception of missionaries and their message.

In summation, while the war disrupted missionary work in Europe, missionary work in general did not stop. Initially missionaries attempted to stay in the European countries as long as possible; but when they had to leave, local leaders replaced them. These local men and women assisted the work to grow until hundreds were baptized every year. Additionally, the emotional environment caused by the war often assisted the dissemination of the gospel message. Soldiers and sailors shared the gospel through conversation and action and the hearts of many soldiers and civilians were softened to receive the truth. Although World War I disrupted missionary work, it also opened doors for many to accept the gospel.

*Ensuring the safe departure of the missionaries.* In 1914, most Church leaders had no idea that a war was about to begin. Even President Valentine failed to predict the war despite his proximity to the events that caused the war. So when the war had begun, the mission presidents of Europe were unprepared for a new responsibility: the safety of over five hundred missionaries in a war zone. Many new dangers cropped up that could have seriously injured these young men and women and mission leaders needed to come up with contingency plans that would quickly remove missionaries while maintaining the branches and conferences in Europe.<sup>2</sup> This subject of missionary safety constantly

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<sup>1</sup> JH, Sept 24, 1914, 2.

<sup>2</sup> JH, Sept 10, 1914, 3.

burdened the minds of Church leaders at every level. Indeed this topic was on the top of President Joseph F. Smith's mind as he began his address in the October 1917 General Conference.<sup>1</sup> Although many Church leaders assumed the war would end quickly and missionary work would resume, they still took every precaution to assure the physical wellbeing of the missionaries.

A particular danger to the missionaries was the charge of espionage. President Hyrum M. Smith wrote in his journal, "On the streets we were suspected as spies and questioned. Every foreigner is suspected."<sup>2</sup> Many other missionaries experienced the same suspicion often on superficial grounds. For example, distrust increased in Germany after England declared war against the Central Powers. Whenever the American missionaries spoke English, a menacing crowd would gather around them and inevitably the police were involved. Although the missionaries could show their American passports and avoid arrest, they found it easier to simply not speak English when others were around.<sup>3</sup> Language was not the only thing the German officials found suspicious. These officials once detained President Hyrum M. Smith on charges of espionage. While searching through his luggage, they noticed his initials (H. M. S.) displayed on his belongings. Since these initials also graced the side of English ships, the officers took it as evidence that President Smith was a British spy.<sup>4</sup>

Another example happened just after the declaration of war by Austria when the citizens of Vienna accused Elder Gilbert Wallace and two other missionaries of sabotage. One of the missionaries had noticed a leaky faucet on the side of a house and stepped

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<sup>1</sup> Smith, Joseph F., in Conference Report, Oct 1914, 3.

<sup>2</sup> JH, Aug 22, 1914, 4.

<sup>3</sup> JH, Oct 22, 1914, 4.

<sup>4</sup> Gibbons, Francis M. *Joseph F. Smith: Patriarch and Preacher, Prophet of God* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1984), 302.

over to turn it off. Elder Wallace reported, “Someone obviously saw the act, for when they reached the street they encountered a furious mob shouting that they [the missionaries] were Servian [sic] spies poisoning the water.” The missionaries fled in fear but a mob followed close behind. They eventually found a policeman and begged for protection. He took them to the police station where they were examined by six judges. The authorities threw the missionaries in jail and then searched their residence. Finding nothing incriminating, the police released the missionaries with an apology. Elder Wallace explained the reason for the Austrian’s hasty suspicions by relating “that a Servian [sic] was recently discovered trying to poison a reservoir in Vienna.”<sup>1</sup>

Life was no simpler in France. As mentioned previously Elder Louis L. Driggs, who had finished his mission in Germany, had begun a tour of Europe when the war began. He was in Switzerland during the early days of the war and felt that the safest route home lay through France. He traveled by train towards Paris but in the city of Troyes, three French army officers accosted him and searched his two suitcases. They were particularly interested in a map of Europe that he carried which was marked in German using a red pen. The officers took him to several government buildings, where they repeatedly searched his belongings. Finally the French took Elder Driggs to a prisoner-of-war camp in Sezanne, France. This camp included prisoners from Italy, Austria and Germany. Driggs explained, “We had armed guards over us, and slept on straw and were fed on bread and water. . . . I saw no brutal treatment of these prisoners, but the guards were certainly not well disposed towards us.” After several days in the camp, the French released him apologetically and put him on a train for Paris.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> JH, July 29, 1914, 8.

<sup>2</sup> JH, Aug 31, 1914, 7.

Despite all of the suspicions that the embattled nations had towards foreigners; the greatest protection that LDS missionaries had against harassment was their United States citizenship. Elder Asahel Woodruff declared that in Germany his American passport was worth “its weight in gold.” He was arrested four times under the charge of espionage and each time used his passport as proof to evade the charge.<sup>1</sup> Elder Lowry Allen had to go even further to prove his American citizenship to the German officials. This experience occurred as he and his companion made their way out of a train station.

No sooner had I gone through the gate when someone tapped me on the shoulder and I whirled around to find myself face to face with a “geheimer” or detective, who made manifest his business by conspicuously showing the emblem of his calling. Of course, his first question was in regard to my nationality. I told him I was an American, but he gruffly said: ‘Nein, Sie zin ein Russ’ (No, you are a Russian). The crowded station was thrown into a turmoil and I found myself surrounded by a menacing throng. The detective asked to see my pass which I showed him and he informed the crowd that I was an American citizen. This stilled the excited throng, but it didn’t satisfy my captor who demanded that I open my baggage and prove that I had no bombs or other dangerous articles concealed therein. By this time the baggage was on the waiting cab, so we adjourned to the street. Here Brother Cannon was seized by a second detective and once more the crowd collected around us. We realized that we were under arrest until we could prove our identity and I was racking my brain for some means to accomplish this end. At last I produced a letter of introduction from Senator Smoot and this had the desired effect of not only establishing our identity, but it also brought fourth [sic] profuse apologies from the zealous detectives. We were allowed to depart in peace, but we and our foreign looking luggage attracted unfavorable attention everywhere we went.<sup>2</sup>

Only the authority behind a United States senator saved Elder Allen and his companion from the suspicions of a local detective.

Unfortunately a few of the missionaries had traveled to Europe without a passport and had a more difficult time leaving. Some were immigrants and had left without their

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<sup>1</sup> JH, Aug 11, 1914, 3.

<sup>2</sup> JH, Oct 22, 1914, 4.

American naturalization papers. For example, Elder Edward R. Dittmer was born in Germany but his family had immigrated to the United States when he was younger. Although he had obtained citizenship, he did not carry his naturalization papers with him on his mission in Germany. With the German declaration of war, Elder Dittmer appeared as a German citizen and was therefore eligible for the draft. In order to avoid this, he mustered witnesses from among the missionaries and members in his area that could vouch for his citizenship. Fortunately, the German officials believed their testimonies and allowed Dittmer to leave the country.<sup>1</sup>

Not all arrests ended with a minor annoyance and a simple appeal to United States documentation. A much more serious case was that of Elder Edward C. Hunter who was serving in Tilsit, Prussia. When the Russians occupied Tilsit, they quickly imprisoned Elder Hunter along with many other Prussians. Hunter's father, Bishop Oscar Hunter, learned of the capture of Tilsit and began actively searching out his son. Bishop Hunter felt that as long as the Russians controlled Tilsit his son would have difficulty leaving the country. Working with Senator Reed Smoot, the Hunters' case went before authorities in the United States Department of State. These men in turn worked with representatives from both Russia and Germany. By October 17, 1914, Elder Edward Hunter had arrived safely back in New York City.<sup>2</sup> American citizenship allowed the missionaries to leave Europe and therefore helped missionary leaders fulfill their responsibility to ensure the safety of their missionaries.

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<sup>1</sup> Elder Edward R. Dittmer was detained again once he arrived in England. The British government was not as trusting and he remained there until his naturalization papers could be sent from the United States (JH, Oct 8, 1914, 8).

<sup>2</sup> JH, Oct 17, 1914, 3.

President Joseph F. Smith and his brethren had worried about the movement, disruption and safety of LDS missionaries in Europe. Through the excellent coordination of the mission presidents of Europe, all of the missionaries safely departed from Europe. The missionary work although disrupted found other ways to grow. Furthermore although the missionaries were often in danger they could rely on their citizenship to get them out of harm's way.

### **Loss of Life**

The First World War cost the lives of millions from all over the world. The defensive nature of this war caused a great number of deaths on the battlefield and in the hospital. President Joseph F. Smith reminded those that would later join the military that they were to fight for the cause of freedom and not merely seek to destroy their enemies.<sup>1</sup> In addition to the intentional deaths inflicted by opposing armies, disease also took a great toll on the lives of many during this war. When it came to deaths caused by either of these causes, President Smith was right to dread the needless loss of life caused by this war. Before the end of the war between six or seven hundred LDS men would die while serving in their nation's military.<sup>2</sup>

Many Latter-day Saints gave their lives while fighting on the battlefields in Europe. After traveling thousands of miles to an unknown land, they gave all they had in order to defend the ideals of freedom. Two of those sacrifices stand out and will serve to

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<sup>1</sup> Smith, Joseph F., in Conference Report, April 1917, 3-4.

<sup>2</sup> Freeman, Robert C., "Latter-day Saints in the World Wars," *Out of Obscurity: The LDS Church in the Twentieth Century*, (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book Company, 2000), 111. "The United States mobilized over 4,000,000 men, of whom 67,813 died." "One in ten of those soldiers who had fought in Europe died in the service of his country; an even greater number were wounded in deadly trench warfare. The final cost of the war will never be known. However, estimates of 12 million people dead, 7 million them soldiers, are almost certainly too low. A total of 3 million people may have died in Russia alone, rather than the usual estimates of 1.7 million there (Duncan, Kirsty, *Hunting the 1918 Flu: One Scientist's Search for a Killer Virus*, [Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, Inc., 2003], 6).

represent the many LDS soldiers who gave their lives during combat in the First World War.

Elder Jens L. Stevenson, the drafted missionary from the Eastern States Mission, continued his missionary work while serving in the United States army. His unit respected him and although he was not from the eastern states like his fellow soldiers, when the time came for advancement, Stevenson was promoted to corporal. He continued to preach the gospel to the men in his unit, even while living in the discomfort of trench life. An officer in Corporal Stevenson's company recorded the last acts of this heroic young man's life. The officer, who was also wounded in the battle, said, "Corporal Stevenson made the supreme sacrifice in the most heroic manner following out one of the principles he had so often recalled to the boys at Sunday Services, 'Greater love hath no man than he lay down his life for another.'"

On Sunday, October 6<sup>th</sup>, during a strong counter-attack by the enemy in the Bois de Argonne in the Meuse river sector, Corporal Stevenson discovered one of our boys very badly wounded, lying near the lines. In full view of the enemy and under terrible machine-gun and artillery fire, Stevenson dashed out and attempted to bandage the wounded soldier, and, while making this attempt, the machine-gun bullet ended his life. He was buried where he fell, with a simple wooden cross as a marker—the emblem of the sacrifice of our heroic dead.

Corporal Stevenson later received the Distinguished Service Cross for his incredible act of bravery and charity.<sup>1</sup>

While every death was mourned, there were times when that loss seemed so unnecessary. One example of this complete misuse of a soldier's life was Edward C. Peterson. While the ambassadors quibbled over the particulars that would end the war,

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<sup>1</sup> Stevenson, 1-3.

soldiers on the frontlines continued to assault on the enemy trenches.<sup>1</sup> Peterson and his squad left their trench and entered the Argonne Forest on the morning of November 11, 1918. In the hours just prior to the armistice, the message had not reached his platoon and Peterson lost his life trying to defeat an already conquered nation.<sup>2</sup> Certainly Peterson gave his life while trying to protect the freedoms espoused by the Allied cause, yet the loss of his life was truly unnecessary.

*The Spanish Influenza epidemic.* The soldiers of World War I saw death come more subtly than battlefield injuries.<sup>3</sup> While the military put great effort into vaccinations and quarantines, the practices of everyday military life often fostered the spread of disease.<sup>4</sup> A particularly dangerous disease struck the world during the First World War; called Spanish Influenza, it decimated the army and civilian populations on both sides of the war.<sup>5</sup> It not only affected the soldiers in France but also spread to countries

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<sup>1</sup> Chaplain Herbert B. Maw shed more light on the deaths that occurred on the last day of the war. Maw stated, “The word first came down that we were to cease fire and that there was to be an armistice on November 7. Everyone was rejoicing and happy. Then November 7 came and went with no signs of an armistice and our joy left. As a result when November 11 was designated as the cease fire day, we were skeptical over the cease fire order at 11 a.m. We had been fooled once. During the half hour before eleven o’clock hundreds and hundreds of soldiers were unnecessarily killed on both sides because of the increased blasting” (Maw, Herbert B., “LDS Chaplains Oral History Project,” November 9, 1974, interviewed by Richard Maher, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 5).

<sup>2</sup> Peterson, Edward C., “Correspondence, 1917-1923,” MSS SC 3071, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

<sup>3</sup> “During seventeen horrifying, apocalyptic weeks, Spanish influenza sickened some twenty-five million Americans. An estimated 670,000 died (Iezzoni, Lynette, *The Worst Epidemic in American History*, [New York, NY: TV Books, 1999], 17). “It is also impossible to state with any accuracy the death toll. . . . The few places in the world that then kept reliable vital statistics under normal circumstances could not keep pace with the disease. . . . In 2002 an epidemiological study reviewed the data and concluded that the death toll was ‘in the order of 50 million, . . . [but] even this vast figure may be substantially lower than the real toll.’ In fact . . . it suggested that as many as 100 million died” (Barry, John M., *The Great Influenza*, [New York, NY: Penguin Group, 2004], 396-397).

<sup>4</sup> See Hausner, Carl, “In Memoriam 1918–1919 Third Army Corps,” Americana BX8608 .A1a #1688, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; and Van Orman, Herschel Harrison. Unpublished Letter, 11 May 1916, MS 1380, folder 1, Church Archives.

<sup>5</sup> The *Deseret Evening News* explained that the disease bore the name “Spanish Influenza” because it had reportedly originated in Spain (JH, Sept 23, 1918, 2). The actual place of origin for this pandemic is still disputed, but some modern scholars suggest that it may not have even started in Europe but in the United

throughout the world. American soldiers watched influenza spread throughout their stateside training camps.<sup>1</sup>

One possible cause for the quick spread of influenza was that the soldiers did not initially understand the severity of the disease.<sup>2</sup> They often viewed it as a minor sickness and a deterrent that would stop them from getting to the frontlines. Having spent so much time in training camps, the soldiers were anxious to get to the fighting. They knew that if they admitted to sickness then they would have to remain in the United States while the rest of their unit continued to France. So when Ivan A. Farnworth contracted influenza, he tried to hide it from the doctors. He related the following experience:

A doctor put a thermometer under my tongue. I was burning up with a fever, but I just rolled the thermometer up on top. I didn't want to be sent back. Our captain was turned back and he cried like a little child. . . He got turned back on account of the flu.

The doctor came and said, "This isn't working, put it under your tongue again." He went off to pick up another thermometer and I rolled it back up. He said, "You are sick, aren't you." I said, "No, I feel fine." He said, "How come your face is so red." I said, "It is always red. I just have a naturally red face."

Farnworth's unit understood his desire to get to France and so they helped perpetuate the illusion of health. After covering him with their overcoats, they carried his belongings

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States (see Barry, John M., *The Great Influenza*, [New York, NY: Penguin Group, 2004], 4). Wherever the origin, many U.S. soldiers came down with the disease in the early part of 1918. At least eleven military camps reported epidemics of this illness among their men (see Duncan, Kirsty, *Hunting the 1918 Flu: One Scientist's Search for a Killer Virus*, [Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, Inc., 2003], 7).

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, 1-2.

<sup>2</sup> Ezra Taft Benson fell sick while training for the military at the Utah Agricultural College in Logan, Utah. In the fall of 1918, the farmers in his program received a two week leave in order to go home and harvest the crops. On the day before the leave was to begin, Benson felt that he should return that day. After the prompting came two more times, he went to his superior officer and received permission to go home. Later that day after he got home, he developed a high fever and felt became delirious. Drifting in and out of consciousness for three days, the only thing he remembered was a doctor saying that only God could save him. Benson's father and grandfather gave him a priesthood blessing and a short while later the fever broke. Ezra Taft Benson felt blessed to have returned home because after he left the flu epidemic hit his barracks. It killed many of the men including the two classmates that slept on either side of him. By the time that he recuperated, the war had ended (Gibbons, Francis M., *Ezra Taft Benson: Statesman, Patriot, Prophet of God*, [Salt lake City, UT: Deseret Book Company, 1996] 41-42).

onto the ship.<sup>1</sup> Farnworth did not mention the number of men who caught influenza on the ship, but the close quarters and unsanitary conditions probably helped pass the germs on to others.

Only later in the war did the public recognize the danger of this disease. In hindsight, the *Deseret Evening News* called this disease as “the worst that ever came upon this country.” The report continued, “It has probably taken more lives in the world at large, and in a shorter time, than any pestilence that ever was visited upon mankind.”<sup>2</sup> Like the people back at home, the soldiers did not recognize the dangerous nature of Spanish Influenza until after they or someone they knew contracted it.

In addition to a misunderstanding by the general populace about the severity of the disease, the doctors did not know how to treat it. While they worked diligently to find a cure, it continued to evade them. The LDS soldiers had suggestions of their own on how to treat or avoid influenza. Private H. Edward Flanders suggested that “fresh air is the preventative.”<sup>3</sup> Benjamin Tueller felt he was coming down with the flu and came up with his own cure. Using his position as the messenger for the company captain, Tueller got a pass into town and bought a bottle of cognac. He later testified, “I am sure that saved me from getting the flu.”<sup>4</sup>

Another soldier, Joseph A. Nielsen, admitted that his healing came only from a higher source.

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<sup>1</sup> Farnworth, Ivan A., “Oral History Interview,” interviewed by Stan Burnett on 31 January 1985, MSS OH 3191, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 1-2.

<sup>2</sup> JH, Jan 11, 1919, 1.

<sup>3</sup> Flanders, Hyrum E., “Letters of Hyrum Edward Flanders to Della May Woolston, 13 May 1918 to 16 January 1919,” MSS 2350, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, p. 108.

<sup>4</sup> “Tueller, Gottlieb Benjamin,” n.p., SAW, 1.

Shortly after we arrived in France [sic] a flu (that old time fatal flu) epidemic went through our company. By about the first of October the flu had just about finished its course and our company moved up to the front except for a few of us who were still in our worst stages of it.

I was about as sick as you can get without dying for quite awhile. It was serious because I had tried to get up too soon and everything was wet and cold as France is and I took a bad chill from my damp clothing and the cold and had a back-set. I must have been sick about 6 weeks and there were five or so days that I was unconscious most of the time.

At this same time at home, my mother told many that she was very worried, that something serious had happened to "Joseph". [sic] I'm sure that much of my recovery was from the blessing of the Lord because of the faith and prayers of my mother's.<sup>1</sup>

Although Joseph A. Nielsen's mother lived thousands of miles away, her faith had an affect in her son's life. It is quite probable that other soldiers received the same kind of support from their parents.

*The effect of sickness on the Hinckley family.* Whatever the cause of death, the loss of life often made a major impact on the soldier's family at home. A member of the 145<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery, Stanford Hinckley went to France in the summer of 1918. Later that year, Hinckley contracted a fatal case of pneumonia and Chaplain Brigham H. Roberts spent many hours at his bedside. The news of Stanford Hinckley's death was reported in a letter from Chaplain Roberts. The family was devastated. His younger brother and later president of the Church, Gordon B. Hinckley, recalled it as the "first sad days of our existence."<sup>2</sup> While the military families knew their loved ones would face dangers, few things could prepare them for the loss of that soldier.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Nielsen, Joseph August," n.p., SAW, 9-10.

<sup>2</sup> Dew, Sheri L, *Go Forward with Faith: The Biography of Gordon B. Hinckley*, (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book Company, 1996), 39.

<sup>3</sup> Of the 125,000 U.S. soldiers lost in World War I, over half of them did not die in combat. Over 75,000 men died from other causes, "notably the influenza epidemic that struck in the closing months of the war" (Heyman, Neil M., *World War I*, [Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1997], 77). Worldwide, the estimates of the number of those who died from influenza are quite broad. The lowest estimate states that around twenty million people died, while some believe it was over one hundred million (Barry, John M. *The Great Influenza*, [New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2005], 4).

*A blessing of protection.* While every worthy Latter-day Saint received protection from the Gift of the Holy Ghost, some LDS soldiers went into their war service with an additional blessing. Many received this blessing at the hands of a patriarch or a family member prior to their entrance into the ranks of the military. Generally these blessings promised that if the individual would follow certain instructions that they would return home safely. This practice of giving such blessings was unique to the Latter-day Saints.

S. Dilworth Young received a blessing at the hands of his grandfather, Elder Seymour B. Young of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Dilworth Young recalled that “if I would keep the commandments and behave, not one hair of my head would be harmed.”<sup>1</sup> Similarly, Leo Jensen received his patriarchal blessings just prior to departure. Leo’s mother then instructed her boy that if he would always carry the transcript of that blessing with him, then he would come home from the war. Jensen reported that he carried his patriarchal blessing in his left pocket at all times.<sup>2</sup> The promise in Ivan A. Farnworth’s blessing read, “You will go in safety and return in safety. You won’t get killed. You will have a good life.”<sup>3</sup> All three of these men had their promises fulfilled when they later returned from the war.

Similar promises were made in Taber, Alberta but in a different circumstance. While attending a sacrament meeting, Elder Samuel J. Layton was asked by the bishop to get up and speak to the members of the congregation. Perhaps Hugh B. Brown’s recruiting mission still filled his mind, because when he stood at the podium, Elder Layton addressed the eight young men in the audience who had enlisted in the militia.

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<sup>1</sup> Parkinson, Benson Y., *S. Dilworth Young: General Authority, Scouter, Poet*, (American Fork, UT: Covenant Communications, Inc., 1994), 41.

<sup>2</sup> Jensen, Leo, “This is My Life,” N.p., SAW.

<sup>3</sup> Farnworth, 9.

“While I was speaking the spirit of prophesy came to me. I promised the boys if they would do nothing that their mothers would be ashamed of they would all return home safely.” Layton then added, “When I got down Bishop got up and said we could not expect them all to return.”<sup>1</sup> However the soldiers in the audience took the promise to heart and had experiences during the war to test the Lord’s word.

After the war, Archibald Bennett, a recipient of these promises, wrote about the dangerous situations through which these men passed. He spoke of a cavalry charge in which he took part at Cambrai, France. The danger was great because the company had to cross a bridge leaving them open to enemy gunfire. While traversing the bridge, Bennett and his horse fell over the side. Enemy snipers then took up positions to kill those that had fallen in the water. After a great struggle, Bennett successfully helped his horse out of the river and returned safely to his group. When he returned to camp, one of the eight Albertan boys, Leslie Bigelow, came up missing. Bennett feared that the Lord’s promise had not been fulfilled. However, Bigelow was still alive although the Germans had taken him prisoner. Leslie Bigelow spent the rest of the war in a German prisoner of war camp, but was eventually liberated and returned home safely.<sup>2</sup>

Lowell Duncombe, who had received the same promise as Archibald Bennett, was part of a cavalry regiment which received an order to charge into a forest filled with machine guns in the middle of the day. His regimental commander objected stating that the action was suicidal, but the ranking officers still commanded the action. During that charge every horse was killed including Duncombe’s. After his horse fell to the ground,

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<sup>1</sup> “Layton, Samuel John,” N.p., SAW, 129-130.

<sup>2</sup> JH, Jan 30, 1937, 9.

Duncombe quickly scrambled into a nearby ditch and escaped without harm.<sup>1</sup>

Alberta Stake President Edward J. Wood later reported on the LDS soldiers from his stake. He restated the promise made to these young men and then reported that although fifty Canadian Saints were currently fighting in France, not a single one had lost his life.<sup>2</sup> Years later, Archibald Bennett reported on the eight young men that sat together the day that Elder Samuel J. Layton ensured them of their safety. “Every one of the eight had had narrow escapes; two had been wounded, and one had been a prisoner of war for a year; but all of them came back home alive, spared for their life’s mission. The promise of the Lord was fulfilled.”<sup>3</sup>

In summary, the high mortality rate of soldiers and civilians in the First World War justified President Joseph F. Smith’s concerns about the needless loss of life during this conflict. LDS soldiers died from both battlefield injuries and the ravages of disease. The messages of these deaths then went home to their families and the suffering spread. Other soldiers clung to promises made to them that they would return home safely if they would be obedient. Although the casualty rate was high, many soldiers returned home to continue their lives and their influence on the Church.

### **Member against Member**

“There is no excuse for *this* war,” President Hyrum M. Smith wrote. “The nations were prepared for it, have been preparing for this day for many years.”<sup>4</sup> This forthright statement showed the irritation that President Smith felt about the First World War. He also pointed out the incongruity in the logic used by the leaders of the warring nations. “It

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, 9.

<sup>2</sup> Wood, Edward J., in Conference Report, April 1917, 127.

<sup>3</sup> JH, Jan 30, 1937, 9.

<sup>4</sup> Smith, Hyrum Mack, “Diaries 1896; 1913–1916,” unpublished diaries, Aug 9, 1914, MS 5842, Church Archives (italics added).

is awful to contemplate possibly 10,000,000 of professed Christian men turned savages, with hearts full of hate of their fellows and determined to drench the earth with each others blood. . . It is proof to me that the Christian nations are followers of Christ in lip service only while their hearts are far removed from him, and their souls thirst for blood and carnage. They have truly rejected God. . . . Five of the greatest Christian(?) nations are now at war with each other.” He even suggested that if each of these nations prayed for the help of God, “It would appear that God is placed in a very peculiar position. Who shall he hear and favor...?”<sup>1</sup> The core of President Hyrum M. Smith’s argument was the concern of how these supposedly Christian nations could go to war and shed each others’ blood; all the while remaining true to the teachings of Christ.

This question goes to the heart of Church President Joseph F. Smith’s third concern: If members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints fought against each other, could they still call themselves servants of Christ? Yet there was a possibility that an Allied LDS soldier could line up across the trenches against an LDS soldier from the Central Powers. In addition to the possible physical confrontations, members of the Church from opposing countries were ideologically at odds and therefore they might begin to take issue with each other from a distance. As the war played out, Church members addressed both the physical and emotional issues.

*Physical opponents.* With the massive build up of troops in Germany, Latter-day Saints in that country could not avoid military service. President Hyrum M. Smith was in Germany during the beginning days of the war and attended a meeting of Latter-day Saints in early August 1914. Of the small congregation of forty, one of the men had

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, August 9, 1914. The question mark in parentheses was written by President Hyrum M. Smith.

already received instructions to take his place in the armed forces.<sup>1</sup> He later explained, “All men between the ages of 17 and 50 years have been call [sic] out and Germany expects within a fortnight to have 6,000,000 men under arms, fully equipped and provisioned for a great campaign.”<sup>2</sup> Since the German draft included such a wide age group of men, it must have included a number of Latter-day Saints.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to those drafted into the service, other German Latter-day Saints felt the desire to enlist. President Hyrum W. Valentine gave an example of one such patriotic German, a Brother Wilhelm Kessler. At the outbreak of the war, Kessler served in the Swiss-German Mission but felt compelled to return to Germany to join the military. He did so even though he was a naturalized American citizen.<sup>4</sup> Just like many of his American and Canadian counterparts, Kessler proved to be a benefit to his native army. He eventually even achieved an officer’s rank but unfortunately was killed in the line of duty on July 1, 1916.<sup>5</sup>

The German draft also summoned another Swiss-German missionary. Brother Hofmann had joined the Church only a few years before beginning his mission. His call to war broke his heart but he still diligently returned to Germany and became part of the hospital corps. In a later injury, Hofmann lost both an arm and a leg and was therefore released from military service. The wounded soldier returned to the Swiss-German Mission office where he finished his mission.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, Aug 1, 1914.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 5 Aug 1914.

<sup>3</sup> When the two hundred missionaries left the Swiss-German Mission in 1914, there were sixty branches in those two countries (Avant, 358).

<sup>4</sup> Valentine, 147-148.

<sup>5</sup> Anderson, Jeffery L. “Mormons and Germany, 1914–1933: A History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Germany and Its Relationship with the German Governments from World War I to the Rise of Hitler” (Masters thesis, Brigham Young University, 1991), 49.

<sup>6</sup> Valentine, 148-149.

The words of Brother Hofmann exemplified the sentiments of many German LDS soldiers. He explained the constant appeal he made to God as he prepared to enter the military: “I prayed to the Lord every night in secret that it might not be my lot to shoot one of my fellow men. I did not want to shoot anybody; and oh, how I rejoiced when, after seven days in the army, I was assigned to the hospital corps, and I was relieved of the responsibility of shedding the blood of any of my brethren.”<sup>1</sup> The desire not to kill was echoed in the advice given to German soldier Wilhelm Stoll. His father, a stalwart convert to the restored gospel, counseled Wilhelm, “Son, always obey orders but never volunteer to do a job that you know means to take someones [sic] life” and “Always have a prayer in your heart that you will never kill a Latter-Day [sic] Saint.”<sup>2</sup> As followers of Christ, these German Saints felt the desire to never shed the blood of another brother in the gospel.

The only possible way to ensure that Saints would not kill other Saints was to leave the situation in the hands of God. In an experience similar to a few of the Allied LDS soldiers, priesthood blessings of safety were given to at least one German soldier. Alberta Stake President Edward J. Wood shared the following experience related by a returned missionary in his stake.

Imagine on the field of battle a German member of this Church receiving also under the hands of the missionaries a blessing that he should go in battle, and that he would not lose his life. The missionary states that this particular young man went to the front, his battalion was called to charge upon the English, and he noticed after the charge that very few were left. They were commanded a second time to Charge. He remembered the blessing that he should not lose his life, and, he said, they made the charge, and all he could then remember was that he should not be called upon to shed blood nor lose his life, and he wondered how it would come

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, 148-149.

<sup>2</sup> “Nielson, Joseph S.,” n.p., SAW, 6-7.

to pass. After the charge was made the next he remembered was that he was in a hospital in Berlin.<sup>1</sup>

From his fortunate return to Berlin, this young German soldier could see the power of the Lord in keeping His promises.

It would be impossible to prove that one Latter-day Saint never came to battle against another Latter-day Saint, but several factors may have limited that possibility. First, many soldiers had a constant prayer that they would not have to shed the blood of the enemy, whatever religious tradition they might follow. These men stated that in answer to those prayers, they were never put in a situation where they had to fight the enemy.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, many of the LDS soldiers from Canada and the United States were delayed in their move to the front. For example, the 145<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery—originally the Utah National Guard and made up predominantly of Latter-day Saints—spent most of the war in the United States training. Even when they finally arrived in France the training continued and just as they were ordered to the front, the war ended.<sup>3</sup> This of course limited the number of Latter-day Saints who fought in France and therefore limited the number of times when members had to fight against members.

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<sup>1</sup> Wood, Edward J., in Conference Report, April 1917, 127-128. President Wood also wondered aloud the following sentiment: “Our boys from Canada had the same blessing given to them. Imagine a Canadian and a German "Mormon" boy meeting on the field of battle, each with that promise that they would not be called upon to shed blood nor lose their life in battle. Can you see any better solution to universal peace than by and through the sensing of religion as we feel it as Latter-day Saints . . . ?”

<sup>2</sup> Farnworth, 13; Jensen, 4; and Nielsen, 10.

<sup>3</sup> The 145<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery arrived at Camp Kearny on October 13, 1917 and continued its training there into the next summer. As of March 1918, the 40<sup>th</sup> Division, of which the 145<sup>th</sup> F. A. battalion was a part, “was declared 100 percent efficient and ready for battle.” However, they were still not sent as a group, but a few men at a time. The first Automatic Replacement Draft to affect Utahns was not until June 1918. Many were willing at this time to go to the front lines, including some non-commissioned officers who had to take a reduction in rank to do so. The replacements arrived in France in July. Having lost these men to other units, the 145<sup>th</sup> had to wait for the new members of its battalion to receive training. Finally, the battalion arrived in England on August 28, 1918 and in September they went to Bordeaux, France. Just prior to the armistice, the 145<sup>th</sup> received orders to take part in the battles at the Metz but these orders were cancelled when the war ended on November 11, 1918 (Roberts, Richard C. *History of the Utah National Guard: 1894-1964*, [Ph. D. dissertation, University of Utah, June 1973]144, 152-154, 157).

*Emotional opponents.* A more likely problem was that the Saints would learn to hate the people of the Central Powers nations. Church leaders felt that if LDS men and women in the United States and Canada began to hate the Germans in general, then their feelings could easily spread to German Latter-day Saints. Those in leadership positions felt that these antagonistic feelings were just as detrimental to the Saints as a physical confrontation. In order to stave off such unchristian feelings, Church authorities addressed it several times in General Conference as the United States joined the war.

In his opening remarks, President Joseph F. Smith clarified the cause of the war in Europe. He condemned the war-hungry leaders in European governments and their desire for power. President Smith then clarified that the civilians were not the ones guilty of starting the war. He counseled the Saints not to blame the people or to feel prejudice toward the common citizens of the Central Powers' nations.

Speaking about the members of the Church living in any land, the President of the Church emphasized that Saints were Saints no matter where they resided. "In speaking of nationalities we all understand or should that in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints there is neither Greek, nor Jew, nor Gentile; in other words, there is neither Scandinavian, nor Swiss, nor German, nor Russian, nor British, nor any other nationality. We have become brothers in the household of faith, and we should treat the people from these nations that are at war with each other, with due kindness and consideration."<sup>1</sup> His counselor, President Anthon H. Lund explained that no matter a man or woman's place of birth, those who had made sacred covenants were Latter-day Saints.<sup>2</sup> Rather than dividing into enemy factions, the Latter-day Saints needed to remain united.

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<sup>1</sup> Smith, Joseph F., in Conference Report, April 1917, 11.

<sup>2</sup> Lund, Anthon H., in Conference Report, April 1917, 12-13.

After members of the First Presidency emphasized the position of the Saints towards their brothers and sisters in hostile nations, President Hyrum W. Valentine, who had recently been released as the Swiss-German Mission President, addressed the congregation. He described his experiences while serving among the German people. He reminded the Saints of the hospitality given to the missionaries—their sons and daughters. “I have enjoyed the hospitality of those seven thousand Saints in that land. I have eaten their food, and so have your boys and your fathers—when they had none themselves. I have slept in their beds when they sat down in chairs.” His words showed how impressed he was by these people. President Valentine then instructed the Saints on how to gain similar feelings for the German people: “I love them . . . because I have learned to know them.” This mission president’s solution to the hatred encouraged by war was for the Latter-day Saints to get to know the German men and women around them. President Valentine then challenged the members of the Church to show their willingness to accept all the Saints, by preparing relief items and food to be sent to members in Germany.<sup>1</sup>

In summary, World War I pitted nations of the world that included LDS men and women against each other. Consequently there were two ways in which member could be set against member. As soldiers of hostile nations, LDS men could possibly faced each other in combat. On the battlefield the identification of another member was nearly impossible and if such a confrontation occurred, it likely ended in a loss of life. Yet a war of words and emotions was more probable, but fortunately the Saints had greater control in these situations and could therefore choose not to act in a narrow-minded manner that prejudiced them against other Saints.

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<sup>1</sup> Valentine, 150.

## Summary

President Joseph F. Smith was justified in his concerns about the First World War. The horrors of war occurring in the French countryside affected the lives of Latter-day Saints and their neighbors across the globe. From the highest government official to the common man on the street, large portions of the population of earth suffered loss.

In some countries they suffered the loss of trust. The belligerent attitudes of governments filtered down to their citizens, which increased suspicion and vigilance. This increased wariness in turn increased the difficulty and danger of missionary work; causing a number of nations to lose access to the Lord's servants. Fortunately, the outbreak of war did not completely halt missionary work, because resources were simply used in a different way. Missionaries received new assignments and local leaders in war-torn countries continued the work originally started by the full-time missionaries. President Smith was correct; missionary work was disrupted but fortunately not stopped completely.

The President of the Church also worried over the loss of life caused by war. Death did not make a distinction between those injured on the battlefield and those who contracted fatal diseases; it claimed both. The influence of these deaths rippled back to their families and caused suffering as fathers and sons were lost. While many soldiers returned home to continue their lives, loved ones still felt the emptiness left by the men buried on the battlefield. Once again President Smith correctly identified the loss that came when men fight against men.

The final concern was that Latter-day Saints would become adversaries. The obvious scenario included LDS men from opposing armies encountering each other in No

Man's Land. The less apparent circumstance came in the form of prejudice and animosity between the citizen Saints of warring countries. Could they possibly fight against each other and remain Saints? The solution was that Latter-day Saint men and women needed to learn charity and tolerance. In this last area President Smith was correct again and so he and others attempted to heal this division where possible.

As a spiritual leader to men and women throughout the world, President Joseph F. Smith correctly identified several of the problems caused by the First World War. Although he had accurately recognized the problems of the war, he could do little about it. Instead he chose to do the things he could and focused on ministering to the needs of the Saints. He taught that only through Jesus Christ could individuals, families and nations find peace.<sup>1</sup> Having found this peace, men and women could accept the absence of missionaries, the loss of loved ones and the differences of other nationalities.

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<sup>1</sup> Smith, Joseph F., in Conference Report, October 1914, 7.

## CHAPTER 6

## LATTER-DAY SAINT CHAPLAINS IN THE GREAT WAR

In the early part of 1918, General John J. Pershing of the American Expeditionary Force said, “It is my desire to surround them [the soldiers] with the best influence possible.”<sup>1</sup> He felt the best way to accomplish this task was to increase the number of chaplains assigned to American military units. In fact, he wanted to triple the number of chaplains; adding two more chaplains to each regiment. This would allow greater, personal connection between the chaplains and the men. As the Latter-day Saint Chaplains took their place among the soldiers of the AEF, they, in the words of President Heber J. Grant, “had an excellent influence over them for good”<sup>2</sup> and thus fulfilled General Pershing’s expectations for this spiritual and military role.

During World War I, three men represented the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as chaplains: Brigham H. Roberts, Calvin S. Smith and Herbert B. Maw. These men worked diligently to fulfill their responsibilities and represented the Church well. However, based on the number of LDS soldiers in the military, the Church’s allotment of chaplains should have been much greater—perhaps twenty.<sup>3</sup> This number remained low despite efforts by the Church to get it increased. Quite a few LDS soldiers applied for the chaplaincy but the army denied their requests. Some members suggested

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<sup>1</sup> Journal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Feb 13, 1918, 4, Church Archives; hereafter cited as JH.

<sup>2</sup> Grant, Heber J., in Conference Report, June 1919, 110.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 110 and Boone, Joseph F., “The Roles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Relation to the United States Military, 1900-1975,” 2 vols. (Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, 1975), 110.

that the rejections came because of the objections made by the Young Men's Christian Association, which claimed that the Latter-day Saints were not Christian.<sup>1</sup> Those charged with the spiritual welfare of American soldiers also feared that LDS chaplains might use their position as a trusted counselor to work as missionaries among the soldiers and win converts to the LDS faith.<sup>2</sup> Concerns such as these limited the number of LDS chaplains to three during the Great War.

The small number of LDS chaplains only increased the responsibilities of each man. Yet the training given to each man was different. Brigham H. Roberts attended a chaplaincy school in Kentucky, while Calvin S. Smith learned from the other chaplains at Camp Lewis in Washington. Herbert B. Maw received no formal or informal training at all. When he asked his commanding officers about his assignment, they simply said, "Use your own judgement [sic]. You are a minister; you know what to do."<sup>3</sup> Maw followed that counsel by treating this profession like a calling. "No one gave me any suggestions so I just tried to operate as I would if I had been the bishop of the ward."<sup>4</sup> Even with their varied levels of formal training, all three men still performed many of the same duties. In an article published in the *Deseret Evening News*, Chaplain Smith elaborated on some of these tasks:

The general impression seems to be that the duties of the army chaplain are confined to the holding of religious services. The fact of the matter is that this phase of his work occupies but a very small portion of his time. At Camp Lewis, Wash., eight army chaplains fitted out their regimental halls as libraries and restrooms with easy chairs, writing table,

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<sup>1</sup> JH, July 28, 1918, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Boone, 110.

<sup>3</sup> Jenson, Harold H., "Utah's Three Latter-day Saint Chaplains," *The Juvenile Instructor*, vol. 54, no. 10, Oct 1919, (Salt Lake City, Utah : Deseret Sunday School Union, 1919), 520; JH, July 20, 1918, 4; and Maw, Herbert B., "LDS Chaplains Oral History Project," November 9, 1974, interviewed by Richard Maher, MSS OH 204, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 5.

<sup>4</sup> Maw, 6.

paper, ink, and other equipment. Three of these halls were provided with pool tables, pianos, phonograph and games. I am safe in saying that these regimental halls were just as popular with the men as the Y. M. C. A. huts. Other chaplains helped provide recreation for the men in the barracks. Part of the barracks was set aside for writing letters. Tables were provided. Phonographs and pianos were installed and games were to be had there. Occasionally, once or twice a month, entertainments were arranged by each chaplain. These consisted of musical programs, dances, smokers, or lectures on interesting and useful subjects.

In addition to this the chaplain is supposed to teach the common branches of English education to the illiterate, and the foreign-speaking elements of his regiment. These schools convene daily, usually in the morning. Attendance at these schools is compulsory. In some regiments the chaplain was responsible for the vital statistics; in some he was athletics officer and arranged for inter-company contests. Usually the postoffice [sic] for the regiment was under his care.

He is the friend of the prisoner in the guard house. In our regiment he is the defending attorney for all prisoners who come up for court-martials. It is the chaplains business to counsel with the prisoners, so that they know their rights. The sick and the down-hearted of a regiment are the chaplain's special charge. He visits them as often as possible. He answers all inquiries from friend and relative about the men and frequently writes and helps them. On the hike and in the field the chaplain is supposed to be a jolly, good fellow. He is the one officer who 'mixes' and gets personally acquainted with as many men as he can. He goes with them to the rifle range, to the machine gun schools, and the gas schools. He hears troubles and becomes a confidant. He is frequently able to lend his entire salary, if he doesn't need it. Each Sunday he holds appropriate religious services. . . .

As an organized body the chaplains at Camp Lewis applied to their commanding officer to have classes in first aid, sanitation, equitation and in martial law. They met with the Y. M. C. A. and the Knights of Columbus representatives. They also met with the camp pastors. These meetings were for the purpose of harmonizing the work of these organizations. These agencies co-operated in getting out Easter greetings and Mother's day cards for the men in Camp Lewis.<sup>1</sup>

The duties dictated by Chaplain Smith included several categories. Among these were spiritual work, maintaining morale, providing educational opportunities, and personal support, such as working with both individual soldiers and their families back at home.

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<sup>1</sup> JH, July 20, 1918, 4.

Through their untiring efforts in these areas, LDS Chaplains Roberts, Smith and Maw greatly influenced many of the men in the United States Army for good.

### **An Introduction to the LDS Chaplains of WWI**

Before any of these three men could perform the duties of a chaplain, they had to enlist in the armed forces. A look at how they joined the chaplaincy along with their first assignments and reactions to their calls explains a lot about each man's character. It also gives greater insight into why Church leaders chose these particular individuals. For that reason, before looking at how they executed their chaplain duties, their initial encounters with the military will be examined.

When the United States declared war on the Central Powers, Elder Brigham H. Roberts was serving as one of the seven presidents of the Seventy of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In addition to his experience as a Church leader, Roberts had also worked in the political system in Utah. In 1898, he had been elected to a seat in Congress but others in that body did not allow him to take office. However, Roberts remained active in state politics and was a friend of Utah Governor Simon Bamberger. His knowledge and personal contacts allowed him to obtain an appointment to the chaplaincy of the First Utah Light Artillery Unit of the Utah National Guard. In the first few years of his military service, he did much to encourage enlistment among the young men of Utah and attained the rank of major. This all changed when the United States government converted all National Guard companies into units of the national army. Military officials told Roberts that at the age of 60, he was too old to serve as a chaplain

in the regular army.<sup>1</sup> This news devastated Elder Roberts. During his recruiting tours, he had promised LDS parents that he would follow their sons into the trenches. In order to overcome this obstacle, Elder Roberts turned to Senator Reed Smoot, who helped Roberts gain admission into the army on two conditions: one, he would be demoted to lieutenant, and two, he would need to complete a chaplain training course. Roberts quickly accepted those terms and received a commission to act as a chaplain.

Chaplain Roberts worked to become a skilled chaplain even before his military training began. While traveling by train to Camp Zachary Taylor in Kentucky, he studied the French language and read out of three versions of the Bible: the Douay, the Vulgate and the King James. He also wrote extensive notes that he could later use in sermons. Once at camp he took part in drills, war simulations, physical exercise, marches and campouts. He also put to use a skill he learned as a youth: horsemanship. When an instructor offered Roberts a chance to avoid some of the strenuous physical activities, Roberts responded, “No sir, I came here to take the full course.” Despite the difficulty, Elder Roberts passed all of the requirements and returned his unit, the now nationalized 145<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Battalion.<sup>2</sup> His enthusiasm and energy was reflected in a report made in a Utah newspaper that Chaplain Roberts “is no longer a young man in years but in pep and patriotism he is hardly old enough for the selective draft.”<sup>3</sup>

Robert’s desire to succeed was driven by more than just enthusiasm. Chaplain Roberts greatly desired to prove his personal patriotism. Years earlier he had won a seat

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<sup>1</sup> On March 13, 1917, Elder B. H. Roberts turned 60, which made him too old to join the national army (Madsen, Truman G. *Defender of the Faith: The B. H. Roberts Story* [Salt Lake City, UT: Bookcraft, 1980], 302).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, 306.

<sup>3</sup> As reported in Warrum, Noble. *Utah in the World War: The Men behind the Guns and the Men and Woman behind the Men behind the Guns*, (Salt Lake City, UT: Arrow Press, 1924), 58.

in Congress but that same body denied his seat on grounds of disloyalty. Although he did not have an opportunity to show his devotion to the United States as a member of the federal legislature, he could now show on the fields of battle that the accusations made by the other congressmen had no basis in fact.

Another LDS chaplain, Calvin S. Smith, would eventually spend a great deal of time on the front lines in France. However, prior to his military service, he worked as an educator. Smith spent two years in Germany teaching the restored gospel.<sup>1</sup> After his missionary experience, he returned to the States and eventually earned a bachelors degree from the University of Utah. His schooling helped him gain a position as an English teacher at the Latter-day Saint University in Salt Lake City. Smith was working in this capacity when the appointment came for him to enter the chaplaincy.<sup>2</sup>

From Utah, Chaplain Smith went to Camp Lewis in Washington. While this camp did not have a training program for chaplains, the constant interaction between the experienced and friendly chaplains of other faiths stationed there taught him all the skills he needed to perform his duty. He initially worked with the Latter-day Saint soldiers assigned to the 362<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment, but his assignment soon changed to that of divisional chaplain-at-large. This position allowed him the freedom to move from regiment to regiment in the camp and interact with any of the men there. This greater access allowed him to find all of the Latter-day Saints in the 91<sup>st</sup> Division and offer any assistance they needed.<sup>3</sup> Smith would later follow this division to France and earn both a

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<sup>1</sup> Calvin S. Smith served in Germany from 1910 to 1913 (JH, June 15, 1966, 5).

<sup>2</sup> Chaplain Smith could have easily avoided service in the military. In 1918, he was only one year away from being over the age of the draft and he was married (JH, Jan 17, 1918, 3).

<sup>3</sup> JH, March 18, 1918, 2.

captain's rank and a French war medal, the *Croix de Guerre*.<sup>1</sup> Both of these commendations show Smith's commitment to the men in his charge.

Not every chaplain began his war service with the chaplaincy in mind. Initially, Herbert B. Maw wanted to fly airplanes as part of the Army Air Corps. In the months before his appointment as chaplain, Maw trained as an aviator. The instruction was difficult and included physics, astronomy and other topics necessary to a pilot. Although many of his classmates failed, Maw passed all the essential classes and began his flight training at Kelly Field in Texas. As an air cadet, Lieutenant Maw received a great deal of esteem from onlookers because of the bravery required by pilots during these early years of aviation.<sup>2</sup>

The homage paid to pilots would soon be overshadowed by an opportunity to serve God. One day while training at Kelly Field, Lieutenant Maw received a life-changing phone call.

While I was in the process of training as a pilot, I received a long distance phone call one day. The person on the other end said, "I am Charles W. Penrose of the First Presidency of the Mormon Church." I replied, "Are you kidding me?" . . . I couldn't conceive of one of the Presidency of the Church calling me. He said, "Indeed I am not. I am calling to tell you that the United States Government has for the first time in the history of the Church permitted our Church to have three chaplains in the military forces and they have authorized us to designate them. We have chosen Brother B. H. Roberts . . . and Calvin Smith . . . We would like you to be the third choice." I was flabbergasted [sic] that the First Presidency even knew me, but I told him that if they designated me, I would accept though I much preferred continuing my training as a pilot.<sup>3</sup>

Although Maw would have liked to serve as a pilot, he willingly received his commission a week later and became the third LDS chaplain in the First World War.

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<sup>1</sup> JH, Nov 30, 1918, 4.

<sup>2</sup> JH, Jan 16, 1918, 5; Maw, Oral History, 2; and Maw, Herbert B., *Adventures with Life*, (Salt Lake City, UT: n.p., 1978), 78.

<sup>3</sup> Maw, Oral History, 3.

Prior to reporting to his new assignment, Maw received a furlough and returned to Utah. While there he accepted with a little trepidation an invitation from President Charles W. Penrose for a meeting at Church headquarters in Salt Lake City. After a short visit with President Penrose, he was introduced to the other two members of the First Presidency: Presidents Joseph F. Smith and Anthon H. Lund. The chaplain asked them if they had any instructions on how he should fulfill his new responsibilities. “Their reply was, ‘No, we know that you will live up to the LDS standards and do your duty as a chaplain.’” In addition to impressing Chaplain Maw with the great responsibility of his position, they also asked if he would like a blessing. He responded in the affirmative and related the following: “All three of them laid their hands on my head and blessed me. That was a thrilling experience. Brother Lund was the mouthpiece. I knew that I was going overseas in active service soon and in my heart I was hoping that he would promise me that I would come back. . . . But he didn’t. He said one sentence in his blessing that I have never forgotten. He said, ‘We bless you with every protection and guidance and inspiration that a representative of the Church of Jesus Christ of should have in a war.[’] Scores of times while at the front those words were literally fulfilled for I repeatedly [sic] received promptings which saved me from disasters.”<sup>1</sup> This experience had an incredible impact on Maw and changed the way that he looked at his position as chaplain. He explained, “I left that office with a feeling the like of which I have never experienced since, and with a resolve in my heart to be a worthy representative of my church and my people.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, 3-4.

<sup>2</sup> Maw, *Adventures*, 81.

A short time after visiting with the First Presidency, Chaplain Maw traveled to Camp Funston, Kansas. Once there, the army assigned him to work as a chaplain-at-large with the 89<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division that included mostly soldiers from Arkansas and Missouri.<sup>1</sup> He later explained that he never understood why the military had assigned him to that group because it contained so few Latter-day Saints. He surmised the reason was that the division included a large number of members of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and that the army did not know the difference between the two faiths. Nevertheless, the RLDS soldiers knew the difference and were unhappy that a Latter-day Saint was assigned as their chaplain. This sentiment eventually changed as Chaplain Maw got to know the men in the division and had the opportunity to break down some of the prejudice that those soldiers felt toward the LDS Church.<sup>2</sup>

While these three chaplains had the specific duty to work with members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, they also spent a good deal of time working with members of other faiths. Their success at this work was aided by their experiences before and after the American declaration of war. After their brief introductions to this new occupation, these men went out and served the men in the United States Army in both spiritual and physical ways. Their efforts assisted the American soldiers with whom they worked to accomplish their objectives and therefore helped the Allied Powers win the war.

### **Spiritual Work**

Although chaplains received various mundane assignments from their superiors, there most important assignment was that of spiritual leader and advisor. Chaplain Calvin

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<sup>1</sup> Maw, Oral History, 6.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 3.

S. Smith felt that of all the occupations in military, the chaplaincy stood as the most significant. He said, “The Chaplain’s job is one of the most important in the army and it is fraught with the greatest of opportunities”<sup>1</sup> The chaplains recognized their important role in the spiritual areas of a soldier’s life. It was a mixture of an occupation and a calling from the Church’s First Presidency. Chaplain Maw explained that he saw his work in the army as akin to that of a full-time missionary.<sup>2</sup> Just as the Church’s full-time missionaries, each Latter-day Saint chaplain recognized that his responsibility was to help men come to Christ even though they would wear a khaki uniform instead of suit.

Since these men had the responsibility to help the soldiers in their care maintain a spiritual presence in their lives, the chaplains needed to teach the gospel of Jesus Christ. Gospel instruction was easier to provide while still in the States and in England. Soldiers remembered meeting in a variety of locations; such as, a machine gun battalion’s mess hall, the deck of a transport ship, or just outside in the open.<sup>3</sup> Basically the chaplains used whatever area was available to gather the LDS men and others together and then give religious instruction.

The actual doctrines taught depended on the chaplain and their audience. Since most of Chaplain Roberts’s men were Latter-day Saints, he focused his teachings on the doctrines of the restoration.<sup>4</sup> Chaplains Smith and Maw, however, were in different circumstances and serving soldiers of various faiths. They tended to teach non-sectarian sermons when addressing the entire company and saved restoration doctrines for personal

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<sup>1</sup> Jenson, 521-522.

<sup>2</sup> Maw, Oral History, 18.

<sup>3</sup> Sharp, June Bennion, “World War I Diary and Battle Account, 1918—1919,” LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1-4; and Young, Gaylen Snow, “Diary from April 22, 1918 to May 13, 1919,” L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 3.

<sup>4</sup> See Sharp, 1-4.

conversations with individuals or small groups. Latter-day Saint doctrine was some times difficult to avoid completely because these chaplains saw these doctrines as truth. The interjection of LDS teachings was particularly sensitive to Chaplain Maw because his soldiers, many of whom were RLDS, generally recognized the disparity between their doctrines and what the chaplain taught. However rather than causing a large difficulty, Chaplain Maw reported that it generally led to interesting conversations between him and his men.<sup>1</sup> The LDS chaplains observed that as “a chaplain forgets that he is a sectarian and remembers only that he is a representative of Christianity in the regiment, his influence for good is immeasurable.”<sup>2</sup>

Things changed once the LDS chaplains and their divisions arrived in the war zones of France. Military orders forbade the gathering of any more than five soldiers in one place at a time, which made large meetings impossible because they would then become a target to enemy artillery. Since they could no longer work with large groups, the chaplains went to where the soldiers were stationed even though this often put them in harm’s way.<sup>3</sup> In the days prior to the Armistice, Chaplain Roberts prepared to accompany his men to the front lines but the war ended before they were deployed.<sup>4</sup> Chaplain Smith was injured twice because he insisted that he remain with his men on the front lines.<sup>5</sup> In both cases he was carrying wounded men back to the trenches from No Man’s Land, all the while surrounded by the explosions of artillery shells. Even after suffering injury, he refused to stop rescuing the soldiers until there was no one left to

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<sup>1</sup> Maw, Oral History, 4.

<sup>2</sup> Jenson, 522.

<sup>3</sup> Maw, Oral History, 4.

<sup>4</sup> Madsen, 311.

<sup>5</sup> JH, July 17, 1919, 8.

help.<sup>1</sup> Chaplain Maw showed a willingness to accompany the soldiers even in dangerous conditions. He could have avoided duty on the front lines because his primary work was with the artillery unit of the 89<sup>th</sup> Division stationed well behind the trenches. However, in spite of the danger, he chose to visit the LDS servicemen in the trenches.<sup>2</sup> In addition to service on the front lines, the chaplains spent time in both the guardhouses and the hospitals in order to increase the morale of the soldiers in both places. In the first location, their presence encouraged obedience and in the second, healing.<sup>3</sup> The chaplains spent their time in the places where the soldiers were and the soldiers appreciated their comforting presence.

While sailing to England, Chaplain Roberts met individually with each soldier in the 145<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Battalion. As he interviewed each man, he reminded them of their covenants and warned them of the temptations that would assault them once they arrived in France. Particularly, he urged each man to “guard the sacred order of love and marriage.” Roberts promised them that Christ could help them overcome any temptation, even if the peer-pressure or loneliness were great. The soldiers were particularly impressed by his method of persuasion. Rather than arguing his point, he simply bore testimony of their relationship with their Heavenly Father.<sup>4</sup> The one-on-one nature of these interviews allowed Chaplain Roberts to influence each man for good.

Chaplain Maw also testified of the worth of this type of individual consultation. While working with soldiers on the front lines, he often encountered men on the verge of a breakdown. These men had experienced the anxiety and fear common in the trenches.

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<sup>1</sup> JH, Apr 14, 1919, 3. According to this article, Chaplain Calvin S. Smith was injured once in the Argonne Forest and once in Belgium. A later article specifies it as Gesnes, Belgium (JH, July 25, 1919).

<sup>2</sup> Maw, Oral History, 8.

<sup>3</sup> Jenson, 522.

<sup>4</sup> Madsen, 308-309.

“They became so tense and they had to have something to calm them down. In those cases I had the opportunity to talk with each of them and teach them to pray and assure them that God would look after them.” Some soldiers would suggest that prayer worked only for those who, like Chaplain Maw, were not already afraid. He would then respond, “I asked the lord to protect me and I know he will.” He remarked that many men would then begin to pray. These personal counseling sessions changed lives because Chaplain Maw encouraged the soldiers to turn to God.<sup>1</sup>

While the main duty of the chaplains was to work with the soldiers, occasionally they met with other chaplains. Generally these meetings were of a friendly nature where each chaplain shared some insights that had assisted their work. Chaplain Smith saw first hand at Camp Lewis the effect of grouping like-minded chaplains and allowing them to do their work. On that base, they coordinated activities and made certain that soldiers of all faiths could find others that shared their beliefs.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately not all of the encounters between chaplains happened under such positive circumstances. Shortly after the signing of the Armistice, Chaplain Roberts had a negative encounter with a few of the chaplains of other faiths.

On Thanksgiving Day 1918 a worship service was arranged by representative chaplains from the major denominations. Roberts was assigned a seat at the rear of the review stand and had not been asked to participate on the program. During the service the conducting officer abruptly announced, “Elder Roberts, the Mormon chaplain from Utah, will now step up and lead the Thanksgiving Psalm.” Dazed, Roberts arose and walked forward; he was familiar with the Psalms but not with that title. The impression then came that he should read “The One Hundredth Psalm.” Opening his Bible he read aloud the lines:

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing. Know ye

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<sup>1</sup> Maw, Oral History, 11.

<sup>2</sup> JH, July 20, 1918, 4

that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

Returning to his seat, Roberts noticed that his fellow chaplains were looking not at him but at the floor. He concluded that this public invitation had been an attempt to embarrass him and the Church. Back at his tent he knelt in prayer, thanking the Lord for coming to his aid in this moment of need.”<sup>1</sup>

With divine guidance, Chaplain Roberts avoided the embarrassment that may have come from such a situation. Still, most interactions between LDS chaplains and chaplains of other faiths did not become antagonistic confrontations, but usually led to mutual assistance.<sup>2</sup>

Often left to their own devices, LDS chaplains chose to focus on the most important part of their occupation: providing spiritual help. Initially they found success in helping soldiers in a groups setting but later found that even greater success happened on an individual level.<sup>3</sup> They helped the soldiers learn to obtain spiritual strength even in the absence of a chaplain. Perhaps it could be said that a chaplain had fulfilled his duty when the men no longer needed him.

## **Diversions**

In addition to providing spiritual stability, chaplains also arranged activities and events that helped maintain the soldiers’ physical and mental well-being. While these pastimes diminished when the soldiers served on the front lines, their importance

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<sup>1</sup> Madsen, 311-312.

<sup>2</sup> Elder B. H. Roberts does not report of any negative experiences between him and the other chaplains-in-training during his instruction and examination period at Camp Zachary Taylor. This suggests that he and the other chaplains got along (see Madsen, 306). Also refer to the positive response that Chaplain Calvin S. Smith had towards his work at Camp Lewis (see JH, July 20, 1918, 4).

<sup>3</sup> JH, Dec 3, 1917; 2, 4; and Maw, Oral History, 11.

increased in times of waiting. The military service for the American Saints included two extended waiting periods: state-side training time before embarking to Europe and post-Armistice waiting for transport home. During these times, the men had more time to think about home or about other things they would rather be doing. Such thoughts made morale drop and so military leaders felt it wise to keep the minds of the soldiers occupied.<sup>1</sup> All three LDS chaplains took part in creating entertainment and diversions for their troops. Two particularly effective diversions were entertainment and education.

Entertainment took many different forms in an army of millions of soldiers. When the soldiers were away from the battlefield they had a lot of spare time but usually only needed simple activities to take their mind off of home. At Camp Lewis, Chaplain Smith got permission to transform a machine gun assembly room into a rest and recreation room for his men. He then turned to the Utah State Council of Defense and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for the money to furnish that room. Each organization donated \$600 and the chaplain purchased recreation equipment, such as pool tables and other games, for the room.<sup>2</sup> Other entertainment took on even simpler forms. For example, after the war ended, the military provided the men with sports equipment. The soldiers could then organize their own baseball and football games.<sup>3</sup> Simple sports and games were one way in which the army hoped to distract their men during times of waiting.

In contrast to the simple activities mentioned above, LDS chaplains also organized more complex diversions for their men. During the initial training of the 145<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> JH, Oct 19, 1919, 6.

<sup>2</sup> JH, July 17, 1919, 7; JH, June 20, 1920; and JH, July 20, 1918. The first article also mentioned that the recreation room at Camp Lewis was only completed the day before the 91<sup>st</sup> Division received orders to depart to France. The items in the room remained at Camp Lewis to entertain the next group of men to receive training there.

<sup>3</sup> Maw, *Adventures*, 87.

Field Artillery at Camp Kearny, California, Chaplain Roberts organized a hike to commemorate the seventy-first anniversary of the Mormon Battalion's journey to California. Seventeen descendants of Mormon Battalion veterans served in the artillery battalion and these young men made the hike from Camp Kearny to the nearby city of San Diego. Once in Old San Diego, the soldiers sang patriotic songs and performed several military exercises. Chaplain Roberts then addressed the men and the crowd who had gathered. He spoke of the history of the LDS men who had made the original march and the how they were a part of the early history of American California. A meal followed the speech and then the Utah Band marched up over the hill, treating the gathering to some more patriotic music. Colonel Richard W. Young spoke next about the loyalty of Utah and its soldiers. The festivities ended with Furgus Furgusen reading "Order No. 1." Written by Colonel Philip St. George Cooke, this order praised the courage and excellent work of the Mormon Battalion in 1847.<sup>1</sup> This exercise helped at least part of the 145<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery pass the time before leaving to France.

Another way in which Chaplain Roberts helped relieve the boredom of his unit had a less physical bend. Before the outbreak of the war, National Guard leaders organized a number of musically talented soldiers into a band. This band accompanied the artillery battalion to Camp Kearny and trained in first aid and prepared to work as a stretcher brigade during the war. Once the band completed their training, Roberts led the band back to tour Utah playing concerts. All during the summer of 1917, they played in cities all over the state and each place earned money for the men in the artillery battalion.

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<sup>1</sup> Anderson, Edward H. "In the Footsteps of their Forefathers," *Improvement Era*, vol. 20 (Feb 1918), 321-329

Back in camp they also helped inspire and comfort the men as they waited for deployment.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to leisure activities, the chaplains also played a major role in supplying educational classes for their men. While the military itself encouraged learning, they often left the actual organization up to the chaplains. For example, Chaplain Smith arranged for a French class to be taught as the soldiers sailed from the United States to Europe.<sup>2</sup> This is perhaps the reason why Smith explained that a chaplain “is the schoolmaster of the battalion.” As a chaplain, he felt it his duty to arrange any class that the soldiers might find interesting. He listed a few of the classes that his division held after the war: “ethics of citizenship, languages, agriculture, history, [and] business subjects.”<sup>3</sup> All of these various topics required the military to find qualified and diverse teachers. In order to locate enough teachers, the U.S. military brought over some of the most talented educators from the United States and also allowed some soldiers to attend French universities.<sup>4</sup> While most chaplains played a major part in organizing various classes for their men, Chaplain Calvin S. Smith, a trained educator, took on an even greater role in his division as the supervisor of education. From January to March of 1919, he supervised over 2,000 soldiers, helping them to find the classes and teachers they needed.<sup>5</sup>

In addition to specialized classes, the chaplains also provided instruction in more basic subjects. For example, many of the men in Chaplain Maw’s division had very little

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<sup>1</sup> “Passing Events,” *Improvement Era*, vol. 21 (Aug 1918), 935.

<sup>2</sup> JH, July 17, 1919, 7.

<sup>3</sup> Jenson, 522.

<sup>4</sup> JH, Oct 19, 1919, 6.

<sup>5</sup> JH, July 17, 1919, 8.

education. Some could not even sign their names, let alone write or read a letter.<sup>1</sup> During rest periods, he organized a class to teach them basic literacy skills, which would help them better perform their jobs in the military and their jobs at home. Working with these men, Maw also saw the affects of illiteracy on the men when it came to morale. He described an experience that he had with one of these men.

One of them was a young fellow from the Ozarks. He was physically large and strong and a master with the rifle, but he was unable to read or write. His name was Jim Flynn. He had been an outdoor person and such a “mundane thing” as schooling had never appealed to him. When I first met him, he was in the depths of an emotional depression. . . Finally, communication between us commenced and I learned that his trouble was homesickness. One day he came to me with a letter that he had been carrying in his pocket for days and asked if I would read it to him. It was from his sweetheart in the Ozarks written in simple terms with misspelled words, but expressing her affection for him. He beamed as I proceeded to read. After I had finished, at his request, I read it a second time and then asked he would like me to answer it for him. “Gee, would ya,” he responded. I tried to have him dictate a letter in his own language, but he was unable to do so. “Tell her I love her and sure wish she was here,” for I brought forth the sweetest love letter I was capable of writing. When I read it to him he brightened up and said, “Gee, I didn’t think I could say such ‘perdy things.’” Then I helped him write his name at the bottom of it, addressed an envelope, and gave it to him to be mailed. An answer came by return mail from the happiest girl in the Ozarks. As I read it to Jim, it was easy to see that he, too, was thrilled.

For the rest of the war, Chaplain Maw helped Jim Flynn carry on correspondence with his sweetheart back home.<sup>2</sup> Since many of the men in his unit had similar difficulties with reading, they too went to the chaplain to have their mail read. The substantial amount of time required by this activity encouraged Chaplain Maw to continue to teach his basic literacy class.

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<sup>1</sup> Maw, *Oral History*, 4.

<sup>2</sup> Maw, *Adventures*, 83.

As demonstrated above, mail played an important role in the military. Chaplain Maw explained, “The most important thing for the soldier was his mail.”<sup>1</sup> Surprisingly, the LDS chaplains also played an important part in the mail services during their service overseas. During the fighting, every letter written by the soldiers needed to be reviewed so that any correspondence intercepted by the enemy would not hamper the Allied war effort. This review process required censors and the Latter-day Saint chaplains acted as censors for the men in their companies. After perusing soldiers’ letters, the chaplains would then initial the letter verifying that it did not contain inappropriate information. Only then would the letter be mailed home. The number of letters often made this job quite difficult, but the chaplains performed it in order to help their men.<sup>2</sup>

### **Sickness and Death**

Not all of a chaplain’s duties were pleasant. Latter-day Saint chaplains spent a good deal of time with wounded and dying soldiers. Both Chaplains Smith and Maw served as stretcher-bearers on the front lines and despite the dangers carried injured men back to the trenches. Soldiers who suffered battlefield wounds joined those who contracted deadly sicknesses as casualties during the war. Their impairments led to two of the major duties fulfilled by the LDS chaplains: visiting the hospital patients and tending to the needs of the deceased.

When soldiers went to the hospital, they were cut off from their regular units. Often chaplains would be the only connection between them and their commanding officers. So when these officers needed to know the condition of their convalescing soldiers, they would turn to the chaplains for this information. This necessitated the

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<sup>1</sup> Maw, Oral History, 10.

<sup>2</sup> Jenson, 522.

chaplains knowing all about the condition of each hospitalized soldier and so chaplains spent many hours with the men in the hospital. During the Spanish Influenza epidemic in France, Chaplain Roberts spent a number of days with the sick men in the hospital. From the first case of the sickness until the doctors finally got the disease under control, Roberts reported that six hundred men from his regiment contracted the flu. Sometimes there were up to sixty-eight men in the hospital at one time.<sup>1</sup> The soldiers remembered fondly the personal care that Chaplain Roberts gave the infirm soldiers. One officer reported, “The Chaplain almost lived in the hospital wards. Day and night I would take Brother Roberts in my motorcycle side car and go to the detention wards and hospitals to visit the men. He was unafraid of the vicious malady. He never hesitated to go into the sick rooms and never seemed to worry about the risk of getting the disease himself. Many times, especially when visiting the Latter-day Saint men, he would administer to them and the blessings Brother Roberts would give were tremendous and would kindle encouragement and hope to the men.”<sup>2</sup> Through his use of the priesthood and his caring visits, Chaplain Roberts helped the LDS soldiers in ways that few others could.

However not every soldier who entered the hospital was healed. The visits of the chaplains often gave soldiers an opportunity to confess the sins and misdeeds of their lives in preparation for death. Other soldiers took this opportunity to write one last letter home and entrusted it to the chaplain to ensure its arrival to their families.<sup>3</sup> The chaplains also had the duty of writing letters to the families who lost soldiers. In these letters, they

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<sup>1</sup> Fourteen men of the 145<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Battalion died while stationed at Camp De Souge near Bordeaux, France (Ibid, 520).

<sup>2</sup> Madsen, 312.

<sup>3</sup> Maw, Oral History, 4; and Maw, *Adventures*, 85.

would describe the soldier's service and the manner of his death, so as to help ease the pain of grieving families.<sup>1</sup>

The LDS chaplains also took part in the burials and funerals of the deceased Latter-day Saint soldiers. Elder Roberts personally visited all of the graves of his men, a majority of who had died from the flu. After decorating the headstone, he took a picture of the place making certain that the name was visible. He then included this picture in the letter that he sent back to the families concerning the death of their soldier.<sup>2</sup> Personal touches such as these comforted the families, who appreciated the time that Chaplain Roberts spent with their sons, husbands and fathers.

### **Gratitude for the Efforts of LDS Chaplains**

Many leaders, both ecclesiastical and secular, recognized the critical contributions of Latter-day Saint chaplains. In June of 1919, Church President Heber J. Grant referred to the excellent service performed by all three chaplains during the war and thanked them for the work they had done.<sup>3</sup> The three LDS chaplains sacrificed years of their lives in order to care for the men of the United States army. During their time in the service, they attended to the spiritual side of each soldier's life and helped a number of them to grow closer to God. This interaction helped the men become not only better soldiers, but also better people. For the soldiers who had many months of free time, the chaplains organized activities that would keep the men from thinking too much of home. They arranged for entertainment providing them with opportunities to enjoy both the arts and athletics. They also taught classes that allowed the soldiers to improve themselves mentally, and if the chaplain did not have the skill needed to teach a subject, they found

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<sup>1</sup> Jenson, 522.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 521.

<sup>3</sup> Heber J. Grant, in Conference Report, June 1919, 110.

someone that did. Finally, the chaplains performed duties that many would find unpleasant. They supported soldiers in the hospital in order to help them recover from either injury or sickness. Their service continued even after a soldier had passed away, as part of the burial team or in writing a letter to family members who had been left behind. The heavy responsibilities performed by LDS chaplains helped improve the lives of soldiers—both Latter-day Saints and those of other faiths—as they fought for their country during the First World War.

After the war, Major General Johnston reported on the successes of the chaplains commissioned by the United States Army. The general said, “Four million American soldiers have acquired the virtues of obedience, fortitude and loyalty to spiritual ideals and will return to civil life better fitted for American citizenship. Chaplains representing Protestants, Catholics, Jews, ‘Mormons’ and other religions and sects worked side by side with the men for the common cause of virtue, and I never heard the word theology mentioned by any of them. Our Christianity consisted of offering lives for our country, for the common good of all mankind. It was the religion of the service.”<sup>1</sup> This fitting tribute echoed the sentiments of General John J. Pershing in 1918, when he recognized the great influence that chaplains had for the good of the soldiers. Such success was also easily apparent in the work of Latter-day Saint Chaplains Brigham H. Roberts, Calvin S. Smith and Herbert B. Maw.

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<sup>1</sup> JH, May 15, 1919, 3.

## CHAPTER 7

### WORLD WAR ONE VETERANS AND INFLUENTIAL LATTER-DAY SAINTS

The battlefield tragedies and triumphs of the First World War affected the lives of many Latter-day Saints during the war, but the influence of this great conflict continued after the soldiers returned home. World War I veterans saw life through eyes that had seen the inhumanity and, conversely, the compassion of war. Some of these men could never share their experiences after the war, while others shared their wartime stories with eager audiences. In either case, the Church and its membership continued to feel the influence of the war for decades after the Armistice. This influence was particularly felt by Latter-day Saints when WWI veterans took up leadership positions. Indeed, these veterans filled positions that had great impact in many of the areas of the Saints' lives. While a few remained in the military, others returned to civilian life and later ran for political office. Others received a call to serve in the Church as General Authorities. Listed below, in alphabetical order, are the descriptions of thirteen of these men and brief explanation of their post-war (and some pre-war) activities.

#### **Archibald F. Bennett**

Archibald Fowler Bennett was born in Dingle, Idaho, on March 17, 1896. As a child, Bennett's family moved to Alberta, Canada, to farm the land there. After hearing the recruiting speeches of Lieutenant Hugh B. Brown, Bennett enlisted in the local

militia, the 23<sup>rd</sup> Alberta Rangers.<sup>1</sup> He saw action overseas as part of the Fort Garry Horse Battalion headquartered in Manitoba, Canada.<sup>2</sup>

After the war, Archibald Bennett involved himself in genealogy. He served on the Church's Priesthood Genealogical Committee, acted as the general secretary and librarian of the Genealogical Society, and was elected as a fellow at the Society of American Genealogists. In addition to these pursuits, he also found time to teach genealogy at Brigham Young University. His work also included serving on the Sunday School Board for twenty-one years. He died on August 28, 1965.<sup>3</sup>

### **Hugh B. Brown**

The future recruiter of Canadian Saints, Hugh Brown Brown, was born in Granger, Utah, on October 24, 1883. His family moved to Canada while he was a teenager so they could buy a farm.<sup>4</sup> After serving a mission in England, Brown served in a bishopric in southern Alberta. This experience put him in a position of trust that later assisted his work in recruiting for the provincial militia.<sup>5</sup> Once the war began, Brown continued to rise through the ranks of the Canadian military, although he was later refused the rank of general on religious grounds.<sup>6</sup>

Three years after the end of the war, Hugh B. Brown was called to serve as the first president of the newly created Lethbridge Stake in Alberta. He later moved his family to Salt Lake City and was called to serve as stake president again, this time over

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<sup>1</sup> Journal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, January 30, 1937, 8, Church Archives; hereafter cited as JH.

<sup>2</sup> Van Orman, Herschel Harrison. Letter, undated, MS d 1380 fd 1, Church Archives.

<sup>3</sup> JH, Aug 28, 1965, 13.

<sup>4</sup> Brown, Hugh B. *An Abundant Life: The Memoirs of Hugh B. Brown*, Firmage, Edwin B., ed. (Salt Lake City, UT: Signature Books, 1988), 1. Brown says that they moved to Canada when he was "about fourteen years old" which would have been around 1897 (Ibid, 4).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 58.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 56-57.

the Granite Stake. In 1937, he moved to England in order to preside over the British Mission and he aided the evacuation of all the missions in Europe during the beginning of WWII. He, too, left England in 1940 but returned again in 1944 to resume his position as mission president. In addition to his missionary responsibilities, he worked with the LDS soldiers stationed in post-war Europe. Brown's experiences in post-war Europe helped him when he returned to Utah and worked with veterans at Brigham Young University [BYU] in Provo, Utah. A few years later, he retired from the Religion Department at BYU and went back to his law practice. Brown was called as an Assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve in 1943 and then as an apostle four and a half years later. He was called into the First Presidency in June 1961 and continued there until the death of President David O. McKay, at which time he returned to his position in the Quorum of the Twelve. Elder Hugh B. Brown passed away on December 2, 1975.<sup>1</sup>

### **J. Reuben Clark**

A native of Grantsville, Utah, Joshua Reuben Clark, Jr. was born on September 1, 1871.<sup>2</sup> He later studied law at Columbia University and then worked for the United States government in international law.<sup>3</sup> He had just started his own practice when he was recruited to the reserve judge advocate division in 1916.<sup>4</sup> During the war, he worked for both the Judge Advocate General and the Attorney General of the United States. For his work on the selective service program, he received a Distinguished Service Medal with a citation from Congress.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Elder Brown: A Life of Service to the Church," *Deseret News*, vol. 383, no. 289 (Dec 3, 1975), A3.

<sup>2</sup> Avant, Gerry, ed., *2006 Church Almanac*, (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret News, 2005), 58.

<sup>3</sup> Fox, Frank W., *J. Reuben Clark: The Public Years*, (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press and Deseret Book Company, 1980), 30, 42, 86.

<sup>4</sup> Fox, 231, 251-252.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, 271-272; and JH, Oct 10, 1961, 4.

When the war ended, Clark returned to the practice of law but his incredible talent in this field prepared him for a greater role in American politics. In 1930, he was nominated to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to Mexico and served in that position until early 1933.<sup>1</sup> The year he returned from Mexico, President Heber J. Grant called Clark as a counselor in the First Presidency, although he would not be ordained as an apostle until 1934. He served as a counselor in the First Presidency longer than any other man (28 ½ years). Only Presidents Brigham Young and Joseph F. Smith spent more years in the First Presidency.<sup>2</sup> He was ninety years-old when he passed away on October 6, 1961.<sup>3</sup>

### **William E. Cole**

William Edward Cole had the distinction of becoming the fifth Utahn to be made a general during the First World War. Cole was born September 22, 1874 in Willard, Box Elder County, Utah. Twenty years later he received his appointment to West Point and graduated as a second lieutenant in 1898. After fourteen years of military service, he attained the rank of major while working with the coastal artillery. He passed both basic and advanced courses in the use of such weapons. When the war began, he was stationed at Ancon near the Panama Canal.<sup>4</sup> General Cole died on May 18, 1953.<sup>5</sup>

### **William J. Critchlow**

Although William James Critchlow, Jr., was born in Brigham City, Utah, he spent most of his life in Ogden.<sup>6</sup> He attended public schools in that city and later studied at

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<sup>1</sup> U. S. Department of State, "Mexico," June 30, 2006, < <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/po/com/10948.htm>> (June 30, 2006).

<sup>2</sup> JH, Oct 10, 1961, 5.

<sup>3</sup> Avant, 58.

<sup>4</sup> JH, Sept 10, 1919, 3.

<sup>5</sup> "Individual Record: William Edward Cole (AFN: 2653-8R)," < [http://www.familysearch.org/Eng/search/frameset\\_search.asp?PAGE=ancestorsearchresults.asp](http://www.familysearch.org/Eng/search/frameset_search.asp?PAGE=ancestorsearchresults.asp)>, (June 30, 2006).

<sup>6</sup> JH, Aug 29, 1968, 18. His birth date was August 12, 1892.

Weber College, where in 1911 he acted as student body president. After the United States went to war, he joined the army and served in the 37<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division.

After the war, Critchlow gained broad experience in the Church. In the Mt. Ogden Stake, he worked as a superintendent of the YMMIA and the Sunday School.<sup>1</sup> He also served on the High Council in that stake. On December 7, 1941 (the day Pearl Harbor was attacked), Critchlow was set apart as the president of the newly organized South Ogden Stake.<sup>2</sup> He served in that position for seventeen years before receiving a call to work as an Assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve. As a General Authority, he served on the Priesthood Committee and as an advisor to the Primary Association. He also worked on the Reading Committee, which approved Church publications.<sup>3</sup> Elder Critchlow passed away in Ogden on August 29, 1968.<sup>4</sup>

### **Frank T. Hines**

Another Latter-day Saint WWI general, Frank Thomas Hines was born in Salt Lake City, Utah, on April 11, 1879. When the United States declared war against Spain in 1898, he served as a sergeant and later a lieutenant in the Utah Light Artillery's "B" Battery.<sup>5</sup> He continued his military career and in September 1918, he was a Brigadier General who traveled with U. S. Secretary of War Newton D. Baker.<sup>6</sup> After returning from France, he attended the 1924 Republican National Convention as an alternate delegate from Utah.<sup>7</sup> Then after World War II, he moved to the nation of Panama to work

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> JH, Oct 11, 1958, 7.

<sup>3</sup> JH, Aug 29, 1968, 18.

<sup>4</sup> Avant, 75.

<sup>5</sup> Prentiss, A. *The History of the Utah Volunteers in the Spanish-American War and in the Philippine Islands* (Salt Lake City, UT: Tribune Job Printing, 1900), 384.

<sup>6</sup> JH, Sept 10, 1918, 3.

<sup>7</sup> Kestenbaum, Lawrence, "The Political Graveyard: Index to Politicians: Hines," March 10, 2005, <<http://politicalgraveyard.com/bio/hines.html>>, (June 30, 2006).

as the United States Ambassador from 1945 to 1948.<sup>1</sup> General Hines died on April 3, 1960 and was buried in Arlington National Cemetery.<sup>2</sup>

### **Herbert B. Maw**

Herbert Brown Maw was born on March 11, 1893, in Ogden, Utah. After graduating from LDS High School, he attended the University of Utah where he earned a law degree. From there he returned to the LDS High School and taught classes during the 1916–1917 school year.<sup>3</sup> When war was declared, he moved to Texas and trained as a pilot, earning the rank of lieutenant. His military plans changed when the President Charles W. Penrose, of the First Presidency, asked him to serve as one of three LDS chaplains in the army. He accepted and went to war with the 89<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division.<sup>4</sup>

After the war, Maw returned to teaching at the LDS High School where he stayed until 1923. In the afternoon and on Saturdays, he worked at a law office with two other lawyers. Maw left high school teaching in order to teach political science at the University of Utah. In 1940, he ran for the governorship of the state of Utah and won. However, this was not Maw's first experience in public office. In the ten years prior to his election as governor, Maw had served in the Utah State Senate and was president of that body for the four years prior to his gubernatorial service. His tenure as governor lasted eight years. Afterwards he went back into law. He would have preferred to go back to teaching but that would require him to retire at age 65, and he could not see himself

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<sup>1</sup> U. S. Department of State, "Panama," <<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/po/com/11139.htm>>, (June 30, 2006).

<sup>2</sup> "Individual Record: Frank Thomas Hines (Compact Disc #101, Pin #490608)," <[http://www.familysearch.org/Eng/search/frameset\\_search.asp?PAGE=ancestorsearchresults.asp](http://www.familysearch.org/Eng/search/frameset_search.asp?PAGE=ancestorsearchresults.asp)>, (June 30, 2006).

<sup>3</sup> Maw, Herbert B., "LDS Chaplains Oral History Project," November 9, 1974, interviewed by Richard Maher, MSS OH 204, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 1-2.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 3.

retiring.<sup>1</sup> Maw continued practicing law into his nineties and handled pro bono cases for the poor. In the decade before his death on November 17, 1990, he wrote two books:

*Adventures with Life* and *The Apostles: Who Were They?*<sup>2</sup>

### **B. H. Roberts**

When Elder Brigham Henry Roberts died on September 27, 1933 at age 76, from complications due to diabetes, there were many things he still wished to accomplish. Elder Roberts had spent his entire life in service to the Church. Born in Warrington, Lancastershire, England on March 13, 1857, Roberts moved to Utah with his widowed mother when just nine years of age. At seventeen he apprenticed as a blacksmith but later attended the University of Deseret; graduating as a teacher in 1878. He then drifted into journalism, working as an associate and later as editor-in-chief of the *Salt Lake Herald*.

From 1880–1882, he served his first LDS mission, starting in Iowa and Nebraska, and then moving to the Southern States Mission. He later returned to the southern states as the mission president and then went to England as a missionary working on the *Millennial Star*. He was sustained as one of the First Seven Presidents of the Seventy on March 8, 1877.<sup>3</sup>

Back in Utah, he tried his hand at politics. He was a member of the constitutional convention but was defeated in his first congressional race. In 1898, he ran again and won, however the other members of congress refused to allow him to take his seat.<sup>4</sup>

When the United States went to war in 1917, he wanted to show that the federal legislature's charges of disloyalty were unfounded, and so he joined the Utah National

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, 1-2.

<sup>2</sup> "Herbert Maw, Former Utah Governor, Dies," *Deseret News*, 141<sup>st</sup> Year, no. 157 (November 18, 1990), A1.

<sup>3</sup> Avant, 72.

<sup>4</sup> JH, Sept 27, 1933, 9.

Guard as its chaplain. However Roberts turned 60 years old the year that his battalion was nationalized, making him too old for the position of chaplain. With the help of Utah Senator and LDS Apostle Reed Smoot, Roberts was given permission to serve as a chaplain if he successfully completed the required training courses, which he did. He then spent months with his men, nationalized as the 145<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Battalion, while they trained at Fort Kearny, California. While this group of men did eventually arrive in France, the war ended just as they received orders to the front.<sup>1</sup>

After returning from France, Roberts did not slow in his service to the Church. From 1922 to 1927, he served as the president of the Eastern States Mission. In the last few years of his life, he wrote books, missionary pamphlets and tracts, and the six volume *Comprehensive History of the Church*, covering the first century of the Church. He had just finished it prior to his death. He had also begun a program that would help the seventies of the Church improve themselves through a correspondence program.<sup>2</sup>

### **Delbert L. Stapley**

Delbert Leon Stapley was born on December 11, 1896 in Mesa, Arizona. From 1915 to 1917 he served a mission in the southern states. During the First World War, he served his country in the Marine Corps. Returning to Arizona, he served in that state's National Guard for nine years and retired as a major.

Stapley was also an avid Scouter. He helped organize the Roosevelt Council of the Boy Scouts of America in Arizona and presided over that body for two years. He was functioning as a national representative for the BSA council when he was ordained an

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<sup>1</sup> See Chapter 6 on Chaplains for more details.

<sup>2</sup> JH, Sept 27, 1933, 8.

apostle on October 5, 1950.<sup>1</sup> Elder Stapley had served in that position for almost thirty years when he died August 19, 1978.<sup>2</sup>

### **Calvin S. Smith**

Calvin Schwartz Smith was one of the six sons of President Joseph F. Smith who joined the army during World War I. Born on May 29, 1890, Smith grew up in Salt Lake City. At twenty years of age, he went to Germany as a missionary. After returning to the United States, he attended the University of Utah and earned his bachelors degree.<sup>3</sup> In 1917, the First Presidency appointed him as a chaplain and he moved to Camp Lewis, Washington. Smith learned his duty from the other chaplains there and then was assigned duty as a chaplain-at-large, so that he could work with all of the LDS soldiers in the 91<sup>st</sup> Division.<sup>4</sup> Near the end of the war, Chaplain Smith attended a university in Leeds, England, where he studied “vocational education.”<sup>5</sup> Once he finished this course, he applied for a discharge and returned to the States.

Smith’s education did not stop after the war. He returned to the University of Utah for a masters degree and then did his doctorate work at the University of Chicago. His professional career also revolved around education. He worked as superintendent for two different school districts: San Juan County and Granite. He directed research for the Utah Education Survey Committee and served as the regional director at the Veterans Administration in charge of the Rehabilitation and Education department. Smith also

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<sup>1</sup> JH, Sept 30, 1950, 5.

<sup>2</sup> Avant, 66.

<sup>3</sup> JH, June 15, 1966, 5.

<sup>4</sup> JH, July 17, 1919, 7.

<sup>5</sup> JH, July 25, 1919, 3.

served three sessions in the state legislature and was a member of the Joint Legislative Committee. Smith passed away on June 16, 1966.<sup>1</sup>

### **Briant H. Wells**

The youngest son of Latter-day Saint pioneer and soldier, Daniel H. Wells, was born in Salt Lake City on December 5, 1872. Briant Harris Wells attended the local ward schools and later the Deseret University. All of this schooling led up to his appointment to West Point Military Academy in 1889. He graduated from that school in 1894 and later fought for his country in three countries: the Philippines (traveling there three times), Panama, and on the Mexican border. He attained the rank of colonel as the world war began.<sup>2</sup>

After the United States declared war on the Central Powers, Secretary of War Newton D. Baker appointed Colonel Wells as a representative of U.S. General Tasker H. Bliss, who was on the supreme war council for the Allied Forces in France. This assignment also put him in contact with generals of other nations, including French General Ferdinand Foch, the Allied Supreme Commander. Wells' official title was liaison officer and his responsibility was to handle "high military secrets between General Bliss . . . and General Foch." This position required a great deal of trust, which Wells had earned in his previous work with General Bliss.<sup>3</sup>

Following the war, now General Wells went to Washington, D.C., as head of the war plans division. He continued his work there until December of 1923 when he was transferred to Fort Benning, Georgia, to be the commanding officer and conduct a

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<sup>1</sup> JH, June 15, 1966, 5.

<sup>2</sup> "Briant Harris Wells," *The Improvement Era*, vol. 20 (Oct 1918), 1076-1080.

<sup>3</sup> JH, July 4, 1918, 7.

training school for infantry officers.<sup>1</sup> He finished his military service in Hawaii, from where he retired in 1934. During his military service Wells received the Distinguished Service Medal, the French Order of the Legion of Honor, and the Silver Star. He died at age seventy-seven on June 12, 1949.<sup>2</sup>

### **Richard W. Young**

Richard Whitehead Young, a grandson of Brigham Young, was born and raised in Salt Lake City on April 19, 1858. After graduating from the University of Deseret, he received an appointment to West Point, finishing in 1882. From 1882 to 1884, he took a leave of absence from the military in order to study law at Columbia University. He next worked at Governor's Island, New York, as a judge advocate. Retiring from the military in 1889, Young returned to Utah to practice law. He also served on the city council of Salt Lake City and as the vice president of the board of education. In 1894, he was made brigadier general in charge of the Utah National Guard. He also managed the *Salt Lake Herald* from 1895–1896.<sup>3</sup>

Young fought in two major wars. He led the Utah Light Artillery in their experiences in the Philippines during the Spanish American War. Though only a captain, he made some very important impressions. Once the insurrection on those islands had been put down, Young was tapped for a judicial position. He spent two years in the Philippines as a Supreme Provost Judge and an Associate Justice and president of the Criminal Branch of the Supreme Court in that country. Less than two decades later and after once again retiring to civilian life, Young took part in another international conflict, World War I. When the United States declared war, Young came out of retirement to lead

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<sup>1</sup> JH, Oct 4, 1924, 3.

<sup>2</sup> JH, June 12, 1949, 1.

<sup>3</sup> JH, Dec 27, 1919, 3.

the Utah National guard as it became the 145<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery. After a year of service there, the army moved him to a leadership position in the 40<sup>th</sup> Division and gave him the rank of Brigadier General. A short time later he commanded that division in France.<sup>1</sup>

A year after the end of World War I ended, General Young passed away.<sup>2</sup> Years later, President Heber J. Grant related a story about his friend, Richard W. Young. While trying to fill a vacancy in the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, President Grant's thoughts continually returned to General Young, who was a lifelong friend. The president finally decided to take Young's name to the weekly meeting of the First Presidency and the Twelve. However, when he began to suggest the name, he was unable to do so. Instead he suggested Melvin J. Ballard, who was then presiding over the Northwestern States Mission.<sup>3</sup> Whatever the reason for the call being changed to Elder Ballard, this experience showed President Heber J. Grant's confidence in the ability and leadership of Richard W. Young.

### **S. Dilworth Young**

When the First World War began for the United States, Seymour Dilworth Young was still too young for the army. Born in September 7, 1897, in Salt Lake City, Young had to receive parental permission to join the military. After receiving counsel from his grandfather, a member of the First Council of the Seventy, Seymour B. Young, Sr., and from an uncle, Richard W. Young, Dilworth joined the Utah National Guard. He traveled with them to California and France, but never made it to the frontlines.

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<sup>1</sup> "Richard Whitehead Young," *Improvement Era*, Oct 1918, 1075-1076.

<sup>2</sup> He passed away on December 27, 1919 (JH, Dec 27, 1919, 3).

<sup>3</sup> Gibbons, Francis M., *Heber J. Grant: Man of Steel Prophet of God* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1979), 174-75. It is also important to recognize that he served as the first stake president of the Ensign stake in Salt Lake City starting on April 1, 1904 (Avant, 264).

After serving his country, Young served for two years as a missionary in the Central States Mission. His life of service did not end after his mission. Returning to Utah, he began his work as an executive for the BSA. When called into the First Council of the Seventy on April 6, 1945, Young was the chief executive of the Ogden Area Council of the BSA.<sup>1</sup> Young's first assignment after his call as a General Authority was to preside over the New England Mission, which he did from 1945 to 1951. His work as a General Authority continued for three decades until 1978 when he was named an emeritus member of the First Quorum of the Seventy. He and his wife then went to the Los Angeles Temple where he directed the Visitors Center. He passed away on July 9, 1981.<sup>2</sup>

### **Summary**

In the years following the First World War, the veterans continued to influence the Church. In addition to the men who returned to the United States and continued in their common professions, a small number of veterans had later in life opportunities to serve in leadership positions. Three of these men continued to serve their country in the military. Two turned to the political arena where they felt they could help their fellow citizens. Eight of these veterans accepted callings and assignments from the leaders of the Church, either as local leaders or general authorities. While these thirteen men do not completely represent all WWI veterans, they do show the wide influence wielded by veterans of this war. Through their military, civil and ecclesiastical leadership they affected members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the decades that followed the war. Since their lives were affected by the experiences they had during the

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<sup>1</sup> JH, Apr 6, 1945, 4.

<sup>2</sup> "Funeral Rites for S. Dilworth Young," *LDS Church News: News of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, Week ending July 18, 1981, 3.

world war, then so were their leadership styles affected by their military service. In this manner, the organization and the membership of the Church continued to feel the effects of the Great War on their lives for many years.

## CHAPTER 8

### CHANGE ON THE HOMEFRONT

When the United States entered World War I in 1917, the consumer practices of Latter-day Saints and other Americans needed to change. The time when the Saints could eat whatever they wanted or liberally use up materials such as paper, metal, cloth and fuel was over.<sup>1</sup> These supplies were needed by the Allied Powers in Europe and by American soldiers training in the United States, who would later be sent to Europe. Consequently America's whole concept of thrift needed to change into one consistent with war-time conditions.

Prior to the entrance of the United States into the war, those who wrote on the subject of thrift and frugality described it in lofty tones. Articles appeared in the *Improvement Era* on thrift topics and mentioned what great virtues they were. For example, editors Joseph F. Smith and Edward H. Anderson wrote an article warning members to be frugal and avoid debt.<sup>2</sup> While these authors and others made strong arguments for this lifestyle, they were fighting a losing battle. Americans at that time were known world-wide for their extravagant buying habits but also for their propensity to waste items that might be in shortage elsewhere. However, once the war started, the topic increased in frequency in the *Improvement Era* and in Salt Lake City newspapers.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Passing Events," *Improvement Era*, vol. 22 (Aug 1919), 929.

<sup>2</sup> "Thrift," *Improvement Era*, vol. 9 (Oct 1906), 972-974.

<sup>3</sup> There were more articles in the *Improvement Era* that used the word "thrift" during the two years of the war than in the four years before it (*LDS Collectors Library 2005*, version 5.2.0, [Salt Lake City, UT: Infobase Media Corporation, 2005]).

The importance of frugal living increased greatly, which caused it to become more than just an ideal. It was now a practical need.<sup>1</sup> Virtually everything that the nation produced was needed by U.S. soldiers and their allies in the war.

In September of 1917, Professor Elmer G. Petersen of the Agricultural College in Logan, Utah, wrote an article entitled “The Patriotic Necessity of Saving.” The title of that article showed a shift in the saving paradigm. It was no longer merely a nice way to live, but had become a matter of patriotism. The article suggested that if the Saints truly loved their country then they would live in a manner conducive to economy. Dr. Petersen wrote, “Conservation and thrift, once a theory, has now become a stern necessity. What we formerly thought was very desirable and admirable by those few who practiced it, now becomes a matter of very nearly life and death consequences.” The article also described the food restrictions placed upon the people living in Europe. Compared to the restrictions experienced by the people in embattled portions of Europe, the regulations required of the Latter-day Saints in America were miniscule.<sup>2</sup> Certainly greater sacrifice would be required as the war progressed, but the initial sacrifices were small in comparison to those required in Europe.

In order to understand the idea of “thrift” as used by the Latter-day Saints in the early part of the twentieth century, one should look into how they defined it. Clarissa A. Beesley, the secretary for the Young Ladies’ Mutual Improvement Association (YLMIA) presented a definition of thrift to accompany one of the organizations slogans: “We Stand

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<sup>1</sup> Harris, Frank S., “Being Good for Something,” *Improvement Era*, vol. 19 (Apr 1916), 488-489.

<sup>2</sup> Petersen, Elmer G., “The Patriotic Necessity of Saving,” *The Improvement Era*, vol. 20 (September 1917), 981.

for Thrift and Economy.”<sup>1</sup> Sister Beesley defined the word as follows: “Thrift denotes industry; it denotes good husbandry. It is the power to produce. It is the power not only to accumulate wealth but to so manage and expend that wealth that it shall bring the greatest net returns. It is the power to grasp opportunity. It is the power to convert limited resources into new forms and products which shall be stepping stones to comfort and prosperity. It is the power which enables one to keep out of debt, or, if forced temporarily into its bondage, soon to release himself therefrom.”<sup>2</sup> She also mentioned that the thrifty also possessed other Christ-like attributes. This statement was printed just a few months after the United States had entered the war and again showed the paradigm shift among the people. Sister Beesley repeatedly used the word “power.” She equated the word “thriftiness” with the ability that each person had to obtain the things that they want. She asserted that if all the Saints used wisely the things that they already possessed, then the time would never come when they could not obtain the things they needed for a price they could afford to pay.

Although the concepts of thrift were familiar the Saints, throughout World War I its importance grew. The sacrifice required by members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints took many forms and required them to not only save but also to give. By the end of the war, many had purchased war bonds, encouraged food production, saved fuel, and in all ways lived frugally. The message of thrifty living would come from the general level of the Church but would of necessity be lived by individual Latter-day Saints.

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<sup>1</sup> At that time, the Y. L. M. I. A. had suggested several slogans for its organization. These ideas included the following: “We Stand for a Sacred Sabbath and a Weekly Half-holiday,” “We Stand for a Weekly Home Evening,” and “We Stand for State- and Nation-wide Prohibition” (Beesley, Clarissa A., “We Stand for Thrift and Economy,” *Improvement Era*, vol. 20 [Aug 1917], 866-867).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, 866.

## Leading by Example

Latter-day Saints were no stranger to the concept of frugality. Beginning with the arrival of the first pioneers into the Salt Lake Valley, the Saints had practiced the principles of saving and avoiding waste because there were no stores from which they could buy more supplies. So when the United States government went to war in 1917 and turned to individual states to help provide the required commodities through increased production and thrift, the Saints were not unfamiliar with these ideas. The Latter-day Saints did not need to be convinced of the value of the traits of frugality so much as receive appropriate direction on proper application. Much of this instruction would come through their Church leaders and auxiliaries. Indeed, Professor Peterson affirmed that “Utah, through its Church organization, can more effectively meet the present apparent emergency than any other state in the Union.”<sup>1</sup>

Throughout the course of the war, many of these Church leaders served in both ecclesiastical positions and governmental roles. For example, President Heber J. Grant served in at least three different roles during the war: President of the Quorum of the Twelve, General Superintendent of the Young Men’s Mutual Improvement Association (MIA), and State Finance Chairman for Liberty Bonds for Utah.<sup>2</sup> Occasionally these various responsibilities would intermingle, such as when President Grant used some of his time at the Salt Lake Tabernacle pulpit to encourage the Latter-day Saints to purchase bonds to help further the war effort.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Peterson, Elmer G., “Food Production and Conservation in Utah,” *Improvement Era*, vol. 20 [June 1917], 680.

<sup>2</sup> See Boone, Joseph F., “The Roles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Relation to the United States Military, 1900-1975,” 2 vols. (Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, 1975), 282,

<sup>3</sup> Boone, 198-199, 201.

*Liberty Loans.* One way members of the Church helped finance the war was through the purchase of war bonds. The United States government issued these bonds as a way to finance their part of the war in Europe. During the course of the war, the government presented five of these bonds and in each case they set a quota to be filled by each state. In the course of three years, Utah was given a total quota of \$61,275,000. In response to that challenge, citizens of the state bought \$73,509,900 worth of bonds—twelve million dollars more than the goal.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints bought bonds in four out of five drives in a substantial way institutionally. The reason for this was not because of a lack of patriotism among the leaders of the Church, but because of the date of General Conference. Since the presiding brethren did not want to use church funds without first seeking the consent of the general body of the Saints, they waited until the next general conference to suggest a donation. By the time that conference began in October 1917, the first Liberty Loan had already closed and so the Church was unable to purchase bonds during that drive. However, the second Liberty Loan had opened just a few days prior to the conference and those in attendance unanimously approved the purchase of \$250,000 worth of Liberty Bonds. This practice of approaching the Saints during conference for consent to buy war bonds continued throughout the conflict and even after the armistice in the case of the fifth loan. In response to the last four Liberty Loans, the Church bought \$850,000 worth of bonds.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to bonds purchased in the name of the entire church, other auxiliary organizations of the Church took up their patriotic duty to fund the war. The MIA bought \$12,500 worth of bonds. The local leadership of that organization received a great deal of

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<sup>1</sup> Boone, 193-198; and Warrum, 34.

encouragement from its Assistant General Superintendent, President Heber J. Grant. He promoted the statement, “A Liberty Bond in Every Home” and encouraged leaders to make it happen. The YLMIA also purchased \$6,250 worth of bonds. While this amount might seem small when compared to its brother organization, individual members of the YLMIA spent \$70, 957 on Liberty Bonds. Not to be outdone by the younger women in the Church, the Relief Society participated in four of the Liberty Loans and contributed \$592,057.<sup>1</sup> Through both teaching and example, the organizations of the Church encouraged the purchase of Liberty Bonds among Latter-day Saints.

*Food Production.* Cash donations were not the only things needed from the members of the Church. In order for the soldiers to continue fighting in the war, the military required more food. The Latter-day Saints, whether full-time farmers or not, therefore needed to produce more foodstuffs. When President Joseph F. Smith addressed the Saints during the April 1917 general conference, he spoke of the general condition of the lands in which a majority of Latter-day Saints lived. He mentioned how long the previous winter had lasted and encouraged the Latter-day Saints to do all they could to grow an abundance of food that year. He reminded them that in the past they had been able to grow all they needed and more, so that they had been able to use the surplus to bless the lives of others in the region. He was referring to the pioneers, who had sold food to other westward migrating individuals. In addition to increased food production, President Smith also mentioned that the Agricultural College in Logan had urged Utahns to save and store the additional food. The suggestion for food storage came at the encouragement of the U.S. government.<sup>2</sup> President Woodrow Wilson repeated this

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<sup>1</sup> Boone, 198-199, 201.

<sup>2</sup> Smith, Joseph F., in Conference Report, April 1917, 3.

statement in a message given months later. He said, “Let me suggest, also, that every one who creates or cultivates a garden helps, and helps greatly, to solve the problem of the feeding of the nations; and that every housewife who practices strict economy puts herself in the ranks of those who serve the nation.”<sup>1</sup> Every little thing the Saints could do would help the nation in fighting the war.

After sharing the instructions from the American government, President Smith turned to the scriptures and outlined the vision of what he wanted the Saints to accomplish. He taught, “I hope the people of this state, especially the Latter-day Saints, will prove themselves to be veritable Josephs in Egypt, that when necessity stalks abroad through the land, the needy may apply to us for that which is necessary for their happiness and for their subsistence.”<sup>2</sup> President Smith not only asked them to produce enough food for themselves for the time to come, but also to grow and store enough food to feed a starving world. The prophet challenged the Latter-day Saints to anticipate a future need and prepare to fill it.

One of the speakers during the April 1917 General Conference was Presiding Bishop Charles W. Nibley. As appropriate for one who held responsibility for the physical welfare of Saints throughout the world, he spoke of the importance of Latter-day Saints doing all they could to increase the production of foodstuffs. To encourage such actions, Bishop Nibley set forth a challenge in the form of a food growing competition. Every organization in each ward was to grow an acre of potatoes. The top three highest producing acres would receive a sizeable cash prize—\$1,000 for first place, \$500 for

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<sup>1</sup> Wilson, Woodrow, “Address,” *Improvement Era*, vol. 20 (June 1917), 734.

<sup>2</sup> Smith, Joseph F., in Conference Report, April 1917, 3.

second and \$250 for third. A similar contest was promoted for the production of spring wheat.<sup>1</sup>

In response to that challenge, the Saints planted many acres of spring wheat and potatoes. Since the *Improvement Era* was the official periodical for the MIA, it reported on the response of the organization's members to the farming competition. As of September 1917, only five months after the conference, the MIA organizations of fourteen wards had entered the five-acre spring wheat competition. As for the one-acre potato contest, twenty-eight wards took part.<sup>2</sup> A few months later when the final tally was made to determine the winner of the potato contest, the *Improvement Era* announced that the 85<sup>th</sup> quorum of Seventies in the Kanab ward had grown the most potatoes. Quorum President Charles R. Pugh had raised 825 ½ bushels of potatoes as the representative of his quorum. This feat not only won the \$1,000 prize but also broke the world record for the amount of potatoes grown on one acre of land.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to the food growing contests, General Authorities made other arguments for the production of food. Perhaps the strongest statement on this topic came from Elder Richard R. Lyman of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles. While speaking at the MIA conference of 1918, Elder Lyman spoke of the duties of Latter-day Saints.

“With such a cause, with such serious business before us, we should do everything the Government requires. If you have not planted a kitchen garden and it is possible for you to plant one, you are not doing your duty. If you are not raising more wheat this year than you raised last year, you are not doing your duty. If you are not doing all you can to conserve food, you are not doing your duty. The more we live in accordance with the wishes and desires and requirements of the Government, the fewer men

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<sup>1</sup> Nibley, Charles W., in Conference Report, April 1917, 142-143.

<sup>2</sup> “Passing Events,” *Improvement Era*, vol. 20 (September 1917), 844.

<sup>3</sup> “Passing Events,” *Improvement Era*, vol. 21 (July 1918), 839; and “The World’s Potato Record,” *Improvement Era*, vol. 21 (September 1918), 979. Also see Journal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Aug 1918, 1, Church Archives; hereafter cited as JH.

we will lose, and the sooner the war will be over. What would you not give to save an arm, or a leg, or an eye, for your own son? What would you not give, what would you not do, at this very hour, to save the life of that one you love, who is fighting over there? No American citizen has done enough nor has given enough until the doing or the giving actually hurts, and he is by so doing positively compelled to endure personal sacrifices.”<sup>1</sup>

Members of the Church needed to sacrifice and, according to Elder Lyman, if it was not a sacrifice, then they had not given enough nor had they worked hard enough.

*An International Need.* The request for the additional work of Latter-day Saint farmers did not come solely from Church leaders or the United States government. The members of the Cassia Idaho Stake had an opportunity to help their Canadian neighbors. The Canadian government approached the farmers in this stake and asked them to help till the land in Canada and plant crops there. The Canadians needed the help because so many of their young men were engaged in the fighting in Europe. In order to fill this need, farmers were enlisted from many of the northern states to help put in the crops that would feed Canadian soldiers and citizens. When Cassia Stake President William T. Jack spoke in general conference, he remarked that the responsibility of growing the nation’s food was every bit as important as the actual fighting.<sup>2</sup> Without provisions the Allied armies would quickly starve to death and the war would be lost.

A plea for continued help came from Elder Hyrum W. Valentine, recently released president of the Swiss-German mission, which at that time was partially in territory occupied by the Central Powers.<sup>3</sup> While speaking in general conference He thanked the members of the Church for the generosity they had shown to the poor in his

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<sup>1</sup> Lyman, Richard R., “Service to Country ‘Over Here,’” *Improvement Era*, Nov 1918 (August 1918), 913-914.

<sup>2</sup> Jack, William T., in Conference Report, April 1917, 115-116.

<sup>3</sup> Despite being surrounded by belligerent nations, Switzerland maintained its neutrality throughout the entire war.

mission. He mentioned that the 25,000 francs they donated had blessed the lives of many of the needy in that area. Elder Valentine then described the Swiss and German Church members in an effort to humanize them to a group of people who had seen so much anti-German propaganda. He related his experience among the Swiss and German members of the Church as follows: “I have enjoyed the hospitality of those seven thousand Saints in that land. I have eaten their food, and so have your boys and your fathers—when they had none themselves. I have slept in their beds when they sat down in chairs, and the Lord has blessed them, and I love them for that charity, because I have learned to know them.” Elder Valentine went on to say that members of the Church needed to fill their hearts with charity towards their fellowmen in Germany. These people had taken care of the missionaries when necessary, so now the Church needed to look out for the Germans and the Swiss.<sup>1</sup> Indeed the responsibility of the Church to provide for the physical welfare of others was more complicated than just feeding the people of the United States. They needed to reach out a helping hand to the needy all over the world.

*Lessons in Frugality.* In order to help others, the Saints needed to use more wisely the material goods which they already possessed. This practice would free up supplies to go to the places where there was a need. Presiding Bishop Charles W. Nibley stated that the Latter-day Saint men and women should make more of their own clothes and not focus so much on extravagance. Since no one knew how long the war would last, he advised that they should begin to live as though it would last a long time. Bishop Nibley advocated that for the next six months Latter-day Saints should live in such a way as would economize all that they owned and thus make it last as long as possible. His words were “Let us try to make ourselves feel poor for six months.” After that period of time,

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<sup>1</sup> Valentine, Hyrum W., in Conference Report, April 1917, 145-146.

all who participated in this program would have a new perspective on the war and its timetable. With this increased understanding the Saints would be able to make future purchases more judiciously.<sup>1</sup> If the Latter-day Saints lived in a manner that assumed that there would be no new supplies, then they would be better off if such circumstances occurred. Subsequently if shortages did not prove to be the case, the people would have already received a financial blessing for their economical use of what they had.

Toward the end of 1917, President Heber J. Grant taught another manner of frugality, this time regarding the proper use of fuel. President Grant sent out a letter to members of the Church throughout Utah and Idaho asking them use wood instead of coal to warm their homes and church buildings. He suggested that the members scour their lots for dead wood that they could use at home; and once they had cleared their property, they should go to the canyons to find more. If the Saints would rely on wood for fuel, then coal could be used to promote the war effort. Underscoring the usefulness of this practice, President Grant suggested that “the ax today is almost as important as the bayonet in the trenches.”<sup>2</sup>

Often the directions of the general authorities of the Church coincided with instructions from the government. William W. Armstrong, the Federal Fuel Administrator for Utah, made great efforts to conserve fuel in the state. He also asked the Saints to regulate the way they heated their homes, offices and schools. In the spring of 1918, a coal storage campaign took place throughout the state.<sup>3</sup> President Grant’s earlier instructions preceded the state sponsored program and prepared the Saints to lower coal usage in Utah when instructions came from the state.

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<sup>1</sup> Nibley, Charles W., in Conference Report, April 1917, 145.

<sup>2</sup> JH, Dec 3, 1917, 2.

<sup>3</sup> Warrum, 142.

While most of the lessons about frugality presented to the Latter-day Saints could also be applied to the nation in general, Dr. Elmer Peterson of the Utah Agricultural College made a suggestion that most Saints could have recognized. Professor Peterson wrote an article on conservation for the June 1917 *Improvement Era*, in which he promoted the Word of Wisdom. He hypothesized that if every citizen in the United States would adopt this principle that the country would save \$3.5 billion each year. Additionally, because refraining from “stimulants and narcotics” would increase the efficiency of American workers, the multi-billion dollar savings could possibly be multiplied by ten times.<sup>1</sup> Obedience to the Word of Wisdom aided the Saints ability to increase production and decrease waste.

With ideas such as avoiding waste, using fuel appropriately, and living the Word of Wisdom, there were not many concepts in the national plan for thrifty living that were new to Latter-day Saints. As members of the Church received instruction from their leaders and watched those leaders follow their own instructions, they learned how to follow the regulations set down by the government. The Saints then had the opportunity through saving and producing needed supplies to take up the role of Joseph of Egypt.

### **The Response of the Average Member**

Once the leaders of the Church had taught and exemplified the concept of thrift, they turned to the lay membership to fulfill their responsibilities. Yet, as children of the pioneers, these Latter-day Saints had a heritage of frugality and hard work. These pioneer traits had been passed down to the men and women who lived during the time of the Great War. An example of their willingness to work was brilliantly shown by Latter-day

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<sup>1</sup> Peterson, Elmer G., “Food Production and Conservation in Utah,” *Improvement Era*, vol. 20 (June 1917), 679.

Saint women in 1917. With the need to bolster the U.S. armed forces, the federal government knew that jobs previously performed by men on the home front would be left undone. In order to fill the gaps left by the departing soldiers, the government asked the women of each state to inventory their various skills and determine which occupations they would feel comfortable filling. When the National Council of Defense called on the women of Utah to offer their services to the government for war work, the response completely surprised them. So many women applied in Salt Lake City that the office ran out of registration cards. Registrars had to turn scores of women away. The state had assumed that five-thousand cards would be sufficient for the city, but the registrars in Salt Lake City soon learned that they had underestimated the war spirit of that city's women. Consequently these officials had to go to offices in other cities and obtain as many cards as they could spare.<sup>1</sup> This was but one example of how willing members of the Church were to take part in the war effort. The Saints also stood out in their other war time responsibilities such as money donations and food production. As previously mentioned, even the youth were able to take part in helping to win the war.

*War Savings Stamps.* In addition to the Liberty Bond program—which both Presidents Joseph F. Smith and Heber J. Grant endorsed<sup>2</sup>—the government established another program that accepted donations on a smaller scale. This new program, the War Saving Stamps campaign, succeeded in helping the government raise money for the war, but it had a greater purpose than just money raising. This campaign made increased thriftiness among Americans its chief goal. Unlike Liberty Loans, War Saving Stamps and Certificates were not to be bought with money that had been accumulated in the past.

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<sup>1</sup> JH, Nov 10, 1917, 4.

<sup>2</sup> Boone, 193-198, 282.

Instead the government encouraged Americans to pay for them with money saved through frugality and the appropriate use of their resources.<sup>1</sup> For example, as Latter-day Saint families saved money from eating the food grown in their family gardens, they could then use that money to buy stamps and certificates. Additionally, the stamps were not to be purchased only once, but as often as individual circumstances would allow. This program of less expensive investments allowed more people, including children and those with limited means, an opportunity to assist the war effort.

Children, in particular, had a special part in this campaign. U.S. Secretary of the Treasury, William G. McAdoo, proclaimed, “We are in the greatest war of the world's history, and we must win this war; we can we shall win if the boys and girls of America say so, and mean it, and feel it, and live it, as the boys and girls of 1776 lived and felt and helped. The Nation needs that sort of boys and girls today . . . Through saving your pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters and buying thrift stamps and then War Savings Certificates you will help your country and its gallant armies to win the war.” By reporting this address in the *Improvement Era*, the editors of the magazine emphasized the role that the youth could play. The *Era* article went on to encourage Latter-day Saint boys and girls to go out and find extra chores so they could earn money to purchase Thrift Stamps.<sup>2</sup>

In order to promote the participation of all Americans, the War Savings Stamp campaign contained several levels of donation. For a quarter, one could buy a War Thrift Stamp and then affix it to a thrift card. While the thrift stamps did not accrue interest, one could save up four dollars worth and trade it in for a War Savings Stamp, which was the

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<sup>1</sup> “Passing Events,” *Improvement Era*, vol. 21 (Apr 1918), 560-561.

<sup>2</sup> “Mutual Work,” *Improvement Era*, vol. 21 (May 1918), 648.

next step up. War Savings Stamps could also be purchased but the cost of a stamp went up one cent each month. In December of 1917 and January of 1918, a War Savings Stamp cost \$4.12. Then in February it would cost \$4.13 for a stamp and continue to increase through the rest of the year. Unlike the Thrift Stamps, these stamps accrued interest and could be redeemed after January 1, 1923 for five dollars. In order to help patriots hold on to their stamps, they also received a savings certificate with spaces to place up to twenty stamps. The additional spaces on the certificate also encouraged the purchase of more stamps so that the buyer could fill in the blanks.<sup>1</sup> Using this tiered system, Latter-day Saints took part in the donation of millions of dollars which the government used to fight the war.

The MIA also set a goal for the purchase of War Savings Stamps. They wanted to encourage every man, woman and child to own a War Savings Certificate, which held twenty savings stamps.<sup>2</sup> Organization leaders not only encouraged MIA members to obtain this certificate, but they also needed to persuade others who were not part of the MIA to do the same.

In addition to goals set by the Church, the government of the United States placed an expectation on the Saints of Utah concerning the amount of stamps each citizen needed to purchase. Each person in Utah needed to buy \$20 worth of stamps, for a total allotment of \$8,903,920 so that the nation could fulfill its goal of two billion dollars to be earned during 1918.<sup>3</sup>

Although the War Savings Stamp Drive began on December 3, 1917, the Saints in Utah were slow in the purchase of these stamps. In both the *Improvement Era* and the

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<sup>1</sup> JH, Nov 22, 1917, 2.

<sup>2</sup> See "The War Savings Campaign," *Improvement Era*, vol. 21 (Aug 1918), 931.

<sup>3</sup> JH, Dec 3, 1917, 2.

*Deseret Evening News*, the editors constantly urged the citizens of Utah to go out and purchase the stamps.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, some people felt that the War Savings Stamp movement was not targeted at them but only for those with small means. One reason for this kind of thinking was that the maximum amount of stamps that any one person could own was \$1,000. The editors of the *Deseret Evening News* pointed out that while that was the case, an individual could purchase the maximum amount for themselves and then for their spouse and their children.<sup>2</sup> Still some saw it as a minor program and turned their attentions to the Liberty Bond program.

By mid-1918, Governor Simon Bamberger was compelled to set aside a day to encourage the sale of savings stamps. On June 28 of that year, pledges were taken in order to fulfill the quota assigned to the state of Utah. Through the efforts of “War Savings Stamp day,” promises were made to fulfill Utah’s responsibility to purchase the stamps and, as was the case in the other fund drives, Utah over-subscribed to this program by more than a million dollars.<sup>3</sup> Even though the war ended before the year was out, Utahns still honored their pledges and therefore decreased the amount of money that the government would have to request in order to finance the military in post-war activities.

*Increased Food Production and Storage.* In addition to cash donations, the Saints in Utah stepped up food production. The amount of grain made available by the Saints in 1917 was higher than it had been the previous year. This happened while the food production throughout the world decreased. This world-wide drop in growth came partly because of loss of manpower but also because of bad weather conditions. In Utah,

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<sup>1</sup> See JH, Mar 8, 1918, 1; May 4, 1918, 5; June 18, 1918, 1; June 27, 1918, 1; and June 29, 1918, 4.

<sup>2</sup> See JH, June 18, 1918, 1.

<sup>3</sup> See JH, June 8, 1918, 5; and June 29, 1918, 4.

however, home gardens increased in number, size and quality.<sup>1</sup> In a conference held years later, Elder John A. Widstoe, of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, pointed out that “during the summer of 1918 the war gardens of Salt Lake City, covering only a part of the vacant lots and backyards of the city, produced crops valued at more than one-half million dollars.”<sup>2</sup> Some surmised that if the gardens in the state of Utah continued to grow in that way that they would be able to send train carloads of food to the needy countries in Europe.<sup>3</sup> This would indeed match the vision stated by President Joseph F. Smith that the Latter-day Saints would become like Joseph in Egypt to the rest of the world.

One concept of conservation that changed throughout the war was that of food storage. In 1917, the Latter-day Saints were encouraged to follow the example of their pioneer ancestors by storing up at least a year’s supply of food. Several reasons were given for such action. First, the war had taken millions of the world’s farmers out of their fields. Some had gone to war while others were working in the munitions factories. Second, if food became scarce then the prices of the food would increase dramatically. Finally, if families had a supply of food in their homes then trains would not have to be used to transport supplies to civilians. Instead the locomotives could be used when necessary to forward the cause of the war. Franklin S. Harris of the Utah Agricultural Experiment Station explained that “storage in the home is much better than storage in the bins of the speculator.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Petersen, Elmer G., “The Patriotic Necessity of Saving,” *The Improvement Era*, vol. 20 (September 1917), 982-983, 985.

<sup>2</sup> Widstoe, John A., in Conference Report, Oct 1937, 65.

<sup>3</sup> Petersen, Elmer G., “The Patriotic Necessity of Saving,” *The Improvement Era*, vol. 20 (September 1917), 981-982.

<sup>4</sup> Harris, Franklin S., “Thrift and Economy,” *The Improvement Era*, vol. 20 (July 1917), 816-817.

Yet, as the war continued, the government officials changed the advice they gave about maintaining a year supply. They replaced the word “storage” with the word “hoarding.” Local food authorities had to explain to the frugal Latter-day Saints that they could no longer expect to build up the kind of storage to which they had been previously accustomed because the supplies were needed by others.<sup>1</sup> As the needs of the war and the government changed, the Saints continued to do their part by using their stores and thus allowing supplies to go elsewhere.

*The Part of the Youth.* The youth of the Church also had a role in the conservation and production of food. As a matter of fact, when it came to communicating the message of thrift among Utahns, the children played an integral part. George T. Odell, state director of war savings, and Francis W. Kirkham, state director of vocational education, prepared a campaign to encourage thrift throughout Utah and decided to use an unorthodox means of disseminating that message. In addition to advertising it in newspapers and pamphlets, public school teachers would teach this message in the schools. This practice would help communicate the program in a climate where the listeners had come to learn and could then take the message home where they would share it with their families. Another positive side effect of teaching the youth was that thrift would become a habit among them and they could continue to live a frugal lifestyle throughout the rest of their lives.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The necessity of such instructions showed that the Latter-day Saints had indeed taken up the cause of food storage. Had that not been the case, then such instructions would have been unwarranted.

<sup>2</sup> JH, 1 Dec 1917, 1.

The boy scouts of the Church also played an important role in thrift. “A scout is thrifty” was part of the scout law from the beginning of that organizations history.<sup>1</sup> A branch of the MIA, LDS boy scouts followed that portion of their promise that required thrift. During the Great War, the 400,000 American Boy scouts received a special commission to do three things: “Every Scout to Feed a Soldier,” “Every Scout to Boost America,” and “Every Scout to Save a Soldier.”<sup>2</sup>

In order to feed the soldiers, the boy scouts grew personal or troop gardens. In October 1917, the *Improvement Era* announced that the state of Utah had many scout gardens that year. In small sections, the scouts had found hundreds of acres of land that would not have been put to use that year and used it to grow an abundance of food.<sup>3</sup>

The boy scouts also did their part to improve morale around the state. They had the responsibility of distributing pro-war literature to the homes of people in their area. Nationwide the scouts disseminated more than thirty million pieces of government literature which explained the various war projects in which the nation was involved.

Scouts’ third responsibility had to do with encouraging American’s to lend money to the government in the form of Liberty Bonds. The boys of Utah helped sell part of the more than two-million bonds that were eventually sold by the Boy Scouts. The *Improvement Era* reported that thousands of dollars were collected weekly by the scouts connected with their organization.<sup>4</sup> They also gathered materials for gas masks and

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<sup>1</sup> Roberts, Brigham H., George H. Brimhall, and Benjamin Goddard, “The Boy Scout Movement in Utah,” *Improvement Era*, vol. 14 (April 1911), 540.

<sup>2</sup> “Summer Program for Scouts,” *Improvement Era*, vol. 21 (May 1918), 650.

<sup>3</sup> “War Gardens,” *Improvement Era*, vol. 20 (Oct 1917), 1093. “Utah has many scout gardens this year; and through the efforts of the Scouts hundreds of formerly idle acres have been made to yield foodstuffs in abundance.”

<sup>4</sup> “The War Savings Campaign,” *Improvement Era*, vol. 21 (Aug 1918), 931.

created a national invoice of standing black walnut trees which could be used to make gun stalks.<sup>1</sup>

### **Summary**

Thrift was a vital concept in World War I. It included the appropriate use of the things the people had and also the manufacture of the things they needed. General Church authorities encouraged the Saints to raise money and be more productive. They reminded the Saints to continue to help their brothers and sisters in the gospel who lived in other areas of the world. These leaders reminded the members of the commandments that when obeyed would save a great deal of money.

Accordingly the members of the Church stepped forward themselves and volunteered to live their lives differently. In addition to the women who volunteered their skills in taking the place of the missing men; other men, women and children broke bad habits and replaced them with thrifty ones. Saints purchased millions of dollars worth of Liberty Bonds and War Savings Stamps. Moreover, their diligent efforts produced millions of dollars worth of food which could be used locally or even preserved and then sent elsewhere. Latter-day Saint youth also did their part in teaching their families and saving their pennies. The Boy Scouts of America also performed many acts of service.

Noble Warrum summarized the sacrifices and efforts of the Saints during the war. “No true record . . . could omit to mention the meatless days and the wheatless days that drifted fast to eatless days, as we saved like we gave—until it hurt. . . In time the lavish use of sugar in tea, of flour in bread, of butter and meat, was discouraged and the olden virtue of saving was recognized as the newer crime of hoarding. But it helped to win the war and to keep alive millions of famished people who were starving and begging for the

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<sup>1</sup> “Mutual Messages,” *Improvement Era*, vol. 45 (Aug 1942), 530.

daily wastage of our accustomed ways.”<sup>1</sup> In the process of the war, Latter-day Saints changed the way they lived because it would bless the lives of others. Through their sacrifice the war was won, stomachs were filled, and lives were saved.

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<sup>1</sup> Warrum, 139.

## CHAPTER 9

### CONCLUSION

The consequences of a world war are more than just the obvious physical affects. The threats of danger echoed around the world until no one remained untouched. Even the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, headquartered in the heart of the Rocky Mountains, felt the effects of this massive confrontation. Church leaders could have tried to avoid the deadly conflict and attempted to avoid the bloodshed and waste by huddling in their mountain home, but they did not. Instead they encouraged their people to take part in the war effort once the nation in which they resided had declared war. This active participation allowed the war to influence the Church's organization and membership, with some of the effects continuing for decades after the hostilities ceased in 1918.

Prior to this conflict, many accused the Latter-day Saints of disloyalty but by the time this war concluded, such arguments could be put to rest. While patriotism played a major part in the lives of the Latter-day Saints, those unfamiliar with their lifestyle argued that such was not the case. The thousands of Latter-day Saints who mobilized for war on both sides of the conflict showed their devotion to their countries. In every step of the war effort, these Saint soldiers proved true to their nations. After the war ended and the surviving LDS men returned home, the Church no longer had to rely on their word only, it had living proof of its loyalty. Although some might still have alleged the Church's infidelity, they could not make a solid case to prove such charges. The brave

service of Latter-day Saint soldiers strengthened the reputation of the Church as a loyal organization.

Church President Joseph F. Smith foresaw the effects of the war before they occurred. He recognized the influence that such a conflict would have on members of the Church and worried about their well-being. In addition to the general membership of the Church, President Smith in particular worried about the missionaries and the soldiers, whose lives would change because of the war. While all of the consequences he predicted occurred, most of them turned out, at least in part, in a positive way.

The removal of the missionaries from most of Europe caused important changes in the affected countries. During the war years, local men took up the reins of Church leadership and found a great deal of success in their endeavors. These leaders learned that they could minister to the needs of their branches without the help of full-time missionaries from North America. One positive outcome of the removal of missionaries from Europe was that local men gained vital leadership experience which decreased the reliance on foreign missionaries in those areas.

The decrease in the number of missionaries in Europe did not stop the spread of the gospel. Church leaders transferred missionaries to different parts of the world so that these young men could continue their service. Missionary work also increased as Latter-day Saint servicemen found ways to share the restored gospel with other soldiers in their units. Much of this introduction to gospel principles came through the examples that these men gave as they endeavored to live the teachings of their faith, allowing members of other faiths to obtain a positive view of the Latter-day Saints. The changes caused by

the war did not stop missionary work, but simply re-directed the way it was accomplished.

In addition to the positive repercussions which occurred in missionary work, the war also encouraged the Latter-day Saints to change their perception of themselves and others both domestically and internationally. Prior to the war, the Church had acted primarily as a small group gathered in the mountains in the western United States. This international crisis caused them to think also about fellow Church members around the world. Additionally, the presence of these members in enemy countries required Saints to reject stereotypes that would condemn foreign Saints, particularly those in the nations controlled by the Central powers. This change in mental paradigm would be especially difficult if enemy armies had killed a loved one. However, Church leaders encouraged members to look past nationality and recognize that Saints were Saints no matter where they lived.

Not all of the events of the war had such positive effects. This monumental war cost the lives of millions of young men around the world. Losing a son or father—particularly when while in the prime of life—caused serious reflection by families on the purpose of the war and the purpose of life. Even when those issues were resolved, the families had already been changed. When fathers lost their lives, it affected the earning power of his family. The loss of a son left a hole in the family which could never be refilled. Many Latter-day Saint homes felt the loss of a loved one during the war and it would continue to influence their families for years.

The three Latter-day Saint chaplains made up another group of influential men. Their enthusiasm to do good also helped the spread of the restored gospel among the men

of the United States Army. Many of the soldiers had never met a Latter-day Saint before the war, but saw gleaming examples of what a Saint should be by watching these three men. The opportunities to change attitudes toward the Church probably came to Chaplain Maw more often than the other two chaplains. While he confessed that he did not know why the government had put him in a division almost devoid of Latter-day Saints, it may have been so that he could work with the soldiers in that group who belonged to the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. His constant work with these men softened many of them in their outlook on the Latter-day Saints. It is especially important considering the suspicions that both organizations held for each other at the time.

The influence of LDS soldiers continued even after the soldiers returned to the United States and Canada. A number of World War I veterans later served their fellow church members in positions of leadership, whether in a military, government or ecclesiastical position. Their style of management could not help but be influenced by their previous experiences especially one as world-shaking as the Great War. Their war experiences would therefore influence the lives of Latter-day Saints for years to come.

War veterans did not have a monopoly on the changes required by war. The men and women who remained at home also made sacrifices in their lifestyle. By the advent of WWI, the people of the intermountain west had strayed from their frugal pioneer roots to a more wasteful modern way of life. The requirements of the war effort in natural resources quickly put a stop to that lifestyle. Within a short time, many of the Latter-day Saints traded their wasteful habits for practices that helped conserve material goods. Even

in lands thousands of miles away from the trenches, Latter-day Saints felt the influence of the war.

World War I left no group untouched. LDS men changed their lives to become soldiers instead of farmers or some other civilian occupation. They traveled outside of the Rocky Mountains and saw the world. Meanwhile, the members that remained behind had to change their lifestyles dramatically in order to follow the instructions given by ecclesiastical and government leaders. General Authorities of the Church felt the problems faced by members on both sides of the battle zone. Interested investigators turned to God through the instrumentation of the missionaries, and these converts grew in the Church and continued to have an influence on it. Some families were influenced in a more basic way when a loved one failed to return home. Indeed the First World War had an all-encompassing effect on the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints which would continue to influence it in the decades to follow.

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